

Request Reference: 3421

FOI Request dated 03/06/2025 –

I would like to request the following information under the Freedom of Information Act:

Please could you provide a list of books and texts used by the university's Department of English, Department of History and Department of Politics (and International Relations) which have been flagged as requiring recommendations or suggestions of content warnings to alert students to potentially distressing content, on reading lists or in lectures and seminars/tutorials.

Please could you also include the reason why there is a content warning on each book/text.

If creating this list would surpass the threshold for the timescale, please could you remove the Department of Politics from the list. If it still surpasses the timescale, please could you create a list just for the books and texts which have suggestions of content warnings too.

And if that is still over the threshold, please could you also not add the reason why there is a content warning on each book/text.

The Freedom of Information Act requires that this request is dealt with in a manner that is motive and applicant blind. A disclosure under this legislation is considered a disclosure to the world and is considered to be on the basis that it is in the public interest.

Response

Content notes on English modules

Level 4 Reading the World: Intercultural Encounters
Frankenstein in Baghdad (casualties of war; mutilation)

Level 5 Secrets, Scandals and Rebellions
Wuthering Heights (domestic abuse)

Level 6 Making Waves: Literature of the Sea
The Mermaid of Black Conch (sexual assault)
Sea Prayer (sensitivities around the experience of migrant crossings)

Content Notes for American Rebels: Reading 20th Century US Counterculture
Jack Kerouac, *On the Road: On the Road* (misogyny, racial, homophobic slurs, allusions to domestic abuse).

Tom Wolfe, *The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test: The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test* (contains scenes of drug use and some of the misogyny).

Diane di Prima, *Memoirs of a Beatnik: Memoirs of a Beatnik* (contains explicit sex scenes, includes sexual assault and incest, as well as homophobic language).

Hunter S. Thompson, *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas*: (racist, sexist and homophobic language, scene of incarceration and threatened sexual assault of a young woman, drug use).

Amiri Baraka, *Poems*: (mental health content, misogyny, anti-Semitism, racist language).

Sylvia Plath, *The Bell Jar*: (features suicide, suicidal ideation, scenes of sexual assault and contains some racism).

Milos Forman, *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*: (racist and misogynist language, suicide, mental health).

Various transgressive/experimental works: Be aware that the *Blood and Guts in High School* content alludes to child abuse. *Naked Lunch* has graphic content around drugs and sex.

On the 'literature and the emotions' MA module, we have included a content warning in relation to Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus* and *The Rape of Lucrece* (both texts contain representations of rape, and graphic depictions of mutilation).

No information held for politics and history.