PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION



1	Awarding Institution	Newcastle University	
2	Teaching Institution	Newcastle University	
3	Final Award	BA Honours	
4	Programme Title	History	
5	UCAS/Programme Code	V100	
6	Programme Accreditation	None	
7	QAA Subject Benchmark(s)	V100 - History by period 6	
8	FHEQ Level		
9	Date written/revised	30 January 2008	

10 Programme Aims

- 1 The purpose of the programme is to provide opportunities for students to study UK, European, American, and world history.
- 2 To acquire the skills of the historian, to undertake specialised research projects, and to acquire skills relevant to employment.
- 3 Our graduates should have an awareness of changing historical phenomena over a long period of space and time, comparative, methodological, and critical skills. They should develop a capacity for independent study, and key skills which are valuable to historians and to employers. They should be able to investigate historical problems in depth, use source materials critically, and be able to assimilate and appreciate historiographical arguments and traditions.
- 4 Our graduates should be capable of going on to further study, or undertaking a wide variety of jobs in industry, commerce or the public sector.
- 5 The programme will meet standards set out in university policies. Where courses of study takes place outside the university during ERASMUS exchanges the standards will comply with the appropriate university policies on placements.
- 6 Graduates of the programme will have attained standards which at least meet Level 3 of the HE Qualifications Framework and the QAA subject benchmarks for History.

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 History.

Knowledge and Understanding

On completing the programme students should:

A1 Have a knowledge of a wide range of primary source material and an understanding of how such material should be interpreted and evaluated.

A2 Have a knowledge and understanding of key themes in world history and an ability to detect similarities, differences and patterns in the histories of different geographical regions and periods over a long period of time.

A3 Have an enhanced sense of the chronological, geographical and causal relationships in European, including British, history and a greater understanding and knowledge of the broad currents of that continent's historical development.

A4 Have an understanding of key historical concepts.

A5 Have some knowledge and understanding of the complexity, variety and diversity of history.

A6 An ability to reflect critically on the nature of the discipline and profession of history

A7 Knowledge and understanding at an intensive level of the sources and historiography relating to relatively short periods or limited topics in history.

Teaching and Learning Methods

The primary method of imparting knowledge and understanding (A1-A6) is lectures, supplemented by seminars and in the case of A1 and A5 by IT workshops. Seminars and workshops help to reinforce and amplify student learning gained in lectures. They also encourage independent study and throughout the programme students are encouraged to supplement taught material by independent study, for which they are given extensive support and guidance on reading materials, and web-based material, and how to use them. A6 is taught particularly in the compulsory Stage One skills module and in one compulsory Stage Three module. A7 is taught partly via intensive seminar work and also by the undertaking of an independent research project under staff supervision.

Assessment Strategy

Knowledge and understanding of the subject is primarily assessed by unseen written examination together with written assignments notably essays and documentary commentaries. (A1-A7). In the case of A7 this may be supplemented by submission of an extended piece of work, usually an undergraduate dissertation (HIS3010).

Intellectual Skills

On completing the programme students should be able to:

- B1 Analytical reasoning and critical skills in reading, writing and debating
- B2 Using appropriate evidence to support a sustained argument or line of reasoning
- B3 Ability to compare contrasting and conflicting ideas and material
- B4 Ability to adapt effectively to new and/or unexpected questions or problems
- B5 Intellectual independence

Teaching and Learning Methods

Cognitive skills (B1-B5) are developed through exercises and guidance in lectures, in seminars, supplemented in the case of B1-B3 by written feedback and by discussion with staff. Students are encouraged to acquire such skills during the completion of a range of written assignments, notably essays and documentary commentaries and problem-solving exercises. (B1-B5) are also encouraged by group and one-to-one discussion and debate in lectures, seminars and tutorials.

Assessment Strategy

Cognitive skills B1-B3 and B5 are assessed by written assignments, including unseen written examinations, and are also be assessed in the (compulsory) dissertation (HIS3010). B4 is primarily assessed by unseen written examination only.

Practical Skills

On completing the programme students should be able to:

- C1 Listening and note-taking
- C2 Independent study
- C3 Locating, critically reading, evaluating and digesting historical material
- C4 Insight into and understanding of different views and interpretations of particular historical events and alternative past and present mental worlds
- C5 The ability to produce clear, succinct, accurate, well-planned and coherent presentation of results in both written and oral forms
- C6 Possession of the research skills required to process and evaluate historical sources and produce thereby an extended piece of work

Teaching and Learning Methods

Listening and note-taking (C1) are taught via a skills module and developed principally in lectures but also in seminars. Note-taking is also a feature of independent study. Other subject-specific skills (C2-C6) are taught in lectures and in seminars, supplemented by assigned work (C2-C3, C5). C6 is further taught via dissertation supervisions. Such skills (C2-C6) are developed and practiced in written assignments, notably essays and documentary commentaries and problem-solving exercises done in class or in private study time. Preparation of oral presentations also helps develop C2 and C4-C5.

