REGULATIONS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS
(MA)

(See also General Regulations and Regulations for Taught Postgraduate Curricula)

Any publication based on work approved for a higher degree should contain a reference to the effect that the work was submitted to the University of Hong Kong for the award of the degree.

The degree of Master of Arts (MA) is a postgraduate degree awarded for the satisfactory completion of a prescribed course of study in one of the following fields: Chinese Historical Studies; Chinese Language and Literature; English Studies; Linguistics; and Literary and Cultural Studies. These fields of study will not necessarily be offered every year.

MA 1 Admission requirements

To be eligible for admission to the courses leading to the degree of Master of Arts, candidates

(a) shall comply with the General Regulations;¹
(b) shall comply with the Regulations for Taught Postgraduate Curricula;
(c) shall hold
   (i) a Bachelor’s degree with honours of this University;
   (ii) in respect of the courses of study leading to the degree of Master of Arts in the field of Chinese Language and Literature, a Bachelor’s degree with honours with a major in Chinese or a closely related subject;
   (iii) in respect of the courses of study leading to the degree of Master of Arts in the field of English Studies, a Bachelor’s degree with honours with a major in English or a closely related subject;
   (iv) in respect of the courses of study leading to the degree of Master of Arts in the field of Linguistics, a Bachelor’s degree with honours with a major in Linguistics or a closely related subject; or
   (v) a qualification of equivalent standard from this University or another comparable institution accepted for this purpose; and
(d) shall satisfy the examiners in a qualifying examination if required.

MA 2 Qualifying examination

(a) A qualifying examination may be set to test the candidates’ formal academic ability or their ability to follow the courses of study prescribed. It shall consist of one or more written papers or their equivalent and may include a project report.
(b) Candidates who are required to satisfy the examiners in a qualifying examination shall not be permitted to register until they have satisfied the examiners in the examination.

¹ In addition to the admission requirement specified in General Regulation G 2, the Faculty also requires:

(a) TOEFL: a Test of Written English (TWE) score of 4 or above or a Writing score of 25 or above in the internet-based TOEFL (not applicable to the MA in Chinese Historical Studies and the MA in Chinese Language and Literature); and
(b) IELTS: a minimum overall Band of 7 with no subtest lower than 5.5.
MA 3  
**Award of degree**

To be eligible for the award of the degree of Master of Arts, candidates

(a) shall comply with the General Regulations;
(b) shall comply with the Regulations for Taught Postgraduate Curricula; and
(c) shall complete the curriculum as prescribed in the syllabuses and satisfy the examiners in accordance with the regulations set out below.

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MA 4  
**Period of study**

(a) The curriculum shall normally extend
   (i) in the fields of Chinese Historical Studies and Chinese Language and Literature, over two academic years of part-time study, with a maximum period of registration of four academic years;
   (ii) in the field of English Studies, over two academic years of part-time study, with a maximum period of registration of three academic years;
   (iii) in the field of Linguistics, over one academic year of full-time study, with a maximum period of registration of two academic years; and
   (iv) in the field of Literary and Cultural Studies, over one academic year of full-time study or two academic years of part-time study, with a maximum period of registration of two academic years of full-time study or three academic years of part-time study.

(b) Candidates shall not be permitted to extend their studies beyond the maximum period of registration specified in MA 4(a), unless otherwise permitted or required by the Board of the Faculty.

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MA 5  
**Completion of curriculum**

To complete the curriculum, candidates

(a) shall satisfy the requirements prescribed in TPG 6 of the Regulations for Taught Postgraduate Curricula;
(b) shall follow courses of instruction and complete satisfactorily all prescribed written work;
(c) shall complete and present a satisfactory capstone experience on a subject within their fields of study;
(d) shall satisfy the examiners in all prescribed courses and in any prescribed form of assessment as prescribed in the syllabuses; and
(e) shall satisfy the examiners in an oral examination if required.

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MA 6  
**Capstone experience**

Subject to the provisions of Regulation MA 5(c), the title of the capstone experience (dissertation, portfolio or individual project) shall be submitted for approval by a date as prescribed in the syllabuses for each field of study. Similarly, the capstone experience shall be presented by a date as prescribed in the syllabuses for each field of study. Candidates shall submit a statement that the capstone experience represents their own work (or in the case of conjoint work, a statement countersigned by their co-worker(s), which shows their share of the work) undertaken after registration as candidates for the degree.
MA 7 Assessment

(a) The assessment for each course shall be as specified in the syllabuses. Only passed courses will earn credits. Grades in all fields of study shall be awarded in accordance with TPG 9(a) of the Regulations for Taught Postgraduate Curricula.

