

## **MA in English Language Teaching For students entering in 2012/3**

Awarding Institution:	University of Reading
Teaching Institution:	University of Reading
Relevant QAA subject Benchmarking group(s):	
Faculty:	Arts, Humanities and Social Science Faculty
Programme length:	1 years
Date of specification:	29/Oct/2012
Programme Director:	Dr Clare Furneaux
Programme Advisor:	
Board of Studies:	MA in English Language Teaching
Accreditation:	

### **Summary of programme aims**

The MA in English Language Teaching (MAELT) programme is designed especially for those currently working or intending to work 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 students will have developed or enhanced the following more specific transferable skills:

- 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;
- giving well-organised, clear oral presentations to a specialist or semi-specialist audience;
- producing well-structured and clearly-written academic and professional papers;
- collaborating with others in research, problem-solving and/or the development of plans and recommendations;
- using time efficiently while carrying out reading, research and related writing activities.
- (for dissertation-track students) 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;
- (for portfolio-track students) observing critically and analysing classroom events, designing lesson plans and materials for language learners, delivering and evaluating micro-teaching practice sessions.
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### **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 three tracks, with dissertation (referred to as the 'dissertation track'), with modules in place of the dissertation (the 'taught track'), and by way of language teaching portfolio (the 'portfolio track'). In addition, there is a distance study version of the taught track and dissertation tracks permitting study entirely away from Reading, or a combination of distance and campus-based study. [A separate programme specification is available for the distance study programme.]

The compulsory modules are divided into three areas: English language description, language teaching/learning, and (for dissertation track) research, or (for portfolio track) teaching observation and practice. The English language description modules run in the Autumn term, and language learning and teaching modules in the Autumn and Spring terms. The research area comprises a research design and basic statistical methods (taught in the Spring Term) and the dissertation, of 15,000 words, on a topic in the field of English Language Teaching, broadly defined. Research for, and the writing of, the dissertation take place in the Summer term and the

Summer vacation. The teaching portfolio comprises a number of assessments related to the observation of classroom practice, design and development of language teaching material, and reflective accounts of experiences delivering materials in classroom contexts.

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.

The following profile states which modules must be taken (the compulsory modules), 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 or portfolio tracks, 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 or teaching portfolio (where relevant). The number of credits for each module is shown after its title.

### Masters Level (three terms)

#### Compulsory modules

Code	Title	Credits	Level
<i>Autumn term</i>			
LSMEP	English Phonology*	10	7
LSMDG	Descriptive English Grammar	10	7
*Portfolio-track students who have studied Phonetics & Phonology at University-level before may choose to study LSMDT instead of LSMEP, with permission from the Programme Director			
For Taught-track and Dissertation track:			
LSMDT	Discourse Analysis for Language Teachers	10	7
LSMSL	Second Language Learning Principles	20	7
For Portfolio-track:			
LSMELT	Core Issues in Language Teaching	10	7
LSMSLT	Second Language Teaching and Learning	20	7
<i>Spring term</i>			
For Taught-track and Dissertation-track:			
LSMLC	Language Curriculum Design	10	7
For Portfolio track:			
LSMTLS	Teaching the Language Skills	10	7
<i>Spring and Summer term and Summer vacation</i>			
For Dissertation-track only:			
LSMDIF	Research Design and Dissertation (MAELT)	60	7
For Portfolio-track only:			
LSMDIP	Language Teaching Portfolio	60	7

#### Option modules

Students select three (dissertation-track and portfolio-track) or six (taught-track) options from the following.  
For Taught-track and Dissertation-track:

Code	Title	Credits	Level
<i>Spring term</i>			
LSMTP	Language Testing Principles	20	7
LSMWL	Written Language (Reading & Writing)	20	7
LSMES	English for Specific Purposes	20	7
LSMEPH	Experimental Phonology for Language Teachers	20	7
<b>Summer Term</b>			
LSMIB	Issues in Bilingualism	20	7
LSMSP	Spoken Language (Listening & Speaking)	20	7
LSMYL	Teaching Young Learners	20	7
LSMIT	Information Technology for Language Teaching	20	7
For Portfolio-track: Autumn Term			
LSMCL	Child Language Development	20	7

