



**Guide to the Master's Degree in English Studies:
Professional Applications and Intercultural
Communication
[Faculty of Humanities]**

Academic year 2023-2024
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C O N T E N T S

Preface.....	3
I. General description of the Master's Degree programme	4
II. About class attendance	5
III. About the submission of assignments	5
IV. About the exams	6
V. About the use of English in classes	7
VI. Choice of topic and Master's thesis advisor	7
VII. The work of the advisee (tutored student)	8
VIII. About plagiarism in scientific works	9
IX. About the externship (students Module 3 only)	10
X. The development of the Master's thesis.....	10
XI. Master's thesis defence.....	12

P R E F A C E

Welcome... to the Master's degree programme in English Studies: Professional Applications and Intercultural Communication at the University of Almería. As Coordinator of this programme and a member of the Academic Committee, I would also like to welcome all new graduate students who have chosen to continue their graduate studies with us. We will strive to ensure that your time here at the University of Almeria will be fruitful and successful.

The following document is intended to provide guidance to new graduate students with regard to possible questions or doubts that may arise throughout the academic year. This guide must be considered an internal document for students enrolling for the Master's programme and, as such, it will be subjected to the legislation of the University of Almería or, otherwise, to future guides that this academic institution might prepare. However, it is recommended to read it carefully as the information offered is essential for the correct development of the Master.

In order to ensure a better understanding of the Master's Degree in English Studies, students have the official webpage provided by the University (<https://www.ual.es/estudios/masteres/presentacion/7048>) (in Spanish) and a more practical site which should be of great interest for new students enrolling in the Master's degree programme (<https://w3.ual.es/Masters/estudiosingleses/index.html>) as it offers a detailed view of the programme as well as information of the schedule of classes, faculty members profile, and course information but also essential documents and link to webpages which students will find of great interest. Likewise, you have at your disposal a specific email address for questions related to the Master's degree programme (masterestudiosingleses@ual.es) where you can address your queries and doubts to the Academic Committee members—M^a Elena García Sánchez, M^a Enriqueta Cortés de los Ríos, José Ramón Ibáñez Ibáñez, and myself, Blasina Cantizano Márquez.

On behalf of all Faculty members of the Master's programme, I would like to wish you professional advancement and personal achievement. We all look forward to meeting you and to helping you in your new academic venture.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE MASTER'S DEGREE PROGRAMME

The Master's Degree in English Studies is divided into three large blocks or modules:

- **Module 1: Foundation Courses (18 credits).** This first module, offered from October to December, is compulsory for all students enrolled in the Master's programme. It consists of six subjects (three credits each) aiming to lay the foundations of key issues in sociocultural, linguistic or communicative fields of the English language while, at the same time, offering advanced research techniques for coursework papers and the Master's Thesis.
- **Module 2 [Itinerary I]: Teaching and Research Itinerary (42 credits).** Subjects are scheduled to start in early January and extend to the end of May. It consists of ten three-credit subjects followed up by a twelve-credit Master's thesis (Trabajo Fin de Máster) based on a topic chosen by the student in consultation with their academic advisor. The student will work directly under the guidance of their advisor with whom he/she will have periodic meetings regarding their project (see sections VII and X of this guide). This Module (and itinerary) is recommended for students whose main objective is to devote themselves to teaching and research (for example, continuing with a doctoral thesis).
- **Module 3 [Itinerary II]: Professional Applications Itinerary (42 credits).** Module classes will be offered simultaneously with Module 2 classes. It consists of eight three-credit subjects and a four-week externship (twelve credits) period during which the student will have to develop a full-time practice in an approved (public or private) site (see section IX). Students enrolled for this itinerary will also have to submit a six-credit Master's thesis (Trabajo Fin de Máster) based on a topic chosen by the student in consultation with their academic advisor (see sections VII and X of this guide). This Module (and itinerary) is intended for students whose main goal is to seek work in the private sector. Students joining Itinerary II and who later wish to do a doctoral dissertation will request approval by the International Doctoral School. In addition, they will have to enrol for at least a three-credit subject of the core area courses (foundation courses) and complete a twelve-credit Master's thesis (Module 2) under

the supervision of a faculty member and in compliance of academic regulations in itinerary I.

