

English MA (Distance Learning)

Study our MA English programme via distance learning and specialise in either language, literature or both. Our modules will develop your research expertise and apply your skills in real world contexts.

[This programme is also available to study on-campus.](#)

Location: Delivered via online teaching

Course type

Online / distance learning

Course format

No placements

Duration

1 year (full-time)

2/3 years (part-time)

UCAS code(s)

N/A

Start date

Overview

Explore MA English (Distance Learning) at Aston University

In this video, Dr Marcello Giovanelli explains how the programme will be taught, the real-life applications it provides, and how you can benefit from taking the course.

Is English a killer language?

Professor Sue Garton explores whether English is a killer language in this three-minute lecture.

How literally is 'literally' changing?

Dr Robbie Love explores how the meaning of words change over time in this three-minute lecture.

Why study a postgraduate degree at Aston University?

Hear from MBA student Monique Farquharson.

Society matters podcast

Whatever the matter, Society matters.

Hear about some of the fascinating academic research taking place into current issues facing our society.

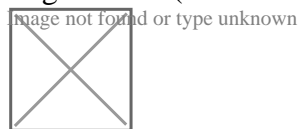
[Click here to listen now.](#)

[Previous](#) [Pause](#) [Next](#)

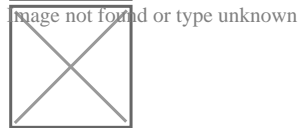
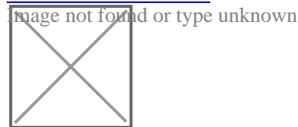
- [English at Aston University was ranked top 10 for 'student to staff ratio' \(Guardian, 2023\).](#)
- [Suitable for GCSE and A Level English teachers looking to enhance their subject knowledge and employability](#)
- [English at Aston University was ranked **first** in the UK for 'graduate prospects - on track' \(Complete University Guide, 2022\).](#)
- [English at Aston University was ranked 12th in the UK for 'graduate prospects' \(Times/Sunday Times Good University Guide, 2023\).](#)

[How to apply](#)

English MA (Distance Learning)



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Teaching Excellence Framework Gold award logo

Course outline and modules

Studied fully online via distance learning, this English masters degree at Aston University is suitable for those wanting to develop their knowledge of English language and/or literature in exciting and applied contexts. The course provides opportunities to develop advanced research skills, study a range of topics, complete a substantial individual project and explore how to apply academic learning to professional contexts.

What you'll learn

The core modules introduce you to advanced study and research skills that will support you with your studies and provide opportunities to apply your learning to a range of contexts beyond the academic.

You will study key theories, concepts and frameworks that will allow you to examine a wide range of texts, drawing on some of the latest research in, for example, genre studies, corpus linguistics, cognitive literary studies and digital humanities.

You will be equipped to confidently apply your reading and research to non-academic and professional contexts as well as to support further academic study. The course provides the flexibility to choose from a wide range of elective modules, enabling you to tailor your masters to suit your interests and future career goals.

Modules

Core modules

Researching English (30 credits)

This module will provide a thorough grounding in research in English language and literature and offer you the opportunity to consider continuities between the two. You will learn about theories and concepts in literary studies and in linguistics, qualitative and quantitative research in English, academic practice, working with archive material, working with digital texts and corpora.

Applying English (30 credits)

This module will provide an overview of the ways in which English may be applied to support personal development and to make a wider contribution to society (individuals, communities and policy makers). Coverage will include a range of ideas that focus on 'applied' English such as English and education; bibliotherapy and the social role of reading; literacies and communities; linguistics and social justice; English and policy; the role of English in innovation and business; research dissemination to and communication with the general public; networking and grant-writing skills.

Dissertation (60 credits)

You will demonstrate your ability to design, conduct and report the results of a research project in the subject domain relevant to the masters programme. You will work independently, under the guidance of a supervisor

Optional modules

You will choose **four** of the following modules, totaling 60 credits.

Analysing Discourse (15 credits)

This module will introduce you to the different ways in which discourse may be analysed, drawing on linguistic, narratological and stylistic approaches. You will study key aspects of genre and narratives and undertake analyses drawing on Conversation Analysis, pragmatics, multimodality, forensic linguistics, and corpus linguistics.

Reading the Nineteenth Century: Globalisation and the Novel (15 credits)

This module explores the ways in which the novel grew as a nineteenth century literary phenomenon. It will help you to critically examine the novel in its aesthetic and theoretical contexts and explore how we read and understand novels in a variety of global cultures. You will analyse the relationship between the novel and science, the novel and culture, the novel and new forms of experimentation in the nineteenth century, and the novel and the literary canon.

Variation and Change in English (15 credits)

This module explores some of the socially-motivated ways in which English varies and has changed over time. Drawing on a strong foundation of sociolinguistic theory and practice, you will explore a range of text types and consider how English varies according to social factors including gender, age, social class and region. The module will help you to consider how language ideologies shape the ways that we use and talk about language and the reasons for how these may vary over time.

