CULTURAL STUDIES

Canterbury
Kent is one of the UK’s leading universities and the School of Social Policy, Sociology and Social Research – which includes Cultural Studies – has an excellent reputation for both research and teaching. All the University’s academic schools produce world-class research, and Kent is rated as internationally excellent, leading the way in many fields of study.

**World-leading research**
The School of Social Policy, Sociology and Social Research (SSPSSR) is one of the largest of its type in the UK. It was ranked 4th in the UK in the most recent Research Assessment Exercise, with 70% or its research rated ‘world-leading’ or ‘internationally excellent’. The School is home to world experts in specialist areas across cultural studies and the social sciences, and we pride ourselves on having one of the most dynamic research and publishing cultures in Europe.

**Outstanding teaching**
Our academics are leaders in their fields and their passion for their subject will inspire you. Those teaching on the Cultural Studies degree have research interests ranging from European cultural theory and philosophy to the commodification of crimes and violence in video games; from religion to urban social change and fragmentation; and from the politics of secrecy to photography and spectacles of war, torture and terrorism. Their research informs their teaching, which means that you learn at the cutting edge of your subject.

Our courses get very good evaluations and feedback from our students, who appreciate the knowledge of our staff and value their dedication in assisting those they teach to achieve their full potential.

**Stimulating programme**
Cultural Studies at Kent is a lively, innovative subject with distinctive perspectives on all forms of present-day culture. You have the opportunity to explore the significant connections between popular culture, the arts, and everyday life by crossing traditional social sciences/humanities boundaries. We offer a wide range of joint honours degrees with Cultural Studies alongside the single honours programme, all of which draw on expertise in several disciplines in the Faculties of Social Sciences and Humanities.

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**DID YOU KNOW?**
The University of Kent was ranked 20th in the UK in *The Guardian University Guide 2014.*
Analysing culture

You cannot be part of contemporary society without being affected by the stream of ads and images of all kinds, in various media. We are all caught up in the network of communications, whether in face-to-face encounters, on Facebook or by way of email. All this is both ‘modern’ and ‘cultural’ – and it is something we all do, cope with, and make sense of. Cultural Studies addresses culture in more theoretical, analytical and critical ways, seeing it in a broader context, and evaluating its impact on the way we experience our lives and organise and govern our societies.

A successful future

As well as providing a first-rate academic experience, we want you to be in a good position to face the demands of a tough economic environment. During your study, you develop key transferable skills, considered essential for a successful career. For more information on the careers help we provide at Kent, please go to p8 or visit www.kent.ac.uk/employability

What is Cultural Studies?

Choosing your course at university is a big decision and Cultural Studies is probably not a subject you are familiar with. So to help you decide whether this is the course for you, here are some interesting questions to consider.

• Are you interested in what is going on in contemporary culture?
• Do you follow what is happening in the media, popular culture and the culture industries?
• Are you ever suspicious of the way that ethnicity, race, youth, gender and sexuality are represented in the movies, on TV or in advertising?
• Is ‘internet life’ (Facebook, Second Life, YouTube, Twitter, Tumblr and so on) part of your life and do you wonder how this affects the way we relate to each other?

If you answered ‘yes’ to any of these questions, then Cultural Studies might be for you. Clearly you want to do something at university that is a bit different to what you have been doing up to now. Good thinking!
DID YOU KNOW?
Canterbury is consistently rated as one of the safest university cities in England and Wales.
SUPERB STUDENT EXPERIENCE

Our campus at Canterbury provides a stunning location for your studies and offers first-class academic and leisure facilities. The campus benefits from a multicultural learning environment and is within easy reach of both London and mainland Europe.

Culture on campus
Kent has a fully-equipped theatre and cinema, which regularly host touring productions and screen the latest films. The students’ union, Kent Union, is at the centre of student culture and hosts bands, club nights and parties.

If you want to produce culture as well as consume it – if you are a musician, budding actor or filmmaker, for instance – there are student societies you can join to get involved. If sport is more your thing, then you can join the University’s sports centre, enjoy its gym, climbing wall and courts and join some of the many sports clubs which thrive on campus.

