

PhD English Language and Applied Linguistics (Distance Learning)

We offer promising candidates the opportunity to carry out research in one of the most dynamic institutions in Britain, while remaining in your resident country. Our principal areas of research expertise are Corpus Linguistics, Stylistics and Discourse Studies, and Language Learning and Teaching.

We also offer a campus-based **PhD in English Language and Applied Linguistics** (</postgraduate/courses/research/english/eng-lang-applied-linguistics.aspx>) and a **PhD with Integrated Studies in Applied Linguistics** (</postgraduate/courses/combined/english/applied-linguistics-integrated-study.aspx>).

Study here and find out why the University of Birmingham was 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: Distance learning, doctoral research

Study Options: Blended learning, distance learning, part time

Duration: 4-6 years part-time

Start date: January, September

Contact

Professor Michael Toolan, Admissions Tutor

Tel: +44 (0)121 414 5686

Email: m.toolan@bham.ac.uk (<mailto:m.toolan@bham.ac.uk>)

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

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

Details

Doing a PhD in English Language and Applied Linguistics via distance learning allows you to study while remaining in your resident country, keeping in contact with your supervisor via email and skype. This is a perfect way to study, especially if you are interested in relating research work to your current professional environment.

Extensive online research training is provided in the first year of the programme and, whilst there is no requirement to spend any time in Birmingham, you are encouraged to visit for short periods, if at all possible. These visits provide valuable opportunities for face-to-face supervision, to meet other PhD students and to make use of the library and other research and training opportunities.

There are two distance learning PhD programmes in English Language and Applied Linguistics. Both programmes involve regular contact with a supervisor by email and/or Skype. There is no assessed taught component, but students follow online research training modules.

Distance PhD

The standard programme requires a traditional 80,000-word thesis. The work is examined at the end of the programme, as with other PhD programmes. Students identify and refine a thesis topic in consultation with their supervisor and send drafts of the various chapters for comment as they work through the programme.

As with all PhDs, progress is monitored throughout the registration period.

Distance Modular PhD

The modular programme requires three modules: two shorter research papers (Module 1 - 12,000 words, Module 2 - 20,000 words) and a final thesis of 50,000 words (Module 3). The work is examined in three phases, at the end of each module. The final product (in terms of total quantity and quality of work) is therefore similar to the standard PhD; however the modular option provides an incremental, continuously assessed route allowing students to progress through explicitly marked stages to a PhD. Students identify a topic they wish to work on and to which all their written work should be related; the nature of the assessment means however that the topic may not be as tightly focused as that in a traditional PhD.

Our principal areas of research include:

Corpus Linguistics – our work in this area incorporates interests in linguistic theory and language description, including descriptive translation and contrastive studies, phraseology and the lexis–grammar interface, and in the application of corpus investigation techniques to areas such as translation, lexicography and diachronic language study. Corpus techniques also underpin much of our work in discourse studies and in language learning and teaching.

Stylistics and Discourse Studies – our work here focuses on themes such as narrative analysis, critical discourse analysis, translation studies and social theory, and on topics such as literary stylistics, workplace discourse, academic discourse, the relationship between language and social class, evaluation, language and new media, everyday creativity, and multi-modal discourse.

Language Learning and Teaching – our work in this area incorporates corpus approaches to phraseology, lexis and grammar, and discourse approaches to academic literacies. This also includes a focus on the teaching and learning of figurative language, collocation, and business English in the context of English as a global language. We also focus on cognitive linguistics and its applications to language learning and teaching.



Profiles of our current doctoral researchers



</schools/edacs/departments/englishlanguage/research/postgraduateresearch/index.aspx>

Modules

Content and assessment for the Modular PhD

Module 1 - Subject-focused work, to include some research training and preparation related to the subject, such as empirical work, literature searches, and research methodology.

The 12,000-word assessment may be divided into 3 x 4,000 papers or combinations amounting to the total (60 credits). Pass/Fail.

Module 2 - Structured research and writing on the research topic. It may be linked in a linear way to Module 1, or the connection may be looser.

The 20,000-word assessment may be divided into one or two papers amounting to the total (120 credits). Pass/Fail

Module 3 - The thesis (maximum 50,000 words - 360 credits). Pass/Fail

The assessed work from Modules 2 and 3 should be of publishable quality.

