**UNIVERSITY OF
NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE**

**FACULTY OF
SCIENCE, AGRICULTURE & ENGINEERING**

DEGREE PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION
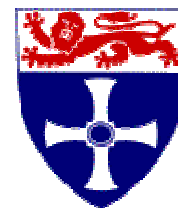
1.	**Awarding Institution**	University of Newcastle upon Tyne
2.	**Teaching Institution**	University of Newcastle upon Tyne
3.	**Final Award**	BSc (Hons.)
4.	**Programme Title**	Countryside Management
5.	**Programme Accredited by:**	
6.	**UCAS Code**	D455
7.	**QAA Benchmarking Group(s)**	Agriculture, forestry, agricultural science, food science and consumer science.
8.	**Date of production/revision**	September 2004

9.   Programme Aims:

The programme aims:

- To provide students from varied educational backgrounds with an opportunity to study a range of social and environmental science subjects applied to the management of the UK countryside.

- To produce graduates with:

  (i) a knowledge and understanding of a range of social and environmental sciences pertinent to management of the UK countryside;
  (ii) a full repertoire of graduate key skills and the ability to utilise information from a variety of disciplines in a flexible and integrated way;

  (iii) the ability to analyse problems and issues, synthesise potential resolutions and criticise alternatives.

- To provide a flow of well-motivated graduates with the subject specific and key skills required by a range of employers both within the countryside and beyond.

- To provide a programme which meets the FHEQ at Honours level and which takes appropriate account of the subject benchmark statements in agriculture, forestry, agricultural sciences, food sciences and consumer sciences.

10. Intended Learning Outcomes; Teaching and Learning Strategies and Methods; Assessment Strategies and Methods

The programme provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding, discipline-related and general key skills in the following areas:

A   Knowledge and understanding
A successful student will have gained and be able to demonstrate a knowledge and understanding of:

A1. the economic, social, political, legal and cultural systems that provide an integrated framework for the management of the UK countryside.

A2. the key organisations and institutions operating in the UK countryside.

A3. rural and agri-environmental policy at UK and European level and its application to key social, economic and environmental problems in the UK countryside.

A4. the natural, historical and cultural factors that contribute to the character of the UK countryside.

A5. current issues regarding sustainable development and conservation applied to rural land use.

A6. key concepts of population and community ecology.

A7. contemporary issues, policies and mechanisms for rural planning in the UK.

A8. the management of UK enterprises.

B   Subject –specific/professional skills
A successful student will be able to:

B1. develop and critically appraise management strategies for a range of public good issues in the countryside.

B2. gather and interpret qualitative and quantitative data.

B3. classify a variety of plants and animals.

B4. develop management plans for managed countryside sites, such as country parks.

B5. apply techniques of countryside interpretation to communicate to countryside users..

B6. describe, evaluate and categorise landscape character.

B7. use economic and qualitative techniques to evaluate a range of rural and environmental policies..

C   Cognitive skills
A successful student will be able to:

C1. critically evaluate arguments and evidence.

C2. critically analyse relevant contemporary literature.

C3. integrate knowledge from a variety of disciplines and applying it to rational decision making and problem solving in countryside management situations.

C4. solve problems.

D   Key (transferable) skills
A successful student will be able to:

D1. communicate in writing and orally in a manner appropriate to the target audience.

D2. work independently, through managing own learning, time management, showing initiative and adaptability.

D3. work successfully as a member of a team.

D4. use library resources and information technology effectively.

Intended learning outcomes
Teaching and learning strategies

A. Knowledge and Understanding
Teaching strategy
The primary method of imparting knowledge and understanding is through lectures. These are supplemented by seminars, field classes, practical sessions and group discussion. The integrated context within which countryside management is undertaken (A1) is introduced during field visits in the first semester and developed through lectures and seminars and supported by guided reading. Classroom-based learning on the organisational context of the countryside (A2) and landscape character (A4) is also developed through fieldwork and site visits. Key issues in rural policy and planning (A7) are given a currency by the use of academic staff who play a role in the development of national strategies. Basic concepts of population and community ecology (A6) are introduced at stage 1 through a combination of lectures and seminars and developed at stage 2. Following their introduction at stages 1 and 2, optional modules allow students to develop their interests in the management of rural enterprises (A8) to cover agriculture, forestry and other rural businesses.

Learning strategy
Students are encouraged to supplement taught material through independent reading, with extensive reading lists provided. Students also enhance their learning through participation in student-centred project work and through exercises focusing on contemporary or developing countryside issues and reflecting material that have been exposed to through their lectures and reading.

