LN906-15 Research Skills in Modern Languages

26/27

Department
School of Modern Languages and Cultures
Level
Taught Postgraduate Level
Module leader
Ingrid De Smet
Credit value
15
Module duration
6 weeks
Assessment
Multiple
Study location
University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

Description

Introductory description

What is the best way to start researching an essay or dissertation topic in Modern Languages and/or Translation Studies? What are the common standards and expectations to present your research in the field?
This module addresses the basic issues and procedures of undertaking advanced research in Modern Languages and Translation Studies & Cultures and the presentation of these research results in commonly accepted scholarly formats. You will become familiar with key electronic databases for research in your field and will learn how to evaluate and present the result of your searches in common formats such as a bibliographies and footnotes. You will learn to evaluate existing scholarship on a given topic and to place your own research and writing within a broader scholarly landscape.
The understanding and skills you gain in this module will support the specific studies you undertake in other MA modules and especially the Dissertation. They will also stand you in good stead if you wish to continue to doctoral research after your MA.
Sessions are conducted by SMLC staff members and by the School of Modern Languages subject librarian(s).
The award of the MA is contingent upon successful completion of the assessment for this module. Students must pass each element of the assessment for the module.

Module web page

Module aims

The aim of this module is to help you

- understand concepts of academic integrity in Humanities research
- place your own writing and research within a broader, critically evaluated research context
- conduct efficient searches in key electronic databases in your field
- locate key printed materials
- understand and master techniques for the scholarly presentation of research, by learning to copy-edit and proofread your work according to a given stylesheet
- develop your academic writing skills in English, while handling foreign-language materials
- develop key research skills that will assist you in your work on your other MA modules and the Dissertation.

Outline syllabus

This is an indicative module outline only to give an indication of the sort of topics that may be covered. Actual sessions held may differ.

The syllabus of the module may vary from year to year, to reflect, firstly, changing research interests and skills development needs of the students taking Master's programmes in Modern Languages or Translation and Cultures, and secondly, staff interests and leave arrangements. The Skills Development programme of about six sessions/topics will typically include:

- an introduction and training on academic integrity
- techniques for conducting electronic bibliographical research
- building a bibliography
- writing a literature review
- choosing a dissertation topic and writing a dissertation proposal
- copy-editing and proofreading your work
- writing a doctoral proposal and applying for funding (optional)

For details of the syllabus, see the Moodle course accompanying the module.

Individual students may require other specific skills training (e.g. a session on Image Capture Technologies for those with filmic interests), or learning a further language. Students are encouraged to discuss their skills development needs with the LN906 module convenor, Deputy Director of Graduate Studies (PGT), or their module tutors and/or dissertation. Alongside the core tutorial sessions, seminars will be scheduled (in the same weekly slot) to reinforce skills development in areas that students and tutors identify as particularly relevant to the cohort.

The Skills development programme (assessed by two short bibliographical exercises, one based on electronic searches) will be a combination of in-house provision with sessions that are on offer elsewhere (such as the Faculty, the Library, the Language Centre, the Transnational Resources Centre, the Centre for the Study of the Renaissance…).

Learning outcomes

By the end of the module, students should be able to:

- - draw up a comprehensive, meaningful and correctly referenced bibliography of primary and secondary materials towards an advanced research topic in Modern Languages and/or Translation Studies
- - to locate and consult key electronic resources for advanced research in Modern Languages and/or Translation Studies
- - to identify and evaluate the relative merits of key publications on a particular topic or in particular field in Modern Languages and/or Translation Studies
- - marshal the results of bibliographical researches on a particular topic or field within Modern Languages and/or Translation Studies in an appropriately arranged bibliography and well-structured literature review
- - demonstrate an advanced capacity for academic writing, with due attention to copy-editing and proofreading according to a given stylesheet

Indicative reading list

Reading lists can be found in Talis

Specific reading list for the module

International

All modules delivered in SMLC are necessarily international.
Students engage with themes and ideas from a culture other than that of the UK and employ their linguistic skills in the analysis of primary materials from a non-anglophone context. The cohort of students is likely to be a mix of home and international students with interests in different language streams. Students will be encouraged to share experiences and will frequently engage with theoretical and critical frameworks from across the world.

Subject specific skills

The module is specifically focussed on developing research skills in modern languages and translation and transcultural studies.
Students will

- develop their language skills through engaging with primary and secondary materials in the target language.
- build their capacity to engage with aspects of modern language culture and transcultural studies through analysis of this primary material and through seminar discussion aimed at deeper critical thinking.