Any student may be registered for all sixty (60) academic credits toward its completion in one academic year; or they may be registered for half of the load—(30) academic credits—in order to complete their graduate studies in two academic years. Should this be the case, the student may neither be enrolled for the externship nor any credits leading towards the completion of the Master's thesis

II

ABOUT CLASS ATTENDANCE

This Master's programme degree offers classes based on a blended learning approach to teaching—online sessions are combined with face-to-face learning methods. Class attendance and student participation are of paramount importance in both face-to-face courses and in online sessions. Students can take active participation in face-to-face activities, forums, debates, online sessions, etc. The final mark may be severely affected by a poor attendance to classes. In this regard, students are requested to inform their teachers about possible absences to those face-to-face sessions. Based upon the teaching guide, teachers and students may come to an agreement with regard to missing assignments and class absence.

III

ABOUT THE SUBMISSION OF ASSIGNMENTS

In order to successfully pass a course, students are requested to revise each course evaluation system. In certain subjects, a fundamental component of the final mark will consist of the submission, in due time, of a final paper that must comply with the academic guidelines as appeared in the Teaching Guide. Assignments must be submitted within a period not exceeding thirty calendar days from the last day of class (first deadline). Teachers will remind students of submission deadlines and may not accept late assignments. In any case, the assignment submission policy states that any paper, project or assignment due shall never be submitted beyond the following deadlines:

- Module 1 Foundation courses (compulsory): 2 February 2024
- Module 2 (Teaching and Research Itinerary): 8 June 2024
- Module 3 (Professional Applications Itinerary): 8 June 2024

IV

ABOUT THE EXAMS

In order to successfully pass a course, students are requested to revise the final mark components of that course. In certain subjects, a fundamental component of this grade will be determined by a final exam that will be based the course content—class notes, reading assignments and additional material provided by the teacher (academic articles, book chapter, documentaries or videoclips, webpage links, etc.).

In the 2023-2024 academic year, the examination periods will be the following:

- Exams subjects—Module 1 (compulsory)
 1. First examination call (C. Ordinaria): 29 Jan. - 3 Feb. 2024
 2. Second examination call (Extraordinaria): 12 - 17 Feb. 2024
- Exams subjects—Modules 2, 3 (specific)
 1. First examination call (C. Ordinaria): 3 - 8 June 2024
 2. Second examination call (C. Extraordinaria): 17 - 22 June 24

Exams shall be administered in English only, and will last between sixty (60) and one hundred and twenty (120) minutes, as scheduled by the teacher in the subject official teaching guide. Exams will be held within the official examination period approved by the University of Almeria Board of Governors.

Former students who wish to defend their Master's Thesis in a particular official announcement are urged to fulfil all academic pre-requisites (exams) prior to the submission of assignments of that call. Information about submission deadlines is available at: <https://w3.ual.es/Masters/estudiosingleses/academic-calendar.html>).

V

ABOUT THE USE OF ENGLISH IN CLASS

Classes in the Master's programme are conducted exclusively in English. All the subject content—lectures, classroom notes, quotations, reading assignments, film versions, literary works and reference material— is also offered in this language. Similarly, students' participation in the regular development of classes—comments, debates, questions, etc.—in both face-to-face or online presentations will be necessarily conducted in English.

Despite registration pre-requisites require proof of a level of B1(at least) in English, students are expected to work in an autonomous way in the preparation of course material, class comments, presentations, paper submissions, and final examinations.

Students will always make an effort to overcome oral/written communication problems that may affect their regular participation in the target language. They are urged to take private classes with native speakers, to actively participate in seminars and language workshops and request any further aid— such as native proofreaders for the papers, presentations, and final projects—as in order to improve their language skills.

VI

CHOICE OF TOPIC AND MASTER'S THESIS ADVISOR

The development of a Master's thesis topic is done by the student in consultation with their advisor. It is highly recommended that the student narrows down the scope of their research and think about a topic for their thesis as soon as possible. It will be essential that students become acquainted with faculty members and their fields of research. The Master's programme website will be of great help for new students as they will have access to faculty profiles, their research interest, as well as their latest projects and publications. In addition, students will find relevant personal information—office number, telephone number, email addresses, etc. Students are free to establish contact with those potential advisors who may best meet their research interests before they determine the topic of their master's thesis.

