

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

1	Awarding Institution	Newcastle University
2	Teaching Institution	Newcastle University
3	Final Award	MA
4	Programme Title	MA Roman Frontier Studies
5	UCAS/Programme Code	4100
6	Programme Accreditation	
7	QAA Subject Benchmark(s)	
8	FHEQ Level	7
9	Date written/revised	June 2011

10 Programme Aims

- 1 To provide students with a range of learning opportunities (in relation to analytical, key, research and subject-specific skills) within the field of Roman Frontier Studies.
- 2 To provide a curriculum that is students responsive to the needs of students holding Master's funding from the AHRC
- 3 To enable students to develop their capacity to learn in preparation for or as part of continuing professional development (CPD) and lifelong learning
- 4 To provide access to Higher Education to students from a variety of educational backgrounds, and to provide a bridge to further postgraduate qualifications
- 5 To provide students with the opportunity to gain the basic skills and knowledge required to continue with academic research in Roman Frontier Studies or related fields of archaeology at PhD level, or to enter the workplace in one of a variety of professions requiring high levels of skills such as literacy, research and project management
- 6 To expose students to cutting-edge research environments in the sphere of Roman Frontier Studies and encourage engagement by students with current staff research
- 7 That the programme meets the requirements of a Master's level qualification as defined by the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications
- 8 That the programme conforms to University policies and to QAA codes of practice

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 have a critical knowledge and understanding of:

- A1 Roman Frontier Studies from a variety of chronological and thematic perspectives
- A2 The theoretical and interpretive perspectives of archaeologists, with particular relevance to Roman Frontier Studies
- A3 The methodologies and sources available to archaeologists of the Roman Frontiers
- A4 The detailed knowledge and analytical skills which come from undertaking a sustained original piece of research in Roman Frontier Studies (a dissertation).

Teaching and Learning Methods

The primary method of imparting knowledge and understanding [A1-A4] are seminars, supplemented by lectures (for systematic and advanced overviews of module subjects), practicals, individual tutorials for the return of coursework, and self-directed learning (to facilitate the development of a comprehensive understanding and critical awareness of current research and advanced scholarship).

The structure of the MA is designed so that all students take a module in Semester 1 on **Research Themes, Theories and Skills in Archaeology** (ARA8090) to give them a critical understanding of a range of key theoretical, analytical and methodological frameworks and research training in Archaeology [A1-3]. Also during Semester 1, students will develop an advanced understanding and knowledge of such frameworks and advanced understanding and knowledge of Roman archaeology through the 20-credit compulsory module **Graduate Seminar in the Archaeology of the Roman World** (ARA 8050) [A2-3].

In semester 2, a further 20-credit module on the **Armies and Frontiers of the Roman Empire** (ARA8028) provides specific knowledge the thematic area of Roman Frontiers in Europe, the eastern empire and north Africa, which includes seminars concerning and field visits to Hadrian's Wall [A1-3].

In semesters 1 and 2 other **optional modules** provide knowledge of specific chronological/thematic areas [A1-3] which will offer excellent preparation for further research or professional practice depending on module choice.

The Newcastle MA in Roman Frontier Studies also provides the opportunity to acquire a range of advanced **practical skills** or knowledge of further **thematic areas**. Optional modules in artefact analysis, GIS (Geographical Information Systems) or other IT applications, and ancient languages will provide high-level practical and/or analytical skills in archaeology. Optional modules in archaeology, history, modern languages and heritage management available elsewhere in the School and the Faculty (subject to timetabling) provide the opportunities to acquire further advanced knowledge based around particular themes and periods. Teaching for this Master's degree in these specialised areas is delivered by world-class specialists based in the School of Historical Studies, the International Centre for Cultural Heritage Studies, the Great North Museum, and the School of Civil Engineering and Geosciences. Students acquire advanced knowledge and understanding of a range of high-level transferable skills. In addition, students are strongly encouraged to apply these practical skills and knowledge to their other archaeology modules [A3].

