

Graduate Student Handbook



Academic Year 2025/2026

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Why Study English Language, Literature or Theatre and Performance Studies?

There are various reasons why you might want to apply for admission to an MA or PhD programme. Some students want to keep going after completing the BA because they feel they have just gotten started. Some want to qualify to work in the profession, doing some kind of university research and teaching. Some do not want to teach but want to develop the ability to research the creation and consumption of culture. We aim to teach our students to create knowledge. This process is essential to the academic process but not limited to it—we also have experts in various other aspects of arts presentation, language policy, and cultural critique. We especially encourage applications from students who want to learn how to read and write critically, producing new knowledge and interrogating those structures that already exist. We have many resources to support those who want to focus on the study of language, literature, and theatre.

Our courses and faculty expertise are on the whole boundary-crossing. We offer courses on performance studies, literary history and theory, film and media studies, and a broad variety of cultural studies approaches—but these are just a few of the possible approaches to research on offer. What you will find in this booklet, however, is a record of what we have done—not a set of limitations on what you might do.

Please consider the various interests and classes listed as possible building-blocks rather than as strict channels or specialties. Singapore is famously a crossroads, a place that thrives as a nexus connecting peoples and cultures, a city-state that is at once one of the most cosmopolitan places on the planet and at the same time a cyber-kampung (village). Our university is an especially good starting point for those who want to explore the contact zone between the cosmopolitan and the subaltern, between the West and the rest. All binaries are ironized in Singapore! It is a wonderful place to study literatures in English, the varieties of performance, and the dynamic reinventions of language in the 21st century.

Students apply to English Language and Linguistics (EL), English Literature (EN), or Theatre and Performance Studies (TPS), but advanced research students can consult faculty from any of the department's three branches. There are three graduate degree programmes: MA (Coursework), MA (Research), and the PhD.

Life in Singapore

Singapore is an extremely well-organized, clean, and beautiful place with world-class medical facilities, schools, transport, and eateries. Snacking is perhaps the true national sport. Singapore is also known as the “garden city,” and there are green spaces in all parts of the country. Bus and MRT routes connect all places with ease, which is good since cars are rather expensive. Changi Airport puts the Singapore resident within an easy 2-4 hours of an enormous variety of countries and cultures. This proximity is a hugely important factor of daily life, and this culture of connectedness is as important to the study of Language, Literature and Theatre as it is to any other discipline in the faculty. It also allows access to exciting fieldwork. Singapore is a rapidly changing place, both in terms of the actual landscape and in terms of language and cultural interaction—it is constantly transforming and upgrading. The university has undergone an energetic programme of growth and development since the beginning of the millennium, and we look forward to continuing developments.

Residency Requirement for Our Graduate Students

Candidates must spend a period of residence in Singapore for a minimum of **6 months for the Masters Degree** and **18 months for the PhD degree** during their candidature.

Please note that candidates who are awarded NUS scholarships must reside in Singapore throughout the duration of the scholarship award.



NUS Academic Calendar AY 2025/2026

				SEMESTER 1			
Regular Semester		Mini Semester		Week	Dates		
Regular Semester: 18 weeks	Orientation			0	Mon, 4 Aug 2025	~	Sat, 9 Aug 2025
	Instructional Period (6 weeks)	Mini Sem 1A: 8 weeks	Instructional Period (6 weeks)	1	Mon, 11 Aug 2025	~	Fri, 15 Aug 2025
				2	Mon, 18 Aug 2025	~	Fri, 22 Aug 2025
				3	Mon, 25 Aug 2025	~	Fri, 29 Aug 2025
				4	Mon, 1 Sep 2025	~	Fri, 5 Sep 2025
				5	Mon, 8 Sep 2025	~	Fri, 12 Sep 2025
				6	Mon, 15 Sep 2025	~	Fri, 19 Sep 2025
	Recess		Reading		Sat, 20 Sep 2025	~	Sun, 28 Sep 2025
	Instructional Period (7 weeks)	Mini Sem 1B: 9 weeks	Instructional Period (6 weeks)	7	Mon, 29 Sep 2025	~	Sat, 4 Oct 2025
				8	Mon, 6 Oct 2025	~	Fri, 10 Oct 2025
				9	Mon, 13 Oct 2025	~	Fri, 17 Oct 2025
				10	Mon, 20 Oct 2025	~	Fri, 24 Oct 2025
				11	Mon, 27 Oct 2025	~	Fri, 31 Oct 2025
				12	Mon, 3 Nov 2025	~	Fri, 7 Nov 2025
13	Mon, 10 Nov 2025	~	Fri, 14 Nov 2025				
Reading		Reading		Sat, 15 Nov 2025	~	Fri, 21 Nov 2025	
Examination		Examination (2 weeks)		Sat, 22 Nov 2025	~	Sat, 6 Dec 2025	
Vacation: 5 weeks					Sun, 7 Dec 2025	~	Sun, 11 Jan 2026
					SEMESTER 2		
Regular Semester		Mini Semester		Week	Dates		
Regular Semester: 17 weeks	Instructional Period (6 weeks)	Mini Sem 2A: 8 weeks	Instructional Period (6 weeks)	1	Mon, 12 Jan 2026	~	Fri, 16 Jan 2026
				2	Mon, 19 Jan 2026	~	Fri, 23 Jan 2026
				3	Mon, 26 Jan 2026	~	Fri, 30 Jan 2026
				4	Mon, 2 Feb 2026	~	Fri, 6 Feb 2026
				5	Mon, 9 Feb 2026	~	Fri, 13 Feb 2026
				6	Mon, 16 Feb 2026	~	Fri, 20 Feb 2026
	Recess		Reading		Sat, 21 Feb 2026	~	Sun, 1 Mar 2026
	Instructional Period (7 weeks)	Mini Sem 2B: 9 weeks	Instructional Period (6 weeks)	7	Mon, 2 Mar 2026	~	Sat, 7 Mar 2026
				8	Mon, 9 Mar 2026	~	Fri, 13 Mar 2026
				9	Mon, 16 Mar 2026	~	Fri, 20 Mar 2026
				10	Mon, 23 Mar 2026	~	Fri, 27 Mar 2026
				11	Mon, 30 Mar 2026	~	Fri, 3 Apr 2026
				12	Mon, 6 Apr 2026	~	Fri, 10 Apr 2026
	13	Mon, 13 Apr 2026	~	Fri, 17 Apr 2026			
Reading		Reading		Sat, 18 Apr 2026	~	Fri, 24 Apr 2026	
Examination		Examination (2 weeks)		Sat, 25 Apr 2026	~	Sat, 9 May 2026	
Vacation: 12 weeks					Sun, 10 May 2026	~	Sun, 2 Aug 2026

Obtained from, [AY2025-2026.pdf \(nus.edu.sg\)](#)
 Accurate as of 1 July 2025

How to Satisfy MA and PhD Course Requirements

1. Disciplinary Courses

Disciplinary courses are level 5000 or 6000 courses offered by English Language and Linguistics (EL), English Literature (EN) or Theatre and Performance Studies (TPS) and are worth 4 Units each. A disciplinary course is usually a weekly three-hour seminar taken in one's own discipline. At the graduate level, Theatre and Performance Studies and English Literature level 5000 and 6000 courses all satisfy both EN and TPS requirements.

*Recognized courses refer to the practice of recognizing graduate level TPS courses for EN credit and vice-versa. It is similar to what is usually called "cross-listing" but without having to generate different course codes.

2. Independent Study

An Independent Study is an independent project worked out with a supervisor, and is worth 4 Units as well. Students may take up to two Independent Studies, but they must be in different levels or subjects. This is subject to the department's approval.

The student should approach a lecturer to work out an agreed topic, readings and assignments for the courses. A formal written agreement is to be drawn up, giving a clear account of the topic, programme of study, assignments, schedule, evaluation and other pertinent details. The Head's and/or Graduate Chair's approval of the written agreement is required. Regular meetings and reports are expected.

3. Honours Courses

Honours courses are level 4000 courses that primarily serve our fourth-year Honours cohorts, but graduate students may enroll in them, subject to the instructor's permission.

4. External Courses

External courses are graduate courses offered by other FASS departments, e.g. Philosophy, History, Chinese Studies, etc.

Students wishing to take such courses need to submit their request online through CourseReg@EduRec. Approval is given on a case-by-case basis. (Only graduate courses can be used as External courses; Honours courses in external departments are not eligible.) ELTS does not generally provide information on other department's courses; please consult the respective departmental websites to find lists of courses offerings. Please also discuss this option with your supervisor, to ensure a good fit with research needs.

5. NG5001 Academic Communication for Graduate Research Students

With effect from AY2022/2023 cohort, all PhD students are required to read the compulsory course NG5001. The new courses consist of 4 Units and will count on top of the existing Units for PhD students' graduation requirements.

For NG5001 courses, students can exercise the S/U option after the exam results are released. PhD students reading NG5001 will be assigned 'S' grade if student receives a 'C' grade or above and will receive a 'U' if the grade obtained is lower than a 'C' grade.

Graduate students who wish to take NG5001 will have to register for the course themselves via CourseReg@EduRec. Students are advised to register for NG5001 at their earliest convenience and refrain from completing it in their last semester

For more information on this course, please refer to <https://nusgs.nus.edu.sg/ng5001-academic-communication-for-graduate-researchers/>.

6. NG5002 Research Ethics for Graduate Research Students

This course, compulsory for all PhD students across NUS, introduces ethical issues in research. It provides an in-depth analysis of core topics, namely data management, publication practices, authorship criteria and responsibilities, research integrity, misconduct, questionable research practices, and conflict of interest. Learners will be allowed to choose two elective topics based on their research needs. A case-study approach will serve as the basis for in-depth analysis. Each topic emphasizes the importance of promoting ethical conduct in research. A blended learning 2.0 pedagogical approach (<https://cit.nus.edu.sg/blended-learning-2-0/>) involving synchronous and asynchronous learning activities will be adopted.

NG5002 is a compulsory course for the following students:

- PhD students admitted from AY2024
- Master's students admitted from AY2024 who eventually segue into the PhD

With effect from AY2024/2025, Semester 1, students who wish to take NG5002 Research Ethics for Graduate Researchers will have to register for the course themselves via CourseReg@EduRec.

Graduate students are advised to register for NG5002 at their earliest convenience and refrain from completing it in their last semester.

For more information on NG5002, please refer to <https://nusgs.nus.edu.sg/ng5002-research-ethics-for-graduate-researchers/>.

Masters by Coursework

Admitted from August 2024 Intake and after

➤ **Master of Arts in English Language and Linguistics**

The Master of Arts in English Language and Linguistics (Coursework) is a fully taught program, designed to be completed in one year of intensive full-time study, or over a longer period of part-time study. Only those locally domiciled are eligible for part-time study.

To qualify for the degree of Master of Arts in English Language and Linguistics, candidates will be required to complete 40 Units or 10 courses (each course is worth 4 Units):

1. Which includes:

- one compulsory course: ELC5104, Approaches to Language
- a minimum of 5 other EL or ELC level-5000 courses
- a maximum of 2 non-EL or non-ELC level-5000 courses on related subjects (subject to department approval)
- a maximum of 2 EL level-4000 courses (subject to department approval)

Candidates who have completed equivalent courses which were not used towards obtaining another degree prior to admission to the Master of Arts in English Language and Linguistics may apply to the Department for an exemption of course(s), subject to a maximum of 50% of the MA requirements.

