

Newcastle Programme Specification R6R6 1

1	Awarding Institution	University of Newcastle upon Tyne
2	Teaching Institution	University of Newcastle upon Tyne
3	Final Award	BA (Hons)
4	Programme title:	Spanish, Portuguese, and Latin American Studies
5	Programme Accredited by:	n/a
6	UCAS Code:	R6R6
7	QAA Subject Benchmarking Group(s)	Languages and related studies, area studies
8	Date of production/revision:	September 2004

9 Programme Aims:

The broad educational aims of the programme are:

- To foster intercultural awareness and understanding (an appreciation both of internal diversity and of trans-cultural connectedness of cultures), and an attitude of curiosity and openness towards different cultures.
- To provide students with knowledge and skills that prepare them for further intellectual development and further independent study.
- To provide a flexible programme of study through variety of student choice within an informed advisory framework, as well as the possibility of combining languages with another field of study chosen from subjects available to R6R6 students as outside modules.
- To give students the opportunity to spend time studying or working abroad in a country/countries where the language/s being studied is/are spoken.

The programme aims to produce graduates with the following qualities:

- proficiency in receptive (reading and listening), productive (writing and speaking), and mediating skills in Spanish and Portuguese
- competence in a range of key skills, including oral and written communication, oral presentation, organisation, adaptability and flexibility, self-study skills for language learning, and IT skills
- knowledge and understanding of a selection of the following: area studies, cultural studies, film, history, linguistics, literary studies, politics
- a capacity for particular cognitive skills, such as information gathering, synthesis, and analysis
- familiarity with an interdisciplinary approach to learning, thereby stretching the mind and stimulating the imagination
- the linguistic competence and expertise to enable them to operate in organisations with an international dimension.

The programme aims to meet fully the requirements of the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) Benchmark statement for Languages and Related Subjects as well as the criteria for an honours degree laid down in the QAA's national Qualifications Framework.

10(a) Programme Intended Learning Outcomes:

A Knowledge and understanding of

- 1 the lexis, grammatical structures, registers and usage of Spanish to Honours level (H) and of Portuguese, where chosen at Stages 3-4, to ALTE Level 4 and Catalan to post-Beginners level ALTE Level 2/3.¹ (See Statement of Standards)
- 2 aspects of the history, society, culture, and linguistic development of a country or countries where Spanish/Portuguese are used. See section 11
- 3 certain areas of specialist study, according to module selection, in area studies, cultural studies, film, history, language, linguistics, literary studies and politics of a country or countries where Spanish/Portuguese are used. See section 11
- 4 intercultural awareness and understanding (an appreciation both of internal diversity and of trans-cultural connectedness of cultures).
- 5 for students opting to write a dissertation an in-depth knowledge, appropriate to undergraduate level, of a self-chosen aspect of study.

B Subject-specific/professional skills

- 1 Receptive (reading and listening) and productive (writing and speaking) skills in Spanish to degree level and of Portuguese, where chosen at Stages 3-4, to ALTE Level 4; but Level 3 in restricted cases.
- 2 The ability to perform a range of communicative tasks.
- 3 Mediating skills - the ability to translate non-technical texts from and into the target language, competent professional liaison interpreting.
- 4 The ability to make effective use of language reference materials, such as grammars, dictionaries and corpora.
- 5 Self-study skills for language learning.

¹ ALTE = Association of Language Testers in Europe. The levels of achievement (from Breakthrough Level to Level 5) defined by the ALTE are anchored to the Common European Framework of Reference for Language on the Council of Europe website at http://www.coe.int/T/E/Cultural_Co-operation/education/Languages/Language_Policy/Common_Framework_of_Reference/default.asp#TopOfPage.

ALTE Level 4 (Competent User): an ability to communicate with the emphasis on how well it is done, in terms of appropriacy, sensitivity and the capacity to deal with unfamiliar topics.

ALTE Level 3 (Independent User): the capacity to achieve most goals and express oneself on a range of topics.

ALTE Level 2 (Threshold User): an ability to express oneself in a limited way in familiar situations and to deal in a general way with non-routine information.

