



UNIVERSITY OF
PORTSMOUTH

MA Applied Linguistics and TESOL (Distance Learning)

Programme Specification

Primary Purpose

Course management and quality assurance.

Secondary Purpose

Detailed information for students, staff and employers. Current students should refer to the related Course Handbook for further detail.

Disclaimer

The University of Portsmouth has checked the information given in this Programme Specification. We will endeavour to deliver the course in keeping with this Programme Specification; however, changes may sometimes be required arising from annual monitoring, student feedback, review and update of units and courses. Where this activity leads to significant changes to units and courses, there will be prior consultation of students and others, wherever possible, and the University will take all reasonable steps to minimize disruption to students. It is also possible that the University may not be able to offer a unit or course for reasons outside of its control, for example; the absence of a member of staff or low student registration numbers. Where this is the case, the University will endeavour to inform applicants and students as soon as possible. Where appropriate, the University will facilitate the transfer of affected students to another suitable course.

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Course Details

1. Named Awards

MA Applied Linguistics and TESOL (Distance Learning)

2. Course Code (and UCAS Code if applicable)

C2023P

3. Awarding Body

University of Portsmouth

4. Teaching Institution

University of Portsmouth

5. Accrediting Body

N/A

6. QAA Benchmark Groups

N/A

7. Document Control Information

August 2016

8. Effective Session

2018-19

9. Author

Janet Bryant, Associate Head Academic (SLAL)

10. Faculty

Humanities and Social Sciences

11. Department

School of Languages and Applied Linguistics

Curriculum

12. Educational Aims

- To enable students to acquire an advanced understanding of phonology, grammar, semantics, pragmatics and discourse analysis
- To provide students with the tools necessary for describing English from the point of view of phonology, grammar, semantics, pragmatics and discourse analysis
- To make students aware of the social processes which shape the comprehension and production of both spoken and written language

- To give students a detailed understanding of the cognitive processes underlying the comprehension and production of both spoken and written language
- To make students aware of theories of second language learning, including instructed second language learning
- To give students an advanced understanding of the range of applications of linguistic theory to applied fields such as language testing, curriculum design, and the use of technology in language teaching and learning
- To provide students with enhanced professional expertise in English Language Teaching and an enhanced ability to engage in on-going reflection on their personal professional practice and their understanding of classroom language teaching and learning
- To give students the opportunity to undertake an independent investigation in one or more of the following areas: second language acquisition, sociolinguistics, discourse analysis, pragmatics, contrastive linguistics, classroom language teaching and learning, language testing, or issues in the language teaching curriculum

13. Reference Points

- The University of Portsmouth postgraduate curriculum framework
- Framework for HE Qualifications
- QAA Codes of Practice for the Assurance of Academic Quality and Standards in Education
- Research and scholarship of the staff involved in the programme

14. General Learning Outcomes

Level 7

Master's degrees/Postgraduate Certificates/Postgraduate Diplomas are awarded to students who have demonstrated:

- a systematic understanding of knowledge, and a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of their academic discipline, field of study or area of professional practice
- a comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to their own research or advanced scholarship
- originality in the application of knowledge, together with a practical understanding of how established techniques of research and enquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in the discipline
- conceptual understanding that enables the student:
 - to evaluate critically current research and advanced scholarship in the discipline
 - to evaluate methodologies and develop critiques of them and, where appropriate, to propose new hypotheses

Typically, holders of the qualification will be able to:

- deal with complex issues both systematically and creatively, make sound judgements in the absence of complete data, and communicate their conclusions clearly to specialist and non-specialist audiences
- demonstrate self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems, and act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional or equivalent level
- continue to advance their knowledge and understanding, and to develop new skills to a high level

And holders will have:

- the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring:
 - the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility
 - decision-making in complex and unpredictable situations

- the independent learning ability required for continuing professional development

15. Learning Outcomes

A. Knowledge and Understanding of:

Students will have a knowledge of, and be able to explain, the central analytical concepts and methods of data-collection in Phonology, Grammar, Semantics, Pragmatics, Discourse, Sociolinguistics, Descriptive Linguistics, Second Language Acquisition, Language Testing, Language Course Design, Classroom Language Learning, and Professional Practice in Language Teaching.

