

**PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION**

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| <b>1</b> | <b>Awarding Institution</b>     | Newcastle University                            |
| <b>2</b> | <b>Teaching Institution</b>     | Newcastle University                            |
| <b>3</b> | <b>Final Award</b>              | BA (Hons)                                       |
| <b>4</b> | <b>Programme Title</b>          | Spanish, Portuguese, and Latin American Studies |
| <b>5</b> | <b>UCAS/Programme Code</b>      | RT47  |
| <b>6</b> | <b>Programme Accreditation</b>  |   |
| <b>7</b> | <b>QAA Subject Benchmark(s)</b> | Languages and related studies, area studies     |
| <b>8</b> | <b>FHEQ Level</b>               | 6   |
| <b>9</b> | <b>Date written/revised</b>     | March 2010                                      |

**10 Programme Aims**

- 1 To foster intercultural awareness and understanding, and an attitude of curiosity and openness towards different cultures.
- 2 To provide students with knowledge and skills that prepare them for further intellectual development and further independent study.
- 3 To provide a flexible programme of study through variety of student choice in modules in Modern Languages within an informed advisory framework.
- 4 To give students the opportunity to spend time studying or working in a Spanish and/or Portuguese speaking country
- 5 To develop proficiency in receptive (reading and listening), productive (writing and speaking), and mediating skills in Spanish and Portuguese

**11 Learning Outcomes**

The programme provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding, qualities, skills and other attributes in a variety of areas. The programme outcomes have references to the relevant benchmark statements.

**Knowledge and Understanding**

On completing the programme students should have knowledge and understanding of:

- A1 the lexis, grammatical structures, registers and usage of Spanish language to BA Honours degree standard and Portuguese where chosen at Stages 3-4, to ALTE Level 4
- A2 aspects of the history, society, culture and linguistic development of Spanish and Portuguese speaking countries
- A3 certain areas of specialist study, according to module selection, in cultural studies, film, history, language, linguistics, literary studies and politics.
- A4 the internal diversity and connections between cultures.
- A5 (for students opting to write a dissertation) a topic studied in-depth and independently.

**Teaching and Learning Methods**

The primary means of imparting knowledge and understanding of the modern languages (A1) is via a mix of communicative, student-centred language teaching methods and formal linguistic instruction. In the case of A2-A3, knowledge and understanding are generally conveyed through lectures and seminars which guide students towards independent reading and enable them to self-assess and develop their learning through group discussion, take-

home tasks; guided self-teaching activities; e-mail discussion and e-mail based group working; the preparation of presentations and/or reports. A4 is developed initially within the communicative language training framework and is further enhanced during the students' year abroad. In A5 (optional dissertation) one-to-one tutorials provide academic guidance, while the opportunity to carry out independent research allows students to apply and practise research skills.

**Assessment Strategy**

Knowledge and understanding of the modern language (A1) is assessed by written continuous assessment and class tests (evaluating student understanding and progress), and unseen written, aural and oral examinations. Outcomes A2-3 are assessed by essay and/or unseen written examination, oral presentation & video presentation (requiring independent, critical analysis and application of intellectual models, principles and theories). Outcome A4 is assessed during the year abroad by a personal learning record and in some cases an intercalary project. Outcome A5 is assessed by a 5-6000 word dissertation.

**Intellectual Skills**

On completing the programme students should be able to:

- B1 gather, synthesise and evaluate information.
- B2 undertake independent, critical analysis.
- B3 organise and present ideas within the framework of a structured and reasoned argument, oral or written.
- B4 apply appropriate methodologies to specialist areas of study.
- B5 (for those who choose to write a dissertation), design a research project and select and employ appropriate research methodologies

**Teaching and Learning Methods**

B1-4 skills are developed through seminar preparation and presentation, group discussion and written assignments. B5 is developed through one-to-one tutorials to facilitate the development of independent study and research skills through student self-evaluation.

**Assessment Strategy**

B1-4 are assessed by means of course work (e.g. essays, oral presentations, video presentations) and unseen written examinations. They are also assessed as part of oral examinations. They may also be assessed by dissertation.

**Practical Skills**

On completing the programme students should be able to:

- C1 show receptive (reading and listening) and productive (writing and speaking) skills in Spanish to BA Honours degree standard and in Portuguese, if taken in stage 4, to ALTE level 4
- C2 perform a range of communicative tasks.
- C3 translate non-technical texts from and into the target language, develop competent professional liaison interpreting skills (in Spanish).
- C4 make effective use of language reference materials, such as grammars, dictionaries and corpora.

