The University of Manchester

School of Arts, Languages, and Cultures

PGT Programme Handbook

Linguistics and English Language
MA Linguistics

2026-2027

Programme Director:

Prof. Maj-Britt Mosegaard Hansen

Preface

What information can you find in this handbook?

This Programme Handbook contains information relevant to postgraduate taught programmes in the **Department of Linguistics and English Language (LEL).**

Information relevant to all postgraduate taught programmes in the **School of Arts, Languages and Cultures (SALC)** can be found in **SALC Students Community Page**

- How the University works
- Getting started
- Research skills and personal development plans
- Marking and assessment
- Dissertation
- Plagiarism and academic malpractice
- Facilities and services for students
- University-level regulations and policies

Please note that some information is subject to change.
This handbook was last updated on 7th August 2026.

For updates, please check our web page:
http://www.alc.manchester.ac.uk/studentintranet/

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0 Introduction and welcome

Studying Linguistics and English Language
in the School of Arts, Languages, and Cultures

About the School. The School of Arts, Languages, and Cultures (SALC) is made up of seventeen different subject areas, covering a diverse range of arts and languages disciplines. Our work embraces the material, visual, linguistic, textual, social, and performative dimensions of human society ranging from pre-historic times, through the classical and medieval periods, to the present.

For students, we offer the advantages of belonging to a specific subject area combined with the extensive choice and variety of being within a large and multi-disciplinary school. Regular research and graduate seminars are held within the department and the School. Attendance at such seminars forms an important part of initiation into the world of scholarly research and is a valuable opportunity for contact with leading scholars in your field.

The University of Manchester is one of the largest in the country and is able to offer excellent facilities to postgraduate students. The University of Manchester Library has excellent holdings relating to the field of Linguistics and to language sciences more broadly. Its collections provide an excellent base for advanced study and research.

Postgraduate students benefit from the School's own Graduate School, an online and physical community where postgraduate students can meet each other, access resources and organise events. We are committed to developing collegiality, intellectual discussion, and inter-disciplinary and multi-disciplinary exchange among both MA and PhD students and staff. Our activities are open to all postgraduate students in the School and we look forward to seeing you soon. In addition to this, the University Language Centre, based within the School, provides advanced facilities for enhancing foreign-language skills where required; it also gives access to European satellite broadcasts and has a video and media library.

About the Department. Our Linguistics and English Language (LEL) programmes offer a very wide range of teaching and research expertise, covering all aspects of theoretical and descriptive linguistics: phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, pragmatics, discourse and conversation analysis, typology, historical linguistics, sociolinguistics, cognitive linguistics and psycholinguistics, computational and corpus linguistics, field linguistics, and the documentation and description of endangered and lesser-known languages. Our academic staff also work on various practical applications of linguistics (including language policy and forensic linguistics) and have expertise in a significant range of languages, including English and its varieties, other Germanic languages, Romance languages, languages spoken in the Americas (e.g. Quechua, Ulwa), Oceania (e.g. Jamingjung, Samoan) and Africa (e.g. Gújjolaay Eegimaa). The subject area hosts several externally-funded research projects with post-doctoral research associates, two laboratories for psycholinguistics and phonetic research as well as around 15 postgraduate research students[1]. The department is also home to the Linguistic Diversity Collective, an initiative that researches and champions linguistic diversity in the local and global context.[2] For up-to-date news from the department, please visit our newsletter:

https://manling.wordpress.com/

*We wish you a very warm **welcome** to LEL and to SALC!*
We hope that your time with us will be intellectual stimulating.

[1] Learn more about the research our PGR students are involved in: https://tinyurl.com/SALC-PGR-projects
[2] To find out more about the Linguistic Diversity Collective, visit their website here: https://www.alc.manchester.ac.uk/linguistics-and-english-language/research/linguistic-diversity-collective/

1 Practical information

1.1 Key contacts in Linguistics and English Language (LEL)

MA Programme Director

Prof. Maj-Britt Mosegaard Hansen
Responsible for the academic side of the programme.

Office	Samuel Alexander Building W1.23
Email	maj-britt.mosegaardhansen@manchester.ac.uk

MA Dissertation Coordinator

Dr. Simone De Cia
Organising the dissertation process throughout the academic year.

Office	Samuel Alexander Building NG.1
Email	simone.decia@manchester.ac.uk

Assessment Coordinator
Dr Dmitry Nikolaev
Overseeing assessment for the programme.