2. Obtain a minimum Grade Point Average (GPA) of 3.00 for all examinable courses. The candidature of a student will be terminated if he/she:

- a. Obtains a GPA of less than 2.5 for two consecutive semesters, or less than 3.0 for three consecutive semesters; or
- b. Fails more than two courses

3. Fulfil 50% residency in Singapore.

For more information on the Masters by Coursework, please refer to Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences Website: <https://fass.nus.edu.sg/prospective-students/graduate/coursework-programmes/programmes-available/>

Admitted from August 2022 Intake and after

➤ Master of Arts in Literary Studies

The Master of Arts in Literary Studies is a fully taught program where students obtain the degree entirely through coursework. No written thesis is required. By taking taught courses, students develop an advanced level of knowledge and critical skill in literary studies.

It is possible for a full-time student to complete the degree in two semesters, i.e., in one year. In practice, a full-time student may take longer to complete the degree, for instance, over a period of three semesters. Students can undertake the degree as full-time or part-time students. A full-time student has a maximum period of three years to complete the degree, while a part-time student has four years to do so. Foreign students on a student pass can only enroll as full-time students.

To obtain the MA in Literary Studies, candidates are required to:

1. Pass a minimum of 40 Units or ten courses (each course is worth 4 Units). The ten courses (40 Units) should comprise:
 - 3 foundational courses:
 - ENC5149: Literary Studies: Overview and Writing Practices
 - ENC5150: Survey of the Discipline: Methods and Approaches
 - ENC5151: Global Anglophonic Literature
 - 7 courses selected from an available selection, which may include:
 - An Independent Study
 - Recognised courses from other programmes, including: TPS5213 Performing Shakespeare in Asia; TPS5215 Theatre and the Novel; ELC5212 History in English

Subject to the approval of the Department, students may take up to two 4000-level courses in English Literature. However, ENC students cannot usually take EN5000-level or EN6000-level research courses (unless granted approval in exceptional cases).

Candidates who have completed equivalent courses which were not used towards obtaining another degree prior to admission to the Master of Arts (Literary Studies) may apply to the Head of Department for an exemption of course(s), subject to a maximum of 50% of the MA requirements.

Candidates will be advised on the possible composition of their programme by the Department.

2. Obtain a minimum Grade Point Average (GPA) of 3.00 for all examinable courses. The candidature of a student will be terminated if he/she:

- obtains a GPA of less than 2.5 for two consecutive semesters, or less than 3.0 for three consecutive semesters; or
- fails more than two courses

3. Fulfil 50% residency in Singapore.

For more information on the Masters by Coursework, please refer to Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences Website: <https://fass.nus.edu.sg/prospective-students/graduate/coursework-programmes/programmes-available/>

Admitted from August 2024 Intake and after

➤ Master of Arts in Theatre and Performance Studies

The Master of Arts (Theatre and Performance Studies) by coursework is designed to be completed in one year of full-time study, or over a longer period of part-time study. (Only those locally domiciled are eligible for part-time study.)

Our courses develop critical thinking, research abilities and presentation skills, particularly for those who seek to work between arts practice, industry, research and community advancement. They are taught by globally recognized leaders in areas such as Asian performance, play analysis, practice-based research, digital humanities, and interdisciplinary study of literature, film and performance. Students will be trained in close critical and historically contextualized analysis and equipped with skills necessary for cultural leadership in a wide range of roles from arts organization leader, to cultural research associate, to arts policy maker. With our emphasis on digital skills in the arts and humanities, our students will be uniquely poised to apply digital tools to a variety of public, educational and industry contexts for professional activities such as archive development, interaction design and multimedia interface.

To obtain the MA in Theatre and Performance Studies, candidates are required to:

1. Pass a minimum of 40 units or ten courses (each course is worth 4 units). The ten courses should include:
 - 1 core course: TPS5101 Text and Performance
 - 9 courses chosen from an available selection:
 - At least one from each of our three curricular focus areas listed below:
 - Theatre, Film and Literature
 - Creative Practices in Performance
 - Digital Skills in Arts and Humanities
 - A maximum of one course may be an Independent Study (arranged with one of our faculty members).
 - Recognised courses from other programmes/departments, including: ENC5883 Screen Culture in Southeast Asia; HY5415 Theatres of Memory: Performing Public History

Subject to the approval of the Department, students may take up to two 4000-level courses in Theatre and Performance Studies.

2. Obtain a minimum Grade Point Average (GPA) of 3.00 for all examinable courses.

For more information on the Masters by Coursework, please refer to Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences Website: <https://fass.nus.edu.sg/prospective-students/graduate/coursework-programmes/programmes-available/>

Masters by Research

Admitted from August 2015 Intake and after

➤ **Master of Arts in English Literature**

➤ **Master of Arts in Theatre and Performance Studies**

The maximum duration for both full-time and part-time study is 36 months. Those awarded a NUS scholarship are required to reside in Singapore for the duration of the scholarship award.

To qualify for the degree of Master of Arts (by Research) candidates will be required to:

1. Successfully complete four courses, three of which must be at level 5000 or 6000.

In Theatre and Performance Studies, there are two compulsory courses:

- TS 5101 Text and Performance
- TS 6770 Graduate Research Seminar

*Note: The courses offered under TPS programme begin with code TS XXXX

Subject to the approval of the Department, students may take up to one 4000-level course in Theatre and Performance Studies

In English Literature, there is one compulsory course:

- EN 6770 Graduate Research Seminar
- Usually, all EN research students should take all EN research-only classes whenever they are on offer, unless there are compelling reasons not to. Please discuss with your supervisors.

In English Language, there is one compulsory course:

- EL 6770 Graduate Research Seminar

2. Obtain a minimum Grade Point Average (GPA) of 3.00 for all examinable courses. The candidature of a student will be terminated if he/she:
 - obtains a GPA of less than 2.5 for two consecutive semesters, or less than 3.0 for three consecutive semesters; or
 - fails more than two courses

3. Successfully complete a dissertation of not more than 30,000 words.

For more information on the Masters by Research, please refer to Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences Website: <https://fass.nus.edu.sg/prospective-students/graduate/research/programmes-available/>

Admitted from August 2022 Intake and after

➤ Master of Arts in English Language and Linguistics

The maximum duration for both full-time and part-time study is 36 months. Those awarded a NUS scholarship are required to reside in Singapore for the duration of the scholarship award.

To qualify for the degree of Master of Arts in English Language and Linguistics (Research), candidates will be required to:

1. Successfully complete four courses: one compulsory course and three elective courses. The compulsory course is EL6770: Graduate Research Seminar. Of the elective courses, one may be a Level 4000 course. Research students may take either EL or ELC at level 5000, except 'ELC5104: Approaches to Language'. This is a foundation course reserved for our EL coursework students.
2. Obtain a minimum Grade Point Average (GPA) of 3.00 for all examinable courses. The candidature of a student will be terminated if he/she:
 - a. obtains a GPA of less than 2.5 for two consecutive semesters, or less than 3.0 for three consecutive semesters; or
 - b. fails more than two courses
3. Successfully complete a dissertation of not more than 30,000 words.

For more information on the Masters by Research, please refer to Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences Website: <https://fass.nus.edu.sg/prospective-students/graduate/research/programmes-available/>

Doctor of Philosophy

Admitted from August 2015 Intake and after

➤ Doctor of Philosophy in English Literature

➤ Doctor of Philosophy in Theatre and Performance Studies

The maximum duration for both full-time and part-time study is 60 months. Those awarded a NUS scholarship are required to reside in Singapore for the duration of the scholarship award.

To obtain the degree of PhD, candidates will be required to:

1. Pass six courses, at least three of which must be at level 6000.

In Theatre and Performance Studies, there are two compulsory courses:

- TS 5101 Text and Performance
- TS 6770 Graduate Research Seminar

*Note: The courses offered under TPS programme begin with code TS XXXX

In English Literature, there are two compulsory courses:

- EN 6770 Graduate Research Seminar
- EN 6102 Advanced Critical Reading
- NOTE: Usually, all EN research students should take all EN research-only classes when they are on offer, unless there are compelling reasons not to. Please discuss this with your supervisors.

Of the remaining courses, no more than one course may be at level 4000.

2. Obtain a minimum Grade Point Average (GPA) of 3.5 for all examinable courses.

In order to continue in the PhD programme, a candidate must not have:

- a GPA of less than 3.5 for three consecutive semesters; or
- a GPA below 3.0 for two consecutive semesters.

3. Reside in Singapore for a minimum of 18 months of the candidature
4. Pass all components of the PhD Qualifying Exam (QE) (Please refer to page 15 for the PhD Qualifying Exam components.)
5. Successfully complete and defend a thesis of not more than 100,000 words.

A graduate student enrolled in ELTS may take courses offered by another graduate programme in the university, based on their relevance to the student's studies and availability, subject to the approval of the student's thesis advisor, the lecturer of the course, and the Grad Chairs.

For more information on the PhD, please refer to Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences Website: <https://fass.nus.edu.sg/prospective-students/graduate/research/programmes-available/>

Admitted from August 2016 Intake to August 2021 Intake

➤ Doctor of Philosophy in English Language and Linguistics

The maximum duration for both full-time and part-time study is 60 months. Those awarded a NUS scholarship are required to reside in Singapore for the duration of the scholarship award.

1. To qualify for the degree of PhD in English Language and Linguistics, candidates will be required to pass a minimum of 32 Units or eight courses (each course is worth 4 Units) from the English Language and Linguistics curriculum. The following conditions must be fulfilled:

Of these eight courses, the following four are compulsory:

- EL5101 Grammatical Analysis
- EL5102 Phonetics and Phonology
- EL5103 Language in Society

- EL6770 Graduate Research Seminar

Of the remaining four courses, one must be at level 6000. No more than one course may be at level 4000.

2. Obtain a minimum Grade Point Average (GPA) of 3.5 for all examinable courses. In order to continue in the PhD programme, a candidate must not have:
 - A GPA of less than 3.5 for three consecutive semesters; or
 - A GPA below 3.0 for two consecutive semesters.
3. Reside in Singapore for a minimum of 18 months of the candidature
4. Pass all components of the Qualifying Exam (QE) (Please refer to page 16 for the PhD Qualifying Exam components.)
5. Successfully complete and defend a thesis of not more than 100,000 words.

A student enrolled in the PhD in the area of English Language and Linguistics may take courses offered by another graduate programme in the university, based on their relevance to the student's studies and availability, subject to the approval of the student thesis advisor, the lecturer of the courses, the Head of the Department of English Language and Literature, and the host department.

For more information on PhD, please refer to Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences Website: <https://fass.nus.edu.sg/prospectivestudents/graduate/research/programmes-available/>

Admitted from August 2022 Intake and after

➤ Doctor of Philosophy in English Language and Linguistics

The maximum duration for both full-time and part-time study is 60 months. Those awarded a NUS scholarship are required to reside in Singapore for the duration of the scholarship award.

1. To qualify for the degree of PhD in English Language and Linguistics, candidates will be required to pass six courses from the English Language and Linguistics curriculum. The following conditions must be fulfilled:

Of these six courses, the following one is compulsory:

- EL6770 Graduate Research Seminar

Of the remaining five courses, one must be at level 6000. No more than one course may be at level 4000. Research students may take either EL or ELC at level 5000, except 'ELC5104: Approaches to Language'. This is a foundation course reserved for our EL coursework students.

2. Obtain a minimum Grade Point Average (GPA) of 3.5 for all examinable courses. In

order to continue in the PhD programme, a candidate must not have:

- A GPA of less than 3.5 for three consecutive semesters; or
- A GPA below 3.0 for two consecutive semesters.

