

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

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| 1 | Awarding Institution | Newcastle University |
| 2 | Teaching Institution | Newcastle University |
| 3 | Final Award | BA (Hons) |
| 4 | Programme Title | Modern Languages |
| 5 | UCAS/Programme Code | T901 |
| 6 | Programme Accreditation | N/A |
| 7 | QAA Subject Benchmark(s) | Languages and related studies, area studies |
| 8 | FHEQ Level | 6 |
| 9 | Date written/revised | April 2014 |

10 Programme Aims

- 1 To foster intercultural awareness and understanding, and an attitude of curiosity and openness towards different cultures.
- 2 To provide students with knowledge and skills that prepare them for further intellectual development and further independent study.
- 3 To provide a flexible programme of study through variety of student choice in modules in Modern Languages within an informed advisory framework.
- 4 To give students the opportunity to spend time studying or working in the countries in which the languages they are studying are spoken.
- 5 To develop proficiency in receptive (reading and listening), productive (writing and speaking), and mediating skills in one, two or three languages

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. The programme outcomes have references to the relevant benchmark statements.

Knowledge and Understanding

On completing the programme students should have knowledge and understanding of:

- A1 the lexis, grammatical structures, registers and usage of one, two or three modern languages to BA Honours degree standard, and where taken as an option, other languages to ALTE Levels 3, 4 or 5 (see Statement of Standards)
- A2 aspects of the history, society, culture and linguistic development of the relevant countries in East Asia, Europe and Latin America dependent upon the languages chosen for study and according to module selection (see section 12).
- A3 certain areas of specialist study, according to module selection, in cultural studies, film, history, language, linguistics, literary studies and politics of the relevant countries in East Asia, Europe and Latin America (see section 12).
- A4 the internal diversity and connections between cultures.

A5 (for students opting to write a dissertation), of a topic studied in-depth and independently.

Teaching and Learning Methods

The primary means of imparting knowledge and understanding of the modern languages (A1) is via a mix of communicative, student-centred language teaching methods and formal linguistic instruction. In the case of A2-A3, knowledge and understanding are generally conveyed through lectures and seminars which guide students towards independent reading and enable students to self-assess and develop their learning through group discussion, take-home tasks; guided self-teaching activities; e-mail discussion and e-mail based group working; the preparation of presentations and/or reports. A4 is developed initially within the communicative language training framework and is further enhanced during the students' year abroad. In A5 (optional dissertation) one-to-one tutorials provide academic guidance, while the opportunity to carry out independent research allows students to apply and practise research skills.

Assessment Strategy

Knowledge and understanding of the modern language (A1) is assessed by written continuous assessment and class tests (evaluating student understanding and progress), and unseen written, aural and oral examinations. Outcomes A2-3 are assessed by essay and/or unseen written examination, oral presentation & video presentation, (requiring independent, critical analysis and application of intellectual models, principles and theories). Outcome A4 is assessed during the year abroad by a Year Abroad ePortfolio and in some cases Year Abroad Work Placement Report. Outcome A5 is assessed by a 5-6000 word dissertation.

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 within the framework of a structured and reasoned argument, oral or written.

B4 apply appropriate methodologies to specialist areas of study.

B5 (for those who choose to write a dissertation), design a research project and select and employ appropriate research methodologies

Teaching and Learning Methods

B1-4 skills are developed through seminar preparation and presentation, group discussion and written assignments. B5 is developed through one-to-one tutorials to facilitate the development of independent study and research skills through student self-evaluation.

