MA in English Literature

Programme Specification

AOU / OU-UK

Arab Open University

Faculty of Languages Studies

MA in English Literature

Programme Specification

Outlines

Programme specification

1. Overview/ factual information

Programme/award title(s)	**MA IN ENGLISH LITERATURE**
Teaching Institution	Arab Open University (AOU)
Awarding Institution	The Open University (OU)
Date of first OU validation	2009
Date of latest OU (re)validation	March 2020
Next revalidation	March 2025
Credit points for the award	180 points
UCAS Code	Code F29
JACS Code	
Programme start date and cycle of starts if appropriate.	Started in Jordan Branch in September 2012 Started in Egypt Branch in September 2018
Underpinning QAA subject benchmark(s)	
Other external and internal reference points used to inform programme outcomes. **For apprenticeships, the standard or framework against which it will be delivered.**	In designing the new MA Programme in English Literature, the FLS Council has been guided by the following General Points of Reference**:** • **AOU** mission, objectives and strategies • **QAA:** Benchmarking (M) Level Programmes • **QAA:** Code of Practice for the Assurance of Academic Quality and Standards in Higher Education • **FHEQ:** Descriptor for a Qualification at Masters (M) Level: Master's Degree
Professional/statutory recognition	Validated by: OU, 2009 Revalidated by: OU, 2015 Validated locally by: ✓ Jordan Ministry of Higher Education, 2012. ✓ Supreme Council of Universities in Egypt, 2015**.** Will be revalidated by OU in March 2020 Local Ministries of Higher Education (Branches)
For apprenticeships fully or partially integrated Assessment.	
Mode(s) of Study (PT, FT, DL, Mix of DL & Face-to-Face) Apprenticeship	Mix of DL & Face-to-Face **--** FT
Duration of the programme for each mode of study	2 years
Dual accreditation (if applicable)	OU and Local Ministries of Higher Education (Branches)
Date of production/revision of this specification	February-March 2020

2. Programme aims and objectives

2.1 Educational aims and objectives

This taught postgraduate programme in literature will:

- build upon and develop students' existing knowledge of, and interest in, the study of literature;
- provide students with appropriate training in methods of research in literature at postgraduate level;
- provide students with the opportunity to carry out a substantial piece of independent research, and write this up using the appropriate scholarly apparatus;
- enable students to read, think, speak and write critically about literary texts, both in relation to other texts and in context.

The intended learning outcomes of this programme are described in four areas:

Area 1: Knowledge and understanding
When students have completed this degree, they will have knowledge and understanding of:

A1. A range of research tools and methods appropriate to postgraduate study in literature;
A2. The importance of textual and bibliographical study in postgraduate work in literature;
A3. How contemporary developments in critical theory bear upon the practice of literary research at postgraduate level;
A4. The three main literary genres: Poetry, Drama, and Fiction;
A5. A chosen topic within a specialist area of literature.

Area 2: Cognitive skills
When students have completed this degree, they will be able to:

B1. Engage critically with a range of literary texts and complex critical, theoretical and historical materials;
B2. Contribute in an informed way to current debates about literature;
B3. Identify a potential area for research in literature.
B4. Write an extended research project using the research skills and literary theories they learnt in other modules.

Area 3: Practical and professional skills
When students have completed this degree, they will be able to:

C1. Construct and present sophisticated, coherent and persuasive written and oral arguments;
C2. Collect, sift and organise substantial bodies of material, and evaluate their significance;
C3. Use a research library and a range of electronic information resources.
C4. Independently design a research proposal;
C5. Plan and write a substantial piece of work, presented with appropriate scholarly apparatus and acknowledgement of the work of others;

Area 4: Key / transferable skills

When students have completed this degree, they will be able to:

>**D1.** Communicate ideas effectively in the form of extended, postgraduate-level essays, presented in an appropriately academic manner;
>**D2.** Use ICT resources for postgraduate research;
>**D3.** Use feedback from the tutor, fellow students and other resources effectively to improve their performance;
>**D4.** Design a programme of independent research and writing;
>**D5.** Undertake academic tasks of increasing length and complexity;

The MA programme in Literature reflects AOU strategy to develop its postgraduate studies that serve the needs of AOU graduates, on the one hand, and meet national and regional socio-economic development requirements, on the other hand. Secondly, an MA in Literature programme is in high demand in all Arab countries, particularly in view of the following facts:

1. Many Arab countries started teaching English in grade 1 instead of grade 4 or 6 as has been the case till very recently. This expansion in the teaching of English at school level requires teachers who are qualified both linguistically and professionally.

2. More and more public and private universities are being established in many Arab countries, and thus there is a great demand for qualified MA holders to teach introductory courses in English literature to first-year students.

3. In most Arab universities there is a shortage of specialists in English literature. By providing an opportunity to Arab students to do their MA, the AOU is enhancing the possibility of their continuing for the PhD degree and hence filling current teaching vacancies in local and regional universities.

4. International and regional businesses, international organizations, foreign missions, the mass media, publishers, and translation establishments require Arab personnel who are proficient in both English and Arabic.

5. International communication/dialogue requires Arab personnel who are not only proficient in English and Arabic, but who are also knowledgeable in international culture/thought and modes of thinking, and who are capable of engaging in cross cultural studies and dialogue.

The FLS believes that the revalidation of a strong and viable MA Programme in English Literature will help the AOU realise the following objectives:

- enhancing and promoting the image of AOU in the region;
- promoting a high-quality system of distance learning;
- providing students with learning programmes that address their academic and vocational needs;
- fostering an open and equal opportunity environment conducive to intellectual development, and to both theoretical and applied research;
- preparing students for further and more advanced study;
- preparing and qualifying students for employment in local and regional markets as well as in a global market;

- graduating students who can appreciate other human cultures and heritages;
- graduating individuals who can communicate with the world at large, understand it, and make themselves understood in it.

