

MA Literary Linguistics

This programme explores the language of literary texts from many angles, drawing on linguistic description and insights. You will acquire an understanding of stylistic theory and methodology while studying the role of grammar, semantics and pragmatics in the reading of literary texts. You will also study narratology, applied to prose fiction and film, and in addition, we look at exciting new approaches in stylistics: multimodal analysis, cognitive poetics, and corpus stylistics.

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

Study Options: Full time, part time

Duration: 1 year full-time, 2 years part-time

Start date: September

Contact

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

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

Details

Literary Linguistics is central to the study and understanding of literature and the media in contemporary cultures, themselves profoundly dependent on information, communication and text. It is often invaluable in attempts to identify the essence of an author's style; it is crucial to understanding how advertisements win us over; it is important in the identification of weak writing, moments of failure or contradiction in political or persuasive language, and in many other contexts. It is newly central to the study and understanding of literature and the media because contemporary cultures are so rooted in information, communication, and text.

This programme is of value to those with an interest in the technique of a particular writer or the grammar of a particular genre of writing; to teachers of A-level courses with an English Language component; or to anyone interested in a systematic, graduate-level exploration of the linguistic bases of literary expression.

The programme includes six taught modules. You will take two core modules [full descriptions available below]:

- Language and Literature: Key Topics in Stylistics
- Advanced Topics in Literary Linguistics

You will choose your optional modules from a range of topics.

You will complete the programme with a 15,000-word dissertation which is expected to take the form of an in-depth case-study of a unified textual phenomenon (as this appears in one or several texts) and its linguistic description and explanation. The aim of the dissertation is to put to work the insights and skills learned from modules, and to enable you to develop your research ability in a more substantial format.

Modules

You will complete two core modules in Literary Linguistics (one per semester):

Language and Literature: Key Topics in Stylistics

This module aims to equip you with an understanding of how language works, so that this understanding can be used in the analysis of literary and non-literary texts. You will gain an understanding of the principles of stylistic analysis and theory and will review core topics of stylistic analysis (such as textual cohesion and coherence, modality, transitivity, speech act analysis, the discursive representation of speech and thought, face and politeness, presupposition, etc.), applying them to authors and texts from historical and contemporary periods of English literature. You will develop your analytic skills through the use of different frameworks and also critique the evolution of stylistic theory and practice and the position of the field within linguistic and literary domains.

Advanced Topics in Literary Linguistics

This module builds on the foundation in Literary Stylistic description, theory, and methods set out in the first semester module. The topics selected for intensive study can vary, but in recent years this module has focused on Narrative Analysis of Fiction and Film: an advanced introduction to some of the fundamental components of narratives, approached from a linguistic and narratological point of view. Issues explored include: temporal manipulation; point of view; setting; structure; characterisation; narrativity and the non-narrative; the semiotics of visual images; narrative expectation; suspense, surprise, secrets and gaps; and print and tv narratives. This includes an exploration of the differences between prose narrative fiction and film narrative fiction which stem from their different media and technologies.

You will also choose four optional modules from a range which includes:

In the autumn term -

- **[Describing Language \(/postgraduate/courses/taught/english/elal-modules.aspx#describinglanguage\)](/postgraduate/courses/taught/english/elal-modules.aspx#describinglanguage)**
- **[Discourse, Culture and Communication \(/postgraduate/courses/taught/english/elal-modules.aspx#describinglanguage\)](/postgraduate/courses/taught/english/elal-modules.aspx#describinglanguage)**
- **[Introduction to Corpus Linguistics \(/postgraduate/courses/taught/english/elal-modules.aspx#discourseculturecommunication\)](/postgraduate/courses/taught/english/elal-modules.aspx#discourseculturecommunication)**
- **[Introduction to Language \(/postgraduate/courses/taught/english/elal-modules.aspx#introductioncorpuslinguistics\)](/postgraduate/courses/taught/english/elal-modules.aspx#introductioncorpuslinguistics)**

- [Social and Psychological Aspects of Language \(/postgraduate/courses/taught/english/elal-modules.aspx#socialmultimodallaspectscommunication\)](#)

In the spring term -

- [Cognitive Approaches to Discourse Analysis \(/postgraduate/courses/taught/english/elal-modules.aspx#CognitiveApproachesDiscourseAnalysis\)](#)
- [English as a Global Language \(/postgraduate/courses/taught/english/elal-modules.aspx#discourseteachers\)](#) ([/postgraduate/courses/taught/english/elal-modules.aspx#englishgloballanguage](#))
- [Intercultural Communication \(/postgraduate/courses/taught/english/elal-modules.aspx#issuesapproachesenglishacademicpurposes\)](#)
- [Language and New Media \(/postgraduate/courses/taught/english/elal-modules.aspx#interculturalcommunication\)](#)
- [Language and Politics \(/postgraduate/courses/taught/english/elal-modules.aspx#languagenewmedia\)](#)
- [Language, Style and Identity \(/postgraduate/courses/taught/english/elal-modules.aspx#LanguageStyleIdentity\)](#)

Fees and funding

We charge an annual tuition fee. Fees for 2015/16 are as follows:

- Home / EU: £6,210 full-time; £3,105 part-time
- Overseas: £14,140 full-time

For part-time students, the above fee quoted is for year one only and tuition fees will also be payable in year two of your programme.

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>)

Tuition fees can either be paid in full or by instalments. Learn more about [postgraduate tuition fees and funding](#) (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/postgraduate/pgt-fees/index.aspx>).

Alumni Bursary

The University of Birmingham is offering awards of ?2,000 to outstanding alumni wishing to undertake Masters study at the University during 2015. There are 50 awards available and applications for the bursary must be submitted by 17:00 on 31 March 2015. Full details and how to apply can be found on the [Distinguished Alumni Scholarship page](#) (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/postgraduate/funding/Distinguished-Alumni-Scholarship-scheme.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>).

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>)

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

Before you make your application

You may wish to [register your interest with us](#) (<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>)

[Apply now \(https://pga.bham.ac.uk/lpages/CALo45.htm\)](https://pga.bham.ac.uk/lpages/CALo45.htm)

Learning and teaching

Throughout your course, you will be supported by staff in the department with a broad range of interests. You will also have a specific dissertation supervisor who will work with you to set your topic and will give advice and guidance during the writing period.

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/inseasonal/index.aspx>).

Related staff

[Professor Michael Toolan \(/staff/profiles/elal/toolan-michael.aspx\)](#)

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.

Adobe Flash Player or QuickTime is required for video playback. [Get the latest Flash Player](#) [Get the latest version of QuickTime](#)

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.