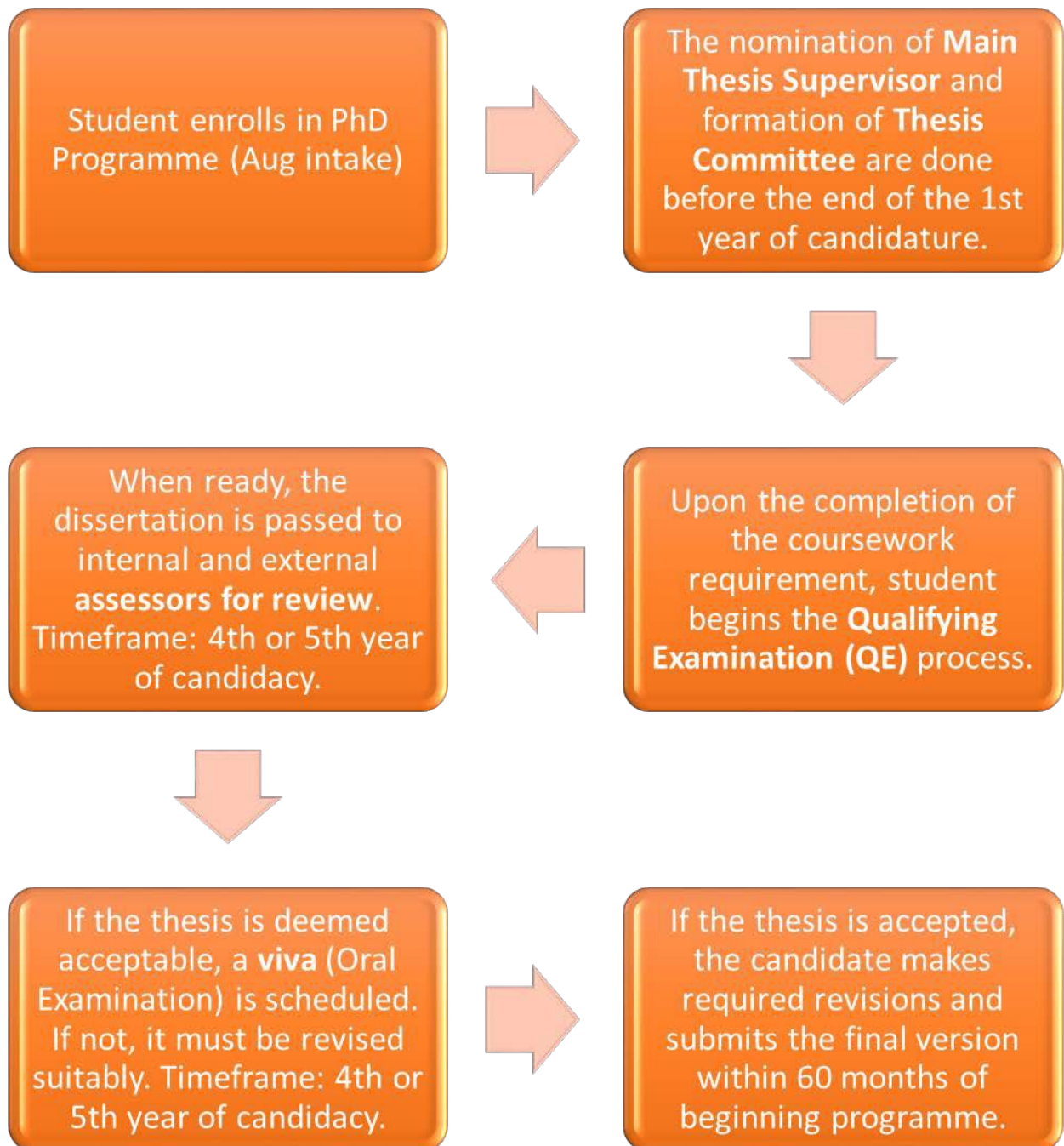
3. Reside in Singapore for a minimum of 18 months of the candidature
4. Pass all components of the Qualifying Exam (QE) (Please refer to page 16 for the PhD Qualifying Exam components.)
5. Successfully complete and defend a thesis of not more than 100,000 words.

A student enrolled in the PhD in the area of English Language and Linguistics may take courses offered by another graduate programme in the university, based on their relevance to the student's studies and availability, subject to the approval of the student thesis advisor, the lecturer of the course, the Head of the Department of English Language and Literature, and the host department.

For more information on PhD, please refer to Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences Website: <https://fass.nus.edu.sg/prospectivestudents/graduate/research/programmes-available/>

PhD Process

The PhD Enrolment-to-Completion Flow Chart



Forming a Thesis Committee

Neither the MA (Coursework) nor the MA (Research) degree programme requires the formation of a committee, though the MA (Research) does require that the student make a timely arrangement with a thesis advisor. This is done by mutual agreement, and so students should become acquainted with faculty interests as soon as possible. They should not wait until a potential thesis advisor offers a graduate course. The student should begin considering possible thesis advisor early—as soon as possible—and ought to take initiative in meeting relevant faculty. In many cases, the student will have already contacted his or her potential thesis advisor at the time of application.

The PhD Thesis Committee (TC) should be formed within 12 months of the student's enrollment. The process may take more or less time, but students should not delay. Note: when research students are first enrolled in the department, they are usually assigned a member of the graduate committee (A/P Vincent Ooi, A/P Anne M. Thell and A/P Liang Peilin) as a preliminary advisor. This arrangement comes to an end when a main thesis advisor is appointed, so from the outset the student is expected to think about the long term.

The TC will consist of the main thesis advisor and two additional faculty members, one of whom may be designated "co-thesis advisor". The co-thesis advisor and other TC members may be drawn from any part of the university (and from outside the university, pending permission from the ELTS Graduate Committee), but the main thesis advisor will be from ELTS. TC members and, in exceptional circumstances, co-thesis advisor may also be drawn from other departments in NUS as well as other institutions.

Practical responsibilities of the main thesis advisor in TC composition and over the QE period include the following:

- a. Discussing the nomination of two other TC members with the student. Once their agreement is secured, the main thesis advisor submits Thesis Committee Form (QE1) for endorsement by the Head of Department or their designee. Department Administrator can assist with the process.
- b. Advising the candidate about the QE and helping him/her to compile QE text lists, and prepare the thesis proposal;
- c. Arranging the dates and times of the various components of the QE, liaising with the department administrator to book examination rooms and marking QE materials;
- d. Completing the PhD Qualifying Examination Report in consultation with TC members after the defence of the thesis proposal; and
- e. Writing progress reports every semester until submission of dissertation.

Practical roles and responsibilities of the TC as a whole include:

- f. Assisting the main thesis advisor in guiding the supervisee; providing the student with feedback on the thesis proposal during the QE process and (later) on dissertation drafts;
- g. Helping to construct and assess QE examination components;

- h. Supporting the thesis advisor in assessing the students' progress (for example through the online bi-annual progress report), and in addressing any difficulties arising over the course of the candidature that require action on the part of the university;
- i. Stepping in as acting thesis advisor if the main thesis advisor is unable to perform the role; and
- j. Advising the main thesis advisor on relevant aspects of the student's candidature, such as the selection of thesis examiners near the completion of the dissertation.

Where a difference of opinion between TC members arises, the main thesis advisor has the final say, and the TC dissolves when the student submits the final version of the thesis for examination.

The PHD Qualifying Examination

Any PhD candidate who has completed a minimum of 5 courses and has a GPA of 3.50 or better is ready to begin the QE process. The process must be completed before the 24th month of study, and so students should not wait until the five courses are finished before consulting a thesis advisor, putting together a committee, making the necessary examination lists, and preparing a proposal. You should begin meeting faculty members and thinking about possibilities as soon as you begin at NUS.

The first half of the Qualifying Examination (QE) process centres on the field and the second half is concerned with the proposed research contribution. What is a "field"? There is no simple answer to this question: the formulation of "knowledge" requires the provisional organisation of so-called disciplinary fields, but much of the most exciting work of our time is directly concerned with the questioning of (formerly) presupposed disciplinary boundaries. We prefer to consider the field in relation to a particular academic community. Whereas a research topic is the direct subject of an article or a dissertation, a field is the shared set of topics and approaches around which a community would coalesce in the form of, say, an academic journal, an annual conference, or a regular series of books. An article or thesis would be the individual's contribution to such a research "conversation," but the field refers to the broader body of methods and knowledge that makes individual contributions possible by creating the possibility of a vibrant communication network.

The first part of the QE process assesses your ability to enter the series of conversations that constitute a field, and the second part (including the assessment of your written proposal and the following oral examination) centres on your particular proposed research contribution. No one working in a field knows everything about that field; rather, the examination processes establish your entry-level competence. It will be important for students to start refining ideas about the relationship between "field" and individual research topics during research seminars.

Once selected, the main thesis advisor can help the student get oriented fully, and at a later stage the particular areas of assessment are worked out. No one would want to have to know everything about "Critical Theory" or "Modernism" or "Bilingualism," but anyone going to a conference specializing in a given field is expected to have a working knowledge of constitutive issues.

➤ **Doctor of Philosophy in English Language and Linguistics** (Admitted from August 2017 Intake and after)

The Qualifying Exam (QE) consists of two parts:

QE1: A written paper of publishable quality (6000-8000 words)

The candidate produces **a publishable-quality paper** – i.e. an original research paper that is ready to be submitted to a reputable journal, or a paper that has been submitted for consideration by such a journal, with reasonable expectation that it will not be rejected outright. Candidates are not required to actually submit this paper to the journal for purposes of the QE, though it is expected that, after passing QE1, they will revise the paper further based on the thesis committee's comments and submit it to a relevant journal.

Settling on a topic:

- Students should seek agreement from the thesis committee (TC) on their topic/focus before they start writing their QE1 paper. While this does not guarantee that all students will produce passable papers, this can at least confirm to students that they are expected not to deviate from a promising topic/focus while they are writing the paper.

Length:

- The general expectation is that the QE1 paper will be around **6000-8000 words**. Specific word count will differ depending on students' topic as well as focus. Before a student starts writing their QE1 paper, thesis committee (TC) members should advise the student about an ideal word count based on the topic/focus on a case-by-case basis.

Marking:

- Each member of the TC marks the paper independently, either as 'pass' (i.e. the paper is of publishable quality, as defined above) or 'fail' (i.e. the paper is not of publishable quality).
- Each TC member is required to provide detailed qualitative comments on the paper. If the decision is 'fail', sufficient justification as well as detailed suggestions for revision should be provided, to guide the student's revision of the paper.
- TC members have three weeks to do the marking.
- All comments and decisions will then be collated and conveyed to the candidate.
- Marks/comments on QE1 paper will NOT be anonymous: student can therefore clarify with any member of the TC during the process of revising the paper for journal submission.
- There is no oral defence for the QE1 paper.

Requirements for passing QE1:

- All TC members must give a 'pass' mark for the candidate to pass QE1.
- If one or more TC members marks the paper as 'fail', then the candidate fails QE1, and has up to 3 months to revise the paper, which will again be marked by the TC members following the same procedure.
- The principle is that the pass should be unanimous among TC members, but in the case of 2 pass and 1 fail, the EL graduate research coordinator will review all the 3 evaluations and decide the pass/fail outcome.

Amount of help candidate can expect from supervisor:

- The paper should be the student's independent work (i.e. single-authored; it definitely cannot be co-author-level collaboration with another person and should be sufficiently different from projects the thesis advisor is working on, etc.). However, since it would be natural for a student to receive feedback from multiple parties while developing a journal article, active guidance by the thesis advisor should be acceptable. The goal of QE1 should be to demonstrate that the student can produce a publishable quality paper using available resources.

