University of Birmingham

MA Teaching English as a Foreign/Second Language (TEFL/TESL) (distance learning) (Department of English)

The programme is designed for practising teachers of English as a second or foreign language. It is a set of interactive course materials to complete in part-time, self-study mode over a period of at least 30 months. We also offer a full-time, on-campus programme over one year – for more information see **Teaching English as a Foreign/Second Language MA (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/courses/postgraduate/taught/english/english-foreign-second-lang.aspx)** .

Study here and find out why the University of Birmingham has been awarded The Times and The Sunday Times University of the Year 2013-14 (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/news/latest/2013/09/20-sep-Birmingham-announced-as-University-of-the-Year.aspx)

Course fact file

Type of Course: Continuing professional development, distance learning

Study Options: Part time

Duration: 30 months

Start date: February, April, July or October

Contact

Postgraduate Administrator
Tel: +44 (0)121 414 5695/3239
Email: **elalpg@contacts.bham.ac.uk (mailto:elalpg@contacts.bham.ac.uk)**

College of Arts and Law Graduate School (/schools/calgs/index.aspx)

College of Medical & Dental Sciences Graduate School (/university/colleges/mds/mds-gradschool/index.aspx)

School of English, Drama and American & Canadian Studies (/schools/edacs/index.aspx)

Department of English Literature (/schools/edacs/departments/english/index.aspx)

Details

The programme includes six taught modules and a 15,000-word dissertation.

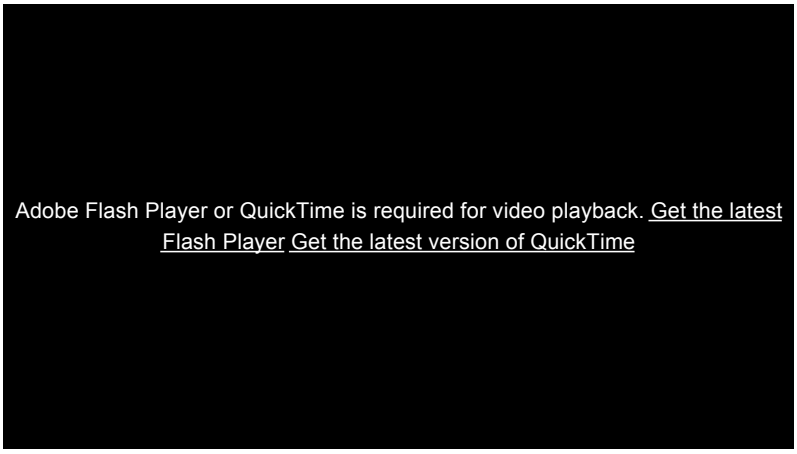
You will take five core modules [full descriptions available below]:

- Language Teaching Methodology and Classroom Research and Research Methods
- Second Language Acquisition and Pedagogic Grammar
- Lexis and Syllabus and Materials
- Classroom and Spoken Discourse and Written Discourse
- ELT Management and Sociolinguistics

For your final module you can choose from a range of modules.

Please note: The deadline for applications is one calendar month ahead of your desired entry date, to allow adequate time for your application to be processed; see 'how to apply' below.

Why study this course



The main advantage of studying by distance learning is the flexibility. Our distance learning programmes have multiple start dates throughout the year so it gives you the option of choosing when to commence your studies with us. You can study at home, in your own time and at your own pace, so you can combine achieving a qualification with other commitments.

In particular, studying by distance learning has the benefit of allowing you to develop your career without having to leave employment. It also means that you can apply

new knowledge and insights to your working life while you are still studying; many students choose to tackle work-related topics in their dissertations.

Modules

You will study five core modules:

Language Teaching Methodology and Classroom Research and Research Methods

- **Language Teaching Methodology.** You will examine a number of concepts central to the methodology of teaching second languages. Our primary intention is to introduce you to a wide range of ideas which we hope will allow you to reflect on your own teaching and learning experience.
- **Classroom Research and Research Methods**. You will be introduced to concepts and techniques used in research carried out in second language classrooms. This involves looking at two traditions: 'action' research, which usually involves examining classroom interactions with the intent of modifying or improving teacher behaviour; and experimental research, which involves looking at linguistic or other outcomes, with the purpose of making general statements about, for example, how language is (best) acquired.

Second Language Acquisition and Pedagogic Grammar

- **Second Language Acquisition**. You will look at theories of learning which underlie the different approaches to TEFL/TESL. You will also explore the link between theory and practice, in order to understand that a concern for students' learning can inform classroom practice.
- **Pedagogic Grammar**. You will examine research into why and how grammar is taught in to language learners, the way methodology influences grammar teaching, how grammar is presented in the syllabus, and the new tools that are available for the devising of a grammatical syllabus.

