MA/Postgraduate Diploma/Postgraduate Certificate in English Language Teaching by Distance Study
For students entering in 2009

Awarding Institution:	The University of Reading
Teaching Institution:	The University of Reading Faculty of Arts & Humanities
Programme length:	24-60 months
Date of specification:	October 2007
Programme Director:	Ms Clare Furneaux
Board of Studies:	MA in English Language Teaching
Accreditation:	Not appropriate

Summary of programme aims
The MAELT programme is designed especially for those working in the field of English as a second / foreign language, and has courses in language description, and in pedagogy and administration-related fields with this audience in mind. Students are given an up-to-date knowledge of principles and issues in areas of importance to language learning and assessment, and investigate their practical implications. They receive a thorough grounding that will help them to develop their career as a teacher, trainer, researcher or manager.

Transferable skills
In addition to those skills which all students are expected to have developed by the end of their degree programme, it is envisaged that MAELT by Distance Study students will have developed or enhanced the following more specific transferable skills:

- studying independently, while making appropriate use of on-line communication resources;
- analysing and categorising – and hence evaluating – language at different levels;
- designing curricula and syllabi on the basis of data provided;
- synthesising, analysing and evaluating information and theoretical claims in specialist literature;
- producing well-structured and clearly-written academic and professional papers;
- designing and conducting a research project, including a clear statement of research aims, identifying and searching relevant bibliographical sources, conducting an empirical or library-based investigation, and analysing and interpreting results in relation to established theory and professional concerns (dissertation-track);
- using time efficiently while carrying out reading, research and related writing activities.

Programme content
The following profile states which modules must be taken (the compulsory part), together with lists of modules from which students must make a selection (the option modules).

The MAELT programme allows students some freedom to suit their own needs, but

with a shared foundation of compulsory core modules. The latter combine with option modules which may be selected from a range of available subjects within the School. A special feature of the programme is that it has two tracks, with and without a dissertation (referred to respectively hereafter as the 'dissertation track' and the 'taught track'). In addition, there is a campus-based version of the programme, permitting a combination of distance and campus-based study. [A separate programme specification is available for the campus-based programme.]

The **compulsory modules** are divided into three areas: English language description, language teaching/learning, and (for dissertation track only) research in ELT.
The English language description modules and the language teaching and learning modules typically comprise the first year.
The research component consists of dissertation preparation (offered on-line once a year, usually in the Spring Term) and the dissertation, of 15,000 words, on a topic in the field of English Language Teaching. Research for, and the writing of, the dissertation typically take a year.

The **option modules** cover a wide range of pure and applied areas (with an emphasis on the latter) and, together with the dissertation, provide flexibility and the opportunity for specialisation in the greater part of the programme. Dissertation-track students typically spend a year on this stage of the programme; taught-track students spend two years.

The following profile states which modules must be taken (the compulsory part), together with lists of modules from which students must make a selection (the option modules). In consultation with their programme adviser, students must choose 3 option modules (each of 20 credits) if following the dissertation track, and 6 option modules (each of 20 credits) if following the taught track, to make a total of 180 credits when combined with the other programme modules and the dissertation (where relevant). The number of credits for each module is shown after its title.

Masters Level *Credits Level*

Compulsory modules

LSMDPH	*Pedagogic Phonetics & Phonology*	10	7
LSMDEG	*English Grammar*	10	7
LSMDDT	*English in Context*	10	7
LSMDSL	*Second Language Learning Principles*	20	7
LSMDLC	*Language Curriculum Design*	10	7

For Dissertation-track only

LSMDDI	*Research Design and Dissertation (MAELT)*	60	7

Option modules
Students select three (dissertation-track) or six (taught-track) options from the following.

LSMDIN	*Intercultural Communication*	20	7
LSMDTP	*Language Testing*	20	7
LSMDWL	*Written Language (Reading & Writing)*	20	7
LSMDSP	*Spoken Language (Listening & Speaking)*	20	7
LSMDYL	*Teaching English to Young Learners*	20	7
LSMDML	*Management in ELT*	20	7
LSMDVO	*The Teaching and Learning of Vocabulary*	20	7
LSMDES	*English for Specific Purposes*	20	7

Compulsory module assessment takes place twice a year, at the end of the period of study for each module. Option module assignments can be submitted on 15 March and 15 September each year.

The dissertation will be submitted at a date to be agreed with the supervisor, a year after starting work on the dissertation.

Part-time/Modular arrangements

The programme is only offered on a part-time basis, with a minimum time span of two years and a maximum of six. Most students will take three years. Students are expected to spend at least eight hours a week in study for the programme.

The structure of typical progression through the programme is as follows:

Year 1: 5 compulsory taught modules;
Year 2: 3 option modules
Year 3: 3 option modules (taught-track) or 1 compulsory taught module (Research Design) + dissertation (Dissertation-track).

