Programme Specification: Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) MA

UNIVERSITY OF
WESTMINSTER⌗

Course record information

Name and level of final award	• Master of Arts – Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) The award is Bologna FQ-EHEA second cycle degree or diploma compatible
Name and level of intermediate awards	• Postgraduate Diploma (Pg Dip) - Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) • Postgraduate Certificate (Pg Cert) – Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages(TESOL)
Awarding body/institution	University of Westminster
Teaching institution	University of Westminster
Status of awarding body/institution	Recognised Body
Location of delivery	Secondary/Tertiary Locations: The course is delivered entirely in distance learning mode.
Language of delivery and assessment	English
QAA subject benchmarking group(s)	Languages, Cultures and Societies
Professional statutory or regulatory body	
Westminster course title, mode of attendance and standard length	• MA Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) DL, Open/Distance Learning Full time, September or January start - 1 year standard length • MA Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) DL, Open/Distance Learning Part time, September or January start - 2 years standard length
Valid for cohorts	From 2024/5

Additional Course Information

MA Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL), also called MA TESOL, is a distance learning course, with modules delivered in asynchronous mode (students work through pre-recorded material, set readings, and weekly tasks in their own time). Learning is further supported by weekly synchronous (live and interactive) online tutorials. Modules on MA TESOL are only available to students who are enrolled on this specific course.

This course is designed for full-time or part-time study. The named award on completion is MA Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL).

Admissions requirements

There are standard minimum entry requirements for all postgraduate courses. Students are advised to check the standard requirements for the most up-to-date information. For most courses a decision will be made on the basis of your application form alone. However, for some courses the selection process may include an interview to demonstrate your strengths in addition to any formal entry requirements. More information can be found here:

https://www.westminster.ac.uk/courses/postgraduate/how-to-apply.

Aims of the programme

MA TESOL provides a combination of theoretical academic study, robust practical applications, and skills development in English language teaching. The course aims to

1. Provide advanced training for TESOL professionals, including beginners and experienced teachers.
2. Facilitate study of the latest developments in TESOL methodology and a range of related aspects of the profession, including current best practice in language teaching methods, theories of learning, and the development of language teaching and language testing material.
3. Develop advanced practical and professional skills in TESOL.
4. Foster the ability to analyse and apply theoretical perspectives to practical situations.
5. Develop skills in argument, synthesis and critical expression of TESOL issues and their practical application in different teaching contexts.
6. Develop advanced skills of research, presentation, and analysis in TESOL contexts.
7. Nurture ongoing professional development and skills in pursuing further independent research.
8. Enable graduates to make a full contribution to professional development in their specialist areas.

Employment and further study opportunities

Today's organisations need graduates with both good degrees and skills relevant to the workplace, i.e. employability skills. The University of Westminster is committed to developing employable graduates by ensuring that:

- Career development skills are embedded in all courses
- Opportunities for part-time work, placements and work-related learning activities are widely available to students
- Staff continue to widen and strengthen the University's links with employers in all sectors, involving them in curriculum design and encouraging their participation in other aspects of the University's career education and guidance provision
- Staff are provided with up-to-date data on labour market trends and employers' requirements, which will inform the service delivered to students.

The MA TESOL course is committed to ensuring that:

1. Students are introduced to the university's extensive range of online materials (Engage, Potential.ly, etc) that help them develop their teaching-specific and more general graduate attributes.
2. Students make substantial progress as advanced English language teaching practitioners and managers in a variety of different national, regional, and cultural educational systems.
3. Student learning is closely aligned with current practices in TESOL and related industries.

The MA TESOL prepares graduates for a variety of roles, including:

- Education manager
- Education researcher
- EFL organisation leader
- School English teacher
- University English teacher or lecturer

What will you be expected to achieve?

Course learning outcomes

Learning outcomes are statements on what successful students have achieved as the result of learning.

These are threshold statements of achievement the learning outcomes broadly fall into four categories:

The overall knowledge and understanding you will gain from your course (KU)

Graduate attributes are characteristics that you will have developed during the duration of your course (GA)

Professional and personal practice learning outcomes are specific skills that you will be expected to have gained on successful completion of the course (PPP)

Key transferable skills that you will be expected to have gained on successful completion of the course. (KTS)

Level 7 course learning outcomes: upon completion of Level 7 you will be able to:

- 01 Evaluate, critique, and manipulate key concepts, research methods, and pedagogical processes in TESOL. (KU)

- 02 Reflect critically on established good practice in the TESOL profession, on your own practices, and on how such practices can be adapted for various teaching and learning contexts. (KU)

- 03 Systematically and critically evaluate social factors that impact student progress in language learning. (KU)

- 04 Synthesise learning across modules to develop high-quality language teaching and language testing materials. (PPP)

- 05 Apply advanced interpersonal and team working skills to engage successfully in complex project work. (KTS)

- 06 Manage time and resources efficiently while producing teaching materials and testing materials of a professional standard following established theoretical frameworks for materials development. (KTS)

- 07 Collect valid primary data, analyse that data using robust research methods, and present research findings according to established conventions in the TESOL field. (SS)

- 08 Devise appropriate approaches, methods and activities for teaching in a variety of contexts to students from differing social backgrounds and linguistic cultures. (SS)

- 09 Select, evaluate, and synthesise a broad range of secondary research, including the appropriate of use academic conventions of citing and referencing. (CS)

How will you learn?

