

## Programme Specification

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### 8329: 25-Week Pre-sessional Programme 2020-21

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.

Awarding Institution	University of Southampton
Teaching Institution	University of Southampton
Mode of study	25 weeks – Full Time
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	Victoria Rowe
Date specification was written	30/11/2018
Date Programme was validated	January 2019
Date specification last updated	December 2020

### Programme Overview

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#### Brief outline of the programme

The 25-Week Pre-sessional programme is an English language programme for international students who have the academic qualifications to join an undergraduate or postgraduate degree programme at the University of Southampton but need to develop their English Language skills. You should have a minimum language level of IELTS 5.0 or equivalent.

On entry, you should have a conditional or unconditional offer to study on an undergraduate or postgraduate study degree programme at the University of Southampton. This programme is designed to enable you to improve your English Language skills to meet the English language proficiency level required to join your degree programme. This will be specified in your offer letter.

Full information about contact hours is provided in individual module profiles.

The programme is designed to increase your confidence and fluency in language use in formal and informal academic contexts and will prepare you for the many different forms of interaction with other speakers of English, which will be a feature of your life within and outside university. The course will focus on all four skills: writing, reading, speaking and listening, along with general language development and independent learning. ***However, these four skills may not always be taught separately in class but instead integrated.***

In the 25-week Pre-sessional, the syllabus will include a combination of general and non-subject-specific academic English. In the summer semester only academic English will be taught.

The course will also concentrate on the learning and teaching methodology in use in Britain (e.g. seminars, workshops, essay writing, listening to lectures, note taking, giving presentations, using the University library, research skills, critical thinking, time-management and many more).

## Special Features of the programme

This programme starts in January/February each year. In the first semester you will consolidate your general language skills alongside developing your academic skills. In the second semester (summer) you will focus primarily on improving and enhancing your academic skills in preparation for university study.

## Learning and teaching

The 25-week Pre-session programme consists of five core modules: academic reading, academic writing, academic listening, academic speaking and independent learning. You will attend lectures which are either subject specific or of general academic interest and have tutorials with your tutors in which you receive feedback on your learning to help you further develop your language and academic skills. You will also be expected to carry out further independent study and complete assignments outside the classroom.

## Learning activities include:

- academic writing tasks
- academic reading tasks e.g. identifying reliable sources
- academic oral interactions, seminar work, oral presentations and Q & A sessions
- grammar and vocabulary work
- academic listening and note-taking activities e.g. from lectures or recorded sources
- information gathering activities i.e. research
- tutorials
- academic advising sessions
- independent learning workshops.

## Assessment

You will complete a number of formative and summative assessments for the academic reading, academic writing, academic listening and academic speaking modules which are designed to prepare you for study on your future degree programme. The independent learning module is not assessed. Examples of assessments may include researched writing tasks, reading and listening assessments, seminar discussions and presentations.

The summative assessments in each module provide the final module mark.

Your assessments are marked according to the University of Southampton Pre-session Assessment Banding, which relates to the English language requirement set out in your conditional offer from the University.

The Pre-session assessment banding is used for international student progression purposes and provides an approximate equivalent to IELTS; you do not take the IELTS test as part of the Pre-session programme.

## Pre-session Assessment banding

IELTS BAND*	PRE-SESSIONAL ASSESSMENT BAND
7.5+	80 - 100%
7.0	70 - 79%
6.5	60 - 69%
6.0	50 - 59%
5.5	40 - 49%
5.0-	0 - 39%

The table above applies to each of the areas in which you are assessed, so if for example you need to achieve IELTS 6.5 overall with no less than 6.0 in writing, then you will need 60% minimum overall and minimum 50% in writing.

*\*Please note that the Pre-session Programme Assessment Banding is used for international student progression purposes and provides an **approximate** equivalent to IELTS; you do not take the IELTS test as part of the Pre-session programme.*

**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**

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The aims of the programme are to:

- enable you to progress to your chosen undergraduate or postgraduate degree programme by achieving the specified progression mark for your degree programme
- develop your listening, reading and writing skills in academic English
- develop your research skills and study skills
- develop your speaking skills for seminar discussions, tutorials, presentations and Q & A sessions
- build your knowledge of general English language
- develop your awareness of and confidence in the use of the English language
- help you to develop the necessary cultural and study skills for effective learning in English at a British university
- prepare you for undergraduate and postgraduate academic study

## **Programme Learning Outcomes**

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### **Knowledge and Understanding**

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

- A1. what is expected of a student in higher education, especially in terms of approach to studying and learning
- A2. various topics at an introductory level
- A3. the relevant conventions followed in academic English (both written and spoken)
- A4. the requirements of academic discourse in selected subjects
- A5. a topic in more depth through independent research

### **Teaching and Learning Methods**

The 25 - Week Pre-session is an integrated programme in which skills/modules are taught together as they are rarely used in isolation. Your classroom sessions therefore focus on academic reading and writing (with your reading and writing tutor) and listening and speaking (with your listening and speaking tutor). You further develop your study skills through independent learning workshops and academic advising sessions.