C5 practice independent language learning.

**Teaching and Learning Methods**

Learning outcomes C1-2 are achieved via communicative, student-centred skills training (e.g. developing and practising reading skills, enhancing listening skills through language laboratory work, liaison interpreting, analysing and practising different writing skills, and conducting oral discussion and presentation, both individually and as part of a team), and formal grammar instruction (e.g. guided study, drills and exercises, and use of IT resources). C1-2 skills may be further enhanced by delivery of specified modules in the target language. These skills are developed and consolidated during the year abroad. C3 is achieved by guided translation into and out of the target language, and analysis of translation techniques; liaison interpreting in and out of the target language; reading for gist exercises; summary and evaluation of texts in the modern language, working in the modern language. C4-5 are achieved in the teaching of C1-3, and further enhanced by study skills sessions as detailed in section 13 (below). Self-access language learning is also encouraged in order to further both C4 and C5.

**Assessment Strategy**

C1-3 are assessed by written continuous assessment and class tests (evaluating student progress) and unseen written examination (reading, writing, translating and interpreting skills), aural examination (listening and writing skills) and oral examination (listening, speaking and interpreting skills). Skills C4 and C5 are not formally assessed.

**Transferable/Key Skills**

On completing the programme students should be able to:

- D1 communicate clearly and effectively, both orally and in writing.
- D2 give oral presentations.
- D3 manage one's time, make plans and set priorities in order to achieve an objective.
- D4 work creatively and flexibly with others as part of a team, and, in the case of the intercalary project, the ability to conduct an effective interview.
- D5. adapt and operate effectively within a different cultural environment.
- D6. use library and bibliographic research resources.
- D7. analyse and solve problems
- D8. use IT effectively, such as word processing, email, databases, online environments and the use of the Internet as a research and study tool.

**Teaching and Learning Methods**

D1 is enhanced through seminar presentations and discussions, and through written assignments. In the case of language modules, they are developed through communicative skills training. Skills D2-3 and D6-8 are practised through seminar preparation and presentation. D3 and D6-8 are further developed through written assignments and research-based modules. D4 is developed through team presentations and projects (including the intercalary project). D5 is developed initially through communicative language training, and is later enhanced during the student's year abroad. D8 is further enhanced through the use of IT resources in language teaching and as an organisational tool for certain modules. D6 and D8 skills are also developed during induction (see 13 below).

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| <b>Assessment Strategy</b>   |
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| <p>D1 is assessed by essay, dissertation and unseen written examination (written communication), while both D1 and D2 are assessed via assessed seminar presentations and oral examinations (oral communication). D3 and D6-7 are assessed in a number of ways, including written assignments, unseen examinations, assessed seminar preparation and presentation, self-directed language coursework and preparation for language classes. D4 is assessed via team presentations and projects (including the intercalary project, which involves a transcribed interview). D5 is assessed via the personal learning record produced during the year abroad.</p> <p>D8 is assessed in a number of ways including the preparation of written assignments and seminars.</p> |
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| <b>12 Programme Curriculum, Structure and Features</b>  |
| <b>Basic structure of the programme</b>   |
| <p>The programme is studied over four years full-time based on 30 weeks attendance per annum. Stages 1, 2 and 4 of the programme are spent in residence attending the University of Newcastle; Stage 3 is an intercalary year during which students attend university or work in a Spanish and/or Portuguese-speaking country. Each year or stage requires the study of modules with a total credit value of 120. 20 credits of module study represent 200 hours of student work, including lectures and other teaching (such as seminars), private study, preparation of coursework and exam preparation and revision. Larger modules are proportionately heavier in their work content. All modules at Stages 1, 2 and 4 are generally 20 credits in weight. Modules undertaken during the intercalary year have a weighting of 100 credits (Personal Learning Record) and 20 credits (Intercalary Project or Study Abroad module).</p> <p>In each of Stages 1, 2 and 4, students are required to study 20 credits of practical language in Spanish and in Stages 1 and 2 also in Portuguese; at stage 1 the 20 credit language module in Spanish is core. In addition to the compulsory practical language module, students must take further modules to bring their credit weighting up to a total of 120 credits at Stages 1, 2 and 4. These modules are chosen from the range of modules offered at the appropriate stage in that particular year in the School of Modern Languages.</p> <p>Language modules are conducted mainly in the foreign language; optional modules are taught in a combination of Spanish/Portuguese and English, varying from module to module and from year to year. The range of options includes those that are language specific and provided by the relevant constituent sections of the School of Modern Languages and those that are open to all students of modern languages and are provided by colleagues across the School.</p> <p>At Stage 1, students develop the language skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking; these modules also provide knowledge and understanding of the target language and its cultural context as well as the foundations of subject-specific skills (outcome A1, 2, &amp; 4, C1-5). Students choose additional credits from a range of introductory modules within the School of Modern Languages in linguistics, film, literature, history, politics, and society; these modules enhance knowledge and understanding of the language and of specialist areas (outcomes A2, A3) as well as providing an introduction for cognitive skills (B1-3) and effective practice in key transferable skills (especially outcomes D1-4). They may also take 20 or 40 credits from outside the School (see above).</p> <p>At Stage 2, a compulsory 20-credit Spanish language module is taken and a compulsory 20-credit Portuguese module is also taken; additional credits are chosen from a range of options</p> |

