	PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION	Newcastle University

1	**Awarding Institution**	Newcastle University
2	**Teaching Institution**	Newcastle University
3	**Final Award**	Postgraduate Diploma / Postgraduate Certificate
4	**Programme Title**	Therapeutics
5	**UCAS/Programme Code**	Diploma 3382P; Certificate 3039P
6	**Programme Accreditation**	n/a
7	**QAA Subject Benchmark(s)**	n/a
8	**FHEQ Level**	Masters
9	**Date written/revised**	21st August 2007

10	**Programme Aims**

1. To develop the knowledge and skills of health professionals in therapeutics as applied to primary and secondary care
2. To develop the knowledge, skills and approaches necessary for the implementation and management of rational prescribing
3. To offer a structured introduction to research methods relevant to therapeutics
4. To develop approaches to information sharing and presentation skills for use in the health care setting

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.

Knowledge and Understanding

On completing the programme students should:

A1   Demonstrate a general working knowledge of the science of drug therapy, including the scientific principles of clinical pharmacology and prescribing

A2   Understand the process by which drugs are developed, licensed and used safely

A3   Be aware of and understand research methods, ethics and conduct in relation to drug treatment

A4   Demonstrate a basic knowledge of the clinical effectiveness, safety, risk benefit and cost effectiveness of medicines in chosen therapeutic areas

Teaching and Learning Methods

Acquisition of basic knowledge (fundamental concepts, principles and practice) is achieved through a combination of lectures, seminars and coursework. For A3, the teachers are specialists in each condition, allowing a broad discussion of the clinical issues involved as needed by the students. There is widespread use of clinical examples and case histories to encourage interactive discussion. Students must be able to identify and solve problems, analyse and interpret data and reason critically. As all formal teaching is in a small group, this facilitates discussion of key issues rather than a didactic approach. The students practice the application of concepts both orally and in writing and gain experience in the analysis and interpretation of clinical data and published work. Students are expected to undertake independent reading to supplement and consolidate the material provided in lectures, seminars etc and to broaden their individual knowledge

Assessment Strategy

A1 MCQ, EMI, unseen written exam
A2 MCQ, EMI, unseen written exam

A3 Unseen written exam, dissertation
A4 MCQ, EMI, unseen written exam

Intellectual Skills
On completing the programme students should be able to:
B1   Find information on specific clinical issues to inform clinical practice B2   Synthesise information from multiple sources B3   Evaluate efficacy, safety and cost-effectiveness of medicines, including those recently introduced into use B4   Apply knowledge of therapeutics and prescribing to clinical problems relevant to their own interests B5   Draw conclusions about prescribing from data collected routinely within the NHS

Teaching and Learning Methods

Cognitive skills are developed through small group seminars. Information gathering and synthesis (B1, B2), as well as critical evaluation of the efficacy, safety and cost-effectiveness of drug therapy (B3) is taught in the compulsory module on evidence-based therapeutics. Skills are practised by an exercise in which students evaluate research papers relevant to a specific topic and then produce proposals for safe, effective and economical prescribing. These are then discussed within the group with a facilitator present. For Diploma students, data synthesis and critical evaluation are further developed by the dissertation. Clinical problem solving (B4) is developed in small group seminars and by reflective learning. Evaluation of routine NHS data (B5) is taught in small group seminars.

Assessment Strategy

B1 Oral presentation, dissertation
B2 Oral presentation, dissertation
B3 Unseen written exam, oral presentation, dissertation
B4 Unseen written exam, critical appraisal exercise
B5 Unseen written exam, dissertation

Practical Skills
On completing the programme students should be able to:
C1   Apply knowledge to allow the safe, effective and ethical medicines use or management within chosen areas of professional practice C2   make a competent oral presentation about medicines and/or therapeutics C3   Use a medical library or computer to obtain information about medicines and therapeutics

Teaching and Learning Methods

Safe, effective and ethical medicines use (C1) is taught using case histories and other clinical examples. Ethical drug use is learned by interactive discussions within the group. Assessment of personal data relating to prescribing or aspects of medicines management facilitates reflective learning.

Presentation and communication skills (C2) are acquired during case discussions and, more formally, by the oral presentation involving a key therapeutic area. There is a formal practical session on IT and literature searching skills.

There is a practical tutorial on use of a medical library and IT and literature searching skills (C3)

Assessment Strategy

C1 MCQ, EMI, unseen written exam
C2 critical appraisal exercise
C3 critical appraisal exercise, dissertation

Transferable/Key Skills
On completing the programme students should be able to: D1   Communicate effectively with other health professionals D2   Take responsibility for self-directed learning and professional development D3   Manage time and prioritise tasks by working to strict deadlines D4   Use Information Technology for word processing, spreadsheet and presentation functions D5   Write a logically structured presentation, paper or report

Teaching and Learning Methods
Presentation and communication skills are acquired during case discussions and, more formally, by the oral presentation involving a key therapeutic area (D1) Self-directed learning (D2) and time management (D3) are supported by coursework, presentations and group discussions. IT and literature searching skills (D4) are acquired in a small group practical session and reinforced by course work. Oral and written presentation skills are developed via group discussions, the oral presentation and the diploma (D5).

