

1	Awarding Institution	University of Newcastle upon Tyne
2	Teaching Institution	As above
3	Final Award	MA
4	Programme Title	Regional Development (Research)
5	Programme Accredited	Institution of Economic Development (IED)
6	UCAS	N/A
7	QAA Subject Benchmarking Group(s)	N/A
8	Date of revision	24 June 2003

9 Programme Aims

To provide learning opportunities to enable graduates to acquire the knowledge and understanding, skills and aptitudes necessary to undertake advanced research in the social sciences in general and in regional development in particular.

To provide learning opportunities that develop the course participants' skills to understand and analyse regional development.

To provide the theoretical, policy and practical skills to enable the student to produce an MA dissertation and, where appropriate, successfully to pursue further postgraduate study for a PhD or enhance their CPD activity.

To contribute to the University's objectives by increasing the number of graduate students and enhancing their key skills and employability, diversifying the teaching portfolio and developing alternative modes of delivery, responding to the CPD agenda and both shaping and responding to national and regional development agendas.

To produce course graduates with enhanced research capabilities to pursue or resume careers in regional development and associated areas in the public, private and voluntary/community sectors.

To provide high quality research training at Masters level in line with the ESRC's postgraduate training guidelines.

To provide a programme that complies with University and QAA Codes of Practice.

To provide a qualification which fully meets the learning outcomes at Level 4 in the national qualifications framework and the standards for accreditation of the Institution for Economic Development (IED).

10 Intended learning outcomes

A Subject-related outcomes

The programme provides the opportunity for students to develop and demonstrate:

A1 understanding of a range of philosophical, epistemological and theoretical social science debates engaged within regional development.

A2 understanding of a range of key concepts and theoretical issues in regional development.

A3 knowledge of the distinctive contribution of regional development to the social sciences.

A4 recognition of the roles and relevance of regional development and its practitioners and professionals in regional development, policy and practice.

A5 understanding of a range of quantitative and qualitative methods of collecting (and sources of) data and evidence for regional development enquiry.

A6 understanding of a range of quantitative and qualitative methods of analysing and interpreting evidence as part of regional development enquiry.

Teaching strategy

A1 and A3 are delivered principally in the modules Regional Development Theory and Policy, Regional Governance and Regional Development: Methodology, Analysis and Statistics and are elements of the combination of discipline and multi-disciplinary student exercises undertaken in Thinking About Research and Dissertation Preparation. A2 and A4 are delivered through the modules Regional Development Theory and Policy, Regional Governance and Regional Development: Methodology, Analysis and Statistics. Teaching for A5 and A6 takes place in

Quantitative Methods, Qualitative Methods, Introduction to Information Skills and Regional Development: Methodology, Analysis and Statistics.

Learning strategy

In Regional Development Theory and Policy and Regional Governance, A1 and A3 are learnt through teaching seminars and through participation in research seminars and dissertation workshops in Regional Development: Methodology, Analysis and Statistics. In Thinking About Research and Dissertation Preparation, A1 and A3 are practiced in team exercises and presentations and in a mixture of disciplinary and multi-disciplinary groups. A2 and A4 are learnt through lectures, teaching seminars and student presentation in the module Regional Development Theory and Policy. Relevant themes are chosen including a teaching block on regional development and governance policy development and engagement (A4). Additionally, A2 and A4 are learnt through participation in research seminars and dissertation workshops in Regional Development: Methodology, Analysis and Statistics. A5 and A6 are learnt through lectures, data practicals and workshops in Quantitative Methods and Qualitative Methods including discipline specific workshops and curriculum streams. Introduction to Information Skills includes workshops on data sources and the Individual Research Assistance Programme for Postgraduate Students comprising a one-to-one tutorial with the relevant Liaison Librarian to discuss specialist information needs. Additionally, A5 and A6 are learnt through participation in research seminars and dissertation workshops in Regional Development: Methodology, Analysis and Statistics.

Assessment strategy

A1, A2, A3, A5 and A6 are jointly assessed in the production and presentation of a research proposal and the research dissertation. Specifically, A1 and A3 are assessed through the completion of an extended 5000 word essay based on extensive reading. Specifically, A2 is assessed through an individual presentation and 5,000 word project. A4 is indirectly assessed. A5 and A6 are assessed through data practicals, a critical methodological review and presentation of a research proposal

B Training in Research Methods

The programme provides the opportunity for students to develop and demonstrate:

B1 Principles

- (i) an ability to define and formulate research problems, questions and hypotheses.
- (ii) an understanding of the rationale for research methods, to evaluate and select them.
- (iii) an understanding of sampling, sampling error, and biases in results.
- (iv) an understanding of, and ability to apply, concepts of generalisability, validity, reliability and replicability.

