

## PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION



1	<b>Awarding Institution</b>	Newcastle University
2	<b>Teaching Institution</b>	Newcastle University
3	<b>Final Award</b>	BA (Hons)
4	<b>Programme Title</b>	English Language & Literature
5	<b>UCAS/Programme Code</b>	Q300
6	<b>Programme Accreditation</b>	n/a
7	<b>QAA Subject Benchmark(s)</b>	English
8	<b>FHEQ Level</b>	H
9	<b>Date written/revised</b>	29/04/08

### 10 Programme Aims

1(a) To produce graduates with:

- (i) the knowledge, understanding, key and specific skills and general intellectual development required to make them employable in graduate positions in a wide range of employments or capable of undertaking a taught postgraduate programme;
- (ii) a knowledge of the main theoretical approaches to linguistic study; of the formal structures of the English language and of the history of the English language;
- (iii) an ability to formulate and evaluate falsifiable theories of linguistic phenomena;
- (iv) an ability to organise complex data and assess its significance;
- (v) a familiarity with the varieties of spoken and written English in the UK and worldwide, and with the language of literary texts from the Anglo Saxon, Medieval and Early Modern periods;
- (vi) a metalinguistic awareness of their native language;
- (vii) an awareness of the social and stylistic significance of linguistic variants;
- (viii) a knowledge of the range of texts from past and present cultures;
- (ix) an introduction to world literatures, creative writing, and film in English;
- (x) an ability to address the cultural and political contexts in which texts are produced and read;
- (xi) a familiarity with a variety of genres and forms;
- (xii) experience of a range of critical practices and an ability to reflect on their critical practice;
- (xiii) an ability to reflect on the processes of creative writing.

(b) To provide a programme:

- (i) in which teaching is informed by research, both relevant research in the discipline and research carried out by members of staff;
- (ii) which consistently attracts highly qualified applicants;
- (iii) which fully meets the requirements of the relevant Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) Benchmark statement, and
- (iv) which fully meets the criteria for the different levels of award (certificate, intermediate or honours level diploma) within the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications.

## **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 English

### **Knowledge and Understanding**

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

- A1. The nature of human language
- A2. Essential linguistic terminology and methodology
- A3. The structure of English and its relation to other languages
- A4. Varieties of English, and the geographical, social and contextual factors which produce them
- A5. Computational models of language
- A6. The acquisition of language
- A7. The intellectual context in which the English language is studied
- A8. Varieties of texts, including film, in English
- A9. Varieties of writing in English from different periods
- A10. The cultural and political contexts in which texts are produced and read
- A11. The complex relationship between text and context
- A12. A range of critical practices
- A13. Genre and generic conventions
- A14. The vocabulary of textual and theoretical analysis

### **Teaching and Learning Methods**

At Stage 1 knowledge and understanding is acquired via lectures and seminars. At Stages 2 and 3 they are acquired via lectures and seminars and independent study, especially the Extended Study. More advanced knowledge and understanding is developed at Stage 3 with the further optional Extended Study modules and/or Dissertation. Students are encouraged to supplement taught material through independent reading. Guidance on further reading is provided by each module director.

### **Assessment Strategy**

Where there is a single assessment of knowledge and understanding in a module, it will normally be via unseen examination of 3 hours or submitted work of 4000, 5000 or 10,000 words in length. Many modules have multiple 'mixed' assessments, in which case the lengths above are used on a *pro rata* basis.

Examinations provide students with the opportunity to demonstrate their ability to structure a clear, concise and well reasoned argument, to address linguistic problems and engage in practical analysis in an unseen context. Submitted work enables students to expand on and test these skills; it also enables them to demonstrate their knowledge of the scholarly protocols of the discipline.

### **Intellectual Skills**

On completing the programme students should be able to:

