

REGULATIONS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS (MA)

(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.

The degree of Master of Arts (MA) is a postgraduate degree awarded for the satisfactory completion of a prescribed course of study in one of the following fields: Art History, Chinese Historical Studies; Chinese Language and Literature; English Studies; Linguistics; Literary and Cultural Studies; and Translation. These fields of study will not necessarily be offered every year.

MA 1 Admission requirements

To be eligible for admission to the courses leading to the degree of Master of Arts, candidates

- (a) shall comply with the General Regulations;¹
- (b) shall comply with the Regulations for Taught Postgraduate Curricula;
- (c) shall hold
 - (i) 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;
 - (ii) in respect of the courses of study leading to the degree of Master of Arts in the field of Art History, either a Bachelor's degree with a major in art history; or a Bachelor's degree in another subject and substantial art-related experience;
 - (iii) in respect of the courses of study leading to the degree of Master of Arts in the field of Chinese Language and Literature, a Bachelor's degree with honours with a major in Chinese or a closely related subject;
 - (iv) in respect of the courses of study leading to the degree of Master of Arts in the field of English Studies, a Bachelor's degree with honours with a major in English or a closely related subject;
 - (v) in respect of the courses of study leading to the degree of Master of Arts in the field of Linguistics, a Bachelor's degree with honours with a major in Linguistics or a closely related subject;
 - (vi) in respect of the courses of study leading to the degree of Master of Arts in the field of Translation, a professional qualification deemed to be equivalent to a Bachelor's degree with honours; and
- (d) shall satisfy the examiners in a qualifying examination if required.

MA 2 Qualifying examination

- (a) A qualifying examination may be set to test the candidates' formal academic ability or their ability to follow the courses of study prescribed. It shall consist of one or more written papers or their equivalent and may include a project report.

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 (not applicable to the MA in Chinese Historical Studies and the MA in Chinese Language and Literature); and
- (b) IELTS: a minimum overall Band of 7 with no subtest lower than 5.5.

- (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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MA 3 Award of degree

To be eligible for the award of the degree of Master of Arts, candidates

- (a) shall comply with the General Regulations;
 - (b) shall comply with the Regulations for Taught Postgraduate Curricula; and
 - (c) shall complete the curriculum as prescribed in the syllabuses and satisfy the examiners in accordance with the regulations set out below.
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MA 4 Period of study

- (a) The curriculum shall normally extend
 - (i) in the field of Art History, over one academic year of full-time study, with a maximum period of registration of two academic years;
 - (ii) in the fields of Chinese Historical Studies, Chinese Language and Literature, and Translation, over two academic years of part-time study, with a maximum period of registration of four academic years;
 - (iii) in the field of English Studies, over one academic year of full-time study or two academic years of part-time study, with a maximum period of registration of two academic years of full-time study or three academic years of part-time study;
 - (iv) in the field of Linguistics, over one academic year of full-time study, with a maximum period of registration of two academic years; and
 - (v) in the field of Literary and Cultural Studies, over one academic year of full-time study or two academic years of part-time study, with a maximum period of registration of two academic years of full-time study or three academic years of part-time study.
 - (b) Candidates shall not be permitted to extend their studies beyond the maximum period of registration specified in MA 4(a), unless otherwise permitted or required by the Board of the Faculty.
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MA 5 Completion of curriculum

To complete the curriculum, candidates

- (a) shall satisfy the requirements prescribed in TPG 6 of the Regulations for Taught Postgraduate Curricula;
 - (b) shall follow courses of instruction and complete satisfactorily all prescribed written work;
 - (c) shall complete and present a satisfactory capstone experience on a subject within their fields of study;
 - (d) shall satisfy the examiners in all prescribed courses and in any prescribed form of assessment as prescribed in the syllabuses; and
 - (e) shall satisfy the examiners in an oral examination if required.
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MA 6 Advanced standing

Advanced Standing may be granted to candidates in the field of Translation in recognition of studies completed successfully before admission to the curriculum. Candidates who are awarded Advanced Standing will not be granted any further credit transfer for those studies for which Advanced Standing

has been granted. The amount of credits to be granted for Advanced Standing shall be determined by the Board of the Faculty, in accordance with the following principles:

- (a) a candidate may be granted a total of not more than 20% of the total credits normally required under a curriculum for Advanced Standing unless otherwise approved by the Senate;
- (b) application for Advanced Standing will only be considered if the previous studies were done within 5 years before admission to the curriculum;
- (c) Advanced Standing will not be granted for elective course and capstone experience; and
- (d) credits granted for Advanced Standing shall not normally be included in the calculation of the GPA unless permitted by the Board of the Faculty but will be recorded on the transcript of the candidate.

