	PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION	Newcastle University

1	**Awarding Institution**	Newcastle University
2	**Teaching Institution**	Newcastle University
3	**Final Award**	MA
4	**Programme Title**	Creative Writing
5	**UCAS/Programme Code**	4021
6	**Programme Accreditation**	N/A
7	**QAA Subject Benchmark(s)**	English
8	**FHEQ Level**	M
9	**Date written/revised**	02/05//08

10	**Programme Aims**

1(a) To produce Masters graduates who have:
i)   advanced their creative ability through practice, discussion and revision
ii)   an advanced awareness of the processes of writing both in their own work and that of others
iii)   a knowledge of a range of contemporary writing in English
iv)   knowledge of the professional world of writing and publishing
v)   an ability to edit and prepare work for submission and publication

(b) To provide a programme:
i)   which has nationally and internationally recognised writers teaching on the course
ii)   in which the practice of writing is combined with directed reading and the opportunity to study contemporary writing
iii)   which draws on the expertise of those engaged in the professional world of publishing and editing
iv)   which attracts a diverse student body, including a significant number of mature students
v)   which establishes connections with the professional world of writing within the region
vi)   which fully meets the requirements of the Master's Degree Quality Assurance Agency National Qualifications Framework

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

A1   Advanced knowledge of the making, editing and critical discussion of texts in various forms and of the relationship between the writer, the text and the reader.
A2   Advanced understanding of verbal creativity and the techniques used in the process of editing and presenting their own and other people's writing.
A3   Advanced knowledge in the application of the techniques of creative writing and the critical understanding of the writing of others.

Teaching and Learning Methods

A   Knowledge and Understanding

Knowledge and understanding is acquired through participation in and preparation for workshops, consultations, seminars, talks, readings and supervision. In workshops this will involve the writing of original texts and their development through a response to the criticism

and comments of others; the reading of others' work and developing knowledge through discussion and criticism of it; the reading and discussion of published and other contemporary work. In consultations the knowledge and understanding will be developed through close scrutiny and discussion of the writer's own work. In seminars the development will primarily be through the study and critical discussion of published texts. Seminars, along with talks, readings and project work will also lead to knowledge and understanding of the professional world of writing, public performance and publishing.

Assessment Strategy

A   Knowledge and understanding
Assessment of knowledge and understanding is via the submission of files of work produced in workshops with accompanying commentaries; essays or projects on seminar topics; a project on 'The Life of Writing'; and a final portfolio of creative work.

Intellectual Skills

Subject-specific/Intellectual skills
B1   Conceptual awareness of how texts are made and developed
B2   Advanced ability to understand and judge the timing and duration of creative projects
B3   Professional skill in the process of editing their own work
B4   Practical knowledge and professional skill in the presentation of their own writing for performance and/or publication

Teaching and Learning Methods

B   Subject-specific intellectual skills
Subject-specific professional skills are also acquired through workshop preparation and participation, consultations, seminars, talks and reading. Skills relating to shorter and more various projects will be acquired and developed through these means. The supervised Portfolio, will develop skills in working on a larger, more sustained project. Professional skills will also be developed through the preparation of individual readings or performances and work for publication.

Assessment Strategy

B   Subject-specific intellectual skills
Assessment of subject-specific skills is through preparing and submitting to deadline files of work produced in workshops; a project for 'The Life of Writing'; a portfolio of work (a short collection of poems or equivalent in prose or dramatic form).

Practical Skills

Practical skills - Able to:
C1   exercise and develop a sensitivity to verbal creativity
C2   practice critical skills in the drafting and revision of writing
C3   engage imaginatively and critically in the reading and discussion of texts
C4   critically examine the conditions within which contemporary writing is published and distributed

Teaching and Learning Methods

C   Practical skills
Practical skills are acquired via workshops, tutorials, seminars, talks, readings and supervision. Throughout, but most specifically within the module on 'The Life of Writing', the contributions of professional editors and writers in various forms will develop the student's skills in critically examining the conditions within which contemporary writing is published and distributed.

Assessment Strategy

C   Practical skills
Assessment of practical skills is via the submission of files, essays or projects, and a portfolio.

Transferable/Key Skills

Key (transferable) skills - Able to:

D1 understand and put into effect the appropriate presentation of a specific text
D2 analyse and evaluate complex evidence critically and imaginatively
D3 work and plan independently on large and small projects involving skill and originality
D4 write and speak to different audiences
D5 adapt swiftly to changing circumstances within a performance situation
D6 use information technology (word processing; the internet)
D7 gather, evaluate, organise and summarise information
D8 work to deadlines or within specified time-limits
D9 work effectively in a team and independently

Teaching and Learning Methods

D   Key (transferable) skills

Key skills are promoted through workshops, tutorials, seminars and supervisions. Throughout, editing, selecting and presenting material both in written form and orally, to a group and receiving critical feedback will develop these skills both working individually and in a group.

Assessment Strategy

D   Key (transferable) skills

Assessment of key skills is implicit in course work at all levels.

