

## PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION



|   |                                 |   |
|---|---------------------------------|---|
| 1 | <b>Awarding Institution</b>     | Newcastle University                      |
| 2 | <b>Teaching Institution</b>     | Newcastle University                      |
| 3 | <b>Final Award</b>              | Master in Arts                            |
| 4 | <b>Programme Title</b>          | International Financial Analysis          |
| 5 | <b>UCAS/Programme Code</b>      | 4050                                      |
| 6 | <b>Programme Accreditation</b>  |   |
| 7 | <b>QAA Subject Benchmark(s)</b> | Masters Awards in Business and Management |
| 8 | <b>FHEQ Level</b>               | 7   |
| 9 | <b>Date written/revised</b>     | Revised May 2010                          |

### 10 Programme Aims

- To provide for the students on the programme a supportive and stimulating learning environment within the context of the University of Newcastle upon Tyne Business School.
- To offer students a broad, coherent, balanced and comprehensive portfolio of modules, appropriate to a post pre-experience masters degree. Covering the main disciplines of financial management.
- To expose students to a variety of teaching and learning experiences, including lectures, tutorials, case analyses, and projects.
- To develop students' transferable skills including: numeracy, literacy, report writing skills, personal and interpersonal skills, presentation skills, group working skills and an appreciation of working in a multicultural environment.
- To enable students effectively to gather data, both qualitative and quantitative, from library, IT and other sources.
- To develop students' analytical and critical abilities in dealing with business concepts and practices.
- To conform with University and QAA policies and codes of practice and with the Higher Education Qualifications Framework.
- To produce highly marketable graduates who are able to contribute immediately to international organisations.

### 11 Learning Outcomes

The programme outcomes have references to the benchmark statements for Masters Awards in Business and Management and provides students with opportunities to demonstrate disciplinary competency by developing the key principles and theories in their subject area and combines theory with the application of skills required to generate solutions within their discipline.

#### Knowledge and Understanding

On completing the programme students should:

- A1 A knowledge and understanding of core subject areas within an international context (finance, accounting, financial analysis, statistical techniques, IT programmes for business analysis, data collection, corporate strategy and valuation) as subjects of academic study and as

|   |  |
|---|--|
|   | practical activities.  |
| A2  | A detailed understanding of the issues and problems appropriate to international financial management.   |
| A3  | An understanding of how to evaluate critically ideas, concepts and practices related to accounting, finance and investment.                            |
| A4  | . Knowledge of financial environments and institutions and how environmental components differ across countries and the markets in which they operate. |
| A5  | Key research in the disciplines studied (including research by members of staff where relevant.)   |
| A6  | The ability to identify ethical issues and make recommendations for appropriate courses of action.   |
| <b>Teaching and Learning Methods</b>  |  |
| The primary means of imparting knowledge and understanding is through interactive lectures which guide students towards independent reading and enable students to check their learning through group discussions and problem solving/ practice (A1 – A6). Students are facilitated to read research articles, take part in student-centred projects, and analysis of case studies during the programme (A3, A4, A5). |  |
| <b>Assessment Strategy</b>  |  |
| Knowledge and understanding (A1 – A6) is assessed by unseen exams, various forms of coursework – essays requiring critical analysis, reports, case studies, presentations and dissertations.  |  |
| <b>Intellectual Skills</b>  |  |
| On completing the programme students should be able to:   |  |
| B1.   | Quantitative skills required for managing investments.   |
| B2.   | Critical analytical skills to relate theory to practice.   |
| B3.   | Analysis of business information and operations for decision-making.   |
| Learning outcomes B1, B2, B3 are achieved via lectures where these skills are demonstrated and practiced. These sessions are essential to enable students to practice and master the requisite quantitative and analytical skills.  |  |
| <b>Teaching and Learning Methods</b>  |  |
| The skills set {B1, B2, B3} is developed by lectures, small group sessions and presentations.   |  |
| <b>Assessment Strategy</b>  |  |
| The skills set {B1, B2, B3} is assessed via unseen exams, various forms of coursework –   |  |

