PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION



1	Awarding Institution	Newcastle University
2	Teaching Institution	Newcastle University
3	Final Award	MA
4	Programme Title	MA in British History
5	UCAS/Programme Code	4066
6	Programme Accreditation	N/A
7	QAA Subject Benchmark(s)	N/A
8	FHEQ Level	M
9	Date written/revised	1 August 2007

10 Programme Aims

- To provide students with a range of learning opportunities (in relation to analytical, key, research, and subject-specific skills) within the field of British history;
- To provide a curriculum that is responsive to the research training requirements of the AHRC and the ESRC;
- To enable students to develop their capacity to learn in preparation for, or as part of, continuing professional development (CPD) and lifelong learning;
- To provide access to Higher Education to students from a variety of educational backgrounds, and to provide a bridge to further postgraduate qualifications;
- To provide students with the opportunity to gain the basic skills and knowledge required to continue with academic research in History at PhD level, or to enter the workplace in a variety of professions requiring high levels of skill such as literacy, research, and project management;
- That the programme meets the requirements of a Masters' level qualification as defined by the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications;
- 7. That the programme conforms to University policies and to QAA codes of practice.

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 History.

A. Knowledge and Understanding

On completing the programme students should have knowledge of and understand:

- A1 British history from a variety of chronological and thematic perspectives;
- A2 The theoretical and analytical frameworks that British historians bring to their Subject:
- A3 The methodologies and sources which are used by specialists in this field;
- A4 The detailed knowledge which comes from undertaking a sustained original piece of historical research (a dissertation).

Teaching and Learning Methods

A1-A4 are taught and learnt through: fortnightly two-hour seminars, which are a combination of discussion and student presentations; participation in research seminars and dissertation workshops laid on by the HASS Faculty and the School of Historical Studies; individual supervision; and self-study.

Assessment Strategy

Knowledge and understanding [A1] are assessed through book reviews, essays and research assignments for each module, and the final dissertation [A4]. Written assignments for 'Pathway' and Optional modules are designed to provide students with the opportunity to explore the historiography of Britain [A2]. In the assessment of these modules, students will write formative essays on British history, on which they will receive written and oral feedback. Marks will be awarded for evidence of knowledge attained, as well as evidence that the student has achieved an appropriate level of understanding of the methodologies and sources used by specialists in this field [A2-3]. The dissertation provides an extended opportunity for students to reveal their in-depth knowledge and understanding of one particular topic and period in British history [A4].

B. Intellectual Skills

On completing the programme students should have developed their skills in:

- B1 Critical reasoning;
- B2 Gathering and using information;
- B3 Applying concepts;
- B4 Evaluation, analysis, and interpretation;
- B5 Empathy.

Teaching and Learning Methods

Cognitive skills are developed through studying texts (B1, B4, B5) seminars (B1, B3), research projects (B2), and supervisions (B4). All written pieces of work require students formatively to gather, evaluate, analyse, and interpret evidence, using the skills identified in History as benchmark skills within the discipline [B1-5]. The dissertation represents the summative task in detailed practice of all of these cognitive skills. Students learn bibliographical skills by developing an initial (and final) bibliography for their Dissertation.

Assessment Strategy

All written pieces of work in the taught modules require students formatively to gather, evaluate, analyse, and interpret evidence, using the skills identified in History as benchmark skills within the discipline [B1-5]. The dissertation represents the summative task in detailed practice of all of these cognitive skills.

C. Practical Skills

On completing the programme students should be able to:

- C1 Acquired subject-specific skills through training and research experience and developed an ability to evaluate, analyse and interpret different sources of evidence relating to British History;
- C2 Developed the ability to undertake higher degree research through completion of short pieces of written work and a dissertation;
- C3 Practiced a wide range of subject-specific skills such as the marshalling of evidence, presenting a balanced written argument, and a critical analysis of historical and bibliographic evidence;
- C4 Developed an in-depth understanding of their dissertation topic;
- C5 Developed a variety of additional skills according to their individual needs, e.g. computer literacy, archive use, and data management.

