

English language

Essentials

What English language degrees are there?

English Language
English Language and a Language (one from French, Italian or Spanish)
English Language and English Language Teaching
English Language and Literature

See also

English (p67)

What A levels/IB scores do I need?

(For other qualifications information, refer to pages 125-129)

Typical A level offer range: AAA-AAB

For English Language and Literature, A levels (or equivalent) must include English, English Literature or the combined A level in English Language and Literature at grade A

For English Language and a Language, A levels (or equivalent) must include the language you wish to study at grade B

Typical IB diploma offer: at least 36 points

For English Language and Literature, at least 36 points including 6 in Higher Level English

For English Language and a Language, at least 36 points normally including your chosen language at Higher Level with a final grade of 5

Fees

Refer to pages 137-138 for information on fees

English language requirements

IELTS 6.5 overall and not less than 6.0 in both the Listening and Writing sections. Internet-based TOEFL with 90 overall, including at least 24 in Speaking and 25 in Writing. For alternative English language requirements, refer to page 130

How do I find out more?

For more information, contact:

E ug.admissions@englishlanguage.sussex.ac.uk

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English Language, Arts B, University of Sussex, Falmer, Brighton BN1 9QN, UK

www.sussex.ac.uk/englishlanguage

When can I visit?

Our Open Day dates for 2011 are 11 June and 8 October. We also run regular campus tours.

Please book online at www.sussex.ac.uk/visitors or call 01273 876787

Why English language?

English is the world's leading international language. In different countries around the globe, English is acquired as the mother tongue, in others it is used as a second language. Some nations use English as their official language, performing the function of administration; in others it is used as an international language for business, commerce and industry.

Among the questions that you investigate when you study English language are:

- What factors and forces have led to the spread of English which, only 400 years ago, was limited to a small number of speakers in a tiny part of the world?
- How has English changed through 1,500 years?
- What can the structure of English tell us about how languages work and, by extension, how the human mind works?

You also examine the immense variability of English and come to understand how it is used as a symbol of both individual identity and social affiliation. You develop in-depth knowledge of the intricate structure of the language. Why do some non-native speakers of English claim that it is a difficult language to learn, yet infants born into English-speaking communities acquire their language before they learn to tie their shoelaces?

Why English language at Sussex?

- In the 2008 Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) 95 per cent of our research was rated as recognised internationally or higher, and over half rated as internationally excellent or higher.
- Active and diverse research culture encompassing theoretical and applied aspects of English linguistics.
- A close and caring student/staff community.
- You are introduced to the nature of English in all its aspects. This involves the study of sound structures, the formation of words, the sequencing of words and the construction of meaning, as well as examination of the theories explaining these aspects of English usage.
- You are encouraged to develop your own individual responses to the practical and theoretical issues raised by studying how speakers and writers employ English for a wide variety of purposes.
- The opportunity to combine language and literature studies.

What sort of career could I have?

- publishing
- journalism, public relations
- communications-oriented business careers
- teaching (with further qualifications)
- speech and hearing therapy (with further qualifications).

Sophie's perspective

'The English Language degree programme at Sussex is second to none. I'm part of a close-knit group of students who are led by faculty who could not be more passionate about what they do.'

'Teaching is by lectures, seminars, workshops, and group and revision sessions, and the variety keeps you engaged and constantly thinking about the work at hand. A vastly diverse range of topics is covered, as Sussex has experts in so many areas. You could have a question about the speech of David Beckham, or a query about the grammar of Dyrirbal (an aboriginal language spoken in Australia by fewer than 40 people), and there's always someone around to help.'

'Unlike at school or college, the focus is on self-motivation. While this can be challenging, you can contact your fellow students by email, study sessions and forums. It's definitely something that is well organised and encouraged on this programme, and it yields only positive results.'

Sophie Niles
English Language graduate



Alex's career perspective

'Sussex's approach to modern languages was what drew me to the University. The prospect of learning in an attractive environment and the promise of spending a year living in France as part of my degree were probably the two main components that swayed my decision.'

'As my time at Sussex progressed, my confidence as a writer and a speaker and my passion for writing grew.'

'Thanks to my hands-on experience gained through the Wired Sussex Internship programme that the University coordinates, and the invaluable research skills, attention to detail and ability to stick to deadlines that I acquired through my degree, I eventually found a marketing role with an online Sports Coaching company.'

Alex Blackman
Marketing Executive,
Sportplan Ltd





How will I learn?

English language teaching and learning takes place in many contexts. You attend lectures in which you are guided through the relevant aspects of the topic, and seminars in which you have the opportunity to make your own presentations, practise new concepts with real linguistic data, and debate relevant issues with fellow students.

We use a range of assessment methods that provide the best opportunity for you to express your knowledge and understanding. Exams take the form of both unseen and take-away papers. Many courses also have a coursework component, which provides a continuous form of appraisal. You write extended essays and will undertake an individual research project that you present as a final-year dissertation. In all of these methods of assessment, your tutors are on hand to provide assistance and support.

What will I achieve?

- a thorough knowledge and understanding of modern English structure and usage
- an understanding of the main historical processes that have led to its present-day status and use
- in-depth knowledge of a topic of central interest to you
- learning, research, information interpretation, critical thinking, debating, presenting, writing and time-management skills
- an advanced understanding of the particular relationship between English language and your other chosen subject, if applicable.

Degrees

English Language BA (Hons), 3 years UCAS Code: Q302

English is the most widely used language in the world. This degree examines the language from societal, psychological, cultural and structural perspectives. You study English in all its forms and contexts, developing an understanding of wider issues related to communication to reflect on how and why English has emerged as a world language.