Learning methods

The MA TESOL is delivered in asynchronous (self-access) online mode, with learning supported via a weekly synchronous (live) online tutorial. This means that students, for the most part, do not meet at scheduled times (except for the weekly tutorial session), but can instead complete required tasks, read assigned texts, and do their own research at times that suit their own situations. Topics are presented to students week-by-week, but there is no specific time during the week at which students must be present in order to complete the learning tasks associated with that topic. This allows students the flexibility to learn at times that suit their needs, but with the guidance of the course team ensuring that students continue to progress through the course in a timely manner. All modules employ Blackboard, the University of Westminster's online learning system, as part of their delivery in providing course materials. Students complete five core modules over the duration of the course, one of which is the dissertation.

In addition to the individual topics associated with each module, students learn via course-level plenary lectures devoted to major topics in TESOL: native and non-native English-speaking language teachers, the ownership of English, and so on. These topics are used to promote student discussion of key philosophical issues in TESOL, and to make students aware of the range of topics that they could pursue for individual research on the dissertation module.

Student learning is further supported via a weekly one-hour timetabled tutorial, delivered live online in small groups of approx. 5-7 students per group. During the tutorial, students and their tutor discuss matters relating to the content and assessment of individual modules, including feedback on formative tasks set at module level, and to the course. Tutorials ensure consistent support and feedback throughout the course, and foster a sense of community amongst MA TESOL students. Tutorials are scheduled at times that suit students across a range of similar time zones. They are held during regular working hours at the University of Westminster. Students can thus expect that their tutorial will be held at their local equivalent of 9am London time at the earliest, and 4pm London time at latest.

For the dissertation module, students research a topic of their choosing under the supervision of a lecturer with advanced knowledge of the topic. Learning is scaffolded via a series of presentations on research topic development, critical reading, data collection and analysis, and academic research writing conventions. Student learning is supported by lecturer feedback on a presentation and a research proposal, both of which inform students' final choices about which methods of data collection and analysis to use in their research.

In addition to support provided at course level, students receive university-level support. Blackboard, the university's virtual learning environment (VLE), in addition to providing access to module materials, allows students to access general university information. Students have access to the university library online, which includes the support of an academic liaison librarian for School of Humanities students. The university's Study Skills and Training provision includes access to online academic skills workshops, online academic skills appointments with a learning advisor, and online guides to support student success in their studies. The university's Careers and Employability Service online provision includes help for students to plan for future employment by providing information about CV writing, interview strategies, application forms and other relevant information for careers development.

The pedagogic strategies used on the MA TESOL support inclusive learning, teaching and assessment methods based on the University of Westminster's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) agenda. The course team aim to eliminate all arbitrary barriers to learning and to work with student to achieve that aim. The course team is also responsible for ensuring that students learn in a manner that respects diversity, encouraging students to draw on their wide range of backgrounds in a manner that acknowledges their lived experiences and integrates it into their studies, and providing students with a range of learning and assessment opportunities that can be applied to future careers in a range of educational contexts around the world.

Our aims are underpinned by a commitment to the principles of provision of an inclusive learning environment (e.g. accessible materials provided on all modules) and the diversification and inclusivity of the curriculum (e.g. reading lists have been constructed to ensure diversity and representativeness). In practice, students will see our commitment to EDI in, for example, the plenary lecture series, in which native-speakerism, racism in TESOL, and critical re-assessments of the supposed triumph of global English are discussed; in the Language Teaching Methods module, in which inclusive teaching methods and activities are examined and practiced; and in the Testing and Assessment module, which acquaints students with the range of assessment methods that can test the language abilities of those with special educational needs robustly, but in a manner that acknowledges diversity.

Our practices are guided by the British Council's guidance on EDI in language teaching, which states that we must 'bridge educational inequality' (both inequality amongst our students, and amongst our students' future students), 'reflect diversity' (by including the voices of lecturers, researchers and theorists that display the full range of human social variety, and by actively fostering our students' skills to reflect diversity in their own development of teaching materials and practices), and 'promote inclusion of certain, typically underrepresented groups'. The asynchronous online teaching mode is particularly important vis-a-vis the inclusion of such groups, including those whose learning styles (specific learning needs that require additional time to complete assignments, for example) or personal circumstances (childcare, for example) make scheduled learning, either online or not, a greater challenge.

