

## BA (HONS.) ACCOUNTING AND LAW PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

1. Awarding institution	University of Newcastle upon Tyne
2. Teaching institution	University of Newcastle upon Tyne
3. Programme accredited by:	Professional accounting bodies. Recognised as a qualifying law degree by the Law Society for England and Wales and the Bar Council.
4. Final Award	BA (Hons.)
5. Programme title	Accounting and Law
6. UCAS Code	NMK1
7. Relevant QAA benchmarking groups	Accounting, Law
8. Date of production	January 2001; 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, law, business, management and a wide range of other employments or capable of undertaking a taught postgraduate programme or professional training
  - (ii) a capacity for inquiry, abstract logical thinking and critical analysis and the ability to work independently
- (b) To provide a programme:
- (i) which offers students a number of different academic pathways through the disciplines of law and accounting, and the opportunity of studying issues in depth from both legal and accounting/finance perspectives
  - (ii) which has accredited degree status for the accounting profession and/or the legal profession, depending on module choices
  - (iii) which includes study of both the conceptual and the applied aspects of accounting and finance, principally using an economics perspective, and in which accounting and finance are related to a broader business context, which is itself informed by the study of law.
  - (iii) which provides a foundation of knowledge of the important principles and rules of law and develops an understanding of the nature of law and the way it is influenced by social, economic and political factors
  - (iv) which provides a critical appreciation of how law is made, interpreted and refined
  - (vi) in which teaching is informed by research (both relevant research in the disciplines and research carried out by members of staff) and by the School's and the Law School's strong professional links
  - (vii) which fully meets the requirements of the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) Benchmark statement for Accounting degrees and for Law degrees, depending on the pathway chosen.
  - (viii) which fully meets the criteria for an honours degree laid down in the QAA's National Qualifications Framework.
  - (ix) which satisfies the requirements of the QAA Code of Practice and University

### **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 economic perspectives, but also informed by the study of law.
2. UK financial reporting including consideration of alternative recognition and measurement rules and of the impact of accounting choices.
3. An introduction to the principles of finance
4. Major concepts, values, policies and rules in key areas of law as seen from an interdisciplinary perspective
5. The principal institutions, processes and procedures of the law
6. Key research in the disciplines studied (including research by members of staff where relevant), critical evaluation of theories and empirical evidence.
7. Through optional modules knowledge and understanding of specialist or additional areas within accounting, finance and law. Given the flexible structure of this programme, learning outcomes will vary considerably depending on the options chosen. Students who choose to follow the accredited route in accounting will study the three streams of financial reporting, management accounting and finance, although they will progress furthest in financial reporting. Students following the accredited law route will cover topics relevant to the Foundations of Legal Knowledge, and may use any further option choices to study topics beyond the Foundations of Legal Knowledge.

#### **B. Subject-Specific/Professional Skills**

1. Recording and summarising transactions and preparing financial statements
2. Solving problems in accounting, finance and law, identifying relevant issues and reaching supported conclusions
3. Applying social, economic, political and philosophical perspectives to the resolution of legal problems.
4. Ability to research, analyse, synthesise and evaluate complex matters
5. Showing precision in the use of language and number in accounting and law

#### **C. Cognitive Skills**

1. Critical evaluation of arguments and evidence in order to make judgements and reach conclusions
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 read, interpret and understand complex technical texts.
3. Ability to work independently, through managing own learning, time management, showing initiative and adaptability.
4. Ability to work as a member of a team
5. Opportunity to develop research skills in accounting, finance and law, depending on module choices.

10.b Intended learning outcomes	Teaching/learning methods and strategies
<b>A. Knowledge and Understanding</b>	<p>The primary method of imparting knowledge and understanding is lectures. Some lectures in the Law School are Socratic, based on answering questions on material read in advance. In Accounting lectures are generally concerned with the exposition of material which is followed up in small group teaching in a more interactive way - in 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 and in law is accomplished through a problem-based approach, although the nature of the problems reviewed may differ. In Law the emphasis in seminars is mostly on discussion on a particular problem. Students are encouraged to supplement taught material through independent reading, with extensive guidance being given about which books and articles to read. Students also enhance their learning through student-centred project work, by analysing case studies and by submitting assessed coursework and seminar essays in Law.</p>
<b>B Subject-specific/ professional skills</b>	<p>Professional skills in accounting 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. Professional skills in Law are fostered largely through the seminar and workshop programme, which has a heavy emphasis on the development of the professional skills of analysis and argument. These skills are further honed by coursework.</p>

<b>C Cognitive Skills</b>	C1 is principally developed through seminars, where students can discuss matters and learn to evaluate arguments and evidence. Problem-solving skills (C2) are principally developed through workshops, problem sessions and projects in accounting and through seminars and coursework in Law. 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.
<b>D Key (Transferable) Skills</b>	These are introduced to students through sessions in the induction programme and skills sessions 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, so that they can manage their workload to meet deadlines. Students can develop these skills further through project work, worksheets, coursework and research topics. Teamwork skills are developed through the use of group projects and group presentations in certain modules.
<b>10 (c)</b>	
<b>Intended Learning Outcomes</b>	<b>Methods of Assessment</b>
<b>A. Knowledge and Understanding</b>	Knowledge and understanding is primarily assessed by unseen examinations, but also by various forms of coursework – essays, projects, reports, case studies, worksheets and dissertations/research topics
<b>B. Subject-Specific/Professional Skills</b>	Professional skills are assessed by unseen examinations as well as by worksheets, projects, case studies, essays and other written work.
<b>C. Cognitive Skills</b>	Cognitive skills are assessed by unseen examinations, essays and presentations for C1, worksheets, case studies, essays and projects for C2 and through projects and research modules for C3.
<b>D. Key/Transferable skills</b>	D1 is assessed through unseen examinations, worksheets, essays, projects and presentations. D2 cannot be directly assessed, but is indirectly through the imposition of strict deadlines and penalties for failing to meet them. D3 is assessed as part of the assessment of group projects and presentations.