2.2 Relationship to other programmes and awards

(Where the award is part of a hierarchy of awards/programmes, this section describes the articulation between them, opportunities for progression upon completion of the programme, and arrangements for bridging modules or induction)

The programme is made up of the following OU modules:

- ✓ AA810: Postgraduate foundation module in literature
- ✓ A813: Literature in context
- ✓ A815: MA Module (Block 1&3)
- ✓ A817: Dissertation module

As the table below indicates and for local accreditation purposes,

- ✓ AA810 is split into four (4) AOU modules
- ✓ A813 is split into three (3) AOU modules
- ✓ Block 1&3 of A815 modules make up the module A805N: Dramatic Dialogues

1. Study Modules: (32 credit hours)

OU Code	AOU Code	Title	Credit Hours
AA810	A801	Research in English studies	4
	A802	Theories in Criticism	4
	A803	The English Novel	4
	A804	Cultural Studies	4
A815 (Block 1&3)	A805N	Dramatic Dialogues	4
A813	A806	Studies in Poetry	4
	A807	Comparative Literature	4
	A808	Postcolonial Studies	4

2. Dissertation Modules: (16 credit hours)

OU Code	Code	Title	Credit Hours
A817	A817	Dissertation in English literature	16

<u>Postgraduate Exit Awards:</u>

i.   <u>Postgraduate Certificate in English Literature</u>

On successful completion of the following postgraduate courses from the MA Programme in English Literature (16 credits), students will be able to claim a *Postgraduate Certificate in English Literature from OU.*

OU Module		AOU Modules	Credit Hours
AA810: Postgraduate Foundation Module in Literature	A801	Research in English Studies	4
	A802	Theories in Criticism	4
	A803	The English Novel	4
	A804	Cultural Studies	4
Total			16

ii.   <u>Postgraduate Diploma in English Literature</u>

On successful completion of the following postgraduate courses from the MA Programme in English Literature (32 credits), students will be able to claim a *Postgraduate Diploma in English Literature from the OU.*

OU Modules		AOU Modules	Credit Hours
AA810: Postgraduate Foundation Module in Literature	A801	Research in English Studies	4
	A802	Theories in Criticism	4
	A803	The English Novel	4
	A804	Cultural Studies	4
A815: MA Module Block 1 + Block 3	A805N	Dramatic Dialogues	4
A813: Literature in Context	A806	Studies in Poetry	4
	A807	Comparative Literature	4
	A808	Postcolonial Studies	4
Total			32

iii.   <u>Postgraduate MA Degree in English Literature</u>

On successful completion of all the following postgraduate courses from the MA programme in English Literature, (48 credit hours), students will be able to claim a Postgraduate *MA Degree in English Literature:*

OU Modules		AOU Modules	Credit Hours
AA810: Postgraduate Foundation Module in Literature	A801	Research in English Studies	4
	A802	Theories in Criticism	4
	A803	The English Novel	4
	A804	Cultural Studies	4
A815: MA Module Block 1 + Block 3	A805N	Dramatic Dialogues	4
A813: Literature in Context	A806	Studies in Poetry	4
	A807	Comparative Literature	4
	A808	Postcolonial Studies	4
A817: Dissertation Module	A817	Dissertation Module	16
Total			48

The table below summarizes the requirements of Postgraduate Exit Awards in English Literature

Requirements of Postgraduate Exit Awards in English Literature

Exit Award	Course Requirements	Credit Hours/points
Postgraduate Certificate in English Literature	**AA810:** Postgraduate foundation module in literature	**16hrs/60 pts**
	Equivalent to 4 AOU Modules	
	A801: Research in English Studies	4hrs/15 pts
	A802: Theories in Criticism	4hrs/15 pts
	A803: The English Novel	4hrs/15 pts
	A804: Cultural Studies	4hrs/15 pts
Postgraduate Diploma in English Literature	**AA810:** Postgraduate foundation module in literature **A813:** Literature in context **A815:** MA Module Block 1 & 3	**32 hrs/ 120 pts**
	Equivalent to 8 AOU Modules	
	A801: Research in English Studies	4hrs/15 pts
	A802: Theories in Criticism	4hrs/15 pts
	A803: The English Novel	4hrs/15 pts
	A804: Cultural Studies	4hrs/15 pts
	A805N: Dramatic Dialogues	4hrs/15 pts
	A806: Studies in Poetry	4hrs/15 pts
	A807: Comparative Literature	4hrs/15 pts
	A808: Postcolonial Studies	4hrs/15 pts
MA Degree in English Literature	**AA810**: Postgraduate foundation module in literature **A813**: Literature in context **A815**: MA Module - Block 1 & 3 **A817**: Dissertation Module	**48hrs/180 pts**
	Equivalent to 9 AOU Modules	
	A801: Research in English Studies	4hrs/15 pts
	A802: Theories in Criticism	4hrs/15 pts
	A803: The English Novel	4hrs/15 pts
	A804: Cultural Studies	4hrs/15 pts
	A805N: Dramatic Dialogues	4hrs/15 pts
	A806: Studies in Poetry	4hrs/15 pts
	A807: Comparative Literature	4hrs/15 pts
	A808: Postcolonial Studies	4hrs/15 pts
	A817: Dissertation Module	16hrs/60 pts

2.3 For Foundation Degrees, please list where the 60 credit work-related learning takes place. For apprenticeships, an articulation of how the work based learning and academic content are organised with the award.
NA

2.4 List of all exit awards
1. Postgraduate Certificate in English Literature 2. Postgraduate Diploma in English Literature 3. Postgraduate MA in English Literature

