

**PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION**

|          |                                 |   |
|----------|---------------------------------|---|
| <b>1</b> | <b>Awarding Institution</b>     | Newcastle University  |
| <b>2</b> | <b>Teaching Institution</b>     | Newcastle University  |
| <b>3</b> | <b>Final Award</b>              | Postgraduate Certificate  |
| <b>4</b> | <b>Programme Title</b>          | Postgraduate Certificate in Educational Research and Innovation |
| <b>5</b> | <b>Programme Code</b>           | 3074P (September start)<br>3078P (January start)                |
| <b>6</b> | <b>Programme Accreditation</b>  | n/a   |
| <b>7</b> | <b>QAA Subject Benchmark(s)</b> | n/a   |
| <b>8</b> | <b>FHEQ Level</b>               | Level 7   |
| <b>9</b> | <b>Last updated</b>             | 25 <sup>th</sup> July 2013                                      |

**10 Programme Aims**

The programme aims to provide effective post-graduate professional development for teachers / lecturers and school leaders in the field of innovation in curriculum and pedagogy through practitioner enquiry. The aims are as follows:

- To develop student knowledge and appreciation of the complexities and skills required to critically evaluate, interpret, and successfully undertake research.
- To provide an understanding of, and the facility to, actively use varied research designs and methods.
- To explore the strengths and weaknesses of quantitative and qualitative methods, and the basic design principles of instruments that address particular research problems or questions.
- To apply these basic design principles and concepts to a potential or actual research proposal.
- To develop knowledge about survey research, sampling, experiments, ethnography, questionnaires, interviews and observation.
- To develop a critical understanding of the particular role of design experiments as a test bed for novel approaches to learning;
- To understand learning contexts as ecologies or systems that can be researched through the study of small group interactions;
- To synthesise central organising theories and frameworks through a systematic search of the literature in a chosen domain of learning. These may include theories relating to culture, identity, affect, motivation and self-efficacy as well as those addressing conceptual or cognitive development;

- To develop knowledge and skills to plan and conduct a robust small-scale design experiment that tests a new hypothesis drawn from or inspired by the literature;
- To develop knowledge and skills to plan methods that indirectly measure underlying learning processes;
- Understand the ethical requirements for research projects involving the study of human subjects.
- To ensure that the programme meets the requirements of a level 7 qualification as defined by the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications.
- To ensure 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 will have a good critical understanding of:

- A1 A range of research methodologies methods and understand their limitations in researching learning processes in real life settings.
- A2 Theories of learning that relate to their domain of interest.
- A3 The main criteria for evaluating social research (reliability, validity and replication)
- A4 The structure of the research process.

### **Teaching and Learning Methods**

The Knowledge and Understanding learning outcomes (A1, A2, A3 and A4) will all be addressed via the following methods:

The taught sessions focus on developing an understanding of educational research and in particular practitioner research in relation to theories of knowledge. Students will be introduced to theoretical frameworks and research evidence in relation to this. The taught sessions will allow for the exploration of a range of methodological approaches, ethical considerations in educational and practitioner research and processes for organising research in educational contexts. Issues of confidentiality when discussing practice contexts and experiences will be explored. Lectures / workshops will tend to merge as the sessions will be designed to be interactive, but also to draw on the expertise of the tutors in relation to the themes.

**Assessment Strategy**

A1, A2, A3 and A4 learning outcomes should be demonstrated via the following:

Assessment for both modules via portfolios. Components within the portfolio demonstrate the ability to students to synthesise theory and research in a given domain of practice and, on this basis, design and carry out small scale empirical research that demonstrates academic rigour. The portfolios tests the link between student's knowledge and understanding and practical application in research design and research process.

**Intellectual Skills**

On completing the programme students will have:

- B1 An understanding of the interacting factors that constitute a given learning ecology, including the wider political and social context.
- B2 The ability to undertake critical analysis of educational theory on a professional and pedagogic basis
- B3 The ability to select and design methods and analyse data taking due account of theoretical frameworks.
- B4 The ability to carry out design experiments in real life settings with due regard for the ethical implications.
- B5 The ability to evaluate research (namely published research) using the main criteria for evaluating social research
- B6 The ability to formulate a valid research question, aims and objectives from a basic research idea
- B7 The ability to design research methods appropriate to context and the research problem presented

**Teaching and Learning Methods**

The above intellectual skills (B1, B2, B3, B4, B5, B6 and B7) will be developed via lectures and further reading providing the students with the necessary input and guidance in defining the focus of the study in order to conduct a small scale design experiment in their chosen domain of interest.

