

## PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION



1	<b>Awarding Institution</b>	Newcastle University
2	<b>Teaching Institution</b>	Newcastle University
3	<b>Final Award</b>	Postgraduate Diploma & MA
4	<b>Programme Title</b>	Museum Studies
5	<b>Programme Code</b>	3371P/F, 4007P/F
6	<b>Programme Accreditation</b>	N/A
7	<b>QAA Subject Benchmark(s)</b>	N/A
8	<b>FHEQ Level</b>	Level 7
9	<b>Last updated</b>	May 2012

### 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 heritage/museums/galleries sectors, with a specific emphasis on museum studies;
2. To provide a curriculum that is responsive to the professional requirements and skills needs of the museum sector nationally and internationally;
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 and appropriate professional qualifications to students from diverse backgrounds including those with disabilities;
5. To provide students with the opportunity to gain the skills and knowledge required to work in the museum sectors on graduation;
6. To enable students to undertake discrete pieces of independent research at postgraduate level through various activities and assignments;
7. To enable students to undertake a sustained piece of independent and original research at postgraduate level through the production of a dissertation;
8. To ensure that the programme meets the requirements of a Level 7 qualification as defined by the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications; and
9. To ensure that the programme conforms to University policies and to QAA codes of practice (including placements).

### 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:

<p>A1 Understand the boundaries of museum studies;</p> <p>A2 Be aware of and understand current developments in the museum sector;</p> <p>A3 Be aware of and understand the key philosophical principles, and theoretical and conceptual approaches of museum studies;</p> <p>A4 Be aware of and understand the various forms that heritage can take;</p> <p>A5 Understand the different values ascribed to heritage;</p> <p>A6 Understand the historical development of museum studies in different geographical contexts;</p> <p>A7 Understand the relationship museum studies has with other subjects, especially gallery and heritage studies;</p> <p>A8 Be aware of and understand the key issues related to interpretation at museums; and</p> <p>A9 Possess the detailed knowledge that comes from carrying out a sustained piece of independent research on a focused topic.</p>
<p><b>Teaching and Learning Methods</b></p> <p><b>A1-A9</b> will be acquired through scheduled learning and teaching activities and guided independent study. University staff and visiting specialist practitioners in the heritage/museum/gallery sector deliver scheduled learning and teaching activities. Practicals, small group learning, workshops, and fieldwork (study visits) ensures students relate theoretical knowledge to specific practical examples. Throughout the programme, students are provided directed reading, but are encouraged to read widely. Additionally, many modules have student-led group activities, which encourage students to express their knowledge and understanding in a peer friendly setting. Employer-based learning is enhanced through the placement module providing students with the opportunity to develop their knowledge, understanding, and experience in the heritage/museums/galleries sectors.</p> <p><b>A9</b> will be provided for through the in-depth knowledge of specialised topics provided by the taught modules, and through the guidance and support provided by dissertation supervision sessions. The dissertation provides MA students with the opportunity to develop a deeper knowledge and understanding of a particular aspect of the heritage/museums/galleries sectors and its relationship to theoretical aspects of the professions and disciplines.</p>
<p><b>Assessment Strategy</b></p> <p>Throughout the programme, students are exposed to a variety of assessment types. Assignments are designed to provide students with the opportunity to relate theoretical and practical constructs to real life situations outside of academia. Knowledge and understanding is assessed formatively through discussions, oral presentations, group exercises, one-page reports, role play etc. Summative assessments are in the form of individual and group assignments. The employer-based placement provides students with the opportunity to explain their understanding of a particular organization and to reflect on the deepening of their own knowledge and understanding of the sector. Additionally, the dissertation provides an extended opportunity for MA students to reveal their in-depth knowledge and understanding of a particular aspect of museum studies, and they will be encouraged to apply the practical skills they have acquired to their research.</p>
<p><b>Intellectual Skills</b></p> <p>On completing the programme, students should be able to:</p> <p>B1 Possess a systematic understanding of knowledge, and a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, much of which is at, or informed by, cutting-edge museum research and practice;</p>

