

**School of Environment, Education and
Development**

Faculty of Humanities

SEED Programme Committee: MA TESOL

Date: Wednesday 26 November 2025

Time: 13:00 – 14:30

Location: Ellen Wilkinson A1.13

Please send any queries to seed.hub@manchester.ac.uk

MINUTES

Staff Attendees: Zeynep Onat-Stelma (Chair), Susan Dawson, Juup Stelma, Richard Fay, Nahielly Palacios (remote), Paul Smith.

Staff Apologies: Helen Choen Yin Chan (tutor)

4 Reps in attendance:

Xinyu Cao, Xiaoqian Cao, Mengxin Zhang, Manjie Gao

1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence

2. Minutes/Actions of the last meeting

Colleagues and students to email corrections to Zeynep

3. Matters arising from the previous meeting

4. Student Reports and Reviews/External Examiner Comments

- External Examiner Comments on dissertations

Extensive, detailed and constructive feedback from markers, though there are some inconsistencies in the amount of feedback provided on some dissertations. The marks reflect the quality and the marks also align well with the feedback given.

- Student reports and reviews

16 students provided feedback. The reps created a presentation covering this. A survey was created to collect feedback. Reps began by expressing gratitude to colleagues for their professionalism.

Unit-level satisfaction and feedback:

Language Awareness for TESOL

63% satisfied, 13% very satisfied. Students find this course very helpful and interesting, and it has a strong connection to their teaching briefs.

Students expected more in-class activities. More explanation of terminologies. Would like review of pre-session reading to check understanding.

Language Education as Intercultural Practice

Very satisfied with the course content. Content can be rather abstract, but is sometimes profound. Many already have experience teaching, but connecting it to cultural exchange is new.

Would like more guidelines on handouts and reading. Students were given a list of reading materials, but would like advice on how to use these materials smartly. Perspective has driven student motivation.

Beyond Approaches, Methods and Techniques

Students find the course detailed and useful. Especially that there is a close connection between the unit and classroom instruction. Helps students theorise their previous experience. However most of the students' experience is in their own country, and getting some from within the UK would be very helpful.

Would like to have more practice included in the programme – an internship or placement would be helpful. Would be nice to have more activities in class, not just learning theories.

Psychology of Language Learning

Well organised and instructive. Helps the students look into different puzzles in English learning. Not just from a teaching perspective, also from a psychological perspective. Very deep content.

Digital Literacy in Language Learning and Teaching

Less students on this unit. Generally satisfied. Very practical and relevant to contemporary teaching, especially about technology. Can help them to gain a deeper understanding of technology.

Would like more hands-on practice, not just theory.

Overall contents of TESOL programme:

Students agree that the programme is up to date. The knowledge is very cutting edge.

Students are satisfied that teaching abilities and enthusiasm is good. Lots of handouts (and chocolate!)

Students feel that the course has a foundational role in their future career development.

Students feel the learning resources are excellent. Resources are very helpful. Not all students use all resources. They know they are there but don't use them. That could provide some room for improvement.

Which aspect of the TESOL course do you think needs the most improvement:

Teaching methods – more interactive elements, more activities in class

Course content – more practical cases, more in-depth theories

Assessment methods – generally satisfied, more diversified assessment

Course arrangement – more reasonable class hours

Wellbeing in UoM:

21% thought this was average, the rest felt this provision was good to excellent.

Specifics about wellbeing – worried about security issues in recent weeks due to thefts near the campus, accommodation and transportation is high.

Staff response – Richard previously worked with the Security team and Chinese students are most likely to report crime. They feel these students are too trusting. Recalibration of expectations might be required.

Learning resources (library, online platforms)– Most students think these are good to excellent.

Overall rating of the experience – 50% think it's good, 38% think it's excellent, 21% average.

Suggestions:

The main request is for an internship opportunity. They were teachers at home, but are not here and really want to have a chance to experience teaching here. Observation might be acceptable. Want to experience the atmosphere. This was the biggest response from the students.

Staff response – looking into volunteering with ESOL with adults. But it is difficult to bring students into schools due to the checks required. University semester timing doesn't always provide a clear pattern that suits the schools – eg assignments can get in the way of weekly teaching.

“What we want to say to our teachers”

We appreciate that you are hard-working, you must prepare for a long time to teach us

- Juup – surprised. Didn't notice him during Welcome Week, but when we took your class for the first time you were so knowledgeable and passionate. Good job.
- Zeynep – considerate. We know that you want to tell us everything that you know.
- Susan – patient. Every time we ask a question you give a patient answer no matter how hard our question is.
- Richard – strict, considerate, nice. When he talks about academics he wants everything to be perfect and accurate, the most impressive part is his use of stories to make the abstract concepts become specific. Comforts students who get bad feedback.
- Paul – traditional. Very kind and gives a very detailed answer to questions. Gave us a lot of opportunities to think about points from articles.
- Nahielly – tech-savvy. Good with digital things. Helped students understand PhDs.

You have all taught us with heart. Everyone is truly grateful for the teaching and helpful. Feels like a family.

5. Department T&L Committee Feedback/Staff Forum Feedback/UEQs

- External examiner comments – full report not yet received. Feedback in Exam Board was positive. Liked that staff were very specific about areas they did well, areas they could improve, and that the feedback reflected the mark. Could do with more consistency in amount of feedback. Colleagues will try to use step-marking in future. Not everyone follows the marking criteria in their feedback.
- TA requests for second semester due at the end of November.
- New Mitigating Circumstances policy and e-mail from TLSE on 30 October 2025 for links to forms. [Staff feel it is unfair being given 15 working days to mark all work including late work, now that extensions can make up 50% of submissions].
- SEAtS (see document provided with agenda)
- Volunteering opportunity for TESOL students in MIE through ESOL Manchester City Council. This includes MA TESOL and MA International Education (TESOL). A bid is in with Manchester ESOL Council for a Social Responsibility grant. Would involve students attending a conversation club with recipients. Council colleagues also gave a link for a volunteering opportunity which will arrange DBS checks for them.

6. Curriculum Monitoring

Completed as part of student feedback section.

7. Curriculum Developments for year 2026-27

Removal of separate pathways going ahead.

8. Admissions Report

Currently about 50 students who have applied. Much wider diversity than this year. Circa 15 accepted offer already. Not too bad for this time of year.

9. Any other business

Zeynep will be stepping down as PD next year. Will be available to advise successor and provide shadowing opportunities in advance.

Gaza project is proceeding well using Social Responsibility funding. 15 MA TESOL students are communicating with 15 students in Gaza. They've described it as 'joyful' and 'exciting'. Clearly having an impact on both sets of students. Hoping to do again next semester.

10. Date of next meeting

TBC. Any dates/times to avoid etc.?

Summary of Actions List

Action Number	Agenda Item	Action	Lead	Deadline	Status/Notes
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					