

# HONOURS IN LINGUISTICS AND ENGLISH LANGUAGE: HANDBOOK

## 1 Introduction

This brief handbook is for students taking Honours courses in Linguistics and English Language (LEL) at the University of Edinburgh in the 2020-21 academic year. It doesn't matter whether you are a home student who will graduate from the University of Edinburgh or a visiting student who is here for one semester or one year, whether you are in your third or fourth year of study, or whether you are doing a single Honours degree in our department, or a combined degree with another subject: at least some of the information in this handbook is relevant for anyone taking an Honours course with us.

Please read the information carefully, and get in contact if you have any additional questions. We appreciate that the public health situation that we are all living through means your learning will be different this year, compared to previous years. But we're looking forward to our classes with you, and hope you find your studies challenging and rewarding.

Given the fact that the public health situation is evolving, we may update this handbook throughout the coming academic year. Please ensure that you regularly revisit the website from which you viewed or downloaded this document: the version available there will always be the most up-to-date (<https://www.ed.ac.uk/ppls/linguistics-and-english-language/current/undergraduate/handbooks>).

### 1.1 Other sources of information and support

The material in this handbook deals primarily with issues relating to specifics of the Honours programme in LEL. Another source of information which you should also familiarise yourself with is the PPLS student handbook, which deals with topics such as degree transfers, requests for extensions, the common marking scheme, and expectations regarding attendance.

You should also feel free to contact the Director of Teaching (see contact information below) with any questions about teaching in the Honours years.

For more general issues concerning your studies, don't forget that you can speak to your personal tutor, or one of our student support officers (SSOs). The student support office can be found on the ground floor of the Dugald Stewart Building, or you can contact them by email: [ppls.sso@ed.ac.uk](mailto:ppls.sso@ed.ac.uk).

### 1.2 Contacts

For any questions regarding the Honours programme, please contact one of the following:

Chloe Anderson, Teaching Administrator  
PPLS UG Teaching Office, Ground Floor, DSB  
[lelinfo@ed.ac.uk](mailto:lelinfo@ed.ac.uk)

Graeme Trousdale, LEL Director of Teaching  
[graeme.trousdale@ed.ac.uk](mailto:graeme.trousdale@ed.ac.uk)

## 2 Degree programmes and course credits

Within the Department of Linguistics and English Language there are a number of Honours degree programmes: for example, Single Honours degrees in Linguistics, English Language, and Linguistics and English Language. In addition, we have a number of Combined Honours degrees involving Linguistics or English Language and another subject. Such degrees are always 'run' or 'owned' by the first-named subject area; e.g. 'Honours in French and Linguistics' is run by French (within a different school of the university, in this case Literatures, Languages and Cultures). Our Honours courses can also be taken by students visiting the university, if they have appropriate previous learning.

For those of you entering year 4 in 2020-21: please note you have a free choice of courses this year. In the past, there was a requirement that you take certain courses from particular core and option groups. This requirement has been suspended for your fourth and final year.

For those of you entering year 3 in 2020-21: like the 4<sup>th</sup> years, you have a free choice of courses this year. We will advise you later in the course of this academic year what the curriculum for your final year will be (which may or may not require you to take courses from particular core and option groups).

We do not distinguish between third and fourth year courses: any course can, in principle, be taken by third and fourth year students alike.

Visiting students should discuss their course choices with their personal tutor (to ensure that what they select is consistent with what they have previously studied at their home university, for example). Further information is provided below.

All courses are weighted at 20 credits. Students take 120 credits in any one academic year (in fourth year, 40 of these 120 credits are taken up by your dissertation). The number of courses you take and their permitted combinations depends in part on the degree you are taking, and whether you are spending or have spent your third year abroad.

The information below is grouped into the following sections:

- SINGLE HONOURS DEGREES, for students taking a degree that involves only Linguistics and English Language courses
- COMBINED HONOURS DEGREES, for home students taking a degree that combines LEL with another subject. This section therefore includes information for students who would normally spend their third year abroad as part of their degree (e.g. French and English Language, or Chinese and Linguistics, students).
- STUDENTS ON OPTIONAL ERASMUS OR INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGES ABROAD, for home students who are (a) in year 3 and hoping to spend time abroad in semester two or (b) in year 4 and who have already been abroad
- VISITING STUDENTS, for students who will graduate from another university but are spending a semester or a year studying at Edinburgh

### ***§2.1 Single Honours degrees*** (i.e. MA in Linguistics, English Language and Linguistics & English Language)

Over the two Honours years, you take ten courses (six in year 3 and four in year 4) and write a Dissertation in year 4. You are free to take any courses this year (including up to two Guided Research seminars).

