

**MA in English Language Teaching (full-time)  
For students entering in 2015/6**

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 year
Date of specification:	21/Aug/2015
Programme Director:	
Programme Advisor:	
Board of Studies:	MA in English Language Teaching
Accreditation:	

**Summary of programme aims**

The MA in ELT is designed as a programme of continuing development for language teachers, especially those working in the field of English language teaching. Core modules are offered in language description and analysis, language pedagogy and language learning, and students are given an up-to-date knowledge of principles and issues of importance within the broad field of teaching and use of language. Through a choice of options, students also have access to a further range of pedagogic and non-pedagogic areas of interest. They receive a thorough grounding that will help them to develop their career in a wide range of language-related professions.

**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 (on campus);
- 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;
- developing an understanding of research principles and methodologies;
- studying independently, while making appropriate use of on-line communication and other resources;
- (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.

**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. A specialist 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 and analysis, language teaching and learning, curriculum design and core issues in English language teaching (for Taught and Dissertation tracks), issues related to teaching language skills (for portfolio track) and research methods. The curriculum design and language skills teaching modules run in the Spring term on campus. These modules

typically comprise the first year of distance study. Study of these core modules is then followed by the core Research Design module for all students. Dissertation track students then work on their dissertation, of 15,000 words, on a topic in the field of ELT, broadly defined. Research for, and the writing of, the dissertation will take place in the Summer term and the Summer vacation for campus-based students and over a year following the Research Design module for the Distance Study students. The language teaching Portfolio comprises a number of assessments related to the observation of classroom practice, studying a language learner, design and development of language teaching materials, and reflective accounts of experiences of delivering materials in classroom context.

The option modules cover a wide range of linguistic and applied areas; together with the dissertation, they provide flexibility and the opportunity for specialisation.

The following list specifies the compulsory core modules (total 140 credits for Dissertation and Portfolio tracks and 80 for Taught track). Students will also take two option modules (total 40 credits for Dissertation and Portfolio tracks) or five option modules (100 credits for Taught track). Choice of option modules is made in consultation with the programme director and/or personal tutor. A complete list of option modules is available from the relevant Programme Director and is listed in the relevant MA Student Handbook.

### Compulsory core modules

Code	Module Title	Credits	Level	
LSMSL	Second Language Learning Principles	20	7	CB
LSMFLS	Foundations of Language	20	7	CB
LSMLCL	Language Curriculum Design (core for Dissertation and Taught Tracks)	20	7	CB
LSMLST	Issues in Language Skills Teaching (core for Portfolio Track)	20	7	CB
LSMRD	Research Design	20	7	CB
LSMDIS	Dissertation (Dissertation Track)	60	7	CB
LSMDIP	Language Teaching Portfolio (Portfolio track)	60	7	CB
LSMDSL	Second Language Learning Principles	20	7	DS
LSMDFL	Foundations of Language	20	7	DS
LSMDLD	Language Curriculum Design	20	7	DS
LSMDRD	Research Design	20	7	DS
LSMDDN	Dissertation (Dissertation Track)	60	7	DS

CB=campus-based

DS=distance study

### Option modules (campus-based)

*Please note that not all options are offered each year. Options with low numbers will not run.*

Code	Title	Credits	Level
LSMCL	Child Language Development	20	7
LSMVO	The Teaching and Learning of Vocabulary	20	7
LSMDA	Approaches to Discourse Analysis	20	7
LSMCBL	Corpus-based Approaches to Language Description	20	7
LSMTP	Language Testing Principles	20	7
LSMWL	Written Language	20	7
LSMES	English for Specific Purposes	20	7
LSMEW	English in the World	20	7
LSMIT	Information Technology for Language Teaching	20	7
LSMYL	Teaching Young Learners	20	7
LSMSP	Spoken Language	20	7

### Part-time or modular arrangements

a) 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: 2 compulsory taught modules and 1-2 option modules

Year 2: 2 compulsory taught modules (including Research Design) and 1-2 option modules + dissertation

b) The programme is offered by Distance Study on a part-time basis only, with a minimum time span of two years and a maximum of five. Most students will take three years. Students are expected to spend at least

fifteen hours a week in study for the programme. The structure of typical progression through the programme as a distance study student is as follows:

Year 1: three compulsory core taught modules

Year 2: two option modules; 1 compulsory core taught module (Research Design);

Year 3 three option modules (Taught-track) or dissertation (Dissertation-track).