Assessment Strategy

The ability of students to deploy subject-specific skills (C1-C5) effectively is assessed primarily by means of unseen written examination, written assignments and also in dissertations. C6 is assessed via an undergraduate dissertation.

Transferable/Key Skills

On completing the programme students should be able to show:

- D1 Computer literacy
- D2 Written Communication
- D3 Problem Solving
- D4 Interpersonal Communication
- D5 Initiative
- **D6 Oral Presentation**
- D7 Adaptability
- D8 Teamwork

D9 Basic numeracy

D10 Planning and Organising

Teaching and Learning Methods

Transferable skills are principally learnt and practised in private study and preparation of assignments. Advice is given in lectures and in seminars (D2-D8, D10), and taught also in a skills module (D2-D3, D5, D10) supplemented in the case of D3, D5, D8, D9 and D1 by workshops. Assigned work also helps to inculcate D2, D3 and D10. Communication skills (D2, D4) are further refined in seminars. Transferable skills are developed and practiced in written assignments such as essays and documentary commentaries (D2-D3, D5, D10) supplemented in the case of D3, D4, D6, D7, D8, D10 by individual or group presentations. Oral debate in seminars or tutorials supplies the opportunity to develop D4 and D6. Specific problem-solving exercises help to develop some basic numeracy (D9) and computer literacy (D1) is practiced by the word-processing of written assignments and problem-solving exercises such as bibliographic tasks. D8 is fostered by group presentations and assignments.

Assessment Strategy

D6 and D8 are assessed by means of the grading of seminar group presentations. D9 is assessed by means of specific workshop tasks. D2, D3, D7, D10 are assessed by a combination of unseen examination (D2, D3, D7), written assignments (D2, D3, D10), and can also be assessed in the dissertation. In the case of D2 this is supplemented by assessed workshop tasks. Computer literacy (D1) is assessed as part of the process of grading written assignments and also forms part of specific workshop tasks. D4 is not assessed.

12 Programme Curriculum, Structure and Features

Basic structure of the programme

The programme is studied over three years full-time.

The programme is divided into three stages. Each year, or stage, requires the study of modules with a total credit value of 120. The three years of the degree therefore amounts to 360 credits. Each credit represents 10 hours of student effort, covering lectures, seminars, workshops, private study, completion of coursework and revision.

At Stages 1 and 2 students have the right to earn up to 40 credits in modules that are not designated as History modules in the regulations but which are offered in the Faculty of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences. The History modules in Stages one and Two are all worth 20 credits. The History modules in Stage Three are all worth 30 credits.

For degree classification purposes all Honours (that is, Stage Two and Stage Three modules) modules count. In History, Stage 3 credits have twice the weighting of Stage 2 credits in the final degree classification.

Progression to the next stage of the programme is conditional on meeting the conditions laid down by the University for progression. Students are normally required to pass every module with a mark of at least 40% in order to proceed. Narrow failure of a small number of credits will be condoned.

At Stage 3 all History students must do at least two Special Subjects. Each Special Subject comprises the investigation of a historical topic in depth, and consists of a consisting of one 30 credit module.

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

The programme has two innovative features, designed to broaden students' perspectives on the past, and establish a sense of long term historical developments. The first of these is the

provision of two compulsory modules of World History taken at Stage 1 (HIS1023; HIS1024), and the foundation of the curriculum on this base. The second is the design of Stage One so that students who do not take the option of modules outside History will, in their History modules, gain a foundation for all the History modules from which they will choose in subsequent Stages.

At the core of Stage 1 are two modules in World History and a compulsory skills module. The innovative World History modules provide a broad knowledge and understanding of key developments in World History (A2) and together with the skills module, HIS1029, Varieties of History, provide an introduction to some primary sources (A1). The skills module provides some exposure to intensive historical study (A7). These compulsory modules also introduce students to key historical concepts, the diversity of history and supply some notion about the nature of the historical disciplines (A4-A6).

The other Stage One History modules contribute towards students' understanding and knowledge of both primary sources and a range of themes and periods within the history of the history of Britain, Europe and the Americas (A2 and A3).

Stage One modules begin the development of all related cognitive skills (B1-B5) and most subject-specific skills (C1-C5). Key skills (D1-D8, D10) are introduced and practiced in Stage One modules.

Stage Two provides the opportunities for specialisation.