Assessment Strategy
D1   Critical appraisal exercise D2   Critical appraisal exercise, dissertation D3   Critical appraisal exercise, dissertation D4   Critical appraisal exercise, dissertation D5   Critical appraisal exercise, dissertation, unseen written examination

12   Programme Curriculum, Structure and Features
Basic structure of the programme
The Certificate and Diploma in Therapeutics Course is organised in modules of 10 or 20 credits, equivalent to 100 or 200 h course work each. Students are able to take sufficient modules in one year to obtain the diploma qualification, which requires 120 credits, or the certificate, which requires 60 credits. However, if they prefer they can also collect the required credits over and up to 3 years. This allows a flexible approach to learning. There are 2 compulsory modules (20 credits each) and 6 optional modules (10-20 credits each, total 70 credits) and the dissertation (20 credits) which is compulsory for the diploma. The optional elements of the programme are intended to enable individual students to select and tailor learning experiences in accordance with their own professional/personal needs and may therefore vary from student to student. Teaching/learning methods include: Seminars; group-work; case discussions; presentations and practical exercises. The module titles are as follows CLB8021. Scientific basis of therapeutics (20 credits, compulsory) CLB8022. Evidence based therapeutics (20 credits, compulsory) CLB8023. Cardiovascular and metabolic therapeutics (20 credits, optional) CLB8024. Prescribing in women and children (10 credits, optional) CLB8025. Therapeutics in the elderly (10 credits, optional) CLB8026. Therapeutics of common disorders (1) (10 credits, optional) CLB8027. Therapeutics of common disorders (2) (10 credits, optional) CLB8028. Therapeutics of musculoskeletal disorders and pain management (10 credits, optional) CLB8029. Dissertation (10 credits, Diploma only, compulsory for Diploma) Taught elements of each module are taught over 1 (10 credit modules) or 2 days (20 credit modules) in Newcastle. Module assessments are performed 3 times each year.
Key features of the programme (including what makes the programme distinctive)
The course is designed to be relevant for professional staff involved with the introduction, prescribing or management of drug therapy. It emphasizes the clinical application of

theoretical knowledge to improve the delivery of health care within the primary care or hospital setting. Teaching is delivered by clinicians who are often leaders in their field. The syllabus includes prescribing, pharmacology and therapeutic principles, and offered modules cover the major areas of practice and specific conditions. The course offers flexible learning, with optional modules, length and timing of study.

Programme regulations (link to on-line version)

http://www.ncl.ac.uk/regulations/programme/

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13 Criteria for admission

Entry qualifications

A Diploma or Certificate in Therapeutics may be awarded to (a) A graduate in Medicine Pharmacy Pharmacology or Biomedical Sciences of an approved institution, (b) a health professional with additional training for independent or supplementary prescribing, or (c) a pharmacy technician with a NVQ level 3 in Pharmacy services, supported by a BTEC in applied pharmaceutical science, or equivalent qualifications relevant for registration with the Royal Pharmaceutical Society.

Admissions policy/selection tools

Applications are uploaded onto the E2R system and passed on to the Degree Programme Director who will judge whether there is sufficient evidence that entry criteria have been met. If there is, students will be accepted. If not, further evidence will be sought from the student.

Non-standard Entry Requirements

N/A

Additional Requirements

N/A

Level of English Language capability

Since communication skills in technical English are integral to the course, those whose first language is not English should have a minimum of IELTS 7.0 or TOEFL 250 (computer based) or 600 (paper based). Students with an IELTS score below 7.0 are required to attend pre-sessional English classes. Students needing English language support are encouraged to complete in-sessional language provision.

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14 Support for Student Learning

Induction

During the day of the first compulsory module 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 the 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 a personal tutor whose responsibility is to monitor the academic performance and overall well-being of their 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-sessional 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

Accreditation reports

N/A

Additional mechanisms

N/A

16 Regulation of assessment

Pass mark
The pass mark is 40 (Undergraduate programmes)
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.

Weighting of stages
N/A

Common Marking Scheme

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

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

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/undergraduate/)

The School Brochure (contact enquiries@ncl.ac.uk)

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

The Degree Programme Handbook

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

Either

Intended Learning Outcome	Module codes (Compulsory in Bold)
A1	**CLB8021,** C.B8023, CLB8024, CLB8025, CLB8026, CLB8027, CLB8028
A2	**CLB8021**
A3	**CLB8021, CLB8022,** CLB8023, CLB8024, CLB8025, CLB8026, CLB8027, CLB8028, **CLB8029**
A4	CLB8023, CLB8024, CLB8025, CLB8026, CLB8027, CLB8028,
B1	**CLB8022, CLB8029**
B2	**CLB8022**
B3	**CLB8022,** CLB8023, CLB8024, CLB8025, CLB8026, CLB8027, CLB8028
B4	CLB8023, CLB8024, CLB8025, CLB8026, CLB8027, CLB8028
B5	**CLB8021**
C1	CLB8023, CLB8024, CLB8025, CLB8026, CLB8027, CLB8028
C2	**CLB8022**
C3	**CLB8022, CLB8029**
D1	**CLB8022,** CLB8023, CLB8024, CLB8025, CLB8026, CLB8027, CLB8028
D2	**CLB8021, CLB8022,** CLB8023, CLB8024, CLB8025, CLB8026, CLB8027, CLB8028, **CLB8029**
D3	**CLB8022, CLB8029**
D4	**CLB8022, CLB8029**
D5	**CLB8022, CLB8029**

Or

Module	Type	Intended Learning Outcomes			
		A	**B**	**C**	**D**
CLB8021	Compulsory	1,2,3	5	-	2
CLB8022	Compulsory	3	1,2,3	2,3	1,2,3,4,5
CLB8023	Optional	1,3,4	3,4	1	2
CLB8024	Optional	1,3,4	3,4	1	2
CLB8025	Optional	1,3,4	3,4	1	2
CLB8026	Optional	1,3,4	3,4	1	2
CLB8027	Optional	1,3,4	3,4	1	2
CLB8028	Optional	1,3,4	3,4	1	2
CLB8029	Compulsory	3	1	3	2,3,4,5