Programme Specification
Postgraduate Programmes

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Awarding Body/Institution	University of London
Teaching Institution	Goldsmiths, University of London
Name of Final Award and Programme Title	MA Sociocultural Linguistics
Name of Interim Award(s)	N/A
Duration of Study/Period of Registration	1 year full-time or 2 years part-time.
UCAS Code(s)	N/A
HECos Code(s)	(101016) Sociolinguistics
QAA Benchmark Group	English and Comparative Literature
FHEQ Level of Award	Level 7
Programme Accredited by	N/A
Date Programme Specification last updated/approved	August 2017
Primary Department/Institute	English and Comparative Literature

Departments which will also be involved in teaching part of the programme
Not Applicable

Programme overview

This interdisciplinary programme looks at language from a sociocultural perspective. It's designed for anyone with an interest in the relationship between language, culture and society but also provides students with a solid understanding of English language and linguistics.

The MA develops your understanding of historical and contemporary debates in (socio)linguistics and discourse analysis and enhances your analytic and linguistic skills by introducing different approaches to the analysis of written and spoken language use from a range of everyday and institutional contexts.

Topics covered include:
- language, discourse and ideology
- linguistic performances of identity (particularly language and gender, sexuality, ethnicity and social class) language and the media
- talk at work global English
- intercultural communication multilingualism and code-switching varieties of English

You're encouraged to engage with these topics by drawing on your own social, linguistic, cultural and occupational backgrounds in class discussions and in your written work.

You're also encouraged to collect your own samples of written and spoken language use and learn to subject those to in-depth critical analysis.

This MA draws on findings, theories and methodologies from: sociolinguistics, semantics, pragmatics, spoken and written discourse analysis, ethnography, semiotics, feminist stylistics; multimodal analysis; interactional sociolinguistics, conversational analysis, membership categorisation analysis, performativity and narrative analysis.

The programme's distinct interdisciplinary ethos is also reflected in your opportunity to choose from a selection of relevant optional modules in other departments of the College.

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Programme entry requirements

The standard requirement is an Upper Second-Class BA or equivalent degree in an humanities/arts subject (e.g. English, Linguistics, Philosophy, Sociology, Psychology); but other qualifications of equivalent level are considered; as are degree results below the upper second class where there are indications of academic strength in this specialism. A high level of competence in written and spoken English is also required.

Aims of the programme

The programme specification is informed by: Goldsmiths' declared focus on 'the study of creative, cultural and social processes'; the QAA Code of Practice; the National Qualifications Framework; the English Benchmarking Statement (insofar as it applies to MA level) and the College's and the Department's Learning, Teaching & Assessment Strategies.

The main purpose of the programme is to offer a challenging, flexible and advanced scheme of study invigorated by current research, which introduces or extends students' specialist knowledge and critical/contextual understanding of Applied Linguistics. The programme aspires to:

(1) enhance independent critical and evaluative skills
(2) develop and expand students' knowledge and understanding of social, cultural, historical and intellectual contexts of socio (cultural) linguistics.
(3) develop an understanding of linguistic theory and methodology deriving from diverse socio-cultural and historical perspectives
(4) promote students' analytical engagement with the complexities of modern linguistics
(5) enhance students' familiarity with and understanding of a variety of spoken and written linguistic genres
(6) encourage students' self-development into professionally organised and interactive individuals by practising skills of selection, assimilation and communication in both written and oral domains
(7) facilitate a learning environment that offers an appropriate foundation for further scholarly research in (sociocultural) linguistics

What you will be expected to achieve

Students who successfully complete the programme will have knowledge and understanding of:

Knowledge and Understanding		Taught by the following modules
A1	an international body of literature related to linguistics, socio(cultural) linguistics and discourse analysis	All modules
A2	significant bodies of works in linguistics and socio(cultural) linguistics representative of major tendencies and problems in these inter-related fields.	All modules, but the 'core' modules in particular
A3	selected historical and contemporary theoretical debates about the relationship between language, culture and society and key sub-topics within these fields (e.g., gender, identity, representation, discourse, inter-cultural studies, Global English)	All modules, specific areas covered by each 'option' module
A4	the ideological implications of different approaches to linguistic analysis of texts	All modules
A5	appropriate use of methods and concepts in	All modules, but the 'core' modules in

