



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

1	Programme Title	Chinese Studies
2	Programme Code	LASU003
3	JACS Code	T210 (HECoS Code: 101164)
4	Level of Study	Undergraduate
5a	Final Qualification	Bachelor of Arts with Honours (BA Hons)
5b	QAA FHEQ Level	6
6a	Intermediate Qualification(s)	None
7	Teaching Institution (if not Sheffield)	Sheffield and a Chinese-medium University
8	Faculty	Arts & Humanities
9	Department	School of East Asian Studies
10	Other Departments providing credit bearing modules for the programme	None
11	Mode(s) of Attendance	Full-time
12	Duration of the Programme	4 years, with study year abroad in a Chinese-speaking society
13	Accrediting Professional or Statutory Body	Not applicable
14	Date of production/revision	March 2023, March 2026

15. Background to the programme and subject area

The BA degree in Chinese Studies embraces the study of the language, history, culture and political economy of Chinese-speaking societies including Taiwan and Hong Kong. These play, and will continue to play, major global roles in economics, politics and culture. An understanding of these increasingly influential societies is therefore central to engagement with the twenty-first century world.

The Chinese Studies BA is offered by the School of East Asian Studies. The School was founded in 1963 as a Centre for Japanese Studies, and has expanded to include interests in Korean Studies and Chinese Studies in 1988 and 1993 respectively. With a large number of research-active staff, who combine teaching with ground-breaking research in gender and sexuality studies, business, economics, anthropology, international relations, politics, film, media, literature, migration and history, the School has grown to be one of the largest and most distinguished departments of its kind in the UK. Its teaching is renowned nationally for its concentration on contemporary East Asia through disciplines in the humanities and social sciences, and on the development of advanced language skills.

In the case of Chinese Studies, the School's programme seeks: to bring students to a high level of expertise in the Chinese language; to give them a thorough grounding in Chinese politics, business, history, society and culture; and to enable them to pursue in-depth study of major areas of these subjects, according to their developing tastes and interests. Simultaneously, it seeks to develop a broad range of intellectual and practical skills, including: collaborative working, awareness of the value of different cultural and academic perspectives on problems and issues; information and digital literacy and the ability to judge the reliability of information; use of creative media; differentiated presentation skills according to audience; reflective practice leading to continuing self-improvement; cultural sensitivity and global awareness through the experience of the study abroad year in a Chinese-speaking society; and the ability to develop new approaches to study from a range of perspectives.

Graduates in Chinese Studies have always been highly employable. The growing global influence of Chinese-speaking societies means that graduates with combined language and area expertise and sophisticated analytical and communications skills are increasingly sought-after across the entire spectrum of careers in business, finance, administration, communications and education. Further information is available on the School website: <http://www.seas.ac.uk/>

16. Programme aims

The programme has the following aims consonant with the Strategic Plan of the University of Sheffield:

1. To provide high-quality teaching informed and invigorated by the research and scholarship of the School's staff and alert to the benefits of student-centred learning that fosters the development of transferable analytical and communicative skills.
2. To provide the acquisition of high-level Chinese language skills alongside a thorough awareness and understanding of the associated cultural context.
3. To sustain a culture of research and teaching that is able to foster the free pursuit of knowledge, the impartial analysis of values, and the acquisition of intercultural awareness, and of informed and professional attitudes towards Chinese language and Chinese-speaking societies.
4. To incorporate the student voice through the inclusion of student perspectives and contributions in all aspects of programme development and presentation.
5. To widen access to the extent permitted by the intellectual and linguistic aptitudes which Chinese Studies demands.
6. To enable students to maximise their potential in all aspects of their programme.
7. To assess students over a range of knowledge, understanding and skills, and to identify and support academic excellence.
8. To offer a range of student-centred forms of learning which foster transferable analytical and communicative skills.

17. Programme learning outcomes

Knowledge and understanding:

By the end of this programme a student will possess:

K1	A sound knowledge and critical understanding of the structures and usage of modern Chinese language.
K2	A sound knowledge and critical understanding of key aspects of Chinese cultures and societies through the study of their cultural products.
K3	A sound knowledge and practical and critical understanding of the methodologies used to analyse language and culture.
K4	A sound knowledge and critical understanding of aspects of the history, politics, societies, cultures and institutions of Chinese-speaking societies.
K5	A sound knowledge and critical understanding of a variety of disciplinary approaches to the study and analysis of Chinese-speaking societies.
K6	A sound understanding of the importance of the different contributions made by a variety of disciplinary approaches and perspectives to the study and analysis of Chinese-speaking societies.
K7	Practical knowledge of contemporary life in a Chinese-speaking society.

