

Programme Title: MA in Linguistics



## Programme Specification

Awarding Body/Institution	Queen Mary, University of London
Teaching Institution	Queen Mary, University of London
Name of Final Award and Programme Title	MA in Linguistics
Name of Interim Award(s)	
Duration of Study / Period of Registration	1 calendar year (full-time); 2 calendar years (part-time)
QM Programme Code / UCAS Code(s)	QM Programme Code: Q1S1, Q1S2
QAA Benchmark Group	
FHEQ Level of Award	Level 7
Programme Accredited by	n/a
Date Programme Specification Approved	24 Oct 2012
Responsible School / Institute	School of Languages, Linguistics & Film

Schools which will also be involved in teaching part of the programme

Institution(s) other than Queen Mary that will provide some teaching for the programme

### Programme Outline

This programme is designed to offer you advanced training in the core subject areas of linguistics (Formal Linguistics and Sociolinguistics). You will be taught by the department's internationally recognised staff, and be part of the vibrant research culture of the department.

This degree also offers you the opportunity to gain practical experience in both conducting and applying linguistics research. In addition to your dissertations, you will have the option to work as a Research Assistant on one of the department's ongoing research projects and/or to take part in a Knowledge Transfer Placement with one of our private or public sector partners.

Upon acceptance, you will work with an academic advisor to tailor a programme of study that corresponds to your experience and research interests. We strongly encourage cross-disciplinary interaction and welcome students with diverse interests. You can aim for a cross-disciplinary programme or choose to specialise in formal linguistics or in sociolinguistics.

### Aims of the Programme

The aim of this programme is to produce well-trained linguists capable of going on immediately to begin a PhD in Linguistics and/or to take employment in a field in which linguistics plays an important part.

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At the same time, we realize that continuing on to PhD research will not be every MA student's goal. For this reason, the new MA programme will include a number of practical and knowledge transfer components that will allow students to build links with partners in industry and to better appreciate the ways in which advanced training in linguistics can be transferred to work outside the higher education sector. Students will, for example, have the opportunity to engage in a semester-long Knowledge Transfer Partnership with an affiliated organization. During this time, students will work closely with the affiliated organization to bring their expert linguistic knowledge to bear on relevant issues and in so doing demonstrate the impact that Linguistics as a field can have on society. The department succeeded in gaining Prospect funds to support formalizing our links with partner organizations. The Knowledge Transfer Partnership scheme ran in 2011-12 with collaborative projects with the British Museum, the British Library, and the BBC.

In the course of bringing students to the appropriate intellectual level for work in either the higher education or the commercial sectors, we will naturally aim to increase their knowledge of the field of linguistics (and their chosen sub-field), especially of open research questions, and to train them in appropriate research techniques.

### What Will You Be Expected to Achieve?

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#### Academic Content:

A 1	Knowledge and understanding of Sociolinguistic and Formal Linguistic theory, and a critical awareness of current problems in those fields, much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of the discipline
A 2	Advanced research techniques in Sociolinguistics or Formal Linguistics (or both), including both experimental, qualitative and statistical methods (in the case of Sociolinguistics) and experimental design, the elicitation of native speaker judgments and the formulation of grammars using discrete mathematics (in the case of Formal Linguistics)
A 3	Knowledge and understanding of the wide range of applications for linguistic research and its potential for social and economic impact, and an informed sensitivity to the intersections and overlaps between research in linguistics and research in other disciplines throughout the humanities and the social and biological sciences

#### Disciplinary Skills - able to:

B 1	produce critical evaluations of current research in Sociolinguistics and Formal Linguistics
B 2	propose and test new hypotheses in Sociolinguistics and Formal Linguistics, where appropriate
B 3	develop theories of mental and/or social structures through the synthesis and integration of diverse bodies of empirical evidence

#### Attributes:

C 1	An ability to exercise initiative and personal responsibility, including an engagement in self-reflective practice and an ability to discuss strategies and tactics
C 2	Able to continue to learn independently, as required for ongoing professional development; make appropriate use of others to further own practical and intellectual goals
C 3	Able to make well-informed decisions in complex and unpredictable and/or conflict situations

C4	Able to work confidently both individually and in groups, and when in groups accurately assess the capacities of group members and make affective use of them
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## How Will You Learn?

A range of Teaching and Learning techniques will be used, tailored to the learning outcomes of the different modules. These will include lectures, seminar discussions, directed readings, practical and library-based research, presentations, group work and knowledge transfer activities. Individual module forms list further details of teaching and learning procedures.

## How Will You Be Assessed?

A wide range of assessment techniques will also be used. These will include poster presentations, technical exercises, critiques of methodological and theoretical proposals in the literature, and extended written analyses of data. Individual module proposal forms list further details of assessment practices.

Overall, the programme offers a rich combination of summative and formative assessment. In particular, activities such as the Research Practicum will allow students to gain hands-on training in conducting advanced linguistics research and receive constant formative feedback from their research mentor. This experience will prove invaluable to them as they undertake the (summatively assessed) task of writing a dissertation.