B2 Data collection and analysis

- (i) a knowledge and understanding of the application of selected methods of data collection.
- (ii) an understanding of strengths and weaknesses of different types of data and the development of a critical use of sources.
- (iii) an understanding of the use of methods and tools to analyse data.
- (iv) proficiency in a range of both qualitative and quantitative data analysis.

Teaching strategy

B1 (i) and (ii) will be delivered through the modules Thinking About Research, Dissertation Preparation and Regional Development: Methodology, Analysis and Statistics. B1 (iii) and (iv) will be delivered through the Quantitative and Qualitative Methods modules. Teaching for B2 (i - iv) will be delivered principally through the Quantitative Methods and Qualitative Methods modules. B2 (i-ii) are covered also in Regional Development Theory and Policy, Regional Governance and Regional Development: Methodology, Analysis and Statistics.

The teaching strategy for B1 (i-iv) is a combination of lectures, workshops, research seminars and both discipline specific and multi-disciplinary teamwork. The teaching strategy for B2 (i - iv) is a combination of lectures, workshops, teaching and research seminars and data analysis practicals.

Learning strategy

For B1 (i - ii) students learn through team-based problem solving exercises, the individual preparation of a research proposal and attendance at research seminars. B1 (iii-iv) is learnt through research seminars, workshops and data practicals. For B2 (i - iv) students learn principally through data practicals and attendance at research seminars. Overall, all B1 and B2 are undertaken in completion of the Research Dissertation.

Assessment strategy

B1 and B2 are assessed through production and presentation of a Research Proposal, the completion of a series of data practicals, the production of a Critical Methodological Review, a group report and presentation in Thinking About Research and the Research Dissertation.

C Knowledge and understanding

The programme provides opportunities for the students to develop and demonstrate:

C General research skills

C1 Bibliographic and Computing Skills

- (i) the skills to identify and retrieve relevant materials relating to research, including annals, books, journals, theses, conference proceedings and resources available electronically and on the www.
- (ii) the skills to maintain a personal research bibliography and use EndNote.

- (iii) IT skills, comprising word processing and other basic computing skills, including spreadsheets and database management, SPSS, Nudist and Powerpoint.
- (iv) evaluation procedure skills: of book reviews, literature reviews and dissertations.

C2 Ethical Issues

- (i) a knowledge and understanding of matters relating to privacy and confidentiality in research.
- (ii) an awareness of the political context of research.
- (iii) an awareness of professional codes of practice.
- (iv) a knowledge and understanding of the power relations inherent in research field work.
- (v) an awareness of the ethical responsibilities that a researcher has towards the researched.

Teaching strategy

Bibliographic and Computing Skills (C1 i-ii) are taught through workshops and practical classes in the Introduction to Information Skills module. C1 (iii) IT skills are taught through a combination of workshops, practical classes, tutorials and lectures in the modules Introduction to Information Skills, Quantitative Methods, Qualitative Methods and Regional Development: Methodology, Analysis and Statistics. Evaluation procedure skills are taught through student seminars (Regional Development Theory and Policy) and student teamwork exercises (Dissertation Preparation).

Ethical issues (A2 i-v) are taught by lectures and workshops in Thinking About Research and Introduction to Qualitative Methods.

Learning strategy

Students learn bibliographical skills (C1 i - ii) by developing an initial (and final) bibliography for their Research Dissertation. IT Skills (C1iii) are learnt through a series of workshops, data practicals, the production of a Powerpoint presentation and completion of the Research Dissertation. Evaluation procedures (C1 iv) are practiced in seminars dedicated to analysis of material pertaining to contemporary debates and teamwork exercises and presentations linked to key stages in a MA dissertation.

Students acquire knowledge of ethical issues (C2 i-v) through teamwork exercises and presentations, case studies and independent reading.

Assessment strategy

General research skills are assessed by means of a range of coursework and, ultimately, the Research Dissertation. Assessment for the Introduction to Information Skills Module requires the construction of a bibliography, incorporating bibliographic search strategies and professional design and layout. IT skills are assessed by the bibliographic exercise, data practicals in the Quantitative Methods and the delivery of

a Powerpoint presentation in Regional Development: Methodology, Analysis and Statistics. Ethical issues are assessed as part of the 3,000 word critical methodological review in Qualitative Methods, and the 3,000 word essay set for the module Thinking About Research.

