



Department of English Studies

PhD applications to Durham University Department of English Studies

Literary criticism and creative writing degrees 2025-2026

Contact information

PG Admissions Team: english.pgadmissions@durham.ac.uk

Co-Director of Postgraduate Research – Admissions and Funding
(Michaelmas and Easter Terms): Dr Maryam Mirza

maryam.mirza@durham.ac.uk

Co-Director of Postgraduate Research – Admissions and Funding (Epiphany
Term): Dr Daniel Hartley

daniel.j.hartley@durham.ac.uk

Application for a place at Durham

- You need to have **at least a 2.1 in your BA degree** (or equivalent from another country), **and a Masters either completed or being studied**, with evidence of results to date
- If you don't have a **supervisor** for your research in mind already, look at our staff's expertise: durham.ac.uk/english.studies/staff
- **Get in touch** with potential supervisors to discuss your project before applying (mid-December if applying for funding)
- **Register** on Durham's applicant portal:
studyatdurham.microsoftcrmportals.com/Account/Login/Register?returnUrl=/application-new-application
- **Complete the application form and provide supporting information** (see English language requirements for non-native speakers):
durham.ac.uk/learningandteaching.handbook/1/3/3/1
- Start dates: October, January, April
- 4-6 weeks' response time (longer if material is missing or clarification needed)

Research proposal

- No more than 750 words
- Should describe:
 - The project
 - Methodology
 - How your research relates to its wider field
 - The contribution to knowledge it aims to make
- You should consult with your proposed supervisor over this!

Funding: general points

- Applying for your place as a PhD student at Durham is separate from funding applications
- Fees are different for UK students and international students; see: [https://www.durham.ac.uk/study/postgraduate/tuition-fees-and-charges/tuition-fees---how-much-are-they/Fees are separate from living costs](https://www.durham.ac.uk/study/postgraduate/tuition-fees-and-charges/tuition-fees---how-much-are-they/Fees%20are%20separate%20from%20living%20costs)
- Funding is usually for 3 years of supervision; must submit by end of year 4 (if full time)
- Possible to study full- or part-time (and to switch from one to the other mode)

Funding schemes (for both literature and creative writing PhDs)

- There are two main funding schemes running this year at Durham:
 - Northern Bridge (a doctoral training programme funded by the UK's Arts and Humanities Research Council or AHRC)
 - Durham China Scholarship (open to Chinese citizens resident in PR China at time of application, holding a PhD offer from Durham).
- Both schemes pay fees and stipend (living allowance)

Northern Bridge Doctoral Training Partnership

- Open to UK AND international students, but fees will only be paid at UK rate (i.e. there'll be a shortfall for international fees)
- A maximum of 30% of awards will be made to international students
- Durham one of 7 universities involved; c. 63 awards made each year
- Highly competitive
- Awards include placement opportunities (21 days to up to 6 months) and 3.5 years of living allowance
- Can be full-time or part-time
- <http://www.northernbridge.ac.uk/applyforastudentship/>

How to apply to Northern Bridge: process and deadlines

- 3 stages of selection
- **Stage 1:**
 - You must have submitted your PhD application and all supporting materials to Durham by 5pm on **Tuesday, 7 January 2025**.
 - The English Department will then review all applications and decide which to put forward to stage 2.
- **Stage 2:**
 - Candidates who are selected to go forward to the central competition will work closely with their proposed supervisors on the Northern Bridge application form, which is separate from the application to Durham.
- **Stage 3:**
 - Applications are submitted to Northern Bridge by **Monday, 24 February 2025**.
 - Applications are ranked by panels from each institution.
- The award holders will be announced **from Thursday, 10 April 2025 onwards**.
- Same process and deadlines for creative writing and literary criticism PhDs.

Useful websites

- Department of English Studies:
durham.ac.uk/departments/academic/english-studies/about-us/staff/
- Durham application registration:
studyatdurham.microsoftcrmpportals.com/Account/Login/Register?returnUrl=/application-new-application
- Durham English language requirements:
durham.ac.uk/learningandteaching.handbook/1/3/3/1
- Fees:
<https://www.durham.ac.uk/study/postgraduate/tuition-fees-and-charges/tuition-fees---how-much-are-they/> Fees are separate from living costs
- Northern Bridge:
<http://www.northernbridge.ac.uk/applyforastudentship/>

Find out more:

durham.ac.uk/departments/academic/english-studies/postgraduate-study/