Excellent study resources
The study resources on campus are excellent. The Templeman Library has extensive printed and electronic collections specifically aimed at supporting the courses and subject areas taught at Kent. There are also over a thousand PCs on campus and a range of support services for help or advice.

Kent’s Student Learning Advisory Service also provides information and advice on all aspects of effective learning and study skills, and is available to students from the time they arrive at the University. See www.kent.ac.uk/learning for more information.

International community
Kent offers an incredibly diverse and cosmopolitan campus – 140 nationalities are represented here. We also have strong links with universities and research centres in Europe.

Beautiful green campus
Our campus has plenty of green and tranquil spaces, both lawns and wooded areas, and is set on a hill with a view of the city and Canterbury Cathedral.

Everything you need on campus is within walking distance including restaurants, cafés and bars, a general store, an off-licence, a bookshop, a medical centre and a pharmacy. From campus it’s a 20-minute walk or a short bus-ride into town.

Attractive location
Canterbury is a lovely city with medieval buildings, lively bars and atmospheric pubs, as well as a wide range of shops. The attractive coastal town of Whitstable is close by and there are sandy beaches further down the coast. London is under an hour away by high-speed train.
Oliver Stephenson is in the final year of his Cultural Studies degree.

Why did you choose Kent?
I came to an Open Day and liked the campus, the city of Canterbury and the area in general. I then looked Kent up in the league tables and saw that it was in the top 15 for my subject area.

How are your studies going?
Cultural Studies is very interesting and relevant to society. There are modules specifically for Cultural Studies students but it is a subject with a lot of crossover, so you take modules in areas including sociology and criminology. I also took a module in English literature.

What have you most enjoyed studying?
I enjoy the discussions we have in seminars. I took a module called Popular Culture, Media and Society, which was fascinating. It’s an area everybody feels they know something about so the debates were lively and your views were constantly challenged. I also took a module called, Drugs, Culture and Control; it was good to look behind the stories in the press, where facts are often simplified, read the background material and form your own opinion. I am now writing my final-year dissertation, which is both exciting and daunting.

Tell us about your dissertation.
I am looking at how social media is changing the output of news and the impact it is having on the political landscape. For example, during the 2009 Iranian election protests very few Western news agencies were allowed into Iran, so they relied on social media such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube for their information. On the political side, a lot has been said about how Barack Obama’s supporters used social media to get his message to voters and raise funds. I find this area fascinating; it is challenging to research though, because it is all so new. My tutor has been very helpful, directing me to online resources and I have discovered some new databases myself. I am also taking a module on digital culture this year, which will be useful.

What about your fellow students?
On my course, there is a group of us who meet in the library and talk about our work and ideas for essays. We also support each other at exam time, revising together.

One of the great things about Kent is that you get to meet people from all kinds of backgrounds. In my first year, I joined the Kickboxing Society; I had never done it before but it was a great way to get fit and the social side of it was fun too. This year, I am a member of the Film Society, which is enjoyable and useful for my work.

Are your lecturers supportive?
I have been very impressed by the time lecturers take to help you; if they find relevant journals, videos or books, they put them on Moodle [Kent’s Virtual Learning Environment] and if you have any difficulties with a reading or an essay, seminar leaders and lecturers always make time to help.

What do you think of the campus?
The facilities are excellent, the library is brilliant and everything you need is on campus – shops, cafés and restaurants. Accommodation is good too; I lived in Eliot College and the rooms were very comfortable.

And Canterbury?
Canterbury is a student-friendly, historic city, a safe place to be and quite near London.

What are your future plans?
I would like to do a Master’s and have looked at careers in areas including public relations and human resources. I went to the University’s Careers and Employability Service, and the adviser was very helpful, telling me which professions a Cultural Studies degree was useful for and offering advice on postgraduate courses.

What would you say to someone considering Kent?
I would say, ‘Great choice!’ My advice would be, do the reading in your first year, it will save you so much time later, and take advantage of the online resources. I think Kent is one of the best institutions for Cultural Studies and I would definitely recommend it.
A SUCCESSFUL FUTURE

Kent equips you with essential skills to give you a competitive advantage when it comes to getting a job and the University is consistently in the top 20 for graduate starting salaries.

