

BA (HONS.) ACCOUNTING AND FINANCE PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

1. Awarding institution	University of Newcastle upon Tyne
2. Teaching institution	University of Newcastle upon Tyne
3. Programme accredited by:	Accounting professional bodies
4. Final Award	BA (Hons.)
5. Programme title	Accounting and Finance
6. UCAS Code	N400
7. Relevant QAA benchmarking group	Accounting
8. Date of production	December 2000; Revised February 2004

9. Educational Aims of the Programme

- (a) To produce graduates with the following qualities:
- (i) The knowledge, understanding, key and specific skills and general intellectual development required to make them employable in graduate positions in accounting, finance, business, management and a wide range of other employments or capable of undertaking a taught postgraduate programme
 - (ii) a capacity for inquiry, abstract logical thinking and critical analysis and the ability to work independently
- (b) To provide a programme:
- (i) which has accredited degree status for the accounting profession
 - (ii) which combines study of both the conceptual and the applied aspects of the disciplines studied and which principally uses an economics perspective.
 - (iii) in which teaching is informed by research (both relevant research in the discipline and research carried out by members of staff) and by the Subject Area's strong professional links
 - (iv) in which accounting and finance is related to a broader business context
 - (v) which fully meets the requirements of the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) Benchmark statement for Accounting degrees.
 - (vi) which fully meets the criteria for an honours degree laid down in the QAA's National Qualifications Framework.
 - (vii) which satisfies the requirements of the QAA Code of Practice and University guidelines

10 (a) Intended Learning Outcomes

The programme provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding, discipline-related and general key skills in the following areas:

A. Knowledge and Understanding

- 1. The business context within which accounting and finance operate, with particular emphasis on the study of economics, the dominant social science perspective used on the programme for the study of accounting and finance.
- 2. UK financial reporting including consideration of alternative recognition and measurement rules and of the impact of accounting choices.

3. Principal aspects of management accounting and the use of accounting information for internal decision making and control
4. The principal models used in finance and consideration of the application of these models in the context of the multinational corporation.

5. Key research in the disciplines studied (including research by members of staff where relevant), critical evaluation of theories and empirical evidence.
6. Through optional modules knowledge and understanding of specialist areas within accounting and finance, cognate areas to accounting and finance and modern languages.

B. Subject-Specific/Professional Skills

1. Recording and summarising transactions and preparing financial statements
2. Analysis of business operations for decision-making purposes
3. Financial projections for decision-making and control
4. Solving problems in accounting and finance
5. Quantitative skills required for accounting, finance and economics

C. Cognitive Skills

1. Critical evaluation of arguments and evidence
2. Drawing conclusions from structured, and to a lesser extent from unstructured, problems using given data or data acquired by the student
3. Location, extraction and analysis of data

D. Key (transferable) Skills

1. Competence in written and oral communication, presentation, numeracy, computer literacy
2. Ability to work independently, through managing own learning, time management, showing initiative and adaptability.
3. Ability to work as a member of a team

10 (b)

Intended learning outcomes	Teaching/learning methods and strategies
A. Knowledge and Understanding	<p>The primary method of imparting knowledge and understanding is lectures. These are supplemented by seminars, workshops and large group problem sessions where students are able to check their learning through discussion and through practice. Much learning in accounting and finance is accomplished through a problem-based approach.</p> <p>Students are encouraged to supplement taught material through independent reading, with extensive guidance being given about which books and articles to read.</p> <p>Students also enhance their learning through student-centred project work and by analysing case studies. The</p>

	induction programme includes a session on reading journal articles to help students tackle A4.
B Subject-specific/professional skills	Professional skills are often demonstrated in lectures with follow-up in large group problem sessions and in workshops to enable students to develop these skills in a supportive environment where help is available. Mastery of these skills requires practice which students gain through workshops and through preparing problem-based worksheets. There are also open help sessions where students can seek help, as well as consultation with members of staff.
C Cognitive Skills	C1 is principally developed through seminars, where students can discuss such matters and learn to evaluate arguments and evidence. Problem-solving skills (C2) are principally developed through workshops, problem sessions and projects. Data extraction and analysis skills (C3) are developed through student-centred project work and through skills sessions in induction and within modules. Students can enhance their learning through independent reading, undertaking case study analysis and project work.
D Key (Transferable) Skills	These are introduced to students through sessions in the induction programme and skills session within modules. IT and numeracy skills are taught in specific modules through lectures and workshops, but are further used and developed in other knowledge based modules. Oral communication skills are in particular developed through seminars and presentations. Students have the opportunity to develop work and study skills, but there is a limit to the extent to which these can be taught. Students can develop these skills further through project work and worksheets. Teamwork skills are developed through the use of group projects and group presentations in certain modules.