QE2: Thesis proposal defence (about 30-50 pages)

A written proposal outlining thesis topic, objectives, rationale, scope, literature review, analytical framework(s), data to be collected, sample analysis, projected contribution to the field. An oral defence is required.

NOTE: QE1 and QE2 should be written on two different topics/areas. This could mean two entirely different areas or within one area (e.g. in syntax or in sociolinguistics) but two different topics.

➤ **Doctor of Philosophy in English Literature**
(Admitted from August 2022 Intake and after)

The QE process has four components that are typically completed within a six-week period.

First, of the four components is an 8-hour, open-book, essay-type exam (QE1), based on the negotiated reading list. This list consists of primary sources (published texts, performances, descriptions of practices) selected by the student in consultation with the thesis advisor. The thesis committee will design the exam around the reading list worked out between TC and candidate. It is suggested, though not stipulated, that the exam be divided into two sections, with a choice of questions in one section pertaining to the field of chosen specialization (and the parameters of the proposed dissertation topic); and a choice of questions in the second section pertaining to *either* a secondary field of research and/or pedagogical master (to impart breadth of training), *or* a secondary field of specialization that gives further focus to the dissertation topic. After the student sits for the exam, the examination scripts are assessed by either the main thesis advisor or co-thesis advisor and the other committee members. If the committee agrees that the candidate is sufficiently ready, the candidate then proceeds to the next stage.

Second, the candidate takes an oral exam (QE2) that continues the enquiry begun by the written exam. To be competent in a field, one should be able to write with appropriate precision and speak with appropriate fluency, and the process in ELTS is designed to bring students up to the required level in a timely manner. In the oral exam, candidates will be asked about the written exam itself, and the discussion can also include related areas of the field in question. This oral examination usually takes around 2 hours. The thesis advisor and two other faculty members will conduct the oral examination, and the discussion will be based on a reading list compiled by the student in consultation with the thesis advisor. Afterwards, the committee informs the candidate as to whether she/he has either passed. This is also an opportunity to offer formative advice about areas of strength and weakness.

Third, the candidate submits the PhD thesis proposal at least two weeks before the oral examination on it, which completes the QE process. The committee will assess the candidate's PhD thesis proposal, prepare questions for the oral examination, and confer with each other about how to proceed. Four copies are submitted: one for the thesis advisor, two for the thesis committee and one for the department. The proposal is a document of 20-25 pages (excluding bibliography), which the committee uses to ascertain the viability of the doctoral project. The proposal should include the following information:

- A research question that organises the enquiry;
- A list of primary sources (including essential publications, performance, archival materials,
- A description of contexts (theoretical or historical frames) that are most important;
- Secondary scholarship that has been generated to date by this issue; and especially the unique contribution(s) that the candidate proposes to offer.

The format of the proposal is worked out between the candidate and the main thesis advisor. Proposals often have sections under headings such as Research Questions, Proposed Methodologies, Research Context, but these formalities vary between disciplines. Anyone evaluating a proposal needs to understand the enquiry in relation to specific texts, practices, datasets or events, to a community of interpreters who pursue such questions, and to a body of published findings. Of what significance will this particular project be to a particular field of research?

Fourth, the candidate orally defends the thesis proposal (QE3). The 1-2 hours examination is conducted by the main thesis advisor and the two other faculty members on the committee. Typically, the exam begins with the candidate's formal presentation (about 20 minutes) on the proposal, and the committee members then examine the candidate. It is also an opportunity to discuss sources, data, strategies, methodologies, and problems—a good opportunity to get valuable feedback on one's project. After the defense, the main thesis advisor will fill out the appropriate forms, and the candidate will commence the writing of the dissertation. In the event of failure, the candidate must work out a schedule for re-testing with the main thesis advisor.

➤ **Doctor of Philosophy in Theatre Performance and Studies** (Admitted from August 2021 Intake and after)

The QE process has four components that are typically completed within a six-week period.

First, of the four components is a 3-hours closed-book written exam (QE1) based on the negotiated reading list. This list consists of primary sources (published texts, performances, descriptions of practices) selected by the student in consultation with the thesis advisor. The thesis committee will design the exam around the reading list worked out between TC and candidate. After the student sits for the exam, the examination scripts are assessed by either the main thesis advisor or the thesis advisor and the other committee members. If the committee agrees that the candidate is sufficiently ready, the candidate then proceeds to the next stage.

Second, the candidate takes an oral exam (QE2) that continues the enquiry begun by the written exam. To be competent in a field, one should be able to write with appropriate precision and speak with appropriate fluency, and the process in ELTS is designed to bring students up to the required level in a timely manner. In the oral exam, candidates will be asked about the written exam itself, and the discussion can also include related areas of the field in question. This oral examination usually takes around 2 hours. The thesis advisor and two other faculty members will conduct the oral examination, and the discussion will be based on a reading list compiled by the student in consultation with the thesis advisor. Afterwards, the committee informs the candidate as to whether s/he has either passed. This is also an opportunity to offer formative advice about areas of strength and weakness.

Third, the candidate submits the PhD thesis proposal at least two weeks before the oral examination on it, which completes the QE process. The committee will assess the candidate's PhD thesis proposal, prepare questions for the oral examination, and confer with each other about how to proceed. Four copies are submitted: one for the thesis advisor, two for the Thesis Committee and one for the department. The proposal is a document of 20-25 pages (excluding bibliography), which the committee uses to ascertain the viability of the doctoral project. The proposal should include the following information:

- A research question that organises the enquiry;
- A list of primary sources (including essential publications, performance, archival materials,
- A description of contexts (theoretical or historical frames) that are most important;
- Secondary scholarship that has been generated to date by this issue; and especially the unique contribution(s) that the candidate proposes to offer.

The format of the proposal is worked out between the candidate and the main thesis advisor. Proposals often have sections under headings such as Research Questions, Proposed Methodologies, Research Context, but these formalities vary between disciplines. Anyone evaluating a proposal needs to understand the enquiry in relation

to specific texts, practices, datasets or events, to a community of interpreters who pursue such questions, and to a body of published findings. Of what significance will this particular project be to a particular field of research?

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A Guide to the MA or PhD Research Proposal

This document provides general guidelines on what is expected of an MA or PhD research proposal. The "Preliminary Proposal" required by the application form is a brief document of approximately 2000 words, whereas the MA/Research and PhD candidates who are already part of the programme must produce a formal research proposal that is much more developed.

- 1** The overall format of a research proposal: Since ELTS comprises three major strands, the disciplines represented by these strands permit a diversity of approaches for the framing of a proposal. There is, therefore, room for flexibility in its scope, length and structure. In any proposal, however, some degree of attention is expected to the following considerations, which should be adequately addressed within a total length of 5000-10,000 words (not including notes or bibliography) for the PhD and can be a half as long for the MA thesis.
- 2** Research topic or questions(s): What's your point? As R. S. Crane once remarked, "A thesis should have a thesis." That is, a dissertation is expected to answer some questions, formulate a specific approach, and develop a focused argument. It should do so in relation to a particular issue, topic or problem within a given field and discipline (or across related fields and disciplines). In writing your proposal, therefore, identify the topic, area, problem or set of questions that you aim to address, and explain why it is important that you do so. Bearing in mind that an original contribution to the field is required at PhD and MA levels, be as explicit as you can about the nature of the contribution you hope to make to your chosen area of study.
- 3** Critical awareness of work in the field: What is the research context of your project? Solving a problem, answering a set of questions, or developing an argument concerning any topic, area or field entails some knowledge of academic work already done by other scholars, and the ability to take a critical stance towards this body of accumulated material. You should

therefore demonstrate an awareness of the broad contours of scholarship within your chosen fields and indicate the nature of your own contribution. Additionally, if there are significant new developments in the area you plan to research, or if you offer a distinctive perspective or level of expertise on the subject, then these factors, too, contribute to your research context, and you should indicate how they might figure in a dissertation project.

- 4.** Methods: How will you conduct your research? Convincing academic arguments include an account of how they were arrived at. Outline the methods you propose to adopt; the premises, assumptions and working hypotheses, or the models and templates that you will work with or work through. This entails giving some indication of how your methods and procedures relate to those of scholars already working in the field, especially if you are proposing to employ a novel methodology or innovative methods. You may also want to outline any theoretical approaches that are of particular relevance to your project.
- 5.** Timeline and resources: When, where, and with what? While dissertation formats tend to be standardized, research projects come in all shapes and sizes. Explain what kinds of specialist resources (such as archives or equipment) you will require for your research (if any), and how you will access them. If parts of your research are time sensitive (relating, for instance, to specific events), indicate this, too. This will enable us to assess the viability of your project, and you to flag up a potentially original feature of your research plans.
- 6.** Expected outcomes: How does it end? Give some indication of the critical or scholarly outcomes you anticipate arising from the project, and/or what form those outcomes will take.
- 7.** Research bibliography: What are you looking at? List the primary and secondary works in the field. While such works may not be limited to books, the list should include full bibliographical details, conforming to any standard style-sheet that is accepted within the discipline. It may also include light annotation of key titles. If you explain in 2-3 sentences why a given work is valuable for your project, you will develop a much better research plan, and potential thesis advisor will be able to assess your plan much more efficiently.
- 8.** Consultation: Applicants are advised to familiarize themselves with the supervisory expertise available in ELTS, as this has a pragmatic bearing on whether a specific proposal is feasible. Proposals show that you have anticipated practical problems and have envisioned using available resources to solve those problems. If the proposal does not demonstrate that the necessary resources—library materials, supervision, ability to complete fieldwork, etc.—are available, it will be turned down. Students are advised to consult appropriate faculty when developing the proposal, although final responsibility rests with the candidate. A particular staff member may not be available at a given time, so the candidate must initiate such discussions early.

9. Further Reading: Many graduate study guides include useful information on research proposals, including Gina Wisker's *Postgraduate Research Handbook* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008) and Peter Bentley's *PhD Application Handbook* (London: Open University Press, 2006).

The student will be required to write a dissertation in English of not more than 30,000 words for the MA and 100,000 for the PhD. Work on the thesis shall commence after the completion of all coursework.

General guidelines on the format of research are available:

<https://myportal.nus.edu.sg/studentportal/nusgs/gd/docs/General-Guidelines-and-Instructions-on-Format-of-Research-Thesis-and-Electronic-Submission.pdf>

The thesis will be examined by two examiners for the MA and PhD. The examiners may set such further tests as they think fit to enable them to assess the thesis. The Board of Examiners may pass or fail a candidate or refer him/her for further work. Work which has been submitted for a degree, or for which a degree has already been conferred by the University or any other university, may not be submitted again as a thesis; but a student is not precluded from incorporating part of such work provided that, in the thesis, the student clearly indicates the part of the work which has been so incorporated.

A student may, in addition, submit such other published work as he/she desires provided it has not already been submitted for a degree in the University or any other university. A thesis found by examiners to be unsatisfactory will have to be revised; candidates are given one opportunity to revise and resubmit the work within a time-limit specified by the examiners. If, after such revision and resubmission, the thesis is still unacceptable, the candidate will be deemed to have failed and will be required to leave the programme.

Change of Thesis Title/ Research Area

If the thesis title differs significantly from the original approved title, the candidate must submit a change of title in myEduRec (navigate to Academics > Graduate Research > Submit Form) at least one month before the thesis is submitted for examination. Please refer to [UserGuide Form Change of Thesis Title](#).