	Spring term		
LSMEW	English in the World	20	7
LSMTP	Language Testing Principles	20	7
LSMES	English for Specific Purposes	20	7
	Summer Term		
LSMIB	Issues in Bilingualism	20	7
LSMIT	Information Technology for Language Teaching	20	7
LSMYL	Teaching Young Learners	20	7

The assessment of those modules running entirely in the Autumn term will be by assignments and an examination to be completed either before or over the Christmas vacation; assessment of those modules running entirely, or completed, in the Spring term, will be by assignments to be completed over the Easter vacation. Modules running entirely, or completed, in the Summer term will be assessed by assignments to be submitted by the beginning of the fourth week of the summer vacation. The dissertation / teaching portfolio will be submitted by 17th September.

#### **Part-time or modular arrangements**

The programme is offered on a part-time basis, normally over a period of up to 24 months, and on a modular basis normally over a period of 3 to 4 years, but with a maximum of 6 years. These arrangements are normally as follows:

Part -time (24 months):

Year 1: 3 compulsory taught modules and 1-2 option modules (dissertation and portfolio track) or 2-3 option modules (taught track);

Year 2: 3 compulsory taught modules (including Research Design) and 1-2 option modules + dissertation (dissertation track) or portfolio (portfolio-track), or 3-4 option modules (taught track).

Modular (3-4 years)

Years 1-3: Dissertation and portfolio track: 1-2 compulsory modules p.a., including Research Design in year 3 for dissertation track, and 1 option module p.a.; Taught track: 1-2 compulsory modules p.a., and 1-2 option modules p.a.;

Year 4: Dissertation and portfolio track: dissertation/teaching portfolio; Taught track: 1-2 option modules.

Note: Dissertation-track students may switch from full-time to modular status at the end of the Spring term to complete the dissertation. They will then have one year to complete the dissertation, and any option modules not taken by that point.

#### **Progression requirements**

N/A

#### **Summary of Teaching and Assessment**

Modules are taught by lectures, seminars and small group practical work. The dissertation module additionally is supported by individual supervision. Most modules are assessed wholly by coursework, but there may also be assessment 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 and have no mark below 40 in compulsory modules LSMEP, LSMDG, LSMDT, LSMSL and LSMLC for the dissertation- and taught-tracks and LSMEP, LSMDG, LSMELT, LSMSLT and LSMTLS for the portfolio-track. 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 be less than 60 credits.

Students who gain an average mark of 70 or more overall including a mark of 60 or more for the dissertation or language teaching portfolio 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 or language teaching portfolio 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 LSMEP, LSMDG, LSMDT, LSMSL and LSMLC for the dissertation- and taught-tracks and LSMEP, LSMDG, LSMELT, LSMSLT and LSMTLS for the portfolio-track. 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 be less than 60 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 on taught modules totalling 60 credits and have no module mark below 40 in those modules.

### **Admission requirements**

Entrants to this programme are normally required to have a good first degree, preferably in a language- or language/education-related subject, and at least two years' full-time language teaching experience, or equivalent professional (language- related) experience.

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 or other language-related professional 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 following 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 6.5 on the IELTS test, with no sub-test band below 6, or TOEFL paper-based test: 580; computer-based test: 240; TWE: 4.5 but with the following conditions attached:

- a) Any applicant who achieves the minimum IELTS scores (or TOEFL equivalents) specified above will be strongly recommended to take at least 5 weeks of pre-sessional English instruction (although that will not be made a condition of acceptance).
- b) Any applicant whose English score is at the levels shown in above on entry to the programme will be required to take a special dedicated in- sessional English course during the MA programme. Compliance with this would be a condition of remaining on the programme. This course will, as minimum, consist of six two-hour class sessions in the first term, with follow-up individual tutorials as needed over the next two terms.

