

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION



1	Awarding Institution	Newcastle University
2	Teaching Institution	Newcastle University
3	Final Award	MA
4	Programme Title	MA in Applied Linguistics and TESOL
5	UCAS/Programme Code	4056
6	Programme Accreditation	N/A
7	QAA Subject Benchmark(s)	Education
8	FHEQ Level	Masters
9	Date written/revised	May 2007

10 Programme Aims

The general aim of the programme is to familiarise students with current developments in TESOL and applied linguistics.

For students with little or no teaching experience, the programme is intended to provide an introduction to the most important current issues in TESOL, and to help students develop and practice skills which will help them realise their personal and professional potential.

Students who are experienced teachers are encouraged to identify key concepts, issues and developments relating to their professional context, reflect on current practice and develop and practice skills which will help them realise their personal and professional potential.

The aims for the programme for students with little or no teaching experience are:

- To provide an introduction to current issues and key trends in language learning and teaching in a global context.
- To develop the knowledge and skills participants will need as practising language teachers.
- To help participants gain a basic knowledge of Applied Linguistics and TESOL as a resource in English language teaching.
- To prepare participants for independent research in the field of Applied Linguistics and TESOL.

The aims for the programme for students who are experienced teachers are:

- To familiarise participants with current issues and key trends in language learning and teaching in a global context.
- To build upon and develop the participants' existing knowledge and professional skills in as practising language teachers.
- To help participants gain a deeper knowledge of Applied Linguistics and TESOL as a resource in English language teaching.

For all students on the programme the aims are:

- To provide opportunities for students to study in depth particular areas of Applied Linguistics and TESOL
- To prepare participants for independent research in the field of Applied Linguistics and TESOL.

11 Learning Outcomes

The programme provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding and general key skills in the following areas and to make an effective contribution within the students' own educational system.

Knowledge and Understanding
By the end of the course participants will be able to:
A1 demonstrate that they can assimilate and critically appraise the information and formulate appropriate action.
A2 set personal goals, rise to challenges and make informed decisions.
A3 demonstrate knowledge and understanding through the submission of written assignments for each module and a dissertation
A4 participate in seminars, workshops, group work, presentations, peer-teaching activities, tutorials, problem solving activities and research supervision.
Teaching and Learning Methods
The programme is structured to include lectures, seminars, workshops and tutorials as the main methods of enhancing knowledge and understanding.
Assessment Strategy
Knowledge and understanding is assessed primarily through assignments and the dissertation. Examinations are used where exam tasks most closely match the way in which knowledge and understanding developed in a particular module might be applied in practice.
Intellectual Skills
On completing the programme students should be able to:
B1 understand and apply key recent ideas in approaches, methods, course design, assessment and classroom techniques.
B2 use these recent ideas about approaches, methods, course design, assessment and classroom techniques to critically assess language learning activities and materials.
B3 use these ideas to design, carry out, and interpret a small-scale study in Applied Linguistics and TESOL.
B4 apply these ideas to the design and assessment of language learning activities and materials.
Teaching and Learning Methods
Professional skills and subject specific skills are modelled in lectures, seminars, and workshops. Mastery of these skills is enhanced through student participation in seminars, peer-teaching sessions and workshops. Students are encouraged to engage in action research and undertake case studies.
Assessment Strategy
Subject-specific skills/ professional skills are demonstrated through directed tasks and the production and evaluation of teaching materials. They are assessed primarily through assignments and a dissertation.
Practical Skills
On completing the programme students should be able to:
C1 critically interpret, analyse and evaluate theories, concepts and arguments
C2 formulate arguments and contribute to discussion.
C3 locate, interpret and analyse data.
C4 where appropriate, critically reflect on professional practice in the light of relevant theory.
Teaching and Learning Methods
Lectures, workshops and seminars are interactive and students are encouraged to discuss and evaluate arguments, critically engage with theory and practice in their chosen field, and undertake problem solving activities. Skills of critical evaluation and analysis are further enhanced through directed tasks. Data collection and analysis are developed through the research methodology module and through producing a dissertation.
Assessment Strategy
Cognitive skills are demonstrated through engagement in group work, directed tasks and action research. They are assessed, primarily through assignments and a dissertation, and also through participation in modules and seminars

