

Programme Specification

Pre-sessional A Online

Year: (Autumn only) 2020

Awarding Institution	University of Southampton
Teaching Institution	University of Southampton [full-time]
Mode of study	10 weeks of full-time study
Duration in years	Not applicable
Accreditation details	Not applicable
Final award	Not applicable
Name of award	Not applicable
Interim Exit awards	Not applicable
FHEQ level of final award	Not applicable
UCAS code	Not applicable
QAA Subject Benchmark or other external reference	Not applicable
Programme Leads	Nick Barratt, Director of Pre-sessional Programmes Elwyn Edwards, Deputy Director of Pre-sessional Programmes
Date specification was written	24/06/2020
Date Programme was validated	
Date specification last updated	

Programme Overview

Pre-sessional A online (10 weeks) is designed for International students who:

- need to improve their language skills as a condition of entry to the University of Southampton

or

- have already met the English language conditions for entry to the University, but who want to find out more about the use of English in academic study and expectations relating to academic life in the UK.

Pre-sessional A online (10 weeks) will:

- help you to develop the English language skills you will need to follow a taught degree programme or undertake research at a UK university
- help you to develop the necessary study skills for effective learning through the medium of English
- help you engage with the University, its structures, services and people
- give you a chance to become accustomed to a UK academic learning environment before starting your degree programme at the University of Southampton.

Students who successfully complete Pre-sessional A online with the minimum English level requirements (stated in your conditional offer from your admitting Faculty Recruitment and Admissions Team), will have met the English language requirements of the University of Southampton.

Special Features of the programme

To aid your learning, Pre-sessional A online includes compulsory weekly independent learning sessions and academic advising sessions. This feature of the programme has been recognised as a particular strength by our external examiners. You will also view weekly lectures on subjects of academic interest, which are delivered by guest lecturers from across the University's academic community.

Learning and teaching

Pre-sessional A online consists of five core modules: Academic Reading, Academic Writing, Academic Listening, Academic Speaking and Independent Learning. You will have approximately 20 University hours per week interacting with Pre-sessional academic staff and/or teaching materials, including live taught sessions, live tutorials, live feedback and small group interactions and a range of recorded material and study tasks. In addition, because this is an academic programme, you will also be expected to carry out further independent study and complete programme assessments.

You will view recorded weekly lectures from University of Southampton academics, which are either subject specific or of general academic interest. Written, in-class (during live online teaching) and tutorial feedback will be provided to enable you to identify your strengths and weaknesses and continue to develop your language and academic skills effectively. Tutors will give extensive guidance, especially through recommendations of reference and source materials. You will learn to take more responsibility for your own learning as the programme develops.

Learning activities include:

- academic writing tasks
- academic reading tasks e.g. identifying reliable sources
- academic oral interactions, including online seminar-style groupwork and presentations
- grammar and vocabulary work as necessary
- academic listening and note-taking activities e.g. from lectures or recorded sources
- information gathering activities i.e. research
- tutorials in which you will receive academic advice
- independent learning workshops.

Assessment

Your knowledge and understanding will be assessed in a variety of ways, which include timed online tasks and ongoing coursework. Timed online tasks will assess your ability to apply your knowledge and understanding, often asking you to present an argument within a limited period.

Coursework may include tasks such as essays, portfolio records, preparing academic presentations, and for online sessions with tutors. Coursework tests your ability to apply your knowledge and understanding of academic language and study skills, to work independently, and to construct an in-depth argument over a much longer period.

Please note: As a research-led University, we undertake a continuous review of our programmes to ensure quality enhancement and to manage our resources. As a result, this programme may be revised during a student's period of registration; however, any revision will be balanced against the requirement that the student should receive the educational service expected. Please read our [Disclaimer](#) to see why, when and how changes may be made to a student's programme.

Programmes and major changes to programmes are approved through the University's programme validation process which is described in the University's Quality handbook.

Educational Aims of the Programme

The key aims of Pre-sessional A online are to:

- consolidate and extend your existing English language knowledge and communication skills to facilitate under-graduate or post-graduate academic study
- develop the academic study skills required for study in higher education in the UK and familiarise yourself with the learning and teaching strategies used in higher education in the UK

Programme Learning Outcomes

Knowledge and Understanding

Having successfully completed this programme you will be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

A1. The relevant conventions followed in academic English (both written and spoken) e.g. referencing, appropriate formality.

