

## **Programme Specification**

CertHE, DipHE, BA / BSc, BA / BSc (Hons)  
Spanish Minor (Intermediate entry) SXI  
Spanish Minor (A-level entry) SXA

Valid from:

**Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences**

## SECTION 1: GENERAL INFORMATION

Awarding body:	Oxford Brookes University
Teaching institution and location:	Oxford Brookes University, Oxford, UK
Final award:	BA / BSc (Hons)
Programme title:	Spanish Minor (Intermediate entry) Spanish Minor (A-level entry)
Interim exit awards and award titles:	CertHE, DipHE, BA / BSc
Brookes course code:	SXI; SXA
UCAS/UKPASS code:	Combination codes only
JACS code:	n/a
Mode of delivery:	Sandwich
Mode/s of study:	FT or PT
Language of study:	English and Spanish
Relevant QAA subject benchmark statement/s:	Languages and related studies
External accreditation/recognition: <i>(applicable to programmes with professional body approval)</i>	N/A
Faculty managing the programme:	Humanities and Social Sciences
Date of production (or most recent revision) of specification:	February 2012 Last validation: 14 December 2009

## SECTION 2: OVERVIEW AND PROGRAMME AIMS

### 2.1 Rationale for/distinctiveness of the programme

The BA Minor Combined (Hons) degree in Spanish follows the Language and related studies benchmark, and is therefore structured and designed for students that wish to become fluent and near-native users in a wide range of personal and professional settings as well as the academic domain.

The course is focused on Spanish language acquisition (covering the four skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking) including an integrated compulsory industrial placement year experience. There is also an opportunity to take a couple of modules on contemporary studies of the Spanish-speaking world.

This Spanish language programme follows the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages thus employers across Europe will be able to recognise the level achieved. A typical student exiting the SXI degree programme after completion of the module Spanish 5B can be seen as falling into

the category of Proficient User (C1). A typical student exiting the SXA degree programme after completion of the module Spanish 6 can be seen as falling into the category of Proficient User (C2).

## **2.2 Aim/s of the programme**

1. To offer students the opportunity to significantly improve their proficiency of the Spanish language in all four skills areas, speaking and writing (as the two productive skills) and listening and reading (as the two receptive skills), but also including such mediation skills as translation from and into the target language.
2. To allow students to become fluent and accurate target language users in a wide range of personal and professional settings as well as the academic domain.
3. To provide students through in-class interactions, discussions, and presentations with the ability to use Spanish creatively and concisely for a range of purposes and audiences.
4. To expose students to a broad range of authentic Spanish language materials, both historical and contemporary.
5. To provide students through a period of residence abroad (Year Abroad in their second / third year depending on their entry level) with prolonged exposure to the native culture and its linguistic environment and thereby to foster direct and independent contact with native speakers.
6. To give students, through a variety of language- and content-based modules, a broad range of knowledge and understanding of the social, historical, cultural, institutional and geographical contexts that shape Spain and Spanish-speaking countries today.
7. To acquaint and familiarize students with a broad variety of media and other source materials through which contemporary culture manifests itself, i.e., newspapers and journals, films, literature in its various forms (novels, drama, short fiction, poetry), electronic texts, radio and television broadcasts, and advertising.
8. To provide students, through comparisons made between the Spanish/Latin American and other cultural environments and heritage, with the opportunity to gain a greater intercultural awareness and understanding of differences in the diverging constructions of national identity.
9. To support students to master the main discipline specific research methods and in particular to be able to deploy collaborative and interdisciplinary research, textual and embodied, in their studies imbue in students notions of learner autonomy and responsibility for their own development of language competence through independent study.

