

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION



1	Awarding Institution	Newcastle University
2	Teaching Institution	Newcastle University
3	Final Award	MA
4	Programme Title	English Language and Linguistics
5	UCAS/Programme Code	4064
6	Programme Accreditation	N/A
7	QAA Subject Benchmark(s)	N/A
8	FHEQ Level	M
9	Date written/revised	01/05/2008

10 Programme Aims

- 1 To produce postgraduate students holding a Master's degree who possess:
- (i) the research skills necessary to undertake independent study in linguistics and English language;
 - (ii) the ability to undertake further postgraduate study;
 - (iii) an advanced knowledge of a range of issues in the subject area;
 - (iv) the ability to engage critically with current work in the subject area.

To provide a programme:

- (i) in which teaching is informed by research;
- (ii) which consistently attracts highly qualified applicants, including mature and overseas applicants;
- (iii) which enables students to conduct arguments effectively in discrete high-level essays;
- (iv) which enables students to work independently under supervision so as to produce a long piece of research (the dissertation);
- (v) which fully meets the requirements of the QAA's Framework for Higher Degree Qualifications at Masters level;
- (vi) which conforms to University policies and procedures.

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 relevant benchmark statements.

Knowledge and Understanding

- A1 Advanced understanding and specialized knowledge of selected areas of study in linguistics and/or English language, including core areas (e.g. syntax, phonology) and, if chosen, applied linguistics or language acquisition.
- A2 Understanding of the relationship between research in different areas of linguistics.
- A3 Knowledge of recent and current theoretical debates in linguistics.

Teaching and Learning Methods

- A Knowledge and understanding

A1-A3 will be acquired through lectures, seminars, and tutorials in taught modules, and through the preparation and completion of submitted coursework; more advanced knowledge and understanding are developed through supervised independent study leading to the dissertation. Knowledge of core linguistic disciplines is delivered through the modules in Bands A and B; Band C provides a range of further areas in linguistics, while Band D offers added options in applied linguistics. In addition, SEL8000 provides a specific focus on A3

Assessment Strategy	
A	Knowledge and understanding
The taught modules deploy a variety of assessment strategies, including examination, written submitted work, oral presentation, and combinations thereof. This encourages students to develop both detailed knowledge of specialized areas (A1), and an integrated view of problems and issues in the discipline (A2 and A3).	
Intellectual Skills	
B	Subject-specific/intellectual skills
B1	Mastery of search and library skills, critical methodologies and theories, and tools for research in the humanities.
B2	Ability to address linguistic questions and problems in terms of the theoretical debates currently at the forefront of academic work in linguistics and/or English language.
B3	Mastery of the methods and skills required to obtain and interpret data relevant to research in linguistics and/or English language.
Teaching and Learning Methods	
B	Subject-specific/intellectual skills
B1 is imparted through HSS8000; B2 and B4, through SEL8000 and, in specific areas, through the modules in Bands A to D. Students are introduced to the relevant concepts and skills through lectures and seminars and practise them in seminar presentations, practicals, and in submitted work. Students are encouraged to undertake independent study and research through reading suggestions from module leaders; the essays and dissertation further this opportunity for independent learning.	
Assessment Strategy	
B	Subject-specific/intellectual skills
B1 and B3 are specially assessed through submitted work and the dissertation. B2 and B4 are tested through all forms of module evaluation and through the dissertation. The progression from module essays to dissertation provides an element of formative assessment.	
Practical Skills	
C	Practical skills
C1	Critical evaluation of arguments and theories
C2	Problem solving
C3	Data collection and analysis
C4	Synthesis
Teaching and Learning Methods	
C	Practical skills
C1 is illustrated in lectures and developed through discussion and exchange in seminars, and through the module leaders' feedback on submitted work. C2 and C3 developed through seminar and practical exercises, and through work on specific problems for essays and the dissertation. C4 is illustrated in lectures and specially developed through submitted work and the dissertation.	
Assessment Strategy	
C	Practical skills
C1 is evaluated in all forms of assessment. C3 to C4 are assessed through submitted work and, particularly, in the dissertation.	
Transferable/Key Skills	
D	Key (transferable) skills
Ability to:	

D1 demonstrate self-direction and originality in planning and completing tasks, D2 deploy information technology (word processing; the internet) appropriately, D3 present research findings in a clear and accessible way, D4 work to deadlines.
Teaching and Learning Methods
D Key (transferable) skills D1 is gradually developed through the progression from seminar and practical exercises to module submitted work, and finally to the dissertation. Students are introduced to D2 and D3 through HSS8000 and SEL8000, and practise the relevant skills in seminar presentations, submitted work, and the dissertation. D4 is developed through the assessment process.
Assessment Strategy
D Key (transferable) skills D1 and D2 are assessed through submitted work and, particularly, through the dissertation. Presentation in written form (D3) is evaluated in the essays and dissertation; oral presentation may or may not be assessed, but in all cases students receive feedback on these. D4 is integral to the whole assessment process.