Office	Samuel Alexander Building N1.3
Email	dmitry.nikolaev@manchester.ac.uk

Academic Advisors
TBC
Providing academic guidance, pastoral and career-related support.
Signposting students to other support available across the University.

Programme Administration
Support with practical questions related to course unit enrolment, access to Canvas and submission of coursework, amongst others. Visit in person or telephone, if possible. Please include your student ID in any enquiries.

Office	Student Support Hub (Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm) Samuel Alexander Building, LG
Telephone	0161 529 3348
Email	salc.hub@manchester.ac.uk

Head of Department
Professor Andrew Koontz-Garboden

Office	Samuel Alexander Building NG.12
Email	andrewkg@manchester.ac.uk

Student Representatives
TBC
Attend departmental board meetings and staff-student liaison committees.
Please feel free to contact the reps to raise any comments, suggestions, or concerns!

1.2 Academic and pastoral support

1.2.1 Academic Advisor

Every student at the University of Manchester is assigned an Academic Advisor. Your advisor will be either the MA Programme Director or another senior member of staff in the department. The Academic Advisor will give you guidance on academic matters as well as on career development within and beyond the programme. Your Academic Advisor is also a first contact point when you experience personal problems that affect your academic study; they will direct you to relevant support services in the University.

1.2.2 Student Support Services

Whatever the issue, be it financial, personal, academic or administrative: Student Services and the Students' Union have experienced and sympathetic people, groups and advice centres to help you.

https://www.alc.manchester.ac.uk/study/student-support/

SALC Student Support & Wellbeing Team
A school-based support service. Can help with student support advice, mitigating circumstances, disability support, attendance, interruptions, and withdrawals. Work closely with University Support Services including Counselling, DASS, and Occupational Health.

Office	Please go to the hub in the lower ground floor of the Samuel Alexander building
Email	salc.wellbeing@manchester.ac.uk

1.3 Asking questions

Please make sure to consult the course unit descriptor, the programme handbook, and our Canvas Linguistics and English Language Community page. Any further questions are best directed at the contacts listed below.

A Question about…	**Contact**	**Alternative Contact**
… a course unit and its assessment	Lecturer	Programme Director/ Assessment Coordinator
... course unit selection	Programme Director	Support Hub
… mitigating circumstances	Support Hub	Assessment Coordinator
… interruption of studies	Support Hub	Academic Advisor/ Programme Director
… change of registration details	Support Hub	Programme Director
… advice on dissertation plans	Member of staff with relevant specialisation	Dissertation Coordinator/ Programme Director
… academic career plans	Member of staff with relevant specialisation	Academic Advisor/ Programme Director/Departmental PGR Director
… financial matters	Support Hub	Support Hub

2 Academic information

2.1 LEL staff and their research profiles

Professor Colin Bannard (PhD, Edinburgh):
computational linguistics, child language development, psycholinguistics
N1.3, colin.bannard@manchester.ac.uk

Dr Maciej Baranowski (PhD, University of Pennsylvania):

language variation and change, sociolinguistics, socio-phonetics, dialects of English
NG.5, maciej.baranowski@manchester.ac.uk

Professor Delia Bentley (Dott. Lingue, Palermo; PhD, Manchester):
syntactic microvariation, the syntax-discourse and syntax-lexical semantics interface, syntactic theories (Role and Reference Grammar and Cartography);
Romance (especially Italo-Romance and Sardinian)
W1.24, delia.bentley@manchester.ac.uk

Dr Ricardo Bermúdez-Otero (PhD, Manchester & Santiago de Compostela):
phonological and morphological theory; historical linguistics; Germanic (especially Old, Middle, and Present-day English); Romance (especially Spanish, Portuguese, Catalan, and French)
NG.4, r.bermudez-otero@manchester.ac.uk

Professor Tine Breban (PhD, KU Leuven):
<On research leave in 2026-27>
English grammar, noun phrases, determiners and adjectives, semantic and functional change, grammaticalization, corpus linguistics, Cognitive and Functional approaches
NG.9, tine.breban@manchester.ac.uk

Professor Thea Cameron-Faulkner (PhD, Manchester):
<On research leave in 2026-27, S1>
child language development, pre-linguistic gestures, development of speech acts, shared book reading in early language development
NG.14, t.cameron@manchester.ac.uk