Good career prospects
According to recent employment statistics, Kent graduates are doing extremely well in an ever-changing job market. Six months after graduation in 2011, only 7% of the University’s students were without a job or further study opportunity.

As a Cultural Studies graduate, you will have a highly developed critical perspective on many aspects of the world today. You will leave the University with a broad knowledge of culture and of the contemporary critical debates surrounding culture in the many senses of the term.

Our graduates do well in a wide range of positions and have gone on to work in areas including advertising and design, journalism, broadcasting, arts and arts management, public relations, the leisure industry and local government. Others may opt for postgraduate training in a related area – for instance, in the social services where the cultural dimensions of service provision in a multicultural society are valued.

Gain transferable skills
As part of your learning experience at Kent, we help you to acquire key transferable skills such as communication and presentation, teamwork, IT and project-planning, that will stand you in good stead for future employment. The ability to analyse complex ideas and offer your own innovative solutions, writing well, gaining confidence in expressing your ideas coherently and with sensitivity are all important skills and ones you acquire during your degree.

There are also opportunities to take part in Jobshop – Kent Union’s job agency – or volunteering programmes, all of which give you plenty of opportunities to give your CV the added extra that employers are looking for.

Careers advice
The Careers and Employability Service at Kent can give you advice on how to choose your future career, how to apply for jobs, how to write a good CV and how to perform well in interviews and aptitude tests. It also provides up-to-date information on graduate opportunities. For more information visit our website at www.kent.ac.uk/employability

DID YOU KNOW?
In The Times Higher Education’s ‘Table of tables’, Kent was ranked as a top 30 institution.
Esme Pooke graduated in Cultural Studies and Social Anthropology in 2010.

Why did you choose Kent?
Kent offered me the most options in the area I was interested in. On my UCAS form three of my choices were based at Kent, so I was very happy when I was offered a place.

Did the course live up to your expectations?
Yes. Taking a joint honours degree, I was able to focus on the areas that interested me in each discipline. For social anthropology, I enjoyed studying different communities and with cultural studies I enjoyed the sociology modules and the range of things we looked at, such as religion, politics, race, education, and homosexuality. Cultural Studies has relevance to almost anything, which is why I am so glad I did it.

Have your studies changed you?
I now realise how big an impact an understanding of different cultures can have on your life as well as on society. I feel I have a level of social and intellectual awareness that I wouldn’t have if I hadn’t taken Cultural Studies. Being aware of cultural differences allows you to treat people as individuals and gives you confidence when you mix with people from different backgrounds. All of which is very useful in a work situation but also in life in general; you are able to enjoy diversity in society.

Why did you decide to do a Master’s?
I wanted to continue studying – I had taken a module on race, ethnicity and identity and found the discussions we had fascinating. Taking a Master’s in sociology enabled me to take cultural studies modules and modules with a more political focus; I was able to create a Master’s based on my interests.

How have your studies helped with your career?
Cultural Studies is a broad-based degree and opens up a lot of possible career options. It gives you flexibility; Cultural Studies is based on society, you analyse attitudes and ideas and in the end better understand how society operates. You can then apply this knowledge to many different areas.

Starting your working life can be difficult but the knowledge I gained from my degree has made it easy for me to adapt; through my studies I have gained transferrable skills that are useful in any job.

What are you doing now?
In the current economic climate finding work can be difficult. I started working at a homeless shelter, which was very rewarding and a job where my cultural studies experience was very useful. It meant that I didn’t judge people, but thought instead about what had brought them to our shelter and was able to understand why they were in that position.

I then saw an advert for a job in the Congregations Department at the University. I applied and got the job.

What does your role entail?
Congregations runs the University’s graduation ceremonies and other events. It is incredibly busy. When students graduate, we want to give them the best experience possible, so spend a lot of time planning. For a lot of the work you need to be accurate and methodical, but we also have to make sure that the students’ graduation day is a fantastic celebration for them. My own role is very student focused, which I love. As a recent graduate, my views on the ceremonies and how we communicate with students are valued. We are currently setting up social media sites to encourage students to stay in touch with us and I am heavily involved in that; I enjoy this communications side as well as the events work.