### ***§2.2 Combined Honours degrees***

#### §2.2.1 Students on a combined Honours Language + LEL degree

#### **Year 3 students on these degrees**

Most students on a Language + LEL degree need to collect 40 Edinburgh credits' worth of Honours courses for the LEL side of their degree during Year 3. Given that we in LEL will be offering a set of hybrid-digital Honours courses (each worth 20 credits, and described below) which will be available to you next year, you will be asked to take these courses, at least during semester 1. (In principle, you should be able to take these courses at home, in Edinburgh, or in a country that speaks the language that you are studying.) At the time of writing, the university is allowing travel abroad during semester 1, and it is hoped that all students on these degrees will also be able to go abroad during semester 2. If you go abroad to study this year, and appropriate courses are available, you may be able to take courses at the university that you visit for credit. Different degrees have slightly different regulations, so we set out some details here. If these regulations are unclear, check with the LEL International Convenor (Patrick Honeybone) and the LEL Director of Teaching (Graeme Trousdale).

#### JAPANESE and LINGUISTICS / CHINESE and LINGUISTICS

- You will be registered for the 'Third-Year Project in Language Sciences' (LASC10059), but this will actually be made up of two 20-credit Honours courses of your choice.
- You should choose two LEL Honours courses, one for each semester, and follow them in the same way as all students on the courses, even if you are abroad.
- The mark for the 'Third-Year Project' will be the average that you obtain from these two courses.

#### MODERN EUROPEAN LANGUAGES and LINGUISTICS or ENGLISH LANGUAGE

- You will have two options:
  - (i) collect 40 credits-worth of work from taught courses
  - (ii) collect 20 credits-worth of work from taught courses and register for the 'Dissertation Preparation Abroad' course – this will allow you to write a dissertation for LEL during Year 4 of your degree and thus angle your degree slightly more towards LEL and slightly less towards the language that you are studying
- If you take option (i), you will be registered for 'Year Abroad Work for Degrees in Modern European Languages and Linguistics or English Language' (LASC10073), but this will actually be made up of two 20-credit Honours courses (or, possibly, some courses from a university that you visit abroad). LASC10073 will serve to record the marks that you obtain during the year.

- You should choose two LEL Honours courses, one for each semester; if you are able to go abroad to study, and appropriate LEL-related courses are available, you may be able to drop these LEL courses and take courses at the university that you visit instead.
- The mark for the 'Year Abroad Work' will be calculated as an average over the work that you do during the year. We will calculate your mark based on (a) the work you submit for Edinburgh courses, or (b) the work you submit at the university abroad, or (c) a combination of (a) and (b).
- If you take option (ii), you will be registered for 'Year Abroad Work for Degrees in Modern European Languages and Linguistics or English Language with dissertation' (LASC10099); this will normally be made up of one 20-credit Honours course. LASC10099 will serve to record the marks that you obtain during the year.
- You are strongly encouraged to choose one LEL Honours course during semester 1, which by default would provide the mark for the 'Year Abroad Work'.
- If you are able to go abroad to study, and appropriate courses are available, we advise you to take LEL-related courses at the university that you visit as well; you may be able to use marks obtained in this way towards the mark for the 'Year Abroad Work'. You may also choose a semester 2 LEL Honours course if you wish (assuming you do not take such a course in semester 1).

#### **Year 4 students on these degrees**

##### JAPANESE and LINGUISTICS

You should choose between 3 and 5 LEL Honours courses, to provide between 60 and 100 credits' worth of LEL courses; these may be taken in either semester.

##### CHINESE and LINGUISTICS

You should choose 3 LEL Honours courses, to provide 60 credits' worth of LEL courses; these may be taken in either semester.

##### MODERN EUROPEAN LANGUAGES and LINGUISTICS or ENGLISH LANGUAGE

You should choose 3 LEL Honours courses, to provide 60 credits' worth of LEL courses; these may be taken in either semester; those students who took 'Dissertation Preparation Abroad' during Year 3, should also take 'Dissertation Completion following Study Abroad' and write a dissertation with LEL during Year 4.

NB If you are studying Japanese, Chinese or Russian Studies and Linguistics, or Russian Studies and English Language, it is not possible to write a dissertation for LEL.

#### §2.2.2 Other Combined Honours degrees involving Linguistics or English Language

These degrees typically require that you take between 40 and 80 credits of LEL courses in year 3 and 40 credits of LEL courses in year 4. You are free to take any LEL courses this year (including up to two Guided Research seminars). The Dissertation is also written in year 4. Consult the relevant online regulations and your Personal Tutor for further details.