12 Programme Curriculum, Structure and Features
Basic structure of the programme
<p>(a) The programme consists of 180 credits. It is divided into modules with a value of 10, 20, or (in the case of the dissertation) 60 credits.</p> <p>(b) The programme is available for study in both full-time (one-year) and part-time (two-year) modes, subject to the definition of those modes in the University Progress Regulations for Postgraduate Taught Programmes.</p> <p>All students take two research training modules: SEL8000 'Research Methods in Language and Linguistics' (10 credits) HSS8000 'Research Training in the Arts and Humanities' (10 credits)</p> <p>All students take the 60 credit dissertation.</p> <p>In addition, all students must take 20 credits from Band 1 (Syntax), 20 credits from Band 2 (Phonology), 40 credits from Band 3 (Topics in English Language) and 20 credits from Band 4 (Language and Linguistics Options). A list of optional modules follows:</p> <p>Band 1: Syntax</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ SEL8026: Constraint-Based Syntax (20 credits) ▪ SEL8028: Issues in Syntax (20 credits) ▪ SEL8203: Advanced Cross-Linguistic Syntax (20 credits) ▪ *SEL8116: English Sentence Structure (10 credits) <p>Band 2: Phonology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ SEL8154: Issues in Phonological Theory (20 credits) ▪ *SEL8117: Phonetics and Phonology <p>Modules marked '*' must be taken by students without a formal background in English Language or Linguistics instead of selecting 20 credits from Bands 1 and 2 and they must additionally choose 20 credits from another Band.</p> <p>Band 3: Topics in English Language</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ SEL8204: The Linguistic Analysis of Early Modern English (20 credits) ▪ SEL8043: Old English Language (20 credits)

- SEL8211: Issues in Variation and Change in the British Isles (20 credits)

Band 4: Language and Linguistics Options

- SEL8033: Evolutionary Linguistics (20 credits)
- SEL8034: Topics in Semantics and Pragmatics (20 credits)
- SEL8045: Old Icelandic (20 credits)
- SEL8163: The Sociolinguistics of Language and Society (20 credits)
- SEL8206: Lexical Innovation (20 credits)
- SML8006: Introduction to Language Acquisition (20 credits)
- SEL8035: Language, Speech and Mind (20 credits)
- SEL8037: Language and Computation (20 credits)
- SEL8040: Issues in First Language Acquisition (20 credits)
- SEL8210: Description of a Language (20 credits)
- SEL8189: Implications of SLA Research (10 credits)
- SEL8190: Issues in Immigrant SLA (20 credits)
- SEL8079: Second Language Phonology: Perception (10 credits)
- SEL8212: Second Language Phonology: Production (10 credits)
- SML8011: Cross-linguistic issues in L2 Syntax (20 credits)

Students may substitute one stage 2/3 undergraduate module noted above for a postgraduate module (20 credits) and (apart from the three SML modules above which are connected to the cross-School MA in Linguistics and Language Acquisition) students may take modules to the value of 20 credits per year from Schools in which modules relevant to their Degree Programme are taught (in particular, ECLS and SML).

Co- and pre-requisite modules

For those modules that involve a progression over two semesters, students on this Degree Programme need to make sure that when registering for a Semester 2 module, they meet the pre-requisites (as set out below) by taking the relevant Semester 1 module.

MODULE and MODULE LEADER	STUDENTS NEED TO TAKE PRE-/CO-REQUISITE
SEL8033 <i>Evolutionary Linguistics</i> (Tallerman)	co- or pre-requisite: SEL8026 Constraint-based syntax
SEL8035 <i>Language, Speech and Mind</i> (Burton-Roberts)	SEL8024 Topics in Semantics and Pragmatics
SEL8205 <i>Issues in Phonological Theory 2</i> (Hannahs)	SEL8154 <i>Issues in Phonological Theory 1</i> (Hannahs)
SEL8203 <i>Advanced Cross-linguistic syntax</i> (Tallerman)	SEL8026 <i>Constraint-based syntax</i> . Other students may apply to take the module.
SEL8040 <i>Issues in First Language Acquisition</i> (Kolliakou)	SEL8116 <i>English Sentence Structure</i> (or comparable SEL syntax module)
SML8006 <i>Introduction to Language Acquisition(FM & MYS)</i>	SEL8116 <i>English Sentence Structure</i> (or comparable SEL syntax module)
SEL8189 <i>Implications of SLA Research</i> (Young-Scholten)	SML8006 <i>Intro to Language Acquisition</i> /comparable SECLS module); SEL8116 <i>English Sentence Structure</i> /comparable SEL syntax module)
SEL 8079/8212 <i>L2 Phonology</i>	SEL8117 <i>Phonetics and Phonology</i> + SML8006