(b) Candidates who have failed to satisfy the examiners on the first attempt in not more than two courses, excluding the capstone experience, in an academic year may be permitted to
(i) present themselves for re-examination in the failed course(s) on a specified date or
re-submit their work for the failed course(s) for re-assessment within a specified period determined by the MA Board of Examiners, but no later than the end of the following semester (not including the summer semester); or
(ii) repeat the failed course(s) by undergoing instruction and satisfying the assessment requirements; or
(iii) for elective courses, take another course in lieu and satisfy the assessment requirements.

(c) Subject to the provisions of Regulation MA 5(c), candidates who have failed to present a satisfactory capstone experience may be permitted to revise and re-present the capstone experience within a specified period determined by the MA Board of Examiners.

(d) Candidates who have failed to satisfy the examiners in the final review in the field of English Studies may be permitted to present themselves for re-examination on a specified date determined by the MA Board of Examiners, but no later than the end of the following semester (not including the summer semester).

(e) There shall be no appeal against the results of examinations and all other forms of assessment.

MA 8 Discontinuation

Candidates who

(a) are not permitted to present themselves for re-examination/re-submission in any written examination or coursework assessment in which they have failed to satisfy the examiners or to repeat the failed course(s); or

(b) are not permitted to revise and re-present the capstone experience; or

(c) have failed to satisfy the examiners on second attempt in any coursework assessment, examination, or the capstone experience; or

(d) have failed more than two courses, excluding the capstone experience, on the first attempt in an academic year; or

(e) have exceeded the maximum period of registration as specified in MA 4

may be required to discontinue their studies under the provisions of General Regulation G 12.

MA 9 Assessment results

On successful completion of the curriculum, candidates who have shown exceptional merit may be awarded a mark of distinction, and this mark shall be recorded in the candidates’ degree diploma.

MA 10 Supplementary examination

Candidates who are unable because of illness to be present at the written examination of any course may apply for permission to present themselves for a supplementary examination of the same course. Any such application shall be made on the form prescribed within two weeks of the first day of
absence from any examination. The supplementary examination shall be held at a time to be
determined by the MA Board of Examiners. Candidates who fail to satisfy the examiners in the
supplementary examination shall be considered as failure on the first attempt.

SYLLABUSES FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS

ENGLISH STUDIES

The MA in English Studies has a cross-cultural focus and this unique curriculum is designed to take
advantage of Hong Kong’s historical, geographical and political position. Each course considers
different aspects of theories, languages and literatures of cross-cultural exchange especially with
respect to East-West and post-colonial situations.

The main objective of this challenging curriculum in English Studies is to interrogate, challenge and
develop theories of language and literature as critical insight into the contemporary world, and to give
expression to this understanding in essays and a dissertation. To this end, each course involves an
appreciation of relevant theories and armed with these, encourages critical responses to cultural
practice in its various representational and linguistic forms, which may include fiction, poetry, film,
advertising and travel writing. This involves not only an understanding of how English might be used
in different linguistic communities, but also an understanding of important contemporary debates
concerning politics, language and culture.

The MA in English Studies consists of six courses, a final review and a capstone experience in the
form of dissertation. Candidates will take two parallel courses per semester (12 weeks) over the first
three semesters, prepare examination essays for the final review after completion of the third semester
and complete a dissertation with the support of a supervisor in the fourth semester. Regular meetings
with the supervisor to assess progress on the dissertation are required in the fourth semester. In the
first three semesters, classes will be held twice weekly, normally for two hours. Each session may
consist of a lecture, workshop, students’ presentations, or other form of in-class learning. Student
participation in all courses is required.