## How is the Programme Structured?

The MA in Linguistics will be a single programme that contains the potential for specialization in two areas: Sociolinguistics and Formal Linguistics. This will capitalize on the specializations and strengths of the department and reflect the fact that many incoming students will already have a chosen area in which they wish to specialize. At the same time, we also want to emphasize the unity of Linguistics as a field and the importance of developing cross-sub-disciplinary knowledge (the cross-sub-disciplinarity of QM Linguistics is one of the factors that makes it stand out as a department nationally). For this reason, we are not proposing to offer two distinct MA programmes (one in Sociolinguistics and one in Formal Linguistics), but rather a single programme in which students are initially acquainted with broad training and theory in linguistics (both social and formal dimensions), after which they may choose to specialize or to continue studying both areas. If specializing, students can gain further training in theory and methods for their chosen area; if not, students can take optional modules from either subject area. Four modules are core modules: three in Semester 1 and one in Semester 2. This structure allows for an integrated programme in Linguistics that provides both broad-based instruction in the disciplines as a whole, but also allows students to specialize in a particular sub-field if they choose. This structure is also in keeping with the College's desire to move away from the provision of multiple speciality programmes towards the provision of more comprehensive programmes with multiple pathways.

Because there is only one programme but different specializations, only those module that will be taken by ALL students (i.e., Trends in Linguistic Research, Sociolinguistic Theory, and Concepts and Consequences in Grammatical Theory) are COMPULSORY (with the dissertation as CORE). From the programme perspective, all other modules are ELECTIVE. However, it is obviously also incumbent upon us to ensure that students who prefer a Sociolinguistics specialization take certain modules while students specializing in Formal Linguistics take others. We do so through close advising and by setting pre-requisites on selected MA modules, including the Dissertation, such that students who choose to do a Sociolinguistics dissertation will have a set of pre-requisite modules and those who do a Formal Linguistics dissertation will have a (different) set of pre-requisite modules. This in effect requires students in the respective specializations to take certain training courses, while leaving the structure of the programme as a whole flexible enough to accommodate multiple inter-disciplinary options.

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In addition, mindful of the need to make the most effective use of College resources (in terms of both staff time and teaching space), we propose to share resources with some of the lecture components of our undergraduate teaching provision. In concrete terms, we propose that some of the MA (level 7) modules will share a 2-hour lecture period with corresponding level 6 modules, supplemented by an additional 1-hour level 7 seminar (for MA students only). These modules would maintain distinct level 7 learning outcomes, level 7 reading lists and level 7 assessments. This is a practice that all of our major national competitors use for their MA in Linguistics programmes (including UCL, York and Edinburgh).

Finally, in accordance with the College's academic regulations for MA provision, where we are not able to run a level 7 MA module but the corresponding level 6 module is available, MA students will be permitted to take up to 15 credits at level 6 in the course of their MA.

Given the above, the programme will have the following structure:

SEMESTER 1:

LIN7027: Trends in Linguistic Research (compulsory 15 credit)  
LIN7026: Concepts and Consequences in Grammatical Theory (compulsory 15 credit)  
LIN7002: Sociolinguistic Theory (compulsory 15 credit)  
(One 15 credit Option)

SEMESTER 2:

LIN7005: Dissertation Proseminar (compulsory 15 credit)  
(Three 15 credit Options)

SEMESTER 3:

LIN7006: MA Dissertation in Linguistics (core 60 credit)

Among the optional modules, (Qualitative Methods in Linguistics, Sociolinguistic Theory, Quantitative Methods in Linguistics for the Sociolinguistics Pathway; From Morpheme to Meaning, Formal Methods and Theory for the Formal Linguistics pathway) will be available as options to students in other pathways.

Among the optional modules, students will be permitted to register for one 15 credit option from the following list, if the equivalent level 7 option is not available:

LIN304 Bilingualism in place of LIN7018 Bilingualism  
LIN602 Sex, Gender and Language in place of LIN7019 Sex, Gender and Language  
LIN620 Ethnography of Communication - Foundations and Fieldwork in place of LIN7020 Ethnography of Communication - Foundations and Fieldwork

Students will be permitted to take any combination of options as long as they can make a convincing academic case for their choices. Each module will be worth 15 credits and the dissertation 60, giving 180 credits overall.

Additionally, we will advise students to attend two courses offered by the Queen Mary/Goldsmiths ESRC Doctoral Training Centre (quantitative methods and qualitative methods), which will be enhanced with additional Linguistics-specific workshops. The MA has been officially recognized by the DTC so attendance by our MA students is welcomed.