(Young-Scholten)	<i>Intro to Lang Acquisition/comparable SECLS module</i>
SEL8190 <i>Issues in Immigrant SLA</i> (Y-Scholten)	SML8006 <i>Intro to Language Acquisition/SECLS module</i> + SEL8116 <i>English Sentence Structure</i>)
SEL8211 <i>Issues in Variation and Change in the British Isles</i> (Buchstaller)	SEL8163 <i>The Sociolinguistics of Language and Society</i> (Corrigan)
SML8011 <i>Issues in cross-linguistic L2 syntax</i> (Myles; Young-Scholten)	SML8006 <i>Introduction to Language Acquisition</i> (or comparable SECLS module) and SEL8116 <i>English Sentence Structure/comparable SEL syntax module</i>
<p>Key features of the programme (including what makes the programme distinctive)</p> <p>The programme is characterized by its extraordinary flexibility and range of options. These features are designed to appeal to students with a wide range of interests, including theoretical and general linguistics, descriptive linguistics (whether focusing on English or on other languages), applied linguistics, and combinations thereof.</p> <p>Generic and specific training in research methods is compulsory under regulation (c): HSS8000 provides broad-based research training in Arts; SEL8000 provides specific research training in linguistics and English language. Both modules are taken in the first semester of the programme. Regulation (h) above caters for highly qualified students whose interests (e.g. sociolinguistics, corpus analysis) call for training in advanced quantitative, statistical, or experimental methods.</p> <p>The dissertation, taken at the end of the programme, provides students with the opportunity of consolidating, developing, and refining their knowledge and skills through a substantial piece of research into a specialist linguistic topic.</p>	
<p>Programme regulations (link to on-line version)</p> <p>http://www.ncl.ac.uk/regulations/programme/</p>	

13 Criteria for admission

Entry qualifications for 2008-9

Admissions policy/selection tools

Applicants are required to possess a first degree of Class 2:1 or above (or the equivalent). The degree must include some study of linguistics, English language, or an appropriate related discipline (e.g. a language other than English, philosophy, anthropology, psychology, cognitive science, computer science, mathematics, etc.). Overseas students whose first language is not English must reach a minimum IELTS score of 7.0 and may be required to attend a pre-sessional or in-sessional course at the University Language Centre.

Non-standard Entry Requirements

Applicants without the standard qualifications would be asked to submit work and to come for interview.

Additional Requirements

None

Level of English Language capability

See above.

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.

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.

Help with academic writing is available from the Writing Centre.

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 a personal tutor whose responsibility is to monitor the academic performance and overall well-being of their tutees. In addition the University offers a range of support services, including one-to-one counselling and guidance or group sessions/workshops on a range of topics, such as emotional issues eg. Stress and anxiety, student finance and budgeting, disability matters etc. There is specialist support available for students with dyslexia and mental health issues. Furthermore, the Union Society operates a Student Advice Centre, which can provide advocacy and support to students on a range of topics including housing, debt, legal issues etc.

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.

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.

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.

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. 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. Every five years degree programmes in each subject area are subject to periodic review. This involves both the detailed consideration of a range of documentation, and a two-day review visit by a review team which includes an external subject specialist in addition to University and Faculty representatives. Following the review a report is produced, which forms the basis for a decision by University Teaching and Learning Committee on whether the programmes reviewed should be re-approved for a further five year period.

Accreditation reports

Not relevant

Additional mechanisms

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 Undergraduate Progress Regulations and Undergraduate Examination Conventions. In summary, students must pass, or be deemed to have passed, 120 credits at each Stage. Limited compensation up to 40 credits and down to a mark of 35 is possible at each Stage and there are resit opportunities, with certain restrictions.

Progression is subject to the University's Masters Degree Progress Regulations, Taught and Research and Examination Conventions for Taught Masters Degrees. 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

The marks from both semesters and the dissertation contribute to the final classification of the

degree

Common Marking Scheme

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

	Modules used for degree classification (DC)	Modules not used for degree classification
<40	Fail	Failing
40-49	Third Class	Basic
50-59	Second Class, Second Division	Good
60-69	Second Class, First Division	Very Good
70+	First Class	Excellent

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

**Summary description applicable to
postgraduate Masters programmes**

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

**Summary description applicable to
postgraduate Certificate and Diploma
programmes**

<50	Fail
50 or above	Pass

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/> or <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/postgraduate/>)

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	ABC1001 , XYZ2002
A2	
A3	
A4	
B1	
B2	
B3	
B4	
C1	
C2	
C3	
C4	
D1	
D2	
D3	
D4	

Or

Module	Type	Intended Learning Outcomes			
		A	B	C	D
XYZ1001	Compulsory	1	1, 2, 3	4	2, 3