B Subject-specific/ professional skills
Teaching strategy
Skills are introduced through lectures and developed through a variety of approaches. Data handling (B2) is developed through exercises and tutorial sessions, while the design and appraisal of management strategies (B1) is supported through case studies and appropriate exercises. Taxonomic skills (B3), management planning (B4), interpretation (B5) and landscape assessment (B6) are developed through field visits and where appropriate supported by case study exercises. Policy evaluation (B7) is introduced in the context of landscape and environmental impact assessment and particular economic and qualitative approaches are introduced in a specialist stage 3 module delivered by an active researcher in this field.

Learning strategy
Students acquire skills (B1-B7) through hands-on practical experience, a variety of problem or case-study based exercises, and through application of appropriate techniques to their Special Study. The latter presents a less-structured and more creative learning opportunity that requires greater exercise of judgement on the part of the student..

C Cognitive Skills

Teaching strategy

Encouraging students to consider information critically and justify their interpretation develops cognitive skills (C1). Literature review (C2) is introduced and practiced at stage 2 and developed in the stage 3 Special Study (AEF395). This is done through tutorials, fieldwork and lectures. The Introduction to Rural Studies module (AEF130) encourages an early focus on understanding rather than on learning facts, and an emphasis on problem solving is then developed in key modules at stages 2 and 3 (C4) especially through exercises focusing on countryside-related problems. The ability to handle and interpret information from a variety of disciplines (C3) in a decision making context, is an integral element of the course and is particularly developed in the countryside management module at stage 3.

Learning strategy

Students learn through participation in problem-solving exercises, research projects, data handling and discussion. Students are encouraged to justify opinions through discussion, oral presentations and in their special study research projects (AEF395) where they practice the production of reasoned arguments and logical conclusions. Literature reviews are practised at stages 2 and 3.

D Key (Transferable) Skills

Teaching strategy

These are introduced to students through the induction programme and skills sessions within modules. IT and library (D4) skills are introduced early in programme within skills or knowledge-based modules and may be further developed and practised in other modules later in the course. Oral communication skills (D1) are explicitly developed by employing a professional storyteller to develop that element within a skills module (AEF243) and practised through a range of individual and group presentations at stages 2 and 3. Written communications skills (D1) are developed through essays and coursework exercises. Teamwork skills (D3) are developed through group-based exercises and assignments beginning in the first induction week. The final year special study develops the ability to work independently (D2), requiring students to develop time management skills, and requiring them to show initiative and adaptability. Students have the opportunity to develop further work and study skills through optional modules offered by the Centre for Academic Development and by attending extra-curricular sessions organised by the careers service and promoted in careers sessions included in lectures at stages 2 and 3.

Learning strategy

Students learn through the production of essays, case study exercises, and critiques of written materials. Oral presentations are required from students at stages 2 and 3. Emphasis is placed on effective study habits and time management throughout the programme and in particular during initial induction sessions.

Intended Learning Outcomes
Assessment Strategies

A. Knowledge and Understanding

Assessment is partly by way of unseen examinations (essay-type questions, short answer questions, problem solving) and partly by way of coursework and case studies. Most modules include coursework, thus encouraging an element of formative, as well as summative, assessment.

B. Subject-Specific/ Professional Skills

Assessment is by way of examinations, assignments (B1, B2, B7), reports (B4), oral presentations (B5), field class exercises (B6). At stage 1 students must produce a documented plant collection (B3).

C. Cognitive Skills

Cognitive skills are assessed by unseen examinations (C1, C3, C4), assignments (C1, C3, C4), oral presentations (C2), case studies (C3, C4) and the stage 3 special study (C1, C2, C3). Literature reviews (C2) are produced in stages 2 and 3 to enable both formative and summative assessment.

D. Key/Transferable skills

Key skills are assessed through the production of coursework and the stage 3 special study. Oral presentations, powerpoint and poster exercises test the ability to communicate in a variety of media (D1) and in a manner appropriate to the target audience. Teamwork skills (D3) developed in group exercises are assessed formatively through tutorial debriefs. Independent working and time management (D2) are assessed summatively in the stage 3 special study. Communications and IT skills (D4) are assessed in coursework exercises and also in the development of special studies at stage 3.

11   Programme Features, Structure and Curriculum

A   Programme Features

The programme is studied over three years full-time.

