Inside:
Skills for Jobs: glimpsing the future, echoing our past

Empowering education professionals to assess English
From football to a new future: how a bursary changed everything
Curating classics? The art of compiling literature reading lists

Behind the scenes at the Institute of Continuing Education at Madingley Hall
The Institute of Continuing Education, or ICE, is part of the University of Cambridge, one of the world’s leading research institutes, where our purpose is to provide accessible, flexible and meaningful education to adults throughout their lives.

Irrespective of whether you’re taking your first steps in higher education or progressing to mid-career postgraduate study, ICE’s aim is to form supportive communities of learning where expert teachers and adult students work together as peers to achieve personal and collective educational goals.

Study at ICE is characterised by friendly groups of committed students engaging with important learning against the backdrop of the resources of one of the world’s best universities. We promote evidence-based exploration, critical enquiry and free speech in welcoming and respectful classrooms. Our discussions extend over virtual tea breaks and social gatherings via Zoom and WhatsApp, as well as globally across our virtual learning environment. ICE is a place where professional networks are formed, friendships are made and learning is cherished.
Welcome to Inside ICE

As the days begin to lengthen and, in the UK at least, COVID-19 restrictions are further relaxed and the vaccine rollout continues apace let’s hope we can now begin to see – albeit out on the horizon – a glimpse of a post-pandemic world.

In stark contrast to the darkness of the loss of life and economic impact caused by COVID-19, we have also witnessed the agility and power of science and medicine, a renewed sense of communities working together and, interestingly, a rekindled focus on lifelong learning as adults sought to upskill and consider new career opportunities and formed new friendships and networks despite the physical isolation of the past year.

At ICE, in the current 2020–21 academic year we are forecasting a robust 8,000 course enrolments. Award-bearing undergraduate and postgraduate enrolments have more than doubled since 2016-17 and fully online course numbers have trebled. Award-bearing enrolments for 2021–22 appear strong – I’d encourage you to join us in the autumn on one of our programmes, including the Advanced Diploma highlighted in this issue. In the meantime, I hope that you will engage with our Virtual Summer Festival of Learning, from 28 June to 30 July, as we bring the current academic year to a climax with a vibrant range of online courses and a truly international student cohort.

The government’s recent white paper entitled Skills for Jobs perhaps signals further grounds for optimism and, as we saw at the recent Queen’s Speech, it now seems likely that many of the proposals pertaining to life-wide learning will be enacted into law. It is also interesting to consider that Coursera, an online learning platform, floated on the New York Stock Exchange with an initial valuation of over $6 billion, suggesting that Wall Street is switched on to the current and future value of lifelong learning. Closer to home, the Open University is reporting strong growth. As we consider our strategy towards 2025, which will incorporate our 150th anniversary in 2023, the need for and opportunities within the lifelong learning sector remain clear.

To close, and to return to the here and now, in this issue of Inside ICE it is fantastic to see our students and tutors featuring prominently. Beyond COVID-19 and technology enabled teaching, continuing education has been and will always be about adult learners and teachers working together as peers to build knowledge, skills and shared understanding. While the pandemic has accelerated a great deal of change, the heart of adult education remains reassuringly constant.

Dr James Gazzard,
Director of Continuing Education,
University of Cambridge
Institute of Continuing Education
Skills for Jobs: glimpsing the future, echoing our past

With their new white paper recently published, ICE’s Director of Continuing Education, Dr Jim Gazzard, shares his perspective on the Government’s proposals for the future of lifelong learning.

In January, the UK Government’s Department for Education published *Skills for Jobs: Lifelong Learning for Opportunity and Growth*. These long-awaited insights aim to support the Prime Minister’s ‘levelling up’ agenda.

The paper, much of which now looks likely to be enacted into law, describes how adults, irrespective of their previous educational achievements or life stage, will be supported to acquire essential work skills.

Expanding options for adult learners

Amongst the initiatives are plans to improve the quality of mid-life careers guidance, focus taught provision on local skills needs and renew higher technical qualifications such as HNCs and HNDs, including extending the provision of apprenticeships.

Mirroring the global trend, there’s likely to be increased emphasis on bite-sized modular learning and credit transfer, allowing adults to gradually accrue credit towards certification from study undertaken at different institutions.