MA 7 Capstone experience

Subject to the provisions of Regulation MA 5(c), the title of the capstone experience (dissertation, portfolio or individual project) shall be submitted for approval by a date as prescribed in the syllabuses for each field of study. Similarly, the capstone experience shall be presented by a date as prescribed in the syllabuses for each field of study. Candidates shall submit a statement that the capstone experience represents their own work (or in the case of conjoint work, a statement countersigned by their co-worker(s), which shows their share of the work) undertaken after registration as candidates for the degree.

MA 8 Assessment

- (a) The assessment for each course shall be as specified in the syllabuses. Only passed courses will earn credits. Grades in all fields of study 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 two courses, excluding the capstone experience, in an academic year may be permitted to
 - (i) present themselves for re-examination in the failed course(s) on a specified date or re-submit their work for the failed course(s) for re-assessment within a specified period determined by the MA Board of Examiners, but no later than the end of the following semester (not including the summer semester); or
 - (ii) repeat the failed course(s) by undergoing instruction and satisfying the assessment requirements; or
 - (iii) for elective courses, take another course in lieu and satisfy the assessment requirements.
- (c) Subject to the provisions of Regulation MA 5(c), candidates who have failed to present a satisfactory capstone experience may be permitted to revise and re-present the capstone experience within a specified period determined by the MA Board of Examiners.
- (d) Candidates who have failed to satisfy the examiners in the final review in the field of English Studies may be permitted to present themselves for re-examination on a specified date determined by the MA Board of Examiners, but no later than the end of the following semester (not including the summer semester).
- (e) There shall be no appeal against the results of examinations and all other forms of assessment.

MA 9 Discontinuation

Candidates who

- (a) are not permitted to present themselves for re-examination/re-submission in any written examination or coursework assessment in which they have failed to satisfy the examiners or to repeat the failed course(s); or
- (b) are not permitted to revise and re-present the capstone experience; or
- (c) have failed to satisfy the examiners on second attempt in any coursework assessment, examination, or the capstone experience; or
- (d) have failed more than two courses, excluding the capstone experience, on the first attempt in an academic year; or
- (e) have exceeded the maximum period of registration as specified in MA 4

may be required to discontinue their studies under the provisions of General Regulation G 12.

MA 10 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.

MA 11 Supplementary examination

Candidates who are unable because of illness to be present at the written examination of any course may apply for permission to present themselves for a supplementary examination of the same course. Any such application shall be made on the form prescribed within two weeks of the first day of absence from any examination. The supplementary examination shall be held at a time to be determined by the MA Board of Examiners. Candidates who fail to satisfy the examiners in the supplementary examination shall be considered as failure on the first attempt.

SYLLABUSES FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS

LINGUISTICS

The objectives of the curriculum are:

1. To engage students in the field of linguistics, including its scientific, social and human aspects.
2. To offer postgraduate level education to those who wish to engage as professionals in the study of languages, bilingualism and multilingualism.
3. To train postgraduate students to conduct research on human language, its theories, empirical methods and applications.

Courses

Candidates must take 2 core courses, 5 elective courses and the capstone experience during the course of study. The candidates must pass the core courses during the period of study.

1. Core Courses

LING7004. Phonetics and Phonology (6 credits)

This course introduces students to two areas of study of the speech sounds of language, phonetics and phonology. In phonetics, students acquire the knowledge of (i) the articulatory and acoustic properties of the speech sound segments, including consonants, glides, vowels, and diphthongs, and (ii) the prosodic characteristics of the suprasegments, such as duration, pitch and stress, associated with the syllables. Students acquire the skills of (i) IPA transcription and (ii) speech analysis, using instruments. In phonology, students learn about (i) the patterns of speech sound systems and (ii) the phonological properties and linguistic functions of the sound segments and suprasegments. Students are required to analyze phonological data, solve phonological problems, and formulate phonological rules.

Assessment: 100% coursework

LING7005. Grammar: Theories and Applications (6 credits)

This course aims at introducing students to the basic concepts in morphology and syntax. Exercises accompany the topics introduced. Example analyses are drawn from various languages. The following topics in morphology and syntax will be covered: wordhood, word classes, constituency, phrase structure, grammatical relations, semantic roles, and sentence types. The course provides a grounding in grammatical concepts useful for further study in grammatical theory, typology and other areas of linguistics.

