

University of Bristol Italian Studies

Benvenuto e benvenuta a Bristol! Studying Italian at Bristol allows you to immerse yourself in Italian language and culture from the time of Dante through to the present day. We take an interdisciplinary approach, integrating the study of literature, history, and visual culture.

Our core unit for first-year students is 'Modern Italy', which lays the foundations for this integrated approach.

The following suggestions are designed to whet your appetite for what awaits you at Bristol; you are not required to read or view these before beginning your studies with us. You might also like to listen to our [playlist](#) of Italian songs to accompany your reading!

Introductory (History, Literature, Film)

Anna Cento Bull, *Modern Italy: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford UP, 2016)

John Foot, *The Archipelago: Italy since 1945* (Bloomsbury, 2018)

Peter Hainsworth, *Italian Literature: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford UP, 2012)

Journalism/Travelogue

Tobias Jones, *The Dark Heart of Italy* (North Point Press, 2005/2013)

Tobias Jones, *Ultra: The Underworld of Italian Football* (Apollo, 2019)

Peter Robb, *Midnight in Sicily* (Vintage, 1999/2014)

Literature

Contemporary Short Stories

Italian Short Stories, Nick Roberts (editor), (New Penguin Parallel Texts Series - Penguin, 1999). A collection of short stories by 20th century writers in Italian and English translation.

The Penguin Book of Italian Short Stories, (Penguin, 2019). A collection of short stories in translation that brings together forty writers, reflecting over a hundred years of Italy's vibrant and diverse short story tradition, from the birth of the modern nation to the end of the twentieth century.

Contemporary Novels (all English translations published by Europa editions)

Elena Ferrante, *L'amica geniale / My Brilliant Friend* & others in the series (2011)

Amara Lakhous, *Scontro di civiltà per un ascensore a piazza Vittorio / Clash of Civilizations over an Elevator in Piazza Vittorio* (2006)

Eva Melandri, *Eva dorme / Eva Sleeps* (2016)

Domenico Starnone, *Scherzetto / Trick* (2018)

Medieval (in English translation)

Dante, *Vita nuova* (Oxford World's Classics, 2008)

Petrarch, *Selections from the Canzoniere and Other Works* (Oxford World's Classics, 2008)

Boccaccio, *Decameron*, trans. by McWilliam (Penguin, 2003)

Modern Italy unit (Semester Two) primary texts

Eduardo de Amicis, *Cuore / Heart: An Italian Schoolboy's Journal* (1886)

Roberto Rossellini, *Roma città aperta / Rome, Open City* (1945) [film]

Shirin Ramzanali Fazel, *Lontano da Mogadiscio / Far from Mogadishu* (2017)

Making the Transition into Higher Education

University study is different from school. In making the journey from being a pupil to being a student you may find it helpful to look at some of the following about the kind of academic and personal development this transition involves.

Study Skills

Stella Cottrell, *The Study Skills Handbook*, 5th edition (Palgrave, 2019) – especially the first couple of chapters

Joe Moran, *First You Write A Sentence* (2019)

Bryan Greetham, *How to Write Better Essays* (Macmillan, 2018)

You can also follow the links to advice on academic reading and writing that are listed at the University of Bristol Study Skills webpages (<https://www.bristol.ac.uk/students/study/skills-development/study-skills/>) and this recent work on managing the step into higher education: [Stay Happy While You Study Make The Most Of Your Student Experience By Lauren Callaghan | TriggerHub \(triggerpublishing.com\)](#)

Advice on dictionaries:

Despite the availability of excellent free dictionary resources online, owning a physical copy of a good bilingual dictionary is still recommended for the quality and depth of information it offers. This is something you may wish to consider as you embark on a degree in Italian. Most dictionaries come in either a “pocket”/abridged or main edition. The main edition in (“grande dizionario”) is recommended.

Recommended bilingual dictionaries currently in print:

- *Il Ragazzini, dizionario inglese-italiano, italiano-inglese*, Zanichelli, (any recent edition)
- *Collins Italian Dictionary Complete and Unabridged: For Advanced Learners and Professionals*, Collins, 2020
- *Grande dizionario di inglese. Inglese-italiano, italiano-inglese*, Hoepli, 2016
- *Grande dizionario Hazon di inglese*, Garzanti, (any recent edition).

The above-mentioned dictionaries can be expensive if bought new. You can also find excellent used/second-hand copies of them from a range of online shops/platforms (both in the UK or Italy) at very good, reduced prices.