The paper also details a new Lifelong Loan Entitlement, potentially commencing in 2025, to provide greater access to funding for ongoing education and training.

At ICE, we look forward to seeing how the proposed policies and approaches develop, and we’ll play an active role in the consultation.

In 2018, ICE led for the University of Cambridge on developing the provision of levy-funded apprenticeships, subsequently launching postgraduate apprenticeships in Police Management and Architecture in 2019 and 2020 respectively. We’ll also begin a new apprenticeship for postdoctoral researchers later in 2021. While the bureaucracy behind the levy is overly complex, it is undeniably providing access routes to more professions for people from a widening range of backgrounds.

Opportunities for ICE

Looking ahead with the white paper in mind, if Cambridge, as a city and locality, is to remain a science ‘superpower’, it is essential that access to technical training is enhanced and, in turn, complements Cambridge’s excellence in undergraduate and postgraduate education.

Cambridge has the unwelcome distinction of being the most unequal city in the UK – the city’s income is more unevenly distributed than any other, including Oxford and London. Consequently, we intend to actively explore whether ICE could provide level 4 and level 5 higher technical-vocational qualifications (while maintaining our broad offer across the arts and sciences and postgraduate professional fields), offering open-access courses in emerging fields for people currently excluded from the knowledge economy, with a clear ambition to promote social mobility.
ICE Professor wins prestigious University teaching prize

We’re delighted to announce the Institute of Continuing Education’s Professor Clare Morris as winner of a University of Cambridge Pilkington Prize for Teaching Excellence 2021.

Clare, a Senior Teaching Associate for Medical Education, has led, created and delivered the portfolio since 2014, now recognised as a regional beacon and a leading national provider.

A role model for clinical educators

Clare is a skilled builder of inclusive communities of learning, enabling post-registration medical and healthcare professionals to learn from her expertise and, vitally, to learn from their peers and extend their professional networks. Clare’s knowledge base, professional experience and superb approach to team-based teaching demonstrate to professional students the range of educational approaches available to healthcare professionals who themselves are educating and training the next generation of clinicians.

“I work with the most extraordinary students on the medical education programmes” Clare commented, “they are generous with their thoughts, ideas and experiences. It is such a privilege to be part of their learning community, even more so to be recognised for the part I play in supporting their development as educators.”

Dr Jim Gazzard, Director of Continuing Education, commented, “Clare richly deserves this recognition. Clare is a continuing educator to her very bones, and we at ICE are fortunate to benefit from her dynamism, professionalism and wisdom.”

The Pilkington Prize awards were endowed and inaugurated in 1994 by Sir Alastair Pilkington (Cambridge alumnus, engineer and inventor of the float glass process) to acknowledge excellence in teaching. Only 12 prizes are awarded each year across the University of Cambridge, with ICE nominating an awardee biennially.

Learn more

To learn more about the Medical Education portfolio, visit: www.ice.cam.ac.uk/medicine-health
Chalk and talk – introducing the new ICE tutors

Dr Hazel Stewart
Course: Undergraduate Certificate in Infectious Diseases
Subject specialism: Molecular Virology

Why should people study this course?
We will all be infected with a huge variety of infectious agents at multiple points in our life and it is fascinating to study how these organisms live and why some cause terrible diseases whilst others are beneficial to us. This course encourages you to view public health, medicine and microbiology in a whole new light.

How is this course relevant to our current world?
The pandemic has really brought viruses and microbiology into the public focus and people are starting to realise how vital it is to understand these tiny but important pathogens.

Why are you interested in teaching adults in particular?
Adults return to study only when they’re really interested in something which gives them a whole different motivation to students who are fresh out of school; it’s really inspiring to teach them and see that commitment.

What’s your hidden talent?
I’m a qualified dance teacher and I used to teach dance classes one or two nights a week.

Dr Stacey Bedwell
Course: Undergraduate Certificate in Cognitive Psychology
Subject specialism: Neuroanatomy and Neurophysiology

Why should people study this course?
The human brain is fascinating. It is one of the few entities that we still know relatively little about, despite its importance. Neuroscience is a fast-paced, exciting area of research, and there is always new information to learn from.

Why are you interested in teaching adults in particular?
People and their circumstances change as they get older and move through life. I want to support opportunities to change career or pursue a new interest beyond the traditional university age.