Dr Simone De Cia (PhD, Manchester):
syntax and information structure; syntactic theories (Minimalism and Cartography); fieldwork and lesser-studied Romance languages; specific interests: discourse-related expletive, verb-object agreement, wh-in-situ, the discourse-pragmatic notion of contrast
NG.1, simone.decia@manchester.ac.uk

Dr Martina Faller (PhD, Stanford):
semantics, pragmatics, typology, field linguistics, Quechua
NG.7, martina.faller@manchester.ac.uk

Professor Maj-Britt Mosegaard Hansen (PhD and dr.phil., Copenhagen):
pragmatics, semantics, verbal interaction, Functional and Cognitive linguistics, grammaticalization, semantic/pragmatic change, negation, pragmatic markers, French, Romance
W1.23, maj-britt.mosegaardhansen@manchester.ac.uk

Dr Vera Hohaus (Dr.phil., Tübingen):
semantics and its interfaces; typology, fieldwork, processing, first language acquisition; comparison constructions, focus sensitivity, weak necessity
WG.20, vera.hohaus@manchester.ac.uk

Dr Wendell Kimper (PhD, University of Massachusetts, Amherst):
phonology, phonological theory, experimental phonology, speech perception
N1.15, wendell.kimper@manchester.ac.uk

Professor Andrew Koontz-Garboden (PhD, Stanford):
lexical and formal semantics, morphosyntax, typology, aspect, language endangerment and documentation, field linguistics, language contact; Ulwa, Spanish, Portuguese, Creoles
NG.12, andrewkg@manchester.ac.uk

Prof April McMahon (PhD, Edinburgh University):
Evolutionary linguistics, historical linguistics, phonology

april.mcmahon@manchester.ac.uk

Dr Dmitry Nikolaev (PhD, Russian State University for the Humanities, Moscow)
<On research leave in 2026-27, S1>
multilingual Natural Language Processing, analysis of language models;
phonological typology, Old and Middle Irish language
N1.3, dmitry.nikolaev@manchester.ac.uk

Dr Andrea Nini (PhD, Aston University):
<On research leave in 2026-27, S2>
Forensic linguistics, register analysis, idiolect, linguistic individuality, authorship analysis
NG.13, andrea.nini@manchester.ac.uk

Dr Serge Sagna (PhD, University of London):
multilingualism, language contact, language policy and planning, child language development, linguistic typology, field linguistics, endangered languages and language documentation, African linguistics
NG.8, serge.sagna@manchester.ac.uk

Professor Eva Schultze-Berndt (PhD, Nijmegen):
linguistic typology (particularly predications, parts of speech, information structure), Construction grammar, syntax of spoken language, lexical semantics, language contact, descriptive linguistics, fieldwork methodology, corpus annotation, endangered languages; Australian and Papuan languages, Creole languages
NG.11, eva.schultze-berndt@manchester.ac.uk

Dr Patrycja Strycharczuk (PhD, Manchester):
phonetics-phonology interface, articulation, ultrasound, sociophonetic variation, sound change
NG.2, patrycja.strycharczuk@manchester.ac.uk

Dr Richard Zimmermann (PhD, Geneva):
historical syntax, syntax of Old and Middle English, history of English, formal syntax, Lexical Functional Grammar (LFG), corpus-based studies, corpus statistics
NG.6, richard.zimmermann@manchester.ac.uk

For more information or information on other members of staff within SALC, please go to:
http://www.alc.manchester.ac.uk/schoolpeople/academic-staff/

2.2 Linguistics and English Language seminar series

The Department of Linguistics and English Language's seminar series (the non-credited LELA 60130 "Departmental Seminar" on your timetable) provides a platform for discussion and an opportunity for the Manchester linguistics community to meet. It is an excellent opportunity for you to get to know the department, shop for dissertation topics, and interact with staff in a less formal setting. *Attendance is therefore most strongly recommended!*

For a list of dates and invited speakers, please see the department's newsletter. To receive regular updates and announcements in relation to the seminar series, please subscribe to our LISTSERV mailing list:

http://manling.wordpress.com/
https://listserv.manchester.ac.uk/cgi-bin/wa?SUBED1=LELA-SEMINARS&A=1