3. Programme structure and learning outcomes

Program Structure:

Programme Structure - LEVEL 7a				
Compulsory modules	**Credit hours**	**Credit points**	**Is module compensatable?**	**Semester runs in**
A801: Research in English Studies	4	15	No	
A802: Theories in Criticism	4	15	No	
A803: The English Novel	4	15	No	
A804: Cultural Studies	4	15	No	
Total	**16**	**60**		

Intended learning outcomes at Level 7a are listed below:

Learning Outcomes – LEVEL 7a	
3A. Knowledge and understanding	
Learning outcomes:	**Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods**
When students complete level 7a of this degree, they will have knowledge and understanding of: **A1.** A range of research tools and methods appropriate to postgraduate study in literature; **A2.** The importance of textual and bibliographical study in postgraduate work in literature;	The AOU learning/teaching strategy provides contact hours that are equal to almost 50% of what traditional universities require. Thus, AOU students enjoy the benefits of both the open and traditional university systems. The MA programme in Literature will be delivered through the AOU system which consists of two complementary modes: 1. Face-to-face interactive tutorials, constituting almost 50% of course credit hours;

Learning Outcomes – LEVEL 7a	
3A. Knowledge and understanding	
	2. Interactive blended learning delivered through specially designed teaching and support materials that are conducive to self-learning, constituting almost 50% of course contact hours. Students are required to participate in class discussions on LMS tutor / students group forums at least once a week. LMS group discussions are closely guided and monitored by the tutor in the form of providing questions for students to think about, commenting on students' responses, uploading additional material and asking for small weekly assignments that are research-oriented on LMS group forum. The assessment strategy of each module offered is included in its respective "Module Specification" template. Learning outcomes are assessed primarily by means of written tutor-marked assignments (TMAs), Final Exams (FEs)and in-class presentations.

3B. Cognitive skills	
Learning outcomes:	**Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods**
When students complete level 7a of this degree, they will be able to: **B1.** Engage critically with a range of literary texts and complex critical, theoretical and historical materials;	Cognitive skills are developed and practised through study of the course materials, and students will also have the opportunity to learn and practise these through group or individual tutorial work. They are assessed in TMAs and Finals.

3C. Practical and professional skills	
Learning outcomes:	**Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods**
When students complete level 7a of this degree, they will be able to: **C1.**Construct and present sophisticated, coherent and persuasive written and oral arguments; **C2.** Collect, sift and organise substantial bodies of material, and evaluate their significance; **C3.** Use research library and a range of electronic information resources.	Practical and professional skills are taught cumulatively throughout the programme. A801Research in English Studies and A802 Theories in Critcism are two foundation modules designed to prepare students to write their TMAs and later their dissertations critically and reflectively.

3D. Key/transferable skills	
Learning outcomes:	**Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods**
When students complete level 7a of this degree, they will be able to: **D1.** Communicate ideas effectively in the form of extended, postgraduate-level essays, presented in an appropriately academic manner; **D2.** Use feedback from the tutor and fellow students and other resources effectively to improve their performance; **D3.** Use ICT resources for postgraduate research.	Key skills are taught by a combination of published teaching materials, textbooks, detailed tutor feedback on written work, and participation in tutorials. Essay-type TMAs particularly assess students' ability to communicate effectively their knowledge and understanding of the subject matter of foundation and subject modules.

On successful completion of level 7a modules from the MA Programme in English Literature (16 credits / 60 credit points), students will be able to claim a **Postgraduate Certificate in English Literature.**

Programme Structure - LEVEL 7b				
Compulsory modules	**Credit hours**	**Credit points**	**Is module compensatable?**	**Semester runs in**
A805N: Dramatic Dialogues	4	15	No	
A806: Studies in Poetry	4	15	No	
A807: Comparative Literature	4	15	No	
A808: Postcolonial Studies	4	15	No	
Total	16	60		

Intended learning outcomes at Level 7b are listed below:

Learning Outcomes – LEVEL 7b	
3A. Knowledge and understanding	
Learning outcomes:	**Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods**
When students complete level 7b of this degree, they will have knowledge and understanding of: **A1.** A range of research tools and methods appropriate to postgraduate study in literature; **A2.** The importance of textual and bibliographical study in postgraduate work in literature;	The AOU learning/teaching strategy provides contact hours that are equal to almost 50% of what traditional universities require. Thus, AOU students enjoy the benefits of both the open and traditional university systems. The MA programme in Literature will be delivered through the AOU system which consists of two complementary modes:

Learning Outcomes – LEVEL 7b	
3A. Knowledge and understanding	
A3. How contemporary developments in critical theory bear upon the practice of literary research at postgraduate level; **A4.** The three main literary genres: Poetry, Drama, and Fiction;	1. Face-to-face interactive tutorials, constituting almost 50% of course credit hours; 2. Interactive distance learning delivered through specially designed teaching and support materials that are conducive to self-learning, constituting almost 50% of course contact hours. Students are required to participate in class discussions on LMS tutor / students group forums at least once a week. LMS group discussions are closely guided and monitored by the tutor in the form of providing questions for students to think about, commenting on student responses, uploading additional material and asking for small weekly assignments that are research oriented on LMS group forum. The assessment strategy of each module offered is included in its respective "Module Specification" template. Learning outcomes are assessed primarily by means of written Tutor-Marked Assignments (TMAs), Final Exams (FEs)and in-class presentations.

3B. Cognitive skills	
Learning outcomes:	**Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods**
When students complete level 7b of this degree, they will be able to: **B1.** Engage critically with a range of literary texts and complex critical, theoretical and historical materials; **B2.** Contribute in an informed way to current debates about literature;	Cognitive skills are developed and practised through the study of the course materials, and students will also have the opportunity to learn and practise these through group or individual tutorial work. They are assessed in TMAs and Finals.

