PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

1	**Awarding Institution**	Newcastle University
2	**Teaching Institution**	Newcastle University
3	**Final Award**	MA or Diploma
4	**Programme Title**	Modern and Contemporary Studies
5	**UCAS/Programme Code**	4019
6	**Programme Accreditation**	N/A
7	**QAA Subject Benchmark(s)**	English
8	**FHEQ Level**	
9	**Last updated**	10 January 2011

10	**Programme Aims**

(a) To produce postgraduates holding a Master's degree with:
(i) research skills and ability to undertake independent study at a level
appropriate to those holding a higher degree
(ii) the ability to undertake a research programme leading to the PhD
(iii) an advanced knowledge of a range of modern and contemporary texts and films
(iv) a critical ability to address and reflect on the cultural and political contexts
in which modern and contemporary texts and films are produced, read and
viewed
(v) an ability to undertake independent scholarly research
(b) 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 indiscrete high level
essays (the submitted essays)
(iv) which enables a student to work independently and undertake the writing of a long piece
of work (the dissertation) based on independent research
(v) which fully meets the requirements of the QAA's Framework for Higher Degree
Qualifications at Masters Level

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:

A1	Advanced understanding and specialised knowledge of selected areas of study within the field of modern and contemporary studies.
A2	Detailed and comprehensive knowledge of the cultural and political contexts in which texts and films have been produced and read in the English speaking during this period.
A3	Critical understanding of scholarship and research in these areas.

Teaching and Learning Methods
In the taught modules (as indicated in section 11) knowledge and understanding are acquired through participation in and preparation for seminars and through the writing of essays. More advanced knowledge and understanding are developed in writing the 15,000 word dissertation. Students are required to select an appropriate subject for this dissertation and to undertake independent scholarship and research in completing it. Guidance is provided by each module director and by the dissertation supervisor.

Assessment Strategy
Assessment of knowledge and understanding is made through submitted essays, short projects demonstrating knowledge of research skills and methods, and a dissertation (15,000 words).

Intellectual Skills
On completing the programme students should be able to:

B1	Conceptual awareness of theoretical debates at the forefront of academic work in modern and contemporary studies.
B2	Practical understanding of the techniques and methodologies applicable to advanced scholarship and research in this period.

Teaching and Learning Methods
Subject-specific skills are also acquired through participation in and reading for the seminars and in the production of the essays and dissertation. The Degree Programme Director assists students in the selection of an appropriate topic for the dissertation, isolating key issues within specific areas of study.

Assessment Strategy
Assessment of subject-specific skills is also made through the marking of these essays, projects and dissertation. Submitted work enables students to develop and demonstrate their knowledge of the theoretical bases of the discipline; the dissertation enables students to give evidence of original research and to demonstrate a practical understanding of research skills and scholarly good practice.

Practical Skills
On completing the programme students should be able to:

Exercise advanced critical skills in the analysis of modern and contemporary texts and film
Understand in depth and at an advanced level the ways in which the works studied produce and reflect cultural change
Participate at a high level in the critical and theoretical debates surrounding these works

Teaching and Learning Methods
Practical skills are acquired in seminars for which students are required to present papers. They then submit essays which present the findings of their reading and research. More advanced cognitive skills are developed in the course of research for and writing the 15,000 word dissertation.

Assessment Strategy
Assessment of practical skills is also made through the submitted essays, research projects and dissertation referred to above.

Transferable/Key Skills
On completing the programme students should be able to: --Analyse and evaluate complex evidence critically and imaginatively --Demonstrate self-direction and originality in planning and completing tasks --Deploy information technology (word processing; the internet) appropriately --Present research findings in a clear and accessible way

Teaching and Learning Methods
Key skills are promoted through seminars and in individual sessions with the dissertation supervisor. The research training modules address time-management, note-taking, IT, the layout of a dissertation and the management of references, footnotes and bibliography.

Assessment Strategy
Assessment of key skills is implicit in both the submitted essays, research projects, and the dissertation.

12   Programme Curriculum, Structure and Features
Basic structure of the programme
The programme is studied over one year full-time or over two years part-time. It is divided into modules which have a value of either 20 or 10 credits, or, in the case of the Dissertation, 60 credits. Both full-time and part-time students are required to take and be assessed in modules to the value of 180 credits. Students take 180 credits of compulsory modules. Compulsory modules (for all students): Credits SEL8355   Time I: 20 SEL8357   Space I: 20 SEL8400   Research Training in Literary Studies I: 10 SEL8359   Research & Development I: 10 SEL8356   Time II: 20 SEL8358   Space II: 20 SEL8450   Research Training in Literary Studies II: 10 SEL8360   Research & Development II: 10 SEL8147   Dissertation 60

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

Programme regulations (link to on-line version)
http://www.ncl.ac.uk/regulations/programme/

13	Criteria for admission

Entry qualifications

UK students: We normally require a II:I in English, Combined Studies (Arts), Film or Media Studies or other related disciplines, but exceptionally we have admitted students with undergraduate degrees from more remote disciplines (e.g. Law).

Overseas students: We normally require the equivalent of a British II:I in English, Combined Studies (Arts), Film or Media Studies (e.g. A or B grades from a North American institution, high numerical scores from Far Eastern universities). Overseas students whose first language is not English are also asked to take an English language test conducted by the University Language Centre. We ask for a minimum IELTS score of 7.0. In addition, applications from, overseas students for whom English in not their first language, will have their form looked at by the DPD.

Admissions policy/selection tools

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

IELTS score of 7.0

14	Support for Student Learning

The Student Services portal provides links to key services and other information and is available at: *http://www.ncl.ac.uk/students/*

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 and help with academic writing is available from the Writing Centre (further information is available from the Robinson Library).

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 e.g. 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-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.

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 Board of Studies and/or the School Teaching and Learning Committee. 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. The FTLC takes an overview of all programmes within the Faculty and reports any Faculty or institutional issues to the University 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 students' views on the quality of the learning and teaching. The results from student surveys are considered as part of the Annual Monitoring and Review of the programme and any arising actions are captured at programme and School / institutional level and reported to the appropriate body.

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

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16   Regulation of assessment

Pass mark
The pass mark is 40%

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 re-assessment opportunities, with certain restrictions.

Weighting of stages
The marks from **Stages 2 and 3** *[AND 4?]* will contribute to the final classification of the degree
The weighting of marks contributing to the degree for **Stages ??? is** *ADD RATIO*

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

Role of the External Examiner
An External Examiner, a distinguished member of the subject community, is appointed by Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee, following recommendation from the Board of Studies. The External Examiner is expected to:
   i.   See and approve assessment papers
  ii.   Moderate examination and coursework marking
 iii.   Attend the Board of Examiners
 iv.   Report to the University on the standards of the programme

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

The University Prospectus: http://www.ncl.ac.uk/undergraduate/

The School Brochure: http://www.ncl.ac.uk/marketing/services/print/publications/ordering/)

Degree Programme and University Regulations: http://www.ncl.ac.uk/regulations/docs/

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