Progression requirements

From taught components to dissertation: to follow the dissertation track in distance mode, a students must meet the following requirements:
1. they must have access to the Internet;
2. they must have access to an appropriate library.

If they do not meet these requirements, students may still follow dissertation-track if they come to Reading for the Research Design module, to use the University libraries and consult supervisors.

Summary of teaching and assessment

Modules are taught by specially produced packs of materials, which typically consist of Module Materials, Module Readers and core textbooks. There is on-line contact with module and personal tutors and with other students via e-mail and a Virtual Learning Environment. The dissertation module additionally is supported by individual supervision. Most modules are assessed wholly by coursework, but two are assessed wholly by examination: details are given in the module descriptions.

The University's taught postgraduate marks classification is as follows:

Mark	Interpretation
70 – 100%	Distinction
60 – 69%	Merit

50 – 59%   Good standard (Pass)

        Failing categories
        40 – 49%   Work below threshold standard
         0 – 39%   Unsatisfactory Work

For Masters Degrees
To pass the degree of Master, students must gain an average mark of 50 or more overall, including a mark of 50 or more for the dissertation in the case of dissertation-track, and have no mark below 40 in compulsory modules LSMDPH, LSMDEG, LSMDDT, LSMDSL, and LSMDLC. In addition the total credit value of all modules marked below 40 must not exceed 30 credits and for all modules marked below 50 must not exceed 55 credits.*

Students who gain an average mark of 70 or more overall, including a mark of 60 or more for the dissertation in the case of dissertation-track, and have no mark below 40 will be eligible for a Distinction. Those gaining an average mark of 60 or more overall including a mark of 50 or more for the dissertation and have no mark below 40 will be awarded eligible for a Merit.

For Postgraduate Diplomas
To pass the Postgraduate Diploma students must gain an average mark of 50 or more and have no mark below 40 in compulsory modules LSMDPH, LSMDEG, LSMDDT, LSMDSL, and LSMDLC. In addition the total credit value of all modules marked below 40 must not exceed 30 credits and for all modules marked below 50 must not exceed 55 credits.*

Students who gain an average mark of 70 or more and have no mark below 40 will be eligible for the award of a Distinction. Those gaining an average mark of 60 or more and have no mark below 40 will be awarded eligible for a Merit.

For Postgraduate Certificates
To pass the Postgraduate Certificate students must gain an average mark of 50 or more and have no mark below 40 in modules LSMDPH, LSMDEG, LSMDDT, LSMDSL, and LSMDLC. In addition the total credit value of all modules marked below 40 must not exceed 10 credits.*

*The provision to permit a candidate to be passed overall with a profile containing marks below 40 is made subject to the condition that there is evidence that the candidate applied himself or herself to the work of those modules with reasonable diligence and has not been absent from any examination without reasonable cause.

Admission requirements
Entrants to this programme are normally required to have
-a good first degree, preferably in a language- or language/education-related subject;
-at least two years' full-time EFL/ESL teaching experience, gained after qualifying as a teacher.

Non-graduates may exceptionally be admitted to the programme if they have

-a diploma level teaching qualification, or its equivalent in in-service teaching qualifications;
-several years of teaching experience, with evidence of a high level of professional activity in areas such as conference attendance and presentations, the production of teaching materials and the writing of professional / academic papers.

All entrants to the programme will be required to meet the Faculty's English language proficiency standards. Where UK GCSE examinations in English (or their equivalent) have not been passed, these standards are normally represented by a minimum overall band of 7.0 on the IELTS test, with no sub-test band below 7.0, or an equivalent score on another standard test recognised by the University.

Admissions Tutor: Clare Furneaux

Support for students and their learning
University support for students and their learning falls into two categories. Learning support includes IT Services, which has several hundred computers and the University Library, which across its three sites holds over a million volumes, subscribes to around 4,000 current periodicals, has a range of electronic sources of information and houses the Student Access to Independent Learning (S@IL) computer-based teaching and learning facilities. There are language laboratory facilities both for those students studying on a language degree and for those taking modules offered by the Institution-wide Language Programme.

Student guidance and welfare support is provided by Personal Tutors, School Senior Tutors, the Students' Union, the Medical Practice and the Student Services Centre. The Student Services Centre is housed in the Carrington Building and includes the Careers Advisory Service, the Disability Advisory Service, Accommodation Advisory Team, Student Financial Support, Counselling and Study Advisors. Student Services has a Helpdesk available for enquiries made in person or online (www.risisweb.reading.ac.uk), or by calling the central enquiry number on (0118) 378 5555. Students can get key information and guidance from the team of Helpdesk Advisers, or make an appointment with a specialist adviser; Student Services also offer drop-in sessions on everything from accommodation to finance. The Carrington Building is open between 8:30 and 17:30 Monday to Thursday (17:00 Friday and during vacation periods). Further information can be found in the Student Diary (given to students at enrolment) or on the Student website (www.reading.ac.uk/student).