A2. What is expected of a student in UK higher education, especially in terms of approach to studying and learning e.g. active and independent learning.

A3. How to efficiently identify and use reliable sources appropriate for your discipline e.g. use of library sources.

A4. How to understand texts such as journal articles in which writers adopt attitudes or viewpoints.

A5. How academic texts are coherently constructed e.g. abstracts.

A6. How to read efficiently in order to complete necessary research e.g. skimming and scanning.

A7. How to construct an academic essay, or similar piece of academic writing, which involves the use of sources.

A8. How to write clear, detailed text supporting your points with academic evidence e.g. in-text citation.

A9. How to write essays of different styles e.g. compare and contrast.

A10. How to identify the structure of lectures and produce well-organised presentations e.g. introduction.

A11. How to identify the main and supporting points in lectures e.g. signposting language, discourse markers in order to enhance understanding.

A12. How to process extended speech and follow lines of argument

A13. How to actively participate in spoken interactions online with academics and fellow students e.g. small group discussions.

A14. How to deliver academic presentations e.g. preparation, structure, flow.

Teaching and Learning Methods

Although there are five separate modules, Pre-sessional A online language and study skills teaching will be integrated as much as possible. For example, you will have one tutor who will teach Reading and Writing modules and one tutor who will teach Listening and Speaking modules. Online teaching will use group sessions and student to student interaction but will focus on you as an individual and guide you through the academic challenges the Pre-sessional demands.

We encourage the use of communicative teaching methods, and this means that any online taught interaction could include use of each of the four language skills. You further develop your study skills through online independent learning interactions and online academic advising sessions. You will also view recorded lectures of academic interest, and will be provided with opportunity for guided listening practice.

Depending on the assessment type, written, group and tutorial feedback will be provided to enable you to identify your strengths and weaknesses, and continue to develop your language and academic skills effectively. Tutors will give extensive guidance, especially through recommendations of reference and source materials. You will learn to take more responsibility for your own learning as you move through the programme.

Assessment methods

Your knowledge and understanding will be assessed in a variety of ways, which include timed online tasks and coursework. Timed online tasks assess your ability to apply your knowledge and understanding, often asking you to present an argument within a limited period. Coursework may include tasks such as essays, academic presentations, and preparing for online taught sessions. These tasks test your ability to apply your knowledge and understanding of academic language and study skills, and to construct an in-depth argument over a much longer period.

Skill (% of final mark)	Pre-sessional Course A online
Reading (25%)	Total 2 tasks: <u>1 formative task</u> RT1(F): Record of reading development <u>1 summative task</u> RT2 (S): Record of reading development: final report (100%)
Writing (25%)	Total 3 tasks: <u>3 formative tasks</u> WT1 (F): Initial writing task (timed online 24 hours) WT2 (F): Full draft of researched writing task (min. 1000 words) <u>1 summative task</u> WT3 (S): Researched writing task (1400 words, 100% of final writing mark)
Listening (25%)	Total 2 tasks <u>1 formative tasks:</u> LT1 (F): Listening task based on audio file (timed online) <u>1 summative task:</u> LT2 (S): Listening task based on audio file (timed online, 100% of final listening mark)
Speaking (25%)	Total 2 tasks <u>1 formative task:</u> ST1 (F): Individual presentation task <u>1 summative task:</u> ST2 (S): Individual presentation task (recorded 100% of final speaking task)

Key: F = formative S = summative

Subject Specific Intellectual and Research Skills

Having successfully completed this programme you will be able to:

- B1. Recognise and understand academic vocabulary.
- B2. Identify appropriate sources of information for your subject area.
- B3. Locate resources for your subject area online.
- B4. Interpret and analyse a range of information from different sources.
- B5. Extract, paraphrase and synthesise key information from written and spoken sources.
- B7. Express facts, concepts and arguments clearly using appropriate language.
- B8. Understand and present detailed reasoning.

Teaching and Learning Methods

The structure and content of Pre-sessional A online gives you the opportunity to develop a range of cognitive skills as you are introduced to the academic rigours of higher education in the UK. From the outset of the programme, cognitive skills are developed in communicative online interactions including seminar type interactions with other students, presentations, and tutorials. Academic Lectures you view will develop the skills of processing and summarising information (internally and through notetaking and discussion). Critical thinking skills will be developed as you learn how to recognise subjectivity, analyse arguments objectively and to apply these skills in your own work. You further develop cognitive skills through researching and writing essays throughout the programme.