3C. Practical and professional skills	
Learning outcomes:	**Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods**
When students complete level 7b of this degree, they will be able to: **C1.**Construct and present sophisticated, coherent and persuasive written and oral arguments; **C2.** Collect, sift and organise substantial bodies of material, and evaluate their significance; **C3.** Use a research library and a range of electronic information resources.	Practical and professional skills are taught cumulatively throughout the programme. A801Research in English Studies and A802 Theories in Criticism are two foundation modules designed to prepare students to write their TMAs and later their dissertations critically and reflectively.

3D. Key/transferable skills	
Learning outcomes:	**Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods**
When students complete level 7b of this degree, they will be able to: **D1.** Communicate ideas effectively in the form of extended, postgraduate-level essays, presented in an appropriately academic manner; **D2.** Use feedback from the tutor and fellow students and other resources effectively to improve their performance; **D3.** Use ICT resources for postgraduate research.	Key skills are taught by a combination of published teaching materials, textbooks, detailed tutor feedback on written work, and participation in tutorials. Essay-type TMAs particularly assess students' ability to communicate effectively their knowledge and understanding of the subject matter of foundation and subject modules.

On successful completion of level 7a and level 7b postgraduate modules from the MA Programme in English Literature (32 credits / 120 credit points), students will be able to claim a **Postgraduate Diploma in English Literature.**

Programme Structure - LEVEL 7c				
Compulsory modules	**Credit hours**	**Credit points**	**Is module compensatable?**	**Semester runs in**
A817: Dissertation Module	16	60	No	
Total	16	60		

Intended learning outcomes at Level 7c are listed below:

Learning Outcomes – LEVEL 7c
3A. Knowledge and understanding

Learning outcomes:	Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods
When students complete level 7c of this degree, they will have knowledge and understanding of: **A1.** A range of research tools and methods appropriate to postgraduate study in literature; **A2.** The importance of textual and bibliographical study in postgraduate work in literature; **A3**. How contemporary developments in critical theory bear upon the practice of literary research at postgraduate level; **A4.** At least two specific areas of literature; **A5.** A chosen topic within a specialist area of literature.	The AOU learning/teaching strategy provides contact hours that are equal to almost 50% of what traditional universities require. Thus, AOU students enjoy the benefits of both the open and traditional university systems. The MA programme in Literature will be delivered through the AOU system which consists of two complementary modes: 1. Face-to-face interactive tutorials, constituting almost 50% of course credit hours; 2. Interactive learning delivered through specially designed teaching and support materials that are conducive to self-learning, constituting almost 50% of course contact hours. Students are required to participate in-class discussions on LMS tutor / students group forums at least once a week. LMS group discussions are closely guided and monitored by the tutor in the form of providing questions for students to think about, commenting on student responses, uploading additional material and asking for small weekly assignments that are research oriented on LMS group forum.

Learning Outcomes – LEVEL 7c

3A. Knowledge and understanding	
	The assessment strategy of each module offered is included in its respective "Module Specification" template.

For the dissertation, students will choose a topic within an area studied earlier in the programme, and write this up in 12,000-15,000 words. Tutors provide ungraded feedback on draft chapters, but the dissertation itself forms the examined component of this final module. |

3B. Cognitive skills	
Learning outcomes:	**Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods**
When students have completed level 7c of this degree, they will be able to:

B1. Engage critically with a range of literary texts and complex critical, theoretical and historical material;

B2. Contribute in an informed way to current debates about literature;

B3. Recognise a potential area for research in literature; | Cognitive skills are developed and practised through the study of the course materials, and students will also have the opportunity to learn and practise these through group or individual tutorial work. They are assessed in TMAs and Finals.

Their ability to recognise a potential area for research in Literature is specifically assessed in the extensive pieces of writing they will be producing in the course, mainly in TMAs and the dissertation. |

3B. Cognitive skills	
B4. Write an extended research project using the research skills and literary theories they learnt in other modules.	

3C. Practical and professional skills	
Learning outcomes:	**Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods**
When students complete level 7c of this degree, they will be able to: **C1.** Construct and present sophisticated, coherent and persuasive written and oral arguments; **C2.** Collect, sift and organise substantial bodies of material, and evaluate their significance; **C3.** Use a research library and a range of electronic information resources; **C4.** Independently design a research proposal; **C5.** Plan and write a substantial piece of work, presented with appropriate scholarly apparatus and acknowledgement of the work of others.	Practical and professional skills are taught cumulatively throughout the programme. A801 (Research in English Studies) and A802 (Theories in Criticism) are two foundation modules designed to prepare students to write their TMAs and later their dissertations critically and reflectively.

3D. Key/transferable skills	
Learning outcomes:	**Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods**
When students complete level 7c of this degree, they will be able to: **D1.** Communicate ideas effectively in the form of extended, postgraduate-level essays, presented in an appropriately academic manner; **D2.** Use feedback from the tutor, fellow students and other resources effectively to improve their performance; **D3.** Use ICT resources for postgraduate research; **D4.** Design a programme of independent research and writing; **D5.** Undertake academic tasks of increasing length and complexity;	Key skills are taught by a combination of published teaching materials, textbooks, detailed tutor feedback on written work, and participation in tutorials. This happens throughout the programme, although there is an increasing emphasis on independent work towards the end. Essay-type TMAs particularly assess students' ability to communicate effectively their knowledge and understanding of the subject matter of foundation and subject modules. The full range of key skills is assessed in the dissertation module.