|   |
|---|
| essays requiring critical analysis, reports, case studies, presentations and dissertations.   |
| <b>Practical Skills</b>   |
| On completing the programme students should be able to:<br><br>C1. Problem solving within the context of accounting and finance.<br>C2. The ability to gather, synthesise and evaluate information.<br>C3. Independent critical analysis.   |
| <b>Teaching and Learning Methods</b>  |
| The skills set {C1, C2, C3} is developed by lectures, small group sessions and presentations.   |
| <b>Assessment Strategy</b>  |
| The skills set {C1, C2, C3} is assessed via unseen exams, various forms of coursework – essays requiring critical analysis, reports, case studies, presentations and dissertations.   |
| <b>Transferable/Key Skills</b>  |
| On completing the programme students should be able to:<br><br>D1 use appropriate verbal/written communication skills to convey information tailored in content, style and presentation to the needs of their intended audience.<br>D2 where relevant demonstrate numeracy by applying the appropriate computational techniques and interpreting or critically evaluating the results within a business setting.<br>D3 work within a team contributing appropriately and effectively towards the team based activity.<br>D4 Ability to work independently, time-manage, show initiative and adaptability. |
| <b>Teaching and Learning Methods</b>  |
| The skills set {D1, D2, D3, D4} is developed by lectures, small group sessions and presentations.   |
| <b>Assessment Strategy</b>  |
| The skills set {D1, D2, D4} is assessed via unseen exams, various forms of coursework – essays requiring critical analysis, reports, case studies, presentations and dissertations. D3 is assessed via a PowerPoint group presentation as part of the compulsory module NBS8006.  |

12    **Programme Curriculum, Structure and Features**

**Basic structure of the programme**

**Programme – Semesters 1 & 2**

The MA IFA programme consists of SIX compulsory modules. These modules will enable you to acquire a firm understanding of many of the major areas of knowledge in accounting and finance. These modules are listed below:

| <u>Code</u> | <u>Credits</u> | <u>Descriptive title</u>                  |
|-------------|----------------|---|
| NBS8001     | (30)           | International Finance and Capital Markets |
| NBS8002     | (20)           | Techniques for Data Analysis              |
| NBS8003     | (20)           | Financial Information Analysis            |
| NBS8005     | (20)           | Corporate Strategy and Valuation          |
| NBS8006     | (30)           | Accounting for Analysts                   |
| NBS8004     | (60)           | Dissertation                              |

Detailed aims and objectives for each module can be found in the module outlines which can be found on the website: <https://mofs.ncl.ac.uk>.

### **Dissertation**

The dissertation is worth 60 credits and is the opportunity for students to integrate and apply their learning to real world situations and problems. Specifically, students produce a detailed report – including in-depth analysis and future assessments – relating to a major corporation. The dissertation is a major piece of work (no more than **15,000 words**) which will enable you to apply the knowledge and skills developed during the taught element of the Newcastle MA IFA to your chosen company. Students will be expected to demonstrate evaluative and analytical ability.

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

The MA in International Financial Analysis is structured around an understanding of the international financial environment. The course has been constructed to enable (reasonably numerate) non-specialists firstly to acquire the quantitative and qualitative skills of financial analysis, and secondly to gain an insight and understanding of how international accounting and finance knowledge may be combined to assess corporate performance and valuation. In particular, the course features 'hands on' analysis of real world data, including work with Datastream and other sources, with a substantial emphasis on developing IT skills (the use of spreadsheets, databases, word processing, econometric and statistical software). In addition, our dissertation is based around the research reports of financial analysts – students prepare a report on a company of their choice, analysing financial and accounting data, strategy and corporate governance, and concluding with a valuation of the company itself.

The above features, along with its international orientation, significantly differentiate this programme from conventional taught Masters programmes in Accounting and Finance.

### **Programme regulations (link to on-line version)**

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

## **13 Criteria for admission**

### *Entry qualifications*

Successful applicants for the MA programme will normally have a good honours degree (full membership of a professional body would also be considered). No prior experience of finance or statistics is assumed, although a reasonable level of numeracy is a prerequisite and applicants should possess basic IT skills.