2.3 MA Linguistics: programme description

2.3.1 Summary of programme objectives and learning outcomes

The MA Linguistics aims

- to give our students experience of excellence in teaching and learning at an advanced level, in an environment where they will benefit from the fact that the Department is also home to world-leading research in Linguistics;
- to give students a grounding in Linguistics, and an understanding of linguistic theories, methods and data interpretation;
- to teach students a wide range of skills in data collection, analysis, and interpretation covering quantitative and qualitative methods applicable in Linguistics and in wider research contexts;
- to offer an academically coherent, challenging, and up-to-date programme of study that will develop students who are independent, critically aware, and self-reliant learners;
- to foster students' personal, intellectual, and organisational skills, so that they will take from this Department a range of skills that will be readily applicable to their chosen career, including an empirical, objective approach to problem-solving both generally and specific to linguistics problems, and skills of clear expression and communication;
- to equip students with the intellectual perspectives and the skills of scholarship that will prepare them to conduct research of their own in their chosen specialism;
- to produce linguistically-informed citizens who can apply concepts and knowledge of Linguistics and bring awareness of these concepts and knowledge to various professions and employment opportunities and trajectories;
- to produce MA students that are capable of entry into the best PhD programmes internationally and able to contribute strongly to Linguistics research projects, privately or publicly funded.

After successfully completing this programme you will

- have a broad advanced knowledge of the core areas of linguistic structure (semantics, syntax, morphology, phonetics and phonology), as well as the major areas of language use (sociolinguistics, pragmatics, language contact) and language development (diachronic linguistics, psycholinguistics);
- be able to read, understand, and critically evaluate academic publications in your chosen specialism of Linguistics;
- have the ability to apply a range of current techniques and methods of data collection and analysis related to the topics and fields you have chosen;
- be able to conduct academic research of your own including hypothesis generation, data collection, analysis and interpretation, compliant with regulations on research ethics and integrity;
- have acquired a range of transferrable skills including enhanced writing, presentation, and IT skills, as well as personal skills of time and goal management and working in team.

2.3.2 Structure of the programme

You can also download a copy of the programme structure from:
https://documents.manchester.ac.uk/display.aspx?DocID=44366

The full MA programme has 180 credits. Of these, 120 credits are taken in taught units, and the remaining 60 are allocated to the dissertation. All taught units in this MA are worth 15 credits. **Full-time students** take the programme over twelve months. The taught course units are completed over two semesters. The Dissertation is completed during the summer for submission in early September. **Part-time students** spread the taught course units over two years, taking 60 credits of taught course units in each year. In year 1, they take LELA60001, at least one other compulsory/core unit (1x15 credits), and at least one optional/free choice unit (at least 1x15 credits). In year 2, they take LELA60002, and the remaining taught units. Like all students, over the two years of the programme, part-time students take LELA70041 "Introduction to Grammatical Theory" and LELA70061 "Phonetics and Phonology", and at least two out of the core course units listed. Part-time students complete LELA70000 "Dissertation" in the summer of their second year.

<table>
<tr><td colspan="3">MA Linguistics
180 credits</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Taught units
120 credits</td><td rowspan="2">Dissertation
60 credits</td></tr>
<tr><td>Compulsory and core units
(90 credits)</td><td>Optional/free choice units
(30 credits)</td></tr>
</table>

Core course units, onto which you are automatically enrolled by the Support Hub:

- compulsory unit developing research skills in linguistics (2x15 credits):
  LELA60001 "Research Methods 1"
  LELA60002 "Research Methods 2"
- compulsory units introducing areas of linguistic study (2x15 credits):
  LELA70041 "Introduction to Grammatical Theory"
  LELA70061 "Phonetics and Phonology"

Core course units, to choose at least two from (2x15 credits), onto which you can enrol after approval by the MA Programme Director:

- LELA70231 "The Sociolinguistics of English"
- LELA62022 "Semantics and Pragmatics"
- LELA60082 "Psycholinguistics"

Optional/free choice units (2x15 credits) to choose from, onto which you can enrol after approval by the MA Programme Director:

- LELA62001 "Topics Romance Linguistics"
- LELA60671 "Topics in Language Development"
- LELA60181 “Cognitive Linguistics”
- LELA74012 "Language Acquisition and Language Learners"
- LELA60572 “Language Policy and Planning”
- LELA71632 "Forensic Linguistics"
- LELA60222 "Experimental Phonetics"

Nota bene: If one of the below core units has not been selected to meet the core requirements, it can be selected as an optional unit.

- LELA70231 "The Sociolinguistics of English"
- LELA62022 "Semantics and Pragmatics"
- LELA60082 "Psycholinguistics"

To be discussed with the MA Programme Director and a member of staff:

- LELA71121 (1st semester) and LELA70502 (2nd semester) "Directed Reading"

With the permission of the MA Programme Director, one course unit (1x15 credits) may also be selected from PGT-level units by another department. In exceptional circumstances, permission may be granted by the Programme Director for two units (2x15 credits) to be selected from outside the department. (Please also refer to the Programme Structure linked above.)