Master's thesis topics will be publicly announced via the Master's website by the end of October. Students will be encouraged to choose their topics of preference (from 13 to 24 November) through the official page of the Master's programme by clicking on the link: [https://www.ual.es/estudios/masteres/presentacion/plandeestudios/trabajofine studios/7048](https://www.ual.es/estudios/masteres/presentacion/plandeestudios/trabajofine%20studios/7048).

By the beginning of December, the Master's Programme Academic Committee will meet and assign a Master's Thesis advisor among those one who have previously been selected by the students. From this moment on and in consultation with their advisor, they will draw up a one-page summary of the contents and a tentative title to their final project which will be submitted to the Master's programme coordinator. Students will be informed of the Academic Committed decision by 28 January.

VII

THE WORK OF THE ADVISEE (TUTORED STUDENT)

Although the approach to the Master's thesis consists in a process of preparation, research, organization of ideas, handling of academic sources, drafting a document and final revision, there is no doubt that the student must be constantly supervised on a regular basis by their advisor. In general terms, both the student (advisee) and their advisor must establish a tutoring timetable that shall depend on the nature of the project or the student's own needs

Once the topic has been established and the parts of the Master's thesis have been agreed upon with the tutor, the student will commit to submitting chapters of their project that will be supervised by their advisor. Advisors will return, if necessary, the chapters with comments, amendments and may even advice the student to redo a whole document. The student, however, will continue with the drafting of a new chapter prior to their subsequent submission to their advisor. The advisor will have access to the final version of the project as a prerequisite to their final approval. No Master's thesis will be accepted or approved by a student's advisor if they have not been under their close scrutiny during the time the student has been doing their research and drafting the document.

The Master's thesis must be written in correct and academic English, so it is recommended that, if necessary, the student seeks the assistance of a native speaker in order to ensure that the versions they submit is devoid of grammar errors, spelling errors, and typos. It is not up to the advisor to correct grammatical inconsistencies, but to guide and advise the student towards the

correct completion of the project.

The signature of the Master's thesis of a tutored student implies that the advisor fully agrees with his advisee's final project and gives their approval for the final submission and subsequence defence.

VIII

ABOUT PLAGIARISM IN SCIENTIFIC PROJECTS

The Oxford English Dictionary defines plagiarism, as “the practice of taking someone else's work or ideas and passing them off as one's own.” In their research and writing process of final papers or final projects, the student will be very careful not to attribute other people's ideas to themselves as if they were their own. To avoid confusion, it is essential that the student always certifies from which document (book, article, book chapter, web, etc.) the ideas are obtained and, if necessary, know how to cite appropriately, either by paraphrasing or copying textually from the original source.

If you are unsure about how to cite correctly, it is advisable to consult your advisor who will provide you with thorough information on how to do so. Likewise, core subjects such as “Research Techniques” offer precise information not only on how to approach a scientific work, but also on aspects such as the handling of bibliography and the correct way of presenting your ideas and hypotheses.

Deliberate plagiarism of texts of diverse kind and origin is a fraud against the scientific community as well as a criminal offence. The finding of a deliberately plagiarized work—regardless of the source where the plagiarism was taken—will result in the failure of the subject for the intended official announcement. In order to preserve the honourability of the student's work, the student's advisor will request the project to be sent digitally through the TURNITIN plagiarism checker and submit a pdf version of the assessed document.

IX

ABOUT THE EXTERNSHIP (PRACTICUM) (MODULE 3 STUDENTS ONLY)

At the end of the teaching period, the students who enrolled for the Professional Applications Itinerary (Module 3) will have to complete a one-hundred hour externship period (Practicum) in companies or organizations that committed to a joint collaboration with the Master's Degree in English Studies. The distribution of this training period will be adjusted by the company or organization as stipulated by the university.

These externships will not be remunerated and the student will be supervised by a tutor of the company or organization. At the end of the externship period, the externship tutor in the workplace will be requested to submit a complete report of the work developed by the student during their externship period. Furthermore, students will have to complete a form via the University of Almería ÍCARO portal through which they will also upload their complete CV. Upon completion of their externship, students will be required to fill in a form describing the tasks developed during the externship.

Once the externship period is finished, the student must write up a brief report (externship experience essay) of their activity in the company or organization in its relation with the study program, following the guidelines offered in the document "Rules for the Externship Report." This report must be submitted within a stipulated period of seven calendar days after the completion of the externship period. The final grade of the "Practicum" will be determined by the grade transferred by the externship tutor in the workplace and the grade of the report given by the Master's internship tutor.