D Key skills

The programme provides the opportunity for students to develop and demonstrate:

- D1 the skills to disseminate research findings effectively to specialist and non-specialist audiences
- D2 the skills of effective written communication and presentation
- D3 the skills to manage research, including writing proposals, planning the research project, and implementation on time
- D4 the skills to work effectively as a member of teams both subject specific and multi-disciplinary

Teaching strategy

D1 is taught across a number of modules including Dissertation Preparation, Thinking About Research, Regional Development Theory and Policy, Regional Governance and Regional Development: Methodology, Analysis and Statistics. D2 is taught through a range of written assessments and presentations across all modules. D3 is a major component of Thinking about Research, Dissertation Preparation and Regional Development: Methodology, Analysis and Statistics. Teamworking (D4) takes place across a number of modules (subject specific and multi-disciplinary) in a variety of exercises.

Learning strategy

Students learn a variety of dissemination skills (D1) through, for example, an introduction to the REGARD database in Introduction to Information Skills, individual and team presentations and document production (subject specific and multi-disciplinary), Powerpoint presentations to external peers, production of a project-based presentations in Regional Development Theory and Policy and Regional Governance. Many of these activities develop D2 (skills of effective written communication and presentation) over and above the range of written assessments produced and culminating in the Research Dissertation. D3 is developed explicitly through the production of research proposals and the completion of a Research Dissertation inclusive of dissertation workshops and individual meetings with supervisors. D4 is learnt throughout the course in a number of contexts including lectures, teaching seminars, workshops, problem-solving exercises and presentations.

Assessment strategy

D1 is assessed through a Powerpoint presentation for Regional Development: Methodology, Analysis and Statistics and in oral presentations for the Regional Development Theory and Policy, Regional Governance and Dissertation Preparation modules. These latter presentations assess D4 in unison with a group-based report delivered in Thinking About Research. D2 (written communication) is assessed through the variety of written coursework submitted across all the modules. D3 is assessed in Dissertation Preparation, Thinking About Research and Regional Development: Methodology, Analysis and Statistics as students progress through an iterative process of writing their research proposal.

11. Curriculum

All candidates shall take the following compulsory modules.

Full-time pathway:

<i>Code</i>	<i>Credits</i>	<i>Descriptive title</i>
Semester 1		
GEO802	(20)	Regional Development Theory and Policy
LES802	(10)	Introduction to Information Skills
LES801	(10)	Thinking About Research
LES804	(20)	Qualitative Methods
Semester 2		
LES805	(20)	Quantitative Methods
LES803	(10)	Dissertation preparation
GEO803	(20)	Regional Governance
GEO807	(10)	Regional Development: Methodology, Analysis and Statistics
Research Semester		
GEO989	(60)	Research Dissertation

Programme Structure: All candidates shall take the following compulsory modules:

Part-time pathway:

<i>Code</i>	<i>Credits</i>	<i>Descriptive title</i>
Year 1, Semester 1		
GEO802	(20)	Regional Development Theory and Policy
LES802	(10)	Introduction to Information Skills
Year 1: Semester 2		
GEO803	(20)	Regional Governance
GEO807	(10)	Regional Development: Methodology, Analysis and Statistics
Year 2, Semester 1		
LES804	(20)	Qualitative Methods
LES801	(10)	Thinking About Research
Year 2, Semester 2		
LES805	(20)	Quantitative Methods
LES803	(10)	Dissertation preparation
Research Semester		
GEO989	(60)	Research Dissertation

12 Criteria for Admission

The normal entry requirement will be at least a good second class honours degree in a relevant social science (e.g. economics, geography, management, planning, politics, sociology).

Applicants for whom English is not a first language must provide evidence of a satisfactory command of English by means of a TOEFL score of 575 or greater, or by an IELTS score of 6.5 or greater.

Alternative entry qualifications and non-standard entrants

Applicants who hold non-standard qualifications, and/or have relevant experience, will be encouraged to apply and considered on an individual basis.

Admissions policy

Upon receipt of a completed application form, UK-based applicants will be expected to visit the Centre for Urban and Regional Development Studies (CURDS) for an Open Day and Interview. Normally, offers of places to suitably qualified candidates will take place following interview and are conditional upon the applicant having achieved the normal entry requirement and the receipt of two references. Any funding awards made on a competitive basis will be awarded taking in to account existing (or expected) qualifications, references and interview performance.