<p>B1. collect, analyse and evaluate data</p> <p>B2. analyse and critically evaluate argumentation</p> <p>B3. compare and evaluate differing intellectual frameworks and theories</p> <p>B4. apply a developed appreciation of the role of language in everyday life - and of English as a global language.</p> <p>B5. critically evaluate arguments and evidence</p> <p>B6. develop an awareness of the complex interplay between text and context</p> <p>B7. organize and present ideas as part of a structured argument, oral and written</p>
<b>Teaching and Learning Methods</b>
<p>Cognitive skills are promoted through seminars and tutorials. At Stage 1 students are given guidance to ensure that they can debate effectively, evaluate arguments and evidence and present information to a group. In the Language seminars, emphasis is placed on the practical acquisition of skills for language and linguistic analysis (B1-3). Skills B5-7 are introduced and practised on <i>Academic Research</i> and/or practised on <i>Selected Texts I &amp; II</i>. These skills are promoted at Stages 2 and 3 with continued emphasis on small group work, and with increased opportunity for guided independent study.</p>
<b>Assessment Strategy</b>
<p>Assessment of intellectual skills is via unseen examination of 3 hours or submitted work of 4000, 5000 or 10,000 words in length. Many modules have multiple 'mixed' assessments, in which case the lengths above are used on a <i>pro rata</i> basis. Some modules also assess intellectual skills in part by oral presentations. Examination provide students with the opportunity to demonstrate their ability to structure a clear, concise and well reasoned argument in a limited time period, to address linguistic problems and engage in practical analysis in an unseen context. . Submitted work enables students to expand on and test these skills; it also enables them to demonstrate their employment of appropriate research techniques.</p>
<b>Practical Skills</b>
<p>On completing the programme students should be able to:</p> <p>C1. practice critical argumentation in language study</p> <p>C2. gather, analyse and evaluate linguistic data</p> <p>C3. compare different linguistic frameworks and their motivation</p> <p>C4. understand the relation between data and theory in English Language study</p> <p>C5. address specific analytical, psychological and cultural issues posed by language and English in particular.</p> <p>C6. practice critical skills in the analysis of texts and films</p> <p>C7. explore how literature and language produce and reflect cultural change</p> <p>C8. engage imaginatively and critically in the reading of complex literary and non-literary texts</p> <p>C9. exercise and develop a sensitivity to verbal creativity</p> <p>C10. analyse a range of texts employing relevant theoretical perspectives</p>
<b>Teaching and Learning Methods</b>
<p>At Stage 1 practical skills are acquired via lectures and student-led seminars and tutorials. Seminars and tutorials give students the opportunity to discuss ideas and</p>

critical practices introduced in the lectures. In the Language seminars, emphasis is placed on the practical acquisition of skills for language and linguistic analysis. At Stages 2 and 3 they are acquired via lectures and seminars and independent study, especially the compulsory Extended Study at Stage 2, and more advanced practical skills are developed with further Extended Studies or the optional Dissertation at Stage 3.

#### **Assessment Strategy**

Assessment of practical skills is via unseen examination of 3 hours or submitted work of 4000, 5000 or 10,000 words in length. Many modules have multiple 'mixed' assessments, in which case the lengths above are used on a *pro rata* basis. Some modules also assess intellectual skills in part by oral presentations. Examination provide students with the opportunity to demonstrate their ability to structure a clear, concise and well reasoned argument in a limited time period, to address linguistic problems and engage in practical analysis in an unseen context. Submitted work enables students to expand on and test these skills; it also enables them to demonstrate their employment of appropriate research techniques.

#### **Transferable/Key Skills**

On completing the programme students should be able to:

- D1. plan and complete essays and project-work
- D2. write and speak to different audiences
- D3. co-ordinate multiple projects
- D4. use information technology (word processing; the internet)
- D5. gather, evaluate and organise material
- D6. summarise and assimilate information
- D7. communicate and debate effectively
- D8. work to deadlines or within specified time-limits
- D9. work and negotiate with others
- D10. work effectively both in a team and independently
- D11. present information to a group in a structured and coherent way

#### **Teaching and Learning Methods**

Key skills too are developed through tutorials and seminars At Stage 1 students are given advice to ensure that they can debate effectively, negotiate with others and present information to a group. Skills D1,2,5,7,8,9,10,11 are introduced and practiced on *Academic Research* and/or *Selected Texts I and II*. Skills D1, 3, 5, 6 and 8-10 are introduced and practised in the Stage 1 language modules. These skills are promoted at Stages 2 and 3 with continued emphasis on small group work, and with increased opportunity for guided independent study. Students are also given experience of small groups (tutorials and seminars) of different sizes: from groups of 7 or 8 at Stage 1 to groups of 15 at Stage 2 and 3. All of these skills are practised from Stages 1 to 3.

#### **Assessment Strategy**

Assessment of key skills is implicit in course work at all levels, although *Academic Research* focuses on these particularly. Presentation skills are formally assessed (by tutor and peers) in those modules which have an oral presentation as part of the summative assessment.