What’s the best study advice you’ve ever been given?
Maintain a life-work balance (not a work-life balance.) Never let your studies become your entire life, regardless of how important they are.
**Dr Peter Broks**  
**Course:** Postgraduate Certificate and Diploma in Science Communication  
**Subject specialism:** Science Communication and the history of science

**Why should people study this course?**  
The world we live in is saturated with science and the media. It is vitally important that we understand how the two interact. There’s so much worry about misinformation in a “post-truth” world, but this course gives us the tools to combat that.

**What has inspired you?**  
The BBC series ‘The Ascent of Man’, written and presented by Jacob Bronowski. I watched the series as a teenager and when I went to university, I was thrilled that I could study this. I suppose at heart I always wanted to be the next Bronowski!

**What do you do outside of work?**  
Much of my time is spent looking after animals. I have rescued several cats and also taken in a stray sheep.

---

**Professor Maria Olea**  
**Course:** Undergraduate Certificate in Strategic Business Management  
**Subject specialism:** Research Management

**Why should people study this course?**  
This course is designed to equally address the challenges that may be faced daily by a complete beginner to an experienced business manager. It appreciates the different journeys everyone has taken, valuing and building on the variety of experience and skills.

**How is this course relevant to our current world?**  
This course is more relevant than it ever has been. It will provide a deeper understanding of the challenges a crisis like COVID-19 brings to an organisation, teaching strategies to compete against other businesses and how to survive during a crisis.

**What would be your one Desert Island Disc?**  
Into the Light - Chris de Burgh

---

**Dr Max Stafford**  
**Course:** Undergraduate Certificate in Politics  
**Subject specialism:** British Politics

**How is this course relevant to our current world?**  
Politics is the study of how we want to live, both now and in the future. It helps us to better understand how decisions are made and why.

**Who has inspired you?**  
My headteacher. He was an inspiring leader and had a firm sense of the empowerment that education could bring. He had a sign on his wall that said “The needs of the individual outweigh those of the many”. Sounds incorrect, but it meant that a class is formed of individuals who, when inspired by their passions, become a many that really can bring about change.

**What do you do outside of work?**  
I love snooker and reading. I’ve set myself a challenge to read 50 books per year (which I’ve singularly failed, so far)!

---

To find out more about our tutors, visit: [www.ice.cam.ac.uk/tutors-a-z](http://www.ice.cam.ac.uk/tutors-a-z)
From 28 June to 30 July this summer, the ICE Virtual Festival of Learning is back, with more than 85 one-week courses and over 60 talks giving people all over the world the chance to follow their existing passions – or find new ones.

**Virtual Summer Festival of Learning – wherever you are in the world**

Summer Festival courses are open to adults of all ages and backgrounds, so we talked to students on opposite sides of the globe to find out a bit more about their lives and what motivates them to keep joining the Festival of Learning.

Where do you live?

**Nelson McMillan**: Bedford, UK. My wife and I recently bought our first home together, and we share it with our standard poodle, Rosie.

**Jenni Wearne**: Martin and I live in a terraced house in Melbourne, Australia with our 11-year-old border collie-whippet cross.

What do you do during the day?

**NM**: I get up at 5am, plan the day ahead and run with the dog before breakfast. I work for the Government, and I like to be at my desk by 8am. Afterwards, I volunteer as a Board Member for a not-for-profit organisation. If I’m not doing that, I like to read, or my wife and I might enjoy a film after dinner.

**JW**: Martin’s a lawyer with days filled with Zoom meetings and deadlines. I’m a retired teacher who still coaches the school’s senior debating teams and who loves to read. In the evening, I watch a bit of TV or embroider and crochet. Martin falls asleep in front of the TV!

What courses have you completed at the Festivals of Learning?

**NM**: This winter, I studied *International Human Rights: war, conflict and the responsibility to protect.*

**JW**: So many! From *English Houses and Gardens* to *The Iliad* and from *Shakespeare’s Sonnets* to *Ancient Rome.*
Why did you pick those courses?

**NM:** I can apply the subject matter to my work, and I’m keen to learn more about global human rights.

**JW:** Literature has always been our passion. As a lawyer, Martin didn’t really have the chance to study it during his academic qualifications. I have a PhD in that field, but being exposed to new ideas, enthusiasms and texts is exciting to me.