Transferable/Key Skills
<p>On completing the programme students should be able to:</p> <p>D1 present complex ideas clearly and articulately in English</p> <p>D2 work with others of different cultural and linguistic backgrounds to achieve an objective.</p> <p>D3 independently manage their time, make plans, and set priorities to achieve complex objectives over several months' work.</p> <p>D4 assimilate, analyse, and evaluate complex information in English, identifying key issues and drawing well-reasoned conclusions.</p> <p>D5 word-process, manage files, use e-mail, and the Web.</p>
Teaching and Learning Methods
<p>Key skills are introduced to students through sessions within the induction programme and skills sessions within modules. IT and numeracy skills are further developed in Research Methods and Communication and Information Skills modules. Students have the opportunity to further develop work and study skills through researching and producing assignments and a dissertation. Oral communication skills are particularly developed through seminars and presentations, group work, participation in interactive lectures. Teamwork skills are enhanced through group activities and presentations. The entire course is an exercise in time management. Students are required to set objectives, determine priorities, schedule their workload and meet deadlines.</p>
Assessment Strategy
<p>Key (transferable) skills are addressed in the induction programme and within modules. Some are assessed within indirectly within particular modules, and some are directly assessed within optional modules.</p>

12 Programme Curriculum, Structure and Features
Basic structure of the programme
<p>The programme is studied over one year, full time. It consists of taught modules and a dissertation or Software Portfolio with a total of 180 credits. The taught part of the course consists of a combination of core compulsory modules in TESOL and Applied Linguistics to the value of 40 or 60 credits, optional modules on any approved topic to the value of 60 or 80 credits, and the dissertation or Software Portfolio to the value of 60 credits.</p>
Key features of the programme (including what makes the programme distinctive)
<p>a) Taught Element The compulsory modules are:</p> <p><i>For students with less than two years' full-time teaching experience:</i> ALT8084 Introduction to TESOL ALT8094 Core Issues In Second Language Acquisition</p> <p><i>For students with at least two years' full-time teaching experience:</i> ALT8041 TESOL Theory and Practice</p> <p><i>For all students:</i> ALT8001 Research Methods in Applied Linguistics</p> <p>The optional modules are: Any modules approved by the Degree Programme Director (typically these will be Applied Linguistics and TESOL modules, or modules in Linguistics or Education modules.</p> <p>b. Research element Students must complete:</p> <p>ALT8098 Dissertation or ALT8099 Software Portfolio</p>

Programme regulations (link to on-line version)

<http://www.ncl.ac.uk/regulations/programme/2007-2008/programme/4056.php>

13 Criteria for admission

A candidate for the degree of Master of Arts in Applied Linguistics and TESOL must, unless the Dean of Postgraduate Studies determines otherwise in any individual case

- (a) be a graduate of this or another approved University or awarding body; or
- (b) hold another qualification approved by the Dean of Postgraduate Studies as equivalent to a degree of a university in the United Kingdom;
- (c) if English is not their first language, provide evidence to show that their proficiency in English is at a level appropriate for postgraduate study.

Admissions policy

In addition to meeting the criteria noted above, all candidates are also required to submit at least one satisfactory references Any applicants living in or visiting the UK at the time of the application are invited for interview.

Arrangements for non-standard entrants

By concession from the Dean of Postgraduate Studies, limited exemption may also be granted to an individual candidate from certain parts of the programme of study in recognition of equivalent work undertaken at other approved institutions, or for accreditation of other forms of prior learning.

14 Support for Student Learning*Induction*

During the first week of the first semester students attend an induction programme. New students will be given a general introduction to University life and the University's principle support services and general information about the School and their programme, as described in the Degree Programme Handbook. New and continuing students will be given detailed programme information and the timetable of lectures/practicals/labs/ tutorials/etc. The International Office offers an additional induction programme for overseas students (see <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/international/arrival/sept/index.phtml>)

Study skills support

Students will learn a range of Personal Transferable Skills, including Study Skills, as outlined in the Programme Specification. Some of this material, e.g. time management is covered in the appropriate Induction Programme. Students are explicitly tutored on their approach to both group and individual projects.