Transferable skills

In this module, students will

- develop their their ability for information retrieval and management, critical evaluation and synthesis
- written and oral communication, including a better command of academic English writing skills
- intercultural understanding and the ability to mediate between languages and cultures
- develop their IT skills through advanced database interrogation and word processing (copy-editing)
- personal responsibility and the exercise of initiative
- time management and organisation

Study

Study time

Type	Required	Optional
Seminars	4 sessions of 2 hours (5%)	
Tutorials	5 sessions of 2 hours (7%)	1 session of 2 hours
Private study	132 hours (88%)	
Total	150 hours	

Private study description

Students will undertake private study and independent research and writing through class preparation, guided reading using instruction through Moodle and the Tallis reading list, and the task instructions for the assessment.

Costs

No further costs have been identified for this module.

Assessment

You do not need to pass all assessment components to pass the module.

Assessment group A3

	Weighting	Study time	Eligible for self-certification
Annotated Bibliography in Modern Languages and	30%		Yes (extension)

	Weighting	Study time	Eligible for self-certification
Translation Studies			

You will submit a well-researched, annotated bibliography of 10-15 titles, on a topic in Modern Languages or Translation Studies. Detailed task instructions will be given on the module's accompanying Moodle page.

Literature review in Modern Languages and Translation Studies	70%		Yes (extension)

Building on the skills acquired for the Annotated Bibliography, you will submit a Literature Review of c. 2,000 words (excluding footnotes or bibliography). Your Literature Review will offer a critical assessment of the state of scholarship relating to a particular topic or field, with a view to formulating any research questions that still need to be addressed. The Literature Review will be written in good academic English and presented in an appropriate scholarly format. Detailed instructions will be given on the Moodle pages accompanying the module.

Assessment group R1

	Weighting	Study time	Eligible for self-certification
Annotated Bibliography	30%		No

Reassessment instructions will follow the university's principles for remedying a Fail on postgraduate taught courses. The student will normally be instructed to resubmit an improved version of their original task, with the result capped at 50%, although a note of the intrinsic merit of the improved performance will be kept for information.
Where poor academic practice is at the origin of the Fail, the mechanism of reassessment (if allowed) will be judged by the appropriate committees on a case by case basis. It may involve starting the task from scratch for a result capped at 50%.

Literature Review in Modern Languages and Translation Studies	70%		No

Reassessment instructions will follow the university's principles for remedying a Fail on postgraduate taught courses. The student will normally be instructed to resubmit an improved version of their original task, with the result capped at 50%, although a note of the intrinsic merit of the improved performance will be kept for information.
Where poor academic practice is at the origin of the Fail, the mechanism of reassessment (if allowed) will be judged by the appropriate committees on a case by case basis. It may involve starting the task from scratch for a result capped at 50%.

Feedback on assessment

Feedback will be provided in the course of the module in a number of ways. Feedback should be understood to be both formal and informal and is not restricted to feedback on formal written work.

Oral feedback will be provided by the module tutor in the course of seminar discussion. This may include feedback on points raised in small group work or in the course of individual presentations or larger group discussion.
Written feedback will be provided on summative assessment using the standard SMLC Assessed Work feedback form (or relevant Tabula platform) appropriate to the assessment. This may consist of a mixture of individual comments and generic feedback given to the whole cohort of students. Feedback is intended to enable continuous improvement throughout the module and written feedback is generally the final stage of this feedback process. Feedback will always demonstrate areas of success and areas for future development, which can be applied to future assessment. Feedback will be both discipline-specific and focussed on key transferrable skills, enabling students to apply this feedback to their future professional lives.
Feedback will be fair and reasonable and will be linked to the marking scheme (criteria) appropriate to the module and course.

Availability

Courses

This module is Core for:

- TLNA-Q910 Postgraduate Taught Translation and Cultures
  - Year 1 of Q910 Translation and Cultures
  - Year 1 of Q910 Translation and Cultures
  - Year 1 of Q911 Translation and Cultures: Literary Translation Studies
  - Year 1 of Q912 Translation and Cultures: Translation and Technologies
  - Year 2 of Q910 Translation and Cultures
  - Year 2 of Q911 Translation and Cultures: Literary Translation Studies
  - Year 2 of Q912 Translation and Cultures: Translation and Technologies

This module is Optional for:

- Year 1 of TGEA-R2P6 Postgraduate Masters for Research in German Studies (Part-time)