C	<u>Cognitive skills</u>
1	The ability to gather, synthesise and evaluate information.
2	The ability to undertake independent, critical analysis.
3	The ability to organise and present ideas within the framework of a structured and reasoned argument, oral or written.
4	The ability to apply appropriate methodologies to specialist areas of study.
5	For students opting to write a dissertation - the ability to design a research project and select and employ appropriate research methodologies.
D	<u>Key (transferable) skills</u>
1	The ability to communicate clearly and effectively, both orally and in writing.
2	Oral presentation skills.
3	Organisational skills: the ability to manage one's time, make plans and set priorities in order to achieve an objective.
4	Interpersonal skills: the ability to work creatively and flexibly with others as part of a team, and, in the case of the intercalary project, the ability to conduct an effective interview.
5.	The ability to adapt and to operate effectively within a different cultural environment.
6.	The ability to use library and bibliographic research resources.
7.	Analytical and problem-solving skills.
8.	Effective use of IT, such as word processing, email, databases, online environments and the use of the Internet as a research and study tool.

10(b) Programme Intended Teaching and Learning Outcomes: Methods and Strategies

A Knowledge and understanding

The primary means of imparting knowledge and understanding of Spanish, and Portuguese, (A1) is via a mix of communicative, student-centred language teaching methods and formal linguistic instruction.

In the case of A2-A3, knowledge and understanding are generally conveyed through lectures and seminars which guide students towards independent reading and enable students to self-assess and develop their learning through: group discussion, take-home tasks; guided self-teaching activities using language centre and web-based materials; blackboard-based teaching; the preparation of presentations and/or reports.

A4 is developed initially within the communicative language training framework and is further enhanced during the students' year abroad.

In A5 (optional dissertation) one-to-one tutorials provide academic guidance, while the opportunity to carry out independent research allows students to apply and practise research skills.

B Subject-specific/professional skills

Learning outcomes B1-2 are achieved via communicative, student-centred skills training (e.g. developing and practising reading skills, enhancing listening skills through language laboratory work, analysing and practising different writing skills, and conducting oral discussion and presentation, both individually and as part of a team), and formal grammar instruction (e.g. guided study, drills and exercises, and use of IT resources).

B1-2 skills may be further enhanced by delivery of specified modules in the target language. These skills are developed and consolidated during the year abroad.

B3 is achieved by: guided translation into and out of the target language, and analysis of translation techniques; reading for gist exercises; summary and evaluation of texts in Spanish/Portuguese, working in Spanish/Portuguese and English, liaison interpreting in and out of the target language.

B4-5 are achieved in the teaching of B1-3, and further enhanced by study skills sessions as detailed in section 13 (below). Self-access language learning is also encouraged in order to further both B4 and B5.

C Cognitive skills

C1-4 skills are developed through seminar preparation and presentation, group discussion and written assignments. C5 is developed through one-to-one tutorials to facilitate the development of independent study and research skills through student self-evaluation.

D Key (transferable) skills

D1 is enhanced through seminar presentations and discussions, and through written assignments. In the case of language modules, they are developed through communicative skills training.

Skills D2-3 and D6-8 are practised through seminar preparation and presentation.

D3 and D6-8 are further developed through written assignments and research-based modules.

D4 is developed through team presentations and projects (including the intercalary project).

D5 is developed initially through communicative language training, and is later enhanced during the student's year abroad.

D8 is further enhanced through the use of IT resources in language teaching and as an organisational tool for certain modules.

D6 and D8 skills are also developed during induction (see 13 below).

**10(c) Programme Intended Assessment Strategy
Learning Outcomes and Methods**

A Knowledge and understanding

Knowledge and understanding of Spanish, and Portuguese (A1) assessed by: written continuous assessment and class tests (evaluating student understanding and progress); unseen written, aural and oral examinations.

Outcomes A2-3 are assessed by essay and/or unseen written examination and oral presentation (requiring independent, critical analysis and application of intellectual models, principles and theories).

Outcome A4 is assessed during the year abroad by a personal learning record, and either an intercalary project in the relevant language or submission of marks for courses taken at the exchange institution.

Outcome A5 is assessed by a 5000-6000 word dissertation.

B Subject-specific/professional skills

B1-3 are assessed by written continuous assessment and class tests (evaluating student progress) and unseen written examination (reading, writing and translating skills), aural examination (listening and writing skills) and oral examination (listening speaking and interpreting skills).