Lexis and Syllabus and Materials

- **Lexis**. You will explore a number of issues. What is the relationship between grammar and lexis? Recent work, particularly stemming from the University of Birmingham COBUILD projects, suggests that far from being separate levels the two are inextricably interwoven. Is there a real distinction? If there is not then is it worth maintaining an artificial distinction for pedagogic purposes? Within lexis how do words relate to one another? How do lexical relations help structure text? What does it mean to say that someone 'knows' or has 'learnt' a word? Concern with lexis is now moving towards a more central position in English Language Teaching. How do we react to this trend?
- **Syllabus and Materials**. You will examine a number of different types of syllabuses and the methodologies – and in many cases complete philosophies – which lie behind them. You will explore the strengths and weaknesses of the different types of syllabus, and look at ways in which they have been put into practice in the form of teaching material and classroom methodology. You will also look at what constitutes teaching material and the advantages and disadvantages of using a coursebook. You will also consider the criteria which can be used to evaluate classroom material, and look at a range of different ways of adapting and designing material for use in the EFL/ESL classroom.

Classroom and Spoken Discourse and Written Discourse

- **Classroom and Spoken Discourse**. This offers a general description of spoken discourse, looking in particular at classroom discourse. It develops a linguistic approach to the analysis of discourse and shows how this can sharpen our awareness of spoken interaction, and in particular of the way teachers and students use language in the classroom. This provides us with an approach to a number of issues related to methodology. You will look at the broad differences between spoken and written discourse and consider the problems of introducing and handling a range of spontaneous discourses in the classroom.
- **Written discourse**. You will consider the relationship between language, other semiotic features and society. You will be introduced to theories of discourse analysis and focus on detailed textual analysis. This will enable you to develop a critical understanding of the key concepts involved in Discourse Analysis and of how language reflects, mediates or - arguably - creates our everyday reality. You are also introduced to two very important developments in Discourse Studies: Critical and Multimodal Discourse Analysis. By exposing you to current approaches to interaction, you should improve your own language production, both oral and written. We also hope you will be able to apply some of the theoretical input acquired to you own data.

ELT Management and Sociolinguistics

- **ELT Management**. Management is a vast field and we will cover just a few areas which are of particular relevance to teachers and administrators. In particular, we are concerned with the questions of change in the classroom and in the syllabus and materials, and how to manage such change. The issue of teacher training and development arises here as a major instrument of change. You will also be introduced to the notion of evaluation, both of large-scale programmes and of what goes on in your classrooms.
- **Sociolinguistics**. This examines the social context in which the teaching of the English language takes place. The role of English as an international language is discussed as are the functions of different languages in societies where two or more languages are used, including relationships between cultures and languages. Relationships between language and ideology, and language and gender, are explored, along with other 'micro-level' topics including language variation, accent, dialect, and register. You are encouraged to undertake comparative work related to language in the society in which you live, and draw out implications for the classroom.

Finally, for your optional module you choose one of the following:

- Functional Grammar
- Corpus Linguistics
- Multimodal Communication
- Translation and Language Pedagogy

Or choose any two of the following modules and complete one coursework assignment:

- Testing
- Teaching Young Learners
- Introduction to Translation Studies

Fees and funding

Fees for entry in February or April 2015 are as follows:

- £940 per module
- £2,820 for the dissertation

Fees for entry in July or October 2015 are as follows:

- £970 per module
- £2,910 for the dissertation

Eligibility for Home/EU or Overseas fees can be verified with Admissions. Learn more about **fees for international students (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/International/students/finance/fees.aspx)**

Learn more about **fees and funding (/postgraduate/pgt-fees/fees.aspx)**

Scholarships and studentships

Scholarships to cover fees and/or maintenance costs may be available. To discover whether you are eligible for any award across the University, and to start your funding application, please visit the University's **Postgraduate Funding Database (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/fees/funding/FundingFilter.aspx)** .

Entry requirements

We usually ask for a good Honours degree, or overseas equivalent. However, when considering your application, we always look at your qualifications and work experience as well as your academic credentials. For this reason, it is important to provide details of any current and/or previous employment in your application; it is always helpful to include a current CV but please complete the relevant sections of the application form as well.

Learn more about **entry requirements (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/requirements/requirements-pg/index.aspx)**

International students

Academic requirements

We accept a range of qualifications; our **country pages (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/international/students/country/index.aspx)** show you what qualifications we accept from your country.