Cognitive Poetics (15 credits)

This module will develop your expertise in stylistics and cognitive poetics by drawing on the latest insights from cognitive linguistics to support literary-critical work. You will develop your understanding of cognitive poetics generally as a research paradigm and critically engage with various concepts, theories and frameworks in order to understand the relationship between literary reading and the mind. You will have the opportunity to apply learning to both text analysis and empirical work using your own data.

Language and Literature in Education (15 credits)

This module critically examines historical and contemporary issues and debates related to the place of English as an intellectual discipline and academic subject in (primarily secondary) education. You will explore the ways that English is actualised as a subject, how and why its nature has been contested and how government policy, research and practitioner enquiry have all influenced various manifestations of the subject. You will study topics such as grammar teaching in schools, the literary canon and school curricula, reading literature at school and at home, assessment and English, and literature for children and young people.

Reading Contemporary Fiction (15 credits)

This module introduces you to the study of contemporary literature in its various forms, genres and modes. It will encourage you to explore our changing relationships with contemporary literature as readers and invites you to consider how such reading experiences might be examined through both experimental and naturalistic protocols. You will study the changing forms of contemporary literature, reading practices across social groups and in different contexts, and learn about the ways that you can generate reader response data, such as questionnaires, surveys, think-aloud protocols

and classroom studies, for analysis.

Reading and Wellbeing (15 credits)

This module will allow you to critically engage with a range of concepts, studies and methods related to the relationship between reading literature and health and well-being. You will both examine the representation of health in literature and analyse how literary studies can be applied to external problems and issues. You will learn about reading and the mind, reading and immersion, reading and education, pathology and literature, the relationship between well-being and literacy; the pro-social benefits of reading, reading and inclusive ageing, and bibliotherapy.

Corpus Linguistics (15 credits)

This module will provide you with advanced digital analysis skills in order to investigate large linguistic and literary datasets. You will learn how to apply theories and methods from corpus linguistics to analyse large and complex corpora, developing skills in digital literacy which can be applied to any area of academic study and to a wide range of professional contexts

Availability of any optional modules will be subject to staff availability and a minimum number of students who express an interest in studying the optional modules.

Entry requirements

Entry requirements

One of the following:

- A good UK honours degree, minimum Lower Second Class (2:2) in English Language, English Literature or a related subject. Please note that transcripts must indicate some studies of English.
- Equivalent overseas degree recognised by Aston University.

Subject specific requirements:

- Applicants must also provide evidence of Mathematics - C/4 or above at GCSE (or equivalent)

As well as:

- Two professional references – at least one must be from an academic referee.
- An official academic transcript of your university grades to date.
- A completed application form.

International students

- Applicants whose first language is not English will be required to provide evidence of an English language qualification. [Find out more about our English language requirements.](#)
- For more information about qualifications view our [Aston in your country](#) webpage.
- For International Students intending to do a foundation year. [Click here to find out more.](#)
- Application: We recommend that overseas students apply before the end of June due to visa requirements as these can take a few weeks to process.

Extensive work experience

We recognise the value of extensive professional experience. If you do not have the academic qualifications, but have extensive and relevant professional experience and a proven ability to succeed, we would welcome your application.

The information contained on this website details the typical entry requirements for this course for the most commonly offered qualifications. Applicants with alternative qualifications may wish to enquire with the relevant admissions teams prior to application whether or not their qualifications are deemed acceptable. For less commonly encountered qualifications this will be judged on a case-by-case basis in consultation with the academic admissions tutor.

Please note, if you do not meet the subject-specific requirements for this programme, you may be considered for an alternative programme which may be better suited to your academic/professional background. If you receive an offer for an alternative programme and do not wish to move forward with this, please contact the Admissions team at pgadmissions@aston.ac.uk.

Speak to our Admissions Team

If you have any questions about the application process please get in touch with our postgraduate admissions team:

Email: pgadmissions@aston.ac.uk

Call: 0121 204 3200 (Please note this line is open Monday-Friday between 10am-4pm)

[Please click here](#) for guidance on completing the postgraduate application.

Our programme directors are our experts

Dr Chloe Harrison

Programme Director, MA English

If you have any questions about the course or modules you will be studying you can [email me via this link](#) and I will be happy to answer your queries.

Learning, teaching and assessment

Learning and teaching

You will take part in interactive seminars, presentations and group work as well as attending lectures and tutorials. There are also opportunities for individual research. All our lecturers are research-active and leading scholars in their fields so you will benefit from their expertise and experience.