What would you say to someone thinking of coming to Kent?
I liked it so much I persuaded my younger sister to come here!

When choosing your course, look at what you are interested in, rather than what you think will help you careerwise, because if you are interested in something you will do well. University is a great time to try new things, it gives you a chance to discover what you want to do for the rest of your life and to gain the skills you need to do it.

And finally, it is such good fun here, why wouldn’t you come!
CHOOSING YOUR PROGRAMME

Not sure which programme to choose? Here’s a guide to the Cultural Studies degrees on offer.

Single honours Cultural Studies
If you choose the single honours Cultural Studies degree programme, you will have the opportunity to work across disciplinary boundaries and to choose modules from a wide range available from several disciplines – all addressing ‘culture’ as it is widely understood. In your final year of study, there is an option to take a dissertation module on a subject of your choice, which allows you to focus in detail on an area you are particularly passionate about.

Joint honours
Cultural Studies is, by its very nature, an interdisciplinary activity and we offer a range of joint honours degrees with Cultural Studies.

Film and Cultural Studies (VW96)
Discussions of film arise across a wide range of topics in Cultural Studies. This programme gives you access to Film modules not available on other Cultural Studies programmes; this will widen your understanding of film, the history of cinema and the perspectives of specific directors and genres.

Other joint honours include:
- Criminology and Cultural Studies (MV99)
- Cultural Studies and Comparative Literature (QV29)
- Cultural Studies and History & Philosophy of Art (VV93)
- Cultural Studies and Philosophy (VV59)
- Cultural Studies and Social Anthropology (LV69)
- Cultural Studies (Combined Languages, German, Hispanic Studies or Italian).

Teaching and assessment
You will generally be studying four modules at any one time. Typically, you attend a one-hour lecture and a one-hour seminar a week for each module – though there are variations on this format. The weekly seminars are where you meet with your tutor in small groups to discuss the literature and other material relating to course subject matters and themes – often following reading or viewing assignments.

Broadly speaking, our degrees are assessed by 50% coursework and 50% examination. The coursework takes the form of essays, short presentations, portfolios and occasionally other practical exercises. The vast majority of examinations take place at the end of the academic year.

International students
It is possible to progress from the Kent International Foundation Programme (KIFP) to the Cultural Studies degree programme. For the most up-to-date information, see: www.kent.ac.uk/internationalpathways/ifp

Need more information
For information on the degrees on offer at Kent, see www.kent.ac.uk/ug

To order a specific subject leaflet for another subject, email: information@kent.ac.uk

To contact Cultural Studies, email d.boothroyd@kent.ac.uk or call +44 (0)1227 827462
STUDYING AT STAGE 1

Stage 1 is the first year of full-time study and you are introduced to the field by the modules, Modern Culture and Contemporary Culture.

Students on the single honours programme in Cultural Studies also take the following modules:
• Social Problems and Social Policy
• Sociology of Everyday Life
• Fundamentals of Sociology.

You also take two further modules from a range of choices drawn from the lists offered by the Faculties of Social Sciences and Humanities, plus a ‘wild module’.

If you are taking a joint honours programme, you take:
• Modern Culture
• Contemporary Culture
• One or two core modules from your joint honours subject
• Two optional modules.

For details of the core modules or optional modules offered within your joint subject, please refer to the website or order the relevant subject leaflet (see p14).

Modern Culture
This module introduces you to discussions and debates surrounding modern culture. It looks at why culture has always been such a contested sphere and has a decisive impact on society at large. You study culture in the widest sense, ranging from ‘the arts’ to the banalities of everyday life in our consumer society; at how culture has expressed and organised the way people think and live from the days of ‘protestantism’ to those of post-punk. Books, magazines, radio, TV, movies, cartoons, fashion, graffiti, the cult of celebrity, youth subcultures and pop music are used to understand class, history, sexuality, colonialism, revolution, conflict and globalisation.