Nomination of Thesis Examiners

Nomination of thesis examiners is expected to be submitted at least one month in advance before the submission of thesis. Hence students should check with the department administrator if nomination has been made and if he/she can proceed with submission.

Thesis Submission

Further details on thesis submission and examination can be found at Registrar's Office website: [NUS Graduate School](#).

Eligible Courses for Graduate Students for AY 2025/2026

English Language and Linguistics Seminars

Semester 1

(As at 1 July 2025)

EL6770: Graduate Research Seminar

Lecturer: A/P HIRAMOTO, Mie

This is a required course for all research Masters and Ph.D. students admitted from AY2004/05. The course provides a forum for students and faculty to share their research and to engage one another critically in discussion of their current research projects. The course will include presentations by faculty on research ethics and dissertation writing. Each student is required to present a formal research paper. Active participation in all research presentations is expected. The course may be spread over two semesters and will be graded "Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory" on the basis of student presentation and participation.

EL6881: Topics in Language and Cognition

Lecturer: Dr ITO, Aine

This advanced seminar allows graduate students the opportunity to address the interface between linguistics, philosophy, psychology and biology. It is particularly useful for students who are considering pursuing research into the field of cognitive science. Possible topics for discussion include: language as a mental and perhaps biological phenomenon; the issue of modularity; the evolution of language; prototype phenomena. Given the highly interdisciplinary nature of this seminar, it is particularly crucial that participants take the initiative to identify for themselves key issues pertaining to the relationship between language, mind and body.

EL6882: Topics in Language and Society

Lecturer: A/P LAZAR, Michelle M

This advanced seminar is especially useful for students who are considering pursuing research in the social aspects of language, including the politics of language and linguistic anthropology. Students are expected to identify for themselves key issues pertaining to the relationship between language and society. Among the possible topics discussed are: critical comparisons between autonomous and socially-oriented views of language; differences between

variationist sociolinguistics and more critically-informed approaches; the relationship between linguistic structure, language ideology and power.

EL6884: Topics in Applied Linguistics

Lecturer: Dr KAPOOR Shrutika

This advanced seminar provides graduate students with opportunities to undertake and report applied linguistic research in areas of negotiated choice, to develop a situated understanding of applied linguistics as a theoretically informed professional field of enquiry, and to generate spoken and written outcomes that reach, or closely approximate, internationally publishable standards. Topics may range from critical re-theorising of applied linguistics itself to suitably informed investigations relating to language in action and communicative practices, in such domains as speech therapy, classroom language learning, teaching and assessment, translation, business, legal services, news reporting and broadcasting, and other social and workplace settings.

EL5101: Grammatical Analysis

Lecturer: A/P ERLEWINE, Michael Yoshitaka

This course aims to ground graduate students in a solid conceptual, analytical, and empirical foundation for doing research in syntax and semantics. It examines a range of core empirical phenomena that have been important in the development of modern linguistic theory and that remain central to current linguistic frameworks (e.g. passive, infinitival constructions, relative clauses, wh-constructions, binding, etc.). Core theoretical notions to be covered include: phrase structure, grammatical relations, subcategorization, and lexical entries.

ELC5102: Phonetics and Phonology

Lecturer: A/P STARR, Rebecca Lurie

The course covers the foundational knowledge of the sound pattern of human language. Major topics include how speech sounds are made and transmitted, and how they pattern, drawing data primarily from English and other familiar languages. Students will learn the conceptual tools and technical skills in the analysis of speech data.

EL503: Language in Society

Lecturer: A/P HIRAMOTO, Mie

This course surveys major approaches and current issues relevant to the study of language in society. It aims to familiarize students with a range of theoretical and conceptual frameworks they may refer to in addressing sociolinguistic questions across a variety of sites and to provide general principles that they may consider when engaged in the study of language in social context. For this purpose, it will critically discuss classical and contemporary research to explore the historical background, prevailing assumptions, methodological perspectives,

and analytic strengths of different approaches to language in society, and consider recent developments in the field.

ELC5104: Approaches to Language

Lecturer: Dr HUANG, Nick

This foundational course familiarizes graduate students with the major theoretical principles and research paradigms that define the various subfields of linguistics. The course surveys the history of linguistics as a discipline, and introduces major thinkers, key linguistic concepts, significant debates, and basic research methods. Topics covered include formal linguistics, historical linguistics, sociolinguistics, discourse analysis, contact linguistics, psycholinguistics, computational linguistics, and applied linguistics. Students will complete the course with a solid understanding of the range of topics addressed and approaches used in the study of language.

ELC5206: Advanced Psycholinguistics

Lecturer: Dr ITO, Aine

This course explores topics in psycholinguistics such as spoken and visual word recognition, language comprehension, language production, language acquisition, and bilingual language processing. Students will also be exposed to research methods in psycholinguistics and neurolinguistics, including eye-tracking and brain potentials (EEG; Electroencephalography, or ERP; Event-Related Potentials).

ELC5251: Approaches to Discourse

Lecturer: Dr KAPOOR, Shrutika

This course will explore approaches to analysing both written and spoken discourses. Students will learn the analytical tools used to describe features of both modes of discourses. They will be encouraged to explore current research in discourse analysis. There may be a specific focus on particular kinds of discourse (classroom, computer-mediated, media, legal, political, etc.), depending on the expertise and interest of the lecturer. Students will be encouraged to collect and analyse their own data for the assignment.

ELC5253: Textual Construction of Knowledge

Lecturer: A/P LAZAR, Michelle M

This course aims to cultivate an understanding both of the relationship between discourse and ideology and of the textual construction of knowledge. Students will be exposed to a critical deconstruction of different kinds of socio-political discourses (including discourses about gender and race, etc.) with specific attention to ideological positionings, and the role ideology plays in the knowledge construction process. Through this course, students will acquire critical skills in reading texts and come to appreciate the different kinds of textual and ideological strategies used in the formation of knowledge.

EL4203: Semantics

Lecturer: A/P ERLEWINE, Michael Yoshitaka

The goal of this course is to develop a concrete, compositional mapping between the syntactic structure of linguistic expressions and their interpreted meanings, based primarily on the study of English data. Emphasis will be placed on precise, formal descriptions of meanings as truth conditions and their computation. The contribution of the conversational context will also be discussed. Basic knowledge of English syntactic structure will be assumed.

EL4222: Stylistics and Drama

Lecturer: Dr TAN Kok Wan, Peter

This course highlights one way in which the disciplines within the Department (theatre, literary studies and linguistics) can be brought together in the enterprise to come to terms with dramatic discourse. The course will focus on the analysis of dramatic discourse, so that evidenced interpretations of dramatic passages may be provided. Students will be introduced to a number of frameworks, especially those used to deal with discourse such as speech-act theory, the co-operative principle, face and politeness, cognitive and critical discourse approaches. Key topics in stylistics such as foregrounding and reader response will also receive coverage.

EL4252: Interactional Discourse

Lecturer: Dr TAN Kok Wan, Peter

This course focuses on how the phenomenon of discourse might be analysed and will consider how a number of frameworks can be used in a complementary fashion to give a fuller description of discourse. These include the frameworks of register and genre; speech-act theory; co-operation; face and politeness; exchange structure and conversation analysis. This course is appropriate for students reading or intending to read English Language honours.

EL4880D: Experimental Syntax

Lecturer: Dr SHEN, Zheng

Fundamental importance is assigned to speakers' introspective judgments of sentence acceptability in syntactic research. However, such judgments can be gravely compromised by instability of different kinds, which calls into question the empirical reliability of such data. In this course, students will learn objective and practical methods by which they may collect and analyse acceptability judgments. We will discuss experimental design, data visualisation, statistical analysis, and the application of experimental methods to theoretical questions. This will be a hands-on course, and students will be expected to lead discussions on primary research.

English Language and Linguistics Seminars

Semester 2

(As at 1 July 2025)

EL6880: Topics in Grammatical Theory

Lecturer: A/P HIRAMOTO, Mie

This advanced seminar provides graduate students with sustained and critical engagement with recent debates in grammatical theory. Students are expected to identify for themselves key issues in grammatical theory (e.g., the architecture of a theory of grammar, the analysis of specific grammatical phenomena, the epiphenomenality of constructions), situate these issues in relation to wider debates about nature of grammar, and propose lines of inquiry that might contribute to the debates. The seminar is especially useful for students who are considering pursuing research in grammatical analysis/theory.

EL6881: Topics in Language and Cognition

Lecturer: Dr ITO, Aine

This advanced seminar allows graduate students the opportunity to address the interface between linguistics, philosophy, psychology and biology. It is particularly useful for students who are considering pursuing research into the field of cognitive science. Possible topics for discussion include: language as a mental and perhaps biological phenomenon; the issue of modularity; the evolution of language; prototype phenomena. Given the highly interdisciplinary nature of this seminar, it is particularly crucial that participants take the initiative to identify for themselves key issues pertaining to the relationship between language, mind and body.

EL6882: Topics in Language and Society

Lecturer: A/P STARR, Rebecca Lurie

This advanced seminar is especially useful for students who are considering pursuing research in the social aspects of language, including the politics of language and linguistic anthropology. Students are expected to identify for themselves key issues pertaining to the relationship between language and society. Among the possible topics discussed are: critical comparisons between autonomous and socially-oriented views of language; differences between variationist sociolinguistics and more critically-informed approaches; the relationship between linguistic structure, language ideology and power.

ELC5207: Second Language Acquisition and Processing

Lecturer: Dr ITO, Aine

The course introduces students to psycholinguistic research on second language acquisition and processing. It explores the mechanisms of learning a second language in comparison with those of learning a first language as well as how second language processing is different from first language processing. Students

will learn key concepts and psycholinguistic models/theories of second language processing.

ELC5211: Contact Languages

Lecturer: A/P HIRAMOTO, Mie

This course focuses on languages evolving in multilingual settings out of radical contact situations. Commonly referred to as “Pidgins”, “Creoles” and “mixed languages”, these languages are spoken mainly in the Caribbean and Asia-Pacific regions. We concentrate on English-lexified contact varieties and investigate the interaction of typological features and sociolinguistic factors determining language change in contact situations. We also discuss the most salient issues within the field of Language Contact such as:

- (i) Creoles as a synchronically viable structural class;
- (ii) restructuring patterns, creolisation and universal patterns of language change;
- (iii) pidginisation;
- (iv) ideology and classification.

ELC5212: History of English

Lecturer: Dr TAN Kok Wan, Peter

This course is aimed at graduate students who wish to explore the development of the English language over the past 1,500 years or so, and to see that some features of present-day English can be explained in the light of its history. Students should ideally have some background in grammatical description. Issues that will receive attention include the transformation of a synthetic Old English to a more analytic Modern English; language contact as a force for language change; the standardisation of English; and the spread of English and the New Englishes.

ELC5216: Corpus Linguistics

Lecturer: A/P Ooi Beng Yeow, Vincent

This course takes an empirical approach to linguistic investigation: it bases claims largely on computer-aided analyses of electronic datasets that are either manually built with linguistic purposes in mind or those that are readily found on the Web. With special reference to English, relevant topics will be introduced to suit particular needs; the corpus-linguistic methodology blends well with various linguistic levels, including grammar, lexis and discourse. This course does not assume any expert computing knowledge; while no computer programming will be introduced, participants will receive hands-on training in the use of standard corpus-linguistic programs.

ELC5252: Language Variation and Change

Lecturer: A/P STARR, Rebecca Lurie

The study of variation and change in language employs quantitative statistical methods to account for phenomena in real-world language data. This course familiarises students with the major questions and methodologies of variationist research in sociolinguistics and corpus linguistics. Students will learn about the stylistic, social, and linguistic factors that influence how language is produced and perceived, and explore how data drawn from speech, texts, social media, and experimental methods are used to investigate variation. This course will prepare students to pursue independent research incorporating quantitative methods.