Compulsory, core module assessment takes place once 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 on 15 March or 15 September, to be agreed with the supervisor, a year after starting work on the Dissertation.

### **Progression requirements**

For Masters Degrees (180 credits)

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 LSMSL/LSMDSL, LSMFLS/LSMDFL, LSMLCL/LSMDLD (for Taught and Dissertation tracks), LSMLST (for Portfolio track) and LSMRD/LSMDRD. 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 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 have no mark below 40 will be eligible for a Merit.

For Postgraduate Diplomas (120 credits)

To pass the Postgraduate Diploma students must gain an average mark of 50 or more and have no mark below 40 in compulsory modules LSMSL/LSMDSL, LSMFLS/LSMDFL, LSMLCL/LSMDLD (for Taught and Dissertation tracks), LSMLST (for Portfolio track) and LSMRD/LSMDRD. 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 eligible for a Merit.

For Postgraduate Certificate (60 credits)

To pass the Postgraduate Certificate students must gain an average mark of 50 or more on 60 credits (for any taught modules) with no credits below 40.

In addition, for Distance Study students:

To follow the dissertation track in distance study mode, a student 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 must still follow the Dissertation-track if they come to Reading to use the University library and consult supervisors.

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

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

### **Admission requirements**

Entrants to this programme are normally required to be qualified teachers with a good relevant university degree and at least two years' full-time experience in teaching English as a second language. Teaching experience is not required for the Portfolio track.

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.

Entrants to the programme will be required to meet the following English language proficiency standards.

A) For campus-based students:

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-session English instruction (although that will not be made a condition of acceptance).

b) Any applicant whose English score is at the minimum levels above on entry to the programme will be required to take a special dedicated in-session English course during the MA programme. Compliance with this would be a condition of remaining on the programme.

B) For Distance Study Students

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 6.5, or an equivalent score on another standard test recognised by the University.

**Admissions Tutor:** Dr Parvaneh Tavakoli

### **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 Careers, Placement and Experience Centre (CPEC), In-session 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, academic issues (eg problems with module selection) and exam related queries. 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 and language-related studies. 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

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

##### **For campus-based students:**

- Lectures, seminars, with occasional student presentations.

English.

3. Theories of L2 acquisition relating to learning in general, to interlanguage, and to environmental and individual factors.

4. Theories of curriculum design and their effects on language teaching programmes.

5. 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.

Depending on choice of options:

6. Theory and pedagogical implications derived from within the broad areas of:

- language curriculum design,
- the four language skills,
- language use and learning in specific domains or circumstances,
- language assessment,
- information technology and computer-based language corpora,

7. Theories of language acquisition and use, including psycholinguistics, child language development, intercultural communication and the role of English in the World.

8. Specialised studies and applications of linguistics in the areas of phonology and grammar.

9. The systems underlying the production of appropriate, coherent and cohesive English discourse, and the ways of describing these.

- Tutorials for assignment guidance

- Supervisions/tutorials

**For distance study students:**

- Specially written module materials are provided
- Tutorial support is available by phone, skype and e-mail, and the University's Virtual Learning Environment (Blackboard)

*Assessment*

- Mainly by assignments requiring essays of different lengths.
- There are some exams
- Dissertation/Portfolio

### **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. 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. analyse and describe samples of discourse, using

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

**For campus-based students:**

- Lectures, seminars with occasional student presentations
- Supervisions/tutorials

**For distance study students:**

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

*Assessment*

Mainly by assignments requiring essays of different lengths.

Dissertation/Portfolio

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

**For campus-based students:**

- Lectures
- Seminars, with occasional student presentations
- Supervision/tutorials

**For distance study students:**

- Module materials: texts, tasks and

one or more descriptive frameworks.

In addition, depending on modules 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. describe and analyse the grammatical, lexical, discursal and phonological systems of languages other than English.

#### **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

commentaries

- On-line discussion with fellow students and staff

#### *Assessment*

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

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

##### **For campus-based students:**

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

##### **For distance study students:**

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

#### *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.

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