

# **REGULATIONS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS (MA[Applied Linguistics])**

*(See also General Regulations)*

Any publication based on work approved for a higher degree should contain a reference to the effect that the work was submitted to the University of Hong Kong for the award of the degree.

---

## **MAAL1 Admission requirements**

To be eligible for admission to the courses leading to the degree of Master of Arts in Applied Linguistics candidates shall:

- (a) comply with the General Regulations;<sup>1</sup>
  - (b) hold either a Bachelor's degree of this University or of another University or comparable institution for this purpose; or another qualification of equivalent standard accepted for this purpose; and
  - (c) satisfy the examiners in a qualifying examination, if required.
- 

## **MAAL2 Qualifying examination**

- (a) A qualifying examination may be set to test candidates' formal academic ability or their ability to follow the course of study prescribed.
  - (b) Candidates who are required to satisfy the examiners in a qualifying examination shall not be permitted to register until they have satisfied the examiners in the examination.
- 

## **MAAL3 Award of degree**

To be eligible for the award of the degree of Master of Arts in Applied Linguistics, candidates shall:

- (a) comply with the General Regulations; and
  - (b) complete the curriculum and satisfy the examiners in accordance with the regulations set out below.
- 

## **MAAL4 Length of curriculum**

The curriculum shall normally be completed within one academic year of full-time study or two academic years of part-time study, with a minimum of 300 hours of prescribed work.

---

<sup>1</sup> In addition to the TOEFL requirement specified in General Regulation G 2, the Faculty also requires a Test of Written English (TWE) score of 4 or above or a Writing score of 25 or above in the internet-based TOEFL.

#### **MAAL5 Completion of curriculum**

To complete the curriculum, candidates shall:

- (a) follow instruction on the syllabuses prescribed and complete all specified work as required;
  - (b) satisfy the examiners in all forms of assessment as may be required;
  - (c) complete and present a satisfactory dissertation on a subject; and
  - (d) satisfy the examiners in an oral examination if required.
- 

#### **MAAL6 Dissertation**

- (a) Candidates shall each submit a title by not later than March 1 of the year in which they plan to complete their study and shall present a dissertation by not later than September 1 of the same year.
  - (b) Candidates shall each submit a statement that the dissertation represents their own work undertaken after registration as a candidate for the degree.
  - (c) The examiners may also prescribe an oral examination on the subject of the dissertation.
- 

#### **MAAL7 Assessment and re-examination**

- (a) The assessment shall be as specified in the syllabuses.
  - (b) Candidates who have failed to satisfy the examiners in not more than half of the courses taken in an academic year may be permitted to re-submit their work for the failed course(s) for re-assessment within a specified period determined by the Board of Examiners.
  - (c) Candidates who have failed to present a satisfactory dissertation but have satisfied the examiners in all the remaining courses may be permitted to revise and re-present the dissertation for re-examination within a period of not more than 12 months after it is deemed unsatisfactory.
- 

#### **MAAL8 Discontinuation of studies**

Candidates who:

- (a) are not permitted to present themselves for re-assessment in any course(s) in which they have failed to satisfy the examiners or to revise and re-present their dissertation; or
- (b) have failed to satisfy the examiners in a second attempt in any course(s) or in their dissertation; or
- (c) have failed more than half of the courses in a first attempt in an academic year

may be recommended for discontinuation of studies under the provisions of General Regulations G12.

---

#### **MAAL9 Examination results**

At the conclusion of the examinations, and after presentation of the dissertations, a list of the successful candidates shall be published. Candidates who have shown exceptional merit may be awarded a mark of distinction, and this mark shall be recorded in the candidates' degree diploma.

## **SYLLABUSES FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS**

Candidates are required to complete 24 credits in total: five core courses (2 credits each); three elective courses (2 credits each); advanced research methods (2 credits); and dissertation (6 credits).

The assessment can be based on essays, term papers, projects, oral presentations, quizzes, and other kinds of oral or written work as prescribed by course teachers.

---

### **CORE COURSES**

#### **MAAL6027. Discourse analysis**

This course introduces candidates to a range of approaches to the analysis of written and spoken discourse. These include conversation analysis, corpus linguistics, functional linguistics and critical discourse analysis, and also explores key concepts for understanding texts such as genre and register, speech functions, repair, turn taking and negotiation of meaning.

---

#### **MAAL6002. Second language curricula**

This course examines the cycle of curriculum design and renewal in English programmes in tertiary and other educational settings.

---

#### **MAAL6028. Introduction to research methods**

This course provides an overview of key methods for researching applied linguistics. At the end of the course candidates will be able to identify, describe and evaluate the relevance of research methods.