Students will understand:

- A.1 The need for a systematic approach to linguistic phenomena and how theory helps to organise understanding
- A.2 The reasons for, and the criteria for evaluating, alternative analyses of a given set of data
- A.3 The nature of the process of professional development in language teaching
- A.4 The relevance of theories from and research in the disciplines of applied linguistics, education, educational psychology, psychology, sociology and statistical techniques

B. Cognitive (Intellectual or Thinking) Skills, able to:

Among the generic intellectual skills the degree will offer, the following abilities are of particular significance:

- B.1 Assessing the merits of contrasting theories and explanations, including those of other disciplines
- B.2 Abstracting and synthesising information
- B.3 Constructing and managing an argument
- B.4 Thinking and judging independently
- B.5 Critically judging and evaluating evidence, in particular in relation to the use of language in specific modes, genres and contexts, in non-academic domains (textual analysis and design, relational aspects of language use, language in social, professional and other occupational contexts, translation and interpretation)
- B.6 Awareness of the relation between knowledge of language and critical evaluation and implementation of language in social life
- B.7 Recognising problems and developing problem-solving strategies
- B.8 Collecting, analysing and manipulating data of diverse kinds
- B.9 Using a variety of methods, and assessing the advantages and disadvantages of each method
- B.10 Writing essays and research reports using the appropriate register and style
- B.11 Advanced literacy and numeracy
- B.12 Ability to critically reflect on experience

C. Practical (Professional or Subject) Skills, able to:

- C.1 Employ fundamental techniques for collecting data in the various areas of applied linguistics, including the creating and exploitation of electronic bodies of data, such as language corpora, elicitation tasks, phonological transcription, questionnaires, and ethnography;
- C.2 Critically discuss the technical issues involved in the collection of reliable data;

- C.3 Use fundamental techniques for the analysis of data, including the use of corpus analytic techniques, statistical techniques, qualitative techniques, and textual analysis;
- C.4 Use the necessary computational tools and software packages wherever appropriate for the analysis of data;
- C.5 Present linguistic data and analyses by means of graphs, tables, matrices and other diagrams;
- C.6 Consider the ethical issues involved in data collection and data storage.
- C.7 Manage classroom language learning
- C.8 Design, develop and deliver a language curriculum
- C.9 Manage personal professional development in language pedagogy

D. Transferable (Graduate and Employability) Skills, able to:

- D.1 Collect, understand, analyse, interpret and critically evaluate complex information
- D.2 Construct, analyse and critically evaluate theoretical and complex argumentation
- D.3 Recognise problems and develop problem-solving strategies
- D.4 Communicate effectively and fluently in speech and writing using appropriate register
- D.5 Work independently, demonstrating initiative, self-organisation and time-management
- D.6 Work with others to achieve common goals
- D.7 Manage their own learning self-critically, and think and judge independently
- D.8 Acquire complex information of diverse kinds, from a variety of sources including electronic sources (libraries, internet, corpora, discussions with peers etc) and use other IT tools

16. Learning and Teaching Strategies and Methods

- Course booklets (learning materials packs), online student discussion boards with tutor input, individual email discussions with tutors
- Planning, designing and executing a piece of rigorous enquiry in a research project.
- Problem sets
- Short exercises involving data analysis
- Independent reading;
- Use of data, resources, contacts and literature for the development of analytical skills.
- The use of computer software
- Reflection on personal professional experience
- Unit VLEs, including videos, written notes, links to reading, discussion forums, etc
- Planning, designing and executing a piece of rigorous enquiry in a research project.
- Short exercises involving data analysis
- Independent reading;
- Use of data, resources, contacts and literature for the development of analytical skills.
- The use of computer software and other technology
- Problem sets

17. Assessment Strategy

All assessment strategies and assessment loads for units on this programme conform to the requirements of the Curriculum Framework Document and the December 2015 Policy on Maximum Assessment Loads. On this programme, assessment is mainly via coursework. A single piece of coursework (other than the Dissertation) may be up to 6000 words, or between 4000 words and

5000 words if another form of assessment (e.g. presentation, in-class test, online test) is also used. The Dissertation is 15000 words. Assessment is not only evaluative; it is also formative and diagnostic. Consequently, students will be provided with constructive feedforward where appropriate. The rationale for assessment on programmes will be clearly presented to students in unit handbooks and on the VLE and there will be clear, explicit assessment criteria for all forms of assessment.

Assessment will take the form of:

- Essays
- Project reports
- Portfolios of tasks
- Tasks aimed at the assessment of specific skills (e.g. IT skills, transcription skills, use of technology for language purposes)
- A dissertation

18. Course Structure, Progression and Award Requirements

See [Unit Web Search](#)¹ for full details on the course structure and units

Standard University rules apply. The regulations must be consulted for a full description of exit awards.

However, it is possible to give the following brief summary. Students require 180 credits for the MA award, 120 credits for a PGDip award, and 60 credits for a PGCert award.

Each credit is equivalent to 10 hours of student learning, and units are offered in 30 credit blocks, apart from the final dissertation which is worth 60 credits. Courses are offered on a PT basis only.

19. Employability Statement

The course is designed for practising teachers and provides them with the skills and knowledge to pursue promoted positions and positions with additional responsibilities. Typically this includes career development into areas such as teacher education and educational management, as well as providing routes into employment with institutions such as The British Council, or other prestigious employers. This preparation for career advancement is achieved in a variety of ways. For example, the core unit Theory and Practice of TESOL is assessed with a clear work focus by asking students to reflect on their teaching context(s) and considering how their working environments impact on the curriculums, assessment and teaching practices that they use. Also the Independent Learning unit allows students to profile their degree in a way in which they see as professionally relevant. The personal tutor system and the supervision provided in support of the Dissertation give specific support in career planning.

