Welcome!

Welcome to the School of English at the University of Leicester. We are delighted that you have chosen our MA programme as a way of expanding your knowledge and extending your skills, and we look forward to getting to know you and working with you.

During the course of your MA programme, you will acquire a well-structured knowledge base for the systematic study of the English language. You will develop your spoken and written communication skills as well as your skills in collecting and handling data. You will learn how to locate and access relevant publications and how to read them critically. As you approach your dissertation, you will move towards a more independent approach to learning, in which you will formulate your own research questions and develop an appropriate methodology for addressing them. Throughout, we will encourage you to reflect upon your own knowledge, understanding and communication skills, and to help your fellow students to reflect on theirs.

Getting to know us

The Language and Linguistics team in the School of English is close-knit, and you will undoubtedly come into contact with all of us during your MA programme. You will find more information about our research interests and contact details on the School of English web pages. Each module on this programme has a Blackboard site, and you will be able to find details of the module convenors’ office hours there.

You will be allocated a personal tutor for the duration of your time on the MA programme. If you have any general concerns about the programme, please do make an appointment to see them. Otherwise, please contact the Programme Director, Dr Cathleen Waters, cathleen.waters@le.ac.uk.

Key Dates 2015-16

2015

Monday 28 September
Semester 1 and Autumn Term begin

Wednesday 30 September
Postgraduate induction event: see separate timetable

Monday 5 October
First semester seminars begin

9.00-11.00am Semester 1 Option Module: first meeting (Attenborough 217) module runs fortnightly until Monday 7 December
2.00-3.00pm EL7000 registration session (Student Common Room, Ground Floor, Readson House)

Tuesday 6 October
9.30-10.30am ED7044 Grammar Awareness lecture (Brookfield Room 0.27) then every subsequent Tuesday in Autumn Term until **Tuesday 8 December** when there will be a Grammar Test/Analysis from 9.00am-1.00pm
5.00-6.00pm EL7000 registration session (Student Common Room, Ground Floor, Readson House)

Wednesday 7 October
11.00am-1.00pm ED7046 Language in Society (venue B202) then every subsequent Wednesday
5.00-6.00pm EL7000 registration session (Student Common Room, Ground Floor, Readson House)

Thursday 8 October
10.00-11.00am ED7044 Grammar Awareness seminar (venue tbc) then every subsequent Thursday until **Thursday 26 November**

Monday 12 October
11.00am-1:00pm EN7232 English Language and Linguistics Research Methods (Attenborough 217): module runs fortnightly until **Monday 30 November**
5.00-7.00pm EL7000 Academic English classes begin*

Tuesday 13 October
3.00-5.00pm Academic Skills classes (Grammar, Listening, Speaking) begin*
5.00-7.00pm EL7000 Academic English classes begin*

Wednesday 14 October
5.00-7.00pm EL7000 Academic English classes begin*

Friday 11 December
Autumn Term ends

**2016**

Monday 11 January
Spring Term begins

Tuesday 12 January
10.00am-12.00noon ED7045 Phonology and Pronunciation (venue tbc) then every subsequent Tuesday until Tuesday 23 February

Wednesday 13 January
10.00am-12.00noon ED7047 Discourse Analysis (venue tbc) then every subsequent Wednesday until Wednesday 9 March

Friday 22 January
Semester 1 ends

Monday 25 January
Semester 2 begins
Semester 2 Option module begins this week (details tbc)
5.00-7.00pm EL7000 Academic English classes begin*

**Tuesday 26 January**
3.00-5.00pm Academic Skills (Grammar, Listening, Speaking) classes begin*
5.00-7.00pm EL7000 Academic English classes begin*

**Wednesday 27 January**
5.00-7.00pm EL7000 Academic English classes begin*

**Tuesday 8 March**
10.00am-12.00noon ED7045 Phonology and Pronunciation assignment seminar (venue tbc)

**Tuesday 15 March**
10.00am-1.00pm ED7045 Phonology and Pronunciation Test (venue tbc)

**Friday 18 March**
Spring Term ends

**Friday 25 March – Wednesday 30 March**
University closed (Easter)

**Monday 25 April**
Summer Term begins

**Monday 2 May**
May Day Bank Holiday: the University will be closed on this day and there will be no classes

**Friday 24 June**
Semester 2 and Summer Term end

**Tuesday 30 September**
12.00noon Dissertations due

* Contact the English Language Teaching Unit ([www2.le.ac.uk/offices/eltu/insessional](http://www2.le.ac.uk/offices/eltu/insessional)) to find out how to register for these classes.

*tbc = to be confirmed.