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	advanced linguistic and socio(cultural)linguistic research	particular

Cognitive and Thinking Skills		Taught by the following modules
B1	conduct detailed textual analysis informed by appropriate theoretical and methodological perspectives	All modules, but especially Analysing Discourse & Identity in Spoken Interaction; Language & Ideology in Written Discourse
B2	synthesise multiple, diverse, but relevant contexts and perspectives	All modules
B3	assimilate and critically evaluate alternative accounts of linguistic, social and cultural processes and practices	All modules
B4	formulate coherent and persuasive interpretations and arguments informed by standards of scholarly accuracy	All modules
B5	integrate diverse evidence into coherent comparative evaluations	All modules

Subject Specific Skills and Professional Behaviours and Attitudes		Taught by the following modules
C1	perceive and account for interactions between socio- cultural contexts and linguistic genres and forms in the creation and reception of textual meanings	All modules: in particular English in a Multilingual World; Intercultural Discourse & Communication; Language in its Sociocultural Context
C2	use textual discourse analysis to produce critically informed independent interpretations of spoken and written texts	All modules: in particular, Language in its Sociocultural Context; Analysing Discourse & Identity in Spoken Interaction
C3	use a range of critical commentary and theoretical perspectives discriminatingly	All modules
C4	produce own written work to scholarly standards in organisation, relevance, expression, referencing, and bibliography	All modules
C5	research linguistic topics using data resources and collecting and sifting primary and secondary evidence	Dissertation (EN71085B), and all other modules
C6	understand and apply accurately the terminologies appropriate to advanced linguistic studies	All modules
C7	design and execute an independent project of linguistic research	Dissertation (EN71085B); Analysing Discourse & Identity in Spoken Interaction; Language & Ideology in Written Discourse
C8	prepare, contribute to, and on occasion lead seminar discussion on topics in linguistics and socio(cultural) linguistics and the analysis of complex spoken and written texts	All modules

Transferable Skills		Taught by the following modules
D1	enhanced communication and discussion skills, in written and oral contexts	All modules; the Dissertation (EN71085B) particularly reflecting the written skills

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D2	facility in accessing verbal data using hard copy / electronic resources	All modules
D3	ability to compare and evaluate different textual materials	All modules, but especially Analysing Discourse & Identity in Spoken Interaction; Language & Ideology in Written Discourse
D4	capacity to handle ideas in rational, critical and evaluative ways	All modules
D5	open-mindedness and capacity for independent judgement	All modules
D6	management of own learning, including working effectively to deadlines	All modules
D7	application of skills of discourse analysis to a variety of texts and contexts	All modules, but especially in Analysing Discourse & Identity in Spoken Interaction; Language & Ideology in Written Discourse
D8	power to organise information, and to assimilate and evaluate competing arguments	All modules
D9	ability to make positive contributions to groups, and perception of group dynamics	All modules

How you will learn

Teaching and learning methods and strategies linked to knowledge and understanding:

The Department is committed to the centrality of the lecture/seminar combination in the teaching and learning process. All modules provide a weekly lecture/seminar for every participant, which reinforces knowledge gained through reading and presentations, and enables students to enhance and develop their understanding. In the 'core' module units, taken in the first and second terms by full-time and part time students, learning in each module is through a weekly 2 hour lecture/seminar combination. This combined structure provides contextual and theoretical perspectives through the lecture hour which is applied in more detail to texts in the seminar hour. These modules support and develop all of programme outcomes A1-5. Outcomes A2-5 are further supported and sustained by the specialist option modules taken in the first and second term; these are taught by a weekly 2-hour lecture/seminar and underpinned by up-to date staff research specialisms.

Teaching and learning methods and strategies linked to these intellectual skills:

These skills are cultivated across the programme's syllabuses. Through seminars and lectures students are continuously exposed to - and encouraged to evolve - fresh perceptions and evaluations of linguistic theory and techniques of analysis; and through self-managed learning they further assimilate a range of contextual approaches to and analyses of them.

