

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

1	Awarding Institution	Newcastle University
2	Teaching Institution	Newcastle University
3	Final Award	MSc
4	Programme Title	International Agricultural and Food Marketing
5	UCAS/Programme Code	5019
6	Programme Accreditation	Chartered Institute of Marketing (CIM) exemptions permitting entry level to CIM Professional Postgraduate Diploma in Marketing
7	QAA Subject Benchmark(s)	Master's Degrees in Business and Management, 2007
8	FHEQ Level	
9	Date written/revised	August 2007

10 Programme Aims

1. Produce graduates capable of understanding and managing marketing activities to an advanced level in the international agricultural and food environment. The training given also forms a good foundation for graduates wanting to pursue either a commercial or research career in generic marketing.
2. Provide an advanced understanding of market and policy behaviour in domestic and international contexts, as well as theoretical and empirical analysis of real world problems, with particular reference to the agrifood sector.
3. Encourage abstract logical thinking and critical analysis.
4. Equip graduates with a suite of key skills including the abilities to communicate effectively, to employ IT and library resources appropriately, to prioritise work and meet deadlines, to use initiative and to solve problems.

11 Learning Outcomes

The programme provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding, qualities, skills and other attributes in the following areas. The programme outcomes have references to the benchmark statements for Master's Degrees in Business and Management, 2007.

Knowledge and Understanding

On completing the programme students should have the opportunity to develop and demonstrate:

- A1 An advanced knowledge and understanding of fundamental principles of economics and marketing, in particular as they apply to agricultural and food sectors.
- A2 An advanced knowledge of the external, institutional and policy contexts against which agrifood actors and agents behave and interact.
- A3 An advanced knowledge of analytical frameworks and tools useful to the measurement and explanation of market and consumer behaviour.
- A4 A sound understanding of the principles and methods necessary to interpret and evaluate research projects and results relating to marketing and the operation of international agrifood markets.

A5 For those students who choose the relevant optional modules, an opportunity to develop knowledge and understanding of the principles of agribusiness, agrifood policy and supply chain management.

Teaching and Learning Methods

The primary means of imparting knowledge and understanding in all the above is through lectures supplemented, as appropriate, with seminars, tutorials and computer classes, and students' independent study. Knowledge and understanding are promoted further, where appropriate, by case studies and exposure to current literature. A4 is enhanced by the undertaking of an individual dissertation requiring a substantial literature review and, typically, primary data collection and analysis. This follows a dedicated taught module in research methods and project management.

Throughout the taught component of the programme, students are encouraged and expected to engage in independent reading and thinking. They are supported in this by the provision of reading lists relating to each module. Students are also encouraged to engage in group discussions of course material for student-led seminars and reflection on case studies. Reflecting the diverse background of the cohort intake, students attain a common threshold understanding of core principles economics, marketing and statistics via dedicated, intensive short courses delivered during the first four weeks of the programme.

Assessment Strategy

Knowledge and understanding are assessed primarily by unseen, written examinations held at the end of each module. Students' knowledge of core principles economics, marketing and statistics may be tested by unseen written examinations held after the first four weeks of the programme. In addition, throughout taught modules, use is made of a variety of continuous forms of assessment, including essays, problem-solving exercises and case studies. There is also a 60 credit dissertation based on individual research which is assessed by means of two short project plans in addition to the final written report. At the discretion of the external examiner, a *viva voce* may also be conducted to clarify, as necessary, the student performance.

Intellectual Skills

On completing the programme students should be able to:

B1 Adopt a critical approach to the evaluation of alternative theories and methodologies relevant to economics and marketing problems.

B2 Critically appraise the quality of data and information offered from different sources.

B3 Question or challenge accepted ideas or assumptions.

B4 Identify gaps or weaknesses in existing knowledge, derive valid hypotheses based on these, and identify appropriate means of testing them.

B5 Conduct research either individually or as part of a team, through research design, data collection, analysis, synthesis and reporting.

Teaching and Learning Methods

Intellectual skills are developed progressively throughout the programme in modules containing seminars, case studies and small group discussions. Typically, lecture material includes leading edge or recent research that offers new or challenging insights to existing problems.