Non-credited course units that all PGT students at the School or at the Department will be automatically enrolled in include:

- LELA60130 "Departmental Seminar"
- SALC60000 "Postgraduate Skills Training"
- SALC61230 "Postgraduate Health and Safety Unit"
- SALC61240 "Academic Malpractice"
- SALC61250 "Wellbeing and Diversity"

2.4 Course units and course unit selection procedures

2.4.1 Procedures for course unit selection

At the start of the academic year, during welcome week, you will be invited to meet with the Programme Director to finalise your course unit selection with the goal of putting together a coherent programme of study that fulfils the course requirements and allows you to develop both breadth and depth. Please read the programme structure and the relevant section of this handbook guidelines carefully before this meeting and bring a provisional selection of course units for approval.

2.4.1.1 Balancing your workload

We recommend taking an equal number of taught course unit credits (= 60 credits) across the 1st and 2nd semester to balance your workload. This recommendation translates to:

2025-26 1st semester	2025-26 2nd semester
LELA60001 "Research Methods 1"	LELA60002 "Research Methods 2"
LELA70041 "Introduction to Grammatical Theory"	
LELA70061 "Phonetics and Phonology"	
plus one additional course unit	*plus three additional course units*

2.4.1.2 Optional/free choice course units

The optional course units can be selected from four sets of course units:

- Set 1: Those **core units** that you have not selected as mandatory units
- Set 2: So-called **enhanced level 3 units**, which are co-taught as final-year undergraduate units, with additional seminars and assessment for postgraduate students
- Set 3: **Directed readings**, which are arranged individually with a member of staff, subject to availability and approval by the Programme Director and Head of Department
- Set 4: Units from **other MA programmes**, subject to availability and approval by the Programme Director

Please note that enhanced level-3 units may have **pre-requisites**: this means that they require that you have taken a certain lower-level course unit or a course unit equivalent to it during your BA. If you want to take an enhanced level 3 unit in the second semester that has a pre-requisite you have not taken during your previous studies, it may be possible to arrange for you to audit a unit or do a directed reading in the first semester, which will be accepted as that pre-requisite. The MA Programme Director can advise on this matter during your meeting in welcome week.

2.4.1.3 Replacing core units

If you have already taken units equivalent to two or three out of compulsory/core units for Linguistics during your previous study, it is possible to replace that unit/those units with other course units selected from the same pool as your optional free choice units (but please note that you can only take 30 credits from enhanced level-3 units).

Waiving of core units is at the discretion of the Programme Director and they will ask for evidence showing that you have covered all aspects of the course units in question. For example, to waive LELA70061 “Phonetics and Phonology”, you should have taken advanced introductory courses in phonetics and in phonology.

2.4.2 Compulsory and core units on offer in 2026-27

Please also consult the more detailed descriptions for these course units, which you can find here: [MA Linguistics (2026 entry) | The University of Manchester]

Each course unit is identified by its course unit ID. This ID includes four letters identifying the subject area or department (that is, LELA for Linguistics and English Language), followed by five numbers. The final number in the sequence is always a 1 or a 2 and corresponds to the semester in which the unit will be taught. If the final number is 0 the unit is taught over both semesters.

Obligatory core units:

LELA60001 & LELA60002 "Research Methods"	
Description	This course is designed to equip students with advanced skills in conducting and presenting linguistic research. It covers the relationship between empirical evidence and theoretical models, methods of data collection in different subdisciplines, an introduction to statistical methods, ethical issues in working with and managing data from human subjects, and strategies of presenting and writing up linguistic research.
Convenor	Dr Simone De Cia
Assessment	Five pieces of coursework throughout the academic year, including two written assignments (with a weight of 20%) each, a portfolio of exercises (with a weight of 10%), your MA dissertation proposal (with a weight of 25%), and a presentation on your dissertation project (with a weight of 25%).

LELA70041 "Introduction to Grammatical Theory"	
Description	The aim of this course unit is to lay the foundations of grammatical theory for students who have little or no previous experience of linguistics, or whose skills are outdated. Drawing on constructions from English and other languages, the modules seeks to cover the basic concepts that underlie the modern study of grammar. The perspective adopted is issue-based and largely theoretically neutral. It thus makes a natural companion to course units in linguistic typology. It also sets the scene for further study into specific approaches to formal syntax.
Convenor	Dr Vera Hohaus
Assessment	Mid-term in-class exam (with a weight of 30%) and a final assignment with problem sets (with a weight of 70%).