### *Admissions policy/selection tools*

Administered by HaSS Graduate School.

### *Non-standard Entry Requirements*

Full membership of a professional accounting/finance/investment body would be considered.

### *Additional Requirements*

None.

### *Level of English Language capability*

Normally you would be expected to have an IELTS score of 6.5 or better (TOEFL 590 or better). Pre-session courses in English are available where needed, and a charge is levied for these courses.

## **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/labs/ tutorials/etc. The International Office offers an additional induction programme for overseas students (see <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/international/prearrival>)

### *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.

### *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/postgraduate/support/pgtutor.htm>

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/postgraduate/support/>

### *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/postgraduate/facilities/>

All new students whose first language is not English are required to take the University English Language Assessment with the INTO Newcastle University Centre. Where appropriate, in-session language training can be provided. See the In-Sessional English web pages for further details:-

<http://www.ncl.ac.uk/students/insessional/>

The Newcastle University Open Access Centre houses a range of resources for learning other languages which may be particularly appropriate for those interested in an Erasmus exchange. See

<http://www.ncl.ac.uk/langcen/>

#### *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 Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) is run by Newcastle University together with the Higher Education Academy and is sent out every year to students on taught postgraduate degrees at Newcastle University. PTES is an anonymous online survey aimed at identifying, at both local and national level, areas where improvements could be made and efforts targeted to further enhance the provision of postgraduate taught degree programmes.

#### *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, see [http://www.ncl.ac.uk/aqss/qsh/internal\\_subject\\_review/index.php](http://www.ncl.ac.uk/aqss/qsh/internal_subject_review/index.php)

#### *Accreditation reports*

Not applicable.

#### *Additional mechanisms*

Not applicable.

## **16 Regulation of assessment**

#### *Pass mark*

The pass mark is 50 (Postgraduate programmes)

#### *Course requirements*

Progression is subject to the University's Masters Degree Progress Regulations, Taught and Research and Examination Conventions for Taught Masters Degrees (see University Regulations online <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/regulations/docs/>). 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*

Not applicable.

#### *Common Marking Scheme*

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/postgraduate/>)

The School Brochure (contact [enquiries@ncl.ac.uk](mailto:enquiries@ncl.ac.uk))

The University Regulations (see <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/regulations/docs>)

The Degree Programme Handbook

Please note. This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and of the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve if she/he takes full advantage of the learning opportunities provided. The accuracy of the information contained is reviewed by the University and may be checked by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education.

## Mapping of Intended Learning Outcomes onto Curriculum/Modules

| Intended Learning Outcome | Module codes (Comp/Core in Bold)               |
|---------------------------|--|
| A1                        | <b>NBS: 8001, 8002, 8003, 8004, 8005, 8006</b> |
| A2                        | <b>NBS: 8001, 8005</b>                         |
| A3                        | <b>NBS: 8001, 8002, 8003, 8004, 8005, 8006</b> |
| A4                        | <b>NBS: 8001, 8005, 8006</b>                   |
| A5                        | <b>NBS: 8001, 8003, 8005</b>                   |
| A6                        | <b>NBS: 8006</b>                               |
| B1                        | <b>NBS: 8001</b>                               |
| B2                        | <b>NBS: 8001, 8002, 8003, 8004, 8005, 8006</b> |
| B3                        | <b>NBS: 8003, 8005, 8006</b>                   |
| C1                        | <b>NBS: 8001, 8002, 8003, 8004, 8005, 8006</b> |
| C2                        | <b>NBS: 8002, 8004, 8005, 8006</b>             |
| C3                        | <b>NBS: 8001, 8002, 8003, 8004, 8005, 8006</b> |
| D1                        | <b>NBS: 8001, 8002, 8004, 8006</b>             |
| D2                        | <b>NBS: 8001, 8002, 8003, 8004, 8005, 8006</b> |
| D3                        | <b>NBS: 8006</b>                               |
| D4                        | <b>NBS: 8001, 8002, 8003, 8004, 8005, 8006</b> |

All modules (NBS8001 – NBS8006) are compulsory.