MA (Res)/Postgraduate Diploma/Postgraduate Certificate in Applied Linguistics
For students entering in 2010

Awarding Institution:	The University of Reading
Teaching Institution:	The University of Reading
	Faculty of Arts and Humanities
Programme length:	12 months F/T, 24 months P/T
Date of specification:	January 2008
Programme Director:	Dr Paul Thompson
Board of Studies:	Applied Linguistics
Accreditation:	Not applicable

Summary of programme aims
This programme is intended as intensive training for those wishing to pursue doctoral studies in Applied Linguistics. It aims to provide students with a range of historical and theoretical perspectives, and specialist knowledge in particular areas of applied linguistics research, and with technical expertise in related research methods. The programme also aims to foster an independent approach to learning.

Transferable skills
The programme has been conceived as preparation for advanced research in applied linguistics. Transferable skills are to be seen in relation to this overall conception, and are as follows:
- practical skills in the analysis of language
- an ability to derive research questions from a body of relevant literature
- an ability to design a substantial piece of research, both for an MA dissertation and a PhD thesis
- the ability to synthesise, analyse and evaluate information and theoretical claims
- critical skills (demonstrated both in written presentations and in the oral evaluation of the work of fellow students and others)
- written communication skills (ranging from report writing, through medium-length essays evaluating arguments, to large-scale sustained argumentation)
- oral communication skills (to different types of audience and in different formats)
- ability to apply a range of data handling and analysis techniques
- interpersonal skills and skills in project management and teamwork
- bibliographic skills (library, searches, Internet, and referencing and indexing software)
- an understanding of ethical issues in research
- an understanding of intellectual property rights

Programme content
The 180 credits of the programme are distributed as follows:
- **30** credits drawing on generic **social science training modules** provided centrally by the University but supplemented by the department (20 credits), and a 10 credit module on linguistic research provided by Applied Linguistics
- **60** credits delivered as two taught modules by Applied Linguistics
- **90** credits are allocated to a 20,000-word **dissertation**, handed in in September, and a dissertation proposal module which includes a presentation.

Compulsory modules
Autumn term
    LSMERM   *Essentials of Research Methods*   20   7
    LSMILR   *Issues in Linguistic Research*   10   7
Spring term
    LSMPRO   *Full Dissertation Proposal*   10   7
Summer term and Vacation
    LSMDIR   *Dissertation*   80   7

Option modules
Students choose **two** option modules from the following:

Autumn Term
    LSMCLR   *Child Language Development*   30   7
    LSMSLR   *Second Language Learning Principles*   30   7
    LSMSOR   *Sociolinguistics*   30   7

Spring term
    LSMPLR   *Psycholinguistics*   30   7
    LSMEWR   *English in the World*   30   7
    LSMCAR   *Corpora in Applied Linguistics*   30   7
    LSMLCLR   *Language Curriculum Design*   30   7
    LSMTPR   *Language Testing Principles*   30   7
    LSMESR   *English for Specific Purposes*   30   7
    LSMWLR   *Written Language (Reading & Writing)*   30   7
    LSMFLR   *First Language Acquisition*   30   7
    LSMRTR   *Research Topics in English Grammar*   30   7

These modules incorporate teaching on existing modules (each of the codes given is the code for an existing MA module, with the addition of the letter R in final position, to indicate 'Research'. These are 20 credit modules (with the exception of Sociolinguistics, which is a 10 credit module), and the MA (Res) module will follow the standard assessment for the module with the addition of a further requirement, the writing of an extended annotated bibliography in the module subject area.

Part-time/Modular arrangements
The programme is offered on a part-time basis, normally over a period of up to 24 months. The structure of these arrangements is as follows:
Part-time (24 months):
Year 1: Foundation course: All modules excluding the Dissertation and Full Dissertation Proposal
Year 2: Dissertation and Full Dissertation Proposal modules

Progression Requirements
N/A

Summary of teaching and assessment
Modules are taught by lectures, seminars and small group practical work. One, Essentials of Research Methods, is taught via the web as well face to face in tutorials. The Dissertation

module additionally is supported by individual supervision. The majority of modules are assessed wholly by coursework. Full 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 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 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 eligible for a Merit.