### *§2.3 Students on **optional Erasmus or International exchanges abroad***

#### **Year 3 students intending to spend semester 2 abroad**

During semester 1, you should take the appropriate number of LEL Honours courses (for example, 3 if you are a Single Honours LEL student). If you are able to go abroad during semester 2, you should take the equivalent of 60 Edinburgh-credits in suitable courses at the university that you visit (as agreed on a Learning Agreement with the LEL International Coordinator). If you are able to go abroad during semester 2, your degree will be classified on the basis of 180 credits (60 from semester 1 of Year 3 and 120 from Year 4).

#### **Year 4 students returning from an optional Erasmus or International exchange**

If you are studying a Single Honours LEL degree, you should choose 4 LEL Honours courses and the 'Dissertation in Language Sciences'. If you are studying a Combined Honours degree, combining Linguistics or English Language with another subject, you should choose 2 LEL Honours courses and you may choose to take the 'Dissertation in Language Sciences'. Given that there are no 'required' or 'core' courses this year, you can choose freely from the courses available, but you must make sure not to choose a course which repeats material that you studied while abroad. If you are uncertain about this, check with LEL International Convenor (Patrick Honeybone) and the LEL Honours Convenor (Graeme Trousdale).

### *§2.4 Visiting students*

Visiting students should discuss course choice with your Personal Tutor and with your home university, and possibly with the Visiting Student Office, too. In principle, all LEL Honours courses are available to visiting students, but you should make sure that you have suitable background knowledge for each course that you take, and you must ensure that your home university is happy with your course choices. Make sure that you know what is expected of you for each course - expectations may be different to what you know from home. Make sure especially that you understand about what is expected in terms of assessed work (and how it needs to be submitted). If you don't know any of these things about a particular course, it is often best to ask the course organiser or course secretary. Visiting students are treated exactly like Edinburgh students on LEL Honours course and must submit the same pieces of assessment in the same way as Edinburgh students.

### 3 Courses available in 2020-21

The table below lists the courses offered at Honours level in Linguistics and English Language in the 2020-21 academic year.

The name in brackets after each course is the name of the course organiser. Typically this is the person who you should contact first if you have specific questions regarding teaching and learning issues associated with that course, including the type of assessment. The exception here is the Guided Research in LEL courses. Here, the first person you should contact is the seminar leader for GR seminar to which you have been assigned, though you are also welcome to contact the course organiser too.

Semester One courses	Semester Two courses
Dialects of English in Britain and Ireland (Maguire) First Language Acquisition (Ota) Guided Research in Linguistics and English Language A (Trousdale) Phonetics and Laboratory Phonology (Remijnsen) Phonological Theory (Honeybone) Pragmatics (Rohde)	Discourse Analysis (Zhao) Guided Research in Linguistics and English Language B (Trousdale) Historical Linguistics (Joseph) Language Variation and Change (Ramsammy) Simulating Language (Kirby) Statistics and Experimental Design (Cummins) Syntax: Theory and Practice (Truswell)

It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that the correct number of Linguistics and/or English Language courses is taken in each of the Honours years and that the prerequisites for any course chosen are met. You should seek your Personal Tutor's or the Director of Teaching's advice if you are not sure.

Students expecting to choose an experimental or survey-based topic for their Dissertation are strongly advised to take Statistics and Experimental Design.

## **Dissertation in Language Sciences**

All Single Honours students (as well as some students on Combined Honours degrees), write a 40-credit Dissertation of 7,000 - 10,000 words within Linguistics and English Language in their fourth year.

Possible dissertation topics and allocation of supervisors, etc. are discussed in a meeting towards the end of your third year. You should contact prospective supervisors over the summer and at the latest by the end of Welcome Week in September; your topic and supervisor must be finalised by 1<sup>st</sup> October 2020. Throughout the year, your individual supervision sessions will be complemented by a series of activities on research methods and other skills to help you while you do the research and writing for your dissertation.

For your dissertation research, you are expected to follow the LEL ethics guidelines. The process you must follow will be explained to you in the research methods component of the dissertation course. Every dissertation project involving human subjects, or the use of any other pre-existing data which has ethical implications, must be submitted along with evidence of ethical approval. If neither of these applies to your project you do not need to seek ethical approval.

### ***Key dates for 2020-21 dissertations***

1 Oct 2020	Deadline to confirm dissertation topic and supervisor.
20 Nov 2020	Deadline for Ethics submission.
8 Dec 2020	Deadline for submission of experimental design or plan of dissertation through LEARN.
18 Jan 2021	Deadline for second submission, either a draft of your literature review or another piece of writing as agreed with your supervisor.
31 Mar 2021	Dissertations are submitted electronically on LEARN by 12 noon.
Apr 2021	The Dissertation Conference 2021. All day event. Precise date to be confirmed.