Each assessment (i.e. each module) is submitted and passed before the student can proceed to the next. One re-submission of each module is permitted. The external examiner is consulted when each module is completed. Like all PhD theses at Birmingham, a Modular PhD is examined in a viva voce examination which takes place after the submission of Module 3.

Fees and funding

For the 2015/16 session the annual fee will be £6,597.50.

The fee will be payable each year for between four years (minimum registration) and six years (maximum registration). Students who go into Writing Up after four or five years will pay a nominal continuation fee (the same as for the full-time PhD).

Tuition fees can either be paid in full or by instalments. Learn more about [postgraduate tuition fees and funding \(/postgraduate/dr-fees/index.aspx\)](/postgraduate/dr-fees/index.aspx).

Scholarships and studentships

Scholarships to cover fees and/or maintenance costs may be available. To be eligible for these awards, candidates must hold either an offer of a place to study or have submitted an application to study at the University. 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 \(http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/fees/funding/FundingFilter.aspx\)](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/fees/funding/FundingFilter.aspx).

International students can often gain funding through overseas research scholarships, Commonwealth scholarships or their home government.

Entry requirements

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

International students

Academic requirements

We accept a range of qualifications; our [country pages \(http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/international/students/country/index.aspx\)](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 \(http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/requirements/requirements-pg/international/index.aspx\)](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/requirements/requirements-pg/international/index.aspx) to the right level
- by taking and successfully completing one of our [English courses for international students \(http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/requirements/requirements-pg/international/english-courses.aspx\)](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/requirements/requirements-pg/international/english-courses.aspx)

How to apply

Before you make your application

You may wish to [register your interest with us \(https://bham.hobsons.co.uk/emtinterestpage.aspx?ip=postgraduate\)](https://bham.hobsons.co.uk/emtinterestpage.aspx?ip=postgraduate) to receive regular news and updates on postgraduate life within this Department and the wider University.

Making your application

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 \(http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/courses/postgraduate/apply-pg/index.aspx\)](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/courses/postgraduate/apply-pg/index.aspx)

[Apply now \(https://pga.bham.ac.uk/lpages/CAL145.htm\)](https://pga.bham.ac.uk/lpages/CAL145.htm)

Research interests of staff

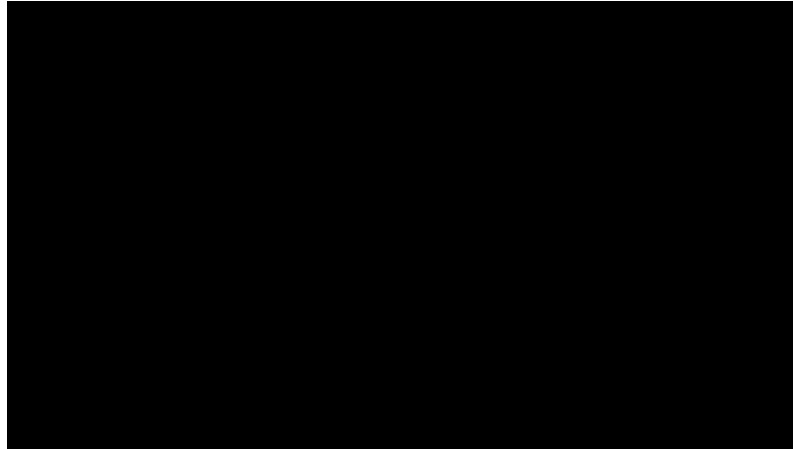
Members of staff and their research and PhD supervision interests

Before contacting members of academic staff, please make sure you are familiar with the application process. Any questions about the administrative side of things (fees, scholarships, paperwork etc.) should go to the [College of Arts and Law Graduate School \(http://www.alpg.bham.ac.uk\)](http://www.alpg.bham.ac.uk).