The online mode also widens access to the course for those who could not otherwise afford associated costs (travel, accommodation, and so on), and it eliminates visa restrictions, increasing the diversity of intake and reducing the environmental impact compared to a traditional course, which is in line with our corporate social responsibility goal of "reducing the environmental impact of campus operations and activities".

Teaching methods

Teaching methods include input videos created by University of Westminster lecturers, guided reading, and independent study. The teaching for a particular topic includes a lecture-style video during which the lecturer introduces the fundamental terms and concepts relevant to that topic, reading notes for the essential readings associated with that topic, set tasks that encourage student reflection and written responses, and guidance on how to use the knowledge gained in order to progress through the module assessment.

This is summarised in the 'WRAP' structure, as follows:

1. **W**atch the video in which the lecturer introduces the topic
2. **R**ead the essential texts and guided reading notes, as listed on the reading list
3. **A**ctivity - Complete the tasks set by the lecturer
4. **P**roduce assessment using weekly guidance

At the course level, learning will be supported as follows:

1. a weekly one-hour synchronous session for feedback and questions about course content
2. an 'ask a question' discussion board for questions about course content, which is monitored and moderated by the course team
3. a dedicated email address for technical questions or problems
4. a personal tutor for consultation about non-academic issues related to the course, in line with all PG students in the

School of Humanities

Assessment methods

The MA TESOL employs both formative and summative assessment. Formative assessment helps learners establish where they are in their learning journey, what they have learned so far, and where they may improve; formative assessment does not contribute to students' overall grades. Summative assessment measures how much students have learned in a way that contributes to their overall grades. The type and nature of the assessments employed on the MA TESOL varies depending on the module and its associated learning outcomes. The guiding principles in designing a module's assessment and its associated feedback are purpose, progression and personalisation.

Purpose: assessment is authentic, meaning that it provides the chance to apply knowledge and competencies to real-world cases, situations, and briefs that are closely aligned with professions TESOL practice; the assessment method(s) used are clearly relevant to the module's learning outcomes; consideration is given to the amount of effort and time required to complete the task(s) and to maintain a balanced assessment load.

Progression: the choice of assessment method(s) employed provides an opportunity for new learning and contributes to the learning process; assessment(s) are clearly related to the overall pattern of the course; they are developmental and not unnecessarily repetitive; less familiar types of assessments are prepared for through formative work.

Personalisation: students are able to make the assessment their own by choice of format or content, and all assessments that contribute to final grades will be assessed against clear assessment criteria stated in module descriptors. These assessment criteria are directly linked to the module's learning outcomes, and they will be used to evaluate the submitted work and produce written feedback. Marks will be produced following rigorous quality mechanisms that ensure academic judgement is fair and consistent with the wider educational sector. Feedback is given in various forms and stages; for example, in response to assessment, in response to questions in tutorials or on the discussion board, and in guidance given during the supervision of student dissertations.

Assessment methods include submitted coursework in the form of essays, reports, teaching and testing materials, presentations, and a dissertation.

For essays, students describe and analyse TESOL practices using set conventions of academic research, writing and referencing.
For presentations, students produce concise oral explanations and arguments about set topics relevant to their own educational contexts.
For posters, students produce a well-designed poster describing the particular context, teaching practice or other set topic.
For teaching and testing materials, students write materials suitable to their own teaching needs, supported by a reflective document that provides a rationale for the pedagogical choices they made.
For assessed teaching practice, students present a lesson on a suitable language feature or language skill, supported by a reflective document that provides a rationale for the pedagogical choices they made.
For the dissertation, students collect and analyse primary data, support their choices with the independent research of secondary data, and write an extended research paper of the type that they encounter in their reading over the duration of the course. This is the capstone of the course, as it allows students the opportunity to conduct in-depth research about a topic of their choice under the supervision of a lecturer who is expert in both the specific topic and the research genre in general.

Graduate Attribute	Evident in Course Outcomes
Critical and creative thinker	01, 02, 07
Literate and effective communicator	01, 05, 07, 09
Entrepreneurial	02, 04, 06
Global in outlook and engaged in communities	03, 08
Socially, ethically and environmentally aware	03

Course Structure

This section shows the core and option modules available as part of the course and their credit value. Full-time Postgraduate students study 180 credits per year. Additional free text information on the choices may also be included, for example where students must choose one of two modules.. Course structures can be subject to change each academic year following feedback from a variety of sources.