LELA70061 "Phonetics and Phonology"	
Description	This course unit introduces students to foundational concepts and basic analytical skills in phonology and phonetics. Students will learn about the principles of speech production and perception, how to transcribe a variety of speech sounds, as well as the methods involved in phonological analysis.
Convenor	Dr Patrycja Strycharczuk
Assessment	One written assignment (with a weight of 75%) and the output from a project (with a weight of 25%).

List of core units to choose from:

LELA62021 "Semantics and Pragmatics"	
Description	This is a course unit in the study of meaning. We explore semantics, in the truth-conditional, model-theoretic perspective, in the tradition of work by Richard Montague, and pragmatics, in the spirit of H. Paul Grice. Phenomena discussed include presuppositions, adjectival modification, relative clauses, quantificational determiners, scope ambiguities, free and bound variables, and implicatures.
Convenor	Dr Martina Faller
Assessment	Two assignments (with a weight of 40% and 60%, respectively).

LELA70232 "The Sociolinguistics of English"

Description	The course introduces students to the quantitative study of linguistic variation and change, also known as variationist sociolinguistics. The focus is on variation and changes currently occurring in English. A number of classic studies in the field are reviewed, and quantitative methods are used to account for the role of linguistic and extra-linguistic factors, such as socio-economic status, gender, age, ethnicity, and region. The course includes data collection by students, multivariate statistical analysis, and provides a foundation for postgraduate work in variationist sociolinguistics and urban dialectology.
Convenor	Dr Maciej Baranowski
Assessment	An exam (with a weight of 80%) and weekly quizzes (weighted 20%).

LELA60082 "Psycholinguistics"	
Description	This course unit will cover a host of topics at the interface between linguistics and psychology. More specifically, it will allow students to engage critically with speech perception, word recognition and reading, speech and language production, processing of syntax and semantics, first language acquisition, bilingualism, and speech and language disorders. Students will be presented with theoretical models and experimental paradigms used in the field while being given the opportunity to explore the relationship between data and theory.
Convenor	Dr Wendell Kimper
Assessment	A written assignment (with a weight of 75%) and a presentation (with a weight of 25%).

Please refer to the Programme Structure and the course descriptions on our website for more information on **optional units**, some of which may be enhanced third-year undergraduate units.

- Programme Structure
- MA Linguistics (2026 entry) | The University of Manchester

2.5 LELA70000 "Dissertation"

As part of their degree, students in the MA Linguistics are required to write a dissertation of 10,000 to 12,000 words. It must include original research that contributes to the field of linguistics. Ideally, the dissertation topic will arise from and dovetail with the taught course units taken, but it can also derive from independent study.

2.5.1 Entry requirements for the dissertation module

The Dissertation is a unit within the MA programme, LELA70000 "Dissertation". In order to be allowed to start this unit, students must pass the taught part of the programme[3].

The Research Outline is a crucial piece of research to help you develop a strong Dissertation topic and it is assessed within LELA60002. A successful research outline will demonstrate satisfactorily that this is a viable project capable of being brought to completion in the time available. Most students will find that they the need to reframe and revise their research outline several times until they have clearly identified and articulated their dissertation research plan.

2.5.2 Dissertation timeline

- Start thinking about dissertation topics from after the mid-term break **during your first semester**. To get you started, think about the subfield of linguistics, a phenomenon, the

[3] Detailed information on pass marks can be found in the School's PGT handbook here: https://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/salc/teaching-and-supervision/postgraduate-taught/

methodology, and the language you would be interested in working on and identify members of staff whose profile would be a good fit.

- Approach potential supervisors from **December 2026** during their office hours. There will also be a dissertation fair towards the end of the semester that will allow you to chat to faculty in the department in a less formal setting.
- You will need to finalise your dissertation topic during the second semester, likely **by mid-February 2027**, when you will have to submit your dissertation research proposal. Please make sure to actively discuss the topic with potential supervisor and leave enough time to develop your research proposal, incorporating their feedback.
- If your dissertation proposal involves research requiring ethical approval, you will also need to leave plenty of time to prepare and submit your ethical approval application by the School-set deadline. This is likely to be **in early March 2027**.
- Actively start your dissertation research in the second semester and present an interim report on your research to your cohort and our staff **towards the end of the second semester**. Do not postpone your research until the end of the semester.
- **During the summer** you will continue to pursue your research. Make use of the opportunity to get feedback from your supervisor.
- Whilst students are not officially progressed to the dissertation until **the exam board in the summer** has decided so, students are permitted to work on the dissertation process well in advance of this. This is on the understanding that official progression to the dissertation is dependent upon successful completion of the taught stage of the programme, either at first attempt or by resit and/or resubmission in August.
- Leave enough time for revisions and proofreading in August: the writing process is not linear. The **dissertation submission deadline** is early in September, to be confirmed.

