

1	Awarding Institution	University of Newcastle upon Tyne
2	Teaching Institution	University of Newcastle upon Tyne
3	Final Award	Bachelor of Arts
4	Programme title	BA. Economics & Social Policy
5	Programme Accredited by:	N/A
6	UCAS Code	LL14
7	QAA Subject Benchmarking Group(s)	Economics Social Policy & Administration
8	Date of production/revision	04/09/2004
9	Programme Aims:	

The overall aims of the Degree in Economics & Social Policy are to:

- enable students to gain a firm grounding in the principles of economics and their application and to provide a sound basic understanding of the process of policy-making and implementation.
- enable students to apply the knowledge and understanding they have acquired to address theoretical and applied problems in economics and social policy.
- equip students with a range of skills which will be of value in employment, and provide them with the knowledge and opportunity to acquire skills to pursue further study in either subject.
- provide an environment informed by research and scholarship which encourages and supports the student learning process.
- provide an award which meets the criteria for an honours degree in the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications and the requirements of relevant subject benchmarks.

In order to meet these aims, our purpose is to ensure that students on the Economics and Social Policy degree programme will have a knowledge of and ability to apply subject-specific concepts and methods of analysis across a broad range of subject areas within the disciplines.

In addition, they will have acquired:

- a structured and cumulative foundation in modern economic concepts and analysis
- a knowledge of the origins and development of welfare institutions and an understanding of key concepts and theories of welfare, including theories of the state and of policy-making and implementation
- knowledge of analytical methods, both theory and model-based
- an ability to apply subject-specific concepts and methods of analysis to address economic and social issues and problems, competence in key skills of written and oral communication, ability to work independently and in teams, ability to work to deadlines, skills of problem solving and numeracy, and information technology skills.

10(a) Programme Intended Learning Outcomes*:

* defined at level of typical graduate

A Knowledge and understanding

The degree programme in Economics and Social Policy will enable students to

- 1 To acquire a knowledge and coherent understanding of the theoretical concepts and analytical tools of economics and associated empirical methods
- 2 To identify, understand and analyse some of the major social scientific approaches to studying the social world and to understand their relevance to issue of social policy
- 3 To develop competence in using major theoretical perspectives and concepts in economics and sociology to understand and analyse aspects of social life at local, national and global levels with special reference to economic issues and issues of welfare and public policy

B Subject-specific/professional skills

The degree programme in Economics and Social Policy will enable students to

1. To develop the analytical skills needed to present and defend economic arguments on issues of topical interest
- 2 To develop the ability to identify the nature and appropriateness of different research strategies and methods in economics and other social sciences and critically evaluate the results of empirical research and their contributions to the production of knowledge and the evaluation of policy initiatives.
- 3 To develop an understanding of the complexity of human behaviour, and a recognition of social context, social diversity and inequalities, their impact on the experiences of individuals and groups and their relevance to economic and social policy.

C Cognitive skills

The degree programme in Economics and Social Policy will enable students to

1. To think logically and critically about social and economic problems and develop the ability to apply theoretical knowledge from either discipline to the understanding and assessment of empirical, practical and policy issues.
- 2 To gather, synthesise and evaluate the significance and validity of information and evidence from a wide variety of sources and to evaluate the use of evidence in the formation of economic and social policy.

D Key (transferable) skills

The degree programme in Economics and Social Policy will enable students to

- 1 To communicate effectively, clearly and concisely, in a variety of modes (eg: written and oral), and in a variety of contexts (ie. different audiences)
- 2 To learn, study and work individually in an organised, time-efficient and self-directed manner and to identify those factors which facilitate the individual learning process
- 3 To work collaboratively as part of a team to plan tasks, make decisions, collate and co-ordinate information, organise practical action and propose solutions to problems posed.
- 4 To be conversant with and competent in information technology and its uses and applications, including word-processing, use of spreadsheets and databases, e-mail and on-line information sources

10(b)

**Programme Intended Learning Outcomes:
Teaching and Learning Methods and Strategies**

A Knowledge and understanding

The primary method for imparting knowledge is lectures (A1-A3). Student learning and understanding are enhanced and tested in seminars (mainly discussion groups), workshops (mainly numerical and technical classes in Economics: exploration of key policy issues in Social Policy); computer-assisted learning and film sessions are also used in many Social Policy modules.