---

#### **MAAL6029. Second language acquisition**

This course provides an overview of key approaches and current trends of second language acquisition (SLA). By the end of the course, candidates will gain a clear understanding of the relationship among different SLA theories, as well as the methodology/techniques used in collecting second language data. Possible topics to be covered include interlanguage transfer, universal grammar, ultimate achievement, monitoring, instruction and feedback.

---

#### **MAAL6030. Understanding language through grammar**

This course adopts a functional view of grammar to understand language as a stratified system. At the end of the course, candidates should be able to (1) identify and describe the language use and function in some common genres, (2) apply relevant grammatical categories to critically analyse and interpret language data; and (3) diagnose problems of language learners.

## **ELECTIVE COURSES**

Elective courses will be offered based on candidate interest.

### **MAAL6014. Language testing and evaluation**

This course introduces fundamental principles of language testing and provides hands-on experience in the design, trialling, moderation, validation and evaluation of testing instruments.

---

### **MAAL6031. Information technology in language teaching and research**

This course aims to explore some of the major issues and current uses of information technology (IT) in language teaching, learning and research. It is designed for teachers who are using (or are expected to use) IT in their professional practice. It aims to help teachers carry out their work in an informed and critical way and with an awareness of the technological, social and linguistic implications of the use of IT in language education.

---

### **MAAL6017. Phonology**

This course aims to enhance understanding of current issues in phonology and to consider the teaching of pronunciation and intonation in the Hong Kong context.

---

### **MAAL6018. Vocabulary teaching and learning**

The course helps candidates focus on English vocabulary acquisition and how to present words effectively to ESL/EFL learners. The kinds of words that learners need most, effective vocabulary learning strategies and use of corpora and online learning resources are also covered.

---

### **MAAL6019. Autonomous approaches to language learning and teaching**

This course will explore the theory and practice of autonomy in language learning and teaching. Discussions will focus on differing interpretations of, and contexts for, learner autonomy, and how these interact with various methods of implementation.

---

### **MAAL6022. Literature and language teaching**

This course examines the role of literature in language teaching. It begins by looking at the differences between two related concepts - “teaching literature” and “teaching language through literature”; and goes on to explore the following topics: justifications for using literature in language classrooms; methods of selecting literary materials for language teaching; ways of writing lesson plans based on literary sources to support the teaching of the four language skills; different kinds of literature curricula and programs in the world; stylistics and the teaching of literature; the teaching of language arts in Hong Kong.

### **MAAL6023. Advances in writing pedagogy**

This course will bring candidates up to date with developments in writing pedagogy. It reviews theoretical and practical developments that have influenced the teaching of writing in recent years and looks in particular at process, genre and critical approaches to writing and discourse studies.

---

### **MAAL6032. Corpora and ELT**

This course introduces candidates to corpus linguistics and its applications in English language teaching. The topics to be covered include: using corpora in English language studies, data-driven learning, corpora and syllabus design, and pedagogical challenges of applications of corpora. Candidates will receive hands-on experience in using corpus analysis tools.

---

### **MAAL6033. Language education in China**

A multilingual country, China offers an unusual opportunity to consider paradigms of bilingual and multilingual developments. This course addresses macro language planning concerns as well as more micro individual learner experience. Topics include: language circumstances in China, the standardization and acquisition of Chinese, foreign language policy and learning, minority learners, a trilingual model for China, the dialectics of language, culture and ethnic identity.

---

### **MAAL6034. Gender and language**

This course explores the role of gender as a sociolinguistic variable in female and male speech. Candidates will learn the linguistic features associated with gender-specific speech in different speech communities, and examine major theoretical approaches to the analysis of the differences between female and male speech behaviour. Topics such as sexism and language use in different cultural contexts and gender-based language reforms will also be addressed.

---

### **MAAL6035. Language teacher development**

This course examines how language teachers develop professionally during their teaching careers. Topics to be covered include teacher training, education and development, the knowledge structure of language teachers and teacher learning, the development of expertise in language teaching, the interface between theory and practice, and reflective practitioners.

---

### **MAAL6036. Sociocultural dimensions of SLA**

This course aims at broadening candidates' perspectives in second language acquisition (SLA) by drawing upon key sociolinguistic concepts and theories. It examines language spread and politics surrounding salient issues of SLA. A special emphasis will be placed on the context of acquiring and teaching English as a second language in Hong Kong.

**MAAL6037. Advanced research methods**

This course consists of a series of interactive workshops which will focus on the skills needed to enter into the research phase leading to the production of a dissertation. By the end, candidates will be able to design and carry out their own research plan. The dissertation will be the outcome of carrying out a research project. Candidates will be assigned to a supervisor who will monitor progress during the research and dissertation writing.

---

**MAAL8999. Dissertation**

Candidates are required to complete a dissertation on an approved topic.