Skills and other attributes:

By the end of this programme a student will be able to:

S1	Display a high level of competence in writing and speaking modern Chinese.
S2	Display a high level of competence in understanding the written and spoken forms of modern Chinese.
S3	Demonstrate a high level of intercultural awareness, derived from the study of language and culture and the experience of the year abroad, and leading to thoughtful, professional and informed attitudes to Chinese language and cultures.
S4	Locate and acquire information about Chinese-speaking societies from a variety of sources, including teachers, native speakers, newspapers, broadcasts, books and works of reference, and digital sources in both English and Chinese.
S5	Critically analyse and evaluate information about Chinese-speaking societies gained from primary and secondary sources in both English and Chinese.

S6	Conduct individual study and research on, or in, a Chinese-speaking society, based upon a self-determination of their needs.
S7	Work collaboratively in small or large groups to plan study and research on Chinese-speaking societies and carry out the resultant activities effectively and efficiently.
S8	Present the results of research or study on Chinese-speaking societies in written English or Chinese appropriate to a range of audiences and contexts.
S9	Present the results of research or study on Chinese-speaking societies in spoken English or Chinese appropriate to a range of audiences and contexts.
S10	Utilise a range of digital and other technologies to support the conduct, analysis and presentation of research and study about Chinese-speaking societies.
S11	Synthesise knowledge from a variety of sources to produce new approaches to activities and study in Chinese-speaking societies.
S12	Assess personal risk in relation to activities conducted in and about Chinese-speaking societies.

18. Teaching, learning and assessment

Development of the learning outcomes is promoted through the following teaching and learning methods:

1. A core academic year module at Level 1 provides a linked combination of content and skills training to: enable students to make the transition from school to university education; understand and reflect on the purposes of different types of teaching and learning activities (S6); and develop core academic skills in information and digital literacy (S4); critical thinking (S5); and academic writing (S8). This will be linked to pastoral and personal tutoring, individually and in groups to develop understanding of peer-learning and peer-support (S7).
2. Formal Lectures are used to impart essential knowledge (K1-K6).
3. Seminars, which may be either staff-led or student-led, are used at all levels of the programme for both language classes and modules that explore humanities and social science content, to encourage students to work through, analyse, understand and respond to that information (K1-K6), and to develop and key academic skills (S4-S11). Seminars in language units may cover reading or listening comprehension, written and spoken language production, translation both from and into Chinese, or the teaching of formal grammar backed up by exercises and drills (K1-K3), and are conducted as far as possible in Chinese increase students' exposure to authentic spoken content in Chinese (S1, S2, S4-S5, S8, S9).
4. Tutorials are meetings arranged between a tutor and an individual student in order to clarify specific problems or questions arising from course material, seminar work or assessment. Tutorials are especially important at Level 3, when students are engaged in a piece of extended research which culminates in the writing of a dissertation. By means of discussion and staff feedback on drafts of the dissertation, Level 3 tutorials in particular play a crucial role in developing knowledge and understanding (K1-K6) and in the development of key skills (S4-S11).
5. Independent study is essential to the successful completion of the programme. New students are introduced to study skills through focussed introduction to a progression of skills in the core academic year module, reinforced by explicit linking to assessment and practice in other Level 1 modules. The amount of independent study broadly expected for each module is clearly set out in the programme information, although it is recognised that this will vary from student to student. Independent study is generally geared towards the assimilation and further clarification of material gleaned from lectures, preparation for seminars, preparation for written assessments, the broader development of knowledge of the field of study, and reflection on, and identification of, individuals' own learning and development needs. Independent study thus contributes to the development of all the programme learning outcomes but is especially important in refining skills S1-S11. It is also crucial for the completion of project work, including the final dissertation.
6. The period of study abroad, during the third year of the programme, is spent at a leading university in a Chinese-speaking society. It is an essential part of the learning experience (K6), providing unrivalled opportunities for creative contact with native speakers, for the sustained exercise and development of both productive and receptive linguistic skills to prepare for final year study at level 3 (S1, S2, S8, S9), for the development of practical intercultural awareness to set alongside the theoretical awareness derived from the study of culture (S3), for the development of personal resourcefulness and adaptability likely to enhance employability (S7-S12). Assessment is by language examination at the host university combined with a reflective project. Any student who fails that first assessment may resit on return to Sheffield.

Opportunities to demonstrate achievement of the learning outcomes are provided through the following assessment methods:

Regular formative assessment – usually in the form of periodic tests or exercises designed to reinforce knowledge and skills such as vocabulary acquisition, language production (written and spoken), language comprehension (written and spoken), translation to and from Chinese – is used at all levels to monitor carefully the student's progression through the core language programme and to pick up and rectify areas of potential weakness in linguistic competence (K1, S1, S2, S8, S9).