Assessment deadlines for each of your modules can be found on the relevant sections of Blackboard, the School’s online system. You will find further information about events during Induction week in a separate timetable.
Course Outlines and Information

Semester 1

EN7232 English Language and Linguistics Research Methods (English)
This core module aims to train students in the essential skills and resources of research in English linguistics at postgraduate level. The module is designed to give students both knowledge and practical experience of research methods vital to the subfields of linguistics, and to ensure that all students are familiar with the academic conventions governing the presentation of a bibliography, an essential part of essays and the dissertation.

ED7044 Grammar Awareness (Education)
Whether you already have a very good grounding in English grammar, or feel that your grammar knowledge is lacking, the Grammar Awareness module is an opportunity to develop your conscious knowledge about how English grammar works. It aims to give you the subject knowledge and confidence needed to use and understand grammar concepts and terminology, predict and understand your students’ grammar problems, explain grammar when/if it is needed, answer students’ questions, and evaluate the linguistic challenges presented by texts and tasks you might use in your own classroom.

ED7046 Language in Society (Education)
The central aim of this core module is to explore the ways in which language and society are interrelated. It will address such issues as: how and why the way we use English varies in different social, regional and communicative contexts; how and why standardizing processes occur in language use over time and how they influence attitudes to different varieties or dialects; how the role of English as a global language has been, and continues to be, both described and theorised.

You will also take one optional module (see below).

Semester 2

ED7045 Phonology and Pronunciation (Education)
The Phonology and Pronunciation module provides an introduction to the formal description of the English sound system, based on pedagogic as well as descriptive models. You will learn about consonant and vowel sounds in isolation (segmental phonology) and sounds in connected speech (supra-segmental aspects). The aim of the module is to improve your awareness of how the English sound system works and enable you to apply this knowledge to your own teaching contexts.

ED7047 Discourse Analysis (Education)
The central aim of this module is explore discourse and develop students’ investigative and analytical skills. It will address such issues as how our identities and communicative intentions affect our linguistic choices; and how we recognise and exploit distinctive kinds and styles of language in different situations and across different media, whether spoken, written or multimodal.

You will also take one of the two optional modules:

Option modules
In each semester, you will take one option module for a total of two over the course of the year. Expected offerings in 2015-16 are:
EN7113 Words and Word Meaning

From Anglo-Saxon glossaries of Latin terms to the online edition of the Oxford English Dictionary, word-lists provide a fascinating insight into the cultures and individuals that produced and used them.

Growing out of bilingual word-lists, the English dictionary began by explaining hard words in English. By the eighteenth century, dictionary-makers were trying to cover all of the vocabulary of English, and were using literary texts to demonstrate how words ought to be used.

Modern dictionaries concentrate instead on how words actually are used, and often accumulate massive databases of written and spoken English on which to base their word-lists and definitions. This module will also look at the origins of English vocabulary. Where do words come from? How and why do they change in meaning?

OR

EN7233 Gender, Language and Discourse

This module aims to provide an introduction to a range of issues relevant to research in the field of Language and Gender. It will give you experience of preparing a small scale research project that enables you to reflect critically on your own and others' language use, especially as this relates to gender issues.

OR

EN7236 Sex and Sexuality in Old English Literature

By the end of the module, students will possess: a detailed knowledge of a range of Old English texts and their different contexts; enhanced evaluative, analytical and team-work skills; and familiarity with the methods of medieval gender and queer studies and their limitations.

OR

EN7239 World Englishes

This module explores varieties of English from around the world, and the main models and critical debates that underpin its study. Using case studies, we will examine features distinguishing different varieties of English outside the UK (e.g. US, Australia, Singapore) and how they arose. We will examine the results of language contact situations, the functions of English in multilingual nations and the role of English as a lingua franca. We will also consider the debates over norm-setting for English internationally, as well as the influence of media (print, broadcast and social/internet) and teaching materials produced for international use.

Compulsory Dissertation

Choosing your dissertation

The dissertation module is worth either 60 credits – one third of your MA – or 90 credits. It consists of eight key phases. They may overlap with one another, but are presented here in more or less chronological order:

- identifying your focus and developing your project (working through six activities on Blackboard): We recommend that you begin this process at the start of December. You will need to complete the dissertation proposal form by the 15th of February and submit it via Turnitin. You will be allocated to a supervisor in early March.
• undertaking background reading to enable you to situate your project within existing research in the field ongoing throughout the project
• considering the ethical implications of your project (by completing the online ethics form)
• working with your supervisor (in one-to-one meetings and by feedback on your drafts): From the beginning of March to the beginning of September
• collecting your data (you may choose to make a start on this before your presentation): From the beginning of March
• analysing your data (as above, it might be useful to undertake a preliminary study before your presentation): From the beginning of March
• presenting your dissertation (by oral presentation): This will take place in late April or early May
• completing your dissertation (writing up, re-writing, proof-reading, printing and binding).