Students are also encouraged to develop knowledge through independent and guided reading which draws on a range of source material (journal articles, conference papers, Internet postings, research programme briefs, and research work in progress). To enhance understanding of the relationship between research, the production of knowledge, investigation of economic and social problems and the evaluation of policy initiatives, the curriculum draws on current research publications by staff in the contributing departments.

B Subject-specific/professional skills

Subject specific analytical skills are introduced in lectures in each stage and are further developed through seminars and workshops which encourage the identification of the contribution of research to the production of knowledge and the understanding of social and economic problems (B1 and 3). Understanding and experience of the principal approaches to social research (B2) are provided in lectures, seminars, workshops and practicals in a series of modules spanning all stages of the degree programme. Through group discussion, problem-solving exercises, presentations, portfolio and project work, students deepen their understanding of economics and sociology (B3) and develop a critical appreciation of the contribution to and application of this knowledge to substantive areas of concern in economics and social policy (B1 and B3).

C Cognitive skills

Cognitive skills of logical and critical thinking (C1), as well as skills in gathering, synthesising and evaluating information and data (C2) are introduced and developed in compulsory, core and optional modules across all stages of the degree programme. Methodology modules, in particular, encourage the development of specific cognitive skills in data inputting, management and analysis (C2). Other modules encourage students to construct and propose reasoned and structured arguments via individual and group presentations, case study analysis and seminar discussions.

D Key (transferable) skills

Students are introduced to all the key skills in the compulsory Study Skills module in Stage One, and develop and refine them in compulsory, core and optional modules to Stage Three. Key skills are formally taught from Stage One through lectures and tutorials and across all stages of the degree programme students are encouraged to develop and practice skills in essay and report writing, and oral presentation (D1); in accessing library, bibliographic and Internet resources (D4); in time-management and independent learning (D2); and in team-working, decision-making, problem-solving and organising practical action (D3). Advanced key skills (in communication, IT, library research, team-working, time-management and independent study) are developed in selected modules at Stage Two and Three through coursework, seminar, workshop and practical group exercises (D1-D4).

10(c) Programme Intended Learning Outcomes: Assessment Methods and Strategies

A Knowledge and understanding

Knowledge and understanding (A1-A3) are assessed by means of written examination and coursework. Both employ a range of approaches in order to accurately assess and grade student abilities. These include:

- Seen examinations
- Unseen examinations
- Essay
- Portfolio
- Project
- Seminar participation

B Subject-specific/professional skills

Subject-specific skills (B1-B3) are assessed by means of written examination and assessed coursework (especially when testing skills such as information and data gathering).. Both employ a range of approaches in order to accurately assess and grade student abilities. These include:

- Seen examinations
- Unseen examinations
- Essay
- Portfolio
- Project
- Seminar participation

C Cognitive skills

Cognitive skills (C1-C2) are assessed by means of written examination and coursework. Both employ a range of approaches in order to accurately assess and grade student abilities. These include:

- Seen examinations
- Unseen examinations
- Essay
- Portfolio
- Project
- Oral presentation (individual and group-based)
- Seminar participation
- Peer moderation

D Key (transferable) skills

Key skills (D1, D2, D4) are assessed by a variety of means which include:

- seen examinations
- unseen examinations
- essay
- portfolio
- project
- individual oral presentation
- seminar participation

D3 is primarily assessed by group-based oral presentation – e.g. as part of the compulsory Study Skills option

D2 is also tested *indirectly* through the need to meet rigid deadlines on all assignments.

11: Programme Curriculum, Structure, and Features:

i. The Structure of the degree programme in Economics & Social Policy

The programme has a modular structure linked to a pattern for the academic year. This is based on a two semester system consisting of one 15 week semester and one 16 week semester located within a three-term framework. The degree is of three years duration.

Each year of the degree programme is referred to as a Stage, so that students complete Stages 1, 2 and 3 of their degree. In each Stage of their degree students are required to study modules to a total credit value of 120, in accordance with degree programme regulations; usually taking modules with a credit value of 60 in Semester 1 and 60 in Semester 2, although a 50-70 or 70-50 split across semesters is permitted. A 10 credit module is equivalent to 100 notional hours of study, including lectures, seminars, private study and completion of assessed work.

Week 1 of Semester 1 is Induction Week for all stages, given over to registration and induction activities, especially for stage one students; weeks 2-13 are teaching and learning weeks; weeks 14 and 15 form the assessment period. In Semester 2 the first 12 weeks are teaching and learning weeks with the remaining weeks given over to assessment.