<p>B2 Synthesis and critical reflection on different theories, concepts, arguments and sources of evidence;</p> <p>B3 Possess a high-level appreciation of decision-making in complex and unpredictable situations;</p> <p>B4 Conduct independent learning and the ability to problem solve and to make sound judgements at an advanced level;</p> <p>B5 Demonstrate originality and maturity in the application of knowledge and concepts; and</p> <p>B6 Master data collection and analyse, evaluate, and interpret the principal source materials of museum studies.</p>
<p><b>Teaching and Learning Methods</b></p> <p>Through scheduled learning and teaching activities, students develop the ability to think critically and to apply advanced knowledge and methodological skills (B1-B6) they have acquired through their studies in order to present balanced and coherent arguments. Students are encouraged to develop and practice their intellectual skills through a wide range of types of assessed work (essays, reports, case studies, written exercises, reflective logs, and a dissertation for MA students). All modules (except ICS8015 and ICS8099) include group work sessions where students develop their cognitive skills in relation to real and topical issues in the heritage/museums/galleries sectors. These sessions require students normally to search for book, journal, or web-based information and for them to discuss such new information in the light of lectures and for them to come to a critical standpoint on any given topic. Feedback on individual and group presentations allows staff to supplement and illustrate their teaching and provides students with further opportunities to learn.</p>
<p><b>Assessment Strategy</b></p> <p>All written assignments enable students to develop their data gathering, evaluation, analytical, decision-making, problem solving, and interpretation skills (B1-B6) set within the wider academic framework of the programme. Thus, students are required to reference fully their work academically while understanding that, for example, a 'real' report may not include such references. Some assignments are split into a piece of professionally related work (e.g., writing an object label) and a critically reflective commentary on the work that requires students to explain the reasoning behind their work and to link it to the theory relating to any given practice (B1 and B2).</p>
<p><b>Practical Skills</b></p> <p>On completing the programme, students should be able to:</p> <p>C1 Master research and library skills, critical methodologies and theories, and tools for research in museum studies;</p> <p>C2 Deal with or exposed to a range of complex museum related issues and problems in terms of the theoretical and conceptual debates currently at the forefront of academic work in museum studies and the ability to make sound judgements;</p> <p>C3 Master the methods and skills required to collect and interpret data relevant to research in museum studies and be able to demonstrate self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems;</p> <p>C4 Master a variety of skills according to the students individual needs; e.g., data collection and management, use of IT to assist data handling and analysis;</p> <p>C5 Develop and present information verbally in a coherent and articulate way;</p> <p>C6 Apply knowledge to a practical situation;</p> <p>C7 Demonstrate the ability conduct a high level of independent and original research (specific to MA</p>

