



## PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

<b>Programme title:</b>	MA in Syntax
<b>Final award (BSc, MA etc):</b> (Identify any stopping off points, e.g. Diploma or Certificate)	MA
<b>Cohort(s) to which this programme specification is applicable:</b> (i.e. the start date the programme was approved in its current form)	From 2002 entry
<b>Awarding institution/body:</b>	University College London, University of London
<b>Teaching institution:</b>	University College London, University of London
<b>Faculty:</b>	Life Sciences
<b>Parent Department:</b> (the department responsible for the administration of the programme)	Phonetics and Linguistics
<b>Other contributing Department(s) or Colleges (if Intercollegiate) :</b> (any other departments involved in teaching aspects of the programme. Please also list the proportion of teaching offered by each department)	Although there are currently no links with other institutions, it may be possible under certain circumstances, and subject to UCL approval, for a student to pursue an optional component externally to UCL. Conversely, it may be possible under certain circumstances, and subject to UCL approval, for a student from another institution to take a component of this MA.
<b>Web page address:</b> (if applicable)	<a href="http://www.ucl.ac.uk/admission/gradbooklets/phonetics/taught/masyntax.html">http://www.ucl.ac.uk/admission/gradbooklets/phonetics/taught/masyntax.html</a>
<b>Method of study:</b> Full-time/Part-time/Other	The programme can be taken either full-time or part-time.
<b>Length of the programme:</b> (please note any periods spent away from UCL, such as study abroad or placements in industry)	One calendar year full-time, two calendar years part-time
<b>Level on Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ)</b> (see note 1 of Guidance notes)	M
<b>Relevant subject benchmark statement (SBS)</b> (see note 2 of Guidance notes)	<a href="http://www.qaa.ac.uk/crntwork/benchmark/phase2/linguistics.pdf">http://www.qaa.ac.uk/crntwork/benchmark/phase2/linguistics.pdf</a>
<b>Outline of programme structure and its assessment:</b>	See appendix A

<b>Board of Examiners:</b>	<b>Name of Board of Examiners:</b> MA in Linguistics  <b>Name of External Examiner with overview of entire programme:</b> Prof. Noel Burton-Roberts
<b>Professional body accreditation (if applicable):</b>	N/A

<b>EDUCATIONAL AIMS OF THE PROGRAMME</b>		
The programme aims to develop the student's knowledge and understanding of current research in generative syntax and to prepare the student for independent research in this area. On completion of the programme, the student will be able to formulate appropriate research questions, to find and evaluate relevant literature by accessing the wide range of information sources available to academic scholarship, to develop and test new hypotheses, and to produce cogent, structured and professionally presented reports.		
<b>PROGRAMME OUTCOMES</b>		
<i>The programme provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding, qualities, skills and other attributes in the following areas:</i>		
<b>Knowledge and understanding</b>		
<b>A Knowledge and understanding of:</b> 1 current research in generative syntax 2 foundational issues in syntax and how they are approached in a variety of frameworks 3 the key questions that drive current research in syntax 4 how syntax interacts with other systems of the mind 5 methods and concepts of linguistic analysis	→	<b>Teaching/learning methods and strategies</b> Foundational issues are explored in Syntax Ia (1, 3, 4, 5 and especially 2). All further teaching will be based on current research by syntacticians internal and external to the department (1, 3 and 5), with emphasis on the nature of research questions (3) and how to evaluate relevant literature (5). The interaction of syntax with other systems of the mind is a fundamental issue in much current research and will feature prominently in our syntax teaching (4). Students will also be given some background in Phonology and Pragmatics to further their understanding of the interaction of syntax with articulatory-perceptual and conceptual (interpretive) systems (4). Students will be required to carry out small-scale but serious research projects, under intensive supervision. This will enhance their knowledge and understanding of research methods (5).
		<b>Assessment</b> Learning outcomes for 1-5 will be assessed through a combination of examinations, essays and a dissertation, with an emphasis on 5 in the latter two.