EL6882: Topics in Language and Society

Lecturer: A/P STARR, Rebecca Lurie

This advanced seminar is especially useful for students who are considering pursuing research in the social aspects of language, including the politics of language and linguistic anthropology. Students are expected to identify for themselves key issues pertaining to the relationship between language and society. Among the possible topics discussed are: critical comparisons between autonomous and socially-oriented views of language; differences between variationist sociolinguistics and more critically-informed approaches; the relationship between linguistic structure, language ideology and power.

English Language and Linguistics Honours courses available for substitution

EL4216: Lexicology and Lexicography

Lecturer: A/P OOI Beng Yeow, Vincent

With special reference to English in multilingual and multicultural settings, this course introduces students to the study of words from both lexicological (theory) and lexicographical (practice) perspectives. It aims to equip participants with a critical awareness of the notion of the word and its attendant sources of evidence, the organisation of the mental lexicon, and the publication of words in the form of print, online and standalone electronic dictionaries.

EL4253: Language, Gender and Sexual Identities

Lecturer: A/P HIRAMOTO, Mie

This course encourages you to think analytically about identity construction issues regarding gender and sexuality by focusing on language, and about the relation between language and social practice. The goals are inseparably intellectual and political: responsible scholarship and citizenship require the ability and eagerness to go beyond stereotype, common belief, and the popular press, to evaluate claims for oneself in a knowledgeable way. Through the gathering and analysis of data, you will be asked to look for questions that might be answered, problems that might be solved, and issues that might be explored.

EL4254: Language, Ideology and Power

Lecturer: A/P Prof LAZAR, Michelle M

This course focuses on the interrelations between language, ideology and power within contemporary society. It examines key concepts and ideas investigated by a range of scholars working within a critical perspective. Topics covered include: the structuring influence of language on worldviews; the construal of particular realities through patterned linguistic choices; the inclusion/exclusion, privileging/marginalising of different social groups through language policies and practices affecting the use (or disuse) of particular language varieties. Target students: those with an active interest in the social and political aspects of language use, willing to articulate their own positions amid lively and complex debate.

EL4880F: Grammar and Language Processing

Lecturer: Dr Huang Nick

Many morphosyntactic phenomena, such as those concerning subject-verb agreement or wh-dependencies, are typically seen as reflecting abstract grammatical rules. However, linguists have often questioned the need for such rules, arguing that these phenomena can be more fruitfully understood as the product of sentence processing and cognitive constraints, such as the limits of working memory. This course introduces students to these perspectives, their underlying assumptions, and their successes and limitations. Through this course, students will also become more familiar with the logic of linguistics experiments and statistical analysis.

English Literature Seminars

Semester 1

(As at 1 July 2025)

VIP NOTES (2025 onwards) (EN-specific):

- Research-students (MA and PhD) should take research-only courses (EN5XXX and EN6XXX courses) whenever they are on offer, unless there is a compelling reason not to. Please discuss this with your supervisor.
- Research students cannot take foundational ENC courses (ENC5149, ENC5150, and ENC5151), which are designed for the ENC program (unless they have been granted formal approval, in exceptional cases only). Similarly, ENC students cannot usually enroll in research-only courses (exceptional cases only).
- Research students can take non-foundational ENC courses, with instructor approval, but should first discuss best options with their supervisors (including options in other FASS departments). If they do take ENC courses, they will automatically be enrolled in the "research-stream," which will involve slightly more research and longer essays.
- Research students can take up to 25% of their coursework in other FASS departments (e.g., philosophy, history, CNM), provided the instructor is amenable

and the course is a good fit for their specific research program. Please consult your supervisor about this option.

EN6881: Topics in Literary History

Lecturer: Dr BRINK-ROBY, Heather Laura

This advanced seminar is especially useful for students who are considering pursuing research in literature written before the twentieth century. Students are expected to identify for themselves key issues pertaining to the relationship between historical and literary studies, including the identification of appropriate evidence and constraints on the interpretation of texts. Topics and texts will depend upon the research interests of individual students, and may include consideration of different literary historical periods. Every student is expected to complete the full range of the reading for the course.

ENC5149: Literary Studies: Overview and Writing Practices

Lecturer: A/P LIM Swee Huat, Walter

This course, specifically designed for MA by Coursework students, prepares them for a Masters in Literary Studies through a two-pronged approach: First, to obtain a general overview of the discipline in order to approach the field with a better understanding of its academic demands. Through gradual but consistent exposure to articles on various critical approaches and research methods, students will gain an understanding of broad theoretical perspectives. Next, through extensive practice: working through several short writing assignments, revising and resubmitting these through the course of the semester, students' comprehension about disciplinary practices and about field-specific academic writing, will increase substantially.

Note: The course is intended for ENC students only.

ENC5150: Survey of the Discipline: Methods and Approaches

Lecturer: Dr YEOH Guan Hin, Gilbert

The course introduces issues, challenges and questions raised by advanced study in literature and culture. Students approach the study of texts by developing a working understanding of appropriate questions and methods. The course covers the nature of scholarship in literary studies and explores the importance of literary history when approaching a given author or text. It introduces the connections between formal study and historical approaches and the relations between textual and cultural experience. Students pursue their choice of approach from a broad base of critical theory. The course also addresses the role of literature within the intersectional and environmental humanities.

Note: The course is intended for ENC students only.

ENC5151: Global Anglophone Literature**Lecturer: Dr Gayatri Thanu Pillai**

The course introduces students to the emerging field of Global Anglophone Literature, which analyses texts associated with postcolonial and decolonised regions, including Asia, Australia, Canada, Ireland, Jamaica, Kenya, Trinidad, Nigeria, South Africa, as well as Great Britain and North America. The course introduces some foundational material on the history and cultures of Empire, and introduces texts from the greater Anglophone world, asking how these fictional works illuminate the forces that shape the globalized yet unequal world we currently inhabit. Critical contexts include those of race, aboriginality, gender, political economy, migration, cosmopolitanism, technology, and war.

Note: The course is intended for ENC students only.

ENC5235: Politics and Literature**Lecturer: A/P WHALEN-BRIDGE, John**

This course is a focused examination of the various senses of “political literature”. One may say “all literature is ideological”, but this course raises doubts that “everything is political” in a significant way. This course examines the differences between “ideology” and “politics” in relation to literature. The course considers works that challenge conventional distinctions such as that between “propaganda” and “literature”. Students will test definitions of “the political” on a variety of texts.

ENC5247: Victorian Literature: History, Politics, Culture**Lecturer: Dr BRINK-ROBY, Heather Laura**

The course will examine Victorian literature with an emphasis on its historical, political, and cultural context. Topics addressed may include significant literary genres and movements (e.g. The Industrial Novel, Aestheticism and Decadence) major authors (e.g. George Eliot, Oscar Wilde), or broader thematic explorations of the diverse literary productions of nineteenth-century Britain (e.g. Gender and Sexuality in the Nineteenth Century, Imperialism and Victorian Writing). This course will also familiarize students with contemporary critical approaches to the study of Victorian literature and culture.

ENC5880A: Literature and the Environment**Lecturer: A/P SANKARAN, Chitra**

This course examines the shifting perceptions of the natural world found in a variety of English literary works. Through the study of key literary texts, the evolution of ideas about nature will be traced from the 17th century’s age of scientific discovery to the 21st century’s idea of environmental crisis. A key element of the model will be the use of ecocritical ideas and concepts as a way to approach and understand connections between literature and the environment.

EN4222: Topics in the Eighteenth Century

Lecturer: A/P THELL, Anne Marie

This module explores the broader significance of new cognitive, social, and literary tendencies that arose in the eighteenth century, which in turn advanced modernity itself. In this particular iteration of EN4222, we will focus on “material cultures,” broadly conceived: We will discuss materialism as it pertains to science and philosophy, early mercantile capitalism and the emergence of consumer culture, the early stirrings of the British empire, and the print marketplace. Across the term, we will work to understand how a focus on material objects pervades scientific, political, and literary thinking, while we will also investigate the ongoing ‘material turn’ in literary studies. Finally, we will think about how ‘things’ relate to ‘individuals’ at the very moment when the ‘modern individual’ emerges.

EN4234: Pynchon and the Poetics of Information

Lecturer: A/P TEH, David

This course examines the poetics of information in post-industrial society. The novels of Thomas Pynchon will be read as a critical meta-narrative of the informational turn in Western societies since the 1960s. Besides its obvious technological and economic effects, how has the new informational paradigm affected our psychology, everyday life and work; our understandings of place and community, of history and culture? The seminars will explore key themes of Pynchon’s oeuvre – such as alienation, entropy and paranoia – drawing on a wide range of critical theory, cultural history, and critiques of globalisation and technology.

EN4251: Jonathan Swift

Lecturer: A/P THELL, Anne Marie

This course focuses on the work of one of most celebrated Anglo-Irish writers of the eighteenth century: Jonathan Swift. By tracking Swift’s dazzling literary output from 1690 to 1740, we will bring into better focus both the eighteenth century as a historical period and the ideas of historicity and modernity themselves. We will investigate a variety of literary modes, from satire to pamphlet polemics to the early novel, while we will also learn about the development of our own discipline by tracing Swift criticism from its inception to the present day and by entertaining a variety of critical perspectives.

EN4264: Modern Poetry

Lecturer: Dr ANG, Wan Ling Susan

This course will look at the work of modern poets (Modernism and after) focusing mainly on their poetry, but, where relevant, on their critical essays and work in other genres (e.g. drama) which adds to an understanding of their poetic work. The major topics covered will include: the modern condition, the relation to history and myth, modern poetics, the urban and natural worlds and war. Other

topics may be considered, depending on the selection of poets in any particular academic year.

English Literature Seminars

Semester 2

(As at 1 July 2025)

EN6770: Graduate Research Seminar

Lecturer: Dr ROY, Tania

This is a required course for all research Masters and Ph.D. students admitted from AY2004/05 onwards. The course provides a forum for students and faculty to share their research and to engage one another critically in discussion of their current research projects. The course will include presentations by faculty on research ethics and dissertation writing. Each student is required to present a formal research paper. Active participation in all research presentations is expected. The course may be spread over two semesters and will be graded "Satisfactory/ Unsatisfactory" on the basis of student presentation and participation.

EN6880: Topics in the New Literatures

Lecturer: A/P LIM Swee Huat, Walter

This course trains students in select key texts in the new literatures and their social contexts. It locates those literatures in the cultural histories of nationalism, postcolonialism, modernisation, intertextuality and related topics. The course is intended for graduate students.

EN6881: Topics in Literary History

Lecturer: Dr YEOH Guan Hin, Gilbert

This advanced seminar is especially useful for students who are considering pursuing research in literature written before the twentieth century. Students are expected to identify for themselves key issues pertaining to the relationship between historical and literary studies, including the identification of appropriate evidence and constraints on the interpretation of texts. Topics and texts will depend upon the research interests of individual students, and may include consideration of different literary historical periods. Every student is expected to complete the full range of the reading for the course.

EN6882: Advanced Topics in Cultural Studies

Lecturer: Dr ROY, Tania

This advanced seminar allows graduate students the opportunity to address the interface between the wide range of disciplines found under the rubric of Cultural Studies, including literature, anthropology, art history, and media studies. Students will be exposed to areas such as critical theory, visual culture, popular culture, postcolonial studies, gender studies, race studies and history of technology while

also pursuing readings intended to help them refine their objects of inquiry, methodologies and theoretical perspectives.