## SECTION 3: PROGRAMME LEARNING OUTCOMES

### Knowledge, understanding and skills:

#### 3.1 Academic literacy

- Achieve fluent and effective communication in Spanish with native speakers of the language, while maintaining a high degree of grammatical correctness;
- Develop an appropriate level of proficiency (C1 for SXI; C2 for SXA) in communicating effectively and appropriately in Spanish communicative and professional contexts;
- Demonstrate a detailed knowledge and understanding of the structure of Spanish and its registers;
- Write clear, well-structured reports or essays;
- Deliver presentations in the target language;
- Demonstrate a reasoned awareness and critical understanding of the intercultural differential between Spain/Latin America and other countries.

#### 3.2 Research literacy

- Competence in exploiting, for a wide variety of purposes, a broad range of authentic materials written or spoken in Spanish;
- Demonstrate critical reflection and judgment in the light of evidence and argument;
- Reflect critically on and interpret Spanish texts with reference to their social and cultural background and significance.

#### 3.3 Critical self-awareness and personal literacy

- Conduct research independently and take responsibility for one's own work;
- Work constructively and productively in groups and teams;
- Work diligently, to fulfill briefs and meet deadlines, and to manage one's time and tasks effectively.

#### 3.4 Digital and information literacy

- Demonstrate skills of analysis, synthesis and effective summary;
- Make effective use of library and information technology for research and communication.

#### 3.5 Global citizenship

- Use Spanish creatively and precisely for a range of purposes and audiences;
- Engage with and interpret layers of meaning within texts and other cultural products;
- Able to contextualize and reflect on the cultural and psychological differential between Spanish-speaking countries and other nations.

## SECTION 4: PROGRAMME STRUCTURE AND CURRICULUM

### 4.1 Programme structure and requirements:

A single module has a credit value of 15 and a double module a credit value of 30.

#### STAGE I:

##### The following modules are compulsory for SXI stage one:

U63512	Spanish 3A	S1	
U63513	Spanish 3B	S2	U63512

##### The following modules are compulsory for SXA stage one:

U63514	Spanish 4A	S1	A-level Spanish or equivalent
U63515	Spanish 4B	S2	U63514

**The recommended modules for both SXI and SXA are:**

U63507	Contemporary Culture of the Spanish-Speaking World	S2	A-level Spanish or equivalent
U63516	Spanish Writing skills I	S1+2	GCSE in Spanish or equivalent

**STAGE II:****The acceptable modules for both SXI and SXA are:**

U61540	The Business Environment in Europe	S1	A-level or equivalent in Fr/Sp
U61543	European Film in focus	S2	A-level or equivalent in Fr/Sp
U63545	Spanish Writing skills II	S1+2	U63516 or U63523 or U63526
U63568	Independent Study in Spanish	S1 or S2	A-level or equiv. in Spanish
U70922	Methodology of Foreign Language Teaching	S1 or S2	

**The following acceptable modules for SXI are compulsory for Degree/Honours Degree & Named Dip HE:**

U63514	Spanish 4A	S1	A-level Spanish or equivalent
U63515	Spanish 4B	S2	U63514
U63528	Spanish 5A	S1	U63515 or U63523 or U63526
U63529	Spanish 5B	S2	U63529

**The following acceptable modules for SXA are compulsory for Degree/Honours Degree & Named Dip HE:**

U63528	Spanish 5A	S1	U63515 or U63523 or U63526
U63529	Spanish 5B	S2	U63528
U63580	Spanish 6 (Double Honours)	S1&2	U63529

**The following acceptable modules are alternative compulsory for Degree / Honours Degree & Named Dip HE for Sandwich mode students:**

1 module from

U63523	Language Studies in Spain/Latin America (Double)	S1&2	U63515
U63526	Language Studies in Spain	S2	U63515

1 module from

U63524	Academic Studies in Spain/Latin America (Double)	S1&2	U63515
U63527	Academic Studies in Spain	S2	U63515

1 module from

U63525	Autonomous Learning in Spain/Latin America (Quadruple)	S1&2	U63515
U63532	Autonomous Learning in Spain (Double)	S2	U63515

**4.2 Professional requirements**

N/A

**SECTION 5: PROGRAMME DELIVERY****5.1 Teaching, Learning and Assessment**

The programme's teaching, learning and assessment strategy is designed to support students, and enable them to achieve the programme aims and learning outcomes.

