



جامعة الإمام عبد الرحمن بن فيصل  
IMAM ABDULRAHMAN BIN FAISAL UNIVERSITY

Imam Abdulrahman Bin Faisal University

College of Arts

Department of English

Master of Arts in English Linguistics

Student Handbook

Master's Thesis Guide

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

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## Section I: Overview of Master of Arts in English Linguistics

This handbook provides students with useful information to students regarding the linguistic master's degree programs offered by the Department of English (DOE). This Handbook was designed to achieve the following objectives:

1. to provide students with necessary information about the available graduate program options, policies, regulations, requirements, and respective responsibilities of students and faculty.
2. to provide students with guidance during the journey and a source to refer to when necessary.
3. to guarantee that students are well-informed to make the right decisions and seek help when needed.

### Tracks of Master of Arts in English Linguistics

The Department of English linguistic master's degree program offers two tracks:

1. The General Linguistics track is designed to provide courses in core areas of linguistics.
2. The Sociolinguistics track is designed to provide courses in core areas of linguistics with more focused courses on sociolinguistics.

### Master of Arts in English Linguistics Identification Information

Program Name	Master of Arts in English Linguistics
Qualification Level	Master, Level 7
System of Study	Coursework and Thesis
Mode of Study	On Campus
Number of Hours	30 hours
Program Location	College of Arts, Al-Rayan Campus

### Program Mission Statement and Goals

#### Mission Statement

To provide high quality education and scientific research in the various areas of Linguistics to enrich language studies that serve the community. The program was designed to achieve the following goals:

1. Providing broad theoretical and practical knowledge of linguistics.
2. Preparing postgraduate students to conduct innovative research in the field of linguistics.
3. Enriching universities, at local and regional levels, with highly qualified academics and researchers in the field of linguistics who are able to serve society in different areas.

## Professional Opportunities

Graduate students pursuing an MA in (socio)linguistics are interested in a variety of language-focused career paths. Among them are:

1. academics & university faculty members specialized in Linguistics.
2. research assistants in various fields of Linguistics.
3. linguists in language planning institutions such as King Salman International Arabic Language Academy; and King Abdullah Bin Abdelaziz International Centre for Arabic Language Service.
4. other professions requiring analytical, linguistic, or writing skills.

## Program Learning Outcomes

### *General Linguistics Learning Outcomes*

General Linguistics	
Knowledge and Understanding	
K1	Discuss essential linguistic concepts, terminology, and theories.
K2	Demonstrate knowledge of relevant research methods in the different linguistic fields.
Skills	
S1	Critically assess various data within their cultural and linguistic contexts utilizing different linguistic theories.
S2	Conduct research to address various linguistic inquiries.
S3	Demonstrate communicative competence in written linguistic research and oral presentations.
S4	Use technology to process linguistic data for research purposes.
Values	
V1	Apply academic ethical standards in their research practices.
V2	Effectively collaborate in research projects or groups.
V3	Effectively manage a task or activity with high autonomy.

### *Sociolinguistics Learning Outcomes*

Sociolinguistics	
Knowledge and Understanding	
K1	Discuss essential sociolinguistic concepts, terminology, and theories.
K2	Demonstrate knowledge of relevant research methods in the different sociolinguistic fields.
Skills	
S1	Critically assess various data within their sociocultural and linguistic contexts utilizing different linguistic theories.
S2	Conduct research to address various sociolinguistic inquiries.
S3	Demonstrate communicative competence in written sociolinguistic research and oral presentations.
S4	Use technology to process sociolinguistic data for research purposes.
Values	
V1	Apply academic ethical standards in their research practices.

V2	Effectively collaborate in research projects or groups.
V3	Effectively manage a task or activity with high autonomy.

## Master of Arts in English Linguistics Study Plan

As noted earlier, the program study plan applies a blended system of courses and thesis and has two tracks: General Linguistics and Sociolinguistics.

The maximum number of years for the completion of the program is four years. Each year has two terms. The program courses are administrated in the first year. General courses are provided in the first term, whereas major-specific courses are provided in the second term. Upon the completion of the courses, students embark on preparing the thesis in a field of their major. The 30-hour credit program are to be completed as follows:

- ✓ 4 General compulsory courses in the first term (12 hours)
- ✓ 3 Major-specific compulsory courses in the second term (8 hours)
- ✓ 2 Elective courses in the second term (4 hours)
- ✓ Thesis in the second year (6 hours)

## Master of Arts in English Linguistics Research Priorities

Students are encouraged to conduct research that is consistent with the program’s research priorities as follows:

<b>Research Priorities</b>	
<b>Department of English</b>	<b>MA in English Linguistics Program</b>
To conduct research in its various disciplines (Lit, Linguistics and Translation) to address the current issues locally and internationally.	Linguistic studies in relation to local and international current issues/topics.
Saudi Values and Heritage Research in English	Linguistic studies in relation to Saudi Values and Heritage
Urban research on the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia on the level of language use	Linguistic studies in relation to Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia on the level of language use

## Section II: Degree Requirements

To be awarded the degree, students have to meet all the requirements of the degree, namely, course requirements, academic publication requirements, and thesis requirements.