On successful completion of all levels 7a, 7b and level 7c postgraduate modules from the MA programme in English Literature, (48 credit hours / 180 credit points), students will be able to claim a Postgraduate **MA Degree in English Literature**

4. Distinctive features of the programme structure

This programme is based on the following OU modules

- ✓ AA810: Postgraduate foundation module in literature
- ✓ A813: Literature in context
- ✓ A815: MA Module - Blocks 1 & 3
- ✓ A817: Dissertation Module

It is a two-year programme as the following per-semester study plan indicates

Semester I		
		Prerequisites
A801	Research in English Studies	None
A802	Theories in Criticism	None
Semester II		
A803	The English Novel	A801 & A802
A804	Cultural Studies	A801 & A802
Semester III		
A805N	Dramatic Dialogues	A801 & A802
A806	Studies in Poetry	A801 & A802
A817	Dissertation module	
Semester IV		
A807	Comparative Literature	A801 & A802
A808	Postcolonial Studies	A801 & A802
A817	Dissertation Module	

5. Support for students and their learning

<div style="border:1px solid #999;padding:0;">

Support for students and their learning.
(For apprenticeships, this should include details of how student learning is supported in the work place)

AOU students are guided and supported by the following resources:

1. Study materials with guides and audio-visual aids;
2. LMS Unified Course Content also embodies a lot of guidance and support materials such as: updated Course Guides, Study Calendars, TMAs, TMA cover form, as well as additional notes and information on courses;
3. A two-hour weekly tutorial. Students meet their tutors on a weekly basis for two hours per class as part of the University's policy to adopt a system of blended learning;
4. Tutors assign weekly office hours. Students can have face-to-face contact with their tutors to seek their assistance, and ask them for clarifications. All part-time and full-time tutors are requested to assign weekly office hours for each taught section of two contact hours;
5. Interaction with tutors through the LMS;
   The LMS has become an integral part of teaching and learning in AOU. It is the main channel of communication between tutors and their students. Students receive their assignments, their tutors' responses, and feedback through the LMS. The privacy of this channel allows students to discuss with their tutors some matters that they may be reluctant to discuss publicly in the classroom. In coordination with the BCCs, GCCs post a substantial amount of support material for the course accessible to all students in every branch to ensure equity and access of all students to the same material;
6. Computer and e-library facilities: Both AOU students and staff are given access to e-library resources. Recently, AOU has updated its e-library subscriptions;
7. Educational Resource Centres. These centres provide the needed resources such as Internet and other facilities;
8. Writing Centres offer students help and guidance on how to write proposals and dissertations;
9. Student Information System (SIS).

In addition to all the resources mentioned above, FLS does its best to ensure that students have the support they need for their learning in:
   (A) Designing a scheme for helping first-year students cope;
   (B) Following up on External Examiner suggestions;
   (C) Training second-year students in the write-up of their proposals & dissertations.

(A) Designing a scheme for helping first-year students cope:
Students who join the MA programme naturally come from undergraduate programmes whose environments differ from the postgraduate environment. In the latter, students are expected to read a lot of material. They are also expected to understand it in depth, think about it critically and express their opinions much more than in the undergraduate programmes. This is especially true since in face-to-face tutorials the students are expected to play an active role in the discussions and deliberations, as there are no formal lectures. As serious scholars, they are also required to depend on themselves a great deal in planning and fulfilling the various tasks needed in order to be able to learn effectively on their own and do well.

</div>

For the transition from the undergraduate to the postgraduate environment to be smooth, students need considerable help. To this end, the Branches – in close coordination with the FLS Deanship – take several important measures to help the students cope and proceed well in their studies. The first is thorough academic advising upon admission. When the students are admitted, they are asked to come to an induction whose main aim is to explain to them in detail what is required of them as postgraduate students. The meeting is conducted by the PC, who is a main tutor in the programme, and a GCC, as well as two other colleagues specializing in literature. It is worth mentioning in this context that the majority of our colleagues who do the advising had a long experience in teaching postgraduate programmes at other universities before joining AOU, which significantly adds to and enriches their academic performance. It is also worth noting that the meeting does not simply aim to give students basic information such as what courses to take, but mainly focuses on explaining how to study for the courses, how to organize time, what the characteristics of the AOU system of learning are, where to find resources, and whom to contact for advice. At the end of the meeting, the students are given the office hours and emails of the tutors who will be advising them throughout their studies. They are encouraged to meet with their advisers throughout the year, and the advisers also call upon those students who seem to be having some difficulties in the tutorials to come and talk to them. At the end of the induction, a tour of AOU buildings is also arranged for new students so that they become familiar with the university's facilities. On many occasions, AOU students express appreciation of this ongoing communication with the tutors/advisers and the attention and care they get from them, which is what gives AOU the edge and which makes the programme attract an increasing number of students.

On another important level, the Deanship has prepared a Student Handbook, which explains salient matters about studying in the programme, from A to Z. The Handbook is placed on LMS Unified Course Content and the students are called upon to read it before they come to the first tutorial. The Deanship has also formed a Postgraduate Board, one of whose members is a specialized faculty member/adviser. The Board meets at least twice a semester to discuss *inter alia*, how the students are progressing. The progress report, which is delivered by the Programme Coordinator (PC), is discussed by all members and the PC is entrusted with the implementation of the decisions taken. Furthermore, the Deanship delegates one faculty member, who is a specialist in Literature and who acts as a liaison officer between the Deanship and the Branch, to assist the Dean in following up on all matters pertaining to the MA programme and in offering continued support to postgraduate students and staff at the respective branch.