Through the dissertation, students demonstrate the theoretical and methodological knowledge acquired during the course and achieve a detailed knowledge of a specific area by undertaking a sustained original piece of research in Roman Frontier Studies [A4].

Throughout the programme students are encouraged to read widely and extensive bibliographies are supplied. Students make use of a wide range of learning resources, including not only books and journal articles in the Robinson Library and Cowen (Archaeology) Library, but also primary sources (e.g. Robinson Library Special Collections, Tyne and Wear Record Office, Tyne and Wear Sites and Monuments Record, Northumberland Record Office, Durham University Library), artefacts in the collections of the Great North Museum, the Wolfson Lab, and other museums, and on-line resources and databases available via the Robinson Library (e.g. Edina/Digimap Modern and Historic Map Collections, JSTOR, Archaeology Data Service, Portable Antiquities Database).

Assessment Strategy

Knowledge and understanding [A1] are assessed through written essays, research assignments or examinations for each module, and through the final dissertation [A4]. Written assignments for compulsory and optional modules are designed to provide students with the opportunity to explore the theoretical and interpretive perspectives of archaeologists of the Roman Frontiers [A2]. In the assessments for some modules, students will present formative essays and/or presentations, on which they will receive written and/or oral feedback as appropriate. Some modules will include written examinations to evaluate knowledge and understanding. Marks will be awarded for evidence of knowledge attained, as well as evidence that the student has achieved an appropriate level of understanding of the methodologies and sources used by specialists in this field [A2-3]. The dissertation provides an extended opportunity for students to reveal their in-depth knowledge and understanding of a particular aspect of Roman Frontier Studies, and they will be encouraged to apply the

practical skills they have acquired to their research [A4].

Intellectual Skills

On completing the programme students should have acquired advanced skills in:

- B1 Critical reasoning
- B2 Gathering and using information
- B3 Applying concepts
- B4 Evaluation, analysis, and interpretation

Teaching and Learning Methods

Through seminar presentations and discussion, practical work and lectures students will develop the ability to think critically and to apply advanced knowledge and methodological skills they have acquired through their studies in order to present balanced and coherent arguments [B1]. For example, students will have the opportunity to develop and practise advanced skills in data gathering and manipulation through seminars and practical work, and the ability to critically identify, select and apply relevant data and concepts to particular questions using relevant methodologies [B2, 3]. Seminar teaching through presentations and discussion will allow students to develop advanced critical skills in evaluating, analysing and interpreting data [B4].

Assessment Strategy

Assessment of knowledge and understanding is by use of coursework (including essays, laboratory or case-study reports, in-course tests, research project work and dissertation, oral and poster presentations), for some modules in combination with written examinations (including essay questions, short answer and problem-solving as appropriate to the module). The mix of coursework and examination varies as appropriate to the module but most modules include some aspect of formative assessment during the module in addition to the summative assessment.

All pieces of written work in the taught modules require students to gather, evaluate, analyse, and interpret evidence, using the skills identified as benchmark skills within the discipline of Archaeology [B1-4]. The dissertation allows students to demonstrate the range of skills they have acquired in relation to a specific piece of research in Roman Frontier Studies.

Practical Skills

On completing the programme students should have:

- C1 Acquired subject-specific skills through training and research experience and developed an ability to evaluate, analyse and interpret different sources of evidence relating to Archaeology and Roman Frontier Studies;
- C2 Developed the ability to undertake higher degree research through completion of short pieces of written work and a dissertation;
- C3 Practised a range of subject-specific skills such as presenting a balanced written argument based on a range of evidence, critical analysis of archaeological reports, and integration of data from a range of sources using appropriate methodologies;
- C4 Developed a variety of advanced additional skills according to their individual needs, in e.g. artefact analysis, GIS, database skills, archive use, data management.

Teaching and Learning Methods

All taught modules include seminars, lectures or practicals delivered by professional archaeologists and practitioners who research and work in the subjects on which they lecture. These will provide an advanced survey of the state of knowledge and enable students to develop a comprehensive understanding and critical awareness of specific topics relating to current research and advanced scholarship. All contributors use a wide range of examples from their own fields of expertise.