Teaching and learning methods and strategies linked to these subject-specific skills:
These skills are cultivated across the curriculum, though with varying emphases according to module. In addition, the Programme Handbook provides initial advice on aspects of C4, and Information Services on aspects of C5. Suitable bibliographical information is normative for each module and its efficacy tested in student evaluation. The foundation modules provide a grounding in C1-C3 and C6, and the option modules build further on that grounding, particularly in relation to C2. C7 is particularly addressed in the programme of individual supervision offered in the summer period, devoted to the dissertation and facilitated by guidance in the Programme Handbook. Seminars are the forum for C8.

Teaching and learning methods and strategies linked to these transferable skills:
Powers of expression and discussion, and the handling of ideas, are developed everywhere in the

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module, since all modules require production of written work that communicates and argues well, and all modules use seminar discussion as part of the learning process, thus supporting D7-D8) in particular. Staff give module-specific help with D2. D3-D5 should be demonstrated to students by staff and peer example. D6 is a crucial skill everywhere fostered in a timetabled curriculum.

How you will be assessed

Assessment of knowledge and understanding:
Summative assessment takes the following forms, allowing students to demonstrate a range of appropriate skills: (i) for each of the foundation modules, 'Core issues in English Language & Linguistics' and 'Language in its Sociocultural Context', by 3-hour exam (80%) and a critical written component of 1500 words (20%) (ii); for the two selected option modules, by 5,000-6,000-word essays; (iii) by 15,000-word dissertation (100%) and a compulsory verbal presentation.

Assessment of intellectual skills:
These skills are assessed in the students' essays and dissertation.

Assessment of subject-specific skills:
The skills in C1-C6 are tested through the assessment methods of essays and dissertation. C7 is tested in the dissertation and some of the option modules. C8 is included among the Department's measures of student progress but for technical reasons (policies on anonymity, verification) it is informally assessed.

Assessment of transferable skills:
(D1-D7) are repeatedly tested during the programme through the requirement to produce, by specified dates, written discussions, through the dissertation, and through the adoption of seminars as the key learning medium. Attainment in D1-D7 is measured in two kinds of assessed written work. D8 is an ubiquitous element of the programme: it is subject to formative tutor assessment by oral feedback.

Your written work is assessed with regard to (a) the Department's general assessment criteria, (b) the particular assessment criteria identified for a given module, and (c) the requirements of the specific essay or assignment or examination answer undertaken.

The Department's general assessment criteria for written work are as follows and you are invited to bear these in mind throughout their work for the degree programme:

- Relevance of discussion and argument to the topic; ability to discriminate between merely descriptive statements and critical analysis, and to identify pertinent issues with precision.
- Ability to present, sustain and conclude fluently a discussion, investigation or complex argument based on close and imaginative engagement with the text(s) in question, and to draw reasoned and logical conclusions.
- Clarity of the work in terms of legibility, spelling, punctuation and grammar; and the professionalism of the presentation. Assessed work is given a percentage mark. The following explanations will give an idea of how marks are assigned. (But note that marking criteria are flexible. An excellent discussion may be compromised by poor expression or organisation: an eloquent discussion may be fundamentally irrelevant. Examples of other factors adversely affecting a mark would be repetition, or manifest incompleteness or serious failure to meet the prescribed length.)

Marking criteria

Mark	Descriptor	Specific Marking Criteria
80-100%	Distinction (Outstanding/Exceptional)	Candidate shows evidence of extensive relevant reading and an outstanding grasp of current major issues in the field. This knowledge will have been reviewed critically with insight and independence of thought. Arguments and

