Introduction and special features

The MA in Applied Linguistics: TESOL positions the teaching of English to speakers of other languages into the wider context provided by the field of applied linguistics. The programme aims to equip you with a range of analytical tools and develop your ability to critically reflect on the potential solutions available in different contexts of teaching and learning practice. As a graduate of the programme, you will be able to apply the most up-to-date research findings in your own teaching context, as well as contributing towards the body of knowledge about an area of specialism that you will develop as part of your studies.

The MA in Applied Linguistics: TESOL is designed for both qualified/experienced and intending TESOL professionals (who may be joining the programme directly from undergraduate-level studies or who may have other, non-ESOL, and teaching experience). The programme attracts students from the UK and many parts of the world, who bring with them a diverse mix of educational backgrounds and experiences. This creates opportunities for you to work with people of different nationalities and educational cultures with a view to increasing your cross-cultural understanding and opening your mind to new possibilities within your specialisation. In addition, situating the TESOL profession within the wider context of applied linguistics provides you with the opportunity to reflect on the similarities between your own work and that of other applied linguists, including translators and interpreters, dictionary writers, literacy teachers and language planners to name a few. Learning and assessment activities are designed to require you to draw on the diversity of your peer group in order to realise the benefits for your own professional development, in this very diverse profession.
Should you wish to pursue an academic career, you would be well-placed to apply to continue your studies in linguistics at doctoral level (at YSJU and in other institutions) upon successful completion of this Master’s programme.

**Special features**

The School of Languages and Linguistics (SoLL) has particular research strengths which are reflected in the content of the programme: a number of the key readings used on the modules have been written by members of the teaching staff\(^1\). The School’s own research unit LIdIA – Language and Identities in Interaction) promotes a vibrant research culture which enhances the programme and ensures that contents are continually updated. As a postgraduate student, you will have opportunities to:

- attend LIdIA research seminars and events, and departmental Colloquium Lectures;
- co-organise and present at the yearly conference run by SoLL post-graduate students, Postgraduate Forum in Applied Linguistics (PFAL);
- participate in the YSJU Post Graduate Research Methodologies conference.

As a student on this programme, you will also have unique opportunities to enhance your language teaching and learning expertise on a very practical level and at no extra cost. If you are seeking practical TESOL experience and additional external qualifications which you do not hold already, you may:

- apply to take the Cambridge ESOL Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (CELTA) or
- take the Cambridge Teaching Knowledge Test (TKT) whilst in York. Although CELTA and TKT are not part of the master’s programme, students who are successful in securing a place on the CELTA, or choose to sit the TKT\(^2\), can do so at no extra cost.

Whilst you are a student on the programme, you may also study another language for free, including Japanese, Korean, Mandarin Chinese, French, Spanish, German or British Sign Language.

As a postgraduate student in SoLL, you will be able to take bespoke academic writing development classes. These sessions will comprise 10 hours of teaching per semester, plus independent study and formative assessments, with feedback from your peers and from the academic writing development tutors. Particular attention will be paid to the issues of academic integrity, paraphrasing and summarising, referencing and critical thinking.

**Admissions criteria**

You must meet the University’s general entry criteria for postgraduate study. In addition, you must have:

- A degree (normally 2.2 or above) from an approved university or institution.
- An equivalent qualification acceptable to York St John University.
- IELTS 6.5, with no less than 6.0 in the individual components, or equivalent (international students)

If your first language is not English, you need to take an IELTS test or an equivalent qualification accepted by the University (see [https://www.yorksj.ac.uk/international/how-to-apply/english-language-requirements/](https://www.yorksj.ac.uk/international/how-to-apply/english-language-requirements/)).

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\(^2\) Both CELTA and TKT are subject to external entry requirements. Students applying to complete the CELTA course would need to satisfy additional conditions and acceptance on to the course would be subject to interview.
If you do not have traditional qualifications, you may be eligible for entry on the basis of Accredited Prior (Experiential) Learning (APL/APEL). We also consider applications for entry with advanced standing.

**Programme aims**

The MA Applied Linguistics: TESOL programme aims to:

- Provide a broad disciplinary framework from applied linguistics for the professional development of teachers and intending TESOL teachers. The framework offers opportunities for encouraging enquiry and reflection, promoting advanced-level practice, and developing skills appropriate to your personal and professional needs.
- Develop your existing academic and professional knowledge to prepare you to engage in research within the field of TESOL with a view to informing your future practice.
- Enable you to develop a range of cognitive skills including data collection, analysis, application of theories and principles, synthesis and evaluation.
- Enable you to develop existing skills of communication, teamwork, self-management, organisation and problem-solving in order to enhance your personal development and professional practice.
- Provide opportunities to share experiences with students from different educational contexts and bring an international perspective to the discipline, whilst learning to appreciate and value your own and others’ educational cultures.
- Enable you to acquire a qualification which will enhance your present or future career options, including progression to doctoral level programmes.

