

**PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION
2014-2015**

Programme Title	MSc Forensic Linguistics
UCAS/JACS Code	Q110
School/Subject Area	LSS
Final Award	MSc
Interim Award(s)	Postgraduate Certificate (60 credits at level 7), Postgraduate Diploma (120 credits at level 7).
Mode(s) of Study	Part time, Flexible Credit Accumulation
Normal Length of Programme	12 months full time, 2-3 years part time
Total Credits	180 credits
Programme Accredited By	NA
Dates Programme Specification Written and Revised	November 2007; July 2009; July 2010; Feb 2012; format change August 2013; August 2014

<p>Educational Aims of the Programme</p>	<p>The overall aim of the programme is to provide students with knowledge of theories and findings in forensic linguistics and to provide students with the critical and practical skills to approach forensic texts and contexts both as linguistic researchers and practitioners.</p> <p>Specifically it aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) provide students with an understanding of how the findings and methods of linguistics can be applied to forensic and legal contexts; b) provide students with a solid foundation in the research findings of linguistics applied to forensic and legal contexts; c) provide a basis in analytic skills and methods to enable students to approach forensic material from an investigative perspective and to undertake further research; d) encourage and promote students' learning, personal development and self-awareness; e) develop the capacity for reflective, critical and independent thought and action in relation to their studies.
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<p>Relevant Subject Benchmark Statements and other External and Internal Reference Points used to inform programme outcomes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Benchmarks Statements for English, Linguistics b) UK Quality Code Part a.1 (2011) c) Aston University Learning and Teaching Strategy 2012-2020 d) Staff expertise
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TAUGHT STAGE**Programme Structures and Requirements: Levels, Modules and Credits**

Module Title	Credits	Level	Module Code	Core/Option	Condonable Y/N	Pre-Requisite(s) Y/N
Introduction to linguistics	20	7	LEM036	Core	Y	N
Introduction to forensic linguistics	20	7	LEM029	Core	Y	N
Analysing Written and Spoken Discourse	20	7	LEM040	Core	Y	N
Research Methods	20	7	LEM043	Core	Y	N
Choose two modules from the following options						
Written language in the legal system	20	7	LEM030	Option	Y	N
Spoken language in the legal system	20	7	LEM031	Option	Y	N
Linguistic investigation and evidence	20	7	LEM032	Option	Y	N
TOTAL	120					

DISSERTATION STAGE**Programme Structures and Requirements: Levels, Modules and Credits**

Module Title	Credits	Level	Module Code	Core/Option	Condonable Y/N	Pre-Requisite(s) Y/N
Dissertation	60	7	LRM003	Core	Y	N
TOTAL	60					

Programme Outcomes, Learning and Teaching and Assessment Strategies

A. Knowledge and Understanding

	On successful completion of their programme, students are expected to have knowledge and understanding of:	Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategies to enable outcomes to be achieved and demonstrated	
		Learning and Teaching Methods	Assessment Methods
1	the nature of legal language and of attempts at language reform in legal texts;	Methods which contribute to the development of knowledge and understanding include: Study of modules chosen from a elective module options as specified in this outline. (A1, 2, 3). Application of knowledge and understanding to specific situations and texts (A4, 5, 6). Carrying out a sustained piece of research (A5, 6).	Completion of essays, each requiring the application of knowledge and understanding to a particular situation, or to examples of language to be analysed, and/or to a small piece of research carried out by student (A1,2,3, 4) Dissertation (A5, 6).
2	how language is used by participants involved in investigative and legal processes;		
3	the roles linguists may assume in investigative and legal processes;		
4	current issues, methods and practices adopted by linguists involving themselves in investigative and legal processes;		
5	current issues, methods and practices in undertaking research in Forensic Linguistics;		
6	the ethical issues in practicing and or carrying out research in forensic linguistics		

B. Intellectual Skills

On successful completion of their programme, students are expected to be able to:		Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategies to enable outcomes to be achieved and demonstrated	
		Learning and Teaching Methods	Assessment Methods
1	Synthesise and evaluate primary and secondary data;	Students gain practice in analysis, Searching bibliographies and on-line Resources, and in writing appropriately while preparing written assignments (B1, 2, 3, 4). The dissertation provides more sustained training in these areas (B5).	Essays (B1,2,4) Written text analyses (B3) Dissertation (B5)
2	Autonomously search, evaluate, synthesise and integrate relevant literature;		
3	Construct coherent and defensible arguments, drawing upon a range of appropriate evidence;		
4	Independently select, develop and use appropriate criteria for evaluation purposes;		
5	Situate their own research with reference to appropriate research traditions and paradigms		