10 (c)

Intended Learning Outcomes	Methods of Assessment
A. Knowledge and Understanding	Knowledge and understanding is primarily assessed by unseen examinations, but also to some extent by various forms of coursework – essays, projects, reports, case studies and worksheets
B. Subject-Specific/Professional Skills	Professional skills are assessed by unseen examinations, worksheets, projects and case studies.
C. Cognitive Skills	Cognitive skills are assessed by unseen examinations, essays and presentations for C2., worksheets, case studies and projects for C2 and through projects for C3.

D. Key/Transferable skills	D1 is assessed through unseen examinations, worksheets, essays, projects and presentations. D2 cannot be directly assessed and D3 is assessed as part of the assessment of group projects and presentations.
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11. Programme structures and requirements, levels, modules, credits

The programme is studied over three years full-time based on 30 weeks attendance per annum.

Each year or stage requires the study of modules with a credit value of 120. A 10 credit module consists of 100 hours of student effort, covering lectures, small group teaching, private study, completion of coursework and revision. Modules can vary in size from 10 to 20 credits.

Stage 1 provides a multi-disciplinary foundation covering not only accounting and finance but also law, economics, IT, quantitative methods and management. The emphasis in accounting and finance is mostly on the applied aspects of the discipline, with the key techniques being introduced. Contact hours are greater at stage 1 than in later stages in order to ensure that students master key technical issues.

Stage 2 focuses on the three main streams of financial reporting, management accounting and finance. At this stage the emphasis on the conceptual as opposed to the applied aspects of the discipline is increased, and students start to be introduced to research findings. Further study of economics, the key social science perspective used on the programme, is compulsory at stage 2, thus providing students with a deeper knowledge and understanding of this underpinning discipline. Stage 2 also incorporates 20 credits of options which must be in something other than accounting in order to broaden experience e.g. a modern language; economics; management; marketing; students into schools. Stage 2 students have lower contact hours than stage 1 students, as they should have developed the skill of independent learning.

At stage 3 further specialisation in the three key streams takes places with students taking 80 compulsory credits covering financial reporting, management accounting, strategy and finance. The research element in the curriculum increases, covering both key research in the area, but also relevant research by members of staff. In addition students are able to broaden their studies through the 40 optional credits they choose from a range offered within the Accounting and Finance covering such topics as taxation, derivatives and accounting change and development. 20 credits or from outside the subject area.

This is shown below:

Stage 1	Module	Credits	Comp	Core
ACC101	Foundations of Accounting	20	Y	Y
ACC102	Introduction to IT	10	Y	Y
ACC106	Introduction to Business Finance	10	Y	Y
ACC109	Quantitative Business Methods	20	Y	Y

BUS101	Introduction to Management and Organisations	20	Y	Y
ECO101	Economic Analysis	20	Y	Y
LAW154	Introduction to English Law and the Law of Contract	20	Y	Y
Stage 2				
		Credits	Comp	Hons
ACC202	Managerial and Business Economics	20	Y	Y
ACC203	Financial Control	20	Y	Y
ACC205	Income Measurement	20	Y	Y
ACC207	Corporate Finance	20	Y	Y
ACC221	Understanding Company Accounts	20	Y	Y
And	Options from other subject areas including Law, Management, Economics, Modern Languages and Students into Schools	20	N	Y
Stage 3				
ACC301	Financial Accounting	20	Y	Y
ACC302	Management Accounting	20	Y	Y
ACC306	International Financial Management	20	Y	Y
ACC319	Accounting, Strategy and Society	20	Y	Y
ACC309	Taxation in Accounting	20	N	Y
ACC316	Research Topic in Accounting, Organisation & Society	20	N	Y
ACC317	Derivative Securities	20	N	Y
ACC318	Accounting Change & Development	20	N	Y
ACC308	Auditing and Accountability	20	N	Y
Other	From outside the subject area	20	N	Y
Honours modules count for degree classification purposes. Core and honours modules must be passed with a mark of at least 40% before a student can proceed.				
The learning outcomes of each module are shown in Appendix I.				