**Assessment Strategy**

B1, B2, B3, B4, B5, B6 and B7 intellectual learning outcomes will be assessed via students being asked to demonstrate their ability to design and justify a research proposal; and to design a research instrument for use in this proposed research. The portfolios will encourage critical reflection upon the research process.

**Practical Skills**

On completing the programme students should be able to:

- C1 Conduct searches using a variety of databases
- C2 Develop methods that indirectly measure underlying learning processes
- C3 Conduct and evaluate a small scale design experiment in a real life setting
- C4 Plan an effective survey-based study

**Teaching and Learning Methods**

The taught sessions combine lecture style input with practical workshops to encourage critical engagement with the empirical evidence and research methodology in the chosen field of interest therefore addressing C1, C2, C3 and C4 learning outcomes.

**Assessment Strategy**

C1, C2, C3 and C4 will be assessed via students being asked to complete the portfolios and will be required to evidence the practical skills to inform design and conduct of practitioner research.

**Transferable/Key Skills**

On completing the programme students should be able to:

**D1** Demonstrate effective oral and written communication and use of ICT to support intellectual development

**D2** Plan and organise research and development projects.

**D3** Communicate with a range of audiences and stakeholders, including the dissemination of research findings to both specialist and non-specialists

**Teaching and Learning Methods**

Tutor and peer support for drafting the components of the portfolio (e.g. literature review/critique of methods used). Informal presentations to peers. Supported self-study and tutor support via Blackboard, website and email all enable students to address learning outcomes D1, D2 and D3.

**Assessment Strategy**

D1, D2 and D3 are all assessed via students undertaking the processes of writing the portfolios and engaging in peer review will allow students to develop transferable academic skills.

**12 Programme Curriculum, Structure and Features**

**Basic structure of the programme**

(a) The programme is available for part-time study only. It is specifically designed to be undertaken by students who work in an educational context.

(b) The period of study for part-time mode shall normally be 9 months starting in September or January.

(c) The programme comprises taught modules to a credit value of 60 credits.

(d) Candidates shall follow a modular route as described below:

EDU8203 Investigating Learning Processes – 40 credits

EDU8995 Research In Practice – 20 credits

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

This programme will be run for practising teachers / lecturers – who will need a professional teaching role and context in order to undertake the practice-based assignments. The programme will not be suited to full-time students due to the need for a current professional context in which to develop practice. This programme will allow individual teachers or groups of teachers to engage in a programme which will enhance both 'know how' and 'know why' in relation to educational research with the teacher / school leader as informed practitioner researcher as a means for professional practice development and school / college improvement.

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

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

**13 Criteria for admission***Entry qualifications*

Entry requirements for the PGCert are a first degree and relevant professional experience in an educational context. Candidates need to have current access to educational workplaces (e.g. through employment or educational consultancy), in order to develop opportunities for innovation.

*Admissions policy/selection tools*

Applications are considered on the basis of the university's online application form.

*Level of English Language capability*

Applicants whose first language is not English require IELTS 6.5, TOEFL 575 (paper-based) or 233 (computer-based), 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 Development Centre (further information is available from the Robinson Library).

*Academic and Pastoral support*

Each undergraduate and taught postgraduate student will be assigned a personal tutor.\* A personal tutor is one part of a wider network of advice and guidance available to students to support their personal and general academic development. The module leader acts as the first point of contact for subject-specific academic advice. Thereafter the Degree Programme Director or Head of School may be consulted. Issues relating to the programme may be

raised at the Student-Staff Committee, and/or at the Board of Studies. Within the academic unit, students may also receive additional academic and pastoral advice from a range of other student-facing staff including degree programme directors, dissertation/project supervisors, and administrative support staff.

\*Arrangements may vary for students taking special types of provision.

The University also offers a wide range of institutional services and support upon which students can call, such as the Writing Development Centre, Careers Service and Student Wellbeing Service. This includes 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 team 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.

#### **Education Resource Centre**

The Education Resource Centre is located in King George VI and houses a fully-networked cluster of PCs and a wide range of school focused texts.