The degree is to be deleted. The last cohort are going into stage 2 academic year 04/05

Stage 2

Stage 2 of the BA Economics & Social Policy degree programme develops the knowledge and skills acquired at Stage 1, in order to provide an understanding of economics and social policy at an intermediate level, which will enable students to progress to the more advanced undergraduate material at Stage 3. Students are required to take 50 credits of compulsory modules in Economics, 40 credits of core modules in Social Policy and 30 credits of options in either department. Compulsory modules in microeconomics and macroeconomics allow a deeper insight into the economist's methods of analysing the workings of the modern economy. A further compulsory module in statistics aims to equip students with the tools needed to carry out basic empirical research in economics and to interpret and critically evaluate the results of such research. Core modules in Social Policy enable students to develop skills in comparative policy

analysis and knowledge and understanding of the relevance to policy making and implementation of socio-economic change and social divisions. Opportunity is provided for students to pursue their interests in a range of specialist areas of economics and social policy such as government and industry, criminal justice and mental health.

Stage 3

The final Stage of the degree programme aims to give students insight into the study of Economics and Social Policy at an advanced undergraduate level, using and developing the knowledge and skills acquired at previous stages. Students choose modules worth 60 credits from a range of optional modules on each side of the degree. Economics modules offered include advanced microeconomics and macroeconomics, which give students an understanding of the topics and methods of analysis in these areas at an advanced undergraduate level, which enables them to follow some more recent developments in the field. Social modules offer a focus on a wide range of contemporary issues in health, family policy, sexuality and crime and punishment together with the study of social movements and global processes. The range of options offered in the two contributing departments enable the students to study those areas of economics and social policy which are of greatest interest to them.

ii Curriculum and Structure			
STAGE TWO			
Module Code	Title	Credits	Compulsory/Designated/Optional
ECO106	Statistics for Economists	10	Compulsory
ECO201	Microeconomic Analysis	20	Compulsory
ECO202	Macroeconomic Analysis	20	Compulsory
SPS232	Socio-economic Change and Social Policy	20	Designated
SPS254	Social Studies of Technology	20	Designated
SPS228	Crime, Governance and Culture	20	Designated
SPS235	Issues in Mental Health	20	Designated
SPS244	Consumer Culture	20	Designated
SPS238	Conceptualising gender	20	Designated
SPS248	Comparative Social Policy	20	Designated
ECO206	Natural Resource and Environmental	10	Optional

	Economics		
ECO208	International Economics	10	Optional
ECO210	Economic Appraisal of Projects	10	Optional
ECO211	Government and Industry	10	Optional
SPS242	Political Sociology	20	Optional
SPS255	Ethnography, Culture and Movement	20	Optional
STAGE THREE			
Module Code	Title	Credits	Compulsory/Designated/Optional
SPS351	Re-reading the Canon: Theory and methods	20	Optional
SPS352	Contemporary Theories in Sociology and Social Policy	20	Optional
SPS334	Households and Livelihoods	20	Optional
SPS353	Gender and Work in Europe	20	Optional
SPS336	Food in Society	20	Optional
SPS341	Adoption: A Worldwide Perspective	20	Optional
SPS346	Youth in Transition	20	Optional
SPS342	Sociology of Crime and Punishment	20	Optional
SPS339	Social Movements	20	Optional
SPS340	Romani Studies	20	Optional
SPS345	Regulating Sexuality	20	Optional
		20	Optional
		20	Optional
STAGE THREE (cont)			
Module Code	Title	Credits	Compulsory/Designated/Optional
ECO209	Empirical Economic Analysis	20	Optional
ECO303	Economics of Information	10	Optional
ECO304	Economics of Developing Countries	10	Optional
ECO312	Public Economics	10	Optional
ECO313	Public Policy	10	Optional
ECO316	Labour Economics	10	Optional
ECO318	Financial Economics	10	Optional
ECO321	Economics of Risk and Uncertainty	10	Optional
ECO325	Economics of Personnel	10	Optional
ECO326	Industrial Economics and Policy	20	Optional
ECO328	Advanced economic theory	20	Optional
ECO323	Monetary Economics	10	Optional

Students are assessed for Honours performance on the basis of all modules taken at Stage Two and Stage Three. Modules taken in Stage Two have equal weighting with modules taken in Stage Three – see also *Section 15: Regulation of Assessment*.