Teaching and Learning Methods

C1 and C3 are delivered principally in HIS8000 HSS8000 and HIS8098; C2 and C4 are delivered in HIS8023; C6 are delivered in the modules HIS8024, HIS8025, HIS8026, and HIS8023. The teaching strategy for B1-B5 is a combination of teaching seminars, workshops, research seminars, and tutorials. C1-4 are learnt through teaching seminars – fortnightly 2-hour sessions, which are a combination of lectures, seminars and student presentations – and through participation in research seminars and dissertation workshops laid on by the HASS Faculty and the School of Historical Studies. C5 is learnt through the SHS postgraduate "Research training" modules.

Assessment Strategy

C1-5 are jointly assessed in the production and presentation of a dissertation proposal, the dissertation itself, two 4000-5000 word essays involving a critical methodological review of secondary literature. The reason for this strategy is that submitted work is by far the most appropriate method of assessment of the relevant outcomes.

D. Transferable/Key Skills

On completing the programme a graduate will have acquired developed skills in:

- D1 Written communication;
- D2 Interpersonal/oral communication;
- D3 Teamwork;
- D4 Planning and organisation;
- D5 Computer literacy.

Teaching and Learning Methods

D1-4 are delivered in all modules, through a combination of teaching seminars, workshops, research seminars and feedback on presentations. Students learn a variety of dissemination skills (D1-D2) through, for example, an oral presentation and through their written assignments and dissertation. D3 is learnt through keeping to programme deadlines and by planning and organizing their written work, including the dissertation. D4 is practised and developed throughout the programme through submission of coursework and then the dissertation.

Assessment Strategy

Written communication [D1] is assessed in each of the modules on this programme. Assignments will be mostly essay-based, reflecting the dominance of this form of writing within the discipline, but other written work may be set, such as writing a research log, or compiling a database as part of a research assignment.

Interpersonal/oral communication, individually and as part of a team [D2-3] is a critical part of the teaching and learning experience for this programme, for example, during individual feedback sessions, and group seminars. As with other comparable Master's level degree programmes in History around the country, performance in oral communication does not form a part of the assessment.

Planning and organization is assessed throughout the programme through the student's ability to meet deadlines and successfully complete the programme [D4].

Basic computer literacy [D5] is assessed through all written assignments that are all required to be word-processed. Additional IT training is provided in the compulsory module 'IT for Historians' [Semester 2]. Where appropriate, students may wish to acquire higher skills (e.g. in database analysis) in relation to quantitative research methodologies, for which training will be provided.

12 Programme Curriculum, Structure and Features

Basic structure of the programme

The programme may be taken on a full time or part time basis. A part-time route through the programme will be decided on a case-by-case basis in consultation with the Degree Programme Director.

All students take the following compulsory modules:

Title	Code	Year	Semester	Credit
The Practice of History	HIS8024	1	1	30
Pathway in British History I: Social and	HIS8025	1	1	20
Economic History [for ESRC applicants]				
<u>OR</u>				
Pathway in British History II: Political and	HIS8026			
Cultural History [for AHRC applicants]				
Faculty Research Training Module	ART8000	1	1	10
Dissertation Training	HIS8098	1	2	10
Research Methods in History	HIS8000	1	2	10
IT for Historians	HIS8019	1	2	20
Dissertation	HIS8023	1	3	60

In addition all students shall take *one* optional module in Semester 1 or 2 chosen from the following:

Title	Code	Year	Semester	Credit
Power and Politics in North-East England, 1750-	HIS8009	1	2	20
2000				
Thatcherism	HIS8011	1	2	20
Women and Gender in Britain, c. 1650-1800	HIS8027	1	2	20
Death and Burial Cultures in Britain, 1550-1832	HIS8028	1	2	20
Literature, Politics and the Nation in Ireland,	HIS8029	1	2	20
1890–1923				
Politics and the Great War	HIS8030	1	2	20
Making Ireland British? Ireland under the Act of	HIS8035	1	2	20
Union, 1801-1921				
Early Modern British Political Thought	HIS8036	1	2	20

The list of optional modules offered could vary from year to year and modules will run subject to appropriate levels of enrolment, as specified on the individual module outline forms. The semester in which each of the optional modules is offered may also vary.