Contemporary Culture
Contemporary culture is ‘now-time’ culture, but when did ‘now’ begin – and, will it be over before the course starts? This module focuses on analysing contemporary culture and contemporary cultural forms and looks at how culture can be viewed from aesthetic, political, ethical and economic perspectives. We take a case study approach, looking at a range of cultural products and objects, media and institutions, and postmodern practices of communication. These include: maps and satnavs; social networking technologies; conspiracy theories; plastic surgery and tattooing; and interactive video games such as Wii. This module gives you an understanding of the transformation of culture and the way it changes who we are.

The modules listed below are an example of the kind of optional modules on offer. However, please note that this list is not the same every year.

Example options:
• Aesthetics and the Visual Arts
• Crime, Culture and Control
• Existentialism
• Film Form
• Foundations of Human Culture
• Ideas in the Arts: Aesthetics, Truth and Meaning
• Introduction to American Studies
• Introduction to Contemporary European and Hispanic Cinemas
• Introduction to Criminology
• Introduction to Philosophy (Ethics)
• Introduction to Political Thought
• Introduction to Psychology 1 and 2
• Social Anthropology
• Literature and Nationhood
• Modern Languages (French, German, Spanish, Italian)
• Readings in the 20th Century
• Religion and Sex
• Self and Society
• Social Problems and Social Policy
• The Tale.
STUDYING AT STAGES 2 AND 3

During your second and third years of study, you have the chance to take an eclectic range of modules from various disciplines and faculties – all in the spirit of our commitment to interdisciplinary thinking.

You build your programme around core modules taken in Stages 2 and 3, which are taught by the Cultural Studies team and, if you are on a joint honours programme, by the course team for your other discipline.

In either Stage 2 or Stage 3 of your programme, you take the following Cultural Studies modules:
- Cultures of Embodiment
- Digital Culture
- Popular Culture, Media and Society.

In Stage 3 of your studies, you have the option to embark on an original piece of research of your own choosing, carried out under the supervision of a member of the Cultural Studies team. This project is the Cultural Studies Dissertation option. If you choose this option, you are assessed on the finished dissertation of around 12,000 words and it will count for one quarter of your final year’s marks.

In addition to these core elements of study, in your second and final years of full-time study you will, once again in line with your specific programme, be able to choose options from a list of modules, including such things as:
- Art and Film
- Beauty in Theory Culture & Contemporary Art
- Contemporary Art: From Warhol to Whiteread
- Creatures of the Night: Vampires in Literature and Film
- Drugs, Culture and Control
- Fiction and Power
- Literature and Medicine
- Native American Cultures
- Race and Racism
- Religion and Film
- Romance
- Science Fiction
- Social Politics of Food
- Sociological Perspectives on Violence
- Surrealism and Photography.

(Please note: this list is not comprehensive and not all modules will necessarily be available in any given year.)

Modules: Stages 2 and 3

Cultures of Embodiment
Images of ‘trim, taut and terrific’ bodies surround us in consumer culture. They look down on us from billboards and are central to attempts to sell us clothes, cosmetics, cars, and other products; they pervade reality television programmes based on diet, exercise and ‘extreme’...
Digital Culture
This module introduces some of the key issues surrounding the significance of information technology (and the internet in particular) in our society and culture. You start by looking at theories of the information society in relation to communications technology in contemporary capitalism, and the emerging disparities and conflicts which result. You then approach the so-called ‘information age’ from a cultural perspective, concentrating on how the internet challenges some of our more traditional notions of identity, relationships, community, space and culture. We consider how some components of traditional culture have been complicated by the rise of cyberspace and mobile technologies.

Popular Culture, Media and Society
Popular and media culture in the forms of movies, TV, music, the press, the club scene, advertising, graffiti, fashion and, of course, the myriad emergent forms carried by the internet, is the contemporary culture of everyday life. It is in these cultural contexts that this module addresses themes such as cultural elitism, the formation of identities, contemporary hedonisms, leisure and pastimes and the ways in which the popular shapes the politics of representation, sexualities and consumption.

The relationship between the kind of popular knowledge that circulates within culture at large, shaping the way that people think about contemporary life, is often at odds with the ‘official knowledges’ that are produced by key cultural institutions – universities included. This module questions the relationship between supposedly legitimate and illegitimate knowledge and how popular culture figures in the distinction between them.