Assessment Strategy

B1-4 are assessed by means of course work (e.g. essays, oral presentations) and unseen written examinations. They are also assessed as part of oral examinations. They may also be assessed by dissertation.

| Practical Skills | |
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| On completing the programme students should be able to: | |
| C1 | show receptive (reading and listening) and productive (writing and speaking) skills in one, two or three languages to BA Honours degree standard. |
| C2 | perform a range of communicative tasks. |
| C3 | translate non-technical texts from and into the target language, develop competent liaison interpreting skills. |
| C4 | make effective use of language reference materials, such as grammars, dictionaries and corpora. |
| C5 | practice independent language learning. |
| Teaching and Learning Methods | |
| <p>Learning outcomes C1-2 are achieved via communicative, student-centred skills training, (e.g. developing and practising reading skills, enhancing listening skills through language laboratory work, liaison interpreting, analysing and practising different writing skills, and conducting oral discussion and presentation, both individually and as part of a team), and formal grammar instruction (e.g. guided study exercises, and use of IT resources). C1-2 skills may be further enhanced by delivery of specified modules in the target language. These skills are developed and consolidated during the year abroad. C3 is achieved by guided translation into and out of the target language, and analysis of translation techniques; liaison interpreting in and out of the target language; reading for gist exercises; summary and evaluation of texts in the modern language, working in the modern language. C4-5 are achieved in the teaching of C1-3, and further enhanced by study skills sessions as detailed in section 13 (below). Self-access language learning is also encouraged in order to further both C4 and C5.</p> | |
| Assessment Strategy | |
| <p>C1-3 are assessed by written continuous assessment and class tests (evaluating student progress) and unseen written examination (reading, writing, translating and interpreting skills), aural examination (listening and writing skills) and oral examination (listening, speaking and interpreting skills). Skills C4 and C5 are not formally assessed.</p> | |
| Transferable/Key Skills | |
| On completing the programme students should be able to: | |
| D1 | communicate clearly and effectively, both orally and in writing. |
| D2 | give oral presentations. |
| D3 | manage one's time, make plans and set priorities in order to achieve an objective. |
| D4 | work creatively and flexibly with others as part of a team, and, in the case of the intercalary project, the ability to conduct an effective interview. |
| D5. | adapt and operate effectively within a different cultural environment. |
| D6. | use library and bibliographic research resources. |
| D7. | analyse and solve problems |

D8. use IT effectively, such as word processing, email, databases, online environments and the use of the Internet as a research and study tool.

Teaching and Learning Methods

D1 is enhanced through seminar presentations, discussions, and written assignments. Skills D2-3 and D6-8 are practised through seminar preparation and presentation. D3 and D6-8 are further developed through written assignments and research-based modules. D4 is developed through team presentations and projects (including the intercalary project). D5 is developed initially through communicative language training, and is later enhanced during the student's year abroad. D8 is further enhanced through the use of IT resources in language teaching and as an organisational tool for certain modules. D6 and D8 skills are also developed during induction (see 13 below).

Assessment Strategy

D1 is assessed by essay, dissertation and unseen written examination, (written communication), while both D1 and D2 are assessed via assessed seminar presentations and oral examinations (oral communication). D3 and D6-7 are assessed in a number of ways, including written assignments, unseen examinations, assessed seminar preparation and presentation, self-directed language coursework and preparation for language classes. D4 is assessed via team presentations and projects (including the Year Abroad Work Placement Report).
D5 is assessed via the Year Abroad ePortfolio produced during the year abroad.
D8 is assessed in a number of ways including the preparation of written assignments and seminars.

12 Programme Curriculum, Structure and Features

Basic structure of the programme

The programme is studied over four years full-time based on 30 weeks attendance per annum. Students study *either* one language (if French or German) or two or three of the following languages: Chinese, Japanese, French, German, Portuguese, and Spanish. Stages 1, 2 and 4 of the programme are spent in residence attending the University of Newcastle; Stage 3 is an intercalary year during which students may either spend the whole year in a country where one of the languages studied is spoken, or split the year between two or even three countries where the target languages are spoken. Each year or stage requires the study of modules with a total credit value of 120. 20 credits of module study represent 200 hours of student work, including lectures and other teaching (such as seminars), private study, preparation of coursework and exam preparation and revision. Larger modules are proportionately heavier in their work content. The weighting of compulsory practical language modules varies between 20 and 40 credits depending on the target language and the Stage at which it is being studied. All other modules at Stages 1, 2 and 4 are generally 20 credits in weight. Modules undertaken during the intercalary year have a weighting of 100 credits (Year Abroad ePortfolio) and 20 credits (Year Abroad Work Placement Report or Study Abroad module).