**Admissions Tutor:** Clare Furneaux

### **Support for students and their learning**

University support for students and their learning falls into two categories. Learning support is provided by a wide array of services across the University, including: the University Library, the Student Employment, Experience and Careers Centre (SEEC), In-sessional English Support Programme, the Study Advice and Mathematics Support Centre teams, IT Services and 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 advisers in the Student Services Centre. The Student Services Centre is housed in the Carrington Building and offers advice on accommodation, careers, disability, finance, and wellbeing. 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 and runs workshops and seminars on a range of topics. For more information see [www.reading.ac.uk/student](http://www.reading.ac.uk/student)

### **Career prospects**

Students graduating from this programme are equipped to take up senior teaching and administration posts within the field of language teaching. Depending on their specialisms, they will also be equipped to take up positions in teacher training / education, curriculum planning, language testing, publishing and other language-related professions.

### **Opportunities for study abroad or for placements**

N/A

### **Programme Outcomes**

#### **Knowledge and Understanding**

##### **A. Knowledge and understanding of:**

1. The production and description of the sound system of English.
2. The main features of the grammatical system of English as described in a modern descriptive reference grammar.
3. (Depending on Programme track) The systems underlying the production of appropriate, coherent and cohesive English discourse, 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. Theories of curriculum design and their effect on programme development and teaching.
6. (Depending on programme track) Different types of research, requirements of effective research, techniques of data-gathering, basic descriptive and inferential statistical methods, requirements of academic dissertations / or reports in the field.  
Depending on choice of options / Track:
7. Theory and pedagogical implications derived from within the broad areas of:
  - the four language skills,
  - language use and learning in specific domains or circumstances
  - language assessment
  - information technology and computer-based language corpora
  - inter-cultural communication
  - phonology
  - English literature.
  - child language development.

##### **Teaching/learning methods and strategies**

Lectures  
Seminars, with occasional student presentations  
Tutorials for assignment guidance

##### *Assessment*

Mainly by assignments requiring essays of different lengths.  
Dissertation (Dissertation Track only)  
Language Teaching Portfolio (Portfolio Track only)

#### **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

##### **Teaching/learning methods and strategies**

Lectures  
Seminars, with occasional student presentations  
Tutorials

##### *Assessment*

Mainly by assignments requiring essays of different lengths.

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

**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. (Depending on Track): analyse and describe samples of discourse, using one or more descriptive frameworks.
- In addition, depending on modules / Track taken and / or research undertaken, students will be able to do some of the following:
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.
  5. evaluate materials used in the teaching of English language skills.
  6. design a language test for a specified group of test-takers.
  7. create, organise and analyse a computer-based language corpus.
  8. design and administer a language-oriented survey, involving a questionnaire or interview.
  9. carry out a statistical analysis of language or language-related data, using appropriate descriptive and/or inferential statistics
  10. develop and use an instrument for the evaluation of teaching during an observation.

**D. Transferable skills - able to:**

- able to:
1. use IT (word processing, using standard and statistical software)
  2. define a research topic and mount a principled investigation by means of hypothesis-formulation and testing
  3. give oral presentations
  4. work as part of a team
  5. use library resources
  6. manage time
  7. formulate and implement career plans

**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**

Dissertation or  
Language Teaching Portfolio

**Teaching/learning methods and strategies**

Lectures, seminars and tutorials.

*Assessment*

Practical sections in assignments and examinations  
Relevant sections in the Dissertation or Language Teaching Portfolio

**Teaching/learning methods and strategies**

Lectures, seminars and tutorials, including special Study Skills classes.

*Assessment*

Items 1, 5 and 6 are assessed under the organisation and presentation criteria for marking assignments and the dissertation.  
Item 2 is assessed by research proposal and dissertation.  
Item 4 is assessed in the work produced for an examination taken for one module.

**feedback from students, quality assurance process or external sources, such as professional bodies, requires a change to be made. In such circumstances, a revised specification will be issued.**