Each year or stage requires the study of modules with a credit value of 120. A 10 credit module consists of 100 hours of student effort, covering lectures, small group teaching, private study, completion of coursework and revision. Modules can vary in size from 10 to 30 credits.

Particular features of the programme include:

- modules introduced specifically for countryside management and rural studies students;
- the opportunity to switch to BSc Rural Studies at the end of stage 2 conditional on appropriate options being passed at stage 1;
- a range of field visits and practical work related to the countryside management;
- the opportunity to develop and practice skills in landscape character assessment and management planning;
- the opportunity to study agriculture at all three stages;
- opportunities to participate in work-related learning at stages 2 and 3;
- the opportunity to study ecology at all three stages;
- the opportunity to study estate and land management;
- the opportunity to undertake an individual research project in a school active in countryside and rural research.

B   Programme Structure

Stage 1 provides a multi-disciplinary foundation covering not only countryside management but also ecology, agriculture, business management or economics and statistics. Stage 1 also incorporates further credits of options in complementary disciplines, and particularly in environmental science. Provided that they meet the required academic standards, students taking appropriate options at stage 1 can transfer to BSc Rural Studies at the beginning of Stage 2 if they so wish.

Stage 2 builds on the introductory modules from Stage 1. At this stage the emphasis on the applied aspects of the discipline is increased, and students start to be introduced to research methods and more intermediate level theory. Further study of ecology is compulsory at stage 2, thus providing students with a deeper knowledge and understanding of this discipline. Options are offered that develop and extend knowledge and understanding gained from compulsory modules in areas such as agriculture, ecology, statistics and environmental management.

At stage 3 students will take advance courses and also increase their research capability by undertaking a special study dissertation. Options can be taken from a large selection of diverse modules from across the university subject to any prerequisites and to the approval of the Degree Programme Director.

C   Programme Curriculum

Stage 1

(a) All candidates shall take the following compulsory modules:

Code	Credits	Descriptive title
AEF130	20	Introduction to Rural Studies
Either		
AEF117	20	Introduction to Management
Or		
AEF116	20	Introduction to Economics
BIO101	20	Biodiversity and Ecology
AGR107	10	British Agriculture
MAS182	10	Statistical Methods

(b) All candidates shall take optional modules with a total value of 40 credits normally selected from the list below.

Code	Credits	Descriptive title
AEF115	20	Introduction to Marketing
AEF116	20	Introduction to Economics
AEF117	20	Introduction to Management
AES117	10	Environment and Land Resources
AES119	10	Environmental and Land Use Field Course
BUS105	20	Personal, Professional and Key Skills Development
CEG100	10	Earth Surface Materials
EDU120	10	Introduction to Communications and Culture
FRE165	20	French: Elementary Level

With the approval of the Degree Programme Director alternative modules to those listed in the above modules may be selected.

Stage 2

(a) All candidates shall take the following compulsory modules:

Code	Credits	Descriptive title
AEF208	20	Landscape, Culture and Heritage
AEF243	20	Rural Studies Skills
AES243	10	UK Countryside Change
AES264	10	Ecology of Populations and Communities
LAW253	10	Law and Land Use

(b) All candidates shall take optional modules with a total value of 50 credits, normally selected from the list below.

Code	Credits	Descriptive title
ACC223	20	Introduction to Accounting and Finance for Non-Specialists
AEF207	10	Marketing Environments
AES218	10	Entomology Field Course
AES240	10	Environmental Practice

AGR210	10	Agriculture II: Crop Production
AGR211	10	Agriculture II: Animal Production
BNS233	10	Quantitative Methods
CAD201/202	10	Student Tutoring
CAS280/290	10	Learning from Work
EDU210	20	Communication and Culture
GEO230	20	Land, Water and Development
GER162	20	Level A German General Language I

With the approval of the Degree Programme Director alternative modules to those listed in the above modules may be selected.