This programme offers you the opportunity for in-depth study of the linguistic structure of English: you learn to examine and analyse English sound structure, grammar and meaning. You learn about the historical development of English and study present-day social issues relating to the English language. You develop analytical skills and are given the opportunity to use these in the investigation of different forms of spoken and written English.

You take the core courses in Years 1 and 2. Alongside your Year 3 courses, you are given the opportunity to pursue independent research on an aspect of English language usage of your choice.

Core courses

Our course offerings are currently undergoing review, therefore titles are provisional. The degree programme is likely to be structured as follows

Courses currently include:

Year 1

Approaches to Grammar
 • Approaches to Meaning
 • Approaches to Pronunciation
 • Investigating Language in Context

Year 2

Approaches to Discourse • Child Language Acquisition • History of English • Variation in English

Year 3

Individual Research Project
 Options may include specialist courses such as Discourse
 • Grammar • Language Change
 • Phonology • Pragmatics
 • Psycholinguistics • Semantics

English Language and a Language (one from French, Italian or Spanish)

BA (Hons), 4 years UCAS Code: QRJ9

This degree offers an in-depth study of the theory of human language and its use in practice. It provides an opportunity to study the linguistic structure of a modern language including sound structure, grammar and meaning. Your studies at Sussex provide linguistic (including sociolinguistic and psycholinguistic) knowledge of English and another modern language, and an opportunity to develop critical and analytical linguistic skills.

In Years 1 and 2, you take the core courses in addition to your chosen language course and choices from courses on European culture and society. During the third year you study abroad at a university in mainland Europe, acquiring first-hand experience of your chosen language and getting to know its speakers.

Returning to Sussex for the final year, alongside the core courses, you have the opportunity to carry out supervised research in an area relating to English and another modern language.

Refer to the core courses list opposite for details of English language courses; refer to the languages subject entry on page 85 for more information on these courses.

English Language and English Language Teaching BA (Hons), 3 years UCAS Code: QX33

English is the language of international communication and people worldwide have a need to learn English. You will explore the psychological, sociological, and cultural factors that affect second-language acquisition and study the grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation of English from the point of view of a foreign learner. You will also be trained to teach English by observing experienced teachers and undertaking supervised teaching practice.

This degree is suitable for native English speakers, as well as foreign students already proficient in English who are interested in teaching the language in their own country. The degree will be of particular interest to students who wish to travel and work abroad after they graduate.

The first two years of the programme include preparation for the Trinity College London Certificate in English Language Teaching, an internationally recognised English language teaching qualification. Suitable candidates may enter for this qualification if they wish (note that there is an examination entry fee of around £90).



In Year 1, you take two core courses plus Introduction to English Language Teaching (ELT); Language Teaching Methods and Approaches; ELT Methodology and Materials I; and Developing Language Skills.

In Year 2, you study the core courses plus Pedagogical Grammar of English; Lexical Development; ELT Methodology and Materials II; and Curriculum Development and Syllabus Design. The Methodology and Materials courses in Years 1 and 2 are both highly practical and include lesson planning, materials preparation and supervised teaching practice, with individual feedback from a trainer.

Year 3 offers you the opportunity to pursue independent research in an area of study relating to English language. You also select English language options, take Advanced Teaching Methodology and Second Language Acquisition, and undertake an English language teaching project.

Refer to the core courses list opposite for details of English language courses; refer to the English language teaching subject entry on page 72 for more information on these courses.

English Language and Literature BA (Hons), 3 years UCAS Code: Q300

The richness and variety of English, in the contexts of both its linguistic structure and its literary heritage, are the focus of this degree. You examine how language operates, in theory and in practice, both in society and in literature, to become a symbol of culture, personal identity and social affiliation. Your study covers literary genres and introduces you to a range of non-literary texts to develop an understanding and appreciation of the relationship between different styles of discourse.

The English Language and Literature degree offers an in-depth study of the linguistic (including sociolinguistic and psycholinguistic) structure of English. You approach literary theory through the study of historical context and through the study and analysis of contemporary discourses in literature, art and culture.

In Years 1 and 2, you take English language core courses alongside core literature courses in Year 1 and literature options in Year 2. In Year 3, you take English language core courses, carry out supervised research in an area relating to English language and literature, and study a special subject and a special author in English literature.

Refer to the core courses list opposite for details of English language courses; refer to the English subject entry on page 67 for more information on the literature courses.

Nicola's perspective

'During the last two years everything I thought I knew about my own language has been turned upside down and looked at from new angles. I've enjoyed studying the history of English from Anglo-Saxon to the present day, how the transformation has happened and why it continues. Studying sociolinguistics has given me an insight into why different groups of people use language in specific ways, while courses in phonology have opened my ears to the sounds of language, enabling me to consider different accents and languages in a more scientific way. And, contrary to popular belief, there is nothing boring about grammar!

'By the end of my second year I found that all the courses on my degree programme linked to one another, and I'm looking forward to expanding the knowledge base I've built up so far during my third year. I'll also be learning how to carry out original research for my dissertation, which is very exciting.

'One of the best things about my programme is the calibre of the tutors, who are world-leading researchers in their respective linguistic fields. Their multinational backgrounds give you a wonderfully wide perspective on English, and help you to understand how English connects to, and takes its place among, other world languages.'

Nicola Taylor
BA in English
Language



English language: from the language of literature to the discourse of graffiti