All students will receive a module handbook at the start of each module, which contain full details of seminar themes and set reading. The handbook will also contain a list of aims and learning outcomes for the module, and a bibliography. Extra teaching and learning support material will be provided, e.g. through Blackboard, Robinson Library Special Collections. Module outline forms will be provided for all modules

Of the compulsory semester 1 modules:

- [a] *The Practice of History* [30 credits] introduces key methodological and historiographical issues in the study of history, and will provide each student with an introduction to the subject of British history from a wide chronological and thematic perspective
- [b] Pathways in British History [20 credits] provides students with the opportunity to develop a thematic approach to the methodologies and themes deployed by historians of Britain. The 'pathways' approach facilitates student choice, allowing them to specialise in the theme that is of particular interest, raising areas of research that may be further explored in the dissertation
- [c] Faculty Research Training [10 credits] provides skills training in key research skills.

In semester 2, all students take:

- [a] Dissertation training [10 credits];
- [b] school research training [10 credits] Discipline-specific research training for Historians;
- [c] IT skills for historians [20 credits];
- [d] An Optional Module [20 credits]. These are more specialist studies which students can select from a range of specialist topics in British history that are devised according to the particular research expertise of each module leader. In some cases, students may elect to take their Optional Module in Semester One.

Statement on progression

Candidates are normally expected to pass the taught modules before proceeding to the Dissertation in semester 3, provided that they normally meet the progression criteria stated above, all students research and write up a *Dissertation* [60 credits]. Students complete their dissertation after the taught modules have been completed. Dissertations are presented in the form of a 14,000 words, including footnotes and appendices but excluding bibliography. Students are encouraged to think about potential topics as early as possible and discuss topics with staff at the beginning of Semester 2. The Masters Degree dissertation must be an original piece of work and not simply a synthesis of existing knowledge. It requires the gathering and analysis of new data, the development of original arguments and the presentation of conclusions and recommendations. To be successful the dissertation requires careful planning and preparation, for which training is given in Semesters 1 and 2.

Key features of the programme

The programme is designed to utilise the research interests of all the British historians in the School, offer routes to both AHRC and ESRC funding, incorporate a full training programme, including IT skills, and lead to a substantial research-based dissertation.

Programme regulations

http://www.ncl.ac.uk/regulations/programme/2007-2008/programme/4066.php

13 Criteria for admission

Entry qualifications

Candidates should normally hold a first degree in History, or a Joint or Combined Honours degree with History, and shall normally hold at least a 2:1 (Upper Second Class) degree. Other degree qualifications may be considered where appropriate, especially where essay-based work formed the written component of the undergraduate programme (e.g. in English).

Admissions policy/selection tools

We actively encourage applications from overseas and domestic students. All overseas students have to satisfy the University's language requirements and obtain a minimum of 7.0 IELTS or equivalent. All applications are seen by the DPD and, where deemed appropriate, another member of staff. All borderline or unusual applicants are contacted by letter, email, or phone and further information solicited. All applicants will be invited for interview, and will be offered the chance to meet staff and view facilities

Non-standard Entry Requirements

Candidates who have followed a non-traditional route into Higher Education will also be considered eligible, according to the Faculty Admissions Policy

Level of English Language capability

IELTS: 7.0 TOEFL (paper-based): 600 TOEFL (computer-based): 250

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 principal 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 seminars. The International Office offers an additional induction programme for overseas students (see http://www.ncl.ac.uk/international/coming to newcastle/orientation.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. Social study areas are also provided, for more details see http://www.ncl.ac.uk/postgraduate/support/facilities/zone.phtml

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. The 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 Postgraduate Studies will have overall responsibility for ensuring coherence and continuity in the 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 Historical Studies that provides information and guidance on a range of academic issues. Each student will be assigned a Dissertation Supervisor to provide personal supervision and guidance on production of the Dissertation.