C. Professional Skills

On successful completion of their programme, students are expected to be able to:		Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategies to enable outcomes to be achieved and demonstrated	
		Learning and Teaching Methods	Assessment Methods
1	collect, record and analyse primary data;	<p>Assignments are also designed to promote the development of professional skills (C1, 3, 4).</p> <p>The design of assignments, requiring the investigation of particular relevance to the student, also promotes these skills. These assignments involve the analysis of texts within the forensic and judicial context and analysis of texts of evidential interest with a view to development of expert opinion. (C 1, 2, 3, 4, 5).</p> <p>Wherever possible, students are encouraged to present their findings through one of the many communication mechanisms of the Forensic Linguistics discourse community (e.g. local seminars, conferences, journals). Such opportunities, external to the University, will be advertised to students and may be supplemented by particular events offered by the Centre for Forensic Linguistics (C4).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • essays (C 1, 2, 4) • written text analyses (C1, 3, 4 & 56) • dissertation (C1, 3 & 4)
2	use their enhanced linguistic awareness and analytical skills to inform professional practice;		
3	formulate, implement and evaluate research projects of an appropriate scale		
4	work towards a publishable standard.		
5	formulate and evaluate expert witness reports taking into account the professional obligations and standards of an expert witness.		

D. <u>Transferable Skills</u>			
	On successful completion of their programme, students are expected to show:	Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategies to enable outcomes to be achieved and demonstrated	
		Learning and Teaching Methods	Assessment Methods
1	ability to construct a clear argument in a manner appropriate to the traditions of analytical academic discourse;	The whole programme is designed to develop the transferable skills listed, and all tasks and assignments build on this (D 1, 2, 3, 4).	Transferable skills underpin success in the assignments and the Dissertation
2	judgement in the selection and analysis of relevant data;		
3	proficiency in IT skills to achieve personal and academic aims;		
4	ability to engage in independent enquiry.		

Entry Requirements	<p>Linguistic route applicants should normally have, or expect to obtain, a good Honours Degree (at least upper 2nd Class) in English, Linguistics, or a related discipline, or equivalent qualification. These students do not take LEM036 - the Introduction to Linguistics module.</p> <p>Non-linguistic route applicants should normally have, or expect to obtain, a good Honours Degree (at least upper 2nd Class) or equivalent qualification. For these students the Introduction to Linguistics module is a requirement.</p> <p>Non-native speakers of English should have an overall IELTS score of 6.5 with a minimum of Band 7 in Speaking and Writing and Band 6 in Reading and Listening. TOEFL 105 (with 25 minimum in Writing and Speaking and 23 minimum in Reading and Listening) Pearson Academic results of minimum 68 in Writing and Speaking and minimum 61 in Listening. either a TOEFL score.</p>
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<p>Programme Regulations</p>	<p>The programme is governed by the General Regulations for Postgraduate Taught Programmes and under the additional regulations published for Flexible Credit Accumulation, for postgraduate taught programmes.</p> <p>Attendance requirements: The Masters programme in Forensic Linguistics is by distance learning and has a duration of between 2 and 3 years. There are no attendance requirements for this programme.</p>
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<p>Further Information</p>	<p>LEM036 is offered to students without an appropriate linguistic qualification.</p> <p>Students taking the MSc starting with LEM036 will choose 3 options modules (LEM030, LEM031 or LEM032). Students with a prior linguistic qualification (thus not taking LEM036 will choose 3 elective modules).</p>
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This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the threshold learning outcomes that a student might normally be expected to achieve and demonstrate if he/she takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. **The individual modules included in the programme may differ from those included in this programme specification as our programmes are subject to continuous review.** Information on admissions requirements and career opportunities is available in the relevant prospectus. More detailed information on the learning outcomes, content and teaching, learning and assessment methods of each module can be found in the appropriate module guides and programme handbook(s) which are available to students on enrolment.