### Course Requirements

To fulfill the course requirements, students are required to pass 24 credit courses, of which 20 are compulsory and 4 are elective, with a minimum grade of C in each course and a minimum grade of B or above for grade of all the courses counted toward the degree. Students must have a C average on the courses to fulfill their degree requirements.

### Academic Publication Requirements

To be eligible for thesis examination, students are required to publish one manuscript in a peer-reviewed journal of their choice. Prior to the oral examination, students need to submit a document that indicates that the paper is published or accepted. Being *under review* meets the requirement as well. However, a document that shows that the paper was submitted is not sufficient. Students need to wait until the paper is under review to arrange for oral examination. There is a standard research paper format available [here](#).

### Thesis Requirements

To be awarded the degree, students must successfully fulfill the following requirements: (a) 6 credit thesis writing tasks; (b) thesis oral examination, and (c) the submission of the required corrections by the appointed examination panel members and finalized thesis to the Department of English.

### *Supervision*

Students are responsible for securing a supervisor who is a faculty member from the Department of English. In the second year, students must register for the 6-credit master's thesis research course.

The primary goal of supervision is to establish an ongoing relationship with the supervisor to facilitate students' learning and academic development, on one hand, and guide thesis progress and provide timely constructive feedback ensuring that the work is done correctly according to the well-established academic standards. Students are entitled to **one hour of supervision per week** and no less than once per month and more often as necessary. Supervisors are expected to submit a [monthly report of students' development](#) whereas students are expected to fill out [Student Supervisory Form](#) at each meeting indicating assigned tasks, accomplishments, issues or difficulties facing students, and scheduling of future meetings (see [Appendix A](#)). Both supervisors and students are strongly urged to communicate with students' academic advisor or the Department of English when they face difficulties in communication.

### ***Thesis Proposal***

Students are eligible to submit a [thesis proposal](#) if they pass 50% of their courses with a minimum grade of C in each course and a minimum grade of B or above for the courses counted toward the degree. They are responsible for selecting a topic with the help of the advisor or supervisor. Research topics must be within the research interest of the appointed supervisors and approved by the department. Students are advised to consult their potential supervisors before submitting their proposals.

Your proposal must include research questions, aims, literature review, methods, short bibliography, and the name of the potential supervisor.

### ***Word Count Requirement***

The thesis must meet the minimum word count of 18,000-22,000 words, excluding the front matter (Title Page, Copyright Page, Abstract, Dedication, Table of Contents, Acknowledgment, and Lists of Tables, Figures, and Abbreviations) and back matter (bibliography and appendix). A thesis must not exceed 22,000 words. Should your thesis exceed the maximum length of 22,000 words, your supervisor is required to submit a written request to be approved by the Department of English Board.

### ***Thesis Style***

Students must follow the [APA Style 7<sup>th</sup> Edition](#). For quick citation and reference guide, you can download [this guide](#) provided by Dutchess Community College.

### ***Thesis Submission***

Once the thesis is ready, the supervisor should initiate the submission process by submitting a request (accompanied by Declaration of Thesis Readiness Report) to the Department of English Board. In this request, the supervisor needs to suggest the names of two examiners. The supervisor is responsible for obtaining the approval of the examiners. The examination committee should be an odd number of members, two examiners and the supervisor, with a minimum of three. Upon the approval of the selected committee members, the supervisor and the student are responsible for ensuring a timely delivery of the thesis to the examiners. Each examiner must complete and submit the examiner's report independently indicating that the thesis meets the minimum accepted standards of academic research. Upon the submission of the examiners' reports, the Deanship of Postgraduate Studies will schedule the oral examination and communicate its day and date with the students, the examination committee, and the Department of English. To be awarded the degree, students need to upload their theses to the Saudi Digital Library (SDL) after the oral examination and the final approval of the theses.



