

A

Course descriptions

Look at this extract from a UK university's web pages. American websites may use different terms.

Diploma/MA in English Language and Culture

- * **Qualification:** **Diploma**¹ or MA. **Duration:** One year full-time or two years part-time. The course is a 180-**credit**² course, consisting of 120 credits of **core**³ and **elective**⁴ **modules**⁵ plus a 60-credit dissertation module. Core modules are **obligatory**. **Candidates** not wishing to **proceed** to the MA may **opt for**⁶ the Diploma (120 credits without dissertation).
- * **Course description:** The course covers all the major aspects of present-day English language and culture. Topics include grammar, vocabulary, language in society, literature in English (for a full list, see the list of modules). Elective modules only run if a minimum of ten students **enrol**⁷. The modules consist of a mixture of **lectures**, **seminars**, **workshops** and **tutorials**⁸.
- * **Assessment**⁹: A 3,000-word **assignment**¹⁰ must be submitted for each core module. Elective modules are assessed through **essays**, **projects** and **portfolios**¹¹. The **word limit** for the dissertation is 12,000 to 15,000 words. Candidates must achieve a pass grade in all four core modules (20 credits each), plus 40 credits in elective modules (minimum of 30 credits in the English department plus 10 **optional** credits from modules offered by other departments), and, for MA, must pass the dissertation module (60 credits). Candidates who achieve a grade average of 70% or more over all modules may be **eligible**¹² for a **distinction**¹³.

¹ a qualification between a bachelor's degree and a master's degree ² unit which represents a successfully completed part of a course ³ most important parts of a course of study, that all students must do ⁴ which are chosen ⁵ one of the units which together make a complete course taught especially at a college or university ⁶ choose ⁷ put one's name on an official list of course members ⁸ see Unit

18 for the meaning of these; a workshop is a meeting to discuss and/or perform practical work in a subject ⁹ judgements of the quality of students' work ¹⁰ a piece of written work ¹¹ a collection of documents that represent a person's work ¹² having the necessary qualities or fulfilling the necessary conditions ¹³ a special mark given to students who produce work of an excellent standard

B

Other aspects of courses

Dr Ward is holding a question-and-answer session for new MA students.

Reza: Can we defer¹ the dissertation if we can't stay here during the summer?

Dr Ward: Yes, you can defer for a year, but don't forget, if you do go home, you won't be able to have face-to-face **supervisions**².

Simon: Are the **in-sessionals**³ language courses compulsory?

Dr Ward: No. Most of you did the **pre-sessional**, which is the most important. But there are good in-sessional courses you can **sign up for**, especially the **EAP**⁴ writing course.

Angela: If we get the MA, can we go on to do a PhD immediately?

Dr Ward: Not automatically. You have to show you can do PhD standard work first anyway, and then **upgrade**⁵ to the PhD programme after a year or so.

¹ delay until a later time ² individual meetings with the teacher who is responsible for the student's dissertation ³ courses held during the main teaching semesters; pre-sessional courses are held before the main teaching semesters begin ⁴ English for Academic Purposes ⁵ become officially registered for the higher degree



When addressing someone with a PhD always use their family name: 'Dr Jones' or 'Dr Lopez'. Only medical doctors can be addressed simply as 'Doctor' without using their family name.

Exercises

20.1 Answer the questions about the text in A.

- 1 How long does the Diploma or MA course take if you study full-time?
- 2 How many credits is a dissertation worth?
- 3 What is special about core modules?
- 4 What is the difference between doing a Diploma and an MA?
- 5 How many students are required for an elective module to run?
- 6 How long do assignments have to be?
- 7 What kinds of classes do the students get?
- 8 On what kinds of work are they assessed?
- 9 What is the maximum number of words allowed in a dissertation?
- 10 What do students have to do to get a distinction?

20.2 Complete the missing words in this email from a student to a friend.

Diploma dissertation in-sessional MA module PhD project sign

Hi Erika,

How are things going with you? I'm sorry not to have written to you sooner but I've been desperately busy with the linguistics (1) I have to do for the elective (2) I'm taking this term. It's really interesting and I think I might decide to do my final (3) on a similar topic. At first I was only planning to do the (4) but now I've decided to have a go at an (5) I might even (6) up for a (7) if they'll have me! PhD students are usually offered some language teaching on the (8) EAP courses they run for foreign students, so it would be useful for my CV for the future.

Shoshana

20.3 Choose the correct word to complete each sentence.

- 1 I started out doing an MA but then decided to *upgrade* / *defer* to a PhD.
- 2 Students whose first language is not English usually have to attend a(n) *in-sessional* / *pre-sessional* language course before their main classes start.
- 3 Only six students have *enrolled* / *opted*, so the MEd programme will not run this year.
- 4 Most students decide to *sign* / *proceed* to the MA after completing their Diploma course.
- 5 Core modules are *obligatory* / *optional*.
- 6 When I was doing my PhD I had monthly one-to-one *seminars* / *supervisions*.
- 7 I won't be able to finish the dissertation this year, so I'll have to *opt* / *defer* till next year.
- 8 *Assessment* / *Assignment* consists of a three-hour end-of-module exam.

20.4 Complete the table below. Use a dictionary to help you if necessary.



verb	noun	adjective
opt		
		obligatory
	supervision +	
	assessment +	-
-		eligible

FOLLOW UP

Compare your own course, or one you hope to do, with the course described in A in terms of duration, modules and assessment.