



**FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES**

**SCHOOL OF LINGUISTICS AND APPLIED LANGUAGE STUDIES**

**BEdTESOL PROGRAMME**

**ALIN 303: ASSESSING AND RESEARCHING LEARNING IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE CLASSROOM**

**TRIMESTER 2 2012**

**16 July to 17 November 2012**

**Trimester dates**

Teaching dates: 16 July to 19 October 2012

Mid-trimester break: 27 August to 9 September 2012

Study week: 22–26 October 2012

Examination/Assessment Period: 26 October to 17 November 2012

**Withdrawal dates**

Information on withdrawals and refunds may be found at

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/admisenrol/payments/withdrawalsrefunds.aspx>

**Names and contact details**

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## **Class times and locations**

Each week there are two one-hour lectures for the twelve weeks of the first trimester. A one-hour tutorial each week runs from Week Two until Week Eleven of the trimester.

## **Lectures**

Tuesday	12.00-12.50	HM LT104
Wednesday	12.00-12:50	HM LT104

Times and rooms for the tutorials will be announced on Blackboard.

## **Teaching learning summary**

The course has two lectures a week and one tutorial a week. A synopsis of each lecture as well as other course materials will be made available on the ALIN 303 Blackboard site (at <http://blackboard.vuw.ac.nz>). Blackboard is Victoria's online teaching and learning system

## **Communication of additional information**

Additional information about this course and information about any changes will be announced in on campus classes and posted on the course website in Blackboard.

## **Course prescription**

This course examines the principles and practice of language assessment, with particular reference to classroom learning and to the role of assessment in action research by teachers. The course also addresses the interpretation and design of classroom based action research.

## **Course content**

The course aims to familiarise students with commonly used research methods for investigating the quality of language learning in the classroom. Students will learn to appraise published classroom research and propose methods that are appropriate to address research questions arising from their classroom observations and their experience of teaching materials. Given that the research revolves around variables that are hypothesised to affect language learners' progress, ample attention will be given to ways of assessing that progress, i.e. language assessment, and the intricacies involved.

## **Learning objectives**

Students who pass this course will be able to:

1. Identify classroom practices that invite (further) research about how they influence young learners' language use and language acquisition in the classroom.
2. Identify and use quality assured sources of research findings that inform effective language teaching practices and language assessment practices.
3. Explain and illustrate commonly used methods in language classroom research, and the related terminology, to a lay person.

4. Compare and appreciate the complementary nature of different research methods addressing the same general research question, and of different language assessment methods.
5. Make effective use of common instruments for classroom research, such as observation grids, questionnaires and interviews.
6. Make judicious use of language assessment instruments, with due attention to issues of validity, reliability and affect.

### Expected workload

In order to make satisfactory progress in this course you should expect to devote, on average, 13 hours a week to it. This includes attendance at lectures and tutorials, preparation for tutorials, background reading and preparation for tests and assignments.

### Readings

Essential and recommended texts will be made available on Blackboard or in the tutorials.

### Assessment requirements

The following table sums up the components that will inform the final grade for the course

Component	(Due) Dates	Weight	Word limits	Objectives
Assignment 1	13 August	10%	1000	1, 2
In-class test	18 Sept	20%	n/a	2, 3
Assignment 2	1 Oct	30%	1000	3, 4
Assignment 3	29 Oct	30%	2000 words	4, 5, 6
Assignment 4	n/a	10%	500 words	all, esp. 5

Note that if no work is submitted for assessment before the last three weeks of teaching, there will be nothing on which to base an aegrotat consideration.

Assignment 1: Report on a language-related activity or practice that you have recently observed in a classroom, the effects of which you would like to find out more about. Look for and list five articles in quality assured journals that address the question you are interested in.

In-class test: This will assess your comprehension of the contents of the first half of the course. It will require you to explain and illustrate common terms used in our field of research.

Assignment 2: On the course website, different articles will be made available that address (more or less) the same research question, but use different research methods. Compare the methods used in the set of articles that address the question of your choice, and evaluate how they might complement one another.

Assignment 3: Prepare a proposal for a small-scale classroom-based study, addressing a question with clear relevance to your likely teaching context. The question of your choice may well be inspired by the other assignments or by topics of discussion in class.

Assignment 4: You will be asked to use an observer grid and to analyse the classroom interaction of one of your tutorial sessions (students will take turns doing this), and submit a brief report.

## **Penalties**

In line with school policy, assignments handed in after the due date will receive a considerably reduced grade unless accompanied by a medical certificate or other evidence of exceptional circumstances. If you require an extension for good reasons, ask the course coordinator ahead of the date for handing in the assignment.

## **Mandatory course requirements**

To gain a pass in this course each student must:

- Submit all written work and tests specified for this course, on or by the specified dates (subject to such provisions as are stated for late submission of work)
- Attend a minimum of 19 of the 23 lectures and 8 of the 10 tutorials.

## **Class representative**

A class representative will be elected in the first week of the course, and that person's name and contact details will be available to VUWSA, the Course Coordinator and the class. The class representative provides a communication channel to liaise with the Course Coordinator on behalf of students.

## **Academic integrity and plagiarism**

Academic integrity means that university staff and students, in their teaching and learning are expected to treat others honestly, fairly and with respect at all times. It is not acceptable to mistreat academic, intellectual or creative work that has been done by other people by representing it as your own original work.

Academic integrity is important because it is the core value on which the University's learning, teaching and research activities are based. Victoria University's reputation for academic integrity adds value to your qualification.

The University defines plagiarism as presenting someone else's work as if it were your own, whether you mean to or not. 'Someone else's work' means anything that is not your own idea. Even if it is presented in your own style, you must acknowledge your sources fully and appropriately. This includes:

- Material from books, journals or any other printed source
- The work of other students or staff
- Information from the internet
- Software programs and other electronic material
- Designs and ideas
- The organisation or structuring of any such material

Find out more about plagiarism, how to avoid it and penalties, on the University's website: <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/plagiarism.aspx>

## **Where to find more detailed information**

Find key dates, explanations of grades and other useful information at [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study). Find out how academic progress is monitored and how enrolment can be restricted at <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/academic->

[progress.aspx](#). Most statutes and policies are available at [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy), except qualification statutes, which are available via the *Calendar* webpage at [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/calendar.aspx](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/calendar.aspx) (See Section C).

Other useful information for students may be found at the Academic Office website, at [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about\\_victoria/avcacademic](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about_victoria/avcacademic).