Modern Languages has a student-centred approach to teaching. This is reflected in the approach adopted in the classroom teaching, which uses a variety of teaching and learning methods to suit the varying needs of both students and course content. While some students excel in interactive small group work, others benefit most from lectures followed by structured feedback exercises, student-led seminars, etc. The content of each course has a bearing on the teaching and learning methods adopted. While language courses are very interactive, requiring considerable participation on the part of the students, some content courses will rely more on a combination of lectures and classroom discussion. Students in all language classes will encounter smaller class sizes than in content modules. These improved staff-student ratios will increase the quality of staff-student contact and the possibilities for in-class learning in small groups.

Modern Languages' teaching and learning methods are common with other humanities-based disciplines. They include:

- Directed study of primary and secondary texts and other cultural products;
- Commentaries on extracts from texts or documents (placing in context, interpreting in the light of knowledge of the historical period, point of view, etc);
- Data collection and evaluation (from guided use of library resources to independent use of subject bibliographies, online databases, etc);
- Collecting, selecting, evaluating and presenting information or interpretations of material on a given topic, for an oral presentation (in a seminar) or in writing (coursework essay or report);
- Discussion of topics in seminar groups;
- Creative writing in language classes;
- Supervised independent study leading to an ethnographic study while abroad and to the writing of essays / reports or a dissertation at the end of the course;
- E-learning activities (using VLE / the E-lab/ TellMeMore software).

The **period of residence abroad** is a vital element for reinforcing understanding and working in the target language. It provides opportunities for the development of cultural insight and stimulates contact with native speakers. Students of the Spanish Minor course at Oxford Brookes University spend their period of residence abroad in their second year (SXA) or in their third year (SXI) as part of the Erasmus programme either a) studying at a Spanish/Latin American university we have links with, b) as an English Language Assistant or c) on a work placement. They develop further their intercultural awareness and understanding. While abroad they will put it into practice by doing a year abroad project. This part of students' learning is integrated into the overall objectives of the programme and fully credited.

In terms of Graduate attributes, the period abroad helps the student to

- Be a cosmopolitan citizen – capable of functioning effectively, flexibly and constructively in an intercultural / global environment
- Be informed by current developments in the subject, demonstrating knowledge and understanding of global perspectives

**Lecturing** is an appropriate mode of teaching in modules where there is a need to convey a considerable amount of factual information and theoretical knowledge about an area students will not be familiar with prior to starting the module - for example, economic concepts in *the Business Environment in Europe* or the concepts of film theory in *European Film in Focus*. However the information conveyed in lectures is usually consolidated in feedback exercises and/or discussion which enable students to ascertain whether they have fully understood the content of the lecture and to explore that content further.

**Tutorials and private consultations** provide students with small-group contact with the lecturer. Most frequently tutorials offer advice on planning work in advance, one-to-one feedback on written assignments or provide a context for individual student presentations. The tutorial format additionally provides: advice for individuals and groups on essay plans, advice on exam preparation, discussion of extended and project-type work. The tutorial system ensures that knowledge and learning outcomes are supported and that disciplinary skills and transferable skills are developed.

During and at the end of each compulsory language level, each student will meet individually with the tutor and assess how he/she progresses against the level of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. The purpose of this consultation is to help the student develop a personal

language learning strategy. The software package Tell Me More (available via our VLE) also enables the student to draw up a programme of self-study exercises towards the achievement of the next CEFR language level.

**Seminars** are held for groups of students and are intended for collective discussion. They enable students to develop their initial ideas and readings through discussion and worksheets. Many seminars allow students to take a lead in setting the agenda for discussion while others act as a workshop with combined contributions from the seminar leader and student members. Seminars are varied in style and approach but the object of all seminars is to help students clarify uncertainties, to test their own ideas, and achieve expertise in the vital skill of oral communication. Seminars will always foster an environment in which knowledge and understanding outcomes can be tried and tested. The student learning experience in seminars develops transferable skills and demonstrated in those seminars with student presentations.