In Stage 1 students are required to study 40 credits of compulsory practical language modules for Level A languages and 20 for Level B languages. These language modules must be passed for the purposes of progression to Stage 2. In Stage 2 students are required to study 40 credits of compulsory language modules for Level B Chinese and Japanese and 20 credits for all other Level B and C languages. In Stage 4 students are required to study 40 credits for Level C Chinese and Japanese and 20 credits for all other Level C and D languages. In addition to the compulsory practical language modules students must take further modules to bring their credit weighting up to a total of 120 credits at Stages 1, 2 and 4. These modules are chosen from the range of modules offered at the appropriate stage in that particular year in the School of Modern Languages. For a student to have a language named on their degree certificate they must have studied a total of 80 credits in compulsory language modules and designated language specific optional modules across Stages 2 and 4.

The compulsory practical language modules are conducted mainly in the foreign language; optional modules are taught in a combination of the target language and English, varying from module to module and from year to year. The range of options includes those that are language specific and provided by the relevant constituent sections of the School of Modern Languages and those that are open to all students of modern languages and are provided by colleagues across the School.

At Stage 1, students may study one, two or three languages, at least one of which must be at Level B. Only one language may be studied *ab initio* at Level A. In the compulsory practical language modules the students develop the language skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking; these modules also provide knowledge and understanding of the target language and its cultural context as well as the foundations of subject-specific skills (outcome A1, 2, & 4, C1-5). Students choose additional credits from a range of introductory modules within the School of Modern Languages in linguistics, film, literature, society and institutions; these modules enhance knowledge and understanding of the language and of specialist areas (outcomes A2, A3) as well as providing an introduction for cognitive skills (B1-3) and effective practice in key transferable skills (especially outcomes D1-4).

At Stage 2, students may study one, two or three languages, at least one of which must be at Level C. In addition to the compulsory practical language modules additional credits are chosen from a range of options in film, history, linguistics, literature, media, politics and visual arts. For those students studying German an *ab initio* option in Dutch language is available and for those studying Spanish an *ab initio* option in Catalan or Quechua. Students continue to develop the language skills of reading, writing, listening, speaking and translation; language modules are designed to develop these skills in preparation for the forthcoming Year Abroad (outcome A1, 2, & 4, C1-5), practise cognitive skills in the target language (B1-3)

as well as key transferable skills (D1, 2, 4 & 6). The optional modules are intended to be as broad-ranging as possible to allow informed choices to be made about more specialised final-year options; they develop knowledge and understanding of the language in relation to specialist areas of study (A2-3), while at the same time providing a sufficient introduction to critical skills and methodology appropriate to the area (B1-4) and further advancing key transferable skills (especially outcomes D1-2, 6-7).

At Stage 3 students generally may *either* spend the whole year in a country where one of the target languages is spoken, working as a teaching assistant in a school or college, or studying at a university, or undertaking an approved work placement, *or* split the year between two or even three countries where the target languages are spoken, studying at universities or undertaking approved work placements. However, students wishing to study Chinese or Japanese at Stage 4 are required to spend a complete academic year pursuing courses of study at a university or comparable institution in the relevant country. The School of Modern Languages has a number of student exchange programmes and/or formal links with Universities in France, Germany, Spain, Portugal, China and Japan, as well as a number of informal links with institutions in Latin America.

The Year Abroad is fully accredited and assessment is by means of a Year Abroad ePortfolio (100 credits) plus either Year Abroad Work Placement Report(20 credits) or marks achieved at the host university (to a total of 20 credits). While all aspects of knowledge, understanding and language skills will be developed during Stage 3, there will be particular opportunities for increasing intercultural awareness and understanding (A4), for developing self-study skills for language learning (C5), for developing organisational and interpersonal skills (D3-5); students preparing a dissertation will have the opportunity to develop knowledge and cognitive skills in this area too (A5, B5).