[Dr Joe Bennett \(/staff/profiles/elal/bennett-joe.aspx\)](/staff/profiles/elal/bennett-joe.aspx)

I would be interested in supervising research into relationships between *discourse* – taken in its most general sense to include not just language but also other semiotic modes, especially images and sounds – and *social power relations*. Of particular interest to me at the moment are the ways in which features of contemporary British life are semiotised – the ways in which, for example, social class differences are talked about by politicians, or the ways in which different organisations with different political interests visually represent British cities. Any work related to these themes, including that relating to other cultural/national contexts, is likely to be of interest. In terms of methodological frameworks, I am interested in work that draws on Halliday's Social Semiotics, including later developments in that area, and in Critical Discourse Analysis.

[j.a.bennett.1@bham.ac.uk \(mailto:j.a.bennett.1@bham.ac.uk\)](mailto:j.a.bennett.1@bham.ac.uk)



- **[view transcript \(/accessibility/transcripts/artsandlaw/cels/bennett-joe-pg-supervision.aspx\)](/accessibility/transcripts/artsandlaw/cels/bennett-joe-pg-supervision.aspx)**

[Dr Melanie Evans \(/staff/profiles/elal/evans-melanie.aspx\)](/staff/profiles/elal/evans-melanie.aspx)

My research focuses on the language of the individual (idiolects), with a current emphasis on historical idiolects from the Early Modern period. I am interested in the relationship between language style, social identity, and linguistic variation and change. I would be interested in supervising students in the following areas:

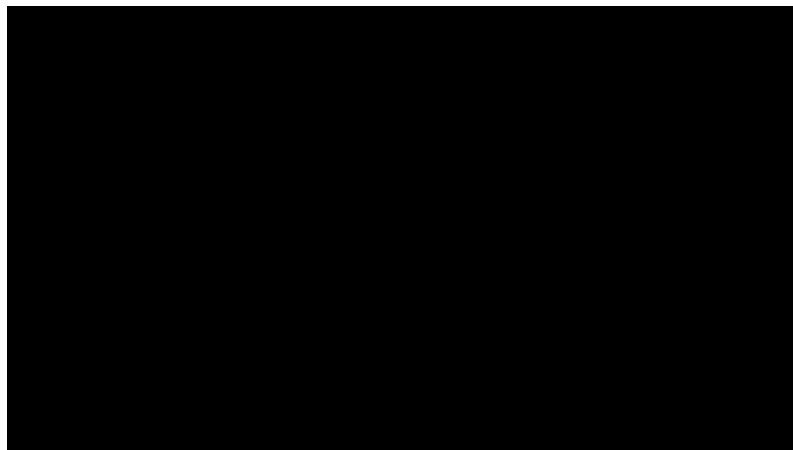
- Historical sociolinguistics, especially the Early Modern period (1500-1700). I would be particularly interested in supervising students wishing to develop new methodological approaches and/or resources (corpora) to answer questions about the relationship between society and linguistic variation in historical periods.
- Studies of idiolects and authorship attribution methods and techniques, both for contemporary or historical data.
- Discursive studies of language and identity, particularly in regards to gender.
- Historical development of spelling and other written dimensions of language.

[m.evans@bham.ac.uk \(mailto:m.evans@bham.ac.uk\)](mailto:m.evans@bham.ac.uk)

[Dr Nick Groom \(/staff/profiles/elal/groom-nicholas.aspx\)](/staff/profiles/elal/groom-nicholas.aspx)

I am interested in supervising PhD students who want to use the tools and methods of corpus linguistics to address problems, questions and issues in Discourse Analysis, Critical Discourse Analysis and Second Language Acquisition research. I am also interested in supervising PhD projects that focus on applications of corpus linguistics in TEFL/TESL.

[n.w.groom@bham.ac.uk \(mailto:n.w.groom@bham.ac.uk\)](mailto:n.w.groom@bham.ac.uk)

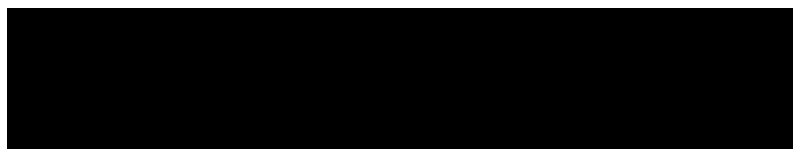


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[Professor Susan Hunston \(/staff/profiles/elal/hunston-susan.aspx\)](/staff/profiles/elal/hunston-susan.aspx)

