Programme Specification (Postgraduate)

FOR ENTRY YEAR: 2026/27

Date created: 28/02/2023 **Last amended:** 15/04/2025 **Version no.** 1 **Date approved by EQED:**
Click or tap here to enter text.

Please note, this programme is currently undergoing review as part of the University's continuous cycle of curriculum enhancement. The information in Appendix 1 represents the current structure and content of the programme. Any future enhancements to the programme in terms of content will be communicated to applicants and offer holders once finalised.

1. Programme title(s) and code(s):

MA Applied Linguistics and TESOL (distance learning)
Postgraduate Diploma in Applied Linguistics and TESOL (distance learning)
Postgraduate Certificate in Applied Linguistics and TESOL (distance learning)

Notes

* An award marked with an asterisk is only available as an exit award and is not available for students to register onto.

a) HECOS Code

HECOS Code	**%**
Applied Linguistics 100970	[50%]
Teaching English as a Foreign Language: 100513	[50%]

2. **Awarding body or institution:** University of Leicester

3. a) Mode of study Part-time

b) Type of study Distance learning

4. Registration periods:

Master of Arts (180 credits)
The normal period of registration for the MA is 24 months
The maximum period of registration for the MA is 48 months

Postgraduate Diploma (120 credits)
The normal period of registration for the Postgraduate Diploma is 18 months
The maximum period of registration for the Postgraduate Diploma is 36 months.

Postgraduate Certificate (60 credits)
The normal period of registration for the Postgraduate Certificate is 8.5 months
The maximum period of registration for the Postgraduate Certificate is 14.5 months

Standalone module (15 credits)
The normal period of registration for the Single module (15 credits) is 2 months
The maximum period of registration for the Single module (15 credits) is 3 months

Students can apply for entry to the MA, PGDip or PGCert; it is possible for students to switch between programmes during the course of their studies. It is also possible to register for a single module, for which students will receive the award of credit.

Standalone module (30 credits)
The normal period of registration for the Single module (30 credits) is 4 months
The maximum period of registration for the Single module (30 credits) is 6 months

5. Typical entry requirements

Candidates should normally be teachers or others working in the TESOL field who have at least a second class honours degree or its equivalent from a non-UK university (GPA 3.0 or above) plus one year teaching experience. Degrees in English language, linguistics or education preferred. Serving teachers who have equivalent qualifications or qualified teacher status and significant experience can be considered. Candidates who are not native speakers of English need to have a proficiency level equivalent to Candidates who are not native speakers of English need to have a proficiency level equivalent to GCSE Grade 5; IELTS 6.5 with a minimum of 6.0 in each sub-skill; TOEFL 575 (paper) plus TWE 4.0, 90 (IBT); Cambridge Proficiency Grade C or above.

6. Accreditation of Prior Learning

Holders of the Cambridge DELTA (Diploma in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages), or equivalent qualification, are considered for exemption from 30 credits corresponding to our core 30 credit module: ED7801 Teaching and Learning a Second Language.

Holders of the University of Leicester PG Certificate in Teaching English for Academic Purposes are exempted from 30 credits corresponding to two of our optional 15-credit courses: EN7512 English for Specific/Academic Purposes, and EN7509 Course & Syllabus Design.

Requests for exemptions, on the basis of prior learning, may be made for a maximum of 60 credits. Detailed evidence of the prior learning with copies of programme outlines and transcripts should be submitted with the request.

7. Programme aims

The programme aims to:

- Provide a programme of study for those who want to further their career in Applied Linguistics and TESOL and related fields.
- enhance participants' knowledge of the sub-disciplines of Applied Linguistics and apply this to TESOL practice;
- develop participants' ability to critically assess a range of perspectives on the theory, policy, and practice of TESOL in different contexts
- enable participants to extend their range of transferable skills including study, research skills and pedagogic skills.
- Prepare students for further academic research in applied linguistics, TESOL and related fields
- Enable participants to pursue a personalised study programme through a wide choice of options

On successful completion of the *MA Applied Linguistics and TESOL, participants* should be able to:

- Relate knowledge of theory and research in Applied Linguistics to the principles and practices of TESOL
- Describe and analyse the formal systems and features of English grammar and phonology
- Analyse and critically evaluate language use in different social contexts
- Develop research knowledge by applying a range of research methods to investigate aspects of English language and pedagogic practices in different contexts
- Plan and conduct a research study in the field of TESOL or Applied Linguistics, building research knowledge and becoming research apprenticed.
- Demonstrate a range of personal transferable skills relevant for career enhancement within the professional sector.