12. Support for Students and Their Learning

- Induction programme for orientation, introducing study skills for both new and returning students and providing careers guidance
- Sessions within relevant modules on skills development
- Student handbooks and module guides
- School website
- All students allocated a personal tutor to assist them with personal problems
- Personal tutors available to advise on module selection and to take an overview of students' performance
- Student e-mail and personal access to Degree Programme Director and tutorial staff
- Access to Disability Unit which provides assistance and guidance e.g. dyslexia

- Access to Student Counselling Service
- Access to Careers Service
- Excellent University library facilities including CD ROMs and on-line services
- Research library of accounts of top 100 UK companies in Accounting and Finance
- Up-to-date IT facilities throughout the campus

13. Criteria for Admission

School/college leavers

Generally three A levels required for entry.

A level grades – ABB excluding General Studies. No specific subjects required.

GCSE Grade B in Mathematics and English expected.

Scottish Highers AABBB

BTEC Merits/distinctions

Under the new post 16 arrangements in England:

6 credit Vocational A level accepted as one of three A levels

Applicants with 12 credit Vocational A levels will be considered on their merits

Points offers using the new UCAS tariff will generally not be made

2 AS levels accepted instead of one of the three A2 levels required

Skills qualifications will not be included in offers

Overseas students

Appropriate overseas qualifications will be considered, as well as A levels.

Evidence of adequate English language skills to complete the programme successfully required.

Admissions policy

Students to whom offers are made are invited to an open day to meet staff and students and see the School. Attendance is not compulsory. Applicants with non-standard qualifications may be interviewed.

Mature students

Each case considered on its merits, although evidence of successful recent study is required (e.g. an accredited Access course). Relevant work experience is also useful.

14. Methods for evaluating and improving the quality and standards of teaching and learning

Mechanisms for review and evaluation of teaching, learning, assessment, the curriculum and outcome standards

- Student questionnaires issued to graduates, finalists and students at stages 1 and 2
- Module and staff member questionnaires
- Annual Board of Studies Report
- Accreditation by accounting professional bodies
- Peer observation of teaching
- Internal subject review

- External Examiner reports
- Annual module review
- Annual review of progression rates, degree classes achieved, graduate employment statistics

Committees with responsibility for monitoring and evaluating quality and standards

- Board of Studies
- School Teaching and Learning Committee
- Staff Student Committee
- Employers' Panel
- Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee
- University Teaching and Learning Committee
- Stream Review meetings
- Examination Boards

Mechanisms for gaining student feedback on the quality of teaching and their learning experience

- Staff Student Committee and student representation on Board of Studies
- Student evaluation questionnaires

15 Regulation of Assessment

Assessment rules and Honours classification

- Minimum pass mark is 40% for each module
- Most modules are assessed by a combination of unseen written examination and coursework, although some are 100% examination and some are 100% coursework
- Information on assessment is available in the degree programme handbooks and in the module outlines which are available on the website (<http://www.ncl.ac.uk/nubs/undergrad/internal/accounting/modules/index.htm>)
- All stage 1 and stage 2 modules must be passed before students can proceed. There are two resit opportunities.
- Degree classification is based on the weighted average result for stages 2 and 3, with stage 3 results accounting for 75% and stage 2 for 25%.
- Honours marks are based on the following University scale:

<u>Mark</u>	<u>Degree Class</u>
≥ 70%	First
60-69%	Upper second
50-59%	Lower second
40-49%	Third
< 40%	Fail

Role of external examiners

The external examiners are distinguished members of the academic community appointed by Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee and their role is to:

- Approve assessment on modules which count for honours
- Review samples of examination scripts and coursework to check standards and assessment procedures
- Attend the Examination Board meeting

- Report back to the University

16. Indicators of Quality and Standards

RAE Grade 5 (2001)

Accreditation by accounting professional bodies

Range of prizes, guest lectures and other support offered by professional firms, industrial companies and professional bodies for students on the programme

Good outcome from University Internal Subject Review, with action points duly followed up

Graduate employment statistics

17. Other Sources of Information

This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes which a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if s/he takes full advantage of the learning opportunities provided. More detailed information can be found in the degree programme handbooks for each stage and in module documentation. The accuracy of the information contained in this document is reviewed by the University and may be checked by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education.

Key information about the programme can be found in:

- The Stage 1, Stage 2 and Stage 3 Degree Programme Handbooks
- The Regulations of the University of Newcastle upon Tyne
- The University's Undergraduate Prospectus and Accounting and Finance brochure
- The website (www.ncl.ac.uk/nubs/about/acccfin.htm)