ENC5238: Literature of the Anglophone Chinese Diaspora

Lecturer: Dr YEOH Guan Hin, Gilbert

This course surveys some major twentieth-century writers. Beginning with selected landmark works of modernist literature in the early twentieth century, we go on to examine authors in the later twentieth century who may be considered postmodern. In the process, we explore a range of issues such as literary experimentation, the literary tradition, literature and gender, magic realism, and literature and historiography. Some attention will go towards understanding modernism and postmodernism, and their characteristics. Writers we will study include J. M. Coetzee, T. S. Eliot, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Toni Morrison, Wallace Stevens, William Carlos Williams and Virginia Woolf.

ENC5239: Literature of the Anglophone Chinese Diaspora

Lecturer: A/P LIM Swee Huat, Gilbert

This course analyses literary works written in English by authors associated with the Chinese diaspora. It considers how this literature engages with concepts such as diaspora, exile, transnationalism, and globalization. It discusses the following themes central to this literature: home and identity; assimilation and alienation; representing China; nationalism and populism; the "Pacific Century"; and others. The course offers an opportunity for a comparative analysis of works written by authors from different countries. Examples of authors to be read include Maxine Hong Kingston, Ha Jin, and Tash Aw. Extracts and short stories may also be recommended for reading.

ENC5240: Visions of China in European Literary Culture

Lecturer: Dr HUI, Andrew Yeung Bun

We will explore European imaginations of China from the medieval to the modern era. Students will journey from Marco Polo's medieval travelogue to Jesuit missionaries' letters, diving into Athanasius Kircher's baroque Sinology and Leibniz's philosophical inquiries. Enlightenment ideas emerge in Voltaire's works, while Borges, Kafka, and Calvino offer modern reflections on the "Oriental Other." We'll explore how European writers constructed and mythologized China, revealing patterns of cultural exchange and fantasy.

ENC5242: Women Novelists

Lecturer: Dr ER, Yanbing

The objectives of this course are to invite students to reflect on and analyse texts by great women novelists. Topics covered include the choice of genre, the relation between narrative structures and psychological experience and their political implications, the nature of the dilemmas at the heart of each text, and the problems of defining and responding to what is specific to women's writing.

ENC5253: Writing in the Aftermath**Lecturer: Dr ROY, Tania**

The course addresses issues of historical trauma and cultural memory; through a focus on how such memory is manifested in aesthetic (primarily literary) representation. The course assumes a dual approach to the study of selected texts, requiring attention to the topic of violence and memory on the one hand; and the ethics and politics of representation on the other. Literary texts will illuminate problems of narrative agency, responsibility and testimony in the aftermath of a violent past. The conceptual framework of discussions derives from Maurice Blanchot and his influence on post-structuralism, and from contemporary uses of psychoanalysis by literary theorists.

ENC5883: Screen Culture in Southeast Asia**Lecturer: A/P TEH, David**

What's distinctive about moving images in Southeast Asia? Are they vehicles of a convergent 'global' culture, or a medium for difference, resistance and critique? As video becomes integral to everyday social and economic life, and screen culture reaches beyond the bounds of national cinema, so should theory and criticism. This interdisciplinary course draws on cultural and media theory, art history and anthropology, as well as film studies, exploring a range of fiction and non-fiction material including indie and experimental film, documentaries, video art and installations. Students will engage critically with this region's screen cultures, via both historical and contemporary perspectives.

English Literature Honours courses available for substitution

EN4232: Topics in American Literature**Lecturer: A/P Whalen-Bridge, John**

This course, which is aimed at upper level English Literature majors and cross-faculty students who have some experience with literary analysis, will focus on American literary orientalism in order to continue to examine questions of race, gender, ethnicity and literary form in the (mainly postwar) American imagination.

EN4263: Topics in European Literature**Lecturer: Prof BAKER, Geoffrey Allen**

This course, whose specific content may change from time to time within the following guidelines, presents an interdisciplinary approach, but one grounded in the literary, to a topic in European literature, especially but not exclusively from the Romantic, Modernist or Contemporary periods. Always comparative (across two nations at least), it considers aspects of a period, a movement, a thematic issue or a combination of all these. Texts are chosen not only for their intrinsic merits but for their complementarity to the English Literature curriculum in general, and, as a course cross-listed with European Studies, to that programme also.

EN4265: Approaches to World Literature: Critical Realism
Lecturer: Dr ROY, Tania

The new millennium has witnessed a return to realism in literature, criticism, and popular culture. Our taste for realism extends from the television reality-show, dramas like *The Wire*, to novels that seek to describe the impact of world markets on lived reality by mapping this system onto the traditional realist narrative. These developments suggest that canonical modernisms of the early twentieth-century prescribed, and so constrained, critical approaches to literatures of the postcolony. Focusing on the resurgent value of postcolonial realism for our current globalist conjuncture, the course entertains theoretical exchanges between World Literature, Postcolonial Studies, and the Frankfurt School's Marxism.

FASS graduate courses available for substitution:

For FASS options, please see current listings in **History, Philosophy, Asian Studies, and CNM**.

E.g., in 2025-26, Philosophy has nominated the following course as potentially suitable to EN postgraduates:

- PH6241 Advanced Philosophical Logic. This course rotates between varied topics: Topics in Analytic Philosophy, Traditions in Asian philosophy, Topics in History of Western Philosophy, Comparative Philosophy.

In other years, see also:

- PH5650 Continental Philosophy
- PH6243 Aesthetics
- PH6242 Philosophy of Language

Theatre and Performance Studies

Semester 1

(As at 1 July 2025)

Note: TPS5101 is mandatory for TPS Coursework MA students. TS5101 is mandatory for TS Research students (MA-by-research and PhD). Coursework students cannot enrol in TS5101, and Research students cannot enrol in TPS5101.

- Research students can take a selection of TPS-coded courses, including: TPS5212, TPS5215, TPS5242, TPS5201, TPS5213 and TPS5214.
- Research MA students may take up to one level 4000 TS courses.
- Coursework MA students may take TS4212 and/or TS4221 *with permission of the instructor*. Please note that space in these courses will be limited. Other level 4000 TS courses are not available for Coursework MA students.

TPS5101: Text and Performance

Lecturer: A/P WOLFE, Graham John

This course provides a broad-based critical and theoretical foundation for advanced study of theatre and performance. Engaging with scripts, live theatrical performances, media performances and cultural performances, the course trains students to examine and compare the critical positions and questions posed by a range of theoretical texts with different approaches, priorities and methodologies. Core topics are the mutually transformational modalities of textuality and performativity, live and mediated performance, and non-traditional critical and performance practices. Students are guided in formulating research questions and writing analytically about theatre and performance.

Note: The course is intended for TPS students only

TPS5201: Collaborative Performance Creation

Lecturer: Dr MURPHY, Maiya

Through studying collaborative performance histories and methodologies from across the globe and engaging in practical exploration, students are invited to consider the intersections of performance, power, technique, aesthetic, and context. While all performances may be considered intrinsically collaborative, this course zeros in on companies that highlight collaboration as a feature to drive or reimagine creation and performance processes. From the most politically engaged theatre to aesthetically inspired performance-making, this course thinks across place, time, and agenda to study companies that stake claims on collaborative performance such as The Living Theatre, Reduta, and The Necessary Stage.

Remarks: Category: Creative Practices in Performance.

Note: The course is intended for both TPS and TS students

TPS5203: Movement as Critique**Lecturer: A/P LIANG Peilin**

Without movement, there would be no performance. The way we move is shaped by prevailing ideologies, sociocultural beliefs and material conditions. Treating human movement on the stage as a mode of critical inquiry, we will examine the way movement has shaped performance style and practice. In addition, students will learn the fundamentals of the moving body, conduct physical assessment, and formulate safe movement strategies for the stage. The practical components of the course are conceived as interventions that respond to discourses relating to capitalism, efficiency and aesthetics.

Remarks: Category: Creative Practices in Performance

TPS5212: Asian International Cinema**Lecturer: Dr LIM Mei Ling, Edna**

In recent years, the vitality and currency of Asian cinema has resulted in texts that can no longer be viewed as merely artefacts of a particular culture or nation. This course looks at how film industries in Asia have engaged with global cinema through various forms of negotiations that assert, compromise or consume national, cultural or conventional distinctions. We assess the implications of a conglomerate Asian cinema by examining the current trend of transnational Asian films, the translatability of conventions and adaptability of ideas within Asia itself as well as between Asia and dominant cinemas like Hollywood.

Remarks: Category: Theatre, Film and Literature

Note: The course is intended for both TPS and TS students

TPS5215: Theatre and the Novel**Lecturer: A/P WOLFE, Graham John**

This course asks how we can better understand theatre through the lens of novels and vice versa. It explores the complex relationships between theatre and prose fiction in different eras and parts of the world. Often competing for audiences and defining themselves through antagonism, theatre and novels have also influenced each other's development, drawing upon each other's techniques, mimicking each other's affordances, at times collaborating or even seeking to dissolve apparent boundaries. Focusing on several authors who have straddled theatre-making and novel-writing, the course investigates topics such as adaptation, transmodalization, theatricality, anti-theatricality, intermediality and parody.

Note: The course is intended for both TPS and TS students

TPS5241: Digital Archiving and Live Performance**Lecturer: Dr LIM Eng Hui, Alvin**

This course introduces key aspects of the field of digital archiving in relation to the performing arts. It will discuss topics on digital media, preservation principles, policy, organisation, curation, translation and subtitling, access and copyrights.

Students will learn to work with both material objects (manuscripts, posters, scripts, programmes, photographs, etc.) and digital objects (audio-visual files, text documents, databases, etc.). Theories of digital archiving and their socio-cultural meanings will also be introduced. Students will develop a prototype digital archive with the use of existing website development tools and explore the challenges and issues that archivists face when developing a digital performance archive.

Remarks: Category: Digital Skills in the Arts and Humanities

TPS5242: Visualising Orientalism, Travel and Performance

Lecturer: A/P YONG Li Lan

How did visualising travel disseminate orientalism as part of colonialism and thereafter? This course looks at panoramas of foreign locales in the early nineteenth century, travel photography, plays and travelling troupes to examine how visually performing the going or coming from abroad has shaped artistic paradigms. Students gain competence in researching and assembling visual materials. They discuss the modes by which viewers enact movement across geographical locations and connect cultural terrains. A digital project equips students with the reflexive skills for scaffolding, designing and presenting a journey through the visual mediums of theatre, film, photography and digital media.

Remarks: Category: Digital Skills in the Arts and Humanities

Note: The course is intended for both TPS and TS students

Theatre Studies Honours courses available for substitution

Note: Coursework MA students may take TS4212 and/or TS4221 *with permission of the instructor*. Please note that space in these courses will be limited. Other level 4000 TS courses are not available for Coursework MA students.

TS4212: Playwriting: Practice and Production

Lecturer: Dr TAY Inn Jean

This course aims to train students in the art and practice of play-writing while simultaneously offering them the opportunity to role-play the professional responsibilities and disciplines of a playwright. Topics to be covered include dramatic structure, dramatic action, the relationship between dialogue and action, characterisation, setting, the use of physical objects to create meaning, and different treatments of time on stage. Students will be assigned research and writing exercises throughout the course culminating in a full-length play. Students will also be expected to act in and direct other students' scenes and plays as part of the continuous re-drafting and critique process.