The [Department of English, Languages and Applied Linguistics](#) has a wide and varied programme of events and you will benefit from being part of an inclusive and exciting academic community. We are home to two research centres, [Aston Centre for Applied Linguistics](#) (ACAL) and [Research Centre for the Humanities](#) (REACH), which hosts academic events throughout the year that you can attend.

Study skills

You will be allocated a personal tutor at the start of your course; this member of academic staff can offer individual study advice and guidance and is there to help support your studies.

Furthermore, you will have access to:

- Our Virtual Learning Environment – Blackboard – to support your studies, including Blackboard discussion groups.
- The University Library, including over 25,000 books and a wide range of electronic journals. The library has special provision in place to help part time and distance learning students access the resources.
- University-wide facilities such as the Careers Service, Students' Advice Centre, Students' Jobshop, Counselling Service, sports facilities and the Chaplaincy.

Assessment

In the taught part of the programme assessments are diverse and include traditional academic essays, data analysis exercises, project reports and tasks related to a professional context.

Successful completion of the taught modules is a precondition for proceeding to a 15,000-word dissertation leading to the MA.

Programme Director

Dr Chloe Harrison

Fees and scholarships

UK students (2024/25): £11,850

International students (2024/25): £11,850

*Part-time students pay a pro-rata version of full-time fees.

The United Kingdom government has confirmed that European Union (EU), other European Economic Area (EEA) and Swiss nationals commencing academic courses in England from August 2021 will no longer be charged the same tuition rates as home students. [Further information can be found here.](#)

Tuition fees for students are reviewed annually and may increase in subsequent years in line with inflation linked to the Retail Price Index (RPI) to take account of the University's increased costs of delivering the Programme. Any such increase shall always be in accordance with the law. When undertaking a placement year, a placement year fee applies.

[More information on fees and funding](#)

UK postgraduate loans

If you're thinking about studying a masters course with us, you may be eligible for a postgraduate loan to help with course fees and living costs. [Find out more here.](#)

Scholarships

At Aston University we are committed to supporting the most talented and hardworking students to achieve their potential by providing a range of scholarships to help lower tuition and living costs. [Find out more about our scholarships here.](#)

20 per cent postgraduate alumni scholarship

Cost shouldn't limit your career aspirations, which is why we are delighted to offer all Aston University graduates (including exchange students) a 20% loyalty scholarship in standard taught MA, MSc and Full-time MBA course fees. Students who have completed their first degree at Aston University will receive an automatic scholarship when applying for their course. If you are not an Aston University graduate there is still a range of UK and international scholarship that you can apply for.

This means that as an Aston University graduate applying to our **MA English (Distance Learning)** course, you could save...

£2,370

UK students

(Total saving equivalent to 20% of the annual tuition fee)

£2,370

International/EU students

(Total saving equivalent to 20% of the annual tuition fee)

As an Aston University graduate you will automatically qualify. For more information [visit our webpage](#).

Career prospects

The Careers service offer a tailored programme for MA English students exploring opportunities across a wide range of professions and careers in copywriting, communications, education and more, as well as the opportunity of PhD study.

Graduates of the MA English programme go on to a whole variety of careers. The programme also offers excellent subject knowledge enhancement for teachers of English in schools and provides an excellent foundation for studies at PhD level for students interested in a career in research in any aspect of English.

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Aston University was recognised as the 'Best University Placement Service'.

The Careers and Placements team at Aston University won the 'Best University Placement Service' category at the [National Undergraduate Employability \(NUE\) Awards](#) 2022. This was achieved by launching Virtual Employability Festivals and recognising the power of peer-to-peer communication by pairing 500 students looking for placements with 500 students who had completed placements.

