

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

*(See also General Regulations and Regulations for Taught Postgraduate Curricula)*

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.

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### **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) comply with the Regulations for Taught Postgraduate Curricula;
  - (c) hold a Bachelor's degree with honours of this University or a qualification of equivalent standard from this University or another comparable institution accepted for this purpose; and
  - (d) 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 Advanced standing**

Subject to the approval of the Board of the Faculty, advanced standing for 6 credits (one core course) may be granted to candidates in recognition of their successful completion of previous studies which are similar to a core course within 5 years before admission to the curriculum in accordance with TPG 3 of the Regulations for Taught Postgraduate Curricula. Application for advanced standing should be made in writing at the time of application for admission to the curriculum accompanied by a copy of the academic transcript to support the application, and it will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Credits granted for advanced standing will not be included in the calculation of the mark of distinction but will be recorded on the transcript of the candidate.

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### **MAAL4 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;
  - (b) comply with the Regulations for Taught Postgraduate Curricula; and
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<sup>1</sup> 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.

- (c) complete the curriculum as prescribed in the syllabuses and satisfy the examiners in accordance with the regulations set out below.
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#### **MAAL5 Period of study**

The curriculum shall normally extend over one academic year of full-time study or two academic years of part-time study. Candidates shall not be permitted to extend their studies beyond the maximum period of registration of two academic years of full-time study or four academic years of part-time study, unless otherwise permitted or required by the Board of the Faculty.

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#### **MAAL6 Completion of curriculum**

To complete the curriculum, candidates shall:

- (a) satisfy the requirements prescribed in TPG 6 of the Regulations for Taught Postgraduate Curricula;
  - (b) take not fewer than 69 credits in the manner specified in these regulations and the syllabuses, and follow instruction on the syllabuses prescribed and complete satisfactorily all specified work as required;
  - (c) satisfy the examiners in all forms of assessment as required;
  - (d) complete satisfactorily a capstone experience on a subject; and
  - (e) satisfy the examiners in an oral examination if required.
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#### **MAAL7 Capstone Experience: Dissertation or Portfolio**

- (a) The capstone experience is compulsory of which two options are available, taking MAAL6037 Advanced research methods and submission of a dissertation; OR taking an additional elective course and submission of a portfolio.
  - (b) 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/portfolio by a date as prescribed by the Programme Committee.
  - (c) Candidates shall each submit a statement declaring that the dissertation/portfolio represents their own work undertaken after registration as candidates for the degree.
  - (d) The examiners may also prescribe an oral examination on the subject of the dissertation/portfolio.
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#### **MAAL8 Assessment and re-examination**

- (a) The assessment shall be as specified in the syllabuses. Only passed courses will earn credits. Grades shall be awarded in accordance with TPG 9(a) of the Regulations for Taught Postgraduate Curricula.
- (b) Candidates who have failed to satisfy the examiners on the first attempt in not more than 24 credits of full-time study or 12 credits of part-time study taken in an academic year may be permitted to re-submit their work for the failed credits for re-assessment within a specified period determined by the Board of Examiners, but no later than the end of the following semester (not including the summer semester).
- (c) Candidates who have failed to present a satisfactory dissertation/portfolio but have satisfied the examiners in all the remaining credits may be permitted to revise and re-present the dissertation/portfolio for re-examination within a period of not more than 12 months after it is deemed unsatisfactory.

- (d) There shall be no appeal against the results of examinations and all other forms of assessment.
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**MAAL9 Discontinuation of studies**

Candidates who:

- (a) are not permitted to present themselves for re-assessment in any credits in which they have failed to satisfy the examiners; or
- (b) have failed to satisfy the examiners in a second attempt in any credits; or
- (c) have failed more than 24 credits of full-time study or 12 credits of part-time study on the first attempt in an academic year; or
- (d) have exceeded the maximum period of registration as specified in MAAL5.

may be recommended for discontinuation of studies under the provisions of General Regulations G 12.

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**MAAL10 Assessment results**

On successful completion of the curriculum, candidates who have shown exceptional merit may be awarded a mark of distinction, and this mark shall be recorded in the candidates' degree diploma.