## ***Plagiarism***

Plagiarism is the act of attributing someone else's ideas or words to one's own without citation or referencing. It is considered a punishable and prosecutable intellectual crime. To check and detect plagiarism, all research papers or theses need to be submitted via plagiarism detection software such as Turnitin or iThenticate. An established score threshold of 20% maximum on the similarity report is allowed. Projects with plagiarism percentages above 20% may not be accepted and students will be given a chance to re-submit their projects after doing the required modifications. Exceptions may apply as there are certain sections of a thesis that can show high similarity submitted to Turnitin/ iThenticate, for example, Material and Methods sections from the same discipline. However, when interpreting the similarity report, assessors should be able to determine whether the student has simply copied or edited another writer's text, or whether the student has written their own text that may coincide with already existing content. If the research is determined to lack originality or if it is not the work of the student herself, the Head of the Department will generate a report, and the matter will be addressed by the Disciplinary Committee at the college.

Students may submit a first draft on Turnitin/ iThenticate through different stages of their research journey where they can view the similarity report. Then, they can edit based on their supervisors' comments and review what the similarity report has detected. Before final submission of thesis, the supervisor should submit a 'declaration of originality' report to be approved by the Department Council. To obtain access to iThenticate, you need to follow the following steps:

1. Sign in [eservices](#).
2. From My Dashboard, click IT services.
3. Click Saned.
4. Choose other services > plagiarism detection system > and then request an iThenticate/Turnitin account.

## ***Oral Examination Evaluation***

The results of the thesis and oral examination are graded on a pass/no pass basis. They will be assessed utilizing the following the requirements specified in the [Thesis Template](#) and [the University Rubric](#). Below are the most pivotal criteria.

*Rationale:* A selected topic and its importance must be logically and adequately justified and the research questions and aims must be relevant and achieve the aims of the study.

*Literature review:* A thesis needs to demonstrate that students did a thorough and in-depth survey of the relevant scholarly literature on the selected topic and highlight how the thesis fits within the scholarly work and the selected theoretical framework.

*Methodology:* A thesis will be graded based on the selection, suitability, and execution of the methodology of the study.

*Result or Analysis presentation of thesis:* A thesis will be evaluated based on the quality of the result presentation and/or the analysis of the data and the quality and adequacy of the discussion. Discussion and conclusion drawn from the results and analysis must be appropriate and adequate, and most importantly they need to address the questions and achieve the aims of the study.

*Writing skills and presentation:* Thesis and students' ideas must be presented and expressed in excellent written academic English following the APA Style.

*Oral skills and ability to address examiners' questions:* Equally importantly, the oral examination and thesis are graded by partially assessing students' oral skills and ability to present, discuss, and defend their topic and address examiners' questions successfully and confidently.

### ***Oral Examination Results***

The oral examination committee shall submit a written report, signed by all the committee members, indicating the following possible examination outcomes:

1. Degree awarded with no further changes to the thesis.
2. Degree awarded with changes to the thesis (changes should be addressed and thesis submitted in three months)
3. Revise and resubmit thesis and retake the oral examination.
4. Reject the thesis.

### ***Thesis Template***

A [thesis template](#), to further guide students in thesis contents and formatting, is provided by the Department of English. When writing your thesis, students need to follow the required contents and order as shown in the [Thesis Template](#) as well as the [framework for writing theses approved by the university](#). In addition, you always need to consult with your supervisor as the nature of some studies may require more information. You can find some helpful tips [here](#).

## Appendix A



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### Department of English Master's Programs

#### Thesis Supervision Record Form

The supervision record form must be filled out by the student and approved by the supervisor at each and every formal meeting, which is expected to be held once a week and no less than once a month and more often as necessary. It is important that all research students keep records of formal meetings with their research supervisor(s). This means that they will be able to trace the history of how their project developed over time. These records may also help to prevent misunderstandings and will assist with reminding both supervisor and supervisee of deadlines agreed, action points to be taken, or issues to follow up. Student must submit a copy of the supervision record form to his/her supervisor after every meeting via Blackboard.

Supervisor's Name:		Student's Name:	
		Student's ID No.:	
Date of Previous Meeting:	Date of Current Meeting:		Date of Next Meeting:
Previous action Points		Completion (Complete/Incomplete/Ongoing)	Percentage of (in)completion
1.			
2.			
3.			
<i>Note: Complete = assigned task is completed, and student is meeting deadlines, Incomplete = assigned task in not completed as planned and student is behind, Ongoing = assigned task is completed but it is still ongoing.</i>			
Summary of meeting discussion points:			
Agreed action points:			
Supervisor's notes:			
Supervisor's signature		Student's signature	