Bachelor's
English Language and Culture

uva.nl/ba-english-language
Taught entirely in English, the Bachelor’s in English Language and Culture explores the literary, linguistic, and cultural richness of the vast English-speaking world. You will refine your command of the English language and discover the diversity of English through its literature, from its origins to its global expansion and beyond.

Top 5 reasons to study English Language and Culture at UvA

• Our programme fosters a warm and welcoming atmosphere in the heart of Amsterdam. The international character of the city attracts frequent literary and cultural events and supports a diverse student population, greatly enriching your university experience.
• The extensive range of courses on offer encourages you to develop your literary and linguistic knowledge. You examine the variety of use of the English language around the globe, from its sounds and vocabulary to its sentence structure and discourse. You develop a rich understanding of literary and cultural expressions, and hone your spoken and written English skills.
• From the very beginning of our Bachelor’s programme, you will immerse yourself in the English language. You will read works by a wide array of English writers from around the globe, from William Shakespeare, Jane Austen, Charles Dickens and the Romantic poets to twentieth-century and contemporary authors such as Samuel Beckett, Virginia Woolf, Toni Morrison, J.M. Coetzee,
Zadie Smith, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, and many more.
• Our staff members themselves represent global English, originating from different regions of the English-speaking world, as well as from within the Netherlands.
• The 2018 QS World University Rankings by Subject placed our English department at #1 in Continental Europe and #38 in the world.

Study programme

The first year
The first year provides you with a broad, general survey of the field of English studies through core courses in literature and linguistics. The literature courses cover the traditional canon of English literature, including works by William Shakespeare, Jane Austen, Charles Dickens and the Romantic poets. However, you will also engage with more recent works of contemporary English literature from around the globe. In the linguistics courses, you study the structure of English and its variation around the world, exploring the history and the structure of language, and how we organise information in discourse. You continually refine your English speaking, listening, reading and writing skills while at the same time developing various professional skills such as academic writing and argumentation, conducting research, and presenting your own academic work.

The second and third years
After the first year, you will choose between a programme focusing on literature and a programme that combines literature and linguistics.
In the second and third years, you will further develop your analytical skills and study topics in greater depth. While 'Many study English to immerse themselves in the works of Austen, Shakespeare or Beckett, or to teach. English has become the global lingua franca, rapidly permeating into the very capillaries of society. With a degree in English, you can participate in and contribute to the globalising world. Many of our students also write poetry, blogs, lyrics or short stories. Our students study English to fine-tune their English and learn more about the richness of the English language and literature.' – Dr Rose van der Zwaard, Lecturer at the English Department
Annemijn Maas, Student

‘When I was a child, reading in English and listening to the English language was already a big part of my life. After visiting the information session on the Open Day, I thought “this is me, this is what I want to do”. I chose UvA because I wanted to be able to choose from a wide range of electives and I also wanted to go abroad. As a member of the board of the study association, I have also actively participated in organising activities, like mixers and study trips to Ireland and Great Britain, career events for networking and essay sessions to improve your academic writing skills. After my Bachelor’s, I first want to do a pre-Master’s in Film and Television in Utrecht. After studying, I want to further specialise in writing subtitles for film and television.’

focusing on modern and contemporary world literature in English, you learn about various literary theories that offer different ways of examining and interpreting literature. While studying the complex relationship between language (variation) and society, you learn how this relationship can lead to language change. The wide selection of options available both within the English programme and throughout the university allows you to tailor the programme to your specific interests. You may choose to pursue a minor in another subject, study abroad in the third year or do an internship.

Master’s programmes

UvA offers a variety of Master’s programmes. After completing your Bachelor’s degree, you can continue studying at UvA in one of its Master’s programmes, including:

• English Literature and Culture
• Comparative Literature
• Literary Studies (several options)
• Linguistics (several options)
• American Studies
• Vertalen (in Dutch)
• Cultural Analysis
• Educatie & Communicatie: Engels (2-year programme taught in Dutch)

After completing one of the Master’s degrees in English language/literature, you are eligible for the 1-year Lerarenopleiding Engels.

Please visit: uva.nl/master

English in the world today

At the core of the English programme at UvA is a deep understanding of English in the world today through examining language and literature within diverse political, social and historical contexts. You become acquainted with the many facets of the English-speaking world and study the status of English as a global language. In this programme, you refine your ability to communicate effectively and strengthen professional and analytical skills highly valued by employers.

Job market

With the combination of excellent English language skills and a solid academic background in critical analysis you will have an advantage in the current international, global job market. Graduates of English have found employment in education, journalism, government, translation, tourism, business, marketing, publishing, copywriting, and academia. Many of our alumni have gone on to further their studies, or to take up careers in the performing and creative arts.

Anna Post Uiterweer, Student

‘I decided to study English Language and Culture for my Bachelor’s studies in order to further develop myself as a translator. Prior to enrolling in the programme, I was already working as a translator while studying Dutch, but after a year, I decided to switch to English. The programme helped me improve my writing skills: I learned to build an argument and greatly expanded my vocabulary. I was also able to focus on my personal area of interest; literary history from before the 1900s. After completing my Bachelor’s studies, I completed the Master’s programme in Translation Studies at the UvA. During my time at the UvA, I developed a network of people with similar career interests. As a freelance translator, it is very important to be connected to others in the same field.’
Study association Etcetera

As a member of Etcetera you can meet with your fellow Bachelor's students and take part in activities such as watching movies, going to the theater, the creative writing magazine *Writer’s Block*, and short trips to English-speaking countries.

Visit us

Make sure you are well-prepared before the start of your studies at the University of Amsterdam. Visit an Open Day, schedule a Campus Visit, and make sure you are well-informed about the programme. Please see: uva.nl/international