Pastoral support

All students are assigned a personal tutor (who will normally be the Programme Director), whose responsibility is to monitor the academic performance and overall well-being of all students on the programme. 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 www.ncl.ac.uk/postgraduate/support

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): www.ncl.ac.uk/postgraduate/support/facilities/library

Within Newcastle: The Robinson Library; Robinson Library Special Collections; Northumbria University Library; Newcastle City Library; Newcastle Literary and Philosophical Society; Tyne and Wear Record Office; Northumberland Record Office. On-line databases and electronic journals available via the Robinson Library (e.g. JSTOR, DNB); microfilm collections. Other specialist museums and archive collections, e.g. Laing Art Gallery, Hancock Museum. Within the region: Durham University Library and Palace Green Library (Special Collections); Durham City and County Archives; York University Library and City of York Archives; Yorkshire County Record Office (Northallerton). Copyright library within day-return journey (Edinburgh). Other specialist museums and archives, e.g. Bowes Museum, Barnard Castle; Durham Light Infantry Museum.

Computing facilities

The University provides campus-wide computing facilities for all students at Newcastle via computer clusters throughout campus, backed up by support staff. For further details see http://www.ncl.ac.uk/postgraduate/support/facilities/computing.phtml

15 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 in the School of Historical Studies Postgraduate Board of Studies. 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;
- Feedback from past graduates;
- Feedback from employers of past graduates;
- External examiner reports (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. A report following consideration of the comments of the external examiner appointed to oversee the faculty generic modules will be forwarded <u>annually</u> to the MA in the School of Historical Studies Postgraduate Board of Studies);

- Annual Monitoring and Review;
- Internal Subject Review: http://www.ncl.ac.uk/aqss/qsh/internal_subject_review/index.php
- Consideration of annual programme monitoring statistics.

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

- Postgraduate Staff-Student 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 in British History.
- A Board of Examiners will also exist to consider issues related to examinations and marks for 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 generic modules, and the DPD's of all the linked Master's programmes. An external examiner will also be appointed for 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 in British History Board
 of Examiners who will consider the marks from the inter-faculty Board alongside the
 marks from the subject- specific modules. <u>Overall responsibility for the award of the
 degree will lie with the MA in British History.</u>

16 Regulation of assessment

Pass mark

The pass mark is 50.

Course requirements

Progression is subject to the University's Masters Degree Progress Regulations, (http://www.ncl.ac.uk/calendar/university.regs/tpmdepr.pdf) and Examination Conventions (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 post- graduate 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

A distinction level mark will be given to work that displays depth of knowledge and mastery of skills appropriate to that module (or modules). The work will be clearly presented with well-structured, sharply focused arguments and will explore the limits of knowledge in the area under investigation. It will demonstrate critical analysis, independence of mind, initiative, and intellectual rigour. In terms of the MA dissertation, work may also demonstrate originality and an ability to extend the research further through doctoral study, or convey ideas that might be publishable. Examiners will use the mark range 70-79% for good performance at distinction level and 80-100% for publishable work

A merit level mark will be awarded for well-written and informed work that indicates awareness of recent developments in the area under investigation. The work will be well organised, showing a thorough understanding of the subject, and evidence of additional self-study. There should be no significant deficiencies, although some points may be discussed without being argued through fully

A pass level mark will be awarded for work that displays competence and general understanding of the subject. It contains relevant information but lacks the sophistication and incisiveness of work at higher grades, and shows limited evidence of additional, independent study. There may be insufficient discussion and conclusions

A fail mark will be given to work which displays a serious lack of understanding of the principles of the subject, major errors, serious deficiencies in knowledge, expression and organisation, substantial omissions and irrelevance

Board of Examiners

The MA in British History Board of Examiners will be held in October. It 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. 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 in British History. Final recommendations for the award of the degree are made in the Michaelmas term.

