

## PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION



1	<b>Awarding Institution</b>	Newcastle University
2	<b>Teaching Institution</b>	Newcastle University
3	<b>Final Award</b>	Master of Arts
4	<b>Programme Title</b>	M.A. in Future Landscape Imaginaries
5	<b>Programme Code</b>	4114F/P
6	<b>Programme Accreditation</b>	N/A
7	<b>QAA Subject Benchmark(s)</b>	N/A
8	<b>FHEQ Level</b>	7
9	<b>Last updated</b>	April 2011

### 10 Programme Aims

- 1 To introduce graduate students to critical analyses of historical and contemporary landscape discourses.
- 2 To equip graduates' students' to undertake substantial research through creative practice.
- 3 To develop graduates' critical and analytical capabilities.
- 4 To provide a programme which satisfies the requirements of level 7 of the FHEQ and complies with University policies and procedures
- 5 To equip graduates for advanced practice in landscape-related disciplines.

### 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 have acquired a deep knowledge and understanding of the way landscape has been conceptualised at different times and in different places, informed by relevant research findings and relevant professional practice.
- A2 have gained a critical insight into the philosophies, ideologies and critical positions which underpin different approaches to landscape, informed by leading edge research and practice.
- A3 have gained a critical understanding of landscape as a hybrid of nature and culture; together with an understanding of the social, economic, political, cultural and environmental issues which are revealed through the medium of landscape.
- A4 have gained a critical understanding of the role of representation in presenting the social, political and environmental crises of our times and the part that landscape imaginaries can play in possible responses to these crises.

**Teaching and Learning Methods**

Through lectures, seminars and guided reading, students will be introduced to a range of different definitions and understandings of landscape, the aim being to stimulate their own critical responses to landscape issues, regardless of their original disciplinary backgrounds, and thus to prepare them to produce their own creative responses to landscape issues in the latter part of the programme.

**Assessment Strategy**

The onus of the programme lies upon the development of critical understanding and creative practice, rather than upon the acquisition of facts. Understanding will be assessed using essays, practice notebooks and other coursework assignments, rather than by formal examination.

**Intellectual Skills**

On completing the programme students should be able to:

- B1 look critically at landscape as a hybrid of nature and culture.
- B2 consider landscape from a range of theoretical positions, with a sensibility toward the complexities of landscape which will assist in the imagining of future landscapes.
- B3 to relate the representation of present and future landscapes to the social, political and ecological crises of our times.

**Teaching and Learning Methods**

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**Assessment Strategy**

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**Practical Skills**

On completing the programme students should be able to:

- C1 Work effectively in a variety of relevant media.
- C2. Identify their own interests and key issues for exploration through creative practice.

**Teaching and Learning Methods**

This is a studio-based programme designed to provide a framework for the development of a self-directed, informed and critical practice. Students may work in media of their own choice, related to their interests, aptitudes and previous experience. For example, those with a first degree in landscape architecture may undertake a design project; others may choose to work through photography, video, text, digital media etc.

Students attend a schedule of studio-based tutorials and group critical reviews, culminating in a public exhibition of work.

**Assessment Strategy**

Individual tutorials take place on a weekly basis. There is also a weekly student-led seminar. Work is presented at interim and final crits. Work will be monitored for assessment continuously and holistically throughout the studio module. Students will be encouraged to bring their draft work, sketches, models etc. to all tutorials and crits. (N.B.The student-led seminar will not form a discrete element of assessment). Formative marks and constructive feedback will be given at the interim crit. Marks for the studio will be given at a summative assessment following the final crit.

**Transferable/Key Skills**

On completing the programme students should be able to:

- D1 Communicate ideas effectively and fluently, through appropriate media.
- D2 Demonstrate originality and creativity in response to complex briefs.
- D3 Set personal targets and manage time effectively.
- D4 Exercise initiative, self motivation and personal responsibility
- D5 Demonstrate critical and analytical skills

**Teaching and Learning Methods**

D1 and D2 are developed through feedback on assignments and work in the studio, the latter being supported by tutorials and critical reviews.  
D3 and D4 are developed throughout the entire programme.  
D5 is developed throughout the programme, but particularly in the Semester 3 dissertation.

**Assessment Strategy**

Skills will be assessed using essays, practice notebooks, coursework assignments, and presentations in studio crits rather than by formal examination. A written dissertation is supervised in the third semester and submitted towards the end of the summer vacation.