Throughout the programme, students develop intellectual skills by participating in group discussions, case study analysis and scrutiny of research findings and evidence. Design, execution and reporting of the final dissertation project enhance the learning of these skills in a focused manner. The research methods and project management module also encourages students to take a critical approach to the analysis of current knowledge via topic based group discussions.

Assessment Strategy

Intellectual skills are assessed through various forms of coursework, including essays and case studies, in addition to unseen written exams. In particular, these skills are tested via the assessment methods of the compulsory module in marketing theory and criticism. In this, students are required to undertake reviews of the literature on specific marketing topics, following a guided framework that obliges students to compare, contrast, and give their critical views on different journal articles. At the discretion of the external examiner, students' intellectual skills may also be assessed via *viva voce* examination.

Practical Skills

On completing the programme students should be able to:

- C1 Conceptualise real world problems using analytical frameworks drawn from the disciplines of economics and marketing.
- C2 Deploy a range of qualitative and quantitative techniques to measure and analyse market and consumer behaviour.
- C3 Present data and research findings in written format according to accepted disciplinary conventions.
- C4 Produce feasible research proposals and implement them competently.

Teaching and Learning Methods

Compulsory modules present the key analytical frameworks of economics and marketing, and then case studies and empirical examples are used to illustrate application of these frameworks (B1). The compulsory 20 credit module in markets and marketing analysis exemplifies this. B2, B3 and B4 are addressed specifically by a dedicated 20 credit module in research methods and optional module in quantitative techniques which cover, in depth, the alternative methodologies for undertaking research to investigate economics and marketing problems.

Students are encouraged to develop subject specific skills via study of the core syllabus supplemented by appropriate reading material on research methods, to which they are directed. Learning is further enhanced by participation in seminars and group discussions in the compulsory modules. Opportunity for focused individual learning is offered via the dissertation, where students, guided by a supervisor, design and execute their own research projects on a relevant topic of their choice.

Assessment Strategy

B1 is assessed primarily through unseen written examinations held at the end of compulsory modules. In addition, throughout these modules, use is made of a variety of continuous forms of assessment, including essays, problem-solving exercises and case studies. Elements of B2-B4 are also assessed in these ways. However, the main assessment vehicles for subject specific and professional skills are the research methods and project management module and dissertation, where students prepare, and received feedback on, a proposal and plan relating to their topic, before commencing the major part of their dissertation research.

Transferable/Key Skills

On completing the programme students should be able to:

- D1 Communicate clearly and effectively in ways that would be expected at a managerial level in professional economic and marketing environments.
- D2 Make effective use of library and other sources of information.
- D3 Make effective use of communication and information technology.
- D4 Plan, organise and prioritise work effectively to meet deadlines and objectives.
- D5 Work independently, with initiative and adaptability.
- D6 Employ problem-solving skills.

Teaching and Learning Methods

Key skills are taught formally in the research methods and project management module. In particular, dedicated sessions on information and database skills are delivered by library professionals at the start of this module. Management of workload in order to meet deadlines is promoted by means of a strict coursework timetable, and students are assisted in this by provision of time management guidelines and timetable proforma in the degree programme handbook. The mode of delivery of taught modules provides students with the opportunity to improve their problem solving abilities and to extend their communication, library, IT and time management abilities. The dissertation project provides students with further opportunities to develop all of these skills.

Students are provided with the opportunity to develop and practice all key skills as part of compulsory core modules. Compliance with continuous assessment methods obliges students to make appropriate use of library and IT facilities. D1, D4, D5 and D6 are also developed as part of compulsory modules, via student participation in case studies, group discussions and informal class presentations. For example, the compulsory 20 credit module in international agricultural and food markets requires students to prepare and present material on specific problems for class presentation and discussion. D2 is specifically developed during dedicated library use sessions. The experience of preparing and executing the dissertation provides students with the opportunity to apply all key skills under the guidance of the supervisor.

Assessment Strategy

Communications, library and IT skills and the ability to meet deadlines are assessed indirectly by coursework (assignments, seminars, case studies, etc.). All key skills are indirectly assessed by the experience of undertaking the dissertation.

