

Programme specification 2012/2013

School of Oriental and African Studies

The following information forms the programme specification at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London. It gives definitive information relating to a programme of study and is written for a public audience, particularly prospective and current students. It is also used for other purposes such as initial programme approval, and is therefore produced at the start of the programme development process. Once approved, it forms the base-line information for all statements relating to the programme and is updated as approved amendments are made.

CORE INFORMATION

Programme title	BA Chinese (Modern and Classical)
Final award	BA Honours
Intermediate awards	n/a
Mode of attendance	Full-time
UCAS code	T100 BA/CHMC
Professional body accreditation	n/a
Date specification created/updated	March 2011

WHY CHOOSE THIS PROGRAMME?

Why study at SOAS?	SOAS is unique as the only higher education institution in the UK specialising in the study of Africa, Asia and the Middle East. The School also has the largest concentration of specialist faculty concerned with the study of these areas at any university in the world. SOAS is consistently ranked among the top higher education institutions in the UK and the world and it also offers a friendly, vibrant environment for students in a diverse and close-knit community.
What is special about this programme?	The Chinese programme is taught by a team of four specialists in modern language, literature and film, three specialists in pre-modern literature and intellectual history, and five specialists in Mandarin Chinese. Courses on Cantonese and Hokkien are also available.
Who would it suit?	Recent graduates have found employment in the UK, Europe and East Asia. They work in management research, medicine, English language teaching, import/export, stockbrokerage, multinational

	corporations, NGOs, libraries, media, law, film production, journalism, galleries and museums and merchant banking. Others go on to postgraduate study.
Programme structure	A student takes a total of 4 units each year. 3 units of language and a unit on the History and Culture of China are studied in year 1. In year 2, 4 units of language are taken in Beijing, and students also work on a Sinological research project. In year 3, students take a minimum of 3 units from courses in the department. In year 4, students also take a minimum of 3 units from the department, which includes a compulsory dissertation.
Assessment summary	In general, coursework assessment and oral examinations (if applicable) will count for 30% of the final grade of a course, and exams will count for 70% of the final grade.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

SOAS has general minimum entrance requirements for registration for an undergraduate degree and these can be viewed at <http://www.soas.ac.uk/admissions/ug/entryreq/>

- **A Levels:** AAB
- A Level language preferred
- **IB:** 36 (6/6/6)
- **BTEC:** DDM
- **Scottish Highers:** AAABB
- **Scottish Advanced Highers:** AAB
- **Irish LC:** 340 points from 5 Higher level subjects at grade C1 or above
- **Advanced Placement:** 4 4 5 (Two semesters - UCAS Group A) plus US HSGD with GPA 3.0
- **Euro Bacc:** 80%
- **French Bacc:** 14/20
- **German Abitur:** 2.0
- **Italy DES:** 80/100
- **Austria Mat:** 2.0
- **Polish Mat:** 75%

PROGRAMME AIMS

What will this programme give the student an opportunity to achieve?

- To provide a high standard of competence (active and passive) in the use of the language.
- To provide knowledge of aspects of the cultures, communities and societies where the languages are used, as well as subject-related skills.
- To actively promote the adoption of a non-Eurocentric perspective and intercultural understanding.

PROGRAMME LEARNING OUTCOMES

Knowledge

1. Advanced active and passive competence in modern Chinese (*putonghua*)
2. Advanced passive competence in classical Chinese (*wenyan*) and pre-modern vernacular Chinese (“old *baihua*”), including knowledge of the standard dictionaries and reference works essential to maintaining and furthering such competence
3. Understanding of the linguistic structures of classical, pre-modern and modern Chinese
4. Thorough ability in reading and translating classical, pre-modern and modern Chinese texts in different styles and genres
5. Detailed knowledge of the history, development and current state of Chinese culture, especially literature and philosophy
6. Key methods and concepts of literary and linguistic analysis
7. Good general knowledge of Chinese history and society

Intellectual (thinking) skills

1. Critical reasoning, from a non-Eurocentric perspective
2. Oral and written application of linguistic, literary and philosophical concepts
3. Written formulation of problems, hypotheses, methods of inquiry and conclusions
4. Demonstration and exercise of independence of mind and thought

Subject-based practical skills

The programme aims to help students with the following practical skills:

1. Retrieve, sift and select information from a variety of sources
2. Plan, undertake and report both bibliographically based and fieldwork-based research
3. Understand, speak, read and write modern Chinese at a high level of proficiency
4. Read Chinese texts written in classical Chinese (the standard written language of China until the early 1920s) and pre-modern vernacular at at least a basic level of proficiency (depending on the student’s course options)
5. Apply key methods and concepts of literary and linguistic analysis
6. Experience of living and studying in China

Transferable skills

The programme will encourage students to:

1. Adopt a non-Eurocentric perspective and foster intercultural awareness and understanding
2. Structure and communicate ideas effectively both orally and in writing
3. Participate constructively in groups

4. Work independently
5. Find information and use information technology
6. Be self-reliant
7. Assess the relevance and importance of the ideas of others

PROGRAMME STRUCTURE AND REQUIREMENTS FOR GAINING AN AWARD

How will the student's study be structured? How will they achieve an award?