Frequently asked questions

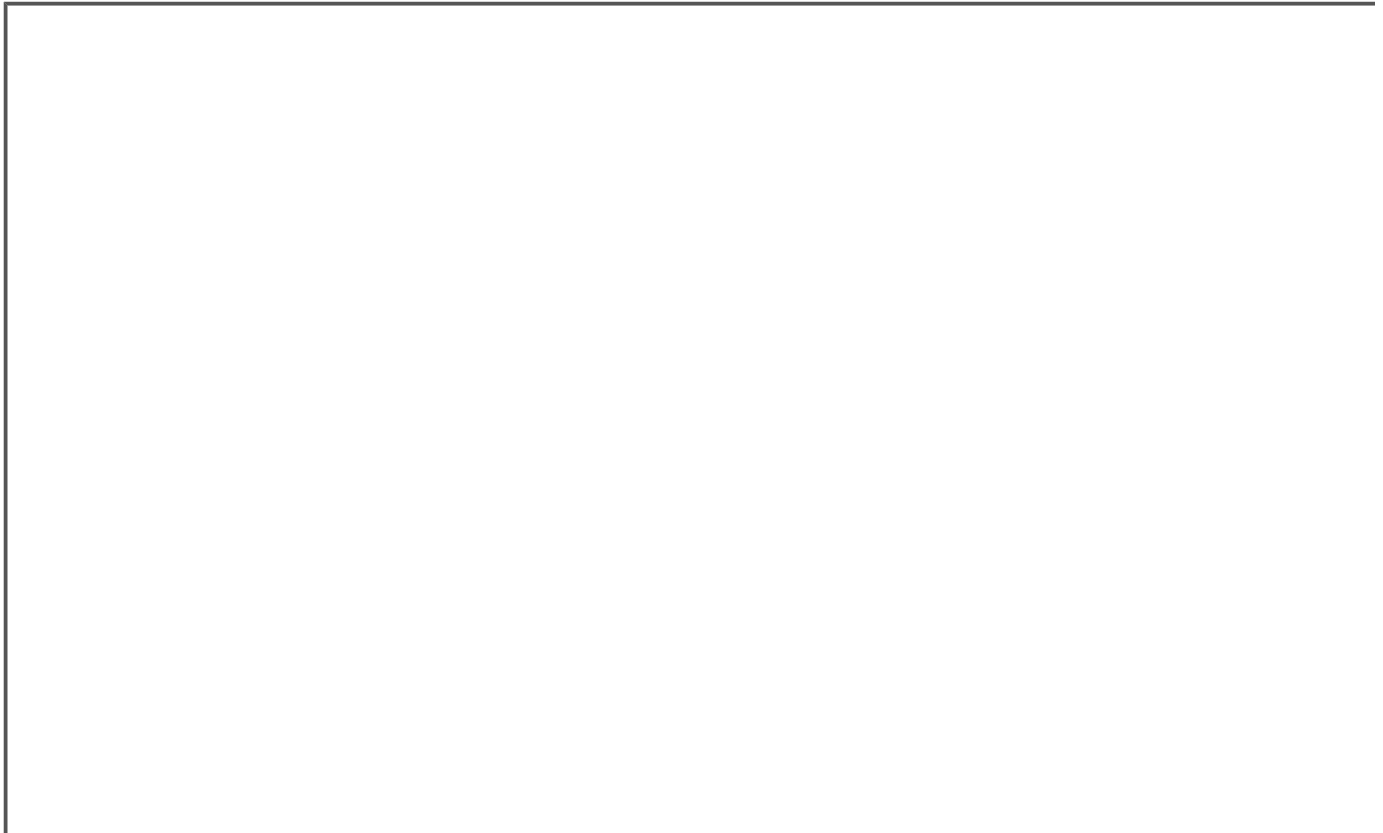
Why should I study MA English at Aston University?

The MA English programme has flexibility at its heart: you will be able to study largely literature modules, largely language modules or a genuinely integrated language and literature programme. You will join a programme that is applied and designed to enable you to make connections between academic English study and the knowledge and skills required in professional contexts. The teaching team consists of highly qualified, internationally-leading scholars who have experience of working with a wide range of students, including those from professional and education backgrounds.

Why should I study my postgraduate degree at Aston University?

There are lots of benefits of studying a postgraduate degree at Aston University.

Watch this video from MBA student, Monique, who talks about just a few of them:



Chat with current students

Register your interest

Register your interest form

Related courses and content

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[Teaching English to
Speakers of Other
Languages \(TESOL\) MA
\(Distance Learning\)](#)

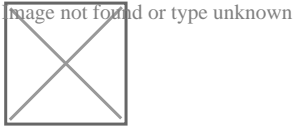
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[English MA](#)

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You might also be interested in...

[NEWS - 08/03/2023](#)

[Podcast: Schools could teach students about swearing to promote responsible language use](#)

[Dr Robbie Love says swearing has been a part of the English language for centuries and using](#)

[NEWS - 16/09/2022](#)

[Aston University launches Research Centre for the Humanities](#)

[The Research Centre for the Humanities \(REACH\) will formally launch with an event and the first lecture in an ongoing series.](#)

[More news](#)

[Events - 30/03/2023](#)

[The science of swearing](#)

[More events](#)

You might also be interested in...

No featured Event set to display.

Student Life at Aston

Accommodation

We provide award-winning accommodation on our small, friendly campus in partnership with Unite Students

Students' Union

Aston SU represents and supports around 14,000 students, providing a number of commercial and non-commercial services.

Birmingham life

Aston University is in a great, central location. Ideally positioned in the centre of Birmingham - one of the youngest cities in Europe - our campus is only a 10 minute walk to the city centre.

Clubs and societies

Joining a club or society is one of the best ways to get the most out of your time here at Aston. With over 130 student-led groups we have something for everyone.

Sports

Here's Sports at Aston. Discover what's happening on the Aston University campus at the Sir Doug Ellis Woodcock Sports Centre.

Student support at the Hub

The Hub is a central location on the Ground Floor of the Main Building where most of the student support services are located.

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