For Postgraduate Diplomas
To pass the Postgraduate Diploma students must gain an average mark of 50. 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 Certificate
To pass the Postgraduate Certificate students must gain an average mark of 50. In addition the total credit value of all modules marked below 40 must not exceed 10 credits.

Admission requirements
Entrants to this programme are normally required to have obtained a 2.1 degree (or equivalent) in Linguistics, Applied Linguistics or a related subject, especially one allied to the student's intended research area.

Admissions Tutor: Dr Paul Thompson

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 Directorate. The Student Services Directorate 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 website (www.reading.ac.uk/student).

Within the School, there are considerable computing and technical facilities, including a well-equipped Language Research Laboratory which offers a range of computational and electronic hardware, and access to well-known language corpora, as well as a number of our own research databases. The School's computers host major statistical packages, such as Minitab and SPSS.

Each student is provided with a course handbook which contains full details of the degree programme, the staff and facilities in the School of Languages and European Studies, and a range of useful information including advice on preparation and presentation of written work, especially the dissertation, dates of terms and examinations, and assessment procedures and criteria. Each student is also provided with a Catalogue of core and option modules available to them, giving outlines and assessment details. The Programme Director and/or Personal Tutors will advise students on selection of modules, and on general matters related to learning and assessment. In addition, a series of Study Skills classes is provided in the Autumn Term to give guidance on note-taking and assignment preparation and writing. Module lecturers will advise students on preparation for their assignments or examinations.

Career prospects
Since the programme is primarily intended as research training, the focus must be on the outcomes in this area. Students will be fully equipped to undertake doctoral research in particular branches of applied linguistics. However, it is also envisaged that the skills acquired (specialist and generic) will be applicable to careers involving research, management, assessment, materials writing, translation, or consultancy related to language matters.

Opportunities for study abroad or for placements
None.

Educational aims of the programme
The principal aim of the programme is to prepare students for research in particular, mainly but not exclusively, in empirical areas of applied linguistics at doctoral level. More specifically, it aims: to provide broadly-based research training in social science and applied linguistics, enabling students to understand and evaluate research conducted both outside and
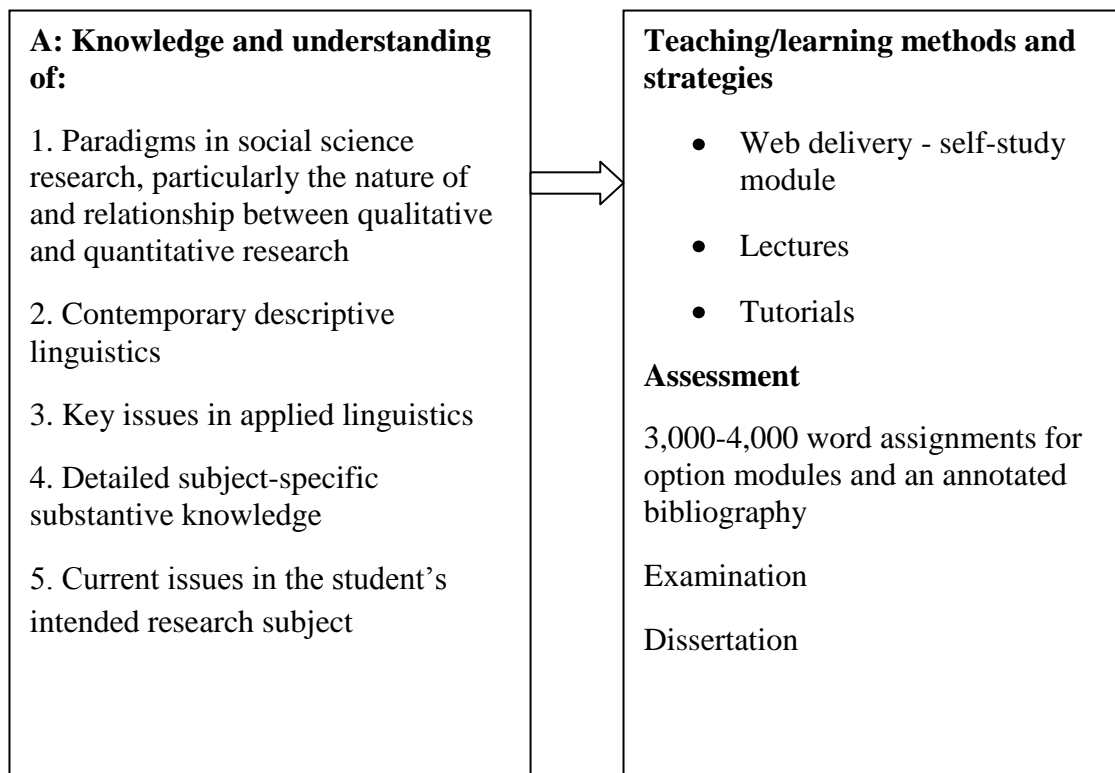
within their own area; to enable students to understand a wide range of research methodologies, applying a subset of these relevant to their own research; to ensure that students acquire a solid foundation in descriptive linguistics and a detailed knowledge of the sub-field in which they are working; to enable students to derive research questions from a body of relevant literature; to enable students to design a substantial piece of research; to give students the ability to synthesise, analyse and evaluate information and theoretical claims; to improve students' critical skills and communications skills; to enable students to use a range of technological and IT resources necessary for their particular research; to give students advanced bibliographic skills.