		the presentation of evidence will demonstrate sophisticated reasoning and be exceptionally clear, well-focused and cogent.
70-79%	Distinction	Mature and full grasp of issues raised by the question/topic, communicated fluently within a structured essay demonstrating analytical rigour and well substantiated independent thought and reaching cogent conclusions; supported by detailed insight into primary texts and into context and/or secondary criticism; a professional standard of execution.
60-69%	Merit	Lucid and analytical discussion showing clear understanding of the principal issues raised by the question/topic, and making aptly selective use of module text(s) and concerns and of relevant contextual or secondary criticism in a structured way to reach substantiated conclusions. Well articulated and presented to a good standard of professionalism.
50-59%	Pass	Adequate discussion showing understanding of some of the issues raised by the question/topic, making use of module text(s) and concerns in a reasonably coherent way to reach sufficiently substantiated conclusions. Satisfactorily clear, with an adequate standard of presentation and execution.
30-49%	Fail	At this level of study, an essay, dissertation or examination answer may show adequate knowledge of the syllabus but fail on grounds of inadequate relevance to the question/topic; it may be fluently argued but lack adequate evidence of the student having understood the work set for the module; or it may be relevant and well-informed but incoherent in expression and argument.
10-29%	Bad fail	A submission that shows a significant overall failure to achieve the appropriate learning outcomes. Written work shows no evidence of an attempt to address the question.
1-9%	Very bad fail	A submission that does not even attempt to address the specified learning outcomes.
0%	Non submission or plagiarised	A categorical mark representing either the failure to submit an assessment or a mark assigned for a plagiarised assessment.

How the programme is structured

The programme is available in full-time (12 months) and part-time (24 months) modes. All students take four taught modules (each worth 30 credits) and complete a dissertation (60 credits).The two core modules are compulsory, and are taken by both full-time and part time students in the first year. Two option modules are taken, normally one in each term (normally in the second year in the case of part-time students). The dissertation is also compulsory and is submitted in September (of the second year in the case of part-time students). The oral presentation on the project of the dissertation constitutes a compulsory element of the dissertation. Presentations will be held in June of the year of dissertation submission. All the Department's modules, and especially the optional modules, are informed by the research interests of staff.

The core modules and the options are each worth 30 credits, while the dissertation is worth 60 credits. In accordance with Goldsmiths' general MA examination regulations, you must pass all assessed elements in order to be awarded the degree.

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Part-Time Mode - Year 1: 2 'core' modules:
Core Issues in English Language & Linguistics Language in its Sociocultural Context

Progression requirements Yr 1 to Yr 2
Minimum of 1 module passed; any failed assessment to be retaken in Yr 2.

Part-Time Mode - Year 2
Two option modules (see list below); dissertation.

The list below indicates the Department's approved option module provision in linguistics. Each of these is worth 30 credits. Where any of these modules is unavailable in a particular year owing to staffing constraints, there will usually be an opportunity for part-time students to take such modules in the following year. Students may also choose up to 30 credits from non-linguistics MA modules taught by other departments in the college, where specifically approved by the Programme Co-ordinator.

Current range of 'option' modules taught in ECL: Analysing Discourse & Identity in Spoken Interaction English in a Multilingual World
Intercultural Discourse & Communication Language & Ideology in Written Discourse

Academic Year of Study 1

Module Title	Module Code	Credits	Level	Module Status	Term
Core Issues in English Language and Linguistics	EN71075B	30	7	Core	1
Language in its Sociocultural Context	EN71076B	30	7	Core	3
Option modules to a value of 60 credits chosen from the approved list available from the Department		60	7	Optional	1 and 2
Dissertation	EN71085B	60	7	Core	1-3

Academic support

Support for learning and wellbeing is provided in number of ways by departments and College support services who work collaboratively to ensure students get the right help to reach their best potential both academically and personally.

Students are allocated a personal tutor and a Senior Tutor in each department who has overall responsibility progress and welfare. Departments arrange regular communication to students in the form of mailings and meetings as well as regular progress reports and feedback on coursework and assignments. This is in addition to scheduled seminars, tutorials and lectures/workshops.

Every student is assigned a personal tutor who will meet with their student twice a year either face-to-face, as part of a group and/or electronically, the first of which normally takes place within the first few weeks of the first term. Personal tutors are also available to students throughout the year of study. These meetings aim to discuss progress on modules, discussion of the academic discipline and reports from previous years if available (for continuing students). This way progress, attendance, essay/coursework/assessment marks can be reviewed, and an informed discussion can be about how to strengthen learning and success.