Stage 3

(a) All candidates shall take the following compulsory modules:

Code	*Credits*	*Descriptive title*
AEF373	10	Rural Environmental Policy Evaluation
AEF379	20	Countryside Management
AEF380	20	Rural Planning, Politics and Society
AEF395	30	Special Study

(b) All candidates shall take optional modules with a total value of 40 credits, normally selected from the list below:

Code	*Credits*	*Descriptive title*
AEF352	10	Estate Management
AES325	10	Trees: Growth Management and Environmental Impact
AES339	10	Ecosystems Management
AGR316	10	Land Reclamation
AGR335	10	Soil Fertility and Management in Organic Systems
AGR340	10	Rural Enterprise Diversification
AGR330	10	Sustainable Land Management
BNS376	10	Field Course and Collection Project
CAD315/316	10	Management of Student Tutoring
GEO328	20	River Conservation and Management
LAW208	10	Countryside Law
FRE166	20	Level A French General Language II
GER163	20	Level A German General Language II

With the approval of the Degree Programme Director alternative modules to those listed in the above modules may be selected

Development of specific Intended Learning Outcomes occurs through the following modules (compulsory modules in bold text, optional modules in normal, italic text)

A1
The economic, social, political, legal and cultural systems that provide an integrated framework for the management of the UK countryside.
AEF130, LAW253, AEF379, AEF380, *AEF115, AEF116 , LAW208*

A2
The key organisations and institutions operating in the UK countryside.
AEF130, AEF208, AEF379, AEF380

A3
Rural and agri-environmental policy at UK and European level and its application to key social, economic and environmental problems in the UK countryside.
AEF130, AES243, AEF379, AEF380

A4
The natural, historical and cultural factors that contribute to the character of the UK countryside.
AEF208, AES243, *AES117, CEG100*

A5
Current issues regarding sustainable development and conservation applied to rural land use.
AEF379, AES243, BIO101, *AES240, AGR330, GEO230, GEO328*

A6
Key concepts of population and community ecology.
BIO101, AES264, *AES325, AES339, GEO328*

A7
Contemporary issues, policies and mechanisms for rural planning in the UK.
AEF130, AEF380, *AGR316*

A8
The management of UK enterprises.
AEF116/AEF117, AEF379, AGR107, *ACC223, AEF115, AEF207, AEF352, AGR210, AGR211, AES325, AGR340*

B1
Develop and critically appraise management strategies for a range of public good issues in the countryside.
AEF243, AEF373, AEF379, AEF380, AES240

B2
Gather and interpret qualitative and quantitative data.
AEF243, AES243, AES264, BIO101, MAS182, *AEF116, ACC223, AES119, AES218, BNS233, BNS376*

B3
Classify a variety of plants and animals.
BIO101, AES264, *AES218, BNS376*

B4
Develop management plans for managed countryside sites, such as country parks .
AEF243

B5
Apply techniques of countryside interpretation to communicate to countryside users.
AEF243, AEF379

B6
Describe, evaluate and categorise landscape character.
AEF208

B7
Use economic and qualitative techniques to evaluate a range of rural and environmental policies.
AEF208, AEF373

C1
Critically evaluate arguments and evidence.
AEF208, AEF373, AEF379, AEF380, AEF395, AES243, *AES119*, *EDU120, EDU210, CAD201, CAD202, AGR316, GEO328*

C2
Critically analyse relevant contemporary literature.
AEF243, AEF380, AEF395

C3
Integrate knowledge from a variety of disciplines and applying it to rational decision making and problem solving in countryside management situations.
AEF379, AEF395, *AEF117, AEF352,*

C4
Solve problems.
AEF379, LAW253, MAS182, *AEF116, AES119*, *CEG100*, *ACC223, AES240, GEO230, AEF352*, *AGR316*, *AGR340*

D1
Communicate in writing and orally in a manner appropriate to the target audience.
AEF243, *ACC223*, *BUS105*, *EDU120, FRE165, FRE166, GER162, GER163, AES240, CAD201, CAD202, CAS280, CAS290, EDU210, AES325, BNS376*

D2
Work independently, through managing own learning, time management, showing initiative and adaptability.
AEF243, AEF395, *AEF352, AES117, EDU120, CAD201, CAD202, EDU210, GEO230, AGR316, CAD315, CAD316*

D3
Work successfully as a member of a team.
AEF243, AES243, AEF379, *BUS105*, *CEG100, EDU210, CAS280, CAS290, AES325, BNS376*

D4
Use library resources and information technology effectively.
BIO101, MAS182, AEF243, *ACC223, BNS233, BUS105, CEG100, GEO230*

12   Criteria for Admission:

*Sc*hool/college leavers

BBC/BCC from 18 units, including a minimum of 12 units from 6- or 12-unit qualifications and usually including one A level. GCSE (at least Grade C) in Mathematics required. Skills qualifications will not be included in offers.

Alternative entry qualifications

BTEC National Certificate / Diploma.
BTEC National Diploma in a science- or land and environment-related subject at overall DMM.