Identifying an Appropriate Dissertation Topic: FAQs

Can I write about another language instead of English?
No, this is an MA in English Language and Linguistics; therefore your dissertation must focus on English. We are not qualified to supervise your work on other languages and the library will not be able to provide you with sufficient support either.

Can I write about another language as well as English?
A meaningful comparative study compares languages that are closely related to one another. Therefore, although it makes sense to write a comparative dissertation on English and Dutch, for example, it makes little sense to write one on English and Chinese. The only possible conclusion this dissertation could draw is that English and Chinese are very different from one another, which is hardly a surprise.

Can I write about EFL learners?
Yes, if you want to build on your knowledge of another language in your dissertation, you could analyse the use of the definite article by Kurdish learners of English (for example).

Can I write about the influence of another language on English?
Yes, if you want to build on your knowledge of another language in your dissertation, you could analyse the use of Arabic vocabulary within English (for example).

Can I write about the influence of English on another language?
You would need to discuss this with a potential supervisor before you submitted your proposal form.

How do I know what topics can be supervised?
The School of English web pages list the research specialisms and publications of all colleagues; it is advisable to check the profile pages of colleagues working in linguistics to make sure that your topic falls within their areas of expertise.

How many hours supervision will I get?
You will be given up to five hours of face-to-face supervision, to be scheduled with your supervisor in the second semester.
What to Do (FAQs)

What happens when I arrive at Leicester?

During the first week you will attend a number of introductory lectures and talks in the School of English and the School of Education.

There will also be other University-wide activities including the Freshers’ Fair and events in the Halls of Residences. You will have time and opportunities to meet new friends and find your way around the campus and city.

Where can I get further information about my course?

Each MA programme has a Course Handbook; this is updated each year and contains important information on class schedules, reading lists, marking criteria and so on. This can be found online http://www2.le.ac.uk/departments/english/existing-staff-and-students.

You will find current information about the modules on the website for the School of English (www.le.ac.uk/english). After you have arrived at the University and registered online, you will be given access to Blackboard, the University’s online learning system. This will supply information about each module, including lecture and seminar materials, module descriptions and assessment information.

A further good resource is the Facebook group that has been set up for the Society of Postgraduates in English Language and Literature.

Lastly, the School office is open for students’ queries 9 am-5 pm, Monday to Friday, and is located in room 1514 on the 15th floor of the Attenborough Tower. If you need to contact the office, the telephone number is (0116) 252 2620.

How will I be taught?

For each module you take in the School of English there will typically be a two-hour session per fortnight for each module. For some modules, like the English Language and Linguistics Research Module, there are additional components where students are expected to study together in small groups (called Autonomous Learning Groups). For the modules you will study in the School of Education, there are lectures and seminars which run throughout each term.

What is a lecture?

Lectures take place in large theatres throughout the main campus. They are designed to provide you with a basic overview of the topic, and may also provide guidance on a range of critical approaches. Above all lectures should give you a sense of the importance and complexity of the texts and subjects under discussion, and to give you a starting-point for your own reading and research. A lecture lasts for fifty minutes and may be attended by up to 200 students at once; it is therefore extremely important that you observe some basic rules of courtesy: no talking, eating, drinking, or disruptive behaviour.

What are seminars?

Seminars are small groups of between five and thirteen students, chaired by a tutor, which meet on a weekly basis. They are designed to encourage you to develop your understanding of the subject through friendly and informed discussions with your tutor and peers. For this reason, your role in a seminar is an active one, contributing to the discussion with points and questions. You may be asked to give a presentation in order to introduce a topic and to open discussion. Seminars are not just to provide you with notes that you can regurgitate in essays or exams, but to foster lively and engaged debate, in which you are able to share opinions and learn from each other.
If I take a part-time job, is there a limit on the number of hours I can work?

The University sets a maximum of 15 hours per week for term-time work. You should therefore endeavour to keep the number of hours of paid employment in term-time to a minimum. The Careers Service, based on the 2nd floor of the David Wilson Library, publishes vacation work and placement opportunities. This service provides advice on a host of other employment-related issues.

What is a Personal Tutor?

Each student is allocated a personal tutor at the beginning of term. Normally you will have the same personal tutor throughout the period of your degree. Your tutor will be available to discuss matters of a general academic nature, or to provide personal support, for example if you are experiencing difficulties as a result of illness. They will also advise on concerns related to equal opportunities, and be able to put you in touch with a range of specialist advisers within the University.

How can I get involved?