Skills B4 and B5 are not formally assessed.

C Cognitive skills

C1-4 are assessed by means of course work (e.g. essays, oral presentations, and unseen written examinations). They are also assessed as part of oral examinations. They may also be assessed by dissertation.

D Key (transferable) skills

D1 is assessed by essay, dissertation (where applicable) and unseen written examination (written communication), while both D1 and D2 are assessed via assessed seminar presentations and oral examinations (oral communication).

D3 and D6-7 are assessed in a number of ways, including written assignments, unseen examinations, assessed seminar preparation and presentation, self-directed language coursework and preparation for language classes.

D4 is assessed via team presentations and projects (including the intercalary project, which involves a transcribed interview).

D5 is assessed via the personal learning record produced during the year abroad.

D8 is assessed in a number of ways including the preparation of written assignments and seminars.

11 Programme Curriculum, Structure, and Features:

The programme is studied over four years full-time based on 30 weeks attendance per annum. Stages 1, 2 and 4 of the programme are spent in residence attending the University of Newcastle; Stage 3 is an intercalary year during which students attend university or work in a Spanish-and/or Portuguese-speaking country.

Each year or stage requires the study of modules with a total credit value of 120. Modules are generally 20 credits in weight and each 20 credit module represents 200 hours of student work, including lectures and other teaching (such as seminars), private study, preparation of coursework and exam preparation and revision. Modules undertaken during the intercalary year are 20 and 100 credits.

In each of Stages 1, 2 and 4 students are required to study 20 credits of compulsory practical language modules in Spanish. In Stage 1 students are additionally required to study 40 credits of compulsory practical language modules in Portuguese.

Language teaching is conducted mainly in the foreign language; most content courses are taught in English (some being open to outside students) while others are taught in a combination of Spanish or Portuguese (in lectures) and English (in seminars).

At Stage 1 students develop the language skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking as well as following a range of introductory modules. Students take 20 credits of language modules in Spanish General Language, providing knowledge and understanding of the Spanish language and its cultural context as well as the foundations of subject-specific skills (outcome A1, 2, & 4, B1-5); they also take 40 credits of language modules in Portuguese bringing them up to ALTE Level 2. Content modules coded LAS and SPA cover a range of disciplines and topics at an introductory level, including linguistics, geography, history, politics, society, film, literature, cultural and literary theory; these modules enhance knowledge and understanding of the language and of specialist areas (outcomes A2, A3) as well as providing an introduction to cognitive skills (C1-3) and effective practice in key transferable skills (especially outcomes D1-4).

At Stage 2, 20 credits of compulsory Spanish General Language modules and 20 credits of compulsory Portuguese General Language modules are taken, and additional credits are chosen from options including Latin American history and politics, the representations of democracy, dictatorship and resistance in Ibero-American countries, film theory, Spanish and Latin American film, Catalan, and linguistics. Students continue to develop the language skills of reading, writing, listening, speaking and translation; language modules in both languages are designed to develop these skills in preparation for the forthcoming Year Abroad (outcome A1, 2, & 4, B1-5), practise cognitive skills in the target language (C1-3) as well as key transferable skills (D1, 2, 4 & 6). The optional modules are intended to be as broad-ranging as possible to allow informed choices to be made about more specialised final-year options; they develop knowledge and understanding of the language in relation to specialist areas of study (A2-3), while at the same time providing a sufficient introduction to critical skills and methodology appropriate to the area (C1-4) and further advancing key transferable skills (especially outcomes D1-2, 6-7).

There are three possibilities for the Intercalary Year, Stage 3:

- working as an English Language Assistant in a school (paid an allowance which is sufficient to live on);

- pursuing a course of study at a university;

- employment in an approved work placement (varying rates of pay).

The Year Abroad is fully accredited and assessment is by means of a personal learning record (100 credits) plus either an intercalary project (20 credits) or marks achieved at the host university (to a total of 20 credits). While all aspects of knowledge, understanding and language skills will be developed during Stage 3, there will be particular opportunities for increasing intercultural awareness and understanding (A4), for developing self-study skills for language learning (B5), for developing organisational and interpersonal skills (D3-5); students preparing a dissertation will have the opportunity to develop knowledge and cognitive skills in this area too (A5, C5).