8. Reference points used to inform the programme specification

- QAA Benchmarking Statement
- Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ)
- UK Quality Code for Higher Education
- University Education Strategy
- University Assessment Strategy [Login required]
- University of Leicester Periodic Developmental Review Report
- External Examiners' reports (annual)
- United Nations Education for Sustainable Development Goals
- Student Destinations Data

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9. Programme Outcomes

Unless otherwise stated, programme outcomes apply to all awards specified in 1. Programme title(s).

a) Discipline specific knowledge and competencies

i) Knowledge

Intended learning Outcome	Teaching methods	Learning Activities	Assessment Type
Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the principles and practices of TESOL, drawing on theory and research in Applied Linguistics	• Asynchronous audiovisual lectures with embedded interactive activities. • Synchronous module webinars (online seminars) for collaborative learning and feedback. • Asynchronous moderated discussion board activities • Synchronous and asynchronous personal tutorials and supervisions	• Etivities and webinar activities involving interaction with peers and tutors • Unit pre-reading and follow-up reading • Assignment writing	• Criterion in all assessments (Coursework essays, projects, individual and group presentations, dissertation)
Apply their knowledge and understanding to teaching and learning in their own educational setting	• Asynchronous lectures • Synchronous online seminar discussions in small groups • Asynchronous discussion board activities • Tutorials and supervisions	• Etivities and webinar activities involving interaction with peers and tutors • Unit pre-reading and follow-up reading • Assignment writing	• Criterion in all assessments (Coursework essays, projects, individual and group presentations, dissertation)
Demonstrate knowledge of the description of the structures of	• Asynchronous lectures • Synchronous online seminar discussions in small groups	• Etivities and webinar activities involving interaction with peers and tutors	• Criterion in all assessments (Coursework essays, projects,

English, especially grammar and phonology	• Asynchronous discussion board activities • Tutorials and supervisions	• Unit pre-reading and follow-up reading • Assignment writing	individual and group presentations, dissertation)

ii) Concepts

Intended learning Outcome	Teaching methods	Learning Activities	Assessment Type
Ability to understand and apply key concepts theories and debates in applied linguistics and TESOL	• Asynchronous lectures • Synchronous online seminar discussions in small groups • Asynchronous discussion board activities • Tutorials and supervisions	• Etivities and webinar activities • Unit pre and post reading • Assignment writing	• Criterion in all assessments (Coursework essays, projects, individual and group presentations, dissertation)
Ability to understand and apply key concepts in the structures of English	• Asynchronous lectures • Synchronous online seminar discussions in small groups • Asynchronous discussion board activities • Tutorials and supervisions	• Etivities and webinar activities involving interaction with peers and tutors • Unit pre-reading and follow-up reading • Assignment writing	• Criterion in all assessments (Coursework essays, projects, individual and group presentations, dissertation)

iii) Techniques

Intended learning Outcome	Teaching methods	Learning Activities	Assessment Type
Ability to understand and apply a range of qualitative and quantitative research approaches in applied linguistics/TESOL	• Asynchronous lectures • Synchronous online seminar discussions in small groups • Asynchronous discussion board activities • Tutorials and supervisions	• Seminar activities involving interaction with peers and tutors • Class pre-reading and follow-up reading • Discussions with dissertation supervisor • Assignment writing	• All assessments (Coursework essays, projects, individual and group presentations, dissertation)