Depending on the assessment type, written feedback, spoken feedback and tutorial feedback is given to help you to identify any gaps in your cognitive skills. This allows you to develop your skills effectively by building on your strengths and/or addressing weaknesses or gaps in conveying subject specific knowledge or processing relevant research.

Assessment methods

Assessment methods include online academic tasks (formative and summative) and online coursework (formative and summative). Timed tasks, whether written or oral, are designed to test your overall thinking skills in conditions where time and support for reflection are limited, as often in real life. Coursework assessment provides formative and summative testing against the intended learning outcomes of the module concerned.

Assessment tasks are directly related to learning outcomes of modules and integrate thinking skills with language knowledge outcomes. For example, a presentation on a specialist topic tests your ability to think through and organise your material in preparation, and to 'think on your feet' under questioning, as well as testing your topic knowledge, interactive skills, strategic competence, and your linguistic accuracy and fluency.

Transferable and Generic Skills

Having successfully completed this programme you will be able to:

- C1. Produce writing in appropriate academic genres and follow required conventions, including referencing.
- C2. Employ a range of general and academic vocabulary appropriately.
- C3. Apply a range of reading strategies to help you to read efficiently.
- C4. Listen to, understand and take notes from recorded academic lectures.

C5. Actively participate in small online discussions and tutorials.

C6. Prepare and deliver oral presentations.

C7. Work as a member of a team by cooperating with others, negotiating, listening to others in a group, sharing responsibilities & tasks.

C8. Adhere to guidelines and meet relevant deadlines.

C9. Set and monitor individual goals, reflect on your own learning and feedback, and have the confidence to seek help when needed.

C10. Use ICT to produce documents and other material using a computer.

Teaching and Learning Methods

Each Pre-sessional A online module (Academic Reading, Academic Writing, Academic Listening, Academic Speaking, Independent Learning) identifies specific linguistic and study / learning skills to be achieved. As the skills are rarely used in isolation, reading and writing modules are integrated within the Pre-sessional A online syllabus as are the speaking and listening modules.

The Reading and Writing modules are structured to ensure the development of important transferable academic skills for both reading and writing, with tasks set to provide you with practice of the skills being covered in online taught sessions. To aid you in your future studies, you will attend an online library induction at the start of the programme.

The first part of the Reading and Writing modules focuses on how to find information, how to read efficiently and to take notes, how to write structured paragraphs and essays, how to incorporate information from outside sources in the form of paraphrase, summary and quotation and how to recognise different academic genres. The second part of the reading and writing modules aims to develop and refine those skills already learnt and focuses on critical thinking skills, improving accuracy and increasing awareness of academic demands and expectations. These skills are essential for study on future university programmes.

The Listening and Speaking modules are also integrated and are structured so that you focus on developing your listening and speaking skills simultaneously. Activities include preparing for and attending a weekly lecture in which you learn to listen effectively and to take appropriate and useful notes while listening; these notes are used later in classroom discussions. Your speaking skills are further enhanced through the development of your presentation and seminar skills. You will also focus on improving your pronunciation. All these skills are highly transferable.

The Independent Learning module supports the academic reading, academic writing, academic listening and academic speaking modules and is designed to equip you with the transferable study skills that you need to be successful in your future studies. The module is designed to work in partnership with the reading and writing and listening and speaking syllabi.

In short, all the skills you develop on Pre-sessional A online are transferable to your future studies and employment if you are in an English-speaking environment.

Assessment methods

The effectiveness of your communication, learning and research skills is tested through both assessed coursework and examinations, which involve writing of different kinds, group and individual projects, oral presentations and other interactive tasks.

Your use of ICT implicitly contributes to your assessment since it is a necessary condition for presenting much of your work.

