

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION



1	Awarding Institution	Newcastle University
2	Teaching Institution	Newcastle University
3	Final Award	BSc (Hons)
4	Programme Title	Geography
5	UCAS/Programme Code	GF18 Geography and Mathematics, GF38 Geography and Statistics.
6	Programme Accreditation	N/A
7	QAA Subject Benchmark(s)	Geography
8	FHEQ Level	Level 6
9	Date written/revised	February 2011

10 Programme Aims

- 1 to enable students to develop their knowledge and understanding of the theoretical and empirical basis of the discipline of geography;
- 2 to enable students to appreciate the relevance of geographical perspectives in the analysis of real world problems;
- 3 to facilitate the students' development of the intellectual, practical and transferable skills necessary for the acquisition, analysis, interpretation and understanding of geographical information;
- 4 to facilitate the students' development of the intellectual, practical and transferable skills necessary for the acquisition, analysis, interpretation and understanding of geographical information;
- 5 to prepare students for a career in a wide range of geographical and non-geographical contexts or for further study;
- 6 to promote the development of personal attributes that foster life-long learning, study and enquiry, and an appreciation of the value of education to the wider community.

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 Geography.

Knowledge and Understanding

- A1 The dynamic and contested nature of geographical thought and practice and the inter-relationships between the discipline and the physical and natural sciences, the social sciences and humanities
- A2 The diversity of global environments and the operation of, and inter-relationships between physical and biological systems over a wide range of spatial and temporal scales
- A3 Patterns and processes of environmental change and their inter-relationships with human activities
- A4 Spatial patterns and relationships in human phenomena at a variety of scales
- A5 The geography of places and their constitution by environmental, economic, social and political processes, and the influence of places on these processes
- A6 The geographies of difference and inequality with particular reference to historical development, ethnicity, class, gender and the changing nature of urban and regional economy and policy
- A7 Contemporary debates about time-space relationships, globalization and global interconnections
- A8 The role of changes in technology, the nature of work and labour markets in influencing spatial patterns of economic activity
- A9 The theory and application of quantitative, visualization and other spatial techniques across a wide range of geographical contexts

A10 The contribution of geography to development of environmental, political, economic and cultural agendas, policies and practices.
Teaching and Learning Methods
<p>Geographical knowledge and understanding (A1-10) is acquired throughout the curriculum via combinations of lectures, tutorials, staff and student-led seminars, workshops, practicals, fieldwork, guided independent study and teamwork.</p> <p>Compulsory Stage 1 modules develop the main themes of the degree (A1-10) while an overview of disciplinary thought and practice (A1) is provided by compulsory Stage 2 modules. During Stages 2 and 3 students can follow particular pathways through the degree programme, specialising in physical geography (A2-3, 10), human geography (A4-10) or a combination of both.</p>
Assessment Strategy
<p>Knowledge and understanding (A1-10) is assessed by combinations of examinations (seen and unseen, including computer-aided assessments) and coursework (including essays, individual and group projects, dissertations, practical reports, oral presentations, poster presentations and portfolios).</p> <p>Examinations are primarily intended to assess knowledge of core information while written and oral coursework places more emphasis on the development of critical analysis and understanding of the concepts within a wider geographical context. Poster presentations emphasise the collection and presentation of knowledge.</p>
Intellectual Skills
<p>On completing the programme students should be able to:</p> <p>B1 Abstract and synthesise information from a variety of sources B2 Assess and critically evaluate the merits of contrasting theories, explanations and policies B3 Critically analyse and interpret data and text B4 Develop reasoned arguments B5 Solve problems and make reasoned decisions</p>
Teaching and Learning Methods
<p>Cognitive skills are introduced in Stage 1 modules and developed to advanced levels through Stage 2 and 3 modules. Seminars, projects and group work allow students to discuss and learn to evaluate arguments and evidence while fieldwork, and especially the dissertation, promotes development of problem solving skills.</p>
Assessment Strategy
<p>Cognitive skills are assessed by coursework essays and projects, case studies, reports, and, to a lesser extent, via unseen written examinations. The dissertation provides a means of demonstrating all cognitive skills.</p>
Practical Skills
<p>On completing the programme students should be able to:</p> <p>C1 plan, design, execute and report geographical research both individually and as part of a team C2 undertake effective laboratory and field work (with due regard for safety and risk assessment) C3 employ a variety of technical and laboratory-based methods for the analysis and presentation of spatial and environmental information (e.g. GIS, water chemistry, etc) C4 collect, interpret and synthesise different types of quantitative and qualitative geographical data C5 recognise the ethical issues involved in geographical debates and enquiries</p>