degrees); and
C8 Demonstrate subject-specific skills through practical and professional experience (varies based on special option selection).
<b>Teaching and Learning Methods</b>
All modules include lectures from a number of professional colleagues involved on a day-to-day basis with the area about which they lecture. Specialist practitioners ensure that the students are exposed to new developments and challenges facing the museum sector (C2). Contributors use a wide range of examples linking professional experience to the more theoretical knowledge and understanding. Group work, practicals, and workshops related to topics covered in lectures allow students to develop and practice their subject specific and professional skills through, for example, role-play and oral presentations (C1-C8). The 8-week employer-based placement provides an intensive work-place opportunity for all students to further develop and practice these skills (C2-C6, C8). Research training lectures, tutorials, guided reading, feedback on outline proposals, and continuous supervision provide the basis for students to complete their dissertations (C7).
<b>Assessment Strategy</b>
All modules require independent research to be carried out by the students, which is assessed through a variety of assignments. In all these forms of assessment, the skills (C1-C8) listed above will be tested to some degree. For MA students, this is assessed further in the dissertation module (C7). All assignments include an element of assessment related to the understanding of sector related skills. In undertaking their assignments, students are encouraged to reflect on 1) their own (voluntary or otherwise) experience in the sector and 2) case studies provided by lecturers. The employer-based placement provides a major opportunity for students to acquire professional skills (C1-C8).
<b>Transferable/Key Skills</b>
On completing the programme, students should be able to: D1 Communicate successfully in both written and oral forms of expression; D2 Communicate effectively with others when working in a group; D3 Conduct independent learning; D4 Manage time and prioritise tasks by working to strict deadlines; and D5 Use Information Technology; e.g., Internet, Blackboard, word processing, spreadsheets.
<b>Teaching and Learning Methods</b>
Students practise and develop their oral communication (D1) by presenting their findings from group work (D2) verbally to the whole cohort either as groups or individually in each module. As part of the induction offer, students are introduced to what is expected from postgraduate students, particularly in relationship to the depth of study and the presentation of ideas. Additionally during scheduled learning and teaching activities, students are exposed to and expected to engage with a variety of ways of writing (D2) required for their professional careers; e.g., news releases, management briefings, policy documents, general reports, implementation plans, web content. Communication skills are fostered and developed gradually through the progression from small group teaching and practical exercises to more extended submitted work, and finally through the dissertation (MA students only), all of which require keeping to programme deadlines and by planning and organizing their written work (D4). The use of IT (D5) is developed through all the modules and also is nurtured through independent research and submission of work.
<b>Assessment Strategy</b>
The majority of skills (D1-D5) mentioned above are assessed in most assignments. Attainment of all other key skills outcomes are not directly assessed but are seen as ancillary to the production of

assessed work; e.g., verbal skills, planning and organising is a necessary precondition for meeting other intended learning outcomes. It follows, therefore, that it is not possible to graduate without meeting the key skills outcomes.

## 12 Programme Curriculum, Structure and Features

### Basic structure of the programme

Students will take the following compulsory modules

Title	Code	Semester	Credit
Issues and Ideas	ICS8001	1	20
Management	ICS8002	1	20
Communication & Interpretation	ICS8003	1	20
Collection Management	ICS8004	2	20
Museum, Gallery & Heritage Placement	ICS8015	1&2	20
Dissertation (MA students only)	ICS8099	1,2&3	60

And one of the following optional modules

Title	Code	Semester	Credit
Art Curatorship 2	ICS8006	2	20
Exhibition and Interpretation	ICS8010	2	20
History	ICS8012	2	20
Archaeology	ICS8013	2	20
Natural Sciences	ICS8014	2	20
Heritage Education and Interpretation 2	ICS8036	2	20

Postgraduate Diploma students must complete six 20-credit modules for 120 total credits, while MA students must complete an additional 60-credit module for 180 total credits.

All students receive a module handbook before the start of each module, which contain full details of lectures, lecturers, practical work, visits, and assessed work, including assignment information. These handbooks also contain a list of aims and learning outcomes for the module, and a bibliography. Extra support material is provided through the computer-based 'managed learning environment' Blackboard.

In Semester 1, students take three, 20 credit, compulsory module; these compulsory modules draw on theoretical and practical examples from across the whole of the museums/galleries/heritage sectors and ensure that all students are provided with a broad understanding of the sector. Examples are drawn from local, national, and international case studies and discussion is frequently enhanced by the previous experience of students.

**Placement** – see description below.

**The Dissertation** Students complete their dissertation after the taught and work placement modules have been completed. Dissertations are presented in the form of a 12,000-15,000 - word piece of work, including footnotes and appendices but excluding bibliography. Dissertations frequently require close liaison with a museum, heritage organisation or site, art museum or gallery and should address a genuine need or problem. Students are encouraged to think about potential topics as early as possible and discuss topics in detail with staff at the beginning of Semester 2.

Once a topic has been agreed students produce a research proposal of no more than 300 words. This

short paper details their aims and objectives and the methods that they will employ to achieve them. Once agreed, a second, more detailed proposal that explains their aims and research methodologies, is required.

The Masters' degree dissertation must be an original piece of work and not simply a synthesis of existing knowledge. It requires the gathering and analysis of new data, the development of original arguments and the presentation of conclusions and recommendations. To be successful the dissertation requires careful planning and preparation.