## Assessment information for Honours courses

Course names below link to full course information on DRPS (Degree Regulations and Programmes of Study, a central University website). All deadlines for assessment are at 12pm (midday/noon) UK time. We reserve the right to alter deadlines if necessary.

Because some of the decisions regarding semester 2 teaching will not be made by the central university management until October 2020, we have not yet provided the dates of the deadlines for semester 2 coursework. We will update this information later in the academic year.

### Semester 1 courses

### Course organiser

#### [Dialects of English in Britain and Ireland \(LASC10085\)](#)

Assignment 1 (40%) due Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> November 2020  
Assignment 2 (60%) due Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> December 2020

[Dr Warren Maguire](#)

#### [First Language Acquisition \(LASC10029\)](#)

Assignment 1 (50%) due Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> November 2020  
Assignment 2 (50%) due Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> December 2020

[Professor Mits Ota](#)

#### [Guided Research in Linguistics and English Language A \(LASC10111\)](#)

Annotated bibliography or short practical assignment of 1500 words (30%) due Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> November 2020  
Essay or Assignment of 2500 words (70%) due Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> December 2020

[Professor Graeme  
Trousdale](#)

#### [Phonetics and Laboratory Phonology \(LASC10090\)](#)

Weekly reading reports (5%) due Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> September, Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> October, Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> October, Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> October, Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> November and Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> November 2020  
Lab reports (30%) due Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> October, Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> October and Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> November 2020  
Project (65%) due Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2020

[Dr Bert Remijsen](#)



### [Phonological Theory \(LASC10088\)](#)

Coursework (50%) is comprised of:

- Assignment 1 (35%) due Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> October 2020
- Short sets of questions (15%) set through Learn on six weeks of the course (the best three weeks' marks count)

Final assignment (50%) due Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> December 2020

[Dr Patrick Honeybone](#)

### [Pragmatics \(LASC10067\)](#)

Assignment 1 (10%) due Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2020

Assignment 2 (10%) due Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> November 2020

Assignment 3 (10%) due Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> November 2020

Assignment 4 (70%) due Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> December 2020

[Dr Hannah Rohde](#)

## **Semester 2 courses**

## **Course organiser**

### [Discourse Analysis \(LASC10114\)](#)

Data Analysis of 1500 words (40%)

Project of 2500 words (60%)

[Dr Sumin Zhao](#)

### [Guided Research in Linguistics and English Language B \(LASC10112\)](#)

Annotated bibliography or short practical assignment of 1500 words (30%)

Essay or assignment of 2500 words (70%)

[Professor Graeme Trousdale](#)

### [Historical Linguistics \(LASC10021\)](#)

Assignment 1 (40%)

Assignment 2 (45%)

Course exercises (15%)

[Professor John Joseph](#)

### [Language Variation and Change \(LASC10102\)](#)

Assignment 1 (40%)

Assignment 2 (60%)

[Dr Michael Ramsammy](#)

### [Simulating Language \(LASC10018\)](#)

Assignment 1 (50%)

Assignment 2 (50%)

[Professor Simon Kirby](#)

### Statistics and Experimental Design (LASC10033)

Assignment 1 (50%)  
Assignment 2 (50%)

[Dr Chris Cummins](#)

### Syntax: Theory and Practice (LASC10084)

Homework assignments (10%)  
Assignment 1 (30%)  
Assignment 2 (60%)

[Dr Rob Truswell](#)

### **Labs**

If you are taking courses with labs or tutorials you will be automatically allocated a place in a tutorial/lab group by the end of Week 1 of the relevant semester. Some allocations may take place in Welcome Week for semester 1 courses.

### **Prizes**

#### ***The Angus McIntosh Prize***

The Angus McIntosh Prize is awarded annually for the best first-class Honours dissertation in Linguistics and/or English Language and is worth £100.

Angus McIntosh (1914-2005) was the first Forbes Professor of English Language and General Linguistics at the University of Edinburgh. Appointed to the Chair in 1948 after war-time work at Bletchley Park, he spent the remaining 31 years of his academic career in that post. He founded both Linguistics and English Language at Edinburgh and for many years led what was probably the strongest department of English Language found anywhere in the world. His life-long pioneering work in linguistics and English language is also commemorated in the McIntosh-Patterson PhD Studentship.

#### ***The Patterson Prize***

The Patterson Prize is awarded annually for the best course mark or Honours dissertation on Old English. The prize, worth £100, can be awarded to a third-year, fourth-year or visiting student.

The Patterson Prize was first awarded in 1880. Its benefactor, the Reverend John Patterson, was a Classics and English master at George Watson's Ladies College in 7 George Square (now the home of PPLS's Psychology subject area). The Patterson legacy has additionally helped make possible the McIntosh-Patterson PhD Studentship.

For more information about our Prizes, Scholarships and Awards please visit the Angus McIntosh Centre for Historical Linguistics.