in film, history, linguistics, literature, media and politics. Students continue to develop the language skills of reading, writing, listening, speaking and translation; language modules are designed to develop these skills in preparation for the forthcoming Year Abroad (outcome A1, 2, & 4, C1-5), practise cognitive skills in the target language (B1-3) as well as key transferable skills (D1, 2, 4 & 6). The optional modules are intended to be as broad-ranging as possible to allow informed choices to be made about more specialised final-year options; they develop knowledge and understanding of the language in relation to specialist areas of study (A2-3), while at the same time providing a sufficient introduction to critical skills and methodology appropriate to the area (B1-4) and further advancing key transferable skills (especially outcomes D1-2, 6-7).

At Stage 3 students spend the whole year in a country where one or both of the target languages are spoken, working as a teaching assistant in a school or college, or studying at a university, or undertaking an approved work placement. The School of Modern Languages has several Erasmus student exchange programmes with universities in Spain, one in Portugal, as well as informal links with a number of institutions in Latin America. The Year Abroad is fully accredited and assessment is by means of a personal learning record (100 credits) plus either an intercalary project (20 credits) or marks achieved at the host university (to a total of 20 credits). While all aspects of knowledge, understanding and language skills will be developed during Stage 3, there will be particular opportunities for increasing intercultural awareness and understanding (A4), for developing self-study skills for language learning (C5), for developing organisational and interpersonal skills (D3-5); students preparing a dissertation will have the opportunity to develop knowledge and cognitive skills in this area too (A5, B5).

The Spanish language module at Stage 4 is taught on the basis that students have reached a very high level (Level D) of competence during their year abroad. The emphasis now is on sophisticated use of language in all skills (A1, 2 & 4, C1-5) as well as the cognitive abilities of analysis and structured argumentation (B2-3). Opportunities to practise interpreting skills are available through translation and interpreting courses (C3). Students opting to continue with Portuguese language are exercising and developing similar skills, but at a lower level (typically at ALTE Level 4/5 threshold). A wide range of more specialised options in film, history, linguistics, literature, media, and politics takes the cognitive skills to a much higher level of development, including greater emphasis upon independent analytical skills, use of appropriate methodologies and problem-solving skills (B1-4, D1-3, 6-7). Students writing a dissertation as well as those preparing an extended essay will develop their knowledge and understanding as well as their subject-specific, cognitive and transferable skills over a broad range of outcomes (A2, 3, & 5, C1 & 4, B1-5, D1, 3, 6 & 7).

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

The combination of the two major languages of the Iberian peninsula and Latin America. However students also have flexibility. They may study either 2 years of Portuguese and concentrate on their Spanish or do Spanish and Portuguese together for 4 years. The programme also provides beginners courses in Catalan and, almost unique in Europe, an Indian language, Quechua.

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

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

**13 Criteria for admission**

*Entry qualifications*

ABB with A in Spanish

Scottish qualifications

AABBB/ ABBBB at Higher Grade, including A for Spanish.  
Combinations of Highers and Advanced Highers are accepted.

International Baccalaureate

32 points with at least one Higher Level Spanish at grade 6 or above.