**VLE** provides selected readings clarifying and focusing the themes of each seminar, ensuring that key secondary material is available for all students.

**Screenings** allow students to view films in a designated slot, ensuring that films discussed in the seminars can be seen in advance and considered in the light of relevant themes highlighted by the readings in advance of seminar discussions.

**Feedback** on assessed work is used to reinforce the understanding outcomes for the module. Regular and detailed feedback is an essential element in language learning. The multiplicity of knowledge and skills involved in language learning and teaching is an important factor in enhancing the employability of graduates. It is therefore matched by a wide variety of types of assessment covering the range of coursework, examinations and peer and self-assessment. The student learning experience from feedback additionally develops disciplinary skill and transferable skills. Normally module handouts give a clear indication of how grades are awarded, and this information, along with the feedback on their work, will show them how to improve their grade. In modules where emphasis is placed on oral presentation skills, their performance may be recorded on video and played back to students to enable them to monitor their own performance critically.

**Independent learning** is also fostered through specified activities (ranging from library research, reading and essay writing, to the use of audio-visual material and e-learning exercises) within modules while it drives the learning environment. Within the programme, independent learning is understood as a learning process in which teaching staff retain overall responsibility for teaching and for the direction of work, while enabling the student to pursue specific localised interests to a greater depth than the syllabus suggests it might allow. Most frequently this practice takes the shape of student-devised projects and this ensures that the student learning experience develops the full range of disciplinary skills.

**Portfolio** is an accumulation of the students' self-directed study. These are designed to further students' understanding of the language and at the same time encouraged students to express what they have learned in their own way. The portfolio is an important part of giving the ownership of work to students. They will take responsibility of the organisation of their own work. These are recognised as a learning outcome and will be a part of a summative assessment.

**The principle of progression** seen in the design of the programme through a spine of compulsory modules from level 4 to 6 is endorsed in curriculum delivery. In the Honours modules intended to be taken towards the end of the individual student's programme students encounter greater opportunity to learn independently. The teaching conditions acknowledge that students at this level require conditions better suited to complex problem-solving and the more research-oriented tasks that students encounter at this stage of the programme.

## **Assessment**

There are two principal purposes to assessment. The first purpose is that of enhancing students' learning. Class teachers will provide students with individual feedback on their class work and coursework, in order to help them become aware of their areas of strength and weakness. This will encourage them to be critical of their own performance and help them develop strategies for working effectively on areas needing improvement. The second purpose of assessment is to evaluate and grade their performance, and to provide them with a clear record of their progress during the course.

The way students' work is assessed depends on the individual modules which they choose, but the particular assessment format will always be explained in the module handout provided at the beginning of each module.

Modules may be assessed entirely by coursework, or by a combination of coursework (in-class test or out-of-class work) and exam. Coursework assessment typically consists of one or more written pieces of work and/or oral presentation where appropriate. Individual written coursework e.g. essay, portfolios normally contributes 40% or more of the module mark. Other forms of coursework assessment, e.g. oral examinations, presentations normally contribute 30% of the module mark. Finally examinations normally contribute 40% of the module mark.

The combination of coursework and final assessment enables module leaders and class teachers to monitor students' progress and performance across a range of skills.

The principle of progression seen in the design of the programme (see Programme Structure) is achieved through the compulsory language stream.

Assessment of language competence is done through regular and detailed formative assessment in order to monitor progress at every stage in the language learning process. Formative assessment of work submitted include comments on appropriateness of style, register, presentation, etc, as well as correction of grammatical and other errors.

There is a wide range of coursework assessment of target language skills.

