MSc Language Sciences (full-time)
For students entering in 2017/8

Awarding Institution:	University of Reading
Teaching Institution:	University of Reading
Programme length:	1 years
Date of specification:	21/Sep/2017
Programme Director:	Prof Jason Rothman
Board of Studies:	MSc Neuroscience of Language

Summary of programme aims

The purpose of this programme is to prepare graduates in linguistics, speech and language therapy, psychology, health science, education and allied disciplines for research-related careers in Language Sciences. The students choose one of three streams: the neuroscience stream, the developmental stream, or the multilingualism stream. The neuroscience stream will introduce the students to the current advances in neuroscience research including functional MRI and electrophysiology of language. The developmental stream will focus on language development and disorders, including disorders of fluency. The multilingualism stream provides a flexible multi-disciplinary course focusing on linguistic, cognitive, and pedagogical aspects of multilingualism, as well as research training in this area. The programme provides a theoretical background and practical experience for students to realise their potential as independent researchers or clinicians, and to undertake advanced research in neuroscience, language development, or multilingualism.

The expected outcomes are that students should acquire and demonstrate:

- Appreciation of the theoretical and philosophical context in which research is designed, conducted, and interpreted.
- Competence in and understanding of a range of research methods, and detailed expertise in a subset relevant to the student's own research interests.
- In-depth knowledge of the work either by language scientists or by neuroscientists on speech and language and awareness of possibilities and limitations of using imaging technology in studying language processing in typical, atypical, and multilingual populations.
- The ability to synthesise, analyse, interpret and evaluate information and theoretical claims.
- Expertise in data management and analysis, and awareness of issues affecting data interpretation.
- Understanding of ethical issues in research and intellectual property rights.
- Competence in research management.
- Written and oral skills for disseminating research outputs to different types of audience and in different formats.
- Awareness of issues relevant to the pursuit of a research career.
- Acquisition of a broad range of transferable employment-related skills.

Transferable skills

By the end of the course, students will have developed the following transferable skills:

- Ability to use computers for statistics, data analysis, and communication.
- Ability to use database/library resources.
- Writing skills: writing of papers, abstraction of others' work from written and oral material, reviewing of work of peers.
- Ability to make oral presentations.

Programme content

Compulsory modules for neuroscience stream (130 credits):

Code	Module title	Credits	Level
PLMRT	Research Methods and Transferable Skills	10	7
PYM0NS	Methods in Neuroscience	10	7
PLMFG	Foundations of Grammar	10	7
PLMEL	Electrophysiology of Language	10	7
PLMLPR	Language Processing	20	7
PLMPP	Phonetics and Phonology	10	7
PLMRDN	Research and Dissertation	60	7

Compulsory modules for language development and breakdown stream (130 credits):

Code	Module title	Credits	Level

Code	Title	Credits	Level
PLMRT	Research Methods and Transferable Skills	10	7
PLMCLA	Child Language Acquisition	10	7
PLMFG	Foundations of Grammar	10	7
PLMISL	Introduction to Speech and Language Pathology	10	7
PLMLPR	Language Processing	20	7
PLMPP	Phonetics and Phonology	10	7
PLMRDN	Research and Dissertation	60	7

Compulsory Modules - Multilingualism stream (130 credits)

Code	Title	Credits	Level
PLMRT	*Research Methods and Transferable Skills*	10	7
PLMFG	*Foundations of Grammar*	10	7
PLMCLA	Child Language Acquisition	10	7
PLMLPR	*Language Processing*	20	7
PLMRDN	*Research and Dissertation*	60	7
PLMML	Multilingualism and Impairment Across the Lifespan	20	7

Optional modules:
Modules totalling 50 credits from a list such as the following:

Code	Title	Credits	Level
PLMCLA	Child Language Acquisition	10	7
PLMCPH	Clinical Phonetics and Phonology	10	7
PLMLAC	Linguistic Assessment Clinic	10	7
PLMCAA	Theoretical and Clinical Aspects of Anomia	10	7
PYM0FM	fMRI Data Analysis	10	7
PLMISL	Introduction to Speech and Language Pathology	10	7
PLMASD	Language in Autism Spectrum Disorders	10	7
PLMEL	Electrophysiology of Language	10	7
PLMLDG	Language in Genetic Disorders	10	7

Students may take any of the optional modules listed above, providing that the timetable permits this. The available option modules may vary from year to year. Students will need to consult the Programme Director with regards to option modules. Students with adequate prior learning in subject areas which are obligatory may be eligible to apply for exemption from a limited number of modules, taking alternative option modules to the same number of credits overall.