Scottish Highers
AABB/BBBB at Higher Grade. Mathematics required at Standard Grade (or Intermediate 2). Combinations of Highers and Advanced Highers accepted..

International Baccalaureate
30 points. Standard Level Mathematics at Grade 5 required if not offered at Higher Level.

Overseas students
Appropriate overseas qualifications will be considered and evidence of adequate English language skills to complete the programme successfully required.

Admissions policy
All applicants are invited to attend a School open day or to have an individual meeting with the Degree Programme Director. We welcome applications from mature candidates and those with non-traditional qualifications.

Arrangements for non-standard entrants
All other non-standard applications are considered on an individual basis. Applicants are encouraged to attend an open day and/or attend for interview with the Admissions Tutor. Where applicants cannot attend, telephone interviews may be used to supplement the UCAS form.

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13   Support for Students and their Learning:

Induction
The first week of the first term/semester is an Induction Week with no formal teaching. During this period all students will be given detailed programme information relating to their Stage and the timetable of lectures/practicals/labs/ tutorials/etc. In particular all new students will be given general information about the School and their course, as described in the Degree Programme Handbook. The International Office offers an additional induction programme for overseas students (see http://www.ncl.ac.uk/international/coming_to_newcastle/orientation.phtml).

Study skills support
Students will learn a range of Personal Transferable Skills, including Study Skills, as outlined in the Programme Specification.

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. Details of the personal tutor system can be found at http://www.ncl.ac.uk/undergraduate/support/tutor.phtml. In addition the University offers a range of support services, including the Student Advice Centre, the Student Counselling Service, the Mature Student Support Service, and a Childcare Support Officer, see http://www.ncl.ac.uk/undergraduate/support/welfare.phtml.

Support for Special Needs
Support for students with special needs is provided as required and the University's Disability Support Service can be consulted where appropriate. For further details see http://www.ncl.ac.uk/undergraduate/support/disability.phtml.

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, see http://www.ncl.ac.uk/undergraduate/support/acfacilities.phtml.
All new students whose first language is not English are required to take an English Language test in the Language Centre. Where appropriate, in-sessional language training can be provided. The Language Centre houses a range of resources for learning other languages which may be particularly appropriate for those interested in an Erasmus exchanges. See http://www.ncl.ac.uk/undergraduate/support/langcen.phtml.

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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 School Teaching and Learning Committee and at the Board of Studies. 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 and learning Committee.

Programme reviews
The Board of Studies conducts an Annual Monitoring and Review of the degree programme and reports to Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee.

External examiner reports
External Examiner reports are considered by the Board of Studies under Reserved Business, in the absence of the student representatives. The Board responds to these reports through Faculty Teaching and Learning 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.

15   Regulation of Assessment:

Pass Marks
The pass mark, as defined in the University's Undergraduate Examination Conventions
(http://www.ncl.ac.uk/calendar/university.regs/ugexamconv.html), is 40.

Course Requirements
Progression is subject to the University's Undergraduate Progress Regulations
(http://www.ncl.ac.uk/calendar/university.regs/ugcont.html) and Undergraduate Examination
Conventions (http://www.ncl.ac.uk/calendar/university.regs/ugexamconv.html). In summary,
students must pass 120 credits at each Stage. Limited compensation down to 35 is possible at each
Stage and there are resit opportunities, with certain restrictions.

Weighting of Stages
Modules taken at Stages 2 and 3 are Honours modules and the two stages contribute to the award
of the final degree in the ratio 25:75.

Common Marking Scheme
The University employs a common marking scheme, which is specified in the Undergraduate
Examination Conventions (http://www.ncl.ac.uk/calendar/university.regs/ugcont.html), 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 June Board of Examiners
> Report to the University on the standards of the programme

16   Indicators of Quality and Standards:

Internal Review Reports
This programme is due for Internal Subject Review in Semester 1 of the 2007-2008 academic year.

Previous QAA Reports
This programme received a QAA Subject Review in 1998 and achieved a score of 22/24.

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.

17   Other Sources of Information:

The University Prospectus (see http://www.ncl.ac.uk/undergraduate/)

The Departmental Prospectus (see http://www.ncl.ac.uk/undergraduate/course/D455)

The University and Degree Programme Regulations (see http://www.ncl.ac.uk/calendar/pdf/uniregs.pdf and http://www.ncl.ac.uk/calendar/sae/)

The Degree Programme Handbook

QAA Subject Review Report (http://www.qaa.ac.uk/revreps/subj_level/q271_98_textonly.htm)