See also *Appendix 1: Intended Learning Outcomes* (by module); and *Appendix 2: Key Skills* (by module)

11 Criteria for Admission:

Not Applicable. No new students are being accepted on to the degree

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Support for Students and their Learning

Induction

Induction of students on the degree programme in Economics and Social Policy takes place primarily in the Department of Sociology & Social Policy, where the students are registered and assigned a personal tutor. Students also have contact with liaison staff in the Department of Economics – e.g. to discuss module selection and academic performance – at the start of each stage of the degree and a special session on module choices is offered during the induction week of Stage One. All students are given a first year handbook which also includes full details of degree regulations.

A series of introductory lectures, meetings, visits and field trips designed to assist student orientation to the University, the two Departments, Departmental teaching and administrative staff and degree programmes, are offered to students in an Induction Week. This takes place in the first week of the autumn term, and is conducted at the beginning of each academic year for both new and returning students. Stage One Induction Week provides students with a comprehensive introduction to the University, through centrally-organised induction sessions; to the Departments, through introductory sessions and social events; and to the degree programme, through meetings with personal tutors in both departments.

Stage Two Induction Week consists of a detailed introduction to the Stage Two curriculum. Students are guided and supported in their module selections in meetings with personal tutors. Talks are provided by the Careers Service in the first teaching week of the academic year. Stage Two and Three students have handbooks specific to the degree programme in Economics and Social Policy.

Stage Three Induction Week provides students with a comprehensive introduction to the various options open to them with respect to the specialist modules offered in this stage of the degree programme. This is undertaken through meetings with personal tutors. Stage Three students also have an initial meeting with their respective dissertation tutors – assigned and notified to students over the summer recess – and this takes place in the first teaching week of the academic year.

In addition, Stage Three students are provided with an introduction on taught postgraduate study and doctoral research. Personal tutors, the Faculty Postgraduate Programme Director (who is also a member of the Departmental teaching staff), and/or the Degree Programme Directors of

Departmental Masters Programmes are available throughout the academic year, to advise, assist and support students who express an interest in postgraduate studies. In Induction Week, Stage Three students are also reminded of the support and guidance available from the University Careers Service.

Study skills support

Interpersonal study skills support

- Sessions within relevant modules on skills development
- Personal tutor
- Faculty Liaison Librarian
- University Computing Service
- Language Centre (for students not having English as a first language)
- E-mail and Blackboard

Independent Study Skills Support

- Student handbooks and module guides
- University skills guides – in particular those provided by the University Library and the University Website
- Departmental Website information
- Blackboard

Academic Support

The Degree Programme Director has overall responsibility for the management of the degree programme. In addition, students are assigned a personal tutor to monitor academic performance and assist with module selection. For specific modules, module leaders and contributing staff such as tutorial leaders (where appropriate) are contactable and/or personally available for student queries and support.

Pastoral Support

Each student is assigned a personal tutor at the beginning of Stage One who is available to discuss both academic and pastoral concerns. Personal tutors remain with students for the full three years of the degree programme. Within the University there are additional support services such as the Student Counselling Service, the University Medical Centre and the Student Union Welfare Office. Students are also advised and informed of the variety of financial support schemes organised and provided by the University Bursar.

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Support for Special Needs

The University Disability Unit provides assistance and guidance for students with special needs, including dyslexia.

Learning resources

- Comprehensive University Library facilities including a wide variety of databases (eg: BIDS, AHCI, SSCI, BOPCRIS), on-line services, and private study rooms (for individuals and groups).
- Careers Advisory Service
- Up-to-date IT facilities both within the Departments and throughout the campus
- Research Library of accounts of top 350 UK companies in the Department of Accounting and Finance

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

Committees with responsibility for monitoring and evaluating quality and standards

- *Board of Studies (BoS)*. Monitoring and evaluation of quality and standards is primarily the responsibility of the Board of Studies. Membership of the BoS consists of all teaching staff, plus a student member nominated from the Staff-Student Committee. Here, for example, External Examiners' Reports are discussed. The full terms of reference for the BoS can be found at <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/internal/teaching-office/dpdhandbookindex.htm>
- *Board of Examiners (BoE)*. Issues related to degree structure, examinations, marks and awards are discussed. The BoE is composed of all teaching staff in the two Departments and for Stage 2 and 3 boards External Examiners in the two subjects.
- *Staff-Student Committee (SSC)*. Wider student issues, including the quality and standards of teaching and learning may be raised at SSC in either department by Student Representatives. In the Department of Sociology and Social Policy the SSC is chaired and convened by a member of the teaching staff, and is composed of a student representatives from each year group (approximately two per stage), and two additional members of teaching staff. Representation of joint honours students is sought for each stage.
- *School Teaching and Learning Committees (STLC)*. The STLC is composed of staff with teaching, examining and recruitment responsibilities across all School degree programmes. STLC discusses specific programme and module improvements within a wider strategic framework; it also discusses more routine issues in respect of the day to day management of the degree programme – for example, STLC is the forum for the panel review of examination papers. STLC reports to the *Executive Committee*.
- *Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee (FTLC) and University Teaching Committee (UTC)*. Major changes to existing modules, the introduction and/or deletion of existing modules, are amongst the teaching and learning related activities of these Committees. FTLC and UTC are responsible, *inter alia*, for monitoring and evaluating Departmental responses to External Examiners' Reports.