TS4221: Performance Research

Lecturer: Dr LIM Eng Hui, Alvin

Doing performance can teach us things that watching it cannot. This course uses performance practice as a research methodology to investigate otherwise inaccessible questions of creativity, embodiment, and performance processes. The three main components of the course include: defining a research question,

designing and conducting experiments/observations, presenting the outcomes. Students will conceptualise and execute their own research project, in a relationship of collaborative research with artists. The nature of the project determines the resulting presentation: multi-media talk, lecture-demonstration, or short performance or workshop. The course will also focus on case studies from a range of cultural and stylistic sources.

TS4880C: Contemporary Performance Practices

Lecturer: Dr THONG Pei Qin

Live performance is a vibrant and dynamic art form, and innovations in aesthetics and technique mean that it is constantly changing. Over the course of this course, students will conduct a critical assessment of recent developments in performance practice, and of their implications for performance theory and analysis. Recent trends in performance and scholarship will be surveyed, informed by a combination of publications, electronic resources, and theatre-going. Students will be assessed on their capacity to develop informed responses to the work, to conduct and present independent research into current trends, and to reflect critically on the concept of the 'contemporary'.

Theatre and Performance Studies

Semester 2

(As at 1 July 2025)

Note: TPS5101 is mandatory for TPS Coursework MA students. TS5101 is mandatory for TS Research students (MA-by-research and PhD). Coursework students cannot enrol in TS5101, and Research students cannot enrol in TPS5101.

- Research students can take a selection of TPS-coded courses, including: TPS5212, TPS5215, TPS5242, TPS5201, TPS5213 and TPS5214.
- Research MA students may take up to one level 4000 TS course.
- Coursework MA students may take TS4212 and/or TS4221 *with permission of the instructor*. Please note that space in these courses will be limited. Other level 4000 TS courses are not available for Coursework MA students.

TS5101: Text and Performance

Lecturer: A/P LIANG Peilin

This course provides a broad-based critical and theoretical foundation for advanced study of theatre and performance. Engaging with scripts, live theatrical performances, media performances and cultural performances, the course trains students to examine and compare the critical positions and questions posed by a range of theoretical texts with different approaches, priorities and methodologies. Core topics are the mutually transformational modalities of textuality and performativity, live and mediated performance, and non-traditional critical and performance practices. Students are guided

in formulating research questions and writing analytically about theatre and performance. Note: The course is intended for TPS students only

Note: The course is intended for TS research students only

TPS5213: Theatre and Civil Dramaturgy

Lecturer: Dr Sonya WONG

This course critically examines the relationship between theatre-making and civil engagement through site-specificity and public anthropology and docudrama. This practice-centred course will also explore the different genres and modalities of theatre as tools to materialise visions of social and cultural histories and changes.

Remarks: Category: Creative Practices in Performance

TPS5213: Performing Shakespeare in Asia

Lecturer: A/P YONG Li Lan

Shakespeare is by far the most produced and adapted western playwright in East Asian theatre cultures. Approaches to translating, performing and re-writing his plays have changed over time, and are now at their most diverse and experimental. Correlatively, connections and relationships between Asian and Anglophone performance histories have also matured. Using translated and annotated archival recordings, this course examines the historical contexts and theatrical concerns of East Asian Shakespeare performances, relating them comparatively to Anglophone and European textual and performance histories. It is jointly taught by NUS and The Shakespeare Institute, University of Birmingham as a distance learning course.

TPS5214: Performance Ethnography

Lecturer: Dr LIM Eng Hui, Alvin

Covering a spectrum of theories, practices, and methods of performance ethnography, students will encounter and engage in the process of translating experience into text, audio, photography or video. This graduate course invites students to engage with ethnography as a mode of inquiry that facilitates cultural exchange and engagement with all involved—participants, audiences, and ethnographers. Beyond textual descriptions of performance, this course introduces students to innovative approaches to translating performative exchanges into a different medium. Through the process of documentation, narration, location recordings, critiquing the process, and interpretation, this course will consider the ethics and politics of ethnographic representation.

Note: The course is intended for both TPS and TS students

TPS5216: Adaptations and Remakes

Lecturer: A/P LIM Mei Ling, Edna

This course explores the rich and dynamic process of adaptations and remakes across various forms of storytelling, including drama, theatrical production, literary and graphic novels, film and television. We study source texts and their adaptations and/or remakes as acts of transforming and performing the same stories through

the codes, conventions and formal qualities of each medium or genre, as well as the creative, cultural and/or commercial motivations that drive the changes between them. Through critical analysis, students will understand how adaptations and remakes can both preserve and reinvent narratives as overlapping but unique performances.

Remarks: Category: Theatre, Film and Literature

TPS5243: Data Analysis and Visualization for Theatre Research

Lecturer: A/P ESCOBAR, Miguel Varela

Theatre performances are increasingly advertised, documented and discussed online. Scholars have a new opportunity to gather this digital data to better understand the history and current trends of theatre performances. This course provides an introduction to data analysis and visualization, and does not require a technical background. Our objective is to understand how data can complement more traditional modes of scholarship, such as historical and ethnographic research. While the examples will mostly come from theatre studies, the techniques learned in the course are applicable to the analysis of all types of cultural data, such as literature, film and popular culture.

Remarks: Category: Digital Skills in the Arts and Humanities

Theatre and Performance Studies Honours courses available for substitution

Note: Coursework MA students may take TS4212 and/or TS4221 *with permission of the instructor*. Please note that space in these courses will be limited. Other level 4000 TS courses are not available for Coursework MA students.

TS4218: Theatre and Gender

Lecturer: Dr Douglas Eacho

This course examines popular media-mediated events “as” performance. The course will investigate the way in which ‘mediatised’(i.e., media-mediated) and popular events “perform” and shape the audience’s perception of reality. Conversely, the course will also examine how media-mediated performance is influenced by audience interests and perceptions. The focus will be on popular media-mediated events like sports, reality TV, the internet to illustrate how they constitute different modes of performances while sharing similar performativities. The course will also focus on cross-genre, inter-disciplinary performances while also examining notions of the spectacular and spectacle in contemporary visual culture.

TS4220: Shakespeare and Film

Lecturer: A/P YONG Li Lan

This course provides a study of how the literary and performance traditions associated with Shakespeare’s work are mobilised and transformed by the visual cultures of contemporary cinema. Through the intersections between the mediums of the dramatic text, theatre and film, the course examines central issues that shape Shakespeare’s currency and circulation in the cinema: the values attached to

authenticity and performance traditions, the Shakespearean actor, the appropriation and parody of the “universality” of Shakespeare, and the transformation of the meaningfulness of his plays through visuality and spectacle.

FASS graduate courses available for substitution:

HY5415: Theatres of Memory: Performing Public History

Lecturer:

This course surveys how societies gain new understandings of the past through performances in the public sphere. A broad spectrum of performances across various cultural contexts will be explored, including theatre and dance, historical re-enactments, public rituals, immersive exhibitions, films, and digital sites such as video games and social media. This course equips students with a toolkit with which to interpret, analyse, and reflect on the dramaturgical strategies and techniques that shape the stories told in these performances, examining how they enhance historical consciousness and negotiate the distance between past and present for the communities involved.

Independent Study Course **Semesters 1 & 2**

Independent Study Course

By arrangement with a faculty member

The Independent Study Course is designed to enable the student to explore an approved topic in the subject in depth. The student should approach a lecturer to work out an agreed topic, readings, and assignments for the course. A formal, written agreement is then drawn up, giving a clear account of the topic, programme of study, assignments, evaluation, and other pertinent details. The agreement is then approved by Graduate Studies Committee: please submit through Ms. Fatimah Ahmad. Regular meetings and reports are expected and evaluation is based on 100% Continuous Assessment. The precise breakdown of contact hours, assignment and preparation is to be worked out between the lecturer and the student, subject to Department approval.

Workload: Minimum 10 hours per week.

EL5660 Independent Study Course: 5000-6000 words,
EL6660 Independent Study Course: 7000-8000 words

EN5660 Independent Study Course: 5000-6000

words, EN6660 Independent Study Course: 7000-8000 words

TPS5660 Independent Study Course: 4000-6000 words,
TPS6660 Independent Study Course: 6000-8000 words

For TPS5660 and TPS6660, lower limit only with substantial practice component

EXTERNAL SEMINARS

Consult departmental web sites. The taking of external courses is subject to approval both by ELTS Graduate Committee and the lecturer of the external course.

Graduate Thesis Advisors & Faculty Members

Please consult the FASS and ELTS staff profiles for information on the current research areas, publications and projects of faculty.

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Graduate Students who require advice on academic matters should consult their respective thesis advisor(s) or our Graduate Chairs/Coordinators for advice. Our Graduate Chairs/Coordinators, together with our Graduate Student Representatives, strive to develop and promote events, workshops and seminars that help professionalise our graduate students. Our Graduate Chairs/Coordinators ensure the productive and efficient progress of each graduate student in our department.

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Graduate Student Representatives

Our graduate student representatives play an active role in getting all our graduates together. They organize social gatherings, professionalization workshops and conduct surveys from time to time to provide a richer and meaningful experience for all our graduates. If you like to join in the experience, do feel free to get in touch with them!



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Important Information

Policy on plagiarism

- In our department, plagiarism means using ideas, words, arguments or points from a “reading” or “source” without proper citation. So long as you are using or making a reference to an idea or a point from a given source, whether or not quoted directly, you need to cite the source. These sources may be from books, journal articles, the internet, other online sites, or even your own previous assignments. For information on plagiarism, please refer to [NUS-Plagiarism-Policy](#).
- Our department does not tolerate plagiarism. Graduate students who are deemed to be guilty of plagiarism will be referred to the ELT Department plagiarism committee. If found guilty, the student’s plagiarized assignment will receive a failure grade or zero marks, and the student will be referred to a higher Board of Discipline which may recommend further penalties.

Important Websites

- NUS Student Information System (My EduRec):
<https://edurec.nus.edu.sg/psp/cs90prd/?cmd=login>
- Programme Requirements – FASS:
<https://fass.nus.edu.sg/prospective-students/graduate/research/programmes-available/>
- NUS Graduate School – Downloadable Forms:
<https://myportal.nus.edu.sg/studentportal/nusgs/gd/df/>
- FASS – Downloadable Forms:
<https://myportal.nus.edu.sg/studentportal/fas/gd/forms-research.html>
- Leave of Absence:
<http://www.nus.edu.sg/registrar/administrative-policies-procedures/graduate/leave-of-absence>
- Student Status Letter Request System:
[NUS Office of the University Registrar](#)
- Thesis Submission and Examination:
<https://myportal.nus.edu.sg/studentportal/nusgs/gd/>
- Tuition Fees Payable – Thesis Submission (Cut-off Date):
<https://nusgs.nus.edu.sg/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/Fees-Payable-for-Thesis-Submission.pdf>
- DERC Guidelines:
<https://fass.nus.edu.sg/elts/grad-doc/>
- Scholarships for Overseas Study and Fieldworks:
<https://fass.nus.edu.sg/prospective-students/graduate/research/scholarships/>
- Course Enrollment:
<http://www.nus.edu.sg/ModReg/>
- Examination Directory:
<https://myportal.nus.edu.sg/studentportal/academics/all/examination-directory.html>
- Information on Fees:
<https://fass.nus.edu.sg/prospective-students/graduate/research/fees/>
- Commencement:
<http://www.nus.edu.sg/commencement>
- Policy on Plagiarism:
<https://myportal.nus.edu.sg/studentportal/fas/gd/plagiarism.html>

For further information,
please visit ELTS website at
<http://www.fass.nus.edu.sg/elts/>

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