Modules

Level 7

Module Code	Module Title	Status	PT Year (where applicable)	UK credit	ECTS
7TESL003D	Language and Learning	Core	1	40	20
7TESL011D	Language Teaching Methods	Core	1	40	20
7TESL007D	Materials Development	Core	1	20	10
7TESL006D	MA TESOL Dissertation	Core	2	60	30
7TESL009D	Testing and Assessment	Core	2	20	10

Please note: Not all option modules will necessarily be offered in any one year. In addition, timetabling and limited spaces may mean you cannot register for your first choice of option modules.

Professional body accreditation or other external references

N / A

Course management

The Course Leader is responsible for day-to-day running and overall operation of the course and development of the curriculum.
The Head of School holds academic and management responsibility for the course and other courses within the School.
The Head of College holds overall responsibility for the course and for the other courses run by the College.

Academic regulations

The current Handbook of Academic Regulations is available at westminster.ac.uk/academic-regulations.

Course specific regulations apply to some courses.

Academic Support

Upon arrival, an induction programme will introduce you to the staff responsible for the course, the campus on which you will be studying, the Library and IT facilities, additional support available and to your Campus Registry. You will be provided with the Course Handbook, which provides detailed information about the course. Each course has a course leader or Director of Studies. All students enrolled on a full-time course and part time students registered for more than 60 credits a year have a personal tutor, who provides advice and guidance on academic matters. The University uses a Virtual Learning Environment called Blackboard where students access their course materials, and can communicate and collaborate with staff and other students. Further information on Blackboard can be found at   https://www.westminster.ac.uk/current-students/studies/your-student-journey/when-you-arrive/blackboard

The Academic Learning Development Centre supports students in developing the skills required for higher education. As well as online resources in Blackboard, students have the opportunity to attend Study Skills workshops and one to one appointments. Further information on the Academic Learning Development Centre can be found at westminster.ac.uk/academic-learning-development.

Learning support includes four libraries, each holding a collection of resources related to the subjects taught at that site. Students1 can search the entire library collection online through the Library Search service to find and reserve printed books, and access electronic resources (databases, e-journals, e-books). Students can choose to study in the libraries, which have areas for silent and group study, desktop computers, laptops for loan, photocopying and printing services. They can also choose from several computer rooms at each campus where desktop computers are available with the general and specialist software that supports the courses taught in their College. Students can also securely connect their own laptops and mobile devices to the University wireless network.

Support Services

The University of Westminster Student and Academic Services department provide advice and guidance on accommodation, financial and legal matters, personal counselling, health and disability issues, careers, specialist advice for international students and the chaplaincy providing multi-faith guidance. Further information on the advice available to students can be found at https://www.westminster.ac.uk/student-advice

The University of Westminster Students' Union also provides a range of facilities to support students during their time at the University. Further information on UWSU can be found at https://www.westminster.ac.uk/students-union

How do we ensure the quality of our courses and continuous improvement?

The course was initially approved by a University Validation Panel. University Panels normally include internal peers from the University, academic(s) from another university. a representative from industry and a Student Advisor.

The course is also monitored each year by the College to ensure it is running effectively and that issues which might affect the student experience have been appropriately addressed. Staff will consider evidence about the course, including the evidence of student surveys, student progression and achievement and reports from external examiners, in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the course and make changes where necessary.

A Course revalidation takes place periodically to ensure that the curriculum is up-to-date and that the skills gained on the course continue to be relevant to employers. Students meet with revalidation panels to provide feedback on their experiences. Student feedback from previous years is also part of the evidence used to assess how the course has been running.

How do we act on student feedback?

Student feedback is important to the University and student views are taken seriously. Student feedback is gathered in a variety of ways.

- Through student engagement activities at Course/Module level, students have the opportunity to express their voice in the running of their course. Course representatives are elected to expressly represent the views of their peers. The University and the Students' Union work together to provide a full induction to the role of the course representatives.

- There are also School Representatives appointed jointly by the University and the Students' Union who meet with senior School staff to discuss wider issues affecting student experience across the School. Student representatives are also represented on key College and University committees.;

- All students are invited to complete a questionnaire before the end of each module. The feedback from this will inform the module leader on the effectiveness of the module and highlight areas that could be enhanced.

- Final year Undergraduate students will be asked to complete the National Student Survey which helps to inform the national university league tables.

This programme specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the course and the learning outcomes that a student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate, if they take full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. This specification is supplemented by the Course Handbook, Module proforma and Module Handbooks provided to students. Copyright in this document belongs to the University of Westminster. All rights are reserved. This document is for personal use only and may not be reproduced or used for any other purpose, either in whole or in part, without the prior written consent of the University of Westminster. All copies of this document must incorporate this Copyright Notice – 2022©

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