



School of Pacific Arts, Communication and Education



Postgraduate Diploma in Linguistics

Frequently Asked Questions

Postgraduate Diploma in Linguistics

What are the programme requirements?

- LN411 Advanced Language Analysis
- LN413 Sociolinguistics
- LN416 Language Acquisition and Multilingualism
- AL400 Research Methods

What are the courses about?

LN411 Advanced Language Analysis

This course provides advanced training in the analysis of language, focusing on the phonological, morpho-syntactic and semantic elements of English and Pacific languages. English teachers will learn to apply these analytic techniques to practical classroom approaches that will transform the teaching of English pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary in the context of the Pacific region. Students intending to pursue a research degree in Descriptive Linguistics will learn to apply these analytic techniques to a detailed description of one or more Pacific languages.

LN413 Sociolinguistics

This course is an introduction to sociolinguistics, that part of linguistics that studies the connection between language and society. Speakers of the same language do not all speak exactly the same way, and an individual speaker does not speak the same way all the time. Through a variety of readings, discussions, and assignments, we will explore language variation across regions, ethnicity, social class, gender, age, and more. Students will learn how sociolinguistic research is conducted and will become familiar with the major findings of sociolinguistic research studies.

LN416 Language Acquisition and Multilingualism

This course provides in-depth coverage of the way first and subsequent languages are acquired and learned, with specific reference to the Pacific context. The course addresses the acquisition of one or more languages in a non-school environment, as well as formal, classroom-based teaching and learning. Topics covered include the roles of input, motivation and explicit instruction within language learning, theoretical perspectives on bilingualism and multilingualism, models of bilingual and multilingual education, and different approaches to the teaching of vernaculars and languages of wider communication.

AL400 Research Methods

This mandatory entry level postgraduate diploma course in SPACE and SOLASS provides students with a blended generic and discipline-based training in research design and methodologies. It is a prerequisite course for students undertaking independent research at the postgraduate level in the humanities and social sciences and related discipline areas. The course delivers training in a range of generic transferable research skills, linking them to relevant research, pedagogical, epistemological and scholarship issues at the discipline level.

What does the programme aim to do?

The PG Diploma Linguistics builds on the undergraduate programme in Linguistics and develops students' skills in describing and analysing languages of the region. It provides a progression route to an MA in Linguistics, during which students can carry out independent research into their own language, or a language-related issue of interest to them.

You can read more about the priority areas for Linguistics research, as well as the topics currently being researched by MA and PhD students, at www.usp.ac.fj/linguistics.

How long does the programme take?

Full-time students can take two courses each semester and complete the programme in one year. Part-time students can take one course each semester and complete the programme in two years.

Where can I study?

Courses can be taken from any country in online mode. You will need a good internet connection in order to access the online materials and join Zoom sessions if you are studying remotely. There will also be a final exam for some courses, for which you will need to attend your nearest USP campus. Those studying from outside the USP region should get in touch well in advance of the application deadline, so that we can work out logistical arrangements for exams and admin.

Students at Laucala Campus can attend face-to-face sessions in addition as part of a Blended offering.

How are the courses assessed?

Some courses are assessed through a series of coursework tasks (60%) and a final exam (40%). Others are 100% coursework.

What will I achieve by the end of the programme?

On successful completion of the programme, you will be awarded a postgraduate diploma. If you achieve a GPA of 3.0 or above (average Grade B), you will be eligible to apply for admission to an MA programme.

What are the entry requirements?

To meet the entry requirements, you must meet the following two conditions:

1. You must hold an undergraduate degree, with a GPA of at least 3.0, in one of the following programmes:
 - BA with a major in Linguistics
 - BA with a major in Literature & Language
 - BEd or BAGCED secondary with a teaching subject in Literature & Language
 - BEd primary
2. The above programme must usually include at least 4 Linguistics courses, with a GPA of 3.0 or above in these 4 courses (equivalent to Grade B). USP Linguistics courses currently include LN111, LN118, LN211, LN213, LN216, LN311, LN315, LN317 and LN319. For primary teachers, we accept ED170, ED217, ED327 and ED357 instead.

If you graduated prior to 2010, you may have taken other courses that we will accept, such as LL124, LL212 and LL318. You should also note that LL course codes changed to LN in 2019.

If you do not meet these entry requirements:

1. If you have only taken 3 Linguistics courses, or your GPA is too low, we may ask you to take some additional undergraduate courses first. We will take teaching experience into account, but we do need to be sure that you will cope with postgraduate study, particularly if you haven't studied for some time.
2. In some circumstances, we may accept you onto your first postgraduate course as 'unclassified studies', before being allowed to enrol on the PG Diploma upon successful completion of this course.

If you do not hold an undergraduate degree, you will not be able to enrol in this particular programme.

Please email fiona.willans@usp.ac.fj to check your eligibility if you are unsure. Provide your USP student number if you have one or send a transcript of results if you have graduated from another institution.

How do I apply?

Please visit the admissions section of the USP website or contact the Student Administrative Services for assistance. When completing any application forms, make sure you specify the programme and field of study as follows:

Programme: Postgraduate Diploma
Field of study: Linguistics

Students may begin the PGDip Linguistics in either Semester 1 or Semester 2 of any year. Application forms should be submitted well before the application deadline set by SAS.