## **12 Programme Curriculum, Structure and Features**

### **Basic structure of the programme**

The programme is studied over three years full-time; it is divided into study units or modules, which have a value of either 10 or 20 credits, or, in the case of the Dissertation only, 40 credits. Each 10 credit module represents 100 hours of student learning, and each 20 credit module, 200 hours.

At Stage 1 students are given a thorough grounding in the three areas of language and linguistic study: syntax, phonology and socio-/historical linguistics. Students are also given a thorough introduction to a range of literatures and the skills required for their study on *Selected Texts I and II*, *Literary Theory* and *Academic Research*. The accompanying tutorials give students the opportunity to practise, experiment with and develop this knowledge and these skills. *Special Topic* extends the students' knowledge of a number of texts closely related by genre, theory or history, while *Medieval Literature* introduces students to a range of earlier texts and the methodologies/critical practices appropriate to their analysis. An emphasis is placed at Stage 1 on small group teaching (tutorials and seminars) to enable the acquisition of academic, practical and key skills.

At Stages 2 and 3 there is a wide choice of modules. This gives students the scope to design their degree programme and to exercise choice. It also gives them the opportunity to develop particular interests and, by Stage 3, an area of expertise. Band restrictions, however, ensure coverage on the literature side of the programme (A5-6) in that students are required to take modules to the value of 20 credits from each of Bands 5-9. The Extended Study in Band 10 is compulsory, to be attached to one of the taught modules at Stage 2, and the 40 credits from Band 11 requires further independent undertakings, which might include a Dissertation in place of 2 Extended Studies and/or a File of Original Literary Work in place of one Extended Study. Independent-study modules encourage the advanced development of knowledge and understanding and cognitive and key skills. The Extended Studies and Dissertation also introduce students applying for postgraduate degrees to advanced research skills.

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

All undergraduates in the School of English Literature, Language and Linguistics can elect to study abroad for one semester, typically the second semester of year two or the first semester of year three. Currently SELLL has links with institutions in Europe and with universities in North America.

SELLL students can also take advantage of University and Faculty-led programmes (including exchanges with universities in Canada and Australia).

#### **Programme regulations (link to on-line version)**

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

### **13 Criteria for admission**

*Entry qualifications for 2008-9*

#### **GCSEs required**

N/A

#### **A-Level Subjects and Grades**

AAB. Excludes General Studies and Critical Thinking. A in English Literature or English Language & Literature is required.

*Admissions policy/selection tools*

Students to whom offers are made are invited to an open day to meet staff and students and to see the department. Attendance is not compulsory.

*Scottish Highers Entry Requirements*

AAABB, including English at Grade A. A combination of Highers and Advanced Highers is acceptable.

**Widening Participation**

BBC + Summer School pass. Minimum Grade B in either English Language & Literature or English Literature is required. Excludes General Studies and Critical Thinking.

**Mature and Overseas Students** are dealt with on an individual basis.

*Additional Requirements*

*Level of English Language capability*  
IELTS 7.0

**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/tutorials/etc. The International Office offers an additional induction programme for overseas students (see [http://www.ncl.ac.uk/international/coming\\_to\\_newcastle/orientation.phtml](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.

*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. 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.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/support/acfacilities.phtml>

All new students whose first language is not English are required to take an English Language test in the Language Centre. Where appropriate, in-session language training can be provided. The Language Centre houses a range of resources for learning other languages which may be particularly appropriate for those interested in an Erasmus exchange. See <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/undergraduate/support/facilities/langcen.phtml>

## **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 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/](http://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](http://www.ncl.ac.uk/aqss/qsh/internal_subject_review/index.php)

### *Accreditation reports*

### *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 (<http://www.ncl.ac.uk/calendar/university.regs/ugcont.pdf>) and Undergraduate Examination Conventions (<http://www.ncl.ac.uk/calendar/university.regs/ugexamconv.pdf>). 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 (<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*

The marks from Stages 2 and 3 will contribute to the final classification of the degree. The two Stages are weighted equally, each contributing 50% to the final degree classification.

#### *Common Marking Scheme*

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

	<b>Honours</b>	<b>Non-honours</b>
<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/>)

The School Brochure (contact [enquiries@ncl.ac.uk](mailto:enquiries@ncl.ac.uk))



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

The School Handbook and individual Stage/Degree Manuals

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.