The language modules at Stage 4 (20 compulsory credits) are taught on the basis that students have reached a very high level of competence during their year abroad. The emphasis now is on sophisticated use of language in all skills (A1, 2 & 4, B1-5) Opportunities to practise mediating skills are available through translation and interpreting courses (B3). as well as the cognitive abilities of analysis and structured argumentation (C2-3). Students opting to continue with Portuguese language are exercising and developing similar skills, but at a lower level (typically at ALTE Level 4/5 threshold). A wide range of specialised options (apart from those available at Stage 2, studies in Inter-American relations, communities and identities in Latin America, recent Spanish film, linguistics) takes the cognitive skills to a high level of development, including emphasis upon independent analytical skills, use of appropriate methodologies and problem-solving skills (C1-4, D1-3, 6-7). Students writing a dissertation will develop their knowledge and understanding as well as their subject-specific, cognitive and transferable skills over a broad range of outcomes (A2, 3, & 5, B1 & 4, C1-5, D1, 3, 6 & 7). In addition to the practical language modules, students take further modules to make up a total credit value of 120 from the range of modules coded LAS, SPA or POR offered at the appropriate stage in that particular academic year.

The undergraduate handbook informs students about the rank and field of all members of staff and the courses which are linked to their research interests. These modules, normally at stage 4, introduce students to key aspects of current academic projects and to most recent theoretical debates, new methodological approaches within a discipline, and the possibilities and challenges of inter-disciplinary cooperation.

Newcastle Programme Specification R6R6 11

ALL CODES AND CREDITS NEW/ADJUSTED				
[<i>a.c.m.</i> = according to module choice]				
Units of Study	Credits	Learning outcomes	Progression Requirements See -15-	Com/Core/Opt
<u>Stage 1</u>				
SPA171	20	A1,A4,B1-5,C1, D1-3, D5		Com/Core
POR165-6	40	A1,A4,B1-5,C1, D1-3, D5		Com
LAS110, SPA117 SML118-120 <i>a.c.m.</i>	60	A2-4, C1-4, D1-8		Opt
<u>Stage 2</u>				
SPA261	20	A1,A4,B1-5,C1, D1-3, D5		Com
POR261	20	A1,A4,B1-5,C1, D1-3, D5		Com
SPA221	20	A1,A4,B1-5,C1, D1-3, D5		Opt
FMS205 LAS226, SPA219, 224,225 <i>a.c.m.</i>	60/80	A2-4, C1-4, D1-8		Opt
<u>Stage 3</u>				
SML304	100	A1, A2, A4, B1, B2, B5 D1, D3, D5, D8		Com
SML305	20	A1, A2, A3, A4, B1, B2, B4, B5, C1, C2, C3, C4, D1, D3, D4, D5, D6, D7,D8		Opt

Newcastle Programme Specification R6R6 12

SML306	20	A1, A2, A3, A4, B1, B2, B3, B4, B5, C1, C2, C3, C4, D1, D2, D3, D5, D6, D7, D8	Opt
<u>Stage 4</u>			
SPA461	20	A1,A4,B1-5,C1, D1-3, D5	Com
POR461	20	A1,A4,B1-5,C1, D1-3, D5	Opt
SPA221	20	A1,A4,B1-5,C1, D1-3, D5	Opt
FMS205 LAS226, SPA219, 224,225			
LAS401,402 SPA401,402			
SML401 <i>a.c.m.</i>	40/100	A2-4, C1-4, D1-8	Opt
LAS499/ POR499/ SPA499	20	A2-5, C1-5, D1-8	Opt

Admission is to the appropriate level according to qualifications at starting point (which, in turn, determine the level of outcome).

GCSEs required

(n/a except in the case of degrees with Accounting, Business or Management Studies, where GCSE Maths grade B is required)

A/AS-Level Subjects and Grades

ABC/BBB from 18 units including a minimum of 12 units from 6- or 12 unit qualifications, and including A level Spanish. Candidates with AS level in Spanish (minimum grade A) will be considered.