12 Programme Curriculum, Structure and Features

Basic structure of the programme

The programme consists of a taught programme and a dissertation stage that total 180 credits over one year, full time. The taught programme consists of compulsory modules (90 credits) such as Research Methods and Project Management and International Marketing. In addition, students select optional modules worth 30 credits. Following successful completion of the taught programme students will undertake a dissertation worth 60 credits on a research topic of the student's choice.

The basic structure is as follows:

(a) Students take the following compulsory modules:

<i>Code</i>	<i>Credits</i>	<i>Descriptive title</i>	<i>Sem</i>
ACE8001	20	Research Methods and Project Management	1+2
ACE8031	10	Principles of Marketing	1
ACE8032	10	International Marketing	2
ACE8009	20	International Agricultural and Food Markets	1+2
ACE8011	20	Markets and Marketing Analysis	1+2
ACE8046	10	International Food Marketing and Policy	1

(b) Students select further modules to a total of 30 credits, normally chosen from the following:

<i>Code</i>	<i>Credits</i>	<i>Descriptive title</i>	<i>Sem</i>
ACE8002	10	Supply Chain Management	2
ACE8012	20	Agrifood Industry Management	1+2
ACE8014	20	Quantitative Techniques for Marketing	1+2
ACE8007	10	Direct Marketing	2
ACE8039	10	International Brand Management	2
ACE8040	10	International Marketing Communications	2
ACE8005	10	Marketing Theory and Criticism	1

(c) On successful completion of the taught component of the programme, students shall take the following compulsory module :

<i>Code</i>	<i>Credits</i>	<i>Descriptive title</i>	<i>Sem</i>
ACE8095	60	Dissertation	3

Key features of the programme (including what makes the programme distinctive)

The programme aims to foster an independent learning environment and be a challenging learning experience. Much subject-specific content of the degree is informed by leading edge research, a significant amount of which has been conducted within SAFRD. Core modules such as ACE 8009 and ACE8011 are delivered in small seminar groups. This enables students to share knowledge, experience and practice through interaction. The students are drawn from wide cultural backgrounds (e.g. in 2006-07 China, Thailand, South Africa, Zimbabwe and Greece) and this learning environment encourages a sensitivity to diversity in people and different situations.

Programme regulations (link to on-line version)

<http://www.ncl.ac.uk/regulations/programme/2007-2008/programme/5019.php>

13 Criteria for admission

Entry qualifications

An upper 2nd class honours degree from a UK university, or its overseas equivalent, is the preferred qualification for entry. Some knowledge of economics and/or marketing is desirable.

Admissions policy/selection tools

Upon receipt of a completed application form, UK based applicants are invited to AFRD, to meet current students and to attend an informal interview. Overseas applicants are not normally required to attend an interview, and instead may correspond with the Degree Programme Director by email, before a decision is reached. Offers of places are made to suitably qualified candidates following the interview/assessment of applicants and are conditional upon applicants achieving a minimum of an upper 2nd class honours degree or overseas equivalent (if they do not hold such a degree at the time of interview), and upon the provision of a satisfactory reference (if one has not already been provided).

Non-standard Entry Requirements

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

Additional Requirements

Level of English Language capability

IELTS score of 6.5, or a TOEFL score of more than 575.

14 Support for Student Learning

Induction

During the first week of the first semester students attend an induction programme. New students will be given a general introduction to University life and the University's principle support services and general information about the School and their programme, as described in the Degree Programme Handbook. New and continuing students will be given detailed programme information and the timetable of lectures/practicals/labs/ tutorials/etc. The International Office offers an additional induction programme for overseas students (see <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/international/arrival/jan/index.phtml>)

Study skills support

Students will learn a range of Personal Transferable Skills, including Study Skills, as outlined in the Programme Specification. Some of this material, e.g. time management is covered in the appropriate Induction Programme. Students are explicitly tutored on their approach to both group and individual projects.

Numeracy support is available through Maths Aid. Further details are available at:

http://www.ncl.ac.uk/library/news_details.php?news_id=159 Help with academic writing is available from the Writing Centre. Details can be obtained from Alicia.Cresswell@ncl.ac.uk

Academic support

The initial point of contact for a student is with a lecturer or module leader, or their tutor (see below) for more generic issues. Thereafter the Degree Programme Director or Head of School may be consulted. Issues relating to the programme may be raised at the Staff-Student Committee, and/or at the Board of Studies.

