

## Master of Creative Writing for Scriptwriters

A year-long script lab

Available onsite or via distance learning

To apply, you need either:

- An undergraduate degree, or
- Equivalent creative practice – a portfolio of writing (published or not), or participation in theatre, film, TV, web or other storytelling projects

The Master of Creative Writing (MCW) for Scriptwriters continues to grow from strength to strength:

- A graduate won Best Drama at the 2019 Venice Short Film Festival
- A 2018 graduate's script was shortlisted for the Sundance Writers Lab in the USA – the world's most prestigious script workshop
- Another 2018 graduate was a finalist for Playmarket's *Plays for the Young* award
- Student who had never written a script before had her script selected as one of only ten nationwide for the first Women Filmmakers Incubator event - run by the NZ Writers Guild and DEGNZ in 2017

### Why are we so successful?

This programme is for writers who are serious about a career in film, TV, web-series, and theatre. Writers who know you can't master the craft in a weekend workshop, or by sitting around 'discussing'.

Limited to ten places, our group is a mix of writers new to scriptwriting, and more experienced writers who want to craft something of lasting power.

In just one year, you'll progress through a professional script development process - from synopsis, through through character sketches, scene writing and detailed outlines, to a full first draft, then a workshop process, to re-drafting and re-writing. Our aim is for you to end up with a second draft ready to present to production companies, or assemble your own production team.

### It's a busy year

In addition to group workshops focusing on your own script, you have a mentor who walks alongside you for the entire year, supporting you as you develop your own creative voice. There are also seminars on story structure, dialogue, character, visual storytelling, industry and funding. It's like a script lab – for an entire year.

The industry is competitive, and your script must stand out. This course is an investment – an intensive, non-judgmental, good-humoured space in which to go deep into the heart of your story. It helps that it's a creative hub up on the 12<sup>th</sup> floor of AUT's WT Building. There are novels being written in the MCW general stream, and whole worlds being built in the new computer labs of the Master of English and New Media Studies.

### **Tell your story**

Above all, the reason for our success is our focus on story. The kind of story that sweeps you up, maybe even changes your life. That's what audiences want – that's what makes your script stand out. It's called *dramatic writing*.

The industry is competitive and to cut through, each script must have real emotional impact, regardless of genre. The course is an intensive, non-judgmental space in which to go deep into the heart of each story.

We teach the craft of storytelling, whilst our students bring the imagination.

### **A scriptwriting community**

Scriptwriting is a serious business – but that doesn't mean it can't be fun. Our students learn in an interactive environment that encourages creativity and support.

Writers of all ages come from around the world do this this course:

- Filmmakers who have made short films and are keen to develop their first feature-length screenplay
- Writers of all kinds who want to know what actors, directors, producers and funding bodies look for in a script (and know it's more than clever dialogue and out-there characters)
- Actors wanting to write their own material for the stage or screen
- Novelists who want the focus on STORY - the powerful narrative structure which audiences expect

### **Distance Learning**

If you live outside of Auckland, you have the option of distance learning.

As the stage and screen industries are very much a team operation, the workshops and seminars involve a lot of group interaction & activities. Regarding distance learning, it depends where you are and how you can be in contact.

For example, if you can come in person for the block of workshops at the start of the year, and/or the blocks of script workshops at a couple of points during the year, then you can do the rest of the classes online. Exercises and discussions, in which you work with other students, can also be either online or in person.

Alternatively, if you are too far away to enable that, then you can do everything online.

One important note is – you are required to be present at all classes, whether online or in person. This is not a course where you can come and go, as group participation is a key strategy. We want everyone to feel included, and at the same time expect everyone to contribute. Sessions range between 9am and 7pm, NZ time.

### **Applications**

Aim to get applications in as soon as possible as places are limited. Officially this is a postgraduate master's programme, so you need to have an undergraduate degree. If you do not have a degree but have a body of writing work (published or not published) or have participated in film, theatre, TV, web or visual projects, then you can apply under exceptional circumstances. All applicants need to supply a portfolio as part of their application.

## Portfolios

The basic portfolio submission requirement is:

For Regular entry:

1. 20 pages of script (or you can assemble 20 pages from different scripts; or it could include prose, etc, if that relates to the script you propose to write while on the course)
2. A one-page summary of your 'research proposal' which basically means an outline of the script you intend to write (though you can change this before the course starts if you want)

For Special Entry and Exceptional Circumstances:

1. 20 pages of script (or you can assemble 20 pages from different scripts; or it could include prose, etc, if that relates to the script you propose to write while on the course)
2. A one-page summary of your 'research proposal' which basically means an outline of the script you intend to write (though you can change this before the course starts if you want)
3. A CV which should list by date (from the most recent) all professional experience you have that could possibly count towards the application (include courses, workshops, university or higher education papers, any creative arts/industry work experience - doesn't have to be writing for the screen - and a list of written work you have produced. This does not have to have been published or developed commercially - it's more to support the case that you have been involved in relevant creative practice.

## Application deadlines

Applications are judged on merit. The course has limited places and enrolment will close when the course is full.

## Fees

The cost for domestic students in 2020 is \$8,711. The Centre for Creative Writing offers one scholarship per annum covering tuition fees. International students can contact the programme administrator, Helen Xue: [helen.xue@aut.ac.nz](mailto:helen.xue@aut.ac.nz)

## Contacts

For more information on the course, contact Andrew Bancroft: [andrew.bancroft@aut.ac.nz](mailto:andrew.bancroft@aut.ac.nz)  
To begin the application process, contact Cynthia D'Souza: [Cynthia.dsouza@aut.ac.nz](mailto:Cynthia.dsouza@aut.ac.nz)