Your knowledge and understanding are further enhanced through the use of communicative teaching activities such as seminars, presentations, guided independent study and the preparation for written assignments. You may also attend lectures of academic interest and all modules use online material.

Depending on the assignment type, written, in-class and tutorial feedback is given to enable you to identify your strengths and weaknesses, and continue to develop your language and academic skills effectively. Tutors give extensive guidance, especially through recommendations for 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 assess your ability to apply your knowledge and understanding, often asking you to present an argument within a limited period of time. Coursework may include tasks such as long essays, class presentations, and seminars. These tasks test your ability to apply your knowledge and understanding of academic language and study skills and construct an in-depth argument over a much longer period of time.

Skill (% of final mark)	Pre-sessional Course 25 Weeks
<b>Reading (100%)</b>	<b>Total 4 tasks</b> <u>S1</u> 1 formative task RT1: Reading report (draft) 1 summative task RT2: Reading report (final report) (40%)  <u>S2</u> 1 formative task RT1: Reading report (draft) 1 summative task RT2: Reading report (final report) (60%)
<b>Writing (100%)</b>	<b>Total 8 tasks</b> <u>S1</u> 3 formative tasks WT1: Initial writing task WT2: Outline/plan of research essay WT3: Draft research essay (700 words) 1 summative task WT4: Research essay (1,000 words) (40%)  <u>S2</u> 2 formative tasks WT1: Initial writing task WT2: Draft research essay (min 1,000 words) 1 summative task WT3: Research essay (1,400 words) (60%)
<b>Listening (100%)</b>	<b>Total 4 tasks</b> <u>S1</u> 1 formative task LT1: Interactive listening task based on academic content 1 summative task LT2: Interactive listening task based on academic content (40%)  <u>S2</u> 1 formative task LT1: Interactive listening task based on academic content

	<u>1 summative task</u> LT2: Interactive listening task based on academic content (60%)
<b>Speaking (100%)</b>	<b>Total 4 tasks</b> <u>S1</u> <u>1 formative task</u> ST1: Individual presentation task <u>1 summative task</u> ST2: Individual presentation task (40%)  <u>S2</u> <u>1 formative task</u> ST1: Individual presentation task <u>1 summative task</u> ST2: Individual presentation task (60%)

### **Subject Specific Intellectual and Research Skills**

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Having successfully completed this programme you will be able to:

- B1. use English for a range of academic purposes.
- B2. critically evaluate evidence and opinion in selected subjects.
- B3. recognise and understand academic vocabulary.
- B4. present reasoned and structured arguments, both orally and in written form.

#### ***Teaching and Learning Methods***

Activities particularly designed to enhance your thinking skills include tutor-led or student-led seminars, workshops, tutorials, group work and oral presentations.

#### ***Assessment methods***

Assessments, essays and shorter pieces of assessed work, individual and group speaking activities including seminar discussions, in addition to a research project, will be used to assess your intellectual skills. Progression is recognised in the assessment scheme, which tests your cognitive skills, moving from understanding and explaining simple concepts through to synthesising and evaluating arguments.

### **Transferable and Generic Skills**

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On successful completion of this programme you will be able to:

- C1. present reasoned and structured arguments, both orally and in written form.
- C2. identify, select and draw upon a range of printed and electronic sources.
- C3. extract and synthesise key information from written and spoken sources.
- C4. carry out a piece of independent research.
- C5. organise your study time effectively.
- C6. demonstrate interpersonal skills whilst working with others in the investigation of problems, and in the presentation of arguments and evidence.
- C7. deal with the requirements of university life.

## Teaching and Learning Methods

Your key skills will be developed through tutor-led and student-led seminars and tutorials, workshops, library sessions, group projects and independent research.

## Assessment methods

You will be asked to demonstrate your key skills through participating in speaking activities including seminar discussions, class exercises, group work and a piece of independent research. Progression is recognised in the assessment scheme, which tests key skills at appropriate levels of study.

## Programme Structure

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The programme structure table is below:

### 25 - Week Pre-sessional Programme

Academic Listening	PRES0045	Compulsory
Academic Reading	PRES0047	Compulsory
Academic Speaking	PRES0049	Compulsory
Academic Writing	PRES0051	Compulsory
Independent Learning	PRES0053	Compulsory

## Typical course content

The 25-week Pre-sessional programme consists of the five modules of academic writing, academic reading, academic listening, academic speaking and independent learning, in which you learn how to study independently. **However, these four skills may not always be taught separately in class but instead integrated.** The focus will be on general English for academic study rather than subject-specific, focusing on the necessary skills for academic study at university, such as structuring an essay, giving a presentation, listening to lectures and taking notes, reading academic texts and making notes along with referencing and critical thinking skills. You will also focus on general language development which looks at language use outside the classroom.

The course will also concentrate on the learning and teaching methodology in use in Britain (e.g. seminars, workshops, essay writing, listening to lectures, note taking, giving presentations, using the University library, research skills, critical thinking, time-management and many more areas).