Normally, applicants not based in the UK will have the requirement to attend an Open Day and Interview waived.

13 Support for students and their learning

Induction

CURDS provides a formal induction session to all new postgraduates covering the organisation of postgraduate affairs, the research groupings in the Centre, research facilities in the Centre, School of Geography, Politics and Sociology and University and the rights and responsibilities of postgraduates. The induction meeting will be led by the Director of Postgraduate Studies and MA Degree Programme Director.

There will also be an induction at inter-Faculty level for the students from all the MA/MSc programmes where the Postgraduate Dean, Director of the Postgraduate Research Training Programme and all the module leaders of the generic modules to be delivered at inter-Faculty level will be present. This will complement the CURDS Induction, and serve to introduce the students to the inter-Faculty part of their programmes, the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences Graduate School and also to each other and to the idea of a multi-disciplinary learning environment.

Study skills support

Support is provided through a range of sources including Personal Tutors (at CURDS and Faculty levels), Research Dissertation Supervisor, FHSS Liaison Librarian and Computing Services.

Academic support

The MA Degree Programme Director will be responsible for the administration and management of the course. This responsibility will include ensuring coherence and continuity within the School delivered modules and between School and inter-Faculty modules. The Degree Programme Director will be available to all students for advice and discussion of any academic issues arising. All School module leaders will be available for advice and discussion of academic issues arising. Full specification and detail of the MA Programme will be set out in the Degree Programme Handbook.

The Director of the Postgraduate Research Training Programme will have overall responsibility for ensuring coherence and continuity in the inter-Faculty delivered modules and also for their administration and management. All students will have access to the Director and all the module leaders for advice and discussion of academic issues arising.

Under the tutor system, each student will be allocated a specific member of staff for academic advice and guidance. Formal meetings will be held each semester and students will have personal and e-mail access to a Tutor at any time if required. All postgraduates are provided with the Postgraduate Handbook on entry in to the School of Geography, Politics and Sociology that provides information and guidance on a range of academic issues.

Each student will be assigned a Research Dissertation Supervisor to provide personal supervision and guidance on production of the Research Dissertation.

Pastoral support

Under the tutor system, each student will be allocated a specific member of staff for pastoral advice and guidance. Formal meetings will be held each semester and students will have personal and e-mail access to a Tutor at any time if required. All postgraduates are provided with the Postgraduate Handbook on entry in to the School that provides information and guidance on a range of pastoral issues.

The MA Degree Programme Director will be available to all students for advice and discussion of any pastoral issues arising.

CURDS has a Seminar Room in Claremont Bridge that will be refurbished and equipped with full IT and audio-visual equipment by the commencement of the course in September 2003. The FHSS Faculty Postgraduate Training Room provides an ideal environment for the teaching of the inter-Faculty delivered modules. The

room has comfortable chairs and kitchen facilities for refreshments and can be used by the students for social, as well as self-organised academic, events such as reading groups and seminars.

Support for special needs

The CURDS Seminar Room and FHSS Faculty Postgraduate Training Room is accessible for wheel-chair users, and there is access to a purpose-built toilet. Any further special needs will be accommodated by those delivering the course modules.

Learning resources

Full-time MA students are provided with the shared facilities. Each is allocated shared desk space and has full access to a networked, dedicated postgraduate cluster. Further University clusters are available including the Brae cluster within the adjacent Daysh building. Photocopying facilities and telephone access are provided for all postgraduates. Part-time MA students have access to a collective space with shared desks and the same IT facilities as the full-time MA students.

The CURDS Seminar Room can accommodate up to 35 students to engage in group discussion and teamwork exercises. There are also overhead and PowerPoint facilities available. Additional meeting rooms are available for teaching in CURDS. The FHSS Faculty Postgraduate Training Room has space for up to seventy students and within the School of Geography, Politics and Sociology a well-equipped Conference Room is available.

The Robinson Library provides an extensive range of appropriate books and journals and CURDS has its own specialist information and library holdings relevant to the course content.

13. 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 output standards

- Student opinion is gathered by means of student questionnaires that are issued on completion of the programme.
- Module questionnaires will be issued to all students on completion of each module. Summaries of the module and programme questionnaires will be considered at the MA Regional Development (Research) Board of Studies and the Inter-Faculty Board of Studies, although the latter will be particularly concerned with evaluations arising from the shared and generic components of the linked Masters programmes.
- Feedback from past graduates.
- Feedback from employers of past graduates.
- Feedback from the Institution of Economic Development (IED).