Structure, duration and requirements for gaining an award

SOAS has standard requirements relating to the structure and duration of undergraduate programmes and for the award and classification of these programmes. Details can be found at

<http://www.soas.ac.uk/registry/degreeregulations/file60378.pdf>

Programme structure diagram

Below is a structure diagram for this programme.

Level	Year of study	Course code	Course title	Credit	Status	Notes
4	1	155901217	Chinese 101: Elementary Modern Chinese Language 1	30	core	
4	1	155901218	Chinese 102: Elementary Modern Chinese Language 2	30	compulsory	
4	1	155901001	Chinese 103: History and Culture of China	30	core	
4	1	155901219	Chinese 104: Introduction to Classical Chinese	30	core	
<p>Year 2 (compulsory year abroad in Beijing): Single-subject students must take four courses, and the examinations are compulsory. Newspaper Reading, Reading and Writing, and Classical Chinese are compulsory. In order to proceed to Year 3, students must pass all four of the language courses taken at Beijing Normal University (BNU). They must also pass the Sinological Research Project in order to progress to Year 3. Students who fail more than one language course will fail the year. Successful completion of the year abroad will result in students being credited with the equivalent of four units on their degree transcript. The year abroad does not count towards the final degree classification.</p>						
5	2		Four of the following 5 courses in Beijing: Newspaper Reading; Reading and Writing; Conversation; Listening; Classical Chinese		Newspaper Reading, Reading and Writing, and Classical Chinese are compulsory	
5	2		Sinological		core	

			Research Project			
Year 3: Students take a minimum of three units in the department, including one core course (301 or 302) and one compulsory course (304). The fourth unit may be an approved open option in another department. Students under advanced entry take Chinese language courses at the appropriate level instead of Intermediate Modern Chinese Language I (301) and Intermediate Modern Chinese Language II (302). There is no core course for those students.						
5	3/4	155901224	Chinese 301: Intermediate Modern Chinese Language I	30	Single-subject students must choose either this course or 302 as their core course	
5	3/4	155901225	Chinese 302: Intermediate Modern Chinese Language II	30	Single-subject students must choose either this course or 301 as their core course	
5	3/4	155901226	Chinese 303: Modern Chinese Film and Theatre	30		
5	3/4	155901227	Chinese 304: Traditional Chinese Language and Literature I	30	compulsory	
5	3/4	155901228	Chinese 305: Elementary Cantonese	30		Prerequisite: At least one year of intensive Mandarin Chinese.
5	3/4	155901249	Elementary Spoken Hokkien (Minnanyu, Taiwanese)	30		Prerequisite: At least one year of intensive Mandarin Chinese.
Year 4: Students take a minimum of three units in the department, including one compulsory course (Chinese 402). The fourth unit may be an approved open option in another department. Fourth-year students may take any third-year course not taken in Year 3 as part of their Year 4 curriculum.						
6	4	155901229	Chinese 401: Advanced Modern Chinese Language	30		Prerequisite: Successful completion of either Chinese 301 or 302
6	4	155901230	Chinese 402: BA Dissertation in Chinese Studies	30	compulsory	
6	4	155901231	Chinese 403: Modern Chinese Literature	30		Prerequisite: Year 3 language level or equivalent
6	4	155901232	Chinese 404: Traditional Chinese Language and Literature 2	30		Prerequisite: Successful completion of Chinese 304
6	4	155901332	Chinese 405:	30		Prerequisite:

			Styles of Modern Chinese Literary Language			Successful completion of either Chinese 301 or 302
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The availability of optional/elective courses may vary in a given academic session due to factors such as staff absence and student numbers. For an up to date list of courses running in a given academic session please refer to the degree structures as listed on the SOAS website for the degree programmes taught by each Department.

TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT

What methods will be used to achieve the learning outcomes?

Numbers refer to the appropriate items in the previous section on Programme Learning Outcomes.

Knowledge

- Acquisition of 1, 2 and 4 is through small-group classes, tutorials, regular assessed and non-assessed coursework. Acquisition of 3 and 6 is through lectures and practical exercises in Year 1 of the degree. An open option providing more in-depth knowledge of linguistic issues related to studying a foreign language is available to students in higher years. Key methods of literary analysis are addressed specifically in literature courses in Years 3 and 4.
- Acquisition of 5 is central to all language use courses in Years 3 and 4, most of which are centred on the reading, translation, analysis and interpretation of literary and philosophical texts.
- Acquisition of 7 is through a survey course in Year 1, involving self study and regular essay writing, as well as through coursework and essay assignment in the context of language use courses in higher years.
- Acquisition of all elements is furthered by the compulsory inclusion of a year abroad (Year 2), spent in Beijing, providing total immersion in the modern language and culture, as well as continued tuition in the classical and pre-modern languages and cultures.