Alternative entry qualifications

AABBB/BBBBB at Higher Grade, including Spanish. Combinations of Highers and Advanced Highers accepted

Admissions policy

The programme welcomes applications from both A level candidates and non-standard entrants (Partners Programme candidates, Mature Students, Access Courses).

Arrangements for non-standard applicants

Non-standard applicants may be invited to interview depending on their qualifications and/or experience. Each application will be considered on its own merits.

Any Additional Requirements

n/a

13 Support for Students and their Learning:

Induction

In advance of the start of the year, the University sends new students a pack of information. The School also sends pre-registration information to both new and returning students, including degree programme handbooks and module handbooks.

An induction programme is held in the first week of the first year to familiarise students with the programme, staff and facilities through advice on module selection and briefings on arrangements and expectations for modules. A Faculty Induction meeting covers such matters as the careers service, student welfare, the library, and other services. There is also further induction during each subsequent year including talks on careers, and the Year Abroad.

Study skills support

The Open Access Centre offers a series of Language Learning Skills workshops. The induction programme (see above) also provides Faculty-led sessions on Study Skills and IT for Stage 1

students. The School itself organises a session on oral presentations for Stage 2 students, and on essay-writing for Stage 3 students (as part of induction).

There is a compulsory Year Abroad Workshop organised jointly by the Careers Service and the School at the end of Stage 2.

Academic support

In addition to attending seminars and tutorials, each student is assigned a degree programme director, who provides individual academic support and guidance. All teaching staff are available in office hours to discuss academic progress with students; many are also available at other times and by e-mail or telephone. Non-credit bearing language consolidation classes are available to students at Stages 1 and 2 whose history of learning Spanish is shorter or less effective than that of others.

Pastoral support

The School of Modern Languages has two designated pastoral tutors (one female/one male) who provide support with regard to students' general welfare (e.g. finance or accommodation) and other personal problems. All queries of an academic nature should be directed to the DPD who will also represent the students of his programme in their dealings with the university. Tutors and degree programme directors may be contacted in person or by email. The undergraduate handbook makes students aware of support provided within the School, and the existence of university services such as Student Counselling.

Prior to going abroad, guidelines are issued on living and studying abroad, and a meeting is organised between outgoing students and those finalists who have recently completed their year abroad. A week-long course for students who will be working as English Language assistants is organised during the last week of the summer term.

During the year abroad the departmental year abroad officer maintains regular email-based contact with the students, working in tandem with his/her counterpart at the host institution. Where possible, the year abroad officer also visits students whilst they are abroad.

Support for Special Needs

The Disability Unit offers advice and support regarding the particular needs of individual applicants. Personal tutors provide a link between the student and these support facilities. Access to levels 3-6 of the Old Library Building (School of Modern Languages) is by lift.

Learning resources

Most of the books, periodicals and other printed materials required by students are housed in the University Library. The School has a collection of text and reference books in the departmental seminar room, including dictionaries, encyclopaedias, and texts on language, literature, history and society. The seminar room also contains a TV monitor which can receive satellite programmes in Spanish and Portuguese.

The School also has access to the facilities of the Language Centre, including the state-of-the-art Open Access Centre.

The Instituto Camões Centro de Língua Portuguesa is a major regional and national resource housed in the School of Modern Languages comprising advanced IT teaching support and a substantial library of printed materials. The Centre provides students with ways of developing

their knowledge as well as opportunities to participate in activities of a cultural nature within the fields of Portuguese language and culture.

There is a cluster of computers located in the Old Library User Area, on the ground floor of the Old Library Building.

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

Module reviews

Modules are reviewed every three years (students complete feedback questionnaires). Failing modules (with an overall score of less than **3.5**) or modules with a return rate of less than 60 per cent are automatically reviewed the following year.

Programme reviews

The programme is regularly reviewed at the Board of Studies in the presence of student representatives in order to monitor achievement of programme aims and learning outcomes. These reviews also serve to maintain the currency of the programme.

External examiner reports

Content, teaching and assessment of the programme as well as output standards are regularly reviewed in the light of the Board of Examiners' meetings and external examiners' reports.

Accreditation reports

n/a

Student evaluations

On completion of each unit of the teaching programme, students complete feedback questionnaires for individual modules (see above) plus Stage questionnaires on an annual basis.