English language requirements

You can satisfy our English language requirements in two ways:

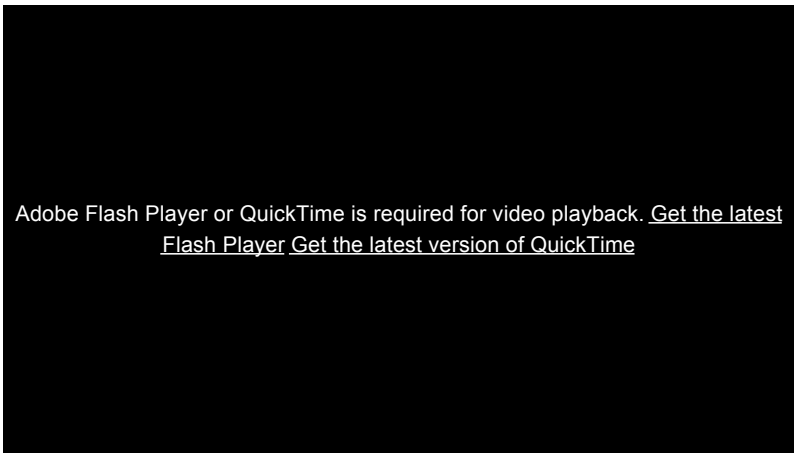
- by holding an **English language qualification (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/requirements/requirements-pg/international/index.aspx)** to the right level; for this course we ask for IELTS 6.5 in all bands.
- by taking and successfully completing one of our **English courses for international students (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/requirements/requirements-pg/international/english-courses.aspx)**

How to apply

When clicking on the Apply Now button you will be directed to an application specifically designed for the programme you wish to apply for where you will create an account with the University application system and submit your application and supporting documents online. Further information regarding how to apply online can be found on the **How to apply pages (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/courses/postgraduate/apply-pg/index.aspx)**

Apply now (https://pga.bham.ac.uk/lpages/CAL055.htm)

Learning and teaching



- **video transcript (/accessibility/transcripts/artsandlaw/calgs/distance-learning.aspx)**

Our study materials are produced by academic staff in the specialist areas and are available online through the University's 'virtual learning environment'. They contain aims and objectives, reading lists, summaries of readings, activities and commentaries, discussion and reflection tasks, indexes and details of assignments required. On joining you are provided with a course handbook that introduces you to the team, provides details of their roles and expertise and gives all the contact information you will need including email addresses so that if you have any difficulties or questions you will know who to contact for help and guidance.

Although much of the course is delivered through the virtual learning environment, support is always available. You will have a personal tutor and dissertation supervisor to guide you and answer any questions, and you will be able to consult academic staff in Birmingham via Skype.

We also run week-long face-to-face seminars in the summer. These are free, and open to all distance learning students on English Language MA programmes.

You will also become part of, and contribute to, the vibrant international community of the College of Arts and Law Graduate School, which offers dedicated research resources and a supportive working environment. Our team of academic and operational staff are on hand to offer support and advice to all postgraduate students within

the College.

Support with academic writing

As a postgraduate student in the College of Arts and Law, you have access to the **Academic Writing Advisory Service (AWAS) (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/university/colleges/artslaw/student-experience/opportunities/awas/index.aspx)** which aims to help your transition from undergraduate to taught Masters level, or back into academia after time away. The service offers guidance on writing assignments and dissertations for your MA/MSc programme with individual support from an academic writing advisor via tutorials, email and the provision of online materials.

International students can access support through the **English for International Students Unit (EISU) (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/eisu/insessional/index.aspx)** .

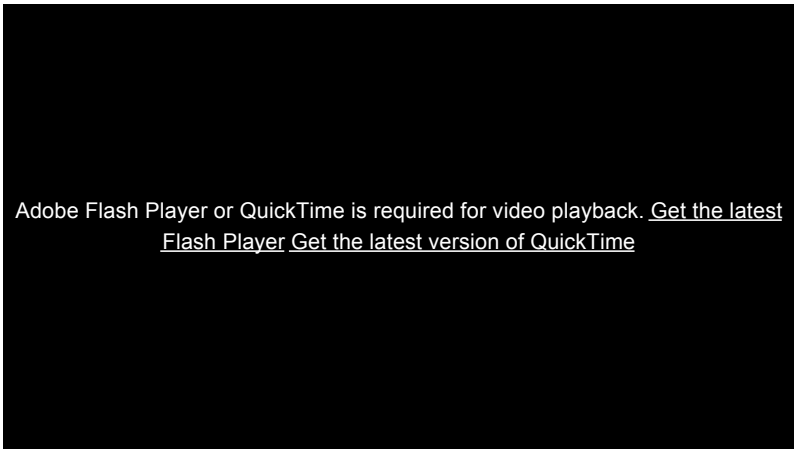
Related staff

Dr Crayton Walker (/staff/profiles/elal/walker-crayton.aspx)

Employability

The University of Birmingham has been ranked 8th in the UK and 60th in the world for post-qualification employability in the latest global survey of universities commissioned by the International Herald Tribune.

Your degree will provide excellent preparation for employment and this will be further enhanced by the employability skills training offered through the College of Arts and Law Graduate School.



Over the last five years, over 95% of English postgraduates have been in work and/or further study six months after graduation.

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