

MFA DRAMATIC WRITING

Course Overview 2025

CRICOS Code: 113111J

SEMESTER ONE

DWR9101A Principles of Dramatic Writing (30 credit points)

Principles of Dramatic Writing provides you with a thorough grounding in the foundational principles and strategies of dramatic writing. You will participate in writing and analysis exercises that explore key concepts such as conflict, character, structure, world building, scene writing and dialogue. The focus is on how these principles are applied similarly and differently across dramatic forms. To cement your understanding, you will develop a short piece of dramatic writing, either for stage or screen, and a portfolio of scenes.

DWR9102A Story and Culture (10 credit points)

Stories are not just entertaining; they say something about who we are and who we want to be. They are “theories of life”, reflecting and commenting on the world we live in. This is true not just in the finished work but increasingly importantly in the collaborative processes used to create them. Story and Culture is designed to examine both the ideas contained within stories as well as the ethics of storytelling and inclusive practices required by contemporary writers to create them.

DWR9103A Writing for Stage (20 credit points)

This subject explores how dramatic principles are applied to live performance and introduces you to a range of theatrical techniques. You will extend your creative practice through improvisation and devising techniques as well as developing a short and long form play. The theatre and arts industry landscape is illustrated by a range of industry guests.

SEMESTER TWO

DWR9104B Writing for Screen (20 credit points)

This subject explores visual language and the ways in which dramatic principles are applied to writing for the screen. You will undertake a number of visual storytelling exercises as well as

writing a short film and developing an original feature film treatment, acting as script editors for your peers. You will also analyse feature film scripts across a range of genres and learn about the emerging trends and opportunities in the film industry.

DWR9105B Episodic Writing (20 credit Points)

Here, your understanding of dramatic principles and visual storytelling are applied to episodic writing. You will explore various episodic forms, including one-hour dramas, half-hour comedy and short form web-series as well as receive extensive training in working in writers' rooms. You will put these principles into practice through the writing of your own spec episodes of an existing show, working in a writers' room with your peers, plus the creation of a series bible for an original hour-drama or half-hour comedy series.

DWR9106B The Business of Writing (10 credit points)

This subject introduces you to the business of being a writer with the aim of translating storytelling ability into sustainable careers. This includes how to pitch yourself and your projects, how to identify and capitalise on opportunities, and how to network and manage relationships and how to manage your legal and financial affairs as a self-employed writer.

COM9103A Practice-Based Research Project (10 credit points)

This subject prepares you for conducting research connected with your arts and cultural practice. You will learn key concepts, processes and methodologies of research design and communication, including research ethics and appreciating diverse knowledge practices. Across two semesters, you will propose and conduct research complementary with your creative practice, using research to support your creative process or share knowledge found through making work.

SEMESTER THREE

DWR9107C Interactive and Immersive Storytelling (10 credit points)

Interactive and Immersive Storytelling explores one of the major frontiers of storytelling at the boundary between technology, live performance and screen narrative. You will experience narratives in a range of mediums, including interactive theatre-making, immersive installations, digital games and XR and collaborate on the design of your own interactive or immersive narrative.

DWR9108C Major Writing Project (40 credit points)

The course culminates in the development of your major projects, which takes your earlier outlines and your ideas that come out of your story lab and develops them into two full-length dramatic works that act as your industry portfolio. These can be full-length plays, films, TV series or interactive and immersive projects. The subject ends with a series of professional meetings, building on the work you do in the Business of Writing subject, where you are able to pitch yourself and your projects.

COM9103B Practice-Based Research Project (10 credit points)

This subject prepares you for conducting research connected with your arts and cultural practice. You will learn key concepts, processes and methodologies of research design and communication, including research ethics and appreciating diverse knowledge practices. Across two semesters, you will propose and conduct research complementary with your creative practice, using research to support your creative process or share knowledge found through making work.