(B) Follow-up on External Examiner suggestions:
FLS makes sure that all EE feedback is taken care of to improve the quality of FLS's existing programme and the students' learning process. We have a clear mechanism in place by which the External Examiners' reports are taken seriously and their suggestions and recommendations are implemented. There have been many important enhancements gained as a result of implementing EEs' suggestions. When FLS receives the EEs' reports, each module report is sent to its GCC to respond to the points raised by the EE regarding delivering and assessing the module. The EE's report and the GCC's response are discussed with the Dean. Then, the Dean drafts FLS response to the EE's report and highlights the issues that need action. The Dean agrees with the GCC on an action plan to implement the suggestions and recommendations of the EE. In the

following CAC (Course Assessment Committee), the GCC reports to the EE on the steps and results of this implementation. This mechanism has been in place for the BA programme and
the MA in Literature, and FLS will follow the same system in order to ensure that the programme is delivered and assessed to the best standards and expectations.

(C) Training second-year students in write up of their proposals & Dissertations
Students enrolled in the programme who finish their first year start thinking about their proposals and dissertations. Our aim is to have them pay attention to this matter as early as possible so that when they start writing their proposals and then the dissertations, they are fully ready. FLS recognizes that all our students generally need all the help they can get in writing articles or dissertations in English. First, the vast majority of them are non-native speakers of the language; secondly, the teaching of writing in many schools is inadequate and students continue to manifest some negative habits in writing. Furthermore, there are some specific, technical requirements for the proposals and the dissertations which are necessary to know such as how to come up with a good topic, how to narrow it down, how to review the literature related to it, and how to structure and present an argument. While some of these matters will be covered in some of the modules that the students take in the programme, we still feel that they need more induction and more assistance. Towards this end, the Deanship will follow up closely with the PCs and the tutors in the branches where the programme is offered to ensure that such hands-on assistance is always available to students as part of the courses they take, during office hours, and in some periodic meetings/mini-workshops specifically held for this purpose. FLS has writing centres operating in all branches, and these centres will shoulder some of this responsibility to help students with their dissertations. FLS External Examiners often comment on the high quality of our students' dissertations. Dr. James Procter comments:"I have been impressed by the students' work this year. There is much evidence of a striving for autonomy and critical independence (particularly in the dissertations) that is in my view precisely the function of a postgraduate MA like this one. The connections students are forging between texts is often ambitious and the strong emphasis on postcolonial approaches often brings a direct passion and significance to the work." In another report he writes: "As in previous years, the dissertations were particularly impressive and a pleasure to read. The dissertation is a key indicate of the overall health of an MA programme, and the 'capstone' of the degree, so it is very reassuring to see students flourishing on this module. I saw a good range of intellectually ambitious dissertations, including comparative projects on Camus and Mahfouz, Yeats and Darwish, Raja Rao and RK Narayan. The MA programme represents excellent preparation for doctoral study in this regard. I very much support the continued and growing emphasis on comparative literature and Arabic literature in English."

We are fully confident that with such support our students will continue to write their proposals and dissertations with ease and effectiveness and in a scholarly framework.

6. Criteria for admission

Criteria for admission
(For apprenticeships this should include details of how the criteria will be used with employers who will be recruiting apprentices.)

Admission requirements
To be admitted to the programme, students need to:
A. Have a BA degree in English Language and Literature, or a related specialization from the Arab Open University or another recognized university with a graduation rating of *GOOD* or higher in light of local accreditation requirements in the branch countries.

B. Achieve Band 6 or higher in the **Academic Version** of the *'International English Language Testing System'* (IELTS) test, OR
Achieve a score of 550 or more in the 'Test of English as a Foreign Language' (TOEFL) (**Paper-Based Test)** or the equivalent score in the Computer-Based Test.

The tests above will indicate that the students admitted should be able to:

✓ write clear, concise, grammatically correct and accurately spelt prose;
✓ read large quantities of text quickly, accurately and critically;
✓ classify evidence precisely and assess its value and reliability;
✓ argue logically, consistently and coherently;
✓ marshal various sorts of evidence to support a logical argument.

The proposed programme of study is aimed at the following target audience:

• New BA graduates in English Language and Literature from the AOU and other Arab and international universities;
• Postgraduate students currently enrolled in traditional universities who may want to avail themselves of the facilities of a flexible open education system;
• BA holders in English Language and Literature who are currently working and are interested in pursuing a higher degree.

7. Language of study

Language of study
English

8. Information about non-OU standard assessment regulations

Information about non-OU standard assessment regulations (including PSRB requirements)
AOU assessment strategy incorporates general principles and procedures aiming to regulate and monitor examinations in all its branches. AOU regulations include validation (pre-assessment moderation) of examination

questions and answer keys by external examiners, anonymous and group marking, monitoring tutors' marking, post-assessment moderation; and formation of different examination committees.

Below is a brief summary of major assessment principles, policies, and procedures adhered to by FLS which are congruent with the general precepts defined in Section 6 of the QAA Code of Practice.

1. General principles
AOU has explicit procedures for ensuring that student performance is properly judged and for evaluating how academic standards are maintained through assessment practice. The following are some of the procedures which FLS implements:

> ➢ Final examination questions and their answer keys are approved by external examiners. Similarly, all TMAs and their answer keys are approved by external examiners.

> ➢ All final examination scripts and TMA samples are sent to AOU HQ from the University's branches for review by external examiners.

> ➢ Cross branch marking (CBM) VCs are held to ensure fair marking between branches.

2. Contribution to student learning
The FLS encourages assessment practice that promotes effective learning. For example, in preparing TMAs and examination questions, course chairs are asked to identify the learning outcomes which each question/task is designed to test.