Assessment:

Testing of the knowledge base is through:

- a) written examinations, typically containing both seen and unseen elements
- b) oral examinations
- c) assessed coursework
- d) assessed library assignments
- e) essays
- f) research project (carried out during year abroad)
- g) dissertation in year 4

Intellectual (thinking) skills

- Intellectual skills are developed through the teaching and learning programme outlined above. Each course involves discussion of key issues, practice in applying concepts both orally and in writing, analysis and interpretation of materials, and individual feedback sessions for learners on work produced.

Assessment:

Assessment of intellectual skills (oral presentation, participation in classroom discussion, essay writing) is typically reflected in a 20% “coursework mark” for upper level courses in literature and philosophy. Intellectual skills are further assessed through the research project in Year 2, and through the dissertation in Year 4. In the curriculum, intellectual skills will be developed and assessed through a clear progression of: essay writing instruction and practice in Year 1; research project in Year 2; tutorials and essays in analysis and interpretation of texts in Year 3; a compulsory BA dissertation in Year Four.

Subject-based practical skills

- Guidance on how to identify, locate and use material in the library and elsewhere is provided in the context of all non-language acquisition courses. Such knowledge will be disseminated even more systemically through dedicated teaching hours in all years except the year abroad.
- Throughout the four years, all students take classes that involve the use of modern Chinese. Classical and pre-modern Chinese are compulsory elements in the first three years, and optional courses are available in Year 4. Key methods and concepts of literary and linguistic analysis are taught in dedicated units at various levels. The compulsory year in China provides students with an invaluable experience that greatly enhances, in practical terms, their position on the job market after graduation.

Assessment:

Skills 1, 2 and 5 are primarily assessed through coursework, essays, the research project and the dissertation.

Skills 3 and 4 are assessed through written and oral examinations and coursework.

Transferable skills

- The year abroad, and the uniquely multicultural constitution of the teaching staff, are key elements in providing students with a learning experience that actively fosters intercultural awareness and a non-Eurocentric perspective (Skill 1).
- Skills 2, 4, 5 and 7 are typically learned in the process of carrying out research assignments (coursework, essays etc.) as well as during classroom discussions.
- Skills 3 and 6 are important elements of the entire learning experience, but specifically of the year abroad.

Assessment:

Assessment of 1, 2, 4, 5 and 6 is through various types of coursework and research assignments already described above.

Encouragement of 1, 3, 6 and 7 is also a key element of the classroom experience, as well as of personal feedback from and contact with tutors.

REFERENCE POINTS

What has been the basis for the design of this programme?

1. School learning and teaching strategy
2. QAA framework for higher education qualifications
3. QAA subject benchmark statement Languages and related studies (2007):
 1. The programme provides a high standard of active and passive competence in the use of the language. It includes a year abroad. It also aims to provide a

high level of reading ability in the classical language, in line with what is common for Chinese programmes. The BA Chinese also caters to the needs of non-beginners and/or heritage students, who are partly taught in special groups during the first year.

2. Explicit knowledge of language is covered by specific upper-year courses, as well as by the Introduction to the Study of Language Learning course taught by Dr Barbara Pizziconi (Dept. of Japan and Korea) which is available as an open option to other language students in the department and in the faculty. In the first year, moreover, the BA Chinese has a course dedicated to the introduction to Chinese writing. More specific disciplinary skills are acquired through tuition in the second subject.

3. The programme clearly provides knowledge of aspects of the cultures, communities and societies where the languages are used, as well as subject-related skills. This is done through survey courses in the first year, as well as through reading (or viewing) and analysis of literary and other cultural materials in later years.

4. The programme actively promotes the adoption of a non-Eurocentric perspective and intercultural understanding. The staffing of the Chinese section, with scholars from China, Hong Kong, Singapore, Austria, Italy and The Netherlands, educated at universities in Asia, Europe and the United States, in itself is a model of intercultural understanding, and guarantees that the students are provided with diverse and sometimes conflicting perspectives, as should be the aim of any university education.

QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ENHANCEMENT

SOAS has internal procedures to assure the quality of provision to be offered to students and to enhance the quality in the light of experience following delivery, taking into account the input of external experts and students. The procedures are set out in the School's Quality Assurance Handbook and can be viewed at (<http://www.soas.ac.uk/add/qualityassurance/quality-assurance-handbook/>).

SOAS is also subject to periodic external review from bodies such as the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education and relevant professional and statutory regulatory bodies.

The procedures described in the Quality Assurance Handbook are in place to provide a high quality student experience for those choosing to study at SOAS, and student input and evaluation of their experiences is greatly valued. Students make an input to the ongoing development of their programmes, and the environment in which they operate, in a number of ways, including:

- formal student evaluation as part of the annual programme review;
- student representation on School committees at various levels (through the Students' Union) where many relevant issues are discussed.

FURTHER INFORMATION

- [SOAS Vision and Strategy Statement](#);
- [Undergraduate Handbook](#);
- [Quality Assurance Handbook](#);

- [UCAS website](#);
- [QAA website](#).