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

**Fieldwork (Study Visits)** These provide students with an insight into the workings of many different types of heritage sites, galleries, and museums and different management structures. They provide students with the opportunity to be up-to-date with developments that are taking place in the heritage/museums/galleries sectors. The visits are viewed as one of the most important parts of the programme. Students are encouraged to make use of the visit checklist (provided separately) and to make notes. Visits normally are followed-up with a de-briefing session. Visits relate to the learning outcomes of a particular module while also supporting the overall aims of the postgraduate programmes. Students also are encouraged to visit as many other heritage, museum, and gallery sites as possible so that they can begin to relate information and ideas presented in lectures and seminars to the real world.

**Employer-Based Learning** All students normally are expected to take the Museum, Gallery & Heritage Placement module (ICS8015). In order to make sure students make the most of their placement, the module leader arranges all placements. Students discuss the type of placement most suited to them with the module leader or their personal tutor before the end of Semester 1 to try to best match the student with an appropriate host organisation. Placements usually commence in late April and last for eight weeks.

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

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

### **13 Criteria for admission**

#### ***Entry Qualifications***

Candidates should normally hold a first degree with at least a 2:1 (Upper Second Class) degree (or international equivalent) from a recognised university or college.

#### ***Admissions Policy/Selection Tools***

We actively encourage applications from overseas and from those employed in the sector who require CPD support. All overseas students have to satisfy the University's language requirements.

All borderline or unusual applicants are contacted by letter, email, or phone and further information solicited. Where appropriate and possible borderline applicants are invited for interview. All applicants are offered the chance to meet with staff. All applicants are encouraged to obtain as much experience in the sector as possible prior to their arrival. On occasion applicants are encouraged to defer for a year to gain such experience. Open Days have been introduced to provide applicants with the chance to see ICCHS facilities and staff, and for ICCHS staff to meet prospective students.

#### ***Non-standard Entry Requirements***

Candidates who have followed a non-traditional route into Higher Education also will be considered eligible; especially candidates able to demonstrate considerable work experience in the heritage/museums/galleries sectors.

#### ***Additional Requirements***

none

### ***Level of English Language Capability***

ICCHS actively encourage applications that are domestic or from the EU or considered International. Applicants whose first language is not English an IELTS score of 6.5 with a minimum of 6.0 in writing and speaking for direct entry, IELTS 6.0 with a minimum of 6.0 in writing for the pre-session 10 week entry and IELTS 6.0 with a minimum of 6.0 in writing and 6.0 in speaking for the 6 weeks entry.

## **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 Development 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 Student Union 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, Learning and Student Experience Committee.

### ***Programme reviews***

The Board of Studies conducts an Annual Monitoring and Review of the degree programme and reports to Faculty Teaching, Learning and Student Experience Committee. The FTLSEC takes an overview of all programmes within the Faculty and reports any Faculty or institutional issues to the University Teaching, Learning and Student Experience Committee.

### ***External Examiner reports***

External Examiner reports are considered by the Board of Studies. The Board responds to these reports through Faculty Teaching, Learning and Student Experience 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 six 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 one-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, Learning and Student Experience Committee on whether the programmes reviewed should be re-approved for a further six year period.

### ***Accreditation reports***

N/A



**Additional mechanisms**

N/A

**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
- 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/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

## MA/Postgraduate Diploma in Museum Studies

Module Code	Type	Intended Learning Outcomes																												
		A									B						C								D					
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	1	2	3	4	5	
ICS8001	Compulsory	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
ICS8002	Compulsory	✓	✓	✓	✓					✓				✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
ICS8003	Compulsory	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
ICS8004	Compulsory																													
ICS8006	Optional	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
ICS8010	Optional	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
ICS8012	Optional	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
ICS8013	Optional	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
ICS8014	Optional	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
ICS8015	Compulsory	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
ICS8036	Optional	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
ICS8099	Compulsory for MA only	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

A shaded cell means that the outcome may be introduced as part of this module depending on the nature of the placement or dissertation topic.