At Stage 4, students may study one, two or three languages, at least one of which must be at Level D. The language modules at Stage 4 are taught on the basis that students have reached a high (Level C) or very high level (Level D) of competence during their year abroad. The emphasis now is on sophisticated use of language in all skills (A1, 2 & 4, C1-5) as well as the cognitive abilities of analysis and structured argumentation (B2-3). Opportunities to practise interpreting skills are available through translation and interpreting courses (C3). A wide range of more specialised options in film, history, linguistics, literature, media, politics and visual arts takes the cognitive skills to a much higher level of development, including greater emphasis upon independent analytical skills, use of appropriate methodologies and problem-solving skills (B1-4, D1-3, 6-7). Students writing a dissertation as well as those preparing an extended essay will develop their knowledge and understanding as well as their subject-specific, cognitive and transferable skills over a broad range of outcomes (A2, 3, & 5, C1 & 4, B1-5, D1, 3, 6 & 7).

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

Flexibility in terms of the number of languages taken (post A level and ab initio) including East Asian Languages. Possibility of movement across degree programmes within the School depending on options taken.

Programme regulations (link to on-line version)

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

13 Criteria for admission

Entry qualifications

ABB with A in the target language.

Scottish qualifications

AABBB at Higher Grade, including at least one of French, German and Spanish. Combinations of Highers and Advanced Highers are accepted.

International Baccalaureate

34 points with at least one Higher Level French, German or Spanish at grade 6 or above.

Admissions policy/selection tools

The programme welcomes applications from both A/AS level candidates and non-standard entrants (Partners Programme candidates, Mature Students, Access Courses). Students to whom offers are made are invited to an open day to meet staff and students and see the School. Attendance is not compulsory.

Admission is to the appropriate level according to qualifications at the starting point, which in turn will determine the level of outcome at the end of the degree course. Chinese, French, Japanese, German, Portuguese and Spanish may all be started *ab initio*.

Non-standard Entry Requirements

Access to HE courses

Candidates offering Access to HE courses are welcomed and considered on an individual basis.

Evidence of relevant language study to a suitable level is also required.

Additional Requirements

Level of English Language capability

6.5 IELTS or approved 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.

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 University 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 stages* are subject to review by student questionnaires. Informal student evaluation is also obtained at the Student-Staff Committee, and the Board of Studies. The National Student Survey is sent out every year to final-year undergraduate students, and consists of a set of questions seeking students' views on the quality of the learning and teaching. 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.
*With the exception of intercalating years and the final stages of undergraduate programmes.

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 40 (Undergraduate programmes)

Course requirements

Progression is subject to the University's Undergraduate Progress Regulations <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/regulations/docs/UGProgress13-14.pdf> and Undergraduate Examination Conventions <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/regulations/docs/UGExamConv13-14.pdf>.

In summary, students must pass, or be deemed to have passed, 120 credits at each Stage. Limited compensation up to 40 credits and down to a mark of 35 is possible at each Stage and there are resit opportunities, with certain restrictions.

Weighting of stages

Work undertaken at Stages 2, 3 and 4 counts towards the final award. Work completed at Stage 4 carries double the weighting of work completed at Stages 2 and 3. If the mark gained in SML3006, SML3007 or SML3008 at Stage 3 (20 credits) is greater than the lowest mark for any 20-credit SML module taken at Stage 2(except Level B or C language modules) then the mark for SML3006, SML3007 or SML3008 will replace that lower mark when calculating the degree average. From 2015/16 this mark replacement will no longer operate and 20 credits from either SML3006, SML3007 or SML3008 in Stage 3 will count towards the final award.

Common Marking Scheme

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

| | Honours | Non-honours |
|-------|-------------------------------|--------------------|
| <40 | Fail | Failing |
| 40-49 | Third Class | Basic |
| 50-59 | Second Class, Second Division | Good |
| 60-69 | Second Class, First Division | Very Good |
| 70+ | First Class | Excellent |

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/undergraduate/>

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.