Ability to understand and demonstrate ability to apply the techniques and skills used by linguists to describe language form, language use and discourse.	• Asynchronous lectures • Synchronous online seminar discussions in small groups • Asynchronous discussion board activities • Tutorials and supervisions	• Seminar activities involving the use of phonemic analysis and models of grammatical analysis, as well as various sociolinguistic frameworks (e.g., of pragmatics).	• Assessed analyses of samples of spoken or written language. (Tests; assignments). • Assessments in the following modules especially: Exploring grammar and pronunciation: from theory to practice' and 'Analysing Language in Social contexts'. •

iv) Critical Analysis

Intended learning Outcome	Teaching methods	Learning Activities	Assessment Type
Critically analyse data relating to language and applied linguistics/TESOL, using a range of qualitative and quantitative approaches	• Asynchronous lectures • Synchronous online seminar discussions in small groups • Asynchronous discussion board activities • Tutorials and supervisions	• Seminar activities involving interaction with peers and tutors • Class pre-reading and follow-up reading • Discussions with dissertation supervisor • Assignment writing	• Formative assessment opportunities via formative assignment, and tutor feedback on performance in seminar tasks • Criterion in all summative assessments, whether oral or written
Ability to critically analyse theories and issues in applied linguistics/TESOL, including the role and use of English in different contexts	• Asynchronous lectures • Synchronous online seminar discussions in small groups • Asynchronous discussion board activities Tutorials and supervisions	• Seminar activities involving interaction with peers and tutors • Class pre-reading and follow-up reading • Discussions with dissertation supervisor • Assignment writing	• Formative assessment opportunities via formative assignment, and tutor feedback on performance in seminar tasks • Criterion in all summative assessments, whether oral or written

v) Presentation

Intended learning Outcome	Teaching methods	Learning Activities	Assessment Type
Ability to present ideas relating to applied linguistics and TESOL in a clear, concise, and professional manner	• Study guides and online induction to support development of academic literacy. • Formative feedback on a referencing task in first module. • Formative feedback on all assignments.	• Assignment preparation webinars with peers and tutors. • Assignment writing	• Criterion in all assessments but especially oral presentations
Ability to produce articulate, coherent, and well-structured assignments	• Study guides and online induction programme; • formative assignment tutorial; • feedback on all course assignments; • assignment webinars in all modules • Tutorials and supervisions	• Feedback in formative assignment tutorial, • assignment webinars held for all course modules	• Formative tutor feedback on performance in etivity tasks • Criterion in all summative assessments, whether oral or written.
Ability to demonstrate accurate and appropriate handling of references and sources.	• Study guides and online induction to support development of academic literacy. • Formative feedback on a referencing task in first module. • Formative feedback on all assignments.	• Feedback in formative assignment tutorial, • assignment webinars held for all course modules	• Formative tutor feedback on performance in etivity tasks • Criterion in all summative assessments, whether oral or written.

vi) Appraisal of evidence

Intended learning Outcome	Teaching methods	Learning Activities	Assessment Type
Ability to assess and evaluate the quality of data and research claims in domain-specific literature.	• Research methods training introduced both extensively throughout modules and in dedicated RM and Dissertation module. • Dissertation supervisions	• Discussion of research papers in all modules but especially Research Methods • Writing of critical literature reviews in coursework assignments and dissertation • Discussions with dissertation supervisor	• Coursework assignments and dissertation

b) Transferable Skills

i) Research Skills

Intended learning Outcome	Teaching methods	Learning Activities	Assessment Type
Become research apprenticed by demonstrating the ability to conduct systematic, trustworthy research e.g.: • Develop researchable questions • Construct a realistic and robust research design • Plan a timetable for fieldwork and working out the feasibility of an intended study in particular contexts • Gain access to participants • Carry out all research activities ethically	• Research Methods training. • Supervisor guidance for Dissertation.	• Online activities and discussions, including critical review of research design in selected research papers. • Production and feedback on draft dissertation proposal.	• Criterion in all assignments requiring data collection, including dissertation.

Ability to design and collect data suitable for different types of research enquiry	• Addressed in all modules, with a particular focus in the Research Methods & Dissertation module • Dissertation supervisions	• Discussion with peers and module tutor in assignment webinars and tutorials • Feedback from all assignments requiring data collection • Discussions with dissertation supervisor	• All assignments requiring data collection • Research proposal for Research Methods & Dissertation • Dissertation
Ability to identify and analyse limitations in existing research	• Formative assignment • Addressed in all modules, especially Research Methods & Dissertation module. • Dissertation supervision	• Feedback from all assignments requiring data collection • Discussions with dissertation supervisor • Discussions with dissertation supervisor • Reviewing literature in writing assignments and dissertation	• Formative assignment • Research proposal for Research Methods & Dissertation • Dissertation

