

**PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION
(Taught Postgraduate)**



1	Awarding Institution	Newcastle University
2	Teaching Institution	Newcastle University
3	Final Award	M.A.
4	Programme Title	M.A. in English Literature
5	Programme Code	4022F/P
6	Programme Accreditation	English
7	QAA Subject Benchmark(s)	N/A
8	FHEQ Level	7
9	Last updated	January 2018

10 Programme Aims

1. To provide an MA programme that is engaged in the advanced study of a wide range of literary texts and genres in English from the Medieval period to the present;
2. To enable students to develop a critical awareness of current thinking at the forefront of the discipline about the relationships between literature, theory and history;
3. To provide a programme of teaching and supervision which is informed by current staff research interests;
4. To enable students to undertake independent scholarly research;
5. To provide a programme which consistently attracts highly qualified applicants, including mature applicants and international applicants;
6. To enable students to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary for progression to advanced research in a PhD or MPhil programme, or for employment in positions suitable to those holding a higher degree;
7. To provide a programme which meets fully the criteria for a Level 7 award as laid out in the QAA's Framework for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies (FHEQ);
8. To comply with prevailing University policies and 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. The programme outcomes have references to the benchmark statements for English at Masters level.

Knowledge and Understanding

Through study on the programme students should:

A1 – Gain advanced knowledge of a range of literary and cultural texts across periods.
A2 – Gain knowledge of core theoretical and methodological debates (such as the relation to the politics and history of literature and its forms, editing practice and book history, ideas of history in literature, postcolonial theory, feminist theory).
A3 – Gain in-depth understanding of specific texts, genres, and contexts.
A4 – Gain knowledge and understanding of working methods appropriate to Masters level research in literary studies.

Teaching and Learning Methods
The primary means of imparting knowledge and understanding (A1 to A4) is through the seminar. Seminars demand that students develop analytical and presentational skills. Throughout the programme, students are expected to supplement essential reading with wide-ranging independent reading under the guidance of module leaders.
Assessment Strategy
<i>A – Knowledge and Understanding</i> The primary method of assessing knowledge and understanding (A1-4) is through submitted written work (primarily essays, dissertation outlines, and small projects). The small element of formal assessment of oral work in research training modules tests A2 and A4 in particular.
Intellectual Skills
On completing the programme students should: B1 – Students will acquire and develop critical and analytical skills to level 7. B2 – Students will acquire and develop a range of level 7 research skills. B3 – Students will be able to apply key methods and concepts relevant to advanced literary study concerning issues of literature and its complex relation to theory, historical context and ideas of history, book history and editing practice, postcolonial and/or feminist theory.
Teaching and Learning Methods
<i>B – Subject-specific/Intellectual Skills</i> Subject specific skills (B1-B3) are acquired through seminars, the completion of essays attached to the compulsory and optional modules, the dissertation preparation work, and the dissertation itself.
Assessment Strategy
<i>B – Subject-specific/Intellectual Skills</i> Subject-specific skills (B1-B3) are assessed by submitted work and by oral presentations.
Practical Skills
On completing the programme students should: C1 – Students will be able to analyse and engage imaginatively with complex literary texts. C2 – Students will be able to evaluate secondary material critically. C3 – Students will be able to grasp the interplay between texts and their theoretical, historical and/or cultural, social, and political contexts.
Teaching and Learning Methods
<i>C – Practical Skills</i> Practical skills (C1-C3) are developed through preparing for seminars, supported by learning technology, and the planning and writing of assignments.
Assessment Strategy
<i>C – Practical Skills</i> Practical skills (C1-C3) are assessed by submitted work and by oral presentations.
Transferable/Key Skills
On completing the programme students should:

D1 – structure and communicate ideas effectively.
D2 – plan and complete essays and presentations.
D3 – write and speak to different audiences.
D4 – gather, evaluate and organize information.
D5 – work and negotiate with others.
D6 – use information technology.
D7 – work to deadlines or within specified time limits.
D8 – work independently and as part of a team.

Teaching and Learning Methods

D – Transferable/Key Skills

Preparation for, and activities, in seminars, as well as the preparation and writing of essays and other assignments encourages the development of all the key skills listed (D1-D8).

Assessment Strategy

D – Transferable/Key Skills

D1, D2, D4, D7 are assessed by submitted work. D1, D3, D4, D5, D8 are assessed by oral presentation.

12 Programme Curriculum, Structure and Features

Basic structure of the programme

The Masters programme is studied over one year full-time or two years part-time. It is divided into modules, each with a value of 20 credits. The exception to this is the dissertation module, which consists of 60 credits. Each 20-credit module represents 200 hours of student learning. At least a 'Pass' in the course work is required for progression to the dissertation.

Full-time Masters students take the research methods module in Semester 1. Seven further modules will be offered (see MOFs, Annex and Programme Regulations for details) and students must choose five of these (two in Semester 1, three in Semester 2). Individual consultations support the assessment strategies of the modules. Each student prepares, under supervision, a dissertation on a topic of their own devising and which is connected to the staff research interests.

Part-time Masters students take the research module in semester 1 of year 1, and two other modules (one in each semester) in the first year; then in the second year, they take three modules (one in Semester 1; two in Semester 2). After that, they complete the dissertation under supervision.

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

This programme offers a distinctive option for the student to study the history of literature, from the medieval period to the contemporary moment, within a unique cross-period module format. Students can choose to broaden their scope in gaining experience of multiple periods, or may choose to concentrate, in the assessment, on one period.

Programme regulations (link to on-line version)

<https://www.ncl.ac.uk/regulations/programme/2018-2019/documents/4022ProgrammeRegulationsV2.pdf>

13 Support for Student Learning

The Student Services portal provides links to key services and other information and is available at: <https://my.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 principal 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 the University's IT Service (NUIT), 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.

14 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. Student opinion is sought at the Student-Staff Committee and/or the Board of Studies. The introduction of new modules and major changes to existing modules are subject to approval by the Faculty Learning, Teaching and Student Experience Committee (FLTSEC).

Programme reviews

The Board of Studies conducts an Annual Monitoring and Review of the degree programme and reports to FLTSEC. The FLTSEC takes an overview of all programmes within the Faculty and reports any Faculty or institutional issues to the Taught Programmes Sub-Committee.

External Examiner reports

External Examiner reports are considered by the Board of Studies. External Examiner reports and the response to the External Examiner from the Board of Studies are shared with institutional student representatives, through the Student-Staff Committee.

Student evaluations

All modules, and the degree programme, are subject to review through online 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 Learning and Teaching 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

n/a

Additional mechanisms

n/a

15 Regulation of assessment

Please refer to the Postgraduate (Taught) Examination Conventions at <https://www.ncl.ac.uk/regulations/docs/2018/>

Role of the External Examiner

An External Examiner, a distinguished member of the subject community, is appointed by the University following recommendation from the Board of Studies. The External Examiner is required to:

- i. confirm whether the standards of the University's awards meet or exceed the academic standards specified in external reference points such as the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications, the UK Quality Code, subject benchmark statements, and, where appropriate, the requirements of professional, statutory and regulatory bodies;
- ii. confirm whether the academic standards of the University's awards are consistent with those of similar programmes in other UK higher education institutions;
- iii. report on whether the University's processes for assessment measure student achievement rigorously and fairly and are conducted in line with University policies and regulations;
- iv. identify, where appropriate, examples of exemplary practice and innovation in learning, teaching and assessment;
- v. comment on opportunities to enhance the quality of the learning experience provided to students.

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

The University Prospectus: <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/postgraduate/courses/>

Degree Programme and University Regulations: <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/regulations/docs/>

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.