Part-time or modular arrangements
The programme may be undertaken over two years on a part-time basis. Selection of modules between the two years will be agreed between the student and the Board of Studies, at the commencement of the course. It is anticipated that students will normally complete at least 80 credits' worth of modules in Year 1. Modules will be assessed in the year that they are studied. Dissertation (PLMRDN) must be taken in year 2.

Summary of Teaching and Assessment
Teaching is by a variety of methods, including lectures, small group seminars, workshops, individual feedback on written work, and one-to -one supervision. Assessment includes written assignments, short notes examinations, open-book tests, submission of practical reports, oral presentations, and submission of project dissertation.

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 (180 credits)

To pass the MSc students must gain an average mark of 50 or more overall including a mark of 50 or more for PLMRDN. 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 50 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 PG Diplomas (120 credits: as MSc but without a Project)

To pass the Postgraduate Diploma students must gain an average mark of 50 or more. 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 50 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.

In addition, the full-time programme must be completed within 24 months from the date of registration, whereas the part-time programme must be completed within 48 months from the date of registration.

Admission requirements
Entrants to this programme are normally required to have obtained an Honours degree in linguistics, speech and language therapy or related discipline (e.g., modern languages, cognitive science, psychology, education, health sciences, and philosophy). Applicants should have gained, or expect to gain, a class mark of 2(1) or higher (i.e., 60%+ [or international equivalent, e.g. B+ US letter grade]). Applicants holding 2(2) degrees may apply and each case will be considered on its own merits. Applicants whose academic qualifications do not meet these formal standards may in the first instance be admitted to the Diploma course; they may then transfer to MSc status subject to satisfactory performance in their first two terms. Applicants who do not have English as their first language, must have an overall IELTS score of 6.5 with no component less than 6.

Admissions Tutor: Prof Jason Rothman:j.rothman@reading.ac.uk

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, In-sessional English Support Programme, the Study Advice and Mathematics Support teams and IT Services. 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 Support Centres. If a student has a general enquiry and is unsure where to seek help, they should visit their Support Centre. There are five Support Centres across the University, including one based at the London Road Campus. The Support Centre will be able to advise on matters such as extenuating circumstances, module selection, suspensions, withdrawals, timetable queries and transferring programme. The Support Centre will also be able to signpost students to Carrington building where other University services related to disability, financial support, counselling and wellbeing, accommodation and careers can be found. More information on what student services are available can be found here: http://student.reading.ac.uk/essentials.

Within the School, there is the Centre for Integrative Neuroscience and Neurodynamics, which is an interdisciplinary centre and houses a 3T research-dedicated MRI scanner and high-density EEG laboratory. These facilities are complemented by high resolution stimulus display systems with integrated high-speed eye tracking. In addition to dedicated CINN facilities, contributing departments house state-of-the-art research laboratories, supporting research in developmental, social and clinical psychology, neurophysiology (EEG/ERP), psychophysiology, speech and language perception and production, visual and auditory perception and motor systems, genomics, post-genomics, structural and computational biology, computational modelling and pharmacology. There is also a large and well-equipped Speech Research Laboratory within the School, offering facilities in acoustic, articulatory and physiological aspects of speech analysis, and supported by a range

of computational and electronic hardware. There is also a Speech and Language Therapy Clinic which functions partly as a community clinic for the local area health authority, while offering a specialist linguistic assessment service. It also supports a teaching and research facility including a large resource of tests and assessments with recording and viewing facilities. The School also has a Learning support access is provided through the departmental networked computers and printers, the departmental assessment library, provision of photocopying cards, and ready access to members of staff who are all respected scholars in the fields taught. Pastoral support augments the University's care systems, with each student being allocated a Personal Tutor.