ii) Communication skills

Intended learning Outcome	Teaching methods	Learning Activities	Assessment Type
Ability to communicate effectively and fluently in spoken and written academic English	• Synchronous online seminar discussions in small groups • Asynchronous discussion board activities • Tutorials and supervisions	• Webinar activities inviting Interaction with peers and tutors • Discussion board posts on VLE	All assessments, but especially: • Coursework essays and projects • Oral presentations • Dissertation

iii) Data Presentation

Intended learning Outcome	Teaching methods	Learning Activities	Assessment Type
Ability to use appropriate methods of quantitative and qualitative analysis to present data effectively	• Research Methods module • Seminars in other modules that emphasize data collection and analysis	• Participation in Research Methods sessions and Reading Groups.	• Formative feedback in seminars • Formative tutor assessment by dissertation supervisors.

	• Supplementary resources on Blackboard	• Participation in relevant modules, including assignment work which requires data presentation and commentary • Writing of dissertation	• Summative assessment in the dissertation, and relevant module assignments

iv) Information Technology

Intended learning Outcome	Teaching methods	Learning Activities	Assessment Type
Ability to make effective use of software relevant to their data preparation, analysis, and research needs	• Introduction to SPSS/Excel for basic quantitative analysis in the Research Methods module. • Introduction to RefWorks in Induction week • Use of phonetic font software in the Phonology part of Exploring Grammar and Pronunciation: From Theory to Practice.	• Short exercises using SPSS/Excel in the Research Methods module • Hands-on activities in the Corpus Linguistics module workshops	• Formative assessment in dissertation supervisions where students choose to use analytical software. • Formative feedback and summative assessment of use of relevant tools in Corpus Linguistics option module
Use digital resources effectively for information searching, collecting, and recording.	• Workshops to introduce particular software tools (e.g., in the Corpus Linguistics option module)	• Study and Research Guidance resource on BlackBoard. • Assessment feedback • Research project feedback.	• Module assignments • Dissertation

v) Problem Solving

Intended learning Outcome	Teaching methods	Learning Activities	Assessment Type
Ability to identify and reflect on common teaching and learning challenges in TESOL, including issues relating to culture and diversity.	• Asynchronous lectures • Synchronous online seminar discussions in small groups • Asynchronous discussion board activities	• Numerous assignments require students to address implications of their work, i.e., to reflect on teaching and learning issues and	• Formative assessment opportunities via formative assignment, and tutor feedback on performance in seminar tasks

	• Tutorials and supervisions	solutions, in a context of their choice.	• Summative assessments that focus on teaching and learning challenges and issues

vi) Working relationships

Intended learning Outcome	Teaching methods	Learning Activities	Assessment Type
Be able to collaborate effectively with course peers and professionals from diverse backgrounds	• Groupwork tasks in webinars. • Blackboard group discussion tasks	• Preparation of and participation in seminar and workshop tasks with classmates from diverse backgrounds • Student-initiated informal study groups	• Formative tutor feedback on classroom performance • Formative tutor feedback on Blackboard discussion tasks

vii) Managing learning

Intended learning Outcome	Teaching methods	Learning Activities	Assessment Type
Be able to work independently, or in groups, demonstrating initiative, self-organisation, and effective time management	• Induction Week (programme leader introduction) • Course Study Guide • Discussions with personal tutor • Discussions with dissertation supervisor	• Reflection and discussion with personal tutor • Reflection and discussion with dissertation supervisor	• Module assignments • Dissertation

viii) Career Management

Intended learning Outcome	Teaching methods	Learning Activities	Assessment Type
Display understanding of the range of teaching and other professional options available on graduation from the programme	• Delivery of the Professional Lives in ELT session, introducing students to professional opportunities and activities following graduation	• Reflection activities on key transferrable skills (e.g., in CPD module and Professional Lives in ELT session)	• Formative assessment opportunities on key transferrable skills at the Professional Lives in ELT session.

	• Links on Blackboard VLE to TESOL-related professional organisations, e.g., IATEFL and the British Council • CPD for English Language Teachers option module; • Careers counselling from personal tutors	• Encouragement of attendance of high-profile conferences, e.g., the annual International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language (IATEFL)	•

10.Progression points

This programme follows the standard Scheme of Progression set out in Senate Regulations – see the version of *Senate Regulation 6 governing postgraduate programmes* relevant to the year of entry.