Forms of assessment include:

- oral presentations
- participation in structured oral discussions
- listening comprehension tests
- transcription and dictation
- interpreting between speakers of the target and 'home' languages
- grammar tests
- summarising and reading for gist or inference
- translation from and into Spanish
- essays and/or extended projects written in Spanish
- report writing based on target language texts or recordings
- drafting target language texts for a defined audience and purpose
- computer-based and online testing, including cloze, multiple choice
- portfolios of evidence
- participation in individual and/or group projects
- translation

Assessment of content modules is based on a variety of assessment strategies appropriate to the discipline. The type of assessment task will depend on the particular module. They may be asked to write a formal essay, requiring independent library research or, alternatively, they may be asked to give a brief presentation in front of the class, making use of the latest technology.

- Coursework examinations are conducted as in-class tests. They assess the knowledge and understanding outcomes of the modules as appropriate under time condition.
- Coursework essays allow the students to have access to information sources but are nonetheless written to a timescale.



- Presentations assess the knowledge and understanding outcome of the module as appropriate and in particular oral skills.

The assessment criteria are derived from the current practice in Languages. Detailed marking grids have been developed to cover all different types of assessment.

## **Learning outcomes across the Spanish Minor course**

The learning outcomes as outlined above map to a very high degree the outcomes provided by the subject benchmark statement for 'Languages and related studies' (LRS), prepared by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education in 2007. The learning outcomes address all 'four key elements' of the 'four complementary dimensions of programmes in LRS (p. 5 of the subject benchmark document):

- 1) Use of the target language for purposes of understanding, expression and communication (Academic and Research literacy)
- 2) Intercultural awareness, understanding and competence (Global citizenship)
- 3) Explicit knowledge of language (Academic literacy)
- 4) Knowledge of aspects of the cultures, communities and societies where the language is used (Global citizenship)
- 5) Demonstrate Highly-developed analytical, team working, communication and presentation skills (Critical self-awareness and personal literacy, and digital and information literacy)

In terms of Graduate Attributes, the Spanish Minor programme will help the student to:

### **Academic literacy**

- Be skilled in communication – through practice in spoken, visual and written communication and in numerical and graphic communication skills

### **Research literacy**

- Be competent in retrieving and managing information and knowledge
- Be a critical consumer of research by demonstrating an ability to deploy techniques of analysis and enquiry
- Be able to have a critical approach, using appropriate methodology

### **Critical self-awareness and personal literacy**

- Work in a team – understand effective collaboration and co-operation with agreed frameworks
- The ability to work effectively and responsibly and autonomously
- Reflect on your own learning
- Understand how one learns and to identify one's strengths and weaknesses

### **Digital and information literacy**

- Be familiar with advanced techniques and skills
- Develop skills to become confident, agile adopter of technologies for personal, academic and professional use

### **Global citizenship**

- Be a cosmopolitan citizen – capable of functioning effectively, flexibly and constructively in an intercultural / global environment
- Be informed by current developments in the subject, demonstrating knowledge and understanding of global perspectives

## **5.2 Assessment regulations**

The programme conforms to the University Regulations [Undergraduate Modular Programme (UMP) Regulations]

## SECTION 6: ADMISSIONS

### 6.1 Entry criteria

#### Typical offers

**A-level:** BBC, or equivalent (SXA – Minimum grade B in Spanish A2; SXI – grade C in Spanish A2)

**IB Diploma:** 31 points

**Advanced Diploma:** grade B, including A-level at grade B

2 AS-levels will be recognised in place of a maximum of 1 A-level.

As combined honours, the offer will normally lie between those quoted for each subject.

### 6.2 CRB checks

N/A

## SECTION 7: STUDENT SUPPORT AND GUIDANCE

- Induction

New students will follow an induction programme to orientate them and help them settle in quickly within their new learning environment (HE and Brookes). They will have introductory meetings with their subject coordinators and meet their academic advisor.