Assessment: 100% coursework

2. Elective Courses

LING6013. Data-Driven Linguistic Analysis (6 credits)

This course offers students training in the latest data-based approaches in linguistic analysis. Different kinds of linguistic data and their theoretical status are first presented, followed by a discussion of the methods currently being used for constructing natural language corpora. Topics including corpus design and annotation, the sampling and retrieval of information from language corpora, and their use in linguistic analysis are discussed.

Assessment: 100% coursework

LING6014. The History and Structure of Cantonese (6 credits)

This course offers a wide-ranging account of Cantonese in all of its major facets: its origins, historical development, phonology, morphology, syntax, and lexis, as well as dialectal and social variation. Recent advances in research on Cantonese will also be discussed and reviewed.

Assessment: 100% coursework

LING6017. Language Development and Language Behavior (6 credits)

The aims of this course are to introduce students to some research methods employed in the study of language acquisition and language behavior, and to assess the significance of research results in these fields. The main topics to be covered include: stages of language development, reading acquisition, second language learning, language and reading disorders, and the influences of writing systems on language processing.

Assessment: 100% coursework

LING6019. Grammar and Interaction (6 credits)

This course introduces students to the recent advances in the study of the interface between linguistic structure (grammar) and human interaction (spontaneous communication). It focuses on issues of the identity of basic interactional units and how syntax, prosody, semantics and conversational structure shape one another in naturally occurring talk. Topics include: Syntax of sentences in progress, Adverbial clauses in conversation, Repair and syntax, Conversational turns and their extension.

Assessment: 100% coursework

LING6020. Advanced Topics in Psycholinguistics (6 credits)

This course will examine issues concerning how language is acquired and processed in the mind. Advanced research topics to be covered in this course are as follows: brain and language development, language and thought, mental systems for words, word segmentation in Chinese and English, dyslexia, language disorders. There will also be practical laboratory classes.

Assessment: 100% coursework

LING6021. Language Types and Universals (6 credits)

This course introduces linguistic typology as an approach to language structure based inductively on investigation of a wide range of languages. It does not require prior knowledge of many languages, although some knowledge of a language such as German or Japanese is a useful asset. The course includes applications of typology in the field of language acquisition.

Assessment: 100% coursework

LING6022. Reading Acquisition and Developmental Dyslexia (6 credits)

This course aims to provide a theoretical understanding of reading development and reading disorders in different writing systems, with a specific focus on alphabetic (English) and logographic (Chinese) writing systems. Through attending the course, students will be able to understand how different cognitive processes contribute to the development of skilled word reading and text comprehension and what problems children may encounter during the course of reading development. Effective treatment and instruction approaches will also be discussed.

Assessment: 100% coursework

LING6023. Researching Language in Hong Kong (6 credits)

This course introduces students to contemporary research on languages issues with special reference to the study of language and linguistics in Hong Kong. This course will survey recent research on the languages of the HKSAR, and discuss how language research may be critically read and interpreted, with particular attention to research design and methodology. The central aim of the course is to help students to understand the techniques of quantitative and qualitative research, with case studies relevant to Hong Kong. It will be of special interest to students intending to carry out locally-based research for their dissertation.

Assessment: 100% coursework

LING6028. Topics in Language Acquisition (6 credits)

The course introduces current linguistic approaches to language acquisition in bilingual and multilingual contexts. Topics will include the acquisition of Cantonese and English by bilingual

children; acquisition of English as second language by Chinese speakers, and vice versa; and the acquisition of a third or additional language by bilinguals. The course is particularly suitable for those with some experience of language teaching.

Assessment: 100% coursework

LING6029. Current Issues in Linguistics (6 credits)

In this course current issues in different sub-fields of linguistics are discussed, with an emphasis on new approaches, methodologies and findings. The topics may vary from year to year but will include a selection from such major fields of research as linguistic theory, sociolinguistics and psycholinguistics.

Assessment: 100% coursework

LING6030. Language Evolution (6 credits)

This course will provide a general introduction to evolutionary linguistics. Following an interdisciplinary perspective, the course will introduce fundamental concepts of some relevant disciplines that could shed light on language origin and evolution, including archaeology and anthropology, comparative studies of humans and other animals, genetics, neuro- and psycholinguistics, and computer simulation.

Assessment: 100% coursework

LING6031. Multilingualism (6 credits)

This course provides a broad overview of issues pertinent to multilingualism, with an emphasis on the linguistic, social and cultural diversity of multilingual societies. Theories and approaches to the study of multilingualism will be illustrated by different multilingual settings around the world, covering Hong Kong and Asia among other contexts. Topics related to the linguistic consequences of multilingualism include code-switching, language change, as well as language contact and creolization. We also look at educational issues involving multilingualism and how they are resolved.