In cases where a student has failed to meet a requirement to progress, he or she will be required to withdraw from the course and a recommendation will be made to the Board of Examiners for an intermediate/exit award where appropriate.

a) Course transfers

n/a

b) Year in Industry

n/a

11.Criteria for award and classification

This programme follows the standard scheme of postgraduate award and classification set out in Senate Regulations – see the version of *Senate Regulation governing postgraduate programmes* relevant to the year of entry.

12.Special features

- Preparatory MOOC - 'An Introduction to Applied Linguistics and TESOL to introduce students to the field and to staff.
- Flexible entry points – option to register for either the PG Certificate or PG Diploma and progress to the full MA if a student wishes.
- Flexible delivery – based on extensive experience of online and distance learning. Synchronous and asynchronous provision, including video lectures, live webinars, group discussions and tasks, and one-to-one online meetings with personal tutor.
- Customisable - students can choose from a wide range of option modules to specialise in areas that suit their own interests
- Research-informed teaching - designed and taught by leading academics who are active researchers and known internationally for their work in the field of Applied Linguistics and TESOL.

12a. Research-inspired Education

Students on this programme will advance through the four quadrants of the University of Leicester Research-inspired Education Framework as follows:

RiE Quadrant	Narrative
Research-briefed Bringing staff research content into the curriculum.	**Research-briefed** In all core programme modules, students are introduced to research outputs and research projects in which Applied Linguistics and TESOL staff have themselves been involved. Examples include the Language Awareness research approach in Exploring Grammar and Pronunciation, and corpus linguistics research methods and findings in Teaching and Learning a Second Language and Analysing Language in Social Contexts.

Research-based Framed enquiry for exploring existing knowledge. **Research-oriented** Students critique published research content and process. **Research-apprenticed** Experiencing the research process and methods; building new knowledge.	**Research-based** Students develop research-analytical and problem-solving skills through a variety of module tasks. For instance, in Analysing Language in Social Contexts , students critically assess the usefulness of different theoretical frameworks and approaches for analysing discourse by applying them to their own textual data. **Research-oriented** Regarding research orientation, students learn how to read and critique the content and methods of contemporary research articles in, for example, the Research Methods and Dissertation module. All modules provide opportunities to discuss current research in applied linguistics and TESOL, through online discussion board activities, and a variety of assessment formats and tasks. **Research-apprenticed** The programme offers opportunities for students to become apprentice researchers. In some modules (e.g. Analysing Language in Social Contexts), students learn how to conduct their own-small scale research project, involving developing appropriate research questions, and devising and implementing a suitable methodology for data collection and analysis. Through the Research Methods and Dissertation module, students develop and consolidate their research literacy and actively apply it to an original area of inquiry in applied linguistics or TESOL.

As part of studying at a research-intensive university, students on this programme have the following extra or co-curricular opportunities available to them to gain exposure to research culture:

Staff-led Reading Group meetings organised as part of the Research Methods and Dissertation core module offer students opportunities to discuss recent research projects across diverse fields in TESOL and applied linguistics. These sessions provide timely reinforcement of key research skills when students are about to embark on their dissertation research projects.

Research seminars: The School of Education runs a research seminar series to which MA students are invited. Talks cover a range of topics in applied linguistics and TESOL, as well as pedagogy more broadly.

Teaching on this programme will be research-informed (it draws consciously on systematic inquiry into the teaching and learning process itself) in the following way:

The School supports all staff involved in teaching to gain an accredited Higher Education teaching qualification, in which they demonstrate their use of teaching theory to support their own practice and reflect on their current teaching and continuing professional development.

All academic staff are research active in a wide range of subject areas in the Applied Linguistics and TESOL domain. A range of option modules are made available to students that directly feature research-based evidence from projects involving module convenors, e.g. Materials Design and

Development, Corpus Linguistics and Language Learning/Teaching, and Migration, Superdiversity and Language. All programme module convenors attend a Masters development group, with regular meetings taking a focus on key and innovative teaching and assessment activities across the School of Education. Academic staff also participate in peer observation and periodic review activities, with a focus on best practice in teaching and assessment.