How do you fit study into your routine?

**NM:** I tend to study after dinner for an hour or two. Once, that wasn’t possible, so I adjusted my schedule to study first thing in the morning instead and was surprised by how much more productive I was.

**JW:** It isn’t difficult for me as I’m retired, but Martin is still busy with his legal practice. We do one class together at lunchtime and another in the evening. This was great for us as the ICE academics are so good that it sometimes feels like we’re getting the most exciting bedtime story!

How does your study benefit you?

**NM:** It’s been of professional benefit and personally enriching. A fundamental understanding of the international system and its legal basis helps me take a strategic perspective on my government research work.

**JW:** There’s no utility as such – we don’t need certificates. It’s just a joy to get up each morning and know that we have a day’s worth of ideas, discussion and learning to look forward to. It’s great to have the opportunity to study remotely, especially right now. Learning at your dining table is a wonderful thing!

What do you love about Festival of Learning courses?

**NM:** The quality of the content is of the highest order. What really reinforces the learning is the effort the Course Directors make in the forums and follow-on webinars. They push your thinking to the next level.

**JW:** We love the warm enthusiasm for the subject matter that comes through the teachers. They’re very generous with the ideas they share in lectures and through their responses on the student discussion forums. We’ve never finished a subject without thinking new thoughts, seeing new things and planning new plans.

Learn more

To find out more and register for the Virtual Summer Festival of Learning, visit: www.ice.cam.ac.uk/virtualsummer
Empowering education professionals to assess English

A new Master’s at ICE aims to develop the next generation of language assessment specialists by connecting professionals working in the field around the world with a host of Cambridge expertise. **Professor Ianthi Tsimpli**, Chair of English and Applied Linguistics at the University of Cambridge’s Faculty of Modern and Medieval Languages and Linguistics, tells us more about the MSt in English Language Assessment.

You may not have considered it but assessing the skills of English language learners and speakers is an integral and important part of many people’s work, with far-reaching impacts on the life chances and opportunities of those being assessed. “English is an important, widely used global language,” says Ianthi. “There are a number of people in a variety of roles around the world – teaching English as a second language in schools, assessing language proficiency in the workplace and administering examinations in the public and private sectors, for example – for whom these skills are a significant part of their careers.”
Yet there aren’t many postgraduate courses like this around. Some courses about teaching English as a second language might include a component on assessment, but very few separate it out as a specialism.

Bringing together wide-ranging Cambridge expertise

The MSt at ICE is a two-year, part-time course beginning in January 2022. It’s a true Cambridge-wide collaboration informed by research from across the University, with teaching delivered by experts from the Cambridge Language Sciences Interdisciplinary Research Centre and Cambridge Assessment English, a world leader since 1913 in assessing English language proficiency. The course will also include input from ALTA, the Cambridge University Institute for Automated Language Teaching and Assessment.

Many people throughout the University of Cambridge are working on aspects of this topic, whether in language development, second language acquisition or automated language assessment. We’re delighted to be able to bring together so much wide-ranging expertise to support this new programme,” adds Ianthi.

Developing a critical eye

As well as learning online throughout the course, students will benefit from face-to-face teaching, provided in two-week residential blocks each April, letting students share ideas in-person and get a taste of the Cambridge experience as College members.

The varied, cross-disciplinary content is designed to help existing practitioners develop a critical understanding of assessment practices, become more reflective about the most appropriate assessment methods and gain the necessary research skills to contribute to the subject’s academic debate. Students will also build on their newly acquired knowledge and skills to develop new assessment tasks and learn how to scrutinise and evaluate the current norms of assessment.

This last part, says Ianthi, is particularly key: “It’s vital to engage with a critical view of your own methods and the commonly accepted systems of assessment. Teachers and assessors should always be questioning their approach and considering how to improve it. We will help them do that.

There will be lots of practical work, and students will have the opportunity to present their experiences and share their perspectives with each other. We anticipate applications from a very diverse group of students with varied backgrounds working in many different local systems, so the chance to learn from and critique each other is extremely valuable.”