Pastoral support

All students are assigned to the Degree Programme Director, who acts as personal tutor. The DPD's responsibility is to monitor the academic performance and overall well-being of the tutees. Details of the personal tutor system can be found at

<http://www.ncl.ac.uk/undergraduate/support/tutor.phtml>

In addition the University offers a range of support services, including the Student Advice Centre, the Counselling and Wellbeing team, the Mature Student Support Officer, and a Childcare Support Officer, see

<http://www.ncl.ac.uk/undergraduate/support/welfare/index.phtml>

Support for students with disabilities

The University's Disability Support Service provides help and advice for disabled students at the University - and those thinking of coming to Newcastle. It provides individuals with: advice about the University's facilities, services and the accessibility of campus; details about the technical support available; guidance in study skills and advice on financial support arrangements; a resources room with equipment and software to assist students in their studies. For further details see <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/disability-support/>

Learning resources

The University's main learning resources are provided by the Robinson and Walton Libraries (for books, journals, online resources), and Information Systems and Services, which supports campus-wide computing facilities, see

<http://www.ncl.ac.uk/undergraduate/degrees/facilities/index.phtml>

All new students whose first language is not English are required to take an English Language Proficiency Test. This is administered by INTO Newcastle University Centre on behalf of Newcastle University. Where appropriate, in-session language training can be provided. The INTO Newcastle University Centre houses a range of resources which may be particularly appropriate for those interested in an Erasmus exchange. See

<http://ncl.ac.uk/langcen/index.htm>

15 Methods for evaluating and improving the quality and standards of teaching and learning

Module reviews

All modules are subject to review by questionnaires which are considered by the Board of Studies. Changes to, or the introduction of new, modules are considered at the School Teaching and Learning Committee and at the Board of Studies. Student opinion is sought at the Staff-Student Committee and/or the Board of Studies. New modules and major changes to existing modules are subject to approval by the Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee.

Programme reviews

The Board of Studies conducts an Annual Monitoring and Review of the degree programme and reports to Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee.

External Examiner reports

External Examiner reports are considered by the Board of Studies. The Board responds to these reports through Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee. External Examiner reports are shared with institutional student representatives, through the Staff-Student Committee.

Student evaluations

All modules, and the degree programme, are subject to review by student questionnaires. Informal student evaluation is also obtained at the Staff-Student Committee, and the Board of Studies. The National Student Survey is sent out every year to final-year undergraduate students, and consists of a set of questions seeking the students' views on the quality of the learning and teaching in their HEIs. Further information is at www.thestudentsurvey.com/ With reference to the outcomes of the NSS and institutional student satisfaction surveys actions are taken at all appropriate levels by the institution.

Mechanisms for gaining student feedback

Feedback is channelled via the Staff-Student Committee and the Board of Studies.

Faculty and University Review Mechanisms

The programme is subject to the University's Internal Subject Review process, see http://www.ncl.ac.uk/aqss/qsh/internal_subject_review/index.php

16 Regulation of assessment

Pass mark

The pass mark is 50 (Postgraduate programmes)

Course requirements

Progression is subject to the University's Masters Degree Progress Regulations, Taught and Research (<http://www.ncl.ac.uk/calendar/university.regs/tpmdepr.pdf>) and Examination Conventions for Taught Masters Degrees (<http://www.ncl.ac.uk/calendar/university.regs/tpmdeprexamconv.pdf>). Limited compensation up to 40 credits of the taught element and down to a mark of 40 is possible and there are reassessment opportunities, with certain restrictions.

