

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION



1	Awarding Institution	Newcastle University
2	Teaching Institution	Newcastle University
3	Final Award	MA
4	Programme Title	MA in Film: Theory & Practice
5	Programme Code	4039
6	Programme Accreditation	N/A
7	QAA Subject Benchmark(s)	N/A
8	FHEQ Level	7
9	Last updated	May 2014

10 Programme Aims

- 1 To enhance students' skills in the critical analysis of the underlying language of film.
- 2 To provide students with advanced knowledge of the theoretical and historical aspects of film in a range of national and transnational contexts.
- 3 To develop and widen students' knowledge of film as both a medium and an aspect of wider cultural histories.
- 4 According to module choice, to provide students with knowledge and experience of film practice, incorporating film production and film exhibition.
- 5 To provide students with training in a range of research methodologies specific to the study of cultural objects in general and film in particular, and a range of research skills including critical and selective data-gathering, archive work, synthesis of complex information, comparative analysis, bibliographical skills, and the application of information and communications technologies.
- 6 To comply with University policy and procedures
- 7 To meet the requirements of a level 7 programme within the FHEQ

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 knowledge and understanding of:

- A1 the close analysis of films and critical discourses on film, in the light of cutting-edge research.
- A2 aspects of the cinemas, and their contextual cultures, of a range of countries, in depth and in detail.
- A3 advanced accounts of the modes of visual and narrative representation in film, and their social, political, commercial, and creative implications.
- A4 how to demonstrate, in extended pieces of writing, in-depth knowledge of a self-chosen aspect of study, informed by advanced and recent scholarship.
- A5 empirical research methods such as distinguishing between varying versions of films and surveying audience responses.
- A6 (for those students choosing options in film practice) the processes, requirements and demands of either filmmaking or cinema management, informed by the expertise and experiences of highly skilled professionals.

Teaching and Learning Methods

A1-6 are imparted via a combination of seminars based on required reading, lectures, workshops, student presentations, practical analyses of short sequences from films, and one-to-one tutorials on work in progress. These primary means lead to guided self-study, mainly through reading and the close viewing of films, and to the development of independent study programmes through selective identification of key areas of materials and ideas.

Assessment Strategy

A1-6 are assessed by written assignments and, where applicable, a dissertation. A6 is also assessed by short films.

Intellectual Skills

On completing the programme students should be able to:

- B1 gather, synthesise and evaluate information.
- B2 undertake independent, critical analysis.
- B3 organise and present ideas convincingly within the framework of a structured and reasoned argument, in oral or – more usually – written form.
- B4 apply appropriate methodologies to specialist areas of study.
- B5 (for those students who choose optional modules in film practice) plan and organise the production of complex images according to the principles of film narrative, and/or negotiate a range of conflicting commercial demands while working in a team to produce elements of a commercial cinema programme.
- B6 design a research project, manipulate and present substantial amounts of data and/or analysis, and select and employ appropriate research methodologies.

Teaching and Learning Methods

B1-5 are developed through the close analysis of films, seminar preparation, presentations to peers, group discussion, and the planning, drafting, and writing of assignments. B4 is also developed in the research training modules through instructional lectures and group analysis of sample films and texts. B5 is also developed through the tutored use of digital cameras and editing suites and/or fieldwork. B6 is developed in two preparatory modules and through specialist supervision during the planning and execution of the writing of chapters comprising a dissertation designed to study a specialised subject in depth. The research methods modules and dissertation are also designed to give training for, and insights into, possible doctoral study.

Assessment Strategy

B1-5 are assessed by means of written assignments. B5 is additionally assessed by the making of a short film. B1-4 and B6 are additionally and to a higher level assessed in the dissertation. B6 is assessed through the dissertation, with particular emphasis being placed by assessors on skills of design, presentation, selection, and argument.

Practical Skills

On completing the programme students should be able to:

- C1 deploy detailed knowledge of key techniques in film construction and identify these techniques within and across films.
- C2 deploy a range of current theoretical approaches, which may include narratology, cultural materialism, auteur analysis, new historicism and aesthetics, in analysing both the nature of individual films and the forces that have shaped film history.
- C3 deploy detailed knowledge of key tendencies, movements, styles, and trends in the film industries and environments of reception across a range of countries and analyse the ways in which such knowledge and its objects are constructed over time.
- C4 (for those students taking optional modules in film theory and history) work imaginatively with key issues in Film Studies, such as those of authorship, gender, performance, modes and circumstances of production and reception, nationality and race.
- C5 (for those students taking optional modules in film practice) develop a narrative screenplay, and/or film and edit together footage according to designs and conventions, and/or programme and market films and/or special events according to the requirements of an independent cinema.