<b>B: Skills and other attributes</b>		
<b>B Intellectual (thinking) skills</b> - able to: 1 reason critically 2 identify a problem 3 pose a cogent research question 4 exercise independence of thought 5 present a linguistic hypothesis and mount systematic and logical arguments for and against it 6 analyse syntactic, phonological, and semantic structures and to manipulate the appropriate symbolic representational systems	→	<b>Teaching/learning methods and strategies</b> Intellectual skills are developed through the teaching and learning programme outlined in appendix B. Each course, whatever its format, involves discussion of key issues, practice in applying concepts, both orally and in writing, analysis and interpretation of material, critical evaluation of linguistic hypotheses and individual feedback for learners on work produced.
		<b>Assessment</b> The assessments employed (exams, essays and dissertation) all place great emphasis on the students' ability to demonstrate the skills in 1-6, either through the production of coherent responses to problems set in an examination or through the demonstration of the ability to sustain systematic and logical arguments for or against a linguistic hypothesis in an essay or the dissertation.
<b>C: Skills and other attributes</b>		
<b>C Practical skills</b> - able to: 1 access the wide range of information sources available to academic scholarship, such as bibliographies, periodicals and on-line resources 2 produce cogent, structured and professionally represented reports 3 give a professional oral presentation 4 manage a project	→	<b>Teaching/learning methods and strategies</b> As students begin the process of 'mining' for information (which will start in term 1 and intensify in terms 2 and 3), they will be made familiar with various relevant information sources, including online resources, such as electronic abstracts services, archives and databases (1). All 4 courses in term 2 will require students to carry out small-scale but serious research projects, under intensive supervision (1 and 2). In syntax IIc, which will take the form of a research seminar, each student will be required to give an oral presentation (3). The dissertation and its associated research work will give students the opportunity to learn about managing a larger project (4) and producing a well-structured and professionally presented piece of work (2).
		<b>Assessment</b> The oral presentations will not be assessed. Rather the emphasis here will be on practising in a safe environment and giving formative feedback. Skills 1 and 2 will be an integral part of the assessment of essays and the dissertation. The student's ability to respond to feedback under supervision and manage a project (4) is an integral part of the assessment of the dissertation.
<b>D: Skills and other attributes</b>		
<b>D Transferable skills</b> - able to: 1 communicate effectively 2 present ideas orally and visually 3 use a computer as an investigative tool 4 listen actively	→	<b>Teaching/learning methods and strategies</b> In each course, whatever its format, students will participate in the discussion of key issues, both orally and in writing, (1, 2, 4 and 5). The supervision of student research work will be aimed at increasing the

5 take initiative and demonstrate a proactive approach 6 act with independence	student's ability to carry out research independently (5 and 6), to use computers as a research tool (3) and to present ideas orally and visually (2). The intensive supervision of essay and dissertation work will provide students with a high level of feedback.
	<b>Assessment</b> These skills are assessed as an integral component of students' written work, both in exams and in essays and the dissertation.
The following reference points were used in designing the programme:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (<a href="http://www.qaa.ac.uk/crntwork/nqf/ewni2001/contents.htm">http://www.qaa.ac.uk/crntwork/nqf/ewni2001/contents.htm</a>);</li> <li>the relevant Subject Benchmark Statements (<a href="http://www.qaa.ac.uk/crntwork/benchmark/index.htm">http://www.qaa.ac.uk/crntwork/benchmark/index.htm</a>);</li> <li>the programme specifications for the UCL degree programmes in relevant subjects (where applicable);</li> <li>College teaching and learning policies;</li> <li>Staff research.</li> </ul>	

**Please note:** This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if he/she takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information on the learning outcomes, content and teaching, learning and assessment methods of each course unit/module can be found in the departmental course handbook. The accuracy of the information contained in this document is reviewed by the College and may be checked by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education.

<b>Programme Organiser(s) Name(s):</b>	<b>Dr Ad Neeleman</b>	
<b>Signature(s):</b>		
<b>Date of production/revision:</b>	26/02/2003	
<b>Date approved by Head of Department:</b>		<b>Signed:</b>
<b>Date approved by Chair of Departmental Teaching Committee:</b>		<b>Signed:</b>
<b>Date approved by Faculty Teaching Committee:</b>		<b>Signed by Chair:</b>

## Appendix A: Programme structure and assessment

### PROGRAMME STRUCTURE

#### Programme Structure: Full-time

TERM 1	TERM 2	TERM 3
Syntax Ia: Foundational Issues in Syntax	Syntax IIa: Interfaces	Dissertation
Syntax Ib: Current Issues in Syntax	Syntax IIb: Advances and Perspectives in Syntax	
Phonology Ia: Advanced Phonological Theory A	Syntax IIc: Syntax Research Seminar	
Pragmatics Ia: Introduction to Pragmatics	Option	

The core of the programme is four courses in syntactic theory (two per term), plus a syntax research seminar, and an additional option, chosen by the student in consultation with their advisor. The option may be chosen from a wide range of courses relevant to the subject available both within the department and in other colleges of the University of London. In addition, students must take one course each in phonology and in pragmatics, since syntactic phenomena can often only be understood in a larger linguistic context. These courses also build bridges between this MA and its sister MA in Phonology.