Each student is provided with a course handbook which contains full details of the degree programme, the staff and facilities in the School of Linguistics and Applied Language Studies, and a range of useful information including advice on preparation and presentation of written work, and assessment procedures and criteria. The Handbook also includes details of core and option modules available to them, giving module descriptions. The Programme Director and/or Personal Tutors will advise students on selection of modules, and on general matters related to learning and assessment. Module lecturers will advise students on preparation for their assignments or examinations.

Students who come to Reading have access to the full range of University resources.

Career prospects
Students graduating from this programme are equipped to take up senior teaching and administration posts within the field of English Language Teaching. They will also be equipped to take up positions in teacher training / education, curriculum planning, English language testing, and publishing.

Opportunities for study abroad or for placements
N/A

Educational aims of the programme
The MA programme in English Language Teaching aims to introduce participants to current ways of describing the grammatical, lexical, phonological and discoursal systems of English; to examine the ways in which concepts from the disciplines of linguistics, education, sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics and psychology can contribute to our understanding of how languages are taught, learnt and used; to describe and critically evaluate current developments in the teaching of English as a Foreign/Second language, especially in course design and management, methodology, and assessment; and to develop expertise in undertaking and evaluating research into the use and learning of English as a Second/Foreign language.

More specifically, the aims of the programme are:
- to introduce participants to current ways of describing the grammatical, lexical, phonological and discoursal systems of English;
- to examine the ways in which concepts from the disciplines of linguistics, education, sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics and psychology can contribute to our understanding of how languages are taught, learnt and used;
- to describe and critically evaluate current developments in the teaching of English as a Foreign/Second language, especially in course design and management, methodology, and assessment;
- to develop expertise in undertaking and evaluating research into the use and learning of English as a Second/Foreign language.

Programme Outcomes

Knowledge and Understanding

A. Knowledge and understanding of:	Teaching/learning methods and strategies
1. How the sounds of English are produced and described. 2. The main features of the grammatical system of English as described in a modern reference grammar, together with implications for second/foreign language (L2)learning. 3. The systems underlying the production of appropriate, coherent and cohesive English text, and the ways of describing these. 4. Theories of L2 acquisition relating to learning in general, to interlanguage, and to environmental and individual factors. 5. The history of approaches to L2 curriculum design and their implications for pedagogy. 6. Theory and pedagogical implications derived from at least three further sub-fields from within the broad areas of: -the four language skills, -language use and learning in specific domains or circumstances - language assessment - management in ELT 7. (Dissertation track only) Different types of research, requirements of effective research, techniques of data-gathering, basic descriptive and inferential statistical methods, requirements of academic dissertations in the field.	Module materials: texts, tasks and commentaries. On-line discussion with fellow students and staff (optional). *Assessment* Mainly by assignments requiring essays of different lengths but also by examination in two cases. Dissertation

Skills and other attributes

B. Intellectual skills – able to:
1. develop a coherent and logical discussion or argument in speech or writing
2. analyse and solve problems
3. operationalise abstract concepts for testing of hypotheses
4. assimilate rapidly-evolving concepts and models of language and language learning
5. synthesise and evaluate information from different sources
6. generalise knowledge and methods from one area of study to others
7. apply theoretical concepts and research-based information to the handling of pedagogical problems and issues.
8. plan, carry out and present an extended independent investigation of a research topic

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

Module materials: texts, tasks and commentaries. On-line discussion with fellow students and staff.

Assessment
Mainly by assignments requiring essays of different lengths but also by examination in two cases.

Dissertation

C. Practical skills – able to:
1. perceive the phonological features of spoken English and transcribe them using an IPA-based phonetic alphabet.
2. analyse and describe written English sentences at the levels of clause, phrase and word.
3. analyse and describe samples of English discourse, using one or more descriptive frameworks.
4. design a syllabus for a group of language learners, on the basis of a needs analysis and assessment of resources and other contextual factors.

In addition, depending on modules taken and / or research undertaken, some students will be able to:

5. design a language test for a specified group of test-takers.
6. design and administer a language-oriented survey, involving a questionnaire or interview.
7. carry out a statistical analysis of language or language-related data, using appropriate descriptive and/or inferential statistics

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

Module materials: texts, tasks and commentaries. On-line discussion with fellow students and staff (optional).

Assessment

Practical sections in assignments and examinations
Relevant sections in the dissertation

D. Transferable skills – In addition to Intellectual skills in C above:

able to:
1. study independently at a distance
2. use IT (CMC, word processing, using standard and statistical software)
3. use Internet resources for study
4. define a research topic and mount a principled investigation by means of hypothesis-formulation and testing
5. manage time

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

Module materials: texts, tasks and commentaries. On-line discussion with fellow students and staff (optional).

Assessment
Items 1 and 5 are assessed by the student's progression through the programme
Items 2 and 3 are assessed under the organisation and presentation criteria for marking assignments and the dissertation.
Item 4 is assessed by research proposal and dissertation.