New students undergo an induction programme in the week before they start the programme. A comprehensive handbook is available for the programme; this is available on-line, as are a wealth of other resources via the department's intranet. There is an active Student-Staff Committee with postgraduate representation.

Career prospects

Since the programme is primarily intended as research training, the focus must be on outcomes in this area. Students will be fully equipped to undertake doctoral research in the neuroscience of language. However, it is also envisaged that the skills acquired (specialist and generic) will be applicable to careers involving research management, such as government and market research.

Opportunities for study abroad or for placements

Programme Outcomes

Knowledge and Understanding

A. Knowledge and understanding of:

1. Typical and atypical language acquisition, multilingual development, and disorders
2. Contemporary theoretical issues in research in the neuroscience of language, language development, and multilingualism
3. Knowledge of a range of brain imaging methods as applied to the neuroscience of language
4. Understanding of a broad variety of methods in, and approaches to, empirical enquiry in the social sciences, and especially in the neuroscience of language, language development, and multilingualism.
5. The use of computer programs to perform qualitative and quantitative analysis of data
6. Ethical issues as they relate to research in the neuroscience of language, language development, and multilingualism.
7. Detailed subject-specific substantive knowledge

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 are achieved through lectures, seminars, workshops, written work and through self-paced exercises followed up by supported workshops, and 7 will be covered by the student's dissertation.

Assessment

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 are assessed by practical coursework, essays, written exams and the requirement to complete an original piece of research in the neuroscience of language, language development, or multilingualism as appropriate. In all cases, students are expected to perform at a level above that required for undergraduate study.

Skills and other attributes

B. Intellectual skills - *able to:*

1. Understand, at an advanced level, the theoretical framework(s) in which research in language sciences is conducted.
2. Analyse and evaluate data;
3. Evaluate linguistic theories in light of clinical, developmental, and multilingual data;
4. Synthesise and evaluate information from different sources;
5. Write well-structured and well-argued essays.
6. Select from a number of possible methods, the one most appropriate to a particular data set and a given research question or questions.

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

Intellectual skills are developed throughout the programme through interactive teaching, small group tutorials, students' written work and oral presentations. In order to achieve 7, students are allocated a research supervisor who monitors closely their progress and gives feedback.

Assessment

1-5 are assessed in coursework and examinations; 6 and 7 is assessed by a dissertation.

Plan, carry out and present an extended independent investigation of a research topic

C. Practical skills - *able to:*

1. Perform advanced searches for information relevant to specific topics.
2. Collect and manage data
3. Make an application for ethical approval.
4. Transcribe non-clinical and clinical data using the International Phonetic Alphabet
5. Ability to use available data bases such as CHILDES and software such as SALT
6. Plan experiments using a range of methodologies including brain imaging

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

Dedicated seminars, practical classes, and exercises deliver 4, 5 and 6. PLMRP specifically delivers 1, 2 and 6.
A dedicated library and resources session supports 1.
2 and 3 are initially explicated as part of the Methods modules (i.e. PYMRT and PLMRDN); they are then consolidated by direct supervision of a research project and associated dissertation.

Assessment
Through practical exercises, data analyses assignments and a research dissertation.

D. Transferable skills - *able to:*

1. Communicate concisely or at length in writing.
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. Work with a group.
5. Plan and implement a project.
6. Solve practical problems.
7. Use IT to write, to present information visually, to manage and analyse numeric data, to communicate, and to find information.
8. Take a critical stance to literature read
9. Manage time.
10. Manage research

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

Transferable skills are integrated in subject-based teaching. 1 is learned, with formative feedback, through essays and other written assignments.
2 is included in seminars and through supervision
3 forms part of the compulsory modules PLMRDN and PLMEL and in a number of optional modules (PLMLI; PLMLAC).
4 is included in the compulsory module PLMRDN and in a number of option modules PLMLAC, PLMLI, PLMLAA. 6, 7, 8 and 9 pervade all aspects of the programme. 5 and 10 are explicated in PLMRDN.

Assessment
1-3 and 5, 7, 8 and 10 are assessed through essays, examinations and the dissertation. 4 is assessed through An adequate standard in 4 and 6 are required to pass the programme.