That critiquing process will also aid students with a final dissertation that encourages them to think more deeply about the context of their work in their own country. “By the end of the course, students will be equipped with practical knowledge they can apply to their work, wherever they may be based,” says Ianthi. “The course encourages students to design new assessment strategies, so it would be great to see them using their learning to pilot new tools in their countries, perhaps. Also, as the course is grounded in research, we hope some students will continue their academic work afterwards by continuing to a PhD.

Learn more

To find out more about the MSt in English Language Assessment and watch one of our taster lectures, visit: www.ice.cam.ac.uk/mst-ela
ICE was delighted to welcome Dr Holly Tilbrook as interim Assistant Director of Student Experience at the end of 2020. Having studied a number of courses at the Institute since 2015, Holly brings a wealth of insight into student life at ICE. Here, Holly tells us how she’s determined ICE will continue to be an open and supportive place to learn, whether that’s online or in the classroom.

In the spotlight: student experience

Learning for life

“...I knew about ICE since I was a child – my uncle used to study here. When I started working for the University of Cambridge, one of my roles in education policy gave me a close relationship with the Institute. I’d come to Madingley Hall about once a month and liked what I saw.

But I really got a student’s perspective when I began studying here myself. My first course was a short course in creative writing, and that turned out to be the first of many: I completed an Undergraduate Certificate and Diploma in Creative Writing too. My father had recently passed away, and I wanted to tell his story to my very young children in a way that did it justice. I loved the courses. Later, when I was thinking about my professional development, I came back to study coaching.

Studying is a great confidence booster and builds so many valuable skills. I was nervous at first – it’d been a long time since anyone had asked me to write an essay! But it helped me understand what it’s like to be a part-time student, juggling the many responsibilities of life, like childcare and work, while finding time to study. I’ve always been surrounded by lifelong learning, though, so I know that you don’t give up discovery when you’re 16 or 21.”
Fairness and friendship, online and offline

“One of my priorities is to ensure the best possible experience for all our students. The last year has presented new challenges and opportunities as more people than ever join us to study from kitchens, bedrooms and dining tables around the world. ICE is well-known for its peer-learning community, so it’s important that we continue to create that sense of cohort for students spread far and wide. Fortunately, we have a long-established virtual learning environment to build upon.

In our digital world, not everyone can always be online at the same time. So I’m keen to enable similarly valuable experiences for those who join sessions live as well as those who access learning at different times. We need materials to be as enriching whenever they’re accessed.

Providing a positive experience isn’t solely about academic support – we have a role to play in building confidence and resilience too. We’ve enhanced our study skills programmes and run events like lunchtime talks to stimulate thinking. Wellbeing workshops have also been held each term. Our students are part of an educational community that goes beyond the course and brings people from different backgrounds together.”

Listening and learning

“Of course, creating the best environment for students also means being good listeners. We love hearing from our students, so we have several feedback channels in place for them to get involved, including our student representatives who pass on ideas. It’s important we have that dialogue and listen to students’ voices to achieve the best experience for all.

To anyone considering returning to study after a long break and feeling a little nervous at the prospect, my advice is to remind yourself of your motivation for wanting to study in the first place. What is it that you want to achieve? Is it to take the next step in your career, to follow a long-forgotten passion or to discover that spark that helps you grow as a person? One of the beauties of ICE is that it provides so many different opportunities to learn to so many different people, and we are here to support your student journey. As humans, we’re never too old and never too under- or over-qualified to learn something new.”

Learn more

To find out more about resources for students, visit: [www.ice.cam.ac.uk/students](http://www.ice.cam.ac.uk/students)
Inside ICE
LONG VACATION - MICHAELMAS TERM ISSUE 2021

The ICE courses that let you research (almost) anything

What would you study if you could choose practically anything? That’s the opportunity offered by ICE’s Advanced Diplomas in Research: unique undergraduate courses that let you pursue your personal passion. Academic Director, Dr Alex Carter, tells us more.

“Film, artificial intelligence, natural sciences, politics – essentially, you can research anything that our academics can support,” begins Alex. “But don’t worry about starting the course with a precise idea of your focus – inevitably, projects evolve during the year – what’s important is that you bring a passion for your subject.”

Taught remotely, the two, one-year, part-time Advanced Diplomas can be taken separately or consecutively. The first, the Advanced Diploma in Research Theory and Practice, develops different research skills each term. The second, the Advanced Diploma in Research in the Arts or Science, is a deep dive into your own specific subject, culminating in a dissertation.