Assessment: 100% coursework

LING6032. Semantics (6 credits)

This course introduces students to the linguistic study of meaning. It focuses on the meaning of signs and the relation between signifiers and what they stand for. Topics to be examined include both traditional and current approaches to lexical and sentence meaning. The role of semantics in the language system will be addressed. Central problems and theoretical concepts of Semantics will be discussed, with illustration from a variety of languages.

Assessment: 100% coursework

LING7006. Readings in Linguistics (6 credits)

In this course students read a selection of current works in an area of interest to the student under direction from a supervisor. The course is suitable for those who have a specific research area which they wish to explore. Students are expected to write critical reviews of works they have read, and/or to compile a literature review. The work is intended to prepare the ground for a dissertation in the chosen area.

Assessment: 100% coursework

LING7007. The Sound Patterns of Language: Phonological Theory and Analysis (6 credits)

Why is English so hard for a Cantonese speaker to pronounce? The sounds of each language are organized by different principles: English allows consonant clusters at word edges (as in strengths) while Cantonese does not. Each human language has its own phonology, a set of principles for organizing its sounds into a unique signature for that language. This course addresses phonological systems from a variety of perspectives. Objectives include teaching the following:

- a. an overview of common types of phonological phenomena;
- b. analytic tools for determining the phonological patterns found in a given language;
- c. theoretical grounding in order to interpret the results of an analysis;
- d. argumentation logic to evaluate the validity of analyses;
- e. presentation skills for both oral and written professional presentations.

Thus, the primary focus is on analytic, argumentation, and presentation skills, set against the backdrop of phonological systems.

Assessment: 100% coursework

LING7008. Language and Speech Sounds: Acoustic and Articulatory Phonetics (6 credits)

When speaking, people tend not to actively think about the sounds that make up their language. The task of listening to and producing speech sounds seems so effortless and automatic for native speakers of a language that it can often be one of the most challenging obstacles for the non-native learner to overcome. Contemporary inquiry into the nature of human speech sounds, however, reveals a complex system of phonetic knowledge that language users must use to navigate their linguistic environment. This course introduces students to the nature of speech production and perception and to the properties of the acoustic signal that is transmitted from speaker to listener. Goals of this course are:

- a. To understand fundamental principles of phonetic theory and phonetic representation. We will look at current theories of the complicated tasks accomplished by speakers and listeners and arrive at a representation of speech sounds in terms of their articulatory, acoustic and perceptual properties.
- b. To introduce students to techniques of phonetic experimentation and modeling. Small-scale experiments will provide training in physiologic measurement, acoustic analysis, and perceptual-data analysis, and reinforce theoretical principles by serving as empirical tests of claims made by such theories.
- c. To reflect on the relationship between the physical instantiation of speech and its representation in the mind. Our exploration of this issue will serve as a bridge between phonetics and phonology.
- d. To provide practical experience in hearing, producing, and transcribing sounds of the world's languages. Such experience can prepare students for field research on poorly documented or under-described languages or for work involving populations who speak different languages.

Assessment: 100% coursework

LING7009. Language Structure for Teaching and Learning Languages (6 credits)

Learning a foreign language can be daunting; teaching a foreign language to bewildered students can be frustrating. This course is for the teacher and learner alike; we will look at general properties of how language is structured -- both generically and through specific examples -- starting with the

sounds that make up languages and moving to how those sounds form word, how those words form sentences, and how those sentences are interpreted to have both specific and contextual meanings.

Assessment: 100% coursework

LING7010. Introduction to speech prosody (6 credits)

This course is designed to introduce students to the field of speech prosody, i.e. aspects of speech above vowels and consonants. We will explore topics such as: tone, rhythm, question and emotion with a particular focus on English, Mandarin and Cantonese. The course will consist of lectures and hands on lab experience, with an aim to increase students' theoretical and practical knowledge of prosody and its applications for further research, teaching and beyond.

Pre-requisite: LING7004 Phonetics and Phonology

Assessment: 100% coursework

3. Capstone Experience

LING7999. Capstone Experience: Dissertation (18 credits)

All candidates should write and submit a dissertation. A topic should be submitted for approval by April 1 of the academic year. On approval of the dissertation topic, a supervisor will be assigned to each candidate. The dissertation, which should normally be between 12,000 and 15,000 words in length, should be submitted by August 1 of the academic year.

Assessment: 100% coursework

Assessment

Courses are assessed by 100% coursework. Coursework assessment is based on essays, term papers, projects, oral presentations, quizzes, and other kinds of oral or written work as prescribed by the course instructors.