#### **Computing**

The University Computing Service provides fully-networked computer services on three types of system – Windows-based PC, Unix and Apple Macintosh – in cluster rooms throughout the University. Cluster rooms are available each weekday; some are open for extended hours and at weekends. A wide range of software is available on each type of system. Printing facilities consists of fast draft printers, draft colour plotters, high-speed, high-quality black and white laser printers, and high-quality colour plotters. The draft facilities are available at every cluster of workstations, and usage is free. The high-quality printers are accessed via the network and printing must be paid for and collected at the main Computing Service building in the centre of the campus. The many and various services of the UCS are described in documents which are widely available in the cluster rooms and on the World Wide Web. Students can use any cluster on the University Campus.

**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 Student-Staff Committee and/or the Board of Studies. New modules and major changes to existing modules are subject to approval by the Faculty Learning, Teaching and Student Experience Committee.

*Programme reviews*

The Board of Studies conducts an Annual Monitoring and Review of the degree programme and reports to Faculty Learning, Teaching and Student Experience Committee. The FLTSEC takes an overview of all programmes within the Faculty and reports any Faculty or institutional issues to the Faculty Learning, Teaching 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 Learning, Teaching and Student Experience Committee. External Examiner reports are shared with institutional student representatives, through the Student-Staff Committee.

*Student evaluations*

All modules, and the degree programme, are subject to review by student questionnaires. Informal student evaluation is also obtained at the **Student-Staff 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 Student-Staff Committee and the Board of Studies.

*Faculty and University Review Mechanisms*

Every six years degree programmes in each subject area undergo periodic review. This involves both the detailed consideration of a range of documentation, and a review visit by a review team (normally one day in duration) which includes an external subject specialist and a student representative. Following the review a report is produced, which forms the basis for a decision by University Learning, Teaching and Student Experience Committee on whether the programmes reviewed should be re-approved for a further six 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. There are reassessment opportunities, with certain restrictions. Limited compensation up to 40 credits of the taught element and down to a mark of 40% is possible for candidates who commenced their programme in 2013/14 or earlier. For students starting their programme in 2014/15 or later, no compensation is possible.

### *Common Marking Scheme*

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

#### **Summary description applicable to postgraduate programmes**

|             |                       |
|-------------|-----------------------|
| <50         | Fail                  |
| 50-59       | Pass                  |
| 60-69       | Pass with Merit       |
| 70 or above | Pass with Distinction |

A Distinction level mark (70%-100%) will be given to work that displays depth of knowledge and mastery of skills appropriate to that module. The work will be consistently well structured and sharply focused. There will be evidence of the capacity to generalise and transfer principles to take account of the wider context. It will demonstrate critical analysis and coherence of argument. Connections between theory, practice and research will be discussed from an informed and highly reflective perspective. A high level of critical engagement will be echoed in the sustained coherence and quality of discussion.

A Merit level mark (60%-69%) will be awarded for well written and informed work that indicates awareness of recent developments and relevant literature. The work will be well structured and will demonstrate an understanding of the different perspectives of evidence from research, practice and theory. Only some aspects of these will be fully integrated conceptually. Literature cited will be used judiciously to identify, interpret and substantiate the main themes.

A Pass level mark (50%-59%) will be awarded for work that is adequately structured and displays some integration of the focus into wider contexts and perspectives. Some links will have been made between different aspects without a sustained conceptual integration and development. Work will draw upon more than one type of evidence and display some critical thinking.

A Fail mark (49% and below) will be given to work which uses a narrow range of evidence from a limited range of sources. Discussion will be largely descriptive with no consideration of the wider context. There will be little attempt to develop an argument or present information coherently.

#### *Role of the External Examiner*

An External Examiner, a distinguished member of the subject community, is appointed by Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee, after recommendation from the Board of Studies.

The External Examiner is expected to:

- See and approve examination papers
- Moderate examination and coursework marking
- Attend the Board of Examiners
- Report to the University on the standards of the programme

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

The University Prospectus: <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

| Module  | Type              | Intended Learning Outcomes |               |        |         |
|---------|-------------------|----------------------------|---------------|--------|---------|
|         |                   | A                          | B             | C      | D       |
| EDU8995 | Core / compulsory | 1, 2,3, 4                  | 3,4,5,6,7     | 4      | 1, 2, 3 |
| EDU8203 | Core / compulsory | 1, 2,3, 4                  | 1,2,3,4,5,6,7 | 1,2,3, | 1, 2, 3 |
|         |                   |                            |               |        |         |
|         |                   |                            |               |        |         |