All modules at this Stage are optional, and provide the opportunity to develop further knowledge and understanding of periods, places, topics and themes drawn from countries and periods as far varied as Imperial China, the Caribbean, Anglo-Saxon England, and twentieth-century Cuba. Stage Two modules are on much narrower topics than Stage One modules and are studied at a more intensive and demanding level than those at Stage One. Modules at Stage Two continue the development of cognitive (B1-B5) and subject-specific skills (C1-C5) but a number of Stage 2 modules offer the opportunity to develop research skills and produce extended pieces of historical work (C6). Transferable skills (D1-D8, D10) are also developed at Stage 2.

At Stage Three the study of history is done at a still more intensive level. This is ensured principally by the rule that students take two Special Subjects, chosen from a wide range of topics drawn from different continents and centuries, as far varied as the early medieval European emperor Charlemagne, America in Vietnam, and Genocide. In a Special Subject students develop their knowledge and understanding of a relatively narrow historical topic and its related primary sources (A1, A7). Special Subjects, taught by subject-specialists, represent the point at which teaching is enriched by staff research interests most fully. They further develop knowledge and understanding of aspects of European history and that of the wider world, and aid the development in depth of an understanding of historical concepts, historical diversity and of the nature of the historical profession (A3-A6).

At Stage Three all students write a dissertation. The dissertation, like all Stage-Two and Stage-Three modules develops cognitive (B1-B5) and subject-specific skills (C1-C5), but also provides students with the opportunity to develop research skills (C6) and produce an extended study. Transferable skills (D1-D8, D10) are further developed at Stage Three, with one Special Subject offering some development of numeracy (D9).

In addition, at Stage Three, all students take the module Reading History. Like all Stage-Two and Stage-Three modules this develops cognitive (B1-B5) and subject-specific skills (C1-C5), but in so far as it requires the ability to locate specific examples of historical writing in a methodological, interpretative and theoretical context, it places particular emphasis on the understanding of broad historical concepts and intellectual independence (B4-B5) specific kinds of knowledge and understanding and(A3-A7). It also requires a range of transferable skills (D2-D7), with some variations of the module encouraging the development of numerical skills (D9).

The learning outcomes of each module are shown in Appendix 1

Programme regulations (link to on-line version)

http://www.ncl.ac.uk/regulations/

13 Criteria for admission

Entry qualifications

The Admissions Tutor normally asks applicants for the Single Honours History degree for at least a B grade in A level history, and for at least another A grade and a B B grade in two other A levels. The Admissions Tutor is happy to accept General Studies as one of the three A levels. A typical offer would be AAB at A level (B in History). Prospective entrants may also offer two AS levels of a similar standard in place of a third A level. The Admissions Tutor welcomes Scottish qualifications and, although we consider all candidates with Scottish Highers/CSYS on an individual basis, a typical offer would be AAABB at Higher Grade.

Admissions policy/selection tools

Places are normally offered primarily on a combination of predicted grades at A and AS level and the student's personal statement.

Information about criteria for admissions may be found at http://www.ncl.ac.uk/undergraduate/course/V100/requirements

Students to whom offers are made are invited to an Open afternoon to meet staff and students. Attendance of this afternoon is not compulsory. Applicants with non-standard qualifications may be interviewed

Non-standard Entry Requirements

The School of Historical Studies is keen to encourage applications from mature students with A levels or other qualifications and each of these applicants is given individual consideration. Whatever your background or qualifications, the School welcomes applications from bright and enthusiastic people with a genuine interest in the subject(s) being studied.

Additional Requirements

Level of English Language capability

Overseas students. Appropriate overseas qualifications will be considered, as well as A levels. Evidence of English language skills that are adequate to complete the programme successfully is required.

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/practicals/computing lab/tutorials/etc. The International Office offers an additional induction programme for overseas students (see http://www.ncl.ac.uk/international/arrival/jan/index.phtml

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. A compulsory first year study skills module (HIS1029) inculcates basic study skills for historians.

Numeracy support is available through Maths Aid. Further details are available at:

http://www.ncl.ac.uk/library/news details.php?news id=159 Help with academic writing is available from the Writing Centre. Details can be obtained from Alicia.Cresswell@ncl.ac.uk

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 and in the History (V100) **Degree Programme Handbook**.

In addition the University offers a range of support services, including the Student Advice Centre, the Counselling and Wellbeing team, the Mature Student Support Officer, and a Childcare Support Officer,

see http://www.ncl.ac.uk/undergraduate/support/welfare/index.phtml

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. For further details see http://www.ncl.ac.uk/disability-support/

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/degrees/facilities/index.phtml

In addition, History students have access to good local history libraries at the Newcastle Central Library and the library of the Literary and Philosophical Society.

Resources and information for History are listed on the School web-site (http://www.ncl.ac.uk/historical/) and on individual staff websites.