Our main forum for student input is the Student-Staff Committee. The Postgraduate SSC is attended by both tutors and student representatives from each year, and meets monthly on Wednesday afternoons to discuss issues that affect all areas of the School, its postgraduates, and their degree courses. Most importantly, the committee is an essential channel for constructive feedback to be given by students to the School on modules and courses, and it offers the opportunity for students to initiate improvements wherever possible. Volunteering to be a representative is the best way to get your views heard. If you are interested in becoming a member of the PG SSC, or wish to know more about it, contact the convenor of the committee, Dr Julian North (jrn8@leicester.ac.uk). You can also make your views known by contacting committee members directly. In any case, PG SSC postgraduate members will make themselves known and can be approached at any time with any concerns, suggestions, and compliments.

You might also like to join the Society for Postgraduates in English Language and Literature. The Society is a thriving group that enriches the social and academic lives of its members. Further information about the Society can be found later on in this Welcome Pack.

What is the Linguistics Research Seminar?

The Linguistics Research seminar takes place on four Monday evenings during the academic year, from 17.00-18.00. We invite expert speakers from different universities along with staff and doctoral students in the School of English to talk about a range of topics in language studies and linguistics. MA students are expected to attend as part of their training. It is also an excellent way to hear up-to-the-minute research and feel part of the academic community.

Where can I buy books?

The University Bookshop is located in the David Wilson Library building. Any book not in stock can be quickly provided to order, and a wide range of further materials, such as maps, cards and stationery items, are also stocked. The Bookshop is open on week days from 9.00-5.30 (5.00 outside term time), and from 9.00-12.30 on Saturdays. Further information can be found here: https://shop.le.ac.uk.

In addition, the School of English runs a second-hand sale at the start of every term; the sale mainly comprises used copies of undergraduate textbooks, but you may also find some useful language books. You could also use various local charity and second-hand booksellers, or buy your books from online booksellers.
The Society for Postgraduates in English Language and Literature

Who we are

SPELL is the social and academic society for postgraduates in the School of English. Throughout the academic year we co-ordinate various formal and informal events in order to support research, to facilitate networking, and to foster a friendly and sociable atmosphere among our students.

Social Events

We host a number of regular events throughout the year, including a welcome reception at the start of term, a Christmas social event, and several instalments of our Postgraduate Forum. We also try to organise as many extra social events as possible; these have recently included theatre and cinema trips, a Shakespeare workshop with the 1623 Theatre Company, and a creative writing day within the department. We look forward to many more of these events in the coming year - and to welcoming many new members to join us.

The SPELL Committee is focused on reaching out to all postgraduates in the School of English and hope to craft a number of events that everyone can enjoy. Please get in touch with any member of the committee if you have any suggestions or ideas for future events.

Postgraduate Forum

The Postgraduate Forum is a warm and collegial environment where postgraduates in the school of English can present on any topic to a group of their peers. We invite papers of around twenty minutes on any aspect of your research, with discussion, drinks, and snacks provided in between. This is a great environment in which to hear about the exciting research being carried out by our students, and to participate in the lively debate within our department. We are also keen to get our MA postgraduates involved with the Forum, and so proposals for short research papers are very much welcomed from these students.

Fees and Further Information

The new membership year will begin at our welcome reception at the beginning of term.

If you would like to join the Society, please see the SPELL web pages on the School of English site (www2.le.ac.uk/departments/english/studentresources/societiesandcommittees) or join our Facebook Group page: https://www.facebook.com/groups/208586385844425.
Key Contacts: Schools of English and Education

Head of School of English
Dr Philip Shaw          ps14@le.ac.uk          (0116) 252 2632

Director of School of Education
Professor Glenn Fulcher gf39@le.ac.uk          (0116) 252 7508

Change of Address, visit:
MyStudentRecord          http://mystudentrecord.le.ac.uk

Change of Programme, contact:
Dr Cathleen Waters       cw301@le.ac.uk          (0116) 223 1398

Change of Module, contact:
Programme Administrator, Mr Simon Poole
englishMA@le.ac.uk       (0116) 252 3943

Student-Staff Committee, contact:
Dr Julian North          jrn8@le.ac.uk          (0116) 252 2776

School Office
The School Office is on the 15th floor of the Attenborough Tower in room 1514. It is open for all postgraduate enquiries from Monday to Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

englishMA@le.ac.uk       (0116) 252 2620

Postgraduate students have pigeonholes on the 16th floor of the Attenborough Tower; here you will also find the postgraduate noticeboard and the coursework submission box.

Tutors
Dr Philip Shaw
Room 1506, Attenborough Tower, 252 5363, ps209@le.ac.uk

Dr Cathleen Waters
Room 1508, Attenborough Tower, 223 1398, cw301@le.ac.uk

University Facilities and Services
Please see your Handbook for useful contact details.