#### *Admissions policy/selection tools*

The programme welcomes applications from both A/AS level candidates and non-standard entrants (Partners Programme candidates, Mature Students, Access Courses). Students to whom offers are made are invited to an open day to meet staff and students and see the School. Attendance is not compulsory.

#### *Non-standard Entry Requirements*

##### Access to HE courses

Candidates offering Access to HE courses are welcomed and considered on an individual basis.

Evidence of the study of Spanish to a suitable level is also required.

##### *Additional Requirements*

##### *Level of English Language capability*

6.5 IELTS or approved equivalent.

## **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 International Office website)

### *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 individual modules. On-line study skills packages are available on the SML UG Community site on BlackBoard. Students are tutored on their approach to both group and individual projects.

### *Academic support*

All students are assigned a Degree Programme Director whose responsibility is to monitor the academic performance and progress of their tutees. Issues relating to the programme may be raised with the Degree Programme Director, at the Staff-Student Committee, and/or at the Board of Studies.

### *Pastoral support*

Each student is assigned a personal tutor who is responsible for pastoral support, giving help and advice on general welfare and personal problems. 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/students/wellbeing/>

### *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/students/wellbeing/disability-support/index.htm>

#### *Learning resources*

The University's main learning resources are provided by the Robinson Library (for books, journals, online resources), the Open Access Centre, and Information Systems and Services (ISS), which supports campus-wide computing facilities, see <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/students/wellbeing/disability-support/index.htm>

All new students whose first language is not English are required to take an English Language test. Where appropriate, in-session language training can be provided. There is 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/elc/>

### **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 Undergraduate 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, where there are students representatives. The Board responds to these reports through Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee

#### *Student evaluations*

All modules and each stage of study are subject to review by student questionnaires. 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/](http://www.thestudentsurvey.com/) In addition to this Newcastle University periodically carries out institutional surveys. With reference to the outcomes of the NSS and institutional student surveys actions are taken at all appropriate levels by the institution.

#### *Mechanisms for gaining student feedback*

Module questionnaires, Stage questionnaires, 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*

#### *Additional mechanisms*

## 16 Regulation of assessment

### *Pass mark*

The pass mark is 40 (Undergraduate programmes)

### *Course requirements*

Progression is subject to the University's Undergraduate Progress Regulations <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/regulations/docs/UGProgress0910.pdf> and Undergraduate Examination Conventions <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/regulations/docs/UGExamConv0910.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.

### *Weighting of stages*

Work undertaken at Stages 2, 3 and 4 counts towards the final award. Work completed at Stage 4 carries double the weighting of work completed at Stages 2 and 3. If the mark gained in SML3005 or SML3006 at Stage 3 (both 20 credits) is greater than the lowest mark for any 20-credit SML module taken at Stage 2, then the mark for SML3005 or SML3006 will replace that lower mark when calculating the degree average.

### *Common Marking Scheme*

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

|       | <b>Honours</b>                | <b>Non-honours</b> |
|-------|-------------------------------|--------------------|
| <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 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](mailto:enquiries@ncl.ac.uk))

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

The Undergraduate 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



## Mapping of Intended Learning Outcomes onto Curriculum/Modules

| Module  | Type | Intended Learning Outcomes |       |     |     |
|---|------|----------------------------|-------|-----|-----|
|   |      | A                          | B     | C   | D   |
| SPA1065<br>SPA1066<br>SPA1071<br>SPA2021<br>SPA2061<br>SPA4061<br>LAS2027<br>POR1065<br>POR1066<br>POR2061<br>POR4061 |      | 1, 2, 4                    | 1 & 3 | 1-5 | 1-5 |
| SML1018<br>SML1019<br>SML1021<br>SML1022<br>SML3004<br>SML3005<br>SML3006   |      | 2-4                        | 1-4   | 1   | 1-8 |
| LAS1010<br>LAS2026<br>LAS2027<br>LAS2028<br>LAS4003<br>LAS4004<br>LAS4005   |      | 2-4                        | 1-4   | 1   | 1-8 |
| SPA1017<br>SPA2005<br>SPA2025<br>SPA4001<br>SPA4003<br>SPA4004  |      | 2-4                        | 1-4   | 1   | 1-8 |
| SML4099<br>POR4002  |      | 2-4                        | 1-4   | 1   | 1-8 |