2.5.3 Summary of dissertation assessment

Assessment task	Formative or summative	Length	Weighting
Research proposal	summative	1,500 words	50% (within LELA60002 "Research Methods")
Oral presentation	summative	10 min	50% (within LELA60002 "Research Methods")
Draft piece	formative	3,000 words	
Dissertation	summative	10,000-12,000 words	100% (within LELA70000 "Dissertation")

2.6 Principles for teaching and assessment

2.6.1 Teaching and assessment in LEL

Core course units and **PGT-specific course units** are taught in a variety of settings but very frequently combining lecture and discussion-based and more hands-on elements. Most course units are assessed by a combination of assessment methods including an on-campus final exam or a long essay/project report to be submitted at the end of the semester alongside one or more smaller pieces of assessment during the semester. Please refer to the course unit descriptors for details.

Some course units (so-called **enhanced-level 3 units**) are co-taught on the final-year undergraduate programmes in Linguistics and English Language. They often require advanced

research skills in their specific topic and may have entry restricted by pre-requisites. When you take one of these units as PGT student, you will attend the lecturers (and seminars) together with the final-year undergraduate students as well as a number of seminars for PGT students only. Assessment for undergraduate versus postgraduate students will differ.

Directed Readings allow individual or smaller groups of students to study one topic in depth on the basis of a reading list and personal research, combined with around five meetings with a member of staff. Directed Readings are arranged at the start of the academic year on a case-by-case basis; they are subject to availability and approval by the MA Programme Director and the Head of Department. Assessment is likely to be research-based and will be discussed with the relevant member of staff at the beginning of the semester but could involve a longer essay or presentation.

2.6.2 Submission of coursework

Please familiarise yourself with the procedures before your submission date. Most course units will require you to submit coursework online using **Turnitin**, a platform that is embedded in Canvas, the University's virtual learning platform. Detailed instructions on how to upload a submission will be provided on the Canvas space for every course unit. Please follow these instructions carefully and allow enough time ahead of your first submission.

You can submit a **backup copy** of your coursework to the PGT office.[4] Regardless of the submission format, please keep a copy of your submission for your record and in case of loss. All electronic copies of your work will be checked for plagiarism and word count.

2.6.3 Pass marks, resits, and alternative exit points

More detailed information regarding assessment criteria is given in Canvas

The **pass mark** for PGT coursework, examinations, and the dissertation is 50%. Candidates may be permitted, on the recommendation of the Examination Board, to be reassessed in course units amounting to no more than 60 credits in total. **Reassessment** will normally take the form of a revised resubmission of coursework; details are provided in the course unit descriptor. The unit mark after reassessment is capped at 40%.

Students who do not meet the criteria to pass the MA can be awarded a **Postgraduate Diploma in Linguistics** if they have passed 120 credits of taught course units at 40%. The Postgraduate Diploma does not include a dissertation. Students completing 60 credits of taught course units at 40% may be awarded a Postgraduate Certificate on recommendation of the Examination Board.

2.7 Short summaries of important teaching and learning policies

A full overview of the school's teaching and learning policies can be found here

Teaching and learning | School of Arts, Languages and Cultures | StaffNet | The University of Manchester

2.7.1 Word count

Coursework exercises and dissertations have a required word limit. In all cases, the word count includes not only the main body of the text, but also examples, footnotes, and endnotes. It does not include the References or Appendices; nor does it include the preliminary pages required for MA dissertations. You must indicate the word count at the end of the main body of text for each assignment and at the bottom of the contents page for the MA Dissertation. Please remember, when calculating word counts using word-processing software, to include footnotes and endnotes in the calculation.

[4] Please see Section 1.1 above for the contact details.