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## **MASTER OF ARTS IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS (MA[Applied Linguistics])**

Candidates are required to complete 69 credits in total: five core courses (6 credits each); three elective courses (6 credits each); and a capstone experience of which two options are available: (a) taking MAAL6037 Advanced research methods (6 credits), and submission of a dissertation (15 credits); OR (b) taking an additional elective course (6 credits), and submission of a portfolio (15 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.

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### **CORE COURSES**

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#### **MAAL6002 Second language curricula (6 credits)**

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.

Assessment: 100% coursework

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#### **MAAL6027 Discourse analysis (6 credits)**

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.

Assessment: 100% coursework

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#### **MAAL6028 Introduction to research methods (6 credits)**

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.

Assessment: 100% coursework

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#### **MAAL6029 Second language acquisition (6 credits)**

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.

Assessment: 100% coursework

#### **MAAL6030 Understanding language through grammar (6 credits)**

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.

Assessment: 100% coursework

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## **ELECTIVE COURSES**

Elective courses will be offered based on candidate interest.

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### **MAAL6014 Language testing and assessment (6 credits)**

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

Assessment: 100% coursework

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### **MAAL6017 Phonology (6 credits)**

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.

Assessment: 100% coursework

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### **MAAL6018 Vocabulary teaching and learning (6 credits)**

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.

Assessment: 100% coursework

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### **MAAL6023 Advances in writing pedagogy (6 credits)**

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.

Assessment: 100% coursework

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### **MAAL6031 Technology in language teaching and learning (6 credits)**

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.

Assessment: 100% coursework

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### **MAAL6034 Gender and language (6 credits)**

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.

Assessment: 100% coursework

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### **MAAL6035 Language teacher development (6 credits)**

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.

Assessment: 100% coursework

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### **MAAL6036 Sociocultural dimensions of SLA (6 credits)**

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.

Assessment: 100% coursework

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### **MAAL6037 Advanced research methods (6 credits)**

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 proposals.

Assessment: 100% coursework

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### **MAAL7001 Applied corpus linguistics (6 credits)**

This course introduces candidates to a variety of applications of corpus linguistics, including genre/register analyses, contrastive (interlanguage) analyses, critical discourse analyses, and L1/L2 corpora for assessment and pedagogical purposes.

Assessment: 100% coursework

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### **MAAL7002 Applied linguistics in the workplace (6 credits)**

In the contemporary workplace, communication is not only concerned with language-in-use but embraces a range of associated social issues. This course introduces to participants key aspects of workplace communication and organizational interactions that are pertinent to applied linguists, such as rapport management, identities, roles, and interactional strategies. These aspects will be contextualized within a range of professional contexts and relevant discourse data will be provided for analysis with reference to frameworks such as communities of practice, critical discourse analysis and interactional sociolinguistics.

Assessment: 100% coursework

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### **MAAL7003 Understanding intercultural communication (6 credits)**

This course introduces and outlines different approaches to the key sociolinguistic notions of 'intercultural communication' and 'intercultural communicative competence'. Via the exploration of these concepts, the course equips students with the analytical competence required for the evaluation of *effective* language use as determined by the social-cultural context in which the language user is involved, and asks students to reflect on the importance of intercultural communicative competence for pedagogical purposes.

Assessment: 100% coursework

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## **CAPSTONE EXPERIENCE**

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### **MAAL8999 Capstone Experience: Dissertation (15 credits)**

Candidates are required to complete a dissertation of no more than 15,000 words on an approved topic. Candidates will be assigned to a supervisor who will monitor progress during the research and dissertation writing.

Co-requisite: MAAL6037 Advanced research methods

Assessment: 100% coursework

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### **MAAL8998 Capstone Experience: Portfolio (15 credits)**

Candidates are required to revise three to four assignments (2,500 to 3,000 words each) from different courses (core or elective courses), write a mission statement (500 to 800 words) and a personal reflection (1,500 to 2,000 words) on how the portfolio contributes to the understanding of a specific issue/topic in Applied Linguistics or the profession.

Candidates taking this option are required to take an additional elective course, subject to the course listing in the Student Handbook of the programme.

Assessment: 100% coursework

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