

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION



1	Awarding Institution	Newcastle University
2	Teaching Institution	Newcastle University
3	Final Award	MA
4	Programme Title	Literary Studies: Writing, Memory, Culture
5	UCAS/Programme Code	4022
6	Programme Accreditation	N/A
7	QAA Subject Benchmark(s)	English
8	FHEQ Level	7
9	Date written/revised	03/04/2009

10 Programme Aims

Programme Aims:

- 1 To provide an MA programme that is engaged in the advanced study of a wide range of literary texts and genres in English from the Renaissance to the present;
- 2 To enable students to develop a critical awareness of current thinking at the forefront of the discipline about history, memory and identity;
- 3 To provide a programme of teaching and supervision which is informed by current staff research interests;
- 4 To enable students to undertake independent scholarly research;
- 5 To provide a programme which consistently attracts highly qualified applicants, mature applicants, and overseas applicants;
- 6 To enable students to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary for progression to advanced research in a PhD or MPhil programme, or for employment in positions suitable to those holding a higher degree;
- 7 To provide a programme which meets fully the criteria for a Masters degree laid down in the QAA's National qualifications framework document.

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 (subject) (X).

Knowledge and Understanding

A Knowledge and understanding

A1 Students will gain advanced knowledge of a range of literary and cultural texts from the Renaissance to the present.

A2 Students will gain knowledge of core theoretical and methodological debates relating to history, memory and identity in contemporary literary studies (e.g. historicist and psychoanalytical approaches to 'representing' or 'disrupting' the past, and postcolonial theories concerning cultural 'location' and the formation of national identities).

A3 Students will gain in-depth understanding of specific texts, genres, and contexts.	
A4 Students will gain knowledge and understanding of working methods appropriate to Masters level research in literary studies.	
Teaching and Learning Methods	
A	Knowledge and understanding
The primary means of imparting knowledge and understanding (A1 to A4) is through the seminar. Seminars demand that students develop analytical and presentational skills. Throughout the programme, students are expected to supplement essential reading with wide-ranging independent reading under the guidance of module leaders. The core module, 'Reading the Past', is assessed through two long essays (of 4,000 words each) in order to achieve A2.	
Assessment Strategy	
A	Knowledge and understanding
The primary method of assessing knowledge and understanding is through submitted written work, whether 4000 word essay, 2500 word essay, dissertation outline and bibliography, or dissertation (A1-A4). Oral presentations may be formally assessed and, where this is not the case, oral feedback will be given	
Intellectual Skills	
B	Subject-specific/intellectual skills
B1 Students will acquire and develop critical and analytical skills to an advanced level.	
B2 Students will acquire and develop a range of research skills to enable higher level research.	
B3 Students will be able to apply key methods and concepts relevant to advanced literary study concerning issues of history, memory and identity	
Teaching and Learning Methods	
B	Subject-specific/intellectual skills
Subject specific skills (B1-B3) are acquired through seminars, the completion of essays attached to the core and optional modules, an extended study, the dissertation preparation module, and the dissertation itself.	
Assessment Strategy	
B	Subject-specific/intellectual skills
Subject-specific skills (B1-B3) are assessed by submitted work and in some optional courses by oral presentations	
Practical Skills	
C	Practical skills
C1 Students will be able to analyze and engage imaginatively with complex literary texts.	
C2 Students will be able to evaluate secondary material critically.	
C3 Students will be able to grasp the interplay between texts and their historical and/or cultural, social, and political contexts.	
Teaching and Learning Methods	
C	Practical skills
Practical skills (C1-C3) are developed through preparing for seminars and the planning and writing of assignments.	

Assessment Strategy	
C	Practical skills
Practical skills (C1-C3) are assessed by submitted work and in some modules by oral presentations.	
Transferable/Key Skills	
D	Key (transferable) skills
D1 structure and communicate ideas effectively. D2 plan and complete essays and presentations. D3 write and speak to different audiences. D4 gather, evaluate and organize information. D5 work and negotiate with others. D6 use information technology. D7 work to deadlines or within specified time limits. D8 work independently and as part of a team.	
Teaching and Learning Methods	
D	Key (transferable) skills
Preparation for, and activities, in seminars, as well as the preparation and writing of essays and other assignments encourages the development of all the key skills listed (D1-D8).	
Assessment Strategy	
D.	Key (transferable) skills
D1, D2, D4, D7 are assessed by submitted work. D1, D3, D4, D5, D8 are assessed in some optional modules by oral presentation.	

12 Programme Curriculum, Structure and Features
Basic structure of the programme
<p>(a) All candidates shall take the following compulsory modules:</p> <p>SEL8400 (20 credits) Research Training in Literary Studies. SEL8187 Reading the Past 1 (20 credits) SEL8188 Reading the Past 2 (20 credits) SEL8185 (10 credits) Extended Study.</p> <p>(b) All candidates shall take further modules to a value of 40 credits from the list of optional modules offered.</p> <p>(c) Alternative modules to those listed in (b) above to a maximum of 30 credits may be substituted by modules offered in the MA programmes in Modern and Contemporary Studies: British and American Literature and Film, Creative Writing and Film Studies, subject to the approval of the degree programme directors concerned and to timetable constraints.</p> <p>(d) All candidates shall take:</p> <p>SEL8003 (10 credits) Dissertation Preparation SEL8099 (60 credits) Dissertation. The recommended length of the Dissertation is 15,000 words.</p> <p>The balance of assessment is 67% coursework to 33% dissertation.</p>
Key features of the programme (including what makes the programme distinctive)

The programme is available for study in both full-time and part-time modes, subject to the definition of those modes in the regulations for Masters Programmes Offered in Arts. The period of study for the programme taken in full-time mode is one year. The period of study for the programme taken in part-time mode is two years.

A comprehensive induction to the programme enables students to make informed module choices in consultation with the Degree Programme Director and other staff.

All students are required to take the 40-credit compulsory 'core' module, 'Reading the Past', two 10-credit research training modules, a 10-credit extended study, a 10-credit dissertation preparation module, and a dissertation of 60 credits. Students, in consultation with the Degree Programme Director, choose 4 optional 10-credit modules.

The Extended Study offers students the opportunity to undertake further study relating to an optional module in addition to the required assessment. An Extended Study will normally be taken after the formal teaching of the optional module has been completed. The decision as to which module to attach an Extended Study will be made by the student in consultation with the Degree Programme Director and module leader concerned.

The Dissertation Preparation module allows students to begin to plan their dissertations well in advance of the Research Semester.

Programme regulations (link to on-line version)

http://www.ncl.ac.uk/regulations/programme/2009-2010/documents/LiteraryStudiesWritingMemoryandCultureMA_002.pdf

13 Criteria for admission in 2009-10

Entry qualifications

Admissions policy/selection tools

Candidates should hold a first degree in English or another appropriate subject of Class 2:1 or above.

Non-standard Entry Requirements

A full-time or part-time applicant may be approved for admission as a candidate by the degree programme director where the applicant: (a) is a graduate of this or another approved University or other degree-awarding body or holds other qualifications approved by the relevant postgraduate sub-dean; and (b) satisfies such additional requirements for admission as may be set out in the relevant degree regulations or otherwise published by the University and approved by the relevant postgraduate sub-dean.

Additional Requirements

None

Level of English Language capability

See Prospectus for details

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

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 Stages ??? will contribute to the final classification of the degree

The weighting of marks contributing to the degree for Stages ??? is ? : ?

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.