3. Assessment committees
The AOU and the FLS implement effective, clear and consistent policies for forming assessment/examination committees/councils and for defining their roles and responsibilities. The structure, roles and powers of the following AOU assessment committees are clearly spelled out in the FLS *Assessment Booklet*:

Course Assessment Committee (CAC)
Faculty Examination Committee (FEC)
Central Examination Committee (CEC)
Branch Examination Committees (BEC)

4. Preparation and administration of examinations
AOU ensures that assessment is conducted with rigour and fairness and with due regard to security:

 a. To guarantee the security of examinations and safeguard against possible leakage, the FLS Dean takes full responsibility for receiving and delivering examination questions through the various stages of production;

b. Branch directors and branch programme coordinators supervise the administration of the examinations;

c. All stages of test administration, the marking of scripts, and the recording of marks are regulated by explicit written instructions and monitored by concerned bodies (programme coordinators, course coordinators, examination committees);

d. To guarantee objectivity in marking, students' names and registration numbers do not appear on final examination scripts. Furthermore, in courses taught by more than one tutor, the principle of 'group marking' is applied in the marking of all scripts;

e. Tutors' marking of TMAs and finals is monitored by Branch Course Coordinators. Reports, together with samples, are sent to the FLS Dean every semester;

f. All final examination scripts are reviewed by external examiners;

g. The final results for each course are reviewed by the course assessment committee (CAC), then by the faculty examinations committee (FEC), and finally by the central examination committee (CEC).[1]

5. Marking, grading and staff training

The FLS adopts transparent and fair mechanisms for marking and for moderating marks. All tutors responsible for marking are provided with model answers (approved by external examiners) to the questions they will be marking. In addition, grades given by branch tutors are centrally processed and moderated by relevant committees to ensure objectivity.

AOU also ensures that faculty members involved in the assessment of students are competent to undertake their roles and responsibilities. This is done through training, directives and memos sent from AOU HQ as well as through posting relevant information on AOU website.

6. Assessment regulations

AOU reviews and amends assessment regulations periodically to ensure that the regulations remain fit for purpose. New measures continue to be introduced to ensure that assessments are valid and are monitored by relevant bodies.

7. Documenting and disseminating assessment decisions

AOU requires that all assessment decisions are recorded and documented accurately and systematically at each administrative level and that the decisions of relevant assessment panels and examination boards are communicated as quickly as possible.

---

1 For details on the composition and responsibilities of these committees the reader is referred FLS *Assessment Booklet* (DOC #2).

MA MODULES ASSESSMENT

Components of Module Assessment
Module assessment is based on one class presentation in addition to two main types of written work: (i) Tutor-Marked Assignments (TMAs) (ii) Final Exams (FEs)

Assessment Components
Students' module results will depend upon their achievements across the different components of assessment: **Continuous Assessment:** This comprises the course TMAs which represent 50% of the Overall Assessment Score (OAS). **Final Assessment:** This consists of ONE FINAL EXAM which represents 40% of the overall assessment score. **Class Presentation:** This represents 10% of the overall grade. To pass a course, a student should obtain a minimum grade of C+, obtaining a minimum numerical score of 70 out of 100. Students should pass all examined courses/modules with an accumulative average of not less than 3 points – i.e. an overall GPA of not less than B. In the case of MA dissertation module, the AOU MA bylaws state that students are required to present a dissertation acceptable to a board of examiners. This board of examiners will consist of the student's supervisor (head of committee), one faculty member and an external examiner.

How to Pass the Course/Module
In order to pass the course/module, a student must obtain: An average of at least 60% across in each of the two main components of assessment (i.e. Continuous Assessment and Final Assessment), obtaining a numerical grade of not less than 70 out of 100. In all these assessment components, students will be assessed according to criteria which are based on learning outcomes. For the MA dissertation module, students are required to present a dissertation acceptable to a board of examiners. The dissertations are read and evaluated by the dissertation committee members and the External Examiner.

Allocation of Marks
A. MA examinable modules For each MA module, students are required to do the following tasks: (i) Prepare the required TMA (ii) Sit for one final exam

The following table shows the distribution of marks for the various types of course assessment in the MA modules.

Components		Total Mark
CONTINUOUS ASSESSMENT	TMAs	50
	In-class Presentation	10
FINAL ASSESSMENT	FINAL EXAM	40
GRAND TOTAL		**100**

Notes on TMAs & Final Exams

(i) Tutor-Marked Assignments (TMAs)
These assignments are spread out over the duration of course delivery. In addition to gauging student progress of study, they serve to invoke and develop investigative and research skills. TMAs carry 50% of the overall grade of the course.

(ii) Final Exams (FEs)
Final exams are typically of the essay type and are divided into two Sections/Parts (A&B) each covering one or two blocks/themes of the course as in the table below, and students are required to answer 3 questions in 3 hours.

Part	Questions	Notes
A	1& 2	The first part of the final exam is made up of two questions from which students answer one question. This part of the exam tends to be more theoretically oriented. The question typically deals with a very important/central topic.
B	3&4& 5	This part consists of 3 questions and the questions tend to be more application than theory. Students will have to answer two questions only. Each question is meant to test a certain block/theme.

9. For apprenticeships in England End Point Assessment (EPA).

For apprenticeships in England End Point Assessment (EPA).
(Summary of the approved assessment plan and how the academic award fits within this and the EPA)
NA

10. Methods for evaluating and improving the quality and standards of teaching and learning.

Methods for evaluating and improving the quality and standards of teaching and learning.