“These courses can be studied on their own, but they’re also ideal preparation for a Master’s programme,” notes Alex. “In the first-year course, we explore different research philosophies, enhance writing skills and sharpen critical thinking. Each term, students put these skills into practice. But, while it’s a skills-based course, it’s not a course about skills. It’s about investigating the research topic you’re passionate about and cultivating your perspective as a researcher. In the second year, we give detailed supervision to write up a full research project.”

Choose your own adventure

“The Advanced Diplomas allow you to specialise in an aspect of a topic you enjoy. Perhaps the most interesting part of your Politics BA was the philosophical element. Why not turn that into your own, bespoke study? We regularly find students are so engaged that their quality of work is closer to postgraduate level. With more independent study there’s greater discipline required, but we offset that with increased flexibility.”

“The near-infinite options available mean we support a wide diversity of topics, too. If you don’t feel represented by the traditional system, these courses give you the chance to follow your own path.”

Dr Alex Carter

© Michael Bailie
How does this work in practice?

Inside ICE hears from Advanced Diploma graduate, Andrew Rowan, and his supervisor, Dr Rune Nyrup to find out.

Andrew:

"My work in financial technology sparked my interest in the places where philosophy of science and machine learning collide. I completed both Advanced Diploma courses, and my dissertation centred on explanations of black box AI predictions.

The first-year assignments helped me whittle down the many research possibilities to arrive at a precise proposal for my second year. That gave me the exciting opportunity to work with Dr Rune Nyrup from the Leverhulme Centre for the Future of Intelligence.

The supervision system was invaluable in honing the core arguments of my dissertation. I actually looked forward to the early starts, travelling to Cambridge to meet Rune before heading back to the office!

It was a pleasure to meet with fellow students from a variety of backgrounds, united by their passion for diverse subjects. There’s no doubt you need to be highly motivated to succeed, but the course schedule fits very well into busy lives. I should know – my son was born and I got married while taking these courses!"

Rune:

"Supervising Advanced Diploma dissertations is about focusing on writing and research. After the student sends me a draft of their work, we spend around an hour and a half discussing it. We go through the arguments and ideas, consider how to present them in the most convincing way and plan for the next leg of research.

As Andrew already had extensive knowledge of machine learning, we could concentrate on exploring the philosophical issues it raises. One thing that makes supervising ICE students particularly exciting is that they typically come with great experience from outside academia which informs their research. Andrew’s dissertation raised important and original criticisms of current approaches to making machine learning systems more explainable. I learned a lot myself.

The first year of the Advanced Diploma develops skills and ideas before tackling the dissertation in the second year. This makes the writing process more focused and gives students time to explore their ideas in greater depth than is typically possible within a traditional undergraduate course."

Learn more

To find out more about the Advanced Diploma in Research Theory and Practice, visit: www.ice.cam.ac.uk/research-diploma

To find out more about the Advanced Diploma in Research in the Arts or Sciences, visit: www.ice.cam.ac.uk/arts-diploma
From football to a new future: how a bursary changed everything

Discovering the Cambridge United in Learning bursary

Fast forward to 2019, with Sam now a professionally contracted midfielder at United. Few make it that far, but Sam wasn’t sure if his contract would be renewed. It was all he could think about until a chat with a team physio changed everything.

“He asked if I’d heard about the partnership between the Cambridge United Community Trust [CUCT] and ICE offering bursaries to a staff member and a fan,” says Sam. “He told me I should apply, and I said, ‘There’s no chance of me getting that!’ But I thought about it and knew my contract was uncertain, so what did I have to lose?”

Sam’s first challenge was figuring out what course to apply for. “I saw ‘Coaching’ and thought it meant football coaching! I’d never heard of any other sort. But when I read the description, I realised it was describing me.

“I was on a beach on holiday when I found out I’d been accepted. I was sure they’d emailed the wrong person.”

Joining the ICE learning community

In autumn 2019, Sam began an Undergraduate Certificate in Coaching. The combination of playing semi-professional football, working for CUCT and studying was, he admits, “A very busy period” during which he learned a lot about managing himself and prioritising his workload.

Sam Squire’s pathway to pro football began aged just eight. Twelve years later, he’s about to start his own life coaching business. Inside ICE talks to Sam about life’s twists and turns, including the unexpected chat that led to his study at ICE.