Summative assessment of Chinese-language knowledge and skills uses a variety of methods across all levels, combining formal examination, aural skills testing, continuous assessment of oral skills, formal assessment of oral/aural skills through presentations and exercises of specific types (academic presentation, group presentation, job interview); and coursework (translation) geared to replicate real-world practice in employment and elsewhere.

Assessment of modules in thematic subjects (politics, culture, history, etc.) uses appropriate combinations of the following:

- essay writing to test subject knowledge, information literacy, critical and analytical thinking, and academic writing and argumentation (K2, K4, K5).
- project work designed to test subject knowledge and skills development across the entire programme, and allow for autonomy in student learning (K2, K4, K5, S3-10). Project work is broadly defined to include the production of a range of written, oral and media materials, or combination of these.
- presentations, both individually and in groups, designed to test organisational and communicative skills; and develop group working and peer-support (S7, S9).
- a level 4 **dissertation** assesses the ability of a student to successfully complete an in-depth piece of research using primary and secondary materials in both English and Chinese (S2-S6, S8-S10), and their understanding of the particular topic chosen (K1-K5).

19. Reference points

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

The research interests of departmental staff and the research strategy of the School of East Asian Studies

The Sheffield Graduate Attributes

<https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/sheffieldgraduate/studentattributes>

Subject Benchmark Statements

<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Documents/SBS-Area-Studies-16.pdf>

Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (2014)

<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/publications/information-and-guidance/publication?PubID=2843>

University Strategic Plan

<http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/strategicplan>

Learning and Teaching Strategy (2016-21)

https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/polopoly_fs/1.661828!/file/FinalStrategy.pdf

20. Programme structure and regulations

Students must take 120 credits each year from one pathway, made up as follows:

Pathway A (ab initio)

- at Level 1 four core Chinese Language modules (two 20 credit modules on Literacy and Writing, and two 10 credit modules on Oral and Aural Skills); the core academic year module providing East Asian Studies content and skills training, and a critical reading module based on the assimilation, analysis and interpretation of a focussed body of literature in the Chinese social sciences or humanities plus unrestricted modules (20 credits) from inside and/or outside the Department.
- at Level 2, four core Chinese Language modules (two 20 credit modules on Literacy and Writing, and two 10 credit modules on Oral and Aural Skills); one of four approved 20 credit modules on Gender and Identities in East Asia or Mass Culture in Twentieth Century East Asia; East Asian Cinema; or Digital East

Asia; modules amounting to the value of 20 credits chosen from a range of Chinese modules offered by the Department which cover the political, social, historical and cultural features of modern and contemporary China, plus unrestricted modules (20 credits) from inside and/or outside the Department.

- a year spent in a Chinese-speaking society at Level 3, developing advanced language skills and applying their critical skills to practical experience of the country.
- at Level 4, two core Chinese Language modules, a 40 credit dissertation requiring the use of Chinese language sources, and modules up to the value of 20 credits from a range of modules offered by the Department focussing on the current research activities of Department staff, plus unrestricted modules (20 credits) from inside and/or outside the Department.

Pathway B (students with substantial prior study of Chinese)

- at Level 1 four core Chinese Language modules (two 20 credit modules on Literacy and Writing, and two 10 credit modules on Oral and Aural Skills) in the “advanced” pathway; the core academic year module providing East Asian Studies content and skills training, and a critical reading module based on the assimilation, analysis and interpretation of a focussed body of literature in the Chinese social sciences or humanities plus unrestricted modules (20 credits) from inside and/or outside the Department.
- a year spent in a Chinese-speaking society at Level 2, developing advanced language skills and applying their critical skills to practical experience of the country.
- at Level 3, two core Chinese Language modules in the “advanced” pathway (20+20 credits); one of four approved 20 credit modules on Gender and Identities in East Asia or Mass Culture in Twentieth Century East Asia; East Asian Cinema; or Digital East Asia; modules amounting to the value of 40 credits chosen from a range of Chinese studies modules offered by the Department which cover the political, social, historical and cultural features of modern and contemporary China, plus unrestricted modules (20 credits) from inside and/or outside the Department.
- at Level 4, two core Chinese Language modules in the “advanced” pathway, a 40 credit dissertation requiring the use of Chinese language sources, and modules up to the value of 20 credits from a range of modules offered by the Department focussing on the current research activities of Department staff, plus unrestricted modules (20 credits) from inside and/or outside the Department.

The programme structure is designed to provide a context in which students can achieve all of the programme learning outcomes.