## **11. Programme structures and requirements, levels, modules, credits**

The programme is studied over four 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 40 credits.

Stages 1 and 2 provide a compulsory foundation covering accounting, finance, law, economics, IT, business organisation and quantitative methods. The emphasis in accounting and finance is more on the applied aspects of the discipline, with the key techniques being introduced. Contact hours are greater at stages 1 and 2 than in later stages in order to ensure that students master key technical issues.

In 2005/06 only Stages 3 and 4 will be running, as the programme is being withdrawn.

At Stages 3 and 4 students can decide to major in either accounting or law. In order to achieve accredited degree status the marked routes must be chosen. However, it is possible to opt for jointly accredited degree with equal weightings of law and accounting modules.

At stages 3 and 4 the emphasis in accounting on the conceptual as opposed to the applied aspects of the discipline is increased, and students start to be introduced to research findings. Stage 3 and 4 students have lower contact hours than stage 1 and 2 students, as they should have developed the skill of independent learning. Progression in law is rather different in nature, as to a greater extent Law study involves separate areas of law. However, there is a logic to the order in which they should be studied. Law modules at stages 3 and 4 also involve more coursework, reflecting the growth of legal analytical skills and independent learning.

This pattern of study is shown below:

<b>Stage 2</b>		<b>Credits</b>	<b>Comp</b>	<b>Hons</b>
BUS101	Introduction to Management and Organisations	20	Y	Y
ECO101	Economic Analysis	20	Y	Y
ACC205	Income Measurement	20	Y	Y
LAW101	Administrative Law	10	Y	Y
LAW122	Land Law	30	Y	Y
LAW211	EC Law	20	Y	Y

**Stage 3:****At least 30 credits from:**

ACC202	Managerial and Business Economics	20	N	Y
ACC203	Financial Control*	20	N	Y
ACC207	Corporate Finance*	20	N	Y
ACC220	Interpreting Company Accounts	10	N	Y

**At least 30 credits from the following:**

LAW260	Criminal Law#	30	N	Y
LAW261	Tort#	30	N	Y
LAW263	Equity#	30	N	Y

**The remaining 60 credits may be chosen from either of the above lists**

**Stage 4****At least 40 credits from the following:**

ACC301	Financial Accounting*	20	N	Y
ACC302	Management Accounting	20	N	Y
ACC306	International Financial Management	20	N	Y
ACC309	Taxation in Accounting	20	N	Y
ACC316	Research Topic in Accounting, Organisation & Society	20	N	Y
ACC317	Derivative Securities	20	N	Y
ACC319	Accounting, Strategy and Society	20	N	Y
ACC308	Auditing and Accountability	20	N	Y
ACC318	Accounting Change & Development	20	N	Y

**At least 40 credits from the following:**

LAW310	Company Law*	20	N	Y
LAW316	Evidence	20	N	Y
LAW320	Labour Law	20	N	Y
LAW327	Research Topic in Law	20	N	Y
LAW328	Revenue Law	20	N	Y
LAW331	Succession	20	N	Y
LAW398	Dissertation in Law	40	N	Y

**The remaining 40 credits may be chosen from either list above. Other modules may be selected with the approval of the Degree Programme Director, including law modules not listed above.**

\* required for Accounting accreditation

# required for Law accreditation

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. Criteria for Admission**

As of 2004-05 no further admissions to this programme will be made.

## **13. Support for Students and Their Learning**

- Induction programme for orientation, introducing study skills for both new and returning students and providing careers guidance available in both Accounting and Finance and the Law School
- Sessions within relevant modules on skills development
- Student handbooks and module guides
- Websites
- 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
- Nominated liaison officer in the School of Law
- Student e-mail and personal access to Degree Programme Director, tutorial staff and liaison officer
- 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
- Specialist Law Library based in the Law School with specialist online services etc
- Research library of accounts of top 100 UK companies in Accounting and Finance
- Up-to-date IT facilities throughout the campus

#### **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 questionnaires in both Accounting and Finance and the Law School
- Annual Board of Studies Report
- Accreditation by professional accounting bodies and recognition by the Law Society for England & Wales and the Bar Council
- Peer observation of teaching in both Accounting and Finance and the Law School
- Internal subject review
- External Examiner reports in both Accounting and Finance and the Law School
- Annual module review in both Accounting and Finance and the Law School
- 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 in Accounting and Finance, Advisory Board in Law
- Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee
- University Teaching and Learning Committee
- 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 ([www.ncl.ac.uk/nubs/undergrad/internal/accounting/modules/index.htm](http://www.ncl.ac.uk/nubs/undergrad/internal/accounting/modules/index.htm) and [www.ncl.ac.uk/nuls/internal/modlist1.html](http://www.ncl.ac.uk/nuls/internal/modlist1.html)).
- All stage 1, stage 2 and stage 3 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, 3 and 4 with stage 2 results accounting for 10%, stage 3 results for 30% and stage 4 results for 60%.
- 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 in Accounting and in Law (2001)
- Accreditation by accounting professional bodies and recognition of qualifying degree status by the Law Society for England & Wales and the Bar Council
- 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 2, Stage 3 and Stage 4 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/accfin.htm](http://www.ncl.ac.uk/nubs/about/accfin.htm)) and the Law School's website ([www.ncl.ac.uk/nuls](http://www.ncl.ac.uk/nuls))