**12 Programme Curriculum, Structure and Features****Basic structure of the programme**

The programme consists of 180 credits across 2 semesters and the summer months (the 'third' semester'). The programme seeks to equip graduate students from a variety of disciplinary backgrounds to undertake substantial research through creative practice in the field of landscape studies. The core theoretical knowledge to enable such practice is delivered in two 20 credit modules in Semester 1: Conceptualising Landscape and Practising Landscape. In Semester 2 students develop their individual practice, under supervision, in the studio in the 40 credit Creative Practice Research Project. The culmination of the creative enquiry undertaken in the programme is the Dissertation, which is produced in Semester 3 and may take the form of a reflection upon the student's own creative practice research, or may take the form of stand-alone study on a relevant topic of the student's choice.

The core modules are supported by a range of optional modules, many of which are delivered by the School. Several of these, for example, TCP8924 'Cities and Change' or TCP8932 'Planning for Climate Change', will raise students' awareness of social, economic and environmental issues in which landscape change is implicated. Others, such as DMS8001, 'Theory and Practice in Digital Media' have been included because they expand the options available to students to develop their creative practices. Others still, such as ARC8101 'Cultural Theory and Architectural Criticism' align the programme with innovative developments in the cognate discipline of architecture. By offering a wide range of optional choices, the programme offers a potentially diverse cohort of students an extensive choice of pathways, through which to develop their research and practice.

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

This is an innovative taught masters-level programme that focuses on the relations between landscape, culture and society, and on the various ways that landscape is practised, represented and imagined. Within the context of a single interdisciplinary programme it brings together various aspects of landscape studies that are normally isolated from one another, involving its students in *both* critical analyses of historical and contemporary landscape discourses *and* substantial research through creative practice. The programme will focus in particular on the various ways that future landscape conditions are being imagined and projected in the present, ranging from current geopolitical imaginaries of the newly securitized nation state and responses to anticipated climate change to contemporary design discourses, such as that of Landscape Urbanism. Students are given the opportunity to act not only as analysts and critics, but also – through the articulation of landscape propositions in their own creative studio practice – as cultural producers

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

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

### **13 Criteria for admission**

#### *Entry qualifications*

Normally a good first degree (2.1 or above) in some creative or design-based subject, though this will be interpreted liberally, and candidates with science or social-science degrees or degrees lower than 2.1 will be assessed on their individual merits, bearing in mind the innovatory nature of the programme and any practice-based or work-related experience the applicant might possess

#### *Admissions policy/selection tools*

Application is by application form and portfolio. The latter may be sent in electronic format using common file formats such as pdf or jpg.

#### *Non-standard Entry Requirements*

See above

#### *Additional Requirements*

No

#### *Level of English Language capability*

Candidates whose first language is not English are expected to achieve IELTS 6.5 or equivalent prior to registration.

### **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-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 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 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*

Not applicable.

*Additional mechanisms*

**16 Regulation of assessment**

*Pass mark*

The pass mark is 50%

*Course requirements*

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.

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

Summary description applicable to postgraduate Masters programmes		Summary description applicable to postgraduate Certificate and Diploma programmes	
<50	Fail	<50	Fail
50-59	Pass	50 or above	Pass
60-69	Pass with Merit		
70 or above	Pass with Distinction		
<i>Role of the External Examiner</i>			
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:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. See and approve assessment papers</li> <li>ii. Moderate examination and coursework marking</li> <li>iii. Attend the Board of Examiners</li> <li>iv. Report to the University on the standards of the programme</li> </ul>			

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

The University Prospectus: <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/postgraduate/>

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

<b>Intended Learning Outcome</b>	<b>Module codes (Compulsory in Bold)</b>
A1	Conceptualising Landscape, Practising Landscape, Creative Practice Research Project, Dissertation
A2	Conceptualising Landscape, Practising Landscape, Creative Practice Research Project, Dissertation
A3	Conceptualising Landscape, Practising Landscape, Creative Practice Research Project, Dissertation
A4	Conceptualising Landscape, Practising Landscape, Creative Practice Research Project, Dissertation
B1	Conceptualising Landscape, Practising Landscape, Creative Practice Research Project, Dissertation
B2	Conceptualising Landscape, Practising Landscape, Dissertation
B3	Conceptualising Landscape, Practising Landscape, Creative Practice Research Project, Dissertation
C1	Creative Practice Research Project, Dissertation
C2	Practising Landscape, Creative Practice Research Project, Dissertation
D1	Conceptualising Landscape, Practising Landscape, Creative Practice Research Project, Dissertation
D2	Creative Practice Research Project, Dissertation
D3	Conceptualising Landscape, Practising Landscape, Creative Practice Research Project, Dissertation
D4	Conceptualising Landscape, Practising Landscape, Creative Practice Research Project, Dissertation
D5	Practising Landscape, Creative Practice Research Project, Dissertation