

REGULATIONS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS (MA[AppliedLinguistics])

(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;¹
 - (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.
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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.
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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.
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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.

¹ In addition to the admission requirement specified in General Regulation G 2, the Faculty also requires:

- (a) TOEFL: a Test of Written English (TWE) score of 4 or above or a Writing score of 25 or above in the internet-based TOEFL; and
- (b) IELTS: a minimum overall Band of 7 with no subtest lower than 5.5.

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.
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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 August 24 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.
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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.
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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 (MA[AppliedLinguistics])

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

MAAL6002 Second language curricula

This course examines the cycle of curriculum design and renewal in English language programmes with particular emphasis on their theoretical basis and practical implementation with reference to secondary and tertiary contexts.

MAAL6027 Discourse analysis

This course introduces candidates to a range of approaches to the analysis of spoken discourse. These include conversation analysis, pragmatics, genre analysis and classroom discourse analysis. At the end of the course, participants should be able to describe, compare and apply the different approaches to analyze spoken texts.

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 the key approaches and current trends within 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 and techniques used when analysing second language data. Topics to be covered include universal grammar, interactionist, functional and processing approaches to SLA, interlanguage development, individual differences and their effect on SLA, and classroom based approaches to SLA that cover teaching and learning.

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 assessment

This course introduces the fundamental principles of language testing and explores the design, trialling, moderation, validation and evaluation of testing instruments.

MAAL6017 Phonology

This course reviews current issues in phonology and discusses the teaching of pronunciation and intonation in the Chinese context. By the end of the course, participants will be able to discuss general aspects of phonological systems, compare theoretical perspectives and identify the specific pronunciation problems of Chinese learners of English.

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.

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.

MAAL6031 Technology in language teaching and learning

This course prepares teachers to use technology effectively in their professional practice. It explores some of the key issues in current and emerging uses of technology in language teaching and learning. It looks in particular at concepts of Computer-Assisted Language Learning, network-based teaching and learning, and electronic literacies. It discusses the use of various technological tools, resources, materials and activities in enhancing teaching and learning. It examines the use of technology from pedagogical and socio-cultural perspectives particularly with reference to language education. No prior experience in teaching using technology is required.

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.

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 aims to engage participants in exploring how in-service teachers of English as a second/foreign language pursue professional development. Topics include: the expertise of language teachers, teacher language awareness, teachers' beliefs and practices, teacher learning and teacher research, reflective practitioners, and teacher autonomy. On completing the course, participants will be able to (1) read critically research literature on language teacher development, (2) articulate their understanding of issues related to language teacher development, and (3) consider how to apply their knowledge to their own professional development.

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 of the workshops, candidates will be able to design and carry out their own research plan. As a result, they will be ready to prepare their dissertation research proposal.

MAAL8999 Dissertation

Candidates are required to complete a dissertation on an approved topic. Candidates will be assigned to a supervisor who will monitor progress during the research and dissertation writing.