Course Management

20. Support for Student Learning

- The Course is managed by a Course Leader.
- Induction programme introduces the student to the University and their course.
- Each student has a personal tutor, responsible for pastoral support and guidance.
- The department has a number of Learning Development Tutors to support students in their learning
- The Placement and Internship Centre (PIC) is located in the department, offering advice and support

¹ www.port.ac.uk/unitwebsearch

- University support services include careers, financial advice, housing, counselling etc.
- The Academic Skills Unit (ASK).
- The Additional Support and Disability Advice Centre (ASDAC).
- Excellent library facilities.
- The University of Portsmouth has consistently been awarded an excellent rating for student support and guidance in a number of Quality Assurance Agency inspections.
- Student course and unit handbooks provide information about the course structure and University regulations etc.
- Feedback is provided for all assessments.
- Personal Development Planning (PDP) for all awards.

21. Admissions Criteria

A. Academic Admissions Criteria

A first degree or equivalent. Experience of English language teaching.

IELTS 6.5, no element lower than 6.5 or equivalent for non-native speakers of English.

B. Disability

The University makes no distinction in its admissions policy with regard to disability and will endeavour to make all reasonable adjustments in order to make it possible for students to study at Portsmouth on a course of their choice.

22. Evaluation and Enhancement of Standards and Quality in Learning and Teaching

A. Mechanisms for Review and Evaluation

- Course Leader's Annual Standards and Quality Evaluative Review.
- Head of Department's Annual Standards and Quality Evaluative Review.
- Unit and Course Level student feedback considered at Board of Studies.
- Unit Assessment Board consideration of student performance for each programme.
- Annual Standards and Quality Reports to Board of Studies, including consideration of Subject and Award External Examiner Reports.
- Periodic Programme Review.
- Student Representatives and Student/Staff Consultative Committees.
- Staff Performance and Development Review.
- Peer Review and Development Framework.
- Faculty Learning and Teaching Committee.

B. Responsibilities for Monitoring and Evaluation

- Unit Co-ordinators for unit content and delivery.
- Course Leader for day-to-day running of course.
- Board of Studies with overall responsibilities for operation and content of course.
- Head of Department.
- Associate Dean (Academic).
- Associate Dean (Students).
- Quality Assurance Committee.
- Unit, Award and Progression Board of Examiners.

C. Mechanisms for Gaining Student Feedback

- Student Staff Consultative Committees.
- Unit and Course level student feedback questionnaires.
- University participates in external student surveys, eg National Student Survey (NSS), Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) and International Student Barometer (ISB).

D. Staff Development Priorities

- Academic staff undertake activities related to research, scholarship, teaching and learning and student support and guidance.
- Annual staff performance and development reviews match development to needs.
- Managers undertake a variety of management development programmes.
- Academic staff undertake initial and continuing professional development within the Academic Professional Excellence Framework (APEX) programme which is aligned with the Higher Education Academy (HEA)'s UK Professional Standards Framework (UKPSF)
- All academic staff encouraged to seek Higher Education Academy membership.
- Support Staff are encouraged to attend short courses in areas such as minute taking, and specific IT packages.

23. Assessment Regulations

The current University of Portsmouth academic regulations will apply to this programme (see [Assessment and Regulations²](#)).

24. Role of Externals

Subject External Examiners who will:

- Oversee unit assessment and usually attend Unit Assessment Boards
- Review unit assessment strategy
- Sample assessment artefacts
- Present report to Unit Assessment Boards

Award External Examiners (usually also a Subject External Examiner) who will:

- Oversee and attend Award/Progression Boards
- Scrutinise and endorse the outcomes of assessment
- Ensure that the standard of the award is maintained at a level comparable with that of similar awards elsewhere in the United Kingdom

25. Indicators of Standards and Quality

A. Professional Accreditation/Recognition

N/A

B. Periodic Programme Review (or equivalent)

This programme underwent Periodic Programme Review in February 2014. The Review confirmed the 'fitness of purpose' of the curriculum and the effectiveness of its annual monitoring and review processes.

² www.port.ac.uk/departments/services/academicregistry/qualitymanagementdivision/assessmentandregulations/

C. Quality Assurance Agency

QAA Higher Education Review, March 2015, judgements about standards and quality meet UK expectations (for full report see [Higher Education Review of the University of Portsmouth, March 2015](#)³).

D. Others

None.

26. Further Information

Further information may be found in:

- Student Handbook
- University of Portsmouth Curriculum Framework Document
- University of Portsmouth Prospectus
- [University of Portsmouth](#)⁴ and [School](#)⁵ websites

³ www.qaa.ac.uk/en/ReviewsAndReports/Documents/University%20of%20Portsmouth/University-of-Portsmouth-HER-15.pdf

⁴ www.port.ac.uk/

⁵ <http://www.port.ac.uk/school-of-languages-and-area-studies/>