In summary, its main aims are:

- to provide broadly-based research training in social science and applied linguistics, enabling students to understand and evaluate research conducted both outside and within their own area
- to enable students to understand a wide range of research methodologies, and to apply a subset of these relevant to their own research
- to ensure that students acquire a solid foundation in descriptive linguistics and a detailed knowledge of the sub-field in which they are working
- to provide students with a range of transferable skills for research and in areas of work outside academia.

Programme Outcomes

Knowledge and Understanding

A: Knowledge and understanding of:	Teaching/learning methods and strategies
1. Paradigms in social science research, particularly the nature of and relationship between qualitative and quantitative research 2. Contemporary descriptive linguistics 3. Key issues in applied linguistics 4. Detailed subject-specific substantive knowledge 5. Current issues in the student's intended research subject	- Web delivery - self-study module - Lectures - Tutorials **Assessment** 3,000-4,000 word assignments for option modules and an annotated bibliography Examination Dissertation

Skills and other attributes

B. Intellectual skills – able to:

1. Develop a coherent and logical discussion
2. Analyse and solve problems
3. Operationalize abstract concepts for testing of hypotheses
4. Assimilate rapidly-evolving concepts
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 subject-specific problems and issues
8. Plan, carry out and present an extended independent investigation of a research topic
9. Evaluate theory in the light of data

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

- Web delivery - self-study module
- Lectures
- Tutorials

Assessment

3,000-4,000 word assignments for option modules and an annotated bibliography

Examination

Dissertation

C. Practical skills – able to:

1. Perform a grammatical analysis of some spoken or written text of English or another language
2. Carry out a statistical analysis of language or language-related data, using appropriate descriptive and/or inferential statistics

Different specific skills will be acquired depending on pathway and option modules taken. These may include:

3. Derive information from electronic linguistic corpora
4. Transcribe a recording of spoken English using the International Phonetic Alphabet

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

- Web delivery - self-study module
- Lectures
- Tutorials

Assessment

Oral presentation of Full Dissertation Proposal (3, 10)

Dissertation (1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10)

Assignments (1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9)

D. Transferable skills – able to:

1. Use IT, including word processing and standard and statistical software
2. Define a research topic and mount a principled investigation by means of the formulation of research questions and the establishment of an appropriate methodology
3. Give oral presentations
4. Present arguments cogently in writing
5. Take a critical stance to literature read
6. Apply a range of bibliographic resources, including use of electronic resources
7. Manage time
8. Evaluate ethical issues in research
9. Manage research
10. Interpersonal skills

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

- Web delivery - self-study module
- Lectures
- Tutorials

Assessment

3,000-4,000 word assignments for option modules and an annotated bibliography

Examination

Dissertation

Please note - This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if he/she takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information on the learning outcomes, content and teaching, learning and assessment methods of each module can be found in the module description and in the programme handbook. The University reserves the right to modify this specification in unforeseen circumstances, or where the process of academic development and feedback from students, quality assurance processes or external sources, such as professional bodies, requires a change to be made. In such circumstances, a revised specification will be issued.