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

The External Examiners are full members of the Board of Examiners and have the right to speak on any matter at meetings of the Board regardless of whether their opinion has been specifically invited. The Board is required to take into account the views of the external examiners but is not obliged to defer to their judgment in taking decisions. External examiners are required to report to the University on the comparability of standards of the programmes and other matters as they so wish.

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

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

The School Brochure (contact historical.studies@ncl.ac.uk)

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

The Degree Programme Handbook

(http://www.ncl.ac.uk/historical/assets/pdfs/MABritishHistory05-6.pdf)

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 (Comp/Core in Bold)
A1	HIS8024 HIS8025/8026 HIS8000 HIS8019 HIS8023,
	HIS8098, HIS8027, HIS8028, HIS8029, HIS8030, HIS8090
A2	HIS8024 HIS8025/8026 HIS8000 HIS8019 HIS8023,
	HIS8098 , HIS8027, HIS8028, HIS8029, HIS8030, HIS8090
A3	HIS8024 HIS8025/8026 HIS8000 HIS8019 HIS8023,
	HIS8098, HIS8027, HIS8028, HIS8029, HIS8030, HIS8090
A4	HIS8023
B1	HIS8025/8026 HIS8000 HIS8019 HIS8023, HIS8098,
	HIS8027, HIS8028, HIS8029, HIS8030, HIS8090
B2	HIS8024 HIS8025/8026 HIS8000 HIS8019 HIS8023,
	HIS8098 , HIS8027, HIS8028, HIS8029, HIS8030, HIS8090
B3	HIS8024 HIS8025/8026 HIS8000 HIS8019 HIS8023,
	HIS8098 , HIS8027, HIS8028, HIS8029, HIS8030, HIS8090
B4	HIS8023
B5	HIS8024 HIS8025/8026 HIS8000 HIS8019 HIS8023,
	HIS8098 , HIS8027, HIS8028, HIS8029, HIS8030, HIS8090
C1	HIS8024 HIS8025/8026 HIS8000 HIS8019 HIS8023,
	HSS8000, LES8003, HIS8098, HIS8027, HIS8028,
	HIS8029, HIS8030, HIS8090
C2	HIS8024 HIS8025/8026 HIS8000 HIS8019 HIS8023,
	HSS8000, LES8003, HIS8098, HIS8027, HIS8028,
	HIS8029, HIS8030, HIS8090
C3	HIS8024 HIS8025/8026 HIS8000 HIS8019 HIS8023,
	HSS8000, LES8003, HIS8098, HIS8027, HIS8028,
	HIS8029, HIS8030, HIS8090
C4	HIS8024 HIS8025/8026 HIS8000 HIS8019 HIS8023,
	HSS8000, LES8003, HIS8098, HIS8027, HIS8028,
	HIS8029, HIS8030, HIS8090
C5	HIS8024 HIS8025/8026 HIS8000 HIS8019 HIS8023,
	HSS8000, LES8003, HIS8098, HIS8027, HIS8028,
	HIS8029, HIS8030, HIS8090
D1	HIS8024 HIS8025/8026 HIS8000 HIS8019 HIS8023,
	HSS8000, LES8003, HIS8098, HIS8027, HIS8028,
	HIS8029, HIS8030, HIS8090
D2	HIS8024 HIS8025/8026 HIS8000 HIS8019 HIS8023,
	HIS8098, HIS8027, HIS8028, HIS8029, HIS8030, HIS8090
D3	HIS8024 HIS8025/8026 HIS8000 HIS8019 HIS8023,
	HIS8098, HIS8027, HIS8028, HIS8029, HIS8030, HIS8090
D4	HIS8024 HIS8025/8026 HIS8000 HIS8019 HIS8023,
	HIS8098, HIS8027, HIS8028, HIS8029, HIS8030, HIS8090
D5	HIS8024 HIS8025/8026 HIS8000 HIS8019 HIS8023,
	HSS8000, LES8003, HIS8098, HIS8027, HIS8028,
	HIS8029, HIS8030, HIS8090