Group work and practical sessions related to lectures provides students with the opportunity to develop and practise their subject specific and generic skills [C1-4] through, for example, preparation for and oral contribution to seminars, artefact or GIS practicals.

The range of postgraduate modules on offer is a great strength of this course. It will allow students with different backgrounds to develop advanced skills appropriate to their research interests. Thus all modules provide an advanced level of knowledge and understanding, but selected modules give students the opportunity to develop particular aspects of their knowledge in classical archaeology and frontier studies, or in practical skills like artefact analysis or database applications for GIS.

Research training (at School level), tutorials, guided reading, feedback on outline proposals, and continuous supervision provide the basis for students to complete their dissertations.

Assessment Strategy

All assignments include an element of assessment related to the understanding of subject-specific skills [C1]. Students are encouraged through the research logs compiled for Faculty and School training modules to reflect on their own research in relation to the attainment of transferable skills, in either the pursuit of further postgraduate research, in professional archaeology, or in the wider workplace [C2]. The dissertation represents the summative task in detailed practice of all these cognitive skills.

Transferable/Key Skills

On completing the programme students should demonstrate advanced skills in:

- D1 Written communication
- D2 Interpersonal/oral communication
- D3 Teamwork
- D4 Planning and organisation
- D5 Computer literacy

Teaching and Learning Methods

Through lectures, seminars, practicals and tutorials, students will acquire advanced skills in:

- [a] how to plan and execute both short and extended pieces of written work [D1, 4, 5].
- [b] effective interpersonal/oral communication techniques. Students practise and develop these skills by contributing orally either as groups or individually in seminars for taught modules [D2, 3-4].
- [c] teamworking. This is practised through contribution to group seminar work [D3], and (optionally) through participation in archaeological fieldwork.
- [d] planning and organization. Students practise and develop planning skills, which are introduced during Induction Week, by organizing their work schedules around programme deadlines, including the dissertation [D4-5].
- [e] computer literacy. This is practised and developed throughout the programme through submission of coursework, practical work, the dissertation [D5], and (optionally) through advanced computing-based skills modules.

Assessment Strategy

Written communication [D1] is assessed in each of the modules on this programme. Assignments will be mostly essay-based, reflecting the dominance of this form of writing within the discipline, but other written work may be set, such as writing a research log, or compiling a database or implementing a GIS as part of a research assignment. Interpersonal/oral communication, individually and as part of a team [D2-3] is a critical part of the teaching and learning experience for this programme, e.g. during group seminars during and individual feedback sessions. Planning and organization is practised throughout the programme through the student's ability to meet deadlines and successfully complete the programme [D4]. Computer literacy [D5] is assessed through written assignments, which are all required to be word-processed. Where appropriate, students may wish to acquire higher computing skills

(e.g. in databases or GIS), and training in these areas is available through optional modules.

12 Programme Curriculum, Structure and Features

Basic structure of the programme

The programme may be taken on a full time or part time basis. All students must take a total of 120 credits of taught courses. For full-time students these may be balanced 50-70-0, 60-60-0, 70-50-0 or 50-50-20 between the three semesters. A part-time route through the programme will be decided on a case-by-case basis in consultation with the Degree Programme Director.

In Semesters 1 or 2 all students shall also take 40 credits of optional modules, after consultation with the Degree Programme Director. (Students may select from 0-20 of these credits in Semester 1, from 20-40 of these credits in Semester 2, and from 0-20 of these credits in Semester 3). All students must take a total of 120 credits of taught courses:

The list of optional modules offered could vary from year to year and modules will run subject to appropriate levels of enrolment, as specified on the individual module outline forms. Likewise, the semester in which each of the optional modules is offered may also vary in different years. All students will receive a module handbook at the start of each module, which will contain details of lecturers, lectures and seminars, methods of assessment, seminar themes and set reading. The handbook will also contain a list of aims and learning outcomes for the module, and a bibliography. Extra teaching and learning support material will usually be provided, e.g. through Blackboard, Robinson Library Special Collections. Module outline forms will be provided for all modules.