Academic support

The initial point of contact for a student is with a lecturer or module leader, or their tutor (see below) for more generic issues. Thereafter the Degree Programme Director or Head of School may be consulted. Issues relating to the programme may be raised at the Staff-Student Committee, and/or at the Board of Studies.

Pastoral support

All students are assigned a personal tutor whose responsibility is to monitor the academic performance and overall well-being of their tutees. Details of the personal tutor system can be found at <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/teachingexcellence/support/pgtutor.htm>
In addition the University offers a range of support services, including the Student Advice Centre, the Counselling and Wellbeing team, the Mature Student Support Officer, and a Childcare Support Officer, see <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/subjects/services/support.html>

Support for students with disabilities

The University's Disability Support Service provides help and advice for disabled students at the University - and those thinking of coming to Newcastle. It provides individuals with: advice about the University's facilities, services and the accessibility of campus; details about the technical support available; guidance in study skills and advice on financial support

arrangements; a resources room with equipment and software to assist students in their studies. For further details see <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/disability-support/>

Learning resources

The University's main learning resources are provided by the Robinson and Walton Libraries (for books, journals, online resources), and Information Systems and Services, which supports campus-wide computing facilities, see <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/postgraduate/support/facilities/>

All new students whose first language is not English are required to take an English Language test in the Language Centre. Where appropriate, in-session language training can be provided. The Language Centre houses a range of resources for learning other languages. See <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/postgraduate/support/facilities/langcen.phtml>

15 Methods for evaluating and improving the quality and standards of teaching and learning

Module reviews

All modules are subject to review by questionnaires which are considered by the Board of Studies. Changes to, or the introduction of new, modules are considered at the School Teaching and Learning Committee and at the Board of Studies. Student opinion is sought at the Staff-Student Committee and/or the Board of Studies. New modules and major changes to existing modules are subject to approval by the Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee.

Programme reviews

The Board of Studies conducts an Annual Monitoring and Review of the degree programme and reports to Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee.

External Examiner reports

External Examiner reports are considered by the Board of Studies. The Board responds to these reports through Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee. External Examiner reports are shared with institutional student representatives, through the Staff-Student Committee.

Student evaluations

All modules, and the degree programme, are subject to review by student questionnaires. Informal student evaluation is also obtained at the Staff-Student Committee, and the Board of Studies.

Mechanisms for gaining student feedback

Feedback is channelled via the Staff-Student Committee and the Board of Studies.

Faculty and University Review Mechanisms

The programme is subject to the University's Internal Subject Review process, see http://www.ncl.ac.uk/aqss/qsh/internal_subject_review/index.php

16 Regulation of assessment

Pass mark

The pass mark for Postgraduate programmes is 50

Course requirements

Progression is subject to the University's Masters Degree Progress Regulations, Taught and Research (<http://www.ncl.ac.uk/calendar/university.regs/tpmdepr.pdf>) and Examination Conventions for Taught Masters Degrees (<http://www.ncl.ac.uk/calendar/university.regs/tpmdeprexamconv.pdf>). Limited compensation up to 40 credits of the taught element and down to a mark of 40 is possible and there are reassessment opportunities, with certain restrictions.

Common Marking Scheme

The University employs a common marking scheme, which is specified in the Taught Postgraduate Examination Conventions, namely:

Summary description applicable to postgraduate Masters programmes

Summary description applicable to postgraduate Certificate and Diploma programmes

<50	Fail	<50	Fail
50-59	Pass	50 or above	Pass
60-69	Pass with Merit		
70 or above	Pass with Distinction		

Role of the External Examiner

An External Examiner, a distinguished member of the subject community, is appointed by Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee, after recommendation from the Board of Studies.

The External Examiner is expected to:

- See and approve examination papers
- Moderate examination and coursework marking
- Attend the Board of Examiners
- Report to the University on the standards of the programme

In addition, information relating to the programme is provided in:

The University Prospectus (see <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/postgraduate/>)

The brochure for the programme (<http://www.ncl.ac.uk/ecls/assets/documents/pdf/TESOL-brochure.pdf>)

University Regulations (see <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/calendar/university.regs/>)

The Degree Programme Handbook

Please note. This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and of the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve if she/he takes full advantage of the learning opportunities provided. The accuracy of the information contained is reviewed by the University and may be checked by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education.