



The  
University  
Of  
Sheffield.

## Programme Specification

A statement of the knowledge, understanding and skills that underpin a taught programme of study leading to an award from The University of Sheffield

### Programme Details

1. Programme title	Language and Linguistics
2. Programme code	EGHT003
3. QAA FHEQ level	7
4. Faculty	Arts and Humanities
5. Department	School of English
6. Other departments providing credit bearing modules for the programme	None
7. Accrediting Professional or Statutory Body	Not applicable
8. Date of production/revision	April 2022, March 2026

Awards	Type of award	Duration
9. Final award	MA	1 year
10. Intermediate awards		

### Programme Codes

11. JACS code(s) <i>Select between one and three codes from the <a href="#">HESA website</a>.</i>	Q100	Q310	Q900
12. HECoS code(s) <i>Select between one and three codes from the <a href="#">HECoS vocabulary</a>.</i>	100328	100318	101410

## Programme Delivery

13. Mode of study	Full time or Part time
14. Mode of delivery	Face to face (on campus)

## 15. Background to the programme and subject area

Language is an all-pervasive medium through which human beings not only communicate with one another but arrive at an understanding of the world around them. The opportunity to study this medium intensively can transform students' understanding of their own experience in exciting and challenging ways. The MA in Language and Linguistics offers students the chance to explore language in all its cultural, socio-historical and structural complexity.

Training in advanced research practice in the field of language and linguistics, broadly defined, forms the core of this programme. The core provision of the programme introduces students to the latest developments at the cutting-edge of the field, and will ensure that they are also aware of the research methods that lie at the heart of advanced research in the multiple sub disciplines that comprise language and linguistics research. Further core provision will ensure that students have the opportunity to develop their own research practice ahead of their dissertation, in which they will produce an extended piece of research-based writing that reflects their interest in language and linguistics.

Students are able to follow further optional modules that cover a diverse range of subjects that reflect the research and teaching specialisms of the teaching team. Key areas of language and linguistic expertise will be offered on the programme, including some or all of linguistic theory, sociolinguistics, language in interaction, CDA, historical linguistics, cognitive poetics, stylististics, and TESOL. Central among the questions investigated over the course of the MA are those concerning the instrumentality of language in forming and expressing cultural, individual, social, regional and national identities over time. Equally, students are introduced to, and may choose to pursue more theoretically and/or structurally orientated avenues of inquiry.

In providing training in research and in guiding students through current approaches to the study of language and linguistics, the programme bridges the gulf between taught undergraduate programmes and postgraduate research degrees, preparing students for advanced research. Many of the skills fostered are equally relevant to a range of other careers, and these include: effective communication using both spoken and written mediums; absorbing and analysing written information; time management; independence of thought; initiative taking. Students will have the opportunity to reflect on and develop these skills over the course of the programme, and careers-centred sessions for students on the programme will be offered in order that they are best able to use their degree to pursue their next career steps.

## 16. Programme aims

MA Language and Linguistics aims to:	
<b>A1</b>	Provide students with an understanding of the latest theory and approaches in the study of language and linguistics.
<b>A2</b>	Provide a wide-ranging experience of different approaches to the study of language and linguistics.
<b>A3</b>	Help students become independent researchers who are capable of responding to and addressing the latest research challenges in their main interest areas of language and linguistics.

<b>A4</b>	Develop high-level skills in critical thinking, data gathering and analysis, and problem-solving in relation to the study of language and linguistics.
<b>A5</b>	Ensure students become autonomous thinkers and communicators of ideas in language and linguistics.

## 17. Programme learning outcomes

<b>Knowledge and understanding</b>		
On successful completion of the programme, students will be able to:		<b>Links to Aim(s)</b>
<b>LO1</b>	Describe and analyse language in use in a way that demonstrates a sound grasp of linguistic concepts and methods of analysis.	A1, A4
<b>LO2</b>	Critically evaluate the key theoretical concepts which underpin contemporary approaches to the discipline.	A1, A4
<b>LO3</b>	Critically evaluate methods of enquiry in linguistics.	A2, A3, A4
<b>LO4</b>	Make informed and appropriately critical responses to current thinking and theorising in the discipline.	A1, A2, A4
<b>LO5</b>	Articulate contemporary theories, principles and practices in language and linguistics.	A1, A2, A4, A5
<b>LO6</b>	Effectively communicate research and ideas to peers, academic staff, and other audiences as required (i.e. lay audiences).	A3, A5
<b>LO7</b>	Carry out a dissertation in language/linguistics that independently identifies problems, formulates research questions and identifies appropriate methods of enquiry.	A3, A4
<b>LO8</b>	Apply a variety of methods of enquiry appropriately and productively to relevant source material.	A1, A2, A3
<b>LO9</b>	Identify appropriate and challenging research questions, discuss these with peers and members of academic staff, and address them in sustained pieces of academic writing.	A1, A2, A3, A4, A5
<b>LO10</b>	Write incisive, informative and relevant research proposals.	A1, A2, A3, A4

