

**PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION
(Taught Postgraduate)**



1	Awarding Institution	Newcastle University
2	Teaching Institution	Newcastle University
3	Final Award	MA
4	Programme Title	TESOL
5	Programme Code	4205F/P
6	Programme Accreditation	N/A
7	QAA Subject Benchmark(s)	N/A
8	FHEQ Level	Level 7
9	Last updated	May 2026

10 Programme Aims

The programme is informed by leading-edge research in the area of Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL). The programme offers professional development opportunities for language teachers as well as students who would like to work as language teachers. It draws on the expertise of staff who have extensive experience of working with students and practitioners from/in different cultural backgrounds/contexts.

The programme aims:

1. To develop students' understanding and application of theories and concepts in TESOL.
2. To support students to critically engage with theories, concepts, and practice in TESOL.
3. To enable students to reflect upon the practical implications for their own teaching and learning context.
4. To facilitate students' understanding and application of professional skills to relevant teaching and learning contexts.
5. To enable students to undertake an independent and systematic research or scholarship investigation on a particular area within TESOL.
6. To support students to communicate their knowledge of TESOL-related areas using written, spoken and visual methods.
7. To enhance students' independent learning and transferable skills required for continuing professional development or lifelong learning.
8. To provide a programme which meets the requirements of a level 7 award in the Framework for Higher Education Qualification.
9. To comply with prevailing University policies and QAA codes of practice.

11 Learning Outcomes

Intended learning outcomes for the Degree Programme conform to those defined by the FHEQ as being at Level 7. The programme provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding, and key skills in the following areas.

Knowledge and Understanding
<p>On completing the programme students should have:</p> <p>A1 An in-depth knowledge and understanding of theories, principles, concepts and methodologies in TESOL.</p> <p>A2 A critical awareness of key issues or debates concerning teaching and learning English as a second/foreign language.</p> <p>A3 An in-depth knowledge and understanding of the developments in research and scholarship in at least one area related to TESOL, such as second language acquisition, classroom interaction, teaching young learners, technology-enhanced learning, teaching English as an international language, and teacher development.</p> <p>A4 An in-depth knowledge of research and teaching methodologies applicable to research and scholarship in TESOL.</p>
Teaching and Learning Methods
<p>A1-A4 are primarily achieved through in-person lectures, seminars, workshops and both synchronous and asynchronous online activities. Lectures are the primary means for sharing knowledge and understanding with the students, while seminars and workshops allow students to make connections between theories and practice. Online activities give students the opportunity to consolidate and deepen their learning through individual and peer tasks. Throughout the course, students are set tasks that encourage independent and critical reading. Support for these skills is carefully embedded into the curriculum, with input from the Library Liaison/Academic Skills Team and the INTO Newcastle University In-Sessional team. Students' knowledge and understanding will be further developed through presentations and an independent research or scholarship project under the supervision of academic staff.</p>
Assessment Strategy
<p>A1-A4 are assessed primarily through individual and group assignments including written assignments, presentations, practical tasks, and the production of a research or scholarship project.</p> <p>The variety of assessment tasks encourage students to engage critically with research and scholarship literature and to reflect on their own experiences and potential applications in different educational contexts. The production of a research or scholarship project facilitates a deep understanding with selected theories, concepts and methodologies.</p>
Intellectual Skills
<p>On completing the programme students should be able to:</p> <p>B1 Carry out intellectual enquiry in the area of TESOL.</p> <p>B2 Critically analyse theories, principles, methodologies and research findings in the field of TESOL.</p> <p>B3 Synthesise information from a number of primary and secondary sources to formulate arguments, make sound judgements or propose new hypotheses.</p> <p>B4 Interpret, analyse, evaluate teaching/learning materials, language use or language production in the light of relevant theories, frameworks and cultural contexts.</p>
Teaching and Learning Methods
<p>B1-B4 will be developed through input in lectures, in-class and online activities, individual and group work, guided learning tasks, small group teaching, practical workshops, and research and scholarship projects.</p>

