ST MARY’S UNIVERSITY

TWICKENHAM, LONDON

BA/BSc Degree Examination students registered for

Level **FIVE**

Title: **Writing the ‘Renaissance’**

Code: **ENG5001**

Semester: **ONE**

Date: **January 8th 2019**

Time: **9:30 – 11:30AM**

TIME ALLOWED: **TWO** HOURS

Candidates must answer **TWO** of the following questions.

1. *Either*
2. ‘In writing of the early modern period, the distinction between ‘civilised’ and ‘barbarous’ is never a simple one, and sometimes such a distinction cannot be upheld at all.’

How far do you agree with this statement, referring in your answer either to two plays, or one play and some other writing.

*Or*

1. Outline a possible ‘post-colonial’ approach to *Othello* and *The Tempest*, evaluating the main strengths and weaknesses of such an approach.

2. *Either*

1. So-called ‘metaphysical poetry’ has often been said to be too intellectual and too complex to express authentic emotion. Discuss this opinion, referring in your answer to a selection of seventeenth-century poetry.

*Or*

1. ‘The metaphysical poets borrowed their images from all branches of learning – science, commerce, war, law, to name but a few – in order to find new ways of thinking about human experience.’ Write an essay on the imagery used by the metaphysical poets in a selection of their poetry.
2. ‘In the drama of Shakespeare and his contemporaries, we’re often not sure who the villain is, and who the hero’.

To what extent do you think this comment true of any two plays?

4. Assess the strengths and weaknesses of a ‘historicist’ approach to the writing of Shakespeare and his contemporaries, using examples from at least two texts of the early modern period.

5. ‘The Moor is of a free and open nature

That thinks men honest that but seem to be so’

(Iago speaking in *Othello*, I.iii.336-7)

To what degree is ‘seeming’ – performing and dissembling – more important than honesty in a selection of texts you have read on this module?

6. To what extent do you think dramatic and other literature of the early modern period subverts orthodox ideas about gender, politics and/or religion, and to what extent do you think it upholds them?

**END OF EXAMINATION**