## 18. Learning and teaching methods

Students on this programme will be taught by academic staff in the School of English whose research interests align with the field of language and linguistics, broadly defined. This means that teaching on the programme will be research-led, ensuring that LOs 1-10 can be met across the modules that will constitute the programme. Where specialist assistance that will help students achieve the learning outcomes support will be sought from the Careers Service (LO11) and 301 (for example, to assist with specific elements of LO7, LO8 and LO10). Students will be taught on campus in lecture and/or seminar rooms, with face-to-face teaching being the primary mode of delivery. Face-to-face teaching may also be supplemented where appropriate by digital learning methods. The mode of teaching delivery will vary across the programme, with a mixture of traditional lecture and seminar style teaching, longer seminar sessions, and student-led sessions (to ensure engagement with LO6). All modules will be supported with dedicated Blackboard sites which will provide access to all teaching materials for students. Students will be supported in becoming self-directed learners through the core provision of the programme, which will provide a solid grounding in language and linguistics as well as

the methods used to tackle the big questions in the field. Further core provision will scaffold students' learning as they begin a research project (LO7), with help from 301 where appropriate (for example in addressing LO10), and assist with their development as autonomous thinkers and communicators of ideas in language and linguistics. By the end of the programme, students will have carried out their own research (LO7) and had the opportunity to reflect over the course of the programme on their own (current or future) professional practice (LO11).

## 19. Assessment and feedback methods

Students will undertake a range of assessments across the programme. Core modules will be assessed using various assessment types which may include essays, assessments involving discussion board posts, assessments comprising exams, presentations, research proposal(s), a dissertation abstract, and a dissertation.

The assessments on core modules are supplemented by assessments in optional modules, which may include a further range of assessment types, including some or all of online quizzes, problem/worksheets, portfolios, textual/data analysis, exams, presentations, and essays. These assessments afford further opportunities for students to demonstrate that they have met the programme learning outcomes.

Table 1 shows the number of opportunities that these assessments afford students to demonstrate that they have achieved the programme learning outcomes. Please note that this lists all opportunities provided in optional modules, despite the fact that students will only take a maximum of five of these modules (see Programme Structure section below).

LO#	LO description	Core	Optional
LO1	Describe and analyse language in use in a way that demonstrates a sound grasp of linguistic concepts and methods of analysis.	1	14
LO2	Critically evaluate the key theoretical concepts which underpin contemporary approaches to the discipline	7	14
LO3	Critically evaluate methods of enquiry in linguistics.	4	14
LO4	Make informed and appropriately critical responses to current thinking and theorising in the discipline.	6	14
LO5	Articulate contemporary theories, principles and practices in language and linguistics.	5	15
LO6	Effectively communicate research and ideas to peers, academic staff, and other audiences as required (i.e. lay audiences).	6	12
LO7	Carry out a dissertation in language/linguistics that independently identifies problems, formulates research questions and identifies appropriate methods of enquiry.	1	0
LO8	Apply a variety of methods of enquiry appropriately and productively to relevant source material.	1	9
LO9	Identify appropriate and challenging research questions, discuss these with peers and members of academic staff, and address them in sustained pieces of academic writing.	2	7
LO10	Write incisive, informative and relevant research proposals.	1	2
LO11	Reflect on and apply learning from the course to their own (current or future) professional practice.	1	1

Table 1: Number of opportunities for students to demonstrate that they have met the programme learning outcomes in assessments for core and optional modules.

All core modules will typically use two or more assessments, typically split into formative assessments with a lower weighting to take place mid-semester, followed by summative assessments with a higher weighting that will take place at the end of the semester. Most optional modules also follow this design, which will permit students to understand how they are progressing in their optional module and allow them to access further support if required.

Students will be provided with feedback in line with the [School of English feedback charter](#). This will ensure that their feedback is timely and is of a standard agreed in the School and among the teaching team.