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

- Student module evaluation questionnaires
- Programme reviews by DTLC and Board of Studies
- Module reviews by module leaders in the light of staff (DTLC), student evaluation and External Examiners' Reports (where appropriate).
- Peer observation of teaching
- External Examiners' Reports
- Taught programme review (UTC) and internal subject review (FTLC)
- Feedback obtained from past graduates eg: Departmental surveys and Careers Service Graduate Destination Surveys
- Feedback from actual and potential employers of graduates
- Feedback from independent external reviews (QAA, HEFCE)

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

- Staff-Student Committee and student representation at Board of Studies
- Under-graduate report presented by student representatives at Departmental Meetings (seven meetings per annum)
- Module and degree programme evaluation questionnaires
- Graduate surveys (Departmental and Careers Service)

15 Regulation of Assessment

Pass marks

- Minimum pass mark is 40 for each module of the degree programme (including those taken in other disciplines)

Course requirements

- Information on assessment is available in the degree programme handbook and in module outlines. Both are also available on the intranet (Departmental websites)
- Most modules are assessed by a combination of continuous assessment and examination (seen and unseen), although some may be 100% assessed by either method
- The Board of Examiners must be satisfied that students at Stage One and Stage Two have achieved a pass mark in all modules before progression to subsequent stages can take place. There are two opportunities to resit failed modules.

Honours degree classification

Degree classification is based upon the Combined Method - this means that the degree awarded is whichever is the highest of the two classes of degree determined by the *average* (mean) mark, and the *preponderance* of marks across all modular assessments in the relevant stages. Stages Two and Three carry an equal weighting in respect of the honours degree classification. Honours classifications are based on the following University scale:

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

Common Marking Scheme

A common marking scheme for continuous and examination assessment is used by all Departmental teaching staff. In Stage One, examination scripts are blindly first-marked, and moderated internally; continuous assessments are first-marked and moderated internally.

In Stages Two and Three, examination scripts are blindly first-marked, second-marked internally and externally moderated.; continuous assessments are first-marked, second-marked internally and externally moderated..

Role of External Examiners

External Examiners are appointed by the Board of Studies, and approved by the Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee. An External Examiner is a distinguished member of the academic community whose knowledge spans the range of subjects covered by the degree programme.

The External Examiner's role is that of moderator, and include:

- Reviewing and approving examination papers
- Reviewing examination scripts and making comments upon standards of marking
- Reviewing coursework and making comments upon standards of marking
- Attendance at the June Board of Examiners
- Reporting to the University regarding standards and comparability of standards

Examination results for this degree are reviewed by stage at joint examination boards and externals from both Departments are present during meetings for Stage 3 where degree grades are awarded.

16 Indicators of Quality and Standards

The degree programme meets the QAA Subject Benchmarking Statements for Economics and Social Policy & Administration

Internal Review Reports

The programme has been regularly reviewed as part of the University's Annual Programme Review and in subject reviews in the two participating Departments – most recently in the Economics review in 2001. This internal Degree Programme Review is being submitted in May 2002.

QAA Reports:

Economics was subject to a HEFCE Review in October 2001 and gained a score of 23 out of 24. Social Policy was subject to a HEFCE Review in November 1995 and the outcome of this review process was an award of 'excellent' under the grading schema then in operation

17. Other sources of information

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. 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 degree programme is provided in:

- The University Prospectus
- The Subject Area Prospectus
- The University and Degree Programme Regulations
- The Degree Programme Handbooks (Stages One, Two and Three)
- The Subject Area Websites : <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/geps/internal/soc/>
 <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/nubs/about/economics.htm>
- HEFCE Review Report - Social Policy (1995-96)