#### Programme Structure: Part-time

The table below gives one possible programme structure for a part-time student. Some variation is conceivable as regards the timing of the option, which might also be taken in the first year. This would allow a part-time student to postpone Syntax Ib and Syntax IIb to year 2, thereby making it possible to take either Phonology Ia or Pragmatics Ia in year 1.

YEAR 1		
TERM 1	TERM 2	TERM 3
Syntax Ia: Foundational Issues in Syntax	Syntax IIa: Interfaces	Preparation for dissertation (through supervised reading)
Syntax Ib: Current Issues in Syntax	Syntax IIb: Advances and Perspectives in Syntax	
YEAR 2		
TERM 1	TERM 2	TERM 3
Phonology Ia: Advanced Phonological Theory A	Syntax IIc: Syntax Research Seminar	Dissertation
Pragmatics Ia: Introduction to Pragmatics	Option	

Part-time students will use term 3 of their first year to prepare for dissertation work through supervised reading.

### ASSESSMENT

The first three exams below take place at the end of term 1. Students who fail to pass some or all these exams may be advised to transfer to our conversion MA in Linguistics.

The other assessments take place in the summer term and form the basis for the award of the degree.

All students, whether full-time or part-time, eventually take all parts of the assessment.

<b>Subcomponents</b>	<b>Components</b>	<b>Reported marks</b>
1 exam covering Syntax Ia	10 % jointly	30 % jointly
1 exam covering Phonology Ia		
1 exam covering Pragmatics Ia		
1 exam covering Syntax Ib and Syntax IIa	20 %	
1 essay covering Syntax IIb (5000 words)	10 %	10 %
1 essay covering Syntax IIc (5000 words)	10 %	10 %
1 essay covering Option (5000 words)	10 %	10 %
Dissertation ( minimum 10000 words)	40 %	40 %
<b>Total:</b>	<b>100 %</b>	

## **Appendix IV: Outline Curriculum**

### **Syntax Ia: Foundational Issues in Syntax**

This course explores core properties of natural language syntax in the context of several theories of syntax. Topics covered include the Language Faculty, Constituency & Displacement, Argument Structure, Word Order, Grammatical Dependencies: Primitives of Syntax.

### **Syntax Ib: Current Issues in Syntax**

The contents of this course will vary from year to year, but it will be mainly concerned with the syntactic representation of grammatical relations and the structural conditions these are subject to. It will normally concentrate on three or four empirical domains that bear on the issue, for example, control, complex versus simplex anaphors, resultative predication or transitive expletive constructions.

### **Syntax IIa: Interfaces**

Syntactic representations are mapped onto phonological and semantic representations at the PF and LF interfaces respectively. This course will deal with the way these interfaces constrain the syntax and the extent to which syntactic operations can be said to be driven by interface requirements. The course will mainly address issues in morpho-syntax (such as affixation, cliticisation and bracketing paradoxes, etc.) as well as issues involving prosody (such as focussing, anaphoric distressing and word order).

### **Syntax IIb: Advances and Perspectives in Syntax**

This course concentrates on theoretical work in syntax. It is concerned with foundations that might explain descriptive generalizations and that could provide a framework with the potential to guide and stimulate further empirical research.

### **Syntax IIc: Syntax Research Seminar**

The content of this course will vary from year to year, but will be based on a number of seminal papers in syntactic theory focussing on a small number of topical issues in current syntactic research.

### **Phonology Ia: Advanced Phonological Theory A**

Intermediate to advanced level. Current phonological theories: rules vs. parameters vs. constraints. Theories of distinctive features and feature structure. Prosodic phonology and morphology. Interface issues: phonetics and phonology, morphology and phonology, syntax and phonology.

### **Pragmatics Ia: Introduction to Pragmatics**

The course is an introduction to pragmatics (defined as a theory of utterance interpretation or speaker's meaning). Issues discussed include the nature and goals of pragmatics, the role of context in comprehension, the relative roles of coding and inference in verbal communication, and a variety of more specific topics, e.g. disambiguation, explicit vs. implicit communication, metaphor and irony. Rather than briefly surveying several alternative approaches to pragmatics, the course looks in depth at a particular approach (relevance theory), drawing comparisons with other approaches wherever possible.