Teaching and Learning Methods

Skills C1-5 are developed through guided reading and viewing, lectures, seminars incorporating detailed analysis of selected film sequences, presentations to peers, group discussion and the preparation and writing of assignments. C5 is additionally developed through the tutored use of digital cameras and editing suites and fieldwork.

Assessment Strategy

C1-5 are assessed through written assignments and the dissertation. C5 is also assessed through the making of a short film, the writing of an essay reflecting on the film-making process, and/or the production of a hypothetical film programme, a marketing campaign, and/or a report on a placement.

Transferable/Key Skills

On completing the programme students should be able to:

- D1 communicate and persuade.
- D2 use library and bibliographic research resources effectively.
- D3 interpret and make sense of visual data used representationally.
- D4 identify and solve complex intellectual problems.
- D5 use email, databases, and online environments as research and study tools.
- D6 manage time, make plans and set priorities in order to achieve an objective.
- D7 work creatively and flexibly with others as part of a small team.

Teaching and Learning Methods

D1-4 are enhanced through seminar presentations and discussions, and through the planning, drafting, and writing of assignments and the dissertation. D5 is developed in the Research Training and Research & Development modules and put into practice across the whole range of student intervention, most particularly in the presentation of written work. D6 is developed in short-term mode across the whole range of student intervention, most particularly in the timely delivery of oral presentations and of written work; in medium-term mode it is developed notably in the preparation, staging, and completion of the dissertation. D7 is imparted, practiced, and enhanced in seminar interventions, group work, and discussions formal and informal, in and beyond the classroom.

Assessment Strategy

D1-5 are assessed through written assignments and the dissertation. D6 & 7 are not formally assessed but are deemed to contribute (negatively or positively) to the outcomes of all assignments and are monitored through seminars and tutorials.

12 Programme Curriculum, Structure and Features

Basic structure of the programme

This is a one year programme (full time) or two years (part time). Students must complete 180 credits, of which compulsory modules account for 120 credits (Screen Aesthetics [20 credits], Approaches to Film Theory & History [20 credits], Researching Film: Skills and Methods [20 credits], Dissertation [60 credits]), and optional modules account for 60 credits.

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

This programme allows students to choose between specialising in film theory & history or film practice. All students take compulsory modules equipping them to analyse films and engage with questions about the nature of film and the dominant and nationally-specific trends in film history, and then choose between optional modules in 1) specialist fields of film theory & history and 2) film practice (including film production and film exhibition). Students electing to specialise in film theory & history are provided with an opportunity to study film from across a wide range of disciplines and national and historical contexts. Students electing to specialise in film practice are given the opportunity to build on their understanding of the nature of the medium developed in the compulsory modules by acquiring practical and vocational skills necessary to producing and/or exhibiting films. This choice extends into the dissertation, for which students may either write a 15,000-18,000-word study of a topic chosen in consultation with their supervisor, or produce a 4-7-minute film accompanied by a 7,000-word critical piece on a related area.

Programme regulations

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

13 Criteria for admission

Entry qualifications

An upper second class BA Honours degree in a relevant subject: Arts, Humanities, Film or Media Studies.

Admissions policy/selection tools

Standard University application form and references.

Non-standard Entry Requirements

International equivalent academic qualifications. Relevant professional experience (film-making, teaching, film exhibition) can also be considered.

Additional Requirements

N/A

Level of English Language capability

IELTS score of 6.5 (TOEFL 575 (paper-based) or 233 (computer-based), or equivalent), with a minimum of 6.5 in written English and a minimum of 6.0 in all other sub skills. There is no route into the programme via pre-sessional English courses.

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.

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.

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		

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

Module	Type	Intended Learning Outcomes			
		A	B	C	D
FMS8358	Compulsory	1, 3, 4	1, 2, 3, 4	1	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7
FMS8055	Compulsory	1, 2, 3, 4	1, 2, 3, 4	2, 3	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7
FMS8360	Compulsory	1, 5	2, 4, 6	1	1, 2, 3, 5
FMS8357 FMS8355	Optional	1, 2, 3, 4	1, 2, 3, 4	1, 2, 4	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7
FMS8352 FMS8353	Optional	4, 6	1, 2, 5	1, 5	3, 6
FMS8356 FMS8359	Optional	6	1, 2, 5	5	1, 4, 5, 6, 7
COM8005 COM8006	Optional	4, 6	1, 2, 5	1, 5	3, 6
FMS8099	Compulsory	1, 2, 3, 4	1, 2, 3, 4, 6	1, 2, 3	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6