13.Indications of programme quality

- External Examiner reports: External Examiners continue to praise the quality of feedback provided to students and the quality of dissertation projects undertaken by students.
- Student feedback mechanisms: Surveys and Student Staff Committees.
- Many of our students go on to successful careers in a wide range of fields related to linguistics and language teaching, as well as registering for higher degrees in our field.

The details of the External Examiner(s) for this programme and the most recent External Examiners' reports for this programme can be found at exampapers@Leicester [log-in required].

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Appendix 1: Programme structure (programme regulations)

The University regularly reviews its programmes and modules to ensure that they reflect the current status of the discipline and offer the best learning experience to students. On occasion, it may be necessary to alter particular aspects of a course or module.

MA Applied Linguistics and TESOL (distance learning)

Level 7 Intake Month September & April Mode of Study Part Time Structure

Credit breakdown

Status	Year long	Semester 1	Semester 2
Core	90 credits	n/a	n/a
Optional	30 credits	n/a	n/a
Dissertation	60 credits	n/a	n/a

180 credits in total over 24 months

Core modules

Delivery period	Code	Title	Credits
October	ED7801	Teaching and Learning a Second Language (year 1)	30 credits
April	ED7802	Exploring Grammar and Pronunciation: From Theory to Practice (year 1)	30 credits
October	ED7803	Analysing Language in Social Contexts (year 2)	30 credits
February	ED7805	Research Methods and Dissertation (year 2)	60 credits

Option modules

Delivery period	Code	Title	Credits
August	ED7505	Teacher Education	15 credits
February	ED7516	Technology Enhanced Language Learning	15 credits
February	ED7574	Corpus Linguistics and Language Learning/Teaching	15 credits
February	ED7510	Materials Design and Development	15 credits
August	ED7509	Course and Syllabus Design	15 credits
August	ED7512	English for Specific Purposes	15 credits
February	ED7520	Intercultural Communication	15 credits
August	ED7513	Migration, Superdiversity and Language	15 Credits

Notes
This is an indicative list of option modules and not definitive of what will be available. Option module choice is also subject to availability, timetabling, student number restrictions and, where appropriate, students having taken appropriate pre-requisite modules.

Postgraduate Diploma in Applied Linguistics & TESOL (distance learning)

Level 7 Intake Month September & April Mode of Study Part Time Structure
Credit breakdown

Status	Year long	Semester 1	Semester 2
Core	n/a	60 credits	30 credits
Optional	n/a	n/a	30 credits

120 credits in total

Core modules

Delivery period	Code	Title	Credits
October	ED7801	Teaching and Learning a Second Language (year 1)	30 credits
April	ED7802	Exploring Grammar and Pronunciation: From Theory to Practice (year 1)	30 credits
October	ED7803	Analysing Language in Social Contexts (year 2)	30 credits
February	ED7805	Research Methods and Dissertation (year 2)	60 credits

Option modules

Delivery period	Code	Title	Credits
August	ED7505	Teacher Education	15 credits
February	ED7516	Technology Enhanced Language Learning	15 credits
February	ED7574	Corpus Linguistics and Language Learning/Teaching	15 credits
February	ED7510	Materials Design and Development	15 credits
August	ED7509	Course and Syllabus Design	15 credits
August	ED7512	English for Specific Purposes	15 credits
February	ED7520	Intercultural Communication	15 credits
August	ED7513	Migration, Superdiversity and Language	15 credits

Notes

This is an indicative list of option modules and not definitive of what will be available. Option module choice is also subject to availability, timetabling, student number restrictions and, where appropriate, students having taken appropriate pre-requisite modules.

Postgraduate Certificate in Applied Linguistics & TESOL (distance learning)

Level 7/Year Intake Month September & April Mode of Study Part Time Structure
Credit breakdown

Status	Year long	Semester 1	Semester 2
Core	n/a	30 credits	30 credits
Optional	n/a	n/a	n/a

60 credits in total

Core modules: STUDENTS CHOOSE TWO MODULES FROM THREE:

Delivery period	Code	Title	Credits
October	ED7801	Teaching and Learning a Second Language	30 credits
April	ED7802	Exploring Grammar and Pronunciation: From Theory to Practice	30 credits
October	ED7803	Analysing Language in Social Contexts	30 credits

Appendix 2: Module specifications

See postgraduate module specification database [Login required] (Note - modules are organized by year of delivery)