Assessment Strategy
Intellectual skills are assessed through both formative and summative assessments. They take the form of written and spoken tasks and a research or scholarship project. Constructive feedback is given to support students' development across each semester. The assessments enable students to develop critical engagement with the research and scholarship literature and demonstrate their intellectual skills.
Practical Skills
On completing the programme students should be able to: C1 Apply TESOL theories teaching and learning in a practical situation. C2 Design language teaching and learning materials appropriate to targeted groups or related issues. C3 Plan, design, conduct an ethically sound independent research or scholarship project in the area of TESOL. C4 Develop academic discourse at an advanced level.
Teaching and Learning Methods
Practical skills of C1-C2 are developed through a combination of lectures, in-class and online activities, individual and group work, guided learning tasks, small group teaching, practical workshops, and research and scholarship projects. Students are encouraged to apply theories and practical skills to design and interpret teaching materials, and to analyse language use for teaching or communication purposes. Students will be given support and guidance during lectures, seminars and practical workshops. C3 will mainly be taught through the TESOL Research Portfolio module and workshops. Students are required to undertake research or scholarship projects as part of this module, in which they are to apply research skills they have been taught on the course. Individual tutorials on writing research proposals, research design, data collection and analysis will be provided by academic advisers. Students are supported to develop academic discourse during the course through classroom and online activities, critical reading tasks, workshops and feedback on assessments. Additional support for these skills is provided by the Library Liaison/Academic Skills Team and the INTO Newcastle University In-Sessional team.
Assessment Strategy
Practical skills C1 and C2 are assessed by means of module assignments, including written work, oral presentations and small group teaching. Practical skill C3 is assessed through the TESOL Research Portfolio. Practical skill C4 is assessed through formative feedback and summative assessments.
Transferable/Key Skills
On completing the programme students should be able to: D1 Present complex ideas clearly using written, spoken and visual methods. D2 Communicate and collaborate effectively with others. D3 Manage time, prioritise tasks and meet deadlines. D4 Take initiatives and set goals for their own learning and personal and professional development. D5 Adapt to changes. D6 Use electronic databases, Virtual Learning Environments and online communication

platforms.
Teaching and Learning Methods
D2-D6 are introduced to students in the induction programme, highlighting their importance for the success of the coming year. Library sessions will be provided on how to search and use the electronic databases and the Virtual Learning Environment (D6). Subject specific sessions and workshops are organised to develop students' academic writing skills, and oral communication skills are developed through seminars, presentations, and group work (D1). Whenever possible, students are encouraged to work in teams through small group activities or presentations (D2). Students will be provided with information of module submission dates and an overview of course to help them set objectives, determine priorities, schedule their workload and meet deadlines (D3). Alumni are invited to share their experiences and insights to adapting to a new teaching and learning environment (D4, D5).
Assessment Strategy
Transferable skills D1, D3, D4 and D6 are directly assessed through or reflected in their written work or oral presentations, while D2 and D5 are assessed indirectly through presentations or small group teaching.

12 Programme Curriculum, Structure and Features
Basic structure of the programme
<p>The period of the study for the programme is normally 12-month full time. The programme consists of 120 credits of optional taught modules and a 60-credit TESOL Research Portfolio. The TESOL Research Portfolio is made up of three, inter-related assignments, produced throughout the year, and culminating in an empirical research project conducted over the summer.</p> <p>Students may substitute one of the TESOL optional modules to a maximum of 20 credits with modules from other Subject Areas, subject to the approval by the Degree Programme Director (typically these will be modules in Cross Cultural Communication, Education and Linguistics).</p> <p>Students who successfully complete all the taught elements of the programme but do not wish to proceed to the research project will be awarded a Postgraduate Diploma, under the University's Examination Conventions for Taught Master's Programmes.</p>
Key features of the programme (including what makes the programme distinctive)
<p>MA TESOL is a one-year taught degree designed for candidates who wish to improve their knowledge, skills and professional performance in TESOL. It offers a wide range of modules and flexibility for students to pursue advanced study in this discipline and/or broaden their career opportunities. Students will develop in-depth knowledge and understanding of leading-edge teaching and learning theories, methodologies, and research and scholarship skills in TESOL. These include areas such as second language acquisition, classroom interaction, teaching young learners, technology-enhanced learning, teaching English as an international language, and teacher development. Students will also develop academic and professional skills to engage effectively with the TESOL-related field using written, spoken and visual methods.</p> <p>A distinctive feature of the programme is that it provides progressive support and offers students the option to conduct a dissertation (research project) or a professional (scholarship) project. The dissertation focuses on original academic research and theoretical inquiry, while the professional project emphasises the practical application of scholarship to real-world TESOL contexts. In the field of TESOL, scholarship encompasses both traditional academic research and applied, critical inquiry that informs and enhances professional practice. Providing these options allows students to align their work with their career goals and academic interests, fostering both research excellence and professional development.</p> <p>This programme is relevant for candidates with teaching experience (in-service) and those without teaching experience (pre-service), or lecturers at higher education</p>

institutions.

Programme regulations (link to on-line version)

[Programme Regulations 26-27](#)

13 Support for Student Learning

Generic information regarding University provision is available at the following link.

[Generic Information](#)

14 Methods for evaluating and improving the quality and standards of teaching and learning

Generic information regarding University provision is available at the following link.

[Generic Information](#)

Accreditation reports
n/a

Additional mechanisms
n/a

15 Assessment regulations

Generic information regarding University provision is available at the following link.

[Generic Information](#)

In addition, information relating to the programme is provided in:

The University Prospectus: [Find a Degree | Postgraduate | Newcastle University](#)

Degree Programme and University Regulations: <https://www.ncl.ac.uk/regulations/>

Please note. This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and of the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve if she/he takes full advantage of the learning opportunities provided.