FLS evaluates and improves the quality and standards of teaching and learning through the following measures:

1. Hiring professional tutors with excellent experience in the field and continually training and upgrading the skills of the junior tutors. It also makes it a point to solicit high quality tutors in the field who are very passionate about their teaching and the subject matter. Our tutors have graduated from many of the best universities: they have very good quality research, and they frequently participate in conferences in their fields. They maintain effective channels of communication with their students, and ensure that the students are progressing well toward the fulfilment of their degree requirements. The Dean constantly follows up on the students' progress during the entire semester. At the end of the semester, the deanship reviews the students' marks and discusses the students' assessments and performance with their tutors. The students' proposals examined by the Deanship team so far reflect the high quality of students' work and the tremendous effort the tutors exert to coach and mentor the students. The tutors receive excellent evaluations from their students at the end of every semester, which get very special mention in the External Examiners' reports. The External Examiners often comment on the quality of AOU teaching staff:

   Prof. Regan comments: "Student success is invariably underpinned by committed and dedicated teaching, and the MA students are obviously inspired and motivated by a first-rate team of academic and support staff. There is evidence of both intellectual range and depth of analysis in the work I have examined. Teachers encourage students to broaden their knowledge, but also to exercise their skills in reading and interpretation. Like my fellow examiners, I am repeatedly impressed by the way in which the students are able to write from a depth of personal experience and express their ideas with a genuine individualism."

   Professor James Procter comments: "The programme is delivered by a dedicated teaching team, and this is reflected in the overall standards and consistency of student performance. The samples I have seen confirm that students are very well trained in the core skills of the field."

2. Coordinating with the University QA Department: FLS receives the tutors' and students' evaluation of the programme from the QA Department and writes an annual monitoring report which includes a major section on the students' evaluation of the programme. The students' survey is rather extensive; it includes information about the learning resources, the performance of the tutors, the quality of the assessments and the university facilities available to them. This report is important to FLS: it helps the deanship to evaluate the programme and prepare an action plan to meet any challenges that may arise.

3. The FLS Deanship keeps an excellent working relationship with the Academic Reviewers and the External Examiners in the programme. Both are constantly consulted about the different aspects of the programme. The External Examiner discusses his/her report with the tutors and the course chairs of the modules, highlights strengths and weaknesses, and makes suggestions toward the improvement of the programme. The Deanship responds to these reports and takes action to implement all relevant suggestions and recommendations of the External Examiners.

The Dean meets with the students quite often to address their concerns and discuss matters related to the programme.

11. Changes made to the programme since last (re)validation

Changes made to the programme since last (re)validation

The following changes have been made to the programme since last revalidation:

- The following two modules were merged in a single module:

A803: The English Novel	A803: The English Novel
A805: The 19th and 20th Century Novel: The Historical Approach	

- A new module in Drama is created based on Blocks 1&3 of module A815N: Dramatic Dialogues
- The content of the following modules is revisited and modified as specified in the module specifications of each module:
  - A802: Theories in Criticism
  - A803: The English Novel
  - A804: Cultural Studies
  - A806: Studies in Poetry
  - A807: Comparative Literature
  - A808: Postcolonial Studies

Annexe1 - Curriculum map

This table indicates which study units assume responsibility for delivering (shaded) and assessing (✓) particular programme learning outcomes.

Level 7a	Study module/unit	A1	A2	A3	A4	A5	A6	A7	A8	B1	B2	B3	B4	B5	B6	B7	B8	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	C6	C7	C8	D1	D2	D3	D4	D5	D6	D7
	A801: Research in English Studies	✓	✓							✓			✓						✓	✓		✓				✓	✓					
	A802: Theories in Criticism	✓	✓	✓						✓			✓						✓	✓		✓				✓	✓	✓				
	A803: The English Novel	✓	✓			✓				✓			✓						✓	✓		✓				✓	✓	✓				
	A804: Cultural Studies	✓		✓	✓					✓		✓	✓						✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓		✓		

Level 7b	Study module/unit	A1	A2	A3	A4	A5	A6	A7	A8	B1	B2	B3	B4	B5	B6	B7	B8	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	C6	C7	C8	D1	D2	D3	D4	D5	D6	D7
	A805N: Dramatic Dialogues	✓	✓		✓	✓				✓	✓	✓						✓		✓		✓				✓	✓			✓		
	A806: Studies in Poetry	✓	✓		✓	✓				✓	✓	✓						✓		✓	✓					✓			✓	✓		
	A807: Comparative Literature	✓		✓		✓				✓	✓	✓	✓					✓	✓		✓	✓				✓			✓	✓		
	A808: Postcolonial Studies		✓	✓		✓				✓	✓	✓	✓					✓		✓	✓					✓				✓		

Level 7c	Study module/unit	A1	A2	A3	A4	A5	A6	A7	A8	B1	B2	B3	B4	B5	B6	B7	B8	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	C6	C7	C8	D1	D2	D3	D4	D5	D6	D7
	A817: Dissertation Module	✓	✓	✓		✓				✓	✓	✓	✓					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		

Annexe 2: Notes on completing programme specification templates

1 **-** This programme specification should be mapped against the learning outcomes detailed in module specifications.

2 – The expectations regarding student achievement and attributes described by the learning outcome in <u>section 3</u> must be appropriate to the level of the award within the **QAA frameworks for HE qualifications**: <u>http://www.qaa.ac.uk/AssuringStandardsAndQuality/Pages/default.aspx</u>

3 – Learning outcomes must also reflect the detailed statements of graduate attributes set out in **QAA subject benchmark statements** that are relevant to the programme/award: <u>http://www.qaa.ac.uk/AssuringStandardsAndQuality/subject-guidance/Pages/Subject-benchmark-statements.aspx</u>

4 – In section 3, the learning and teaching methods deployed should enable the achievement of the full range of intended learning outcomes. Similarly, the choice of assessment methods in section 3 should enable students to demonstrate the achievement of related learning outcomes. Overall assessment should cover the full range of learning outcomes.

5 - Where the programme contains validated **exit awards** (e.g. CertHE, DipHE, PGDip), learning outcomes must be clearly specified for each award.

6 - For programmes with distinctive study **routes or pathways,** the specific rationale and learning outcomes for each route must be provided.

7 – Validated programmes delivered in **<u>languages other than English</u>** must have programme specifications both in English and the language of delivery.