I have done work on mainly written discourse, especially evaluative language, and on corpus linguistics. I am interested in supervising topics that use discourse or corpus methods (or a mixture of the two). Previous and current students have researched topics such as: aspects of lexis and grammar in learner corpora; the representation of given people and situations in newspapers; the language of text messaging; the discourse of particular academic disciplines; assessing task-based learning in the classroom; business and academic job advertisements; language and visual communication in university websites; and many more. The topic that interests me particularly at the moment is the language of interdisciplinary academic fields, so I would be very happy to work out a research proposal with anyone keen to work in this area. But I am also happy to supervise other topics that relate to the methodologies I mentioned above.

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Dr Suganthi John (/staff/profiles/elal/john-suganthi.aspx)

My main areas of research are in academic discourse and the teaching of academic writing. I am keen to supervise research which investigates aspects of academic discourse – for e.g. argumentation in academic discourse, comparative studies on the features of academic discourse in different disciplines, academic style etc. Of particular interest is research which aims to illuminate aspects of academic discourse which are challenging for second language writers. Equally, I would be keen on supervising research which evaluates classroom techniques for the teaching of academic writing and materials development for academic writing. I would also be happy to supervise writing (not academic but general or creative writing) for EFL learners.

s.p.john@bham.ac.uk (<http://www.english.bham.ac.uk/pg/s.p.john@bham.ac.uk>)

Dr Almut Koester

My research is on the analysis of spoken discourse in the workplace, so I am particularly interested in supervising research involving the collection and transcription of naturally-occurring spoken interactions in workplace, business and other institutional settings. In addition to studies investigating English native speaker discourse, I would welcome those involving cross-cultural and cross-linguistic comparisons or Business English as a lingua franca. Research methods I use include discourse analysis, conversation analysis, genre analysis and corpus research methods. Areas of language and interaction I have investigated: spoken workplace genres, small talk, conflictual talk, modality, hedges, vague language, idioms, metaphor.

a.j.koester@bham.ac.uk (<mailto:a.j.koester@bham.ac.uk>)

Dr Jeannette Littlemore (/staff/profiles/elal/littlemore-jeannette.aspx)

I am interested in supervising PhD theses on the acquisition and use of metaphor and other types of figurative language by second language learners. I would particularly welcome proposals that focus on the acquisition of metonymy, humour and irony, and the use of verbal and gestural metaphor in cross-linguistic communication or communication between members of different discourse communities. I am also interested in supervising research that explores other applications of cognitive linguistics (such as construal) to second language learning and teaching.

j.m.littlemore@bham.ac.uk (<mailto:j.m.littlemore@bham.ac.uk>)

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Dr Neil Millar

I am interested in supervising PhD students in the following areas:

- corpus data and theories of language learning/processing
- the combination of corpus data and experimentation
- investigating language using statistical approaches to collocation
- recent language change
- or in any area coherent with my research interests

n.j.millar@bham.ac.uk (<mailto:n.j.millar@bham.ac.uk>)

Dr Rosamund Moon (/staff/profiles/elal/moon-rosamund.aspx)

My main research areas are lexis in general (including phraseology, collocation, and idioms), lexicography and dictionary-making, figurative language – also discourse and ideological aspects of language, particularly from a lexical point of view: my approaches are generally corpus-based or text-based. I'd be very interested in supervising PhD topics in these and similar areas.

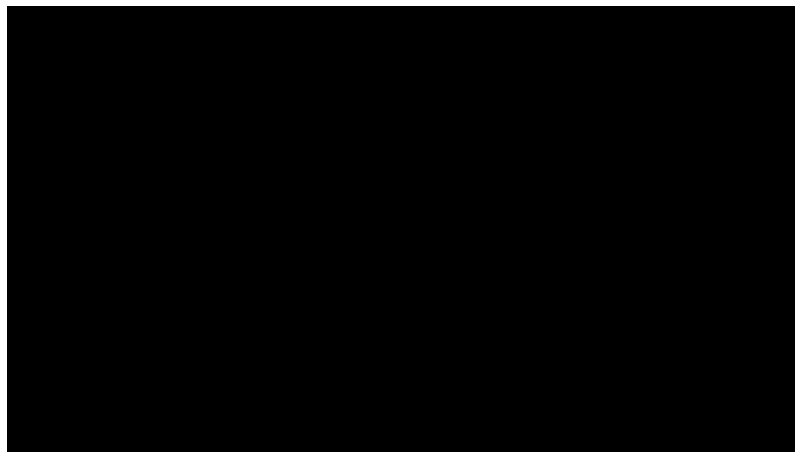
r.e.moon@bham.ac.uk (<mailto:r.e.moon@bham.ac.uk>)