- External examiner reports (A report following consideration of the comments of the external examiner appointed to oversee the faculty generic modules will be forwarded annually to the MA Regional Development (Research) Board of Studies)
- Degree Programme Review.
- Internal Subject Review.
- Consideration of annual programme monitoring statistics.

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

- Staff-Student Consultative Committee.
- Student representation on Boards of Studies.
- Student evaluation questionnaires.

Committees Responsible for Monitoring and Evaluating Quality and Standards

There will be separate but linked forums at School level for evaluating and improving the quality and standards of teaching and learning.

- A separate Board of Studies will monitor and evaluate quality and standards of the shared and generic modules on the MA programme which are delivered in common across the faculty. This Board will be chaired by the Postgraduate Dean, and its members will include the Director of the Postgraduate Training Programme, DPD's of all the linked Masters programmes, module leaders of the five generic modules, and all teachers on these modules delivered at an inter-faculty level. Overall responsibility for assuring quality and standards of the MA programme will lie with the MA Regional Development (Research) Research Board of Studies.
- A Board of Examiners will also exist to consider issues related to examinations and marks for the 2 modules delivered at an inter-faculty level to all linked Masters programmes. The Board will be chaired by the Postgraduate Sub-Dean, and its members will include the Director of the Postgraduate Training Programme, the module leaders of the 2 generic modules, and the DPD's of all the linked Master's programmes. An external examiner will also be appointed for the 2 modules delivered at an inter-faculty level, who will also report on the standard of, and coherence between, the generically- taught modules.
- This Board of Examiners will meet before the meeting of the MA Regional Development (Research) Board of Examiners who will consider the marks from the inter-faculty Board alongside the marks from the subject- specific modules. Overall responsibility for the award of the degree will lie with the MA Regional Development (Research) Board of Examiners.

School Committee

- A MA Regional Development (Research) Research Board of Studies including representatives from the Inter-Faculty Board of Studies, the Degree Programme Director, Director of Postgraduate Studies, Head of School, module leaders, and student members.

- A MA Regional Development (Research) Examination Board which will include one representative from the generic Board of examiners and an External Examiner appointed to oversee the MA Regional Development (Research).
- School of Geography, Politics and Sociology Staff-Student Consultative Committee including a MA student representative.
- School of Geography, Politics and Sociology Teaching and Learning Committee.
- School of Geography, Politics and Sociology representation (staff and students) on Faculty Graduate School.

14. Regulation of Assessment

(i) Assessment rules and degree classification are set out in the degree regulations.

(ii) Role of the external examiners

A MA Regional Development (Research) external examiner will be appointed by FTLC to oversee the degree and its constituent modules, and provide guidance on content and standards. S/he will attend the June Board of Examiners and will be concerned with acting as a moderator, and reporting to the University on the maintenance and comparability of standards of the MA programme.

An external examiner has been appointed to oversee the generic modules that are being delivered to all of the linked Masters programmes. The role of this external examiner is to moderate these modules.

(iii) Board of Examiners

The MA Regional Development (Research) Board of Examiners will be held in June and September. They will be Chaired by the MA Programme Director and its members will include the Director of Postgraduate Studies, module leaders, a representative from the Inter-Faculty Board of Examiners and the Head of School or her or his nominee. The purpose of the Board of Examiners meeting in June is to determine student performance in the taught elements of the programme. Any mitigating circumstances which may have affected a student's performance will be reviewed at a Scrutiny Sub-Committee of the Board of Examiners for the MA Regional Development (Research). Final recommendations for the award of the degree are made in the Michaelmas term.

An inter-Faculty Board will be held in June. It will be chaired by the Dean of Postgraduate Studies, and its members will include the Director of the Postgraduate

Training Programme, the module leaders of the 2 generic modules, and the DPD's of all the linked Master's programmes. This board will report back to the MA Regional Development (Research) Board of Examiners.

16. Indicators of Quality and Standards

The proposed course will run for the first time in 2004-05. Indicators of quality and standards will therefore be available for 2005-06.

This programme specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and of the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonable be expected to achieve if s/he takes full advantage of the learning opportunities provided. The accuracy of the information contained is reviewed by the University and may be checked by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education.

Once approved, full details of the proposed course will be provided for both the University and School Postgraduate Prospectus and the University and Degree Programme Regulations.