Students are sent information about learning resources in the Library and on the VLE so that they have access to programme handbooks, programme information and support related information and guidance. Timetables are sent in advance of the start of term so that students can begin to manage

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their preparation and planning.

Taught sessions and lectures provide overviews of coursework themes, which students are encouraged to complement with intensive reading for presentation and discussion with peers at seminars. Coursework essays build on lectures and seminars, so students are encouraged to attend all taught sessions to build knowledge and their own understanding of their chosen discipline.

In depth feedback is provided for written assignments and essays via written feedback forms and formative feedback with module tutors/leads is provided to ensure that students' work is on the right track. Feedback comes in many forms and not only as a result of written comments on a marked essay. Students are given feedback on developing projects and practice as they attend workshops and placements.

Students may be referred to specialist student services by department staff or they may access support services independently. Information about support services is clearly provided on the College Website and for new students through new starter information and induction/Welcome Week. Any support recommendations that are made are agreed with the student and communicated to the department so that adjustments to learning and teaching are able to be implemented at a department level and students can be reassured that arrangements are in place. Opportunities are provided for students to review their support arrangements should their circumstances change. The Inclusion and Learning Support and Wellbeing Teams maintain case loads of students and provide on-going support.

The Careers Service provides central support for skills enhancement, running the Gold Award Scheme and other co-curricular activities that are accredited via the higher education achievement report (HEAR).

The Academic Skills Centre works with academic departments offering bespoke academic literacy sessions. It also provides a programme of academic skills workshops and one-to-one provision throughout the year, which students can access directly at gold.ac.uk/asc/.

Links with employers, placement opportunities and career prospects

Careers: Publishing, journalism, British Council roles, public relations, teaching, research, translation, advertising, the civil service, business, industry, the media.
Skills: Transferable skills, including enhanced communication and discussion skills in written and oral contexts; the ability to analyse and evaluate a wide variety of spoken and written texts from informal as well as institutional settings; an understanding of the concept of communicative competence; the ability to organise information, and to assimilate and evaluate competing arguments.

The requirements of a Goldsmiths degree

Master's Degrees
All Master's degrees at Goldsmiths have a minimum value of 180 credits. Programmes are comprised of modules which have individual credit values. In order to be eligible for the award of a Master's degree students must have passed all modules on the programme.

Intermediate Exit Points
Some programmes incorporate intermediate exit points of Postgraduate Certificate and Postgraduate Diploma, which may be awarded on the successful completion of modules to the value of 60 credits or 120 credits respectively. Individual programmes may specify which, if any, combination of modules are required in order to be eligible for the award of these qualifications. The awards are made without classification.

Final Classification

There are four possible categories of final classification for Master's degrees: Distinction, Merit, Pass and Fail.

For further information, please refer to the Regulations for Postgraduate Taught Students, which may be found here: http://www.gold.ac.uk/governance/studentregulations/

Programme-specific rules and facts

For the Postgraduate Certificate to be awarded, students must have passed modules to the value of 60 credits (all of which must be from the compulsory modules).
For the Postgraduate Diploma to be awarded, students must pass modules to the value of 120 credits (60 of which must be from the compulsory modules).

Programme costs

General Costs

In addition to your tuition fees, you will be responsible for meeting standard costs associated with your study. Find out more information here: https://www.gold.ac.uk/programme-costs

How teaching quality will be monitored

Goldsmiths employs a number of methods to ensure and enhance the quality of learning and teaching on its programmes.
Programmes and modules must be formally approved against national standards and are monitored throughout the year in departmental staff / student forums and through the completion of module evaluation questionnaires. Every programme also has at least one External Examiner who produces an annual report which comments on the standards of awards and student achievement.
This output is considered with other relevant data in the process of Annual Programme Review, to which all programmes are subject, and which aims to identify both good practice and issues which require resolution.

Every six years all programmes within a department are also subject to a broader periodic review. This aims to ensure that they remain current, that the procedures to maintain the standards of the awards are working effectively and the quality of the learning opportunities and information provided to students and applicants is appropriate.

Detailed information on all of these procedures are published on the webpages of the Quality Office (http://www.gold.ac.uk/quality/).

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