

ADVANCED RUSSIAN

Course Description

This course aims to develop post-BA advanced skills in comprehension and the active use of written and spoken Russian. The course will concentrate on contemporary Russia – politics, society, culture, and also the changing Russian language itself – with materials drawn mainly from newspapers, journals and other media sources.

The advanced skills developed in the course include: oral presentation and argument; extracting information from spoken and written sources; concise summarizing of information in Russian and English; translation into English; conveying information and argument in clear and coherent written Russian.

KEY REFERENCE WORKS

Derek Offord, *Modern Russian: An Advanced Grammar Course*, Bristol Classical Press

Terence Wade, *A Comprehensive Russian Grammar*, Blackwell Publishers, 2000

Словарь русского языка в четырех томах, Москва, Русский язык, 1981-84

С.И.Ожегов, *Словарь русского языка*, Москва, Русский язык, 1991

Title: ADVANCED RUSSIAN
Course Code: SEES G077
Course-unit value: 1 cu

Availability: Taught in the autumn and spring terms

Open to: **Students of:** MA in Russian Studies
MA in Russian and East European Literature and Culture
other MA degree programmes, subject to requirements

Prerequisite: The course requires BA 2.i class level in Russian language or equivalent. A one-hour test of comprehension and written Russian, as well as a translation exercise from Russian into English, is held in the first week of term to assess required entry level.

Course leader: Dr Svetlana McMillin
Other participants: Dr Philip Cavendish, Dr Polly Jones

Aims:

The course aims at enabling students to:

1. Improve skills in comprehension and the active use of written and spoken Russian in the context of the contemporary language;
2. Improve translating and summarizing skills through the use of a wide range of stylistically diverse materials, mostly drawn from contemporary sources;
3. Improve oral presentational skills.

Objectives:

By the end of the course, you will have acquired:

1. An improved understanding of the Russian language as practised today, as well as an appreciation of the various political, social and cultural issues which lie at the heart of contemporary Russian experience;
 2. The ability to choose and develop topics of research on the basis of Russian-language materials for the purpose of oral presentations and written essays;
 3. An improved ability to translate and summarize accurately, coupled with an awareness of contemporary idiom.
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Teaching & Learning Methods:

Number of Hours:

Use of Russian: 40

Translation and summary: 20

Private Study: 90

The classes meet for three hours per week over twenty teaching weeks during the autumn and spring terms.

Use of Russian:

Two hours, taken by a native Russian speaker, are devoted to developing production skills in written and spoken Russian and to extending aural comprehension listening skills. Exercises normally include thematic discussion of the text in Russian, summarizing of Russian texts in Russian, oral presentations, and writing in Russian through essays and other tasks.

Translation and summary:

One hour, taken by a native English speaker, concentrates on the development of comprehension, translation and summary skills. Russian texts drawn from a wide range of contemporary sources are analysed and discussed in English and Russian. Exercises include translation of Russian texts into English, summarizing of Russian texts in English, and information retrieval.

Assessment:***Coursework:***

The regular and satisfactory completion of assignments is an essential part of the course, but it does not contribute to the overall assessment of the course.

Use of Russian:

Preparation of the Russian-language materials prior to tutorials is essential as they provide the basis for discussion/analysis and subsequent written assignments. These are given each week and may assume a variety of different guises. They may take the form of summaries in Russian of the materials studied, or they may involve a series of written tasks based on the information given.

Translation and summary:

A different text is set for preparation for work in class each week. Written assignments – either translation or summary exercises – are given each week.

Examination:

The course is examined by a combination of TWO elements: a written examination (**60%**) and an oral examination (**40%**).

- **A three-hour written exam**, held in May, consisting of two separate sections:

(i) Section 1 (one hour):

Students are asked to summarize in English a 700-word article written in Russian and to translate into English a brief fragment of this Russian text (around 150 words in length).

Section 1 accounts for **30%** of the total mark for the course.

(ii) Section 2 (two hours):

Part I consists of written tasks in Russian (e.g. posing a series of journalistic questions to a well-known contemporary figure; commenting on a cartoon which has recently appeared in a national newspaper etc.); Part II is an essay in Russian of about 350 words on a topic chosen and researched in advance of the exam, using Russian-language materials.

Section 2 accounts for **30%** of the total mark for the course.

- **An oral examination**, held in May, lasting for 20 minutes:

This involves a presentation by the student based on the same topic chosen and researched for the essay part of the written exam using Russian-language materials; this is followed by a broad-based conversation with the examiners which may include discussion of points raised during the oral presentation, but might also include related (contemporary) subjects.

The oral examination accounts for **40%** of the total mark for the course.