Academic Year of Study 1

Module Title	Module Code	Credits	Level	Module Selection Status	Academic Year of Study	Semester

## What Are the Entry Requirements?

- Upper second-class honours (or overseas equivalent) in an undergraduate degree with a significant linguistics component
- IELTS 7.0 with 7.0 in writing (or equivalent TOEFL, IBTOEFL, PTE) required of overseas applicants whose first language is not English

## How Do We Listen and Act on Your Feedback?

The Staff-Student Liaison Committee provides a formal means of communication and discussion between Schools and its students. The committee consists of student representatives from each year in the school/institute together with appropriate representation from staff within the school/institute. It is designed to respond to the needs of students, as well as act as a forum for discussing programme and module developments. Staff-Student Liaison Committees meet regularly throughout the year.

Each school operates a Learning and Teaching Committee, or equivalent, which advises the School/Institute Director of Taught Programmes on all matters relating to the delivery of taught programmes at school level including monitoring the application of relevant QM policies and reviewing all proposals for module and programme approval and amendment before submission to Taught Programmes Board. Student views are incorporated in this Committee's work in a number of ways, such as through student membership, or consideration of student surveys.

All schools operate an Annual Programme Review of their taught undergraduate and postgraduate provision. The process is normally organised at a School-level basis with the Head of School, or equivalent, responsible for the completion of the school's Annual Programme Reviews. Schools/institutes are required to produce a separate Annual Programme Review for undergraduate programmes and for postgraduate taught programmes using the relevant Undergraduate or Postgraduate Annual Programme Review pro-forma. Students' views are considered in this process through analysis of the NSS and module evaluations.

## Academic Support

### Personal tutor arrangements

The policy of the School of Languages, Linguistics and Film is to provide maximum support and guidance to all students of the School throughout their course of study at Queen Mary. Each student's academic progress and personal welfare is monitored by an adviser, with whom regular meetings are scheduled.

Advisers see each Advisee at regular intervals and are responsible for the overall profile of the student's programme of study. This is chiefly an academic role, covering module choice and registration, advice on study skills and assessment. The other main function of the Adviser is a pastoral one. Advisers are interested in their Advisees' general welfare and if difficult problems of a pastoral or academic nature emerge, may recommend they consult the School Senior Tutor or College professional service departments, including Disability and Dyslexia, Welfare, and Counselling.

### Support for learning and personal development

All teaching staff hold regular office hours in which students are actively encouraged to discuss their work and their progress.

The School of Languages, Linguistics and Film runs a Writing Support Centre which offers weekly workshops to any students who would like to develop their academic writing further. The College also offers a range of services to support you in your learning and help you develop academically and professionally. These include: Academic Study Workshops, Academic English and Study Skills Support and One-to-One Tutorials working with you on your written assignments.

### Programme induction

All students beginning study on the programme participate in an introductory meeting to the programme. This also includes opportunities for social interaction, and scheduled meetings with personal advisers.

## Programme-specific Rules and Facts

## Specific Support for Disabled Students

Queen Mary has a central Disability and Dyslexia Service (DDS) that offers support for all students with disabilities, specific learning difficulties and mental health issues. The DDS supports all Queen Mary students: full-time, part-time, undergraduate, postgraduate, UK and international at all campuses and all sites.

Students can access advice, guidance and support in the following areas:

- Finding out if you have a specific learning difficulty like dyslexia
- Applying for funding through the Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA)
- Arranging DSA assessments of need
- Special arrangements in examinations
- Accessing loaned equipment (e.g. digital recorders)
- Specialist one-to-one "study skills" tuition
- Ensuring access to course materials in alternative formats (e.g. Braille)
- Providing educational support workers (e.g. note-takers, readers, library assistants)
- Mentoring support for students with mental health issues and conditions on the autistic spectrum.

## Links With Employers, Placement Opportunities and Transferable Skills

### Career prospects

The study of linguistics at this level develops a unique set of skills and knowledge, including:

- Numeracy skills
- Sophisticated data collection and analysis techniques
- Logical and critical thinking
- Communication, presentation and IT skills.

### Where linguistics graduates work

Your skills and knowledge will be valuable in any field where a sensitivity to language and the ability to use evidence are important, in particular:

- Directly related fields such as teaching, translating, lexicography and speech therapy
- Areas such as social research, the media, PR, publishing, marketing, branding (eg in helping to develop new brand names), cultural institutions, and IT (eg in the development of voice recognition or predictive texting software).

### Continuing onto further research

You will also be ideally placed to pursue further research; each year, a good percentage of our MA students continue onto PhD studies (in 2011, it was 25 per cent).

### Our links with industry

A number of our academics take on consultancy work with industry, for example:

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Developing and researching new global brand names  
Working as pronunciation specialists for news organisations, such as the BBC.

Staff draw on this industry experience to inform and enrich their teaching, bringing theoretical subjects to life. These links can also lead to opportunities to work with external organisations as part of the Knowledge Transfer Placements option.

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## Programme Specification Approval

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**Person completing Programme Specification**

Jill Evans

**Person responsible for management of programme**

Erez Levon

**Date Programme Specification produced/amended  
by School Learning and Teaching Committee**

5 Oct 2012

**Date Programme Specification approved by  
Taught Programmes Board**

24 Oct 2012