Course offered on the MAES will include six from the following list:

ENGL6056. Cultural semiotics (6 credits)

This course will examine culture as a complex web of signifying systems and practices. It will look
at different concepts of culture and consider their accessibility to semiotic theory and analysis. After
an introduction to semiotic terminology, most of the time will be given to the investigation of different
spheres of cultural activity, analysing the meanings of images, bodies, objects, spaces, sounds, etc.,
and the configurations and practices that underpin them. The interdisciplinary nature of cultural
semiotics, its relevance to society and its limitations will also be addressed. The course will focus
mostly on aspects of contemporary urban culture as it exists in places like Hong Kong, but attention
will also be given to cross-cultural comparisons and intercultural relations.
Assessment: 100% coursework

ENGL6073. Introduction to cross-cultural theory (6 credits)

The theme of cross-cultural study is implicit in all the courses in the MA in English Studies. This
foundation course prepares students by introducing them to the work of critics who have tried to
formalize cross-cultural relations through particular historical, ethnographic, literary and linguistic studies of cultural interaction. This might include work by Benedict Anderson, Homi Bhabha, Frantz Fanon, Mary Louise Pratt, Edward Said, and others. Assessment: 100% coursework

ENGL6075. The politics of English (6 credits)

This course examines the contemporary politics of English, looking at debates over local and regional cultural identities, English as the language of modernity and social mobility, English as a "killer language" within linguistic imperialism, cross-cultural discourse and globalization. The historical roots of the rise of English will be traced, and its current world-wide profile analyzed, with special reference to the sharply divergent attitudes found in socio-political debate. Special reference will be made to English in Hong Kong. Assessment: 100% coursework

ENGL6079. World Modernism (6 credits)

This course will pursue the idea of a ‘world modernism’, by looking at selected works of short fiction and poetry from around the world, between (roughly) 1900 and 1940, written in English or translated into English. How differently do these works respond to modernity, and how do they relate to each other – by influence, and shared or contrasted preoccupations or procedures – in the network of ‘world modernism’? Assessment: 100% coursework

ENGL6080. Travel writing and culture (6 credits)

Cross-cultural or intercultural issues are necessarily central to most travel writing. This course explores such issues in a wide range of travel narratives by writers from the medieval period to the present day. The approach is more thematic than historical and themes covered will include travel and imperialism, East-West meetings, mapping self and nation, mobilization of knowledge, postcolonial journeys and travels in globality. Assessment: 100% coursework

ENGL6081. Global fictions (6 credits)

This course will consider global fiction as contemporary stories from around the world, as in ‘world literatures’, and stories about the world, or ‘worlds’, as self-conscious and ironic constructions of reality, often multiple and conflicting. As well as examining novels, plays, poetry and cinema from contemporary ‘ex-centric’ writers, the course will also study Western fictions (sometimes called metafictions) that seek to disturb and shock by leading the reader from one kind of reality or ‘world’ to another. Assessment: 100% coursework

ENGL6083. Post-Colonial representations (6 credits)

This course will examine a fundamental issue in post-colonial studies: Representation. This issue will be examined through its various forms, including Gender, Race, Culture, from the perspective of critical, fictional and visual texts. Assessment: 100% coursework
ENGL7101. Language and Communication: Theories, approaches and applications (6 credits)

This course is designed to introduce students to core research areas within the field of language and communication, with a focus on theories, approaches and applications drawn from sociolinguistics. With a strong emphasis on contemporary issues of globalisation and on English in multilingual contexts (in and outside of Asia), the course encourages students to critically reflect upon how issues of language spread, use and ideologies are related to power. Key themes addressed in the course include: colonialism and post-colonialism, ideology, identity, market and capital, scales, globalisation and transnationalism, multilingualism, language policy, varieties of English, World Englishes and global Englishes. To facilitate introduction to these themes, the course will present students with a series of theories and approaches, as well as empirical examples drawn from the literature. So as to also train students with respect to conducting ethically sound and ethnographically grounded sociolinguistic research, two sessions will be devoted to research methodologies. Based on these insights, students will regularly be encouraged to bring along their own examples of linguistic data, to discuss and interpret in class.
Assessment: 100% coursework

ENGL6999. Final Review (6 credits)

In addition to passing all courses, candidates are also required to pass a take-home final examination after completion of the third semester. The written examination requires students to synthesise and reflect on their learning experiences on the six compulsory courses by preparing an examination essay. They are also required to write an examination essay regarding the dissertation in which they are asked to formulate their ideas, scope their research, identify primary works and define their methodology.
Assessment: 100% coursework

ENGL7999. Capstone Experience: Dissertation (18 credits)

Each student will present a dissertation as part of the fulfilment of the requirements for the MA degree. The dissertation title must be submitted for approval by February 15th of the second academic year and the dissertation must be submitted by July 30. The dissertation should be 10,000 to 15,000 words in length and should be produced under the direction of a member of staff, who will assist in the formulation of the topic, planning and reviewing drafts.
Assessment: 100% coursework.

Assessment

Each course is examined through coursework assessment based on class participation and written assignments.