The normal progression will be as follows:

In Semester 1, all students take:

[a] Research Themes, Theories and Skills in Archaeology [20 credits]. This will provide skills training in key research skills and will introduce key theoretical, methodological and historiographical issues in the study of archaeology, and will offer a range of chronological and thematic perspectives on the subject.

[b] *The Graduate Seminar in Roman Archaeology* [20 credits].

In Semesters 2, all students will take:

[a] *Armies and Frontiers of the Roman Empire* [20 credits].

In Semesters 1 and 2, all students take:

[a] Optional modules in archaeology and/or related subjects [to a maximum of 70 credits total in any semester]. The options available in any given year will provide a range of thematic, methodological and/or practical skills. They are selected by each candidate in consultation with the Degree Programme Director depending on the specific knowledge and skills the candidate wishes to acquire.

In Semester 3, all students take:

[a] Dissertation [60 credits].

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

The Newcastle MA in Roman Frontier Studies offers the opportunity to pursue advanced study and research in the **thematic area** of the archaeology of Roman Frontier Studies. It also provides a portal for students from other, related disciplines to begin studying Roman Frontiers at an advanced level. The considerable range of **optional modules** allows students to shape their course flexibly to suit their interests and career aspirations.

The Graduate Seminar in the Archaeology of the Roman World (and the optional Graduate Seminar in Greek Archaeology), include study tours to Rome (and Athens, respectively). Students participate in on-site seminars taught at some of the principal sites of the ancient

cities (these two modules incur an additional fee to fund the study tours).

The Newcastle MA in Roman Frontier Studies also provides the opportunity to acquire a range of **advanced practical skills**. Optional modules in artefact analysis, GIS, linguistic competence in European modern languages and other IT applications, heritage management and ancient languages provide high-level practical and/or analytical skills relevant to careers in both further research and professional practice.

Programme regulations (link to on-line version)

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

13 Criteria for admission

Entry qualifications

Candidates should normally hold a first degree with at least a 2:1 (Upper Second Class) degree in a humanities or related social science or science subject. Other degree qualifications may be considered where appropriate.

Admissions policy/selection tools

All applications are seen by the DPD and, where deemed appropriate, another member of staff. All borderline or non-standard applicants may be contacted by letter, email, or phone and further information solicited. Applicants may be called to interview to assess the level of their knowledge and experience. All applicants will be offered the chance to meet staff and view facilities.

Non-standard Entry Requirements

Candidates who have followed a non-traditional route into Higher Education will also be considered eligible.

Additional Requirements

Level of English Language capability

We actively encourage applications from overseas and domestic students. All overseas students have to satisfy the University's language requirements and obtain a minimum of 6.5 IELTS or equivalent.

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.

This programme is also supported to a significant extent by the Cowen (Archaeology) Library in the Great North Museum, and the collections of the Great North Museum and Wolfson Laboratory.

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

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

<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, 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

Report to the University on the standards of the programme

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

MA Roman Frontier Studies

	A				B				C				D				
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	5
Research Themes, Theories and Skills in Archaeology ARA8090		X	X		X	X	X	X		X			X	X	X	X	X
Graduate Seminar in Roman Archaeology ARA8050	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X
Armies and Frontiers of the Roman Empire ARA8028	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X
Dissertation ARA8099	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X
Graduate Seminar in Byzantine Archaeology ARA8072	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X
Graduate Seminar in Greek Archaeology CAH8006	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X
Practical Artefact Analysis ARA8026	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X
Advanced Seminar in Artefact Studies ARA 8025	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X
Early Medieval Britain and Europe ARA8080	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X		X	X
Understanding Metalwork: An Introduction to Use-Wear Analysis ARA8035	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X
Recording Historic Buildings ARA8100	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Theory and Application in GIS CEG8704			X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X
An Introduction to the Fundamentals of GIS CEG8702			X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X
Ancient language option CAC					X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X
Ancient language options CAG					X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X
Ancient language options CLA					X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X

compulsory modules are indicated by **bold type**