Common Marking Scheme

The University employs a common marking scheme, which is specified in the Taught Postgraduate Examination Conventions, namely:

Summary description applicable to postgraduate Masters programmes		Summary description applicable to postgraduate Certificate and Diploma programmes	
<50	Fail	<50	Fail

50-59	Pass	50 or above	Pass
60-69	Pass with Merit		
70 or above	Pass with Distinction		

Marketing Criteria and Degree Class Descriptors for Taught Elements of Postgraduate Programmes

Class Equivalent	Mark Range	Descriptive Equivalent
Distinction	90-100	An outstanding piece of work throughout with excellent analysis, synthesis and evaluation of material and concise, logical thought. Where appropriate, work shows originality and critical ability. Demonstrates comprehensive understanding of topic with evidence of substantial additional study and with virtually no errors. Extremely well presented and structured work. Could not be bettered at this Stage in the time available.
	80-89	Outstanding in most elements but minor deficiencies in some, compensated by excellence in others. Extremely well presented and structured work.
	70-79	Overall excellent with respect to synthesis, originality, critical ability and logical argument. Thorough understanding of the topic and evidence of significant additional study, although may contain minor errors. Extremely well presented and structured work.
Merit	65-69	Shows thorough understanding of topic. Substantial detail supported by reasoned argument, application and critical analysis, with evidence of further study. Very well presented and structured work.
	60-64	Work provides substantial information that addresses the aims and objectives of the module/topic. May contain minor errors of understanding. Some evidence of additional study. Very well presented and structured work.
Pass	55-59	Clear understanding of the topic. Material included is relevant and largely factually correct, but lacking in critical analysis and in evidence of further study. May contain errors of understanding or facts in some areas compensated by very good work in other areas. Relies almost entirely on course material. Adequately presented and structured.
	50-54	Limited understanding of material. Considerable omission of relevant material and/or use of irrelevant material. May contain significant errors of understanding and some errors of fact. Presentation and structure adequate to poor.
Fail Compensation Range	45-49	Very limited understanding of material. Significant omissions, errors of understanding and factual errors. Generally poorly presented and structured.
	40-44	Demonstrates minimum acceptable understanding in some though not all areas. Many factual errors and omissions. Generally poorly presented and structured.
Fail	26-39	Fail. Some material of relevance, but generally irrelevant approach and failure to understand basic requirements of module/topic. Significant factual errors and omissions. Little or no structure and poorly presented.
	16-25	Fail. Limited work showing an inability to deal with the requirements of the module/topic. Some factually relevant material.
	6-15	Fail. Extremely limited work with very little factually relevant material.
	0-5	Fail. Little or no attempt to complete the work.

Role of the External Examiner

An External Examiner, a distinguished member of the subject community, is appointed by Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee, after recommendation from the Board of Studies. The External Examiner is expected to:

- See and approve examination papers
- Moderate examination and coursework marking
- Attend the Board of Examiners
- Report to the University on the standards of the programme

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

The University Prospectus (see <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/postgraduate/>)

The School Brochure (contact <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/postgraduate/taught/>)

The University Regulations (see <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/calendar/university.regs/>)

The Degree Programme Handbook (see <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/afrd/assets/documents/iafmhandbook.doc>)

Please note. 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.

Mapping of Intended Learning Outcomes onto Curriculum/Modules

Intended Learning Outcome	Module codes (Compulsory in Bold)
A1	ACE8009, ACE8011, ACE8031, ACE8032, ACE8046, ACE8095
A2	ACE8011, ACE8031, ACE8032, ACE8046
A3	ACE8009, ACE8011, ACE8031, ACE8032, ACE8046
A4	ACE8001, ACE8009, ACE8011
A5	ACE8002, ACE8012, ACE8007, ACE8039, ACE8040
B1	ACE8005, ACE8009, ACE8011, ACE8046, ACE8095
B2	ACE8005, ACE8001, ACE8046, ACE8095
B3	ACE8005, ACE8046, ACE8095
B4	ACE8005, ACE8014, ACE8001, ACE8095
B5	ACE8001, ACE8095
C1	ACE8009, ACE8011, ACE8031, ACE8032, ACE8095
C2	ACE8014, ACE8001, ACE8095
C3	ACE8014, ACE8001, ACE8095
C4	ACE8001, ACE8095
D1	ACE8009, ACE8011, ACE8046, ACE8095, ACE8014, ACE8040
D2	ACE8001, ACE8046, ACE8095, ACE8012
D3	ACE8001, ACE8095, ACE8014
D4	ACE8001, ACE8046, ACE8095, ACE8040, ACE8014, ACE8012
D5	ACE8001, ACE8095
D6	ACE8001, ACE8009, ACE8011, ACE8046, ACE8095