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

21. Student development over the course of study

In Pathway A (*ab initio*)

At **Level 1**, the programme provides: (a) a core of language modules which develop skills in Chinese from beginner's level; (b) a core academic year module designed to aid the transition from school to university, place the study of Chinese-speaking societies in an East Asian context and provide a spine of training in key academic skills; and (c) critical reading to provide an initial disciplinary perspective, develop an area focus and reinforce the skills training from the material covered in the core module.

Level 2 builds on the language and studies skills developed in Level 1, The choice of one of four approved 20 credit modules on Gender and Identities in East Asia or Mass Culture in Twentieth Century East Asia; East Asian Cinema; or Digital East Asia will provide students with a solid grounding in disciplinary approaches and methodologies used for answering questions about East Asia, as well as providing key context for their studies of Chinese-speaking societies. The options introduce students to further approaches required for the study within one or more disciplines covered and relate these to Area Studies, further develop their critical and analytical skills; and provide training in key academic and transferable skills such as presentation and group working.

The **Year Abroad** is taken in Year Three. Students study at a leading university in a Chinese-speaking society. The Year Abroad consolidates all language skills, promotes intercultural awareness and understanding, develops self-reliance and confidence in the use of Chinese, encourages students to reflect on their own linguistic competence and develop as autonomous learners. On the studies side, it provides practical experience in applying and extending their understanding of theory and content covered in the course to date and also gives students opportunities to apply and consolidate the research, critical and advanced linguistic skills that will be required for the final dissertation.

At Level 4 the language modules build on linguistic development during the Year Abroad, extending grammatical competence, exploring advanced translation, extending essay skills and oral competence. Language modules build on the advanced competence in areas of the written and spoken language gained in earlier study and focus on the development of the key language skills most likely to be used in employment and the seeking of it (translation, reading comprehension and summarisation, report writing and written communication (letters, emails) and formal oral communication (interviews and presentations). The options, which are strongly focused on areas of current staff research, are designed to deepen students' understanding of the specialist fields covered and of the methodologies the investigation of them entails, and to enhance their analytical skills, their intellectual sophistication, and their abilities in written and oral expression. Students also write a dissertation on a China-related topic, for which some use of Chinese language sources is required.

Pathway B (students with substantial prior study of Chinese)

At **Level 1**, the programme provides: (a) a core of language modules which develop skills in Chinese in the advanced pathway; (b) a core academic year module designed to aid the transition from school to university, place the study of Chinese-speaking societies in an East Asian context and provide a spine of training in key academic skills; and (c) critical reading to provide an initial disciplinary perspective, develop an area focus and reinforce the skills training from the material covered in the core module.

The **Year Abroad** is taken in Year Two. Students study at a leading university in a Chinese-speaking society. The Year Abroad consolidates all language skills, promotes intercultural awareness and understanding, develops self-reliance and confidence in the use of Chinese, encourages students to reflect on their own linguistic competence and develop as autonomous learners. On the studies side, it provides practical experience in applying and extending their understanding of theory and content covered in the course to date and also gives students opportunities to apply and consolidate the research, critical, writing and advanced linguistic skills that will be required for further study in thematic subjects on return to Sheffield.

Level 3 builds on the language skills developed during the Year Abroad, and extends critical, research and writing skills. Language modules build on the advanced competence in areas of the written and spoken language gained in earlier study and focus on the development of the key language skills most likely to be used in employment and the seeking of it (translation, reading comprehension and summarisation, report writing and written communication (letters, emails) and formal oral communication (interviews and presentations). The choice of one of four approved 20 credit modules on Gender and Identities in East Asia or Mass Culture in Twentieth Century East Asia; East Asian Cinema; or Digital East Asia will provide students with a solid grounding in disciplinary approaches and methodologies used for answering questions about East Asia, as well as providing key context for their studies of Chinese-speaking societies. The options introduce students to further approaches required for the study within one or more disciplines covered and relate these to Area Studies, further develop their critical and analytical skills; and provide training in key academic and transferable skills such as presentation and group working.

At Level 4 the language modules require that students develop sophisticated language skills through taught work and apply these to an independent project. The options, which are strongly focused on areas of current staff research, are designed to deepen students' understanding of the specialist fields covered and of the methodologies the investigation of them entails, and to enhance their analytical skills, their intellectual sophistication, and their abilities in written and oral expression. Students also write a dissertation on a China-related topic, for which some use of Chinese language sources is required.

22. Criteria for admission to the programme

The School teaches Chinese from beginner's level, and no prior language knowledge is required; the advanced pathway is available for students with substantial prior study of Chinese language, subject to language test on arrival.

Detailed information regarding admission to programmes is available from the University's On-Line Prospectus at: <https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/prospectus/courseDetails.do?id=T1102018>

23. Additional information

For further information students are directed to the School web pages at www.seas.ac.uk

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.shf.ac.uk/ssid>.