“To understand culture we have to denaturalise our relationship to it, yet without losing the sense of its centrality to everyday life.”

Dave Boothroyd
Director of Cultural Studies
VISIT THE UNIVERSITY

Come along for an Open Day or a UCAS Visit Day and see what it is like to be a student at Kent.

Open Days
Canterbury Open Days are held in the summer and autumn for potential students, their families and friends. The day includes a wide range of subject displays, informal lectures and seminars, and the chance to tour the campus with current students to view accommodation and facilities. You can also meet staff to discuss course options or admissions, disability and dyslexia support and study skills. For more information, see www.kent.ac.uk/opendays

UCAS Visit Days
UCAS Visit Days run between December and April each year. They include a tour of the campus, a general talk on the University and a talk from a departmental representative. You have the chance to meet academic staff in your chosen subject and to discuss any queries you may have. If you are invited for an interview, it will usually be held on one of our Visit Days. If we make you an offer without an interview, it usually includes an invitation to a Visit Day, but this might not be possible if you have applied late. For more information, see www.kent.ac.uk/visitdays

Informal visits
You are welcome to visit the campus at any time. We produce a leaflet that can take you on a self-guided tour and you may be able to meet up with an academic member of staff. For more details, please contact the Information and Guidance Unit (see below).

Scholarships and bursaries
For details of scholarships and bursaries at Kent, see www.kent.ac.uk/ugfunding

More information
For more information about the University, or to order another subject leaflet, please contact the Information and Guidance Unit.

T: +44 (0)1227 827272
Freephone (UK only): 0800 975 3777
E: information@kent.ac.uk

You can write to: The Information and Guidance Unit, The Registry, University of Kent, Canterbury, Kent CT2 7NZ.

For more information on the school, please see www.kent.ac.uk/sspssr

KENT OFFERS A VERY WIDE RANGE OF SUBJECT AREAS.
Location
Canterbury.

Award
BA (Hons).

Degree programme

Single honours
• Cultural Studies (V900)

Joint honours
• Criminology and Cultural Studies (MV99)
• Cultural Studies and Comparative Literature (QV29)
• Cultural Studies and Film (VW96)
• Cultural Studies and History & Philosophy of Art (V93)
• Philosophy and Cultural Studies (VV59)*
• Cultural Studies and Social Anthropology (LV69)
• Cultural Studies (Hispanic Studies) (R4V9)*
• Cultural Studies (Italian) (R3V9)*

*These programmes are run from the School of European Culture and Languages (SECL); see www.kent.ac.uk/secl for further information.

Required subjects
None. Preferred A levels for all programmes include one or more of the following: Sociology, English Literature, Media Studies, Philosophy, Geography, Politics, Film Studies, Economics, Art, natural sciences, languages, combined with any others.

For Cultural Studies and Film: grade B in A level Film Studies if taken.

For Cultural Studies with Comparative Literature: grade B or above in A level English Literature or English Language and Literature, if taken.

For Cultural Studies (Hispanic Studies) and Cultural Studies (Italian): grade B at A level in the appropriate language (where taken) or good GCSE or A Sub in related modern language.

Year abroad
If you are studying Cultural Studies and a European language, you spend a year between Stages 2 and 3 at a university in the country of your chosen language.

Offer levels
ABB at A level, IB Diploma 34 points or IB Diploma with 16 points at Higher.

We are committed to widening participation and have a successful tradition of admitting mature students. We welcome applications from students on accredited Access courses.

Offer levels and entry requirements are subject to change. For the latest information, see www.kent.ac.uk/ug

Terms and conditions: the University reserves the right to make variations to the content and delivery of courses and other services, or to discontinue courses and other services, if such action is reasonably considered to be necessary. If the University discontinues any course, it will endeavour to provide a suitable alternative. To register for a programme of study, all students must agree to abide by the University Regulations (available online at: www.kent.ac.uk/regulations).

Data protection: for administrative, academic and health and safety reasons, the University needs to process information about its students. Full registration as a student of the University is subject to your consent to process such information.
COME AND VISIT US

We hold Open Days at our Canterbury and Medway campuses.
For more information, see: www.kent.ac.uk/opendays