- Programme Information

All students should be provided, by the subject leader, with the following contextual information to enable them to familiarise themselves with the programme/s:

- Programme specification
- Programme handbook
- Module descriptions/handbooks
- Regulations and policies governing the programme

Much of this information can be accessed via the Personal Information Portal (PIP) or on the University web pages. They will also be provided with assignment deadlines and examination dates at the start of each semester.

- Support for students

We recognise the need to support students throughout their studies and offer advice so students can make the best of their time at Oxford Brookes.

Thus there is a range of support mechanisms for students, such as **academic advisers** and **subject coordinators**, who will facilitate the students' academic development, and **student support coordinators**, who provide a drop-in service for questions about any aspect of student life, covering both academic and personal welfare.

- Central Support Services for students

The university's support services include **Upgrade**, which provides advice on study skills such as planning and writing essays, assignments and dissertations, research, or preparing for an exam. They also give advice on statistics and mathematics.

There is a dedicated **Student Disability and Dyslexia Service**, which provides support for students with disabilities including sensory and mobility impairments, dyslexia and other specific learning difficulties, mental health problems and medical conditions. Here, staff offer advice and support on a range of issues, including physical access, funding, alternative assessment arrangements and liaison with teaching staff to ensure that they are aware of your requirements.

- Careers

The sandwich degree/degree with Honours with a compulsory year abroad / industrial placement experience requires a fair amount of support before, during, and after the placement year. Students will

get to know the **Year Abroad tutor** in the first year who will arrange several YAB preparation meetings covering the different options of the placement year, the application process, some interviews advice, information about health and safety, etc...

A **work placement officer** in the Faculty will also help students with all administrative matters. Finally, the **University Erasmus officer** will make sure that any student eligible to receive Erasmus funding applies within a set deadline.

Oxford Brookes students and graduates can expect the **Careers Centre** to provide support for three years after graduation in the form of:

- individual confidential drop-in slots
- help with locating relevant and up-to-date information on occupations, further study opportunities, vacation work, voluntary work, employers and graduate vacancies
- help with applications, interviews and aptitude testing, and with the development of transferable skills, often through workshops
- a user-friendly website which delivers information and relevant links effectively.
- a range of careers education workshops which may be delivered directly by the Careers and Employment Centre or via academic schools

## **SECTION 8: GRADUATE EMPLOYABILITY**

The employability of linguists (around 90%) is high and can often boost the employability of their other subject.

A qualification in another language is a significant addition to a CV and enhances the employability in an increasingly international market. Employers value graduates with language skills, and also their more general communication skills and their knowledge and understanding of other cultures.

Previous graduates in Spanish gained employment in a wide variety of areas such as the media, public and international relations, cultural institutions and business corporations. Popular employment sectors also include hotel and restaurant management, tourism and international law. Spanish is also an excellent basis for postgraduate study and the teaching profession.

Some students who chose to do a work placement during their year abroad will be able to demonstrate a structured practical experience and often gain experience to demonstrate career potential.

Those potentially interested in teaching apply to be a language assistant on the British Council scheme and then after graduation apply for a PGCE.

Those interested in a business career often keep contact with their company and either return to work for them after graduation or use the company as referee.

## **SECTION 9: LINKS WITH EMPLOYERS**

As part of the Spanish Minor, students take a year out in Spain or Latin America. Some choose to go on a work placement in a school or in a business. Thus we are building up a relationship with employers in Spain.

## **SECTION 10: QUALITY MANAGEMENT**

Modern Languages at Brookes encourage active participation in the monitoring, maintenance and enhancement of quality, the responsibility for the quality management of academic programmes is devolved to the Faculty AESC but the programme lead and the team have the responsibility to monitor and review the performance in their provision of services to students. The Academic Policy and Quality Office provides support and guidance and has a quality assurance role on behalf of the University.

We take on board all types of feedback: student surveys at module or programme levels, focus group, annual and periodic review. At the last validation (December 2009), the team was also congratulated on gaining feedback from other stakeholder such as second school teachers and employers.

The Modern Languages Department at Oxford Brookes was rated excellent in the most recent national teaching assessment.