Feedback Mechanisms

Staff-student committee meetings are held once per semester. The minutes are reviewed at the Board of Studies in the presence of student representatives.

Faculty and University Review Mechanisms

Biennial Degree Programme Review.

Internal Subject Review.

15 Regulation of Assessment

Pass Marks: 40

Course Requirements

PROGRESS

The general rule is that before passing from one Stage of the degree programme to the next students must pass all the assessments for that Stage. However, compensation for failed modules is possible in certain circumstances.

Stage 1 Core Modules

At Stage 1, the following language modules are designated as "core", which means that they must be passed before students may proceed to Stage 2:

POR165/166 Level A Portuguese General Language; SPA171 Level B Spanish General Language

Stage 1 Non-core Modules

Failed non-core modules will be compensated (i.e. no resit will be necessary), if all of the following conditions are met:

- (i) the failed modules have a total credit value of no more than 40 out of the 120 credits comprising the Stage;
- (ii) none of the fail marks is below 35%
- (iii) the average mark for all modules taken at Stage 1 is not below 40%;
- (iv) no core modules have been failed

Stage 2

The School of Modern Languages has no core modules at Stage 2. Failed modules will be compensated (i.e. no resit will be necessary), if all of the following conditions are met:

- (i) the modules have a total credit value of no more than 40 out of the 120 credits comprising the Stage;
- (ii) none of the fail marks is below 35%;
- (iii) the average mark for all modules taken at Stage 2 is not below 40%.

Resits

Any failed module that is not subject to compensation must be resat. Resits take place either during the August-September resit period of the academic year in which the modules were failed, or - if the student takes a year out - during the following academic year. Candidates have the right to two resit attempts. Where a Stage 2 Honours module is failed and then resat and passed, a mark of 40% goes forward to the calculation of the final degree result.

Weighting of Stages

Work undertaken at Stages 2, 3 and 4 counts towards the final award. Work completed at Stage 4 carries double the weighting of work completed at Stage 2. If the mark gained in SML305 or SML306 at Stage 3 (both 20 credits) is greater than the lowest mark for any 20-credit module (or the average of the two lowest 10-credit modules) taken within the School of Modern Languages at Stage 2, the mark for SML305 or SML306 will replace that lower mark (or average of the two lowest 10-credit modules) when calculating the degree average and preponderance.

Final Degree Assessment

Candidates must have taken modules to a total credit weight of 360 at Stages 2, 3 and 4 of which 240 credits bear marks.

The degree class is determined by the more advantageous of the following:

either (a) the average mark for all modules assessed, **or** (b) by the number of marks the candidate has in the lower and higher classes. For the candidate to be awarded the higher class of degree under (b), the following conditions must apply:

- (i) s/he must have at least half of modules in the higher class;
- (ii) her/his average mark for all modules assessed must not fall more than two percentage points below the bottom of the normal mark range for the higher class;
- (iii) s/he must not have more than one sixth of modules in classes that are two or more classes below the proposed final class.

Common Marking Scheme

70 or more	First Class
60-69	Second Class (Upper Division)
50-59	Second Class (Lower Division)
40-49	Third Class
Less than 40	Fail

Role of the External Examiner

The external examiner is appointed by Faculty Teaching Committee and is a distinguished member of the academic community.

The external examiner reviews and approves examination questions, acts as moderator, attends the Board of Examiners, and reports to the University on the comparability of output standards.

16 Indicators of Quality and Standards:

Professional Accreditation Reports

n/a

Internal Review Reports

Internal Subject Review carried out in 1995
The next review is planned for November
2004.

Previous QAA Reports

The School of Modern Languages received an excellent result of 22/24 in the TQA
carried out in November 1995

This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and of the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve if she/he takes full advantage of the learning opportunities provided.

It should be noted that there may be variation in the range of learning opportunities reflecting the availability of staff to teach them. While every effort will be made to ensure that the module or modules described in the programme specification are available, this cannot be guaranteed.

The accuracy of the information contained is reviewed by the University and may be checked by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education.

In addition, information relating to the course is provided in:

The University Prospectus

The School Prospectus

The University and Degree Programme Regulations

The Degree Programme Handbook

QAA Subject Review Report