As noted above, all core modules will typically have two or more assessments. Early assessments will be formative with later assessments being summative. Feedback will be provided with this in mind, and students will be able to understand how they can improve their work in the second assessment and meet the module and programme learning outcomes. Formative assessments will take place approximately mid-semester, and summative assessments will take place at the end of the semester. Feedback on assessed work will be provided in Turnitin in line with standard practice, and will involve the use of the MA level template to provide feedback in an expected format for all modules. Marking will be moderated in line with standard School practice.

All students will be inducted into the programme during Intro Week. As well as providing information about study choices and guidance relating to other aspects of learning and teaching, induction sessions will also include information and guidance on making the best use of feedback. This information will also be available to students via the School of English Hub PGT pages. Information will also be available at module level, and teaching teams will be encouraged to discuss the purpose and chosen format of feedback within teaching sessions and in module outlines.

Students will be assigned a personal tutor at the outset of their programme. They will meet with their personal tutor at the start of the programme, and will be encouraged to meet with them in the context of mid-semester formative assessments in semesters one and two. Students will also be encouraged to speak to module tutors for advice and support about specific assessment feedback as they receive it. All teaching staff will have bookable student consultation appointments to facilitate this.

## 20. Programme structure and student development

The programme will be structured as follows:

Semester	Status	Module title/option details	Credits
Aut	Core	Language and Linguistics seminar	15
Aut	Core	Research Methods	15
Aut	Optional	30 credits of optional modules	30
Spr	Core	Research Dissertation Practice	15
Spr	Optional	45 credits of optional modules	45
Summer	Core	Dissertation	60

This programme structure will ensure that core material is delivered in the first semester, responding to LOs 1,2,3,4,5,8, and 9, before students work towards LOs 6,7,10, and 11 in the second semester. The increased student choice in the second semester will further enhance students' understanding in line with LOs 1,2,3,4,5 and ensure their engagement with LOs 6,7,8,9,10, and 11.

The curriculum is expected to change and develop in line with continuous evaluation at module and programme-level, but when the programme starts, optional modules that will be available for students

to take are as follows:

Current issues in Applied Linguistics

Course and Materials Design

Advances in TESOL

Topics in linguistic theory

Language and interaction

Language and public life

Historical Linguistics: Texts and Theories

Style in Literature and Discourse - Tools and Techniques

Style in Literature and Discourse - Approaches to Research

Introduction to Language and Linguistics

Literature and Language in the Workplace

In order to ensure that students are prepared for the Topics in linguistic theory optional module, Introduction to Language and Linguistics will run in the Autumn semester and be listed as a prerequisite for these modules.

Students will also be able to take up to 30 credits of modules from other M-Level programmes, as part of guided module choice.

The programme will provide students with breadth and depth of knowledge in Language and Linguistics, broadly defined, and allow them to specialise their programme in line with staff research interests as it develops. This makes the programme a distinctive offering that showcases the high quality of research and teaching in the School of English at the University of Sheffield.

Detailed information about the structure of programmes, regulations concerning assessment and progression and descriptions of individual modules are published in the University Calendar available online at <http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/calendar/>.

## **21. Criteria for admission to the programme**

A minimum 2:1 undergraduate degree in linguistics, English language and/or literature, or a modern language.

The School of English has particular strengths and teaching expertise in four main areas:

- language and society
- historical linguistics
- literary linguistics
- theoretical linguistics

Prior experience in one or more of these areas is required to succeed on this programme. Prospective applicants should approach the department if they require any further details about these areas of expertise.

Entry requirements for international students

Overall IELTS score of 7.0 with a minimum of 6.5 in each component, or equivalent.

## 22. Reference points

**The learning outcomes have been developed to reflect the following points of reference:**

Subject Benchmark Statements

<https://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code/subject-benchmark-statements>

Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (2014)

<https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/quality-code/qualifications-frameworks.pdf>

University Vision

<https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/vision>

Learning and Teaching Strategy (2016-21)

[https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/polopoly\\_fs/1.661828!/file/FinalStrategy.pdf](https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/polopoly_fs/1.661828!/file/FinalStrategy.pdf)

## 23. Additional information

None

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This specification represents a concise statement about the main features of the programme and should be considered alongside other sources of information provided by the teaching department(s) and the University. In addition to programme specific information, further information about studying at The University of Sheffield can be accessed via our Student Services web site at <http://www.shef.ac.uk/ssid>.