12	Programme Curriculum, Structure and Features

Basic structure of the programme

The programme is studied over one year full-time or two years part-time. It is divided into study units or modules, which have a value of from 10 to 60 credits. Each 10 credit module represents 100 hours of student learning, and each 20 credit module, 200 hours etc. At least a 'Pass' in the course work is required for progression to the portfolio stage.

Compulsory core modules:
- Writing Workshop I (30 credits)
- Writing Workshop II (30 credits)
- The Life of Writing (20 credits)
- Portfolio of Work (60 credits)

Students choose two Literature Optional Modules from a changing list (each worth 10 credits), for instance:
- Literature of Incarceration
- The Short Story
- Reading and Writing Poetry
- Dramatic Style

Students choose two Short Course Modules from a changing list (each worth 10 credits), for instance:
- From Agatha to Zen (Aurelio): Writing in Genre
- Documentary Film
- Fiction Masterclass
- Writing & Health 1
- Writing & Health 2
- Creative Writing and Psychology

For the final module, students offer a Portfolio of Original Creative Work (60 credits).

Full time students take all modules in one year. All students take Workshops 1 and 2 in which they develop their writing of poetry, prose or script and are guided in their reading. Individual consultations support this work with one to one discussion of the student's writing. All students take the 'Life of Writing' module which introduces them to the professional world of writing through seminars on publishers and publishing, literary magazines, anthologies, preparing for publication, readings and performance. This part of the course includes contributions from people from the professional world of publishing and is examined by a project prepared by the students. All students take two modules on aspects of modern and contemporary literature. Each student finally prepares under supervision, a portfolio of their own creative work for submission.

Key features of the programme (including what makes the programme distinctive)
Because of the selective nature of the modules, this programme offers a distinctive option for the student to study creative writing across a wide range of disciplines (poetry, prose and script) in order to broaden his or her scope; or to concentrate on a chosen discipline to deepen his or her experience.

Programme regulations (link to on-line version)
http://www.ncl.ac.uk/regulations/programme/

13	**Criteria for admission**

Entry qualifications for 2008-9

Admissions policy/selection tools
Entry will normally be through a minimum of an upper second class honours degree in a relevant subject and examples of creative work.

Overseas students whose first language is not English are also asked to take an English language test conducted by the University Language Centre. We ask for a minimum IELTS score of 7.0.

Non-standard Entry Requirements

Candidates without a degree may submit a file of creative work for consideration with a view to being granted a concession to enter the course.

Additional Requirements
None

Level of English Language capability
See above

14	**Support for Student Learning**

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/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.

Help with academic writing is available from the Writing Centre.

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. In addition the University offers a range of support services, including one-to-one counselling and guidance or group sessions/workshops on a range of topics, such as emotional issues. 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 Union Society 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 Service 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-sessional 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 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. The Board responds to these reports through Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee. External Examiner reports are shared with institutional student representatives, through the Staff-Student 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. The National Student Survey is sent out every year to final-year undergraduate students, and consists of a set of questions seeking the students' views on the quality of the learning and teaching in their HEIs. With reference to the outcomes of the NSS and institutional student satisfaction surveys actions are taken at all appropriate levels by the institution.

Mechanisms for gaining student feedback
Feedback is channelled via the Staff-Student Committee and the Board of Studies.

Faculty and University Review Mechanisms
The programme is subject to the University's Internal Subject Review process. Every five

years degree programmes in each subject area are subject to periodic review. This involves both the detailed consideration of a range of documentation, and a two-day review visit by a review team which includes an external subject specialist in addition to University and Faculty representatives. Following the review a report is produced, which forms the basis for a decision by University Teaching and Learning Committee on whether the programmes reviewed should be re-approved for a further five year period.

Accreditation reports
N/A

Additional mechanisms

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16   Regulation of assessment

Pass mark
The pass mark is 40 (Undergraduate programmes)
The pass mark is 50 (Postgraduate programmes)

Course requirements
Progression is subject to the University's Undergraduate Progress Regulations and Undergraduate Examination Conventions. 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.

Progression is subject to the University's Masters Degree Progress Regulations, Taught and Research and Examination Conventions for Taught Masters Degrees. Limited compensation up to 40 credits of the taught element and down to a mark of 40 is possible and there are reassessment opportunities, with certain restrictions.

Weighting of stages

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

	Modules used for degree classification (DC)	**Modules not used for degree classification**
<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

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, 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 (see http://www.ncl.ac.uk/undergraduate/ or http://www.ncl.ac.uk/postgraduate/

The School Brochure (contact enquiries@ncl.ac.uk)

The University Regulations (see http://www.ncl.ac.uk/calendar/university.regs/)

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

Either

Intended Learning Outcome	Module codes (Compulsory in Bold)
A1	**ABC1001**, XYZ2002
A2	
A3	
A4	
B1	
B2	
B3	
B4	
C1	
C2	
C3	
C4	
D1	
D2	
D3	
D4	

Or

Module	Type	Intended Learning Outcomes			
		A	**B**	**C**	**D**
XYZ1001	Compulsory	1	1, 2, 3	4	2, 3