“If you’re into football at eight years old, you’ll play wherever and whenever. That’s why Sam Squire thought he was turning up for a kickabout, only to find out afterwards that he’d attended an open trial for Cambridge United. From that session, Sam’s immediate future was always in football, eventually signing a scholarship at 16 to train with United’s youth team.”
By now, Sam had learned that his United contract wouldn’t be renewed, but he was at peace with it, especially after meeting his fellow coaching students: “I’d never been in a room full of so many amazing people. I gained so much from meeting such a diversity of people from different countries and backgrounds. I learned with them and from them. It opened my eyes, discovering so many different perspectives.

I’d never experienced a learning environment like it. The tutors almost felt like classmates, leading discussions, encouraging me to think critically. It transformed the way I think.”

Completed in summer 2020, Sam’s coaching certificate had big benefits for his role as Youth Development Officer at CUCT, where he works with eight- to 18-year-olds in disadvantaged areas of Cambridge, using football to steer them towards positive pathways.

“The young people I work with don’t realise I’m coaching them,” explains Sam. “I give my course and tutors so much credit for helping me build relationships and, hopefully, bring about change.

A new career is born

But there’s a new chapter about to be added to Sam’s story – having found his calling thanks to a bursary to study at ICE, Sam, still only 20, is about to pursue his passion full-time: “I’m setting up my own coaching practice, working with 18- to 24-year-old men to give them clarity, confidence and commitment about the lives they want to live. Young men need a space to talk about these things.”

Having been the recipient of an opportunity he might otherwise never have had, Sam’s keen to pay it forward: “Not all young people have the means to access coaching. I’d love to serve them without charging, so they can flick the switch on their futures.”

What final advice does Sam have for anyone who might be thinking about applying for a bursary at ICE? “Just three words really: go for it. You’ve got nothing to lose. At worst, you’ll have a chance to reflect on yourself by writing your application statement. I’ve had so many great experiences, but studying coaching at ICE has been the best experience of my life.”

Learn more

To find out more about the range of bursaries available at ICE, visit: www.ice.cam.ac.uk/bursaries
Curating classics?
The art of compiling literature reading lists

From weekend classes through Festival of Learning and short courses to undergraduate qualifications, there’s an array of English Literature study options at ICE. But with so many books to choose from, have you ever considered how tutors curate their reading lists? Academic Director of English Literature, Dr Jenny Bavidge, lifts the lid.

We review texts every year. Sometimes we make changes for practical reasons – picking novels to illustrate a particular concept within a new course component, for example. Other times, we may be tackling new ideas that enter the field, or we might just read a book we love so much that we want to discuss it with everyone. Teaching English Literature can be a selfish pleasure, and tutors get a lot of autonomy to use their own judgements about what will engage students.

The upcoming Undergraduate Certificate course, for instance, includes a unit on American literature. Of course, we can’t cover 250 years of published works, so we’re taking a snapshot, looking at specific movements and motifs from the perspectives of writers like Emily Dickinson, Jack Kerouac and Toni Morrison.

An ever-changing landscape of literature

There used to be an idea that studying English literature meant ploughing through a fixed canon. But literature traditions live and breathe – roots lead to branches continually growing new leaves – and we want students to explore the whole structure.

That’s something we’ll be doing at this summer’s Virtual Festival of Learning, where I’ll be teaching a course on Literature and Nature. We begin by looking at Wordsworth, but I’ve been learning more about First Nation poets whose work offers richly alternative perspectives on our relationship with nature. So, by way of comparison, we also study Nature Poem by Tommy Pico, which is a long way from the romantic, Wordsworthian view of the great outdoors.

I love pairing texts from different periods that make connections too –
Student picks:

We asked students to share some of their favourite reading discoveries from ICE English Literature courses:

**Mrs Dalloway, Virginia Woolf**

“Woolf has a fantastic way of lulling the reader into a pseudo-dream state in which they’re privy to the private thoughts and feelings of her characters. Yet she places them solidly within timeless, real-life contexts.”

Andrea Pickering, Clinical Psychologist

**In Praise of Limestone, W.H. Auden**

“This poem wormed its way into my mind with its evocation of both timelessness and transience.”

