

**The University of Edinburgh**

**The Moray House School of Education**

**Board of Studies**

**[Date of meeting]**

**Language and the Learner: EDUA11248**

Brief description of the paper

*This paper proposes an amendment of the course assessment. (Course content would remain unchanged.)*

Rationale for Course Amendment

*This course covers a considerable range of topics and areas of interest within the broader fields of first and second language learning. Specifically, the course aims to provide a sound working knowledge of some of the major theories and practices which underpin language learning, and which knowledge will also, in turn, provide some basis for selecting, understanding, and benefiting optimally from the more specialist optional courses. It is hoped, also, that Language and the Learner will help provide a sound grounding for the further research and exploration involved in the dissertation process.*

*The teaching team hopes to address two issues with this amendment:*

*i) it is becoming increasingly the case that students attempt to “short-cut” the course by focussing exclusively on three topics. This puts students at considerable disadvantage in terms of their overall knowledge base, hence their capacity for benefiting optimally from the more specialist courses, and for embarking on their dissertation with optimal grounding in base-line theory*

*ii) more and more of our students (particularly our international students) do not have teaching experience. It is becoming increasingly obvious that section 2 of the assignment (as detailed below) is not providing a level playing-field for all our students, and that students with teaching experience have much more to draw on than those with no teaching experience. This raises questions of reliability and validity of comparisons and whether or not goalposts should be set differently for teachers and not-yet teachers. (We think not.) This year the issue was further complicated by our having two students, both native English speakers, who had not yet taught English and who had not previously learned a foreign language.*

*The teaching team proposes that:*

*a) a paper taken under test conditions, requiring answers from different sections (but with choices within each section), would help us to ensure that students did not short-cut the course. This would, we hope, encourage a more even coverage on the part of our students of the underlying theories underpinning many of our other courses (40%)*

SPGSC PAPER G 220415

*b) a second, take-home, paper would allow the individual student more room to reflect critically on an area, or areas, of particular interest (60%) and to demonstrate a more in-depth knowledge of the research literature and current debates within a particular field of interest.*

Action requested

*For approval.*

Resource implications

Does the paper have resource implications? No

If 'Yes', in which section(s) of the paper are they described?

Risk assessment

Does the paper include a risk analysis? No

If 'Yes', in which section(s) of the paper is it set out?

Equality and diversity

Have due considerations been given to the equality impact of this paper? Yes

Freedom of information

Can this paper be included in open business? Yes

Any other relevant information

Originator of the paper

*Aileen Irvine, Course Director for Language and the Learner*

**MHSE Board of Studies Course Amendment Information**

Course Name and Code: Language and the Learner: EDUA11248

SCQF credit level : 11 SCQF credit rating: 20

Programme: MSc Language Teaching/MSc TESOL/Msc Education: Language

Amended Course Name (if appropriate):

	PRE AMENDMENT	POST AMENDMENT
Learning Outcomes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. evaluate critically a range of current theories of first and second language acquisition and learning</li> <li>2. demonstrate an understanding of how these might influence first and second language teaching</li> <li>3. evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of a variety of language classroom teaching practices in the light of such theories</li> <li>4. investigate and evaluate multicultural literacies and linguistic practices</li> <li>5. demonstrate critical awareness of strategies which enhance language learning in a range of learning environments</li> </ol>	NO CHANGE
Elements of Summative Assessment (with % weightings)	<p>The assignment (100%) requires the students to produce a 4,000-word discussion which is made up of two sections</p> <p>Section (i) requires the students to highlight at least three theories, related to language acquisition and learning and/or language</p>	<p>A test covering knowledge and understanding of concepts across the course (40%)</p> <p>A written paper covering a more in-depth investigation of the literature and debates within a chosen area of interest (60%)</p>

	<p>teaching, covered in the Language and the Learner course, which have influenced, challenged, impacted the student as either a learner or a teacher, or both. It is expected that the student will provide a critical analysis of the theories.</p> <p>Section (ii) requires the student to apply the theories critically evaluated in (i) to their own context as either a teacher and/or a learner. In this section, the student will discuss how the theories played out in their teaching or learning context and/or draw on experiences which they think are related to the theories under exploration.</p>	
Formative Assessment Event		
Relationship between learning Outcomes and Assessment Instrument(s)		Test questions and written assignment choices would, each year, ensure coverage of the course learning outcomes.
Assignment Success Criteria (if app)	<p>Students are graded (and given feedback) according to performance on:</p> <p>Knowledge and understanding of concepts            Knowledge and use of the literature            Critical reflection on theory and practice            Application of theory to practice            Constructing academic discourse</p>	<p>Knowledge and understanding of concepts            Knowledge and use of the literature            Critical reflection on theory and practice            Constructing academic discourse</p>
Pass requirements (compensation/ aggreg)	40% is the current "pass" grade.	Weighted aggregate (40% and 60%) would give an overall percentage for the course.

Graduate Attributes		<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1.</li><li>2.</li><li>3.</li><li>4.</li></ol>
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