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. See http://ncl.ac.uk/langcen/index.htm

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.

In History, modules are reviewed each year first by the Module Leader and then by the Board of Studies. Modules are reviewed in the light of student feedback, student attainment and staff comment.

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. Further information is at www.thestudentsurvey.com/ 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

Student feedback regarding modules, Stages and the Programme via module, Stage 1, Stage 2 and Programme (issued at the end of Stage 3) questionnaires.

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, see http://www.ncl.ac.uk/aqss/qsh/internal_subject_review/index.php

Accreditation reports

QAA report on the quality and standard of provision

Faculty reports on the quality and standard of provision

Graduate employment statistics

Prizes awarded to graduate students by the Royal Historical Society for undergraduate work (dissertation).

Prizes awarded by the Society for French History for undergraduate work (dissertations). AHRB awards to graduates

Additional mechanisms

Peer observation of teaching via the mentoring system for new members of staff and via the Degree Programme's requirement of peer observation.

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 (http://www.ncl.ac.uk/calendar/university.regs/ugcont.pdf) and Undergraduate Examination Conventions (http://www.ncl.ac.uk/calendar/university.regs/ugexamconv.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.

Assessment rules and Honours Classification for History

- Students are assessed by a combination of unseen written examination, by submitted work and by a variety of class exercises.
- At Stage Two no History module is assessed by a combination of both an unseen written examination and submitted work. All Stage Two History modules involve either an examination or submitted work.
- Programme requirements: students should pass all modules at Stage 1 and Stage 2 to proceed to the next Stage. (Narrow failure of a small number of credits will be condoned.)
 There are two resit opportunities

Weighting of stages

Final degree classification is based on the results of Stage Two and Stage Three modules only. Credits taken at Stage Three count double towards the final degree classification.

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)	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

Modules not used for

Classification criteria: History (for guidance).

I First Class 70%+

An outstanding answer which displays both breadth and depth of knowledge, ability to engage with cutting-edge scholarship, critical analysis, independence of mind, initiative, and intellectual rigour. A range of descriptive material and factual evidence is deployed to support the writer's argument. It is presented and expressed clearly with a well structured argument, avoiding irrelevance. Cites sources thoroughly.

80% + Work which includes substantial evidence of originality and independent thought exceptional for an undergraduate. Ambitious in scope it will display sophisticated handling of critical and complex issues. In exceptional circumstances a mark of 90% or above could be awarded for publishable work.

70 - 79% An excellence answer displaying evidence of independent thought. In areas where excellence is not achieved, a high degree of competence is shown.

II Upper Second: 60-69%

A well organised, detailed and logical answer showing a thorough understanding of the subject as taught and evidence of additional study. It may show competence in some areas but excellence in others. It will be well structured and relevant with a sound grasp of critical issues, making a serious attempt to engage with the question set. Cites sources accurately.

III Lower Second: 50-59%

An answer which displays overall competence and an understanding of the basics of the subject. The answer contains reasonably good information, but there may be only limited evidence of additional, independent study and a lack of independent thought. It may be uneven showing strength in some areas but weaknesses in others. The weaknesses may include a lack of critical analysis, arguments not always well structured or relevant, some inaccuracies and or poor expression and presentation. Whilst it may show awareness of critical debates the writing maybe too descriptive or generalised. Majority of sources adequately cited.

IV Third: 40-49%

Weak answer in all or most areas, tending to be descriptive with uncritical coverage of debates and issues, but with adequate comprehension of some basic facts and principles. Little evidence of reading or understanding the question. Relatively weak skills of planning, structuring and presentation, barely adequate understanding of concepts, significant errors or detail with some irrelevance and poorly constructed arguments. There may be some attempt to cite sources.

V Fail 0-39%

Examiners may wish to distinguish between:

- 35 39% An answer which displays poor understanding of basic facts and principles, but includes significant errors, irrelevance, and poorly constructed argument. The answer raises doubts about the candidate's grasp of the essentials of the subject. No attempt to cite sources.
- 20 34% An answer which displays serious lack of understanding of the principles of the subject, major errors, serious deficiencies in knowledge, expression and organisation, poor use of English, substantial omissions and irrelevance. Sources not cited.
- 0 19% Totally inadequate answer which displays no evidence of understanding or knowledge of the subject; inability to construct an argument, lack of planning or presentation skills; poor use of English. Sources not cited.

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/)

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

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

The Degree Programme Handbook (History/V100): available from School of Historical Studies' Office.

The School of Historical Studies Web-site (http://www.ncl.ac.uk/historical/)

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*

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^{*}Not all modules in History are available every year; new modules may replace or be offered in addition to those listed above.