## Progression Requirements

The Programme follows the University's regulations for Progression, Determination and Classification of Results: Pre-sessional Programmes as set out in the University Calendar.

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.

## Assessment

The weighting of assessment will be increased in the summer semester to show your English Language level at the end of the programme.

The nature of Pre-sessional programmes does not allow for referral.

## **Support for student learning**

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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 assistance from Library staff to enable you to make the best use of these resources
- high speed access to online electronic learning resources on the Internet, from dedicated PC workstations onsite and from your own devices; laptops, smartphones and tablet PCs via the Eduroam wireless network. There is a wide range of application software available from the Student Public Workstations.
- 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 ICT tools such as Email, secure filestore and calendars.
- access to key information through the MySouthampton Student Mobile Portal which delivers timetables, module information, locations, tutor details, the library account, bus timetables etc. while you are on the move.
- IT support through a comprehensive website, telephone and online ticketed support and a dedicated helpdesk in the Hartley Library.
- Enabling Services, offering support services and resources via a triage model to access crisis management, mental health support and counselling.
- assessment and support (including specialist IT support) facilities if you have a disability, long term health problem or Specific Learning Difficulty (e.g. dyslexia)
- the Student Services Centre (SSC), to assist you with a range of general enquiries including financial matters, accommodation, exams, graduation, student visas, ID cards.
- Career Destinations, advising on job search, applications, interviews, paid work, volunteering and internship opportunities and getting the most out of your extra-curricular activities alongside your degree programme when writing your CV.
- other support that includes health services (GPs), the Chaplaincy (for all faiths) and 'out of hours' support for students in Halls (18.00-08.00), an Academic Centre for International Students(ACIS), providing assistance in the development of English language and study skills for non-native speakers.

The Students' Union provides

- an academic student representation system, consisting of Course Representatives, Academic Presidents, Faculty Officers and the Vice-President Education; SUSU (Southampton University Students' Union) provides training and support for all these representatives, whose role is to represent students' views to the University.
- opportunities for extracurricular activities and volunteering.
- an Advice Centre offering free and confidential advice including support if you need to make an academic appeal.
- support for student peer-to-peer groups, such as Nightline.

Associated with your programme you will be able to access:

- the ACIS website
- Blackboard

## **Methods for evaluating the quality of teaching and learning**

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

- Completing student evaluation questionnaires for each module of the programme.

- Acting as a Student Representative on various committees, e.g. Staff-Student Liaison Committees, Faculty Programmes Committee OR providing comments to your student representative to feed back on your behalf.
- Serving as a Student Representative on Faculty Scrutiny Groups for programme validation
- Taking part in programme validation meetings by joining a panel of students to meet with the Faculty Scrutiny Group

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 Excellence Framework (our research activity contributes directly to the quality of your learning experience).
- Institutional Review by the Quality Assurance Agency.

## Career Opportunities

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Students are advised to contact the University's Careers and Employability Service to explore opportunities to enhance employability.

## External Examiner(s) for the programme

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<b>Name</b>	Mr Richard Hitchcock
<b>Institution</b>	University of Portsmouth

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.

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**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

<https://www.southampton.ac.uk/studentservices/academic-life/faculty-handbooks.page>

<https://www.southampton.ac.uk/courses/pre-sessional-language-courses/general-english-for-academic-purposes.page>



# Appendix 1:

## 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 typically also have to pay for the items listed in the table below.

In some cases you'll be able to choose modules (which may have different costs associated with that module) which will change the overall cost of a programme to you. Details of such costs will be listed in the Module Profile. 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](http://www.calendar.soton.ac.uk).

Main Item	Sub-section	PROGRAMME SPECIFIC COSTS
Stationery		You will be expected to provide your own day-to-day stationery items, e.g. pens, pencils, notebooks, etc.). Any specialist stationery items will be specified under the Additional Costs tab of the relevant module profile.
Textbooks		Where a module specifies core texts these should generally be available on the reserve list in the library. However due to demand, students may prefer to buy their own copies. These can be purchased from any source.  Some modules suggest reading texts as <b>optional</b> background reading. The library may hold copies of such texts, or alternatively you may wish to purchase your own copies. Although not essential reading, you may benefit from the additional reading materials for the module.
IT		You will need to back-up all of your work to ensure you do not lose any valuable data.
Printing and Photocopying Costs		In the majority of cases, coursework such as essays; projects; dissertations are likely to be submitted on line. However, there are some items where it is not possible to submit on line and students will be asked to provide a printed copy. A list of the University printing costs can be found here: <a href="https://www.southampton.ac.uk/isolutions/students/printing-for-students.page">https://www.southampton.ac.uk/isolutions/students/printing-for-students.page</a>
Optional Visits (e.g. museums, galleries)		Some modules may include optional visits to a museum, galleries, etc. You will normally be expected to cover the cost of travel and admission, unless otherwise specified in the module profile.
Parking Costs		You will be expected to pay for a permit if you wish to park your car at the University.  <a href="https://www.southampton.ac.uk/transport/parking/student-parking-permits.page">https://www.southampton.ac.uk/transport/parking/student-parking-permits.page</a>