You must observe the word limit for each assignment, as this is part of the task set, and you are not allowed to exceed the upper limit. Normally, material that exceeds the upper limit will not be read or considered in the marking. When work exceeding the word limit is marked, the mark given on the feedback form will include the appropriate penalty. The feedback will indicate how the penalty has been calculated.

2.7.2 Late submission

Any assessed coursework submitted after the deadline without good cause will incur a penalty determined by the lateness of its arrival. This will be applied by the office.

- Any work submitted at any time within the first 24 hours following the published submission deadline will receive a penalty of 10% of the maximum amount of marks available.
- Any work submitted at any time between 24 hours and up to 48 hours late will receive a deduction of 20% of the marks available, and so on, at the rate of an additional 10% deducted per 24 hours, until the assignment is submitted, or no marks remain.

If you are registered on units outside of SALC, you should ensure that you are aware of the penalties that will be imposed for late course work submission for that School, as Schools may operate different penalty schemes for late submission.

2.7.3 Mitigating circumstances and deadline extensions

Extensions to the submission dates for assessment linked to your course units as well as the dissertation may be sought where **mitigating circumstances** outside of students' control will delay the completion and submission by the published date. Please note that individual members of staff cannot grant extensions. All requests must be submitted following the procedure published here: https://www.studentsupport.manchester.ac.uk/study-support/mitigating-circumstances/.

Please submit your application as soon as possible. Please make sure to also read the School's policy on Mitigating Circumstances. It is best practice to inform your Course Unit Director if you have been granted an extension.

2.7.4 Plagiarism and academic malpractice

Please take the time to familiarise yourself with the School's and University's policies on plagiarism and academic malpractice, which we take extremely seriously.[5] You will have the opportunity to do so as part of the non-credited course unit **SALC61240 "Academic Malpractice"**, onto which you will be automatically enrolled.

Academic malpractice is regarded as a serious offence and students found to have committed it will be penalized. At the very least a mark of only 30% would be awarded for the piece of work in question, but the penalty is likely to be more substantial, from being awarded zero (with or without loss of credits), failing the whole unit, being demoted to a lower class of degree, or being excluded from the programme.

The most well-known form of academic malpractice is **plagiarism**, but malpractice also includes **collusion** (the agreement to hide someone else's individual input to collaborative work with the intention of securing a mark higher than either you or another student might deserve), the **falsification or fabrication** of results, **contract cheating** (the practice of commissioning all or part of piece of work to a third-party, or parties, without acknowledging the contribution) and the unauthorized and/or undeclared use of **large language model-based AI chatbots** like ChatGPT. Please note that the extensive use of **translation software** is also considered problematic.

Plagiarism is presenting the ideas, work or words of other people without proper, clear, and unambiguous acknowledgement. It also includes **self-plagiarism** (which occurs where, for example, you submit work that you have presented for assessment on a previous occasion), and

[5] These will be linked on every of the Canvas spaces for your course units, but you can find the University's regulations here, for instance, http://www.regulations.manchester.ac.uk/academic/academic-malpractice/

the submission of material from **essay banks** (even if the authors of such material appear to be giving you permission to use it in this way). To avoid plagiarism, make sure that you always acknowledge your sources according to the guidelines for referencing discussed in LELA60001 "Research Methods". Take care to properly acknowledge words, close paraphrases of words, as well as ideas. If in doubt, reach out to our staff.

2.7.5 Feedback

Whenever possible, you will receive feedback on coursework within 15 working days (Monday to Friday, with the exclusion of Bank Holidays, vacation and examination periods) of the submission date, or within 20 working days, if there is no further assessment. If the submission date falls within less than 15 days before a vacation or examination period, the course unit convenor will inform you as to when you should expect their feedback. You will receive feedback on your dissertation after the final Examination Board. Please note that all marks are provisional and thus can change until they have been confirmed by the Examination Board.

2.8 Submission and examination dates for 2026-27

2026-27 1st semester	2026-27 2nd semester	dissertation
Final submission date for essays and coursework: To be confirmed. Examination period: 14th– 31st January 2027	Final submission date for essays and coursework: To be confirmed. Examination period: 17th May – 13h June 2027	Final submission date: Early September 2027.

Examination resits between 23th August - 5th September 2027.

2.9 A note on part-time study

Part-time study is supported and is actively facilitated in the timetabling of teaching hours for the MA-level course units, wherever possible. However, students should note that even part-time study requires a significant commitment of time, and that we do not recommend combining part-time study with a full-time job. If you are considering taking the programme part-time, we encourage you to talk to the Programme Director to discuss your options.