Dr Gabriela Saldanha (/staff/profiles/elal/saldanha-gabriela.aspx)

My main research areas are 1) stylistics and translation, in particular the investigation of translator style, that is, stylistic features that can be attributed to the translator – rather than the author. the source text or to linguistic constraints in language transfer – and therefore can tell us something about the translators themselves as literary artists; 2) the reception of translated literature, including, for example, readers' attitudes towards translation within a particular literary system, the role of publishers and booksellers in disseminating foreign literature, translation policies, and 3) translation and gender, in particular the representation of gendered language and gender

stereotypes across cultures.

g.saldanha@bham.ac.uk (<mailto:g.saldanha@bham.ac.uk>)



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Dr Alison Sealey

I welcome applications from postgraduate research students who are seeking supervision in the areas of:

- The sociology of language and the links between language use and social processes. Students who are interested in any aspect of language and the realist social theory explored in a number of my recent publications are especially encouraged to contact me about their proposals for MPhil/PhD research.
- Corpus linguistics: a) As a method in discourse analysis b) In first language learning and teaching
- Language planning and policy

a.j.sealey@bham.ac.uk (<mailto:a.j.sealey@bham.ac.uk>)

Dr Caroline Tagg (/staff/profiles/elal/tagg-caroline.aspx)

I started my career as a TESOL teacher and teacher trainer in Spain, Vietnam and the UK, before becoming interested in the language of digital media. My PhD was a corpus study of text messaging, and I am now researching social network sites. I am interested in supervising students in the following areas:

- Language and New Media: any aspect of communication and community online.
- Creativity in ordinary language: how people play with language and use it artfully in everyday situations, including online ones.
- Corpus projects: particularly those which integrate corpus methods with other approaches, or which involve online data.
- TESOL and education: particularly the use of digital media in education and related topics.

c.tagg@bham.ac.uk (<mailto:c.tagg@bham.ac.uk>)

Dr Paul Thompson (/staff/profiles/elal/thompson-paul.aspx)

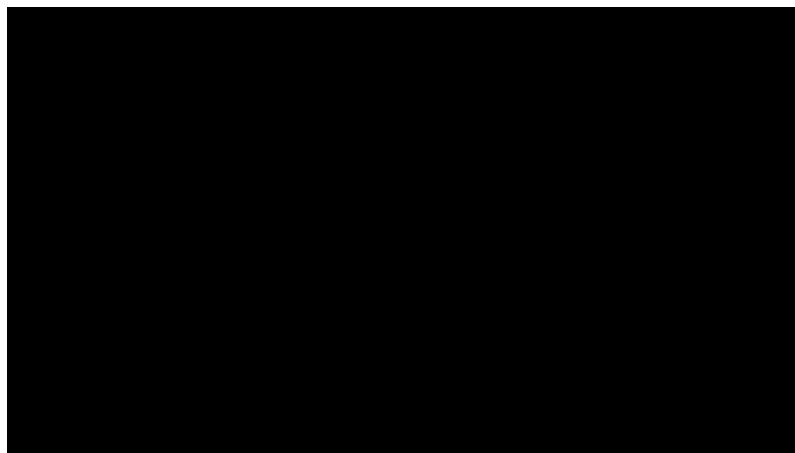
I have research interests in linguistic aspects of human-computer interaction, in uses of educational technologies in language learning, and in the exploitation of corpus resources and methodologies in learning about language. I have worked on large scale academic corpus development projects, and am keen to supervise doctoral research which explores specialised language use, particularly in academic discourse, through corpus analysis, or which develops innovative approaches to corpus studies.