X

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE MASTER'S THESIS

The Master's thesis is not only the culmination of the learning process acquired by the student throughout the Master's programme, but also the culmination of intense, serious, and autonomous research work. The Master's thesis is also the demonstration of the student's intellectual capacity as a researcher.

The development of the Master's thesis will be determined by their academic advisor. As indicated in section VI, both tutor and advisee will agree on a regular schedule of academic appointments in which the advisor will provide guidance to the student in their needs, correct drafts, chapters, suggest literature and offer their help so that the student can undertake their research autonomously but under their supervision.

The research and writing process of the Master's thesis are carried out in parallel. It is not convenient to subordinate the writing task to the reading of scientific material since it may result in never being prepared to start writing the final project. For those students who wish to consult information on how to undertake a research work, they can have access to a public link offered by Purdue University under the heading "Directions for conducting a research work," or else they may want to visit the "Writing Center" on the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill webpage. Further information can also be found on the "Documents and Web Links" tab of the Master's website.

On the other hand, it is highly advisable that the student follow some specific guidelines regarding the format (layout, headings, epigraphs, indentation, etc.). To facilitate this task, the document in Word entitled "Master's Thesis Template.doc" located on the "Documents and Web Links" tab of the Master's website may be downloaded and used as a template for the final project. Apart from the above, it is absolutely essential and necessary that the student obtain information about the completion of the Master's thesis through the documents "Normativa de la UAL para TFMs" and "Normas de presentación del TFM".

The Master's Academic Committee is entitled to verify, via Turnitin plagiarism checker, the quality and originality of the projects submitted for defence. The Commission itself will determine the suitability of these works for their defence.

The length of the Master's thesis varies depending on the itinerary chosen by the student:

- Itinerary 1 (Research and Teaching) students. The Master's thesis is equivalent to twelve (12) credits. It is estimated that the length of this project cannot be less than sixty (60) pages—not including bibliography or appendices—written at one and a half spaces.
- Itinerary 2 (Professional Applications) students. The Master's thesis is equivalent to six (6) credits. It is estimated that the length cannot be less than forty (40) pages—not including bibliography or appendices—written at one and a half spaces.
- In both cases, when the work requires it, the use of graphics (tables, diagrams, etc.) should not be less than two images per page.

XI

MASTER'S THESIS DEFENCE

Prior to the Master's thesis defence, the student must have submitted the final draft of their project to their tutor at least ten days before the final deadline for submission of the Master's thesis (this is applicable to all official academic announcements).

The dates of the Master's thesis defence will be set in June, July, and November. Only when all the requirements are met, the student may upload their work via telematics to the university application. Along with their pdf version of the Master's thesis, the student will also submit a TURNITIN plagiarism checker report certifying the project's originality. The Master's coordinator will give students precise instructions in this regard when the time comes.

The dates for the Master's thesis defences for the academic year 2023-2024 are the following:

June 2024 final defence period:

- Submission date of final draft to advisor: 14 June 2024
- Submission date of the Master's Thesis: 19-21 June 2024
- Defense date of the Master's Thesis: 27 June 2024

July 2024 final defence period:

- Submission date of final draft to advisor: 8 July 2024
- Submission date of the Master's Thesis: 12-15 July 2024
- Defense date of Master's Thesis: 19 July 2024

July / September 2024 final defence period:

- Submission date of final draft to advisor: 26 July 2024
- Submission date of the Master's Thesis: 2 - 4 September 2024
- Defense date of Master's Thesis: 6 September 2024

In order to defend the Master's thesis, it is recommended that students prepare a Power Point or Keynote (Mac users) presentation to explain the objectives and results of the research. The full time of the presentation shall not exceed twenty minutes. Once the candidate has finished their presentation, the

members of the examination board may formulate questions, or make observation that they deem necessary, to which the candidate will have to answer when all board members have finished their observation. Once the defence has been completed, the Board may decide on joint grade of both the project and the presentation and make it public, either at the end of the assessment process or at the end of each student's defence.

For purely administrative matters, the student will have to comply with the University of Almería regulations (e.g. fees, digitization of the Master's Thesis, etc.). This information can be obtained at the ARATIES administrative centre.