Programme Structure

Module Title	Module Code
Academic Listening (Pre-sessional A online)	PRES0064
Academic Reading (Pre-sessional A online)	PRES0065
Academic Speaking (Pre-sessional A online)	PRES0066
Academic Writing (Pre-sessional A online)	PRES0067
Independent Learning (Pre-sessional A online)	PRES0068

Typical course content

Pre-sessional A online consists of five modules: Academic Reading, Writing, Listening, Speaking and Independent Learning. You will watch weekly lectures, which are either subject-specific or of general academic interest, and have separate individual tutorials with your Reading and Writing tutor and your Listening and Speaking tutor to receive feedback on your learning and to help you further develop your skills. You will have live taught interactions with your tutors and also access recorded and written feedback

Progression Requirements

The Programme follows the University's regulations for Progression, Determination and Classification of Results: Pre-sessional Programmes 2020.

If you complete the Pre-sessional Programme with the minimum English level requirements as set out in your conditional offer from your admitting Faculty Recruitment and Admissions Team, you will have met the English language requirements of the University of Southampton.

Support for student learning

There are facilities and services to support your learning some of which are accessible to students across the University and some of which will be geared more particularly to students in your particular Faculty or discipline area.

The University provides:

- library resources, including e-books, on-line journals and databases, which are comprehensive and up to date; together with guidance from Library staff to enable you to make the best use of these resources
- computer accounts which will connect you to a number of learning technologies for example, the Blackboard virtual learning environment (which facilitates online learning and access to specific learning resources)
- standard online tools such as email, secure filestore and calendars.
- access to key information through the MySouthampton Student Mobile Portal
- IT support through a comprehensive website.
- Enabling Services offering support services and resources via a triage model to access crisis management, mental health support and counselling.
- the Student Services Centre (SSC) to assist you with a range of general enquiries

The Students' Union provides:

- an Advice Centre offering free and confidential advice including support if you need to make an academic appeal

Associated with your programme, you will be able to access:

- Experienced academic tutors
- On-line course materials via Virtual Learning Environment (Blackboard)
- Dedicated administrative staff for administrative queries.

Methods for evaluating the quality of teaching and learning

You will have the opportunity to have your say on the quality of the programme in the following ways:

- completing online student evaluation questionnaires at the end of the programme
- completing a feedback questionnaire sent by the Students' Union

The ways in which the quality of your programme is checked, both inside and outside the University, are:

- regular module and programme reports which are monitored by the Faculty
- Programme validation, normally every five years.
- external examiners, who produce an annual report
- a national Research Assessment Exercise (our research activity contributes directly to the quality of your learning experience)
- Institutional Review by the Quality Assurance Agency

Criteria for Admission

The minimum English level requirements for Pre-sessional A online will depend on the entry requirements for your chosen degree programme stated in your conditional offer from your admitting Faculty Recruitment and Admissions Team.

Career Opportunities

The communication and research skills you will develop on Pre-sessional A online are highly transferable. The increased ability to work with peers, express ideas and understand complex language should mean that future career opportunities will be enhanced.

External Examiner(s) for the programme

Name: Mr Richard Hitchcock Institution. University of Portsmouth	Name: Ms Norlene Conway Institution: University of London
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Students must not contact External Examiner(s) directly, and external examiners have been advised to refer any such communications back to the University. Students should raise any general queries about the assessment and examination process for the programme with their Course Representative, for consideration through Staff: Student Liaison Committee in the first instance, and Student representatives on Staff: Student Liaison Committees will have the opportunity to consider external examiners' reports as part of the University's quality assurance process.

External examiners do not have a direct role in determining results for individual students, and students wishing to discuss their own performance in assessment should contact their personal tutor in the first instance.

Please note: This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if s/he takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information can be found in the programme handbook (or other appropriate guide) or online at:

http://www.southampton.ac.uk/humanities/international/language_support/presess.page

Appendix:

Additional Costs

Students are responsible for meeting the cost of essential textbooks, and of producing such essays, assignments, laboratory reports and dissertations as are required to fulfil the academic requirements for each programme of study. In addition to this, students registered for this programme also have to pay for the items listed in the table below.

Please also ensure you read the section on additional costs in the University's Fees, Charges and Expenses Regulations in the University Calendar available at www.calendar.soton.ac.uk.

Main Item	Sub-section	PROGRAMME SPECIFIC COSTS
IT equipment		All students will need a broadband connection and must be able to access learning materials and online taught sessions. You must also be able to record and upload personal video recordings and complete and submit written assessments online. As a minimum, we recommend that you use a personal computer (e.g. laptop) using a full keyboard.
Stationery		You will be expected to provide your own day-to-day stationery items, e.g. pens, pencils, notebooks, etc). We do not expect any further stationery costs.