p.thompson@bham.ac.uk (<mailto:p.thompson@bham.ac.uk>)

Professor Michael Toolan (/staff/profiles/elal/toolan-michael.aspx)

I am interested in supervising PhDs in all areas of Stylistics, Narrative Analysis, and Sociolinguistics. My own current research interests include the role of repetition in verbal art, the textual construction of expectations and emotional immersion in written narratives, and the construction/performance of 'emergent identity' in personal narratives.

m.toolan@bham.ac.uk (<mailto:m.toolan@bham.ac.uk>)



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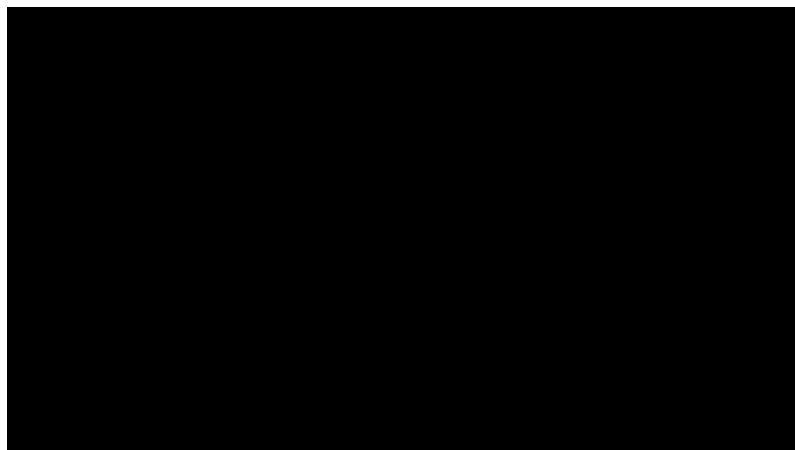
Dr Crayton Walker (/staff/profiles/elal/walker-crayton.aspx)

My own research interests are associated with the study of collocation and other phraseological aspects of English. I am currently using corpus-based techniques to investigate the phraseological behaviours of high frequency nouns and verbs and looking at how these are represented in mainstream EFL coursebooks.

I am particularly interested in supervising MA and PhD research in the areas of

- collocation and other phraseological aspects of English
- the pedagogic application of corpora
- vocabulary and the teaching of vocabulary

c.p.walker@bham.ac.uk (<mailto:c.p.walker@bham.ac.uk>)

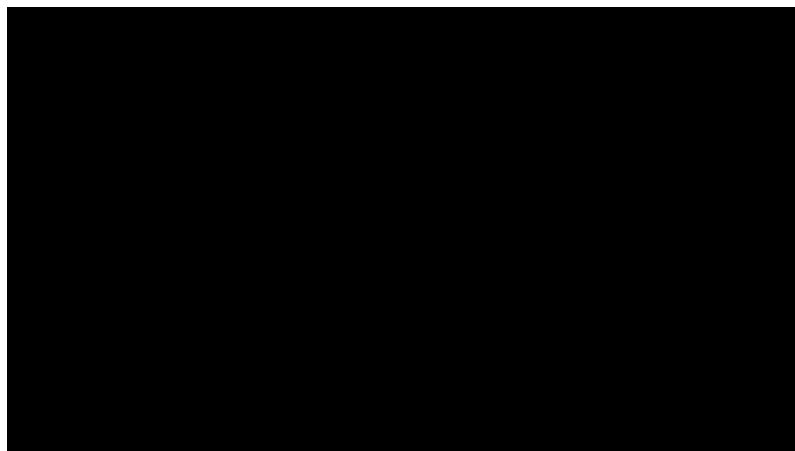


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Employability

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.



Birmingham's English Language and Applied Linguistics postgraduates develop a broad range of transferable skills that are highly valued by employers, particularly in relation to verbal and written communication. They also develop crucial skills in organisation, time management, analysis and interpretation of information.

Over the past five years, over 92% of English Language and Applied Linguistics postgraduates were in work and/or further study six months after graduation. Some of our graduates enter roles for which their programme has prepared them, such as translation, interpreting or teaching; others use their transferable skills in a wide range of occupations including journalism, marketing, publishing and media.