Sarah Westvik, Student and Intern

**The Lonely Londoners, Samuel Selvon**

“This book has widened my knowledge of how the Windrush generation was treated on arrival to 1950s London. The way Selvon creolised the voices really helped me see the characters from a perspective within their community. Loved it!”

Gail Willington, Retired Funeral Director

**The Aspern Papers, Henry James**

“I’d never read any Henry James before, but I enjoyed this so much I ended up writing my first essay on it and plan to seek out more of his novels.”

Anna Gouviea, Local Government Officer

**Moby Dick, Herman Melville**

“Wild and unpredictable as the oceans it explores, feeling compelled to read Melville’s 600-page sprawl infuriated me. Grudgingly, fury became infatuation as I chased down the white whale. Like Jonah, it swallowed me whole.”

David Prosser, Patient Trustee

**In the Ditch, Buchi Emecheta**

“I chose this book as it deals with real experiences of people moving to London. I also like to look at it from a woman’s point of view, as I think a mother’s life is not just for herself, it’s for her children too.”

Razieh Harding, Bookkeeper

Occasionally, updating reading lists attracts criticism for politicising study. But it’s a mistake to think historical works can only be critiqued one way. Romantic poets we revere now, such as Shelley, were revolutionary in the 1800s. Today, we’re conscious of making sure our lists reflect diverse and emerging authorial voices. Student recommendations are often an important part of that expansion. There’s no single ‘right’ curriculum – the study of literature is constantly evolving, and that’s a selfish pleasure for us all.

Learn more

To find out more about English Literature courses at ICE, visit: [www.ice.cam.ac.uk/ice-literature](http://www.ice.cam.ac.uk/ice-literature)
Madingley Hall and Gardens emerge as community “sanctuary”

Last August, Inside ICE learned how staff at Madingley Hall adapted and served their community in the first months of the pandemic. We caught up with Hall Operations Manager, Matthew Brazier, to find out what’s happened since and the upcoming plans for all at the Hall.

“It’s been a tough time for everyone, not least the teams working here, but one thing the last twelve months has given us is a chance to be creative. It’s been brilliant to welcome the public on a regular basis. The gardens and our dog- and cycle-friendly café have stayed open since July last year, displaying fantastic artwork by local artist Jonny Boatfield. People have seen the gardens as a hidden treasure, a sanctuary in difficult times.

“Everyone has had to think on their feet as the situation changes. It’s been inspiring how staff have supported each other and pitched in – for example, housekeeping staff helping to drive food deliveries to our village neighbours. The way everyone has pulled together has been a bright spot during a difficult year.

“We’re still serving the local community with our food delivery and takeaway service. The run-up to Christmas was busy as we delivered festive food hampers, invited diners into our COVID-safe Hall for a few weeks and even managed to squeeze in a small regulation-compliant December wedding. It was really a magical occasion for us and for the couple who had this grand old hall practically to themselves.

Lifting the lid on Hall conservation

“Although it was planned before any of us had heard of COVID-19, it’s been a good time for the Hall to be wrapped in scaffolding while much-needed roof repairs take place. Historic building specialists have renewed the whole structure and replaced worn-out tiles. Considering some of the tiles have been up there in all weathers for over 200 years, many are still in good shape. The scaffolding’s down now, and we’re delighted with the big reveal.

Summer outdoor events, open to all

“We’re closely following Government guidelines for re-opening. We’ve now started welcoming visitors to The Lodge for holiday lets, recommenced Hall bed and breakfast and resumed serving meals both inside and outside, including bar meals on the terrace. As the gardens move into summer, it’s a lovely time to enjoy the environment.

“Most of this year’s academic courses will continue to be delivered remotely, although we welcomed back some postgraduate students in late May and are welcoming some students back for residential weekend courses in July. We’re proud to have stayed safely open as a training venue for critical workers, such as healthcare professionals and police officers, throughout the pandemic.

“There are some great activities planned here over the summer too, hopefully outside and inside. The gardens have hosted Shakespeare plays in June, and we’ve got some outdoor cinema events planned for July as well. We’re also running art workshops and hope to add private events and hands-on cookery and baking tutorials too. Keep an eye on the website as events get confirmed.

Matthew Brazier

Learn more

For the latest updates on opening times and planned events at Madingley Hall and Gardens, visit: www.madingleyhall.co.uk/