**Programme learning outcomes**

**Level 7 / FHEQ L7**

*Upon successful completion of the programme students will be able to:*

1. Critically evaluate current research and advanced scholarship relevant to TESOL as a profession within the disciplinary framework provided by applied linguistics.
2. Demonstrate Apply an in-depth knowledge of applied linguistics in the design, and critical evaluation, of solutions for complex problems in unpredictable situations.
3. Critically apply and reflect on techniques applicable to your own research or advanced scholarship.
4. Take an independent and self-reflective role in developing professional relationships with others.
5. Demonstrate self-direction and originality in the formulation of research ideas, questions and hypotheses, including the development, implementation and execution of plans to evaluate these

**Programme Structure**

The MA Applied Linguistics: TESOL is a modular programme. Students will take a range of Level 7 modules. The modules, with their credit rating, are listed by semester below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Semester</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
<th>Status of Module</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MEL061</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Key Themes in Applied Linguistics</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MLG006</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Second Language Acquisition</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Learning, teaching and assessment

Throughout the programme, you are encouraged to play an active role, critically reflecting on subject input and contextualising it through structured and assessed reflection on how your reading and discussion connects with your own experience. Module tutors will take the role of facilitators, encouraging you to think outside your own sphere of reference, maximising your subject knowledge and understanding, whilst drawing inferences for best practice.

Your fellow participants in the MA Applied Linguistics: TESOL programme will bring their experiences, as learners and/or teachers in a diverse range of educational cultures, sectors and as users of many different languages, to group discussions in lectures and seminars. Your tutors have many years of experience of structuring classroom tasks to ensure that this valuable cultural and linguistic capital is translated into new knowledge for all participants. Your tutors will also use the diversity of your peers to demonstrate how effective classroom management techniques can keep all students involved, and prevent any group or individual being disadvantaged or unfairly advantaged by their differences.

Your final piece of work will be a dissertation exploring a specific research question(s) about a topic within TESOL which is of interest to you. The dissertation provides an opportunity for you to show that your knowledge, as it applies to your chosen research topic and question, is both relevant and up-to-date. You will be supervised by an academic member of staff, but will be guided towards taking independent responsibility for your own work. The dissertation module is designed to enable you to provide evidence of your ability to pro-actively formulate research plans, independently carry these out and critically reflect on your findings.

Throughout the programme, you will be helped to acquire the key skills appropriate to taught postgraduate study. These include: evaluation of your own achievement and that of others; the ability to develop professional relationships; self-direction and effective decision-making and time management; independent learning; and the ability to work in a way that encourages continuing professional development. You will be also encouraged to share your experience and reflections through in-class and online dialogue, as part of a proactive approach to learning.

The programme will therefore engage in the following learning, teaching and assessment practices:

- Flexible and accessible learning and teaching methods, with full use of the virtual learning environment (VLE), email communication and varied timetabling of modules.
- The use of a range of assessment methods, to provide for a diverse range of preferences in assessment type.
- The provision of a variety of learning methods within and across modules to appeal to a diverse range of learning styles.

The strategy is to employ a range of teaching and learning methods as follows:

- Pre-course reflective tasks.
- Lectures (with supporting materials).
- Tutor and student-led seminars.
- Workshops and discussion groups.
- Independent study and research.
- Collection and analysis of data.
- Individual and group tutorials.
- Access to the digital archive of the Centre for Languages and Linguistics Colloquium Series of guest lectures hosted on the University Digital Repository.
- Verbal feedback.
- Access to University-based support services including library and IT support.
- Module information and assessment briefs with participant requirements, timetable, learning outcomes, dates of submission and associated policy and procedure.
- Written feedback on assessed work.

There are a range of assessments designed to suit the needs of all students. Elements of the assessment strategy are as follows:

- Submission of module assessments will be wholly online via the VLE.
- Assessment will occur during, and at the end of the module.
- A variety of assessment types will be utilised throughout the programme:
  - For summative assessments (those contributing to final module marks) these will include essays, reflective reports, peer teaching (individual and/or group), ePortfolio, a research project proposal and a dissertation.
  - For formative assessments and for feedback purposes, you may be asked to post on module discussion forums, complete on-line quizzes, and submit essay plans or draft materials for tutor and/or peer review.
- Where appropriate, you will be encouraged, via negotiation with the module tutors, to link your professional practice with the academic content of the programme in order that one may inform the other.

**Progression and graduation requirements**

The University’s general regulations for taught postgraduate awards apply to this programme.

Any modules that must be passed for progression or award are indicated in the Programme Structure section.

**Internal and external reference points**

This programme specification was formulated with reference to:
- [University Mission Statement](#) [see page two]
- [Strategic Plan 2015-20](#) [see page four]
- [The Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies](#)
- [QAA Master’s Degree Characteristics](#)

*Date written / revised: 21/03/17*