Teaching and Learning Methods
Subject-specific and professional skills are introduced and developed in dedicated compulsory Stage 1 and 2 modules, and are developed to an advanced level in optional modules and the dissertation. Teaching and learning methods include lectures, seminars, IT and laboratory practicals, fieldwork.
Assessment Strategy
Subject-specific and professional skills are assessed by means of essays, oral and poster presentations, fieldwork and laboratory reports and written and computer-aided examinations.
Transferable/Key Skills
<p>On completing the programme students should be able to:</p> <p>D1 learn in familiar and unfamiliar situations, both independently and in groups</p> <p>D2 communicate effectively (in writing, verbally and through graphical presentations)</p> <p>D3 apply numerical and computational skills to geographical information</p> <p>D4 use information technology effectively (including use of spreadsheet, database and word processing programmes; Internet and e-mail)</p> <p>D5 identify, retrieve, sort and exchange geographical information using a wide range of sources (including on-line computer searches)</p> <p>D6 work as part of a team and to recognise and respect the viewpoints of others</p> <p>D7 manage their time and organise their work effectively</p>
Teaching and Learning Methods
An introduction to all (D1-7) key skills is taught formally in Stage 1 and developed further throughout the programme in a range of class, practical and fieldwork-based sessions. Communication skills (D2) are developed in written coursework and exams, projects, oral and poster presentations. Specific modules support numerate skill development (D3) and the retrieval and use of information sources (D4-5). Self-management (D7) is promoted through a strict coursework and assessment timetable.
Assessment Strategy
Key skills are assessed by a combination of examination and coursework assignments, including essays, project and practical reports, portfolios, oral and poster presentations and computer-aided assessments.

12 Programme Curriculum, Structure and Features
Basic structure of the programme
<p>Stage 1 of the programme aims to provide a foundation in skills and methods appropriate to the study of Geography, as well as an introduction to the themes of study developed in Stages 2 and 3; physical geography and environmental science, the geography of social, cultural and international development, the geography of urban and regional development and geography as spatial analysis. All students have 40 credits of compulsory modules and 20 credits of optional modules. During stages 2 and 3 students are free to construct their degree from a wide range of optional modules in order to provide a focused programme of study that is both coherent as a Joint Honours geography degree and tailored to individual interests, abilities, and future employment. Students are progressively engaged with cutting edge theory and research and optional modules at Stage 3 directly reflect staff research activity. Further development of work-based skills is encouraged by optional modules in student tutoring and learning from work.</p>
Key features of the programme (including what makes the programme distinctive)
Programme regulations (link to on-line version)
http://www.ncl.ac.uk/regulations/

13 Criteria for admission
Dealt with in the overarching Joint Honours Programme Specification.

14 Support for Student Learning
<p><i>Induction</i></p> <p>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.</p> <p><i>Study skills support</i></p> <p>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.</p> <p>Numeracy support is available through Maths Aid.</p> <p>Help with academic writing is available from the Writing Centre.</p> <p><i>Academic support</i></p> <p>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.</p> <p><i>Pastoral support</i></p> <p>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 eg. 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.</p> <p><i>Support for students with disabilities</i></p> <p>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.</p> <p><i>Learning resources</i></p> <p>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.</p> <p>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-session 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.</p>

15	Methods for evaluating and improving the quality and standards of teaching and learning
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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

This programme is not accredited by any professional body.

Additional mechanisms

Board of Studies annual report
Peer observation of teaching
Annual module review
Annual review of progression rates
Joint Honours questionnaires
Joint Honours Staff Student Committee

Committees with responsibility for monitoring and evaluating quality and standards

Board of Studies in Accounting and Finance
Joint Honours Board of Studies
Teaching and Learning Committee in the Newcastle University Business School
Employers' Panel
Stream Review meetings in Accounting and Finance
Examination Boards

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 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.

Weighting of stages

The marks from Stages 2 and 3 will contribute to the final classification of the degree

The weighting of marks contributing to the degree for Stages 2 and 3 is 1:1.

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:

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

Module	Type	Intended Learning Outcomes			
		A	B	C	D
	Compulsory	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 10	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	5	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
	Optional	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	5	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7
	Optional	1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	4, 5	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
	Optional		1, 2, 3, 4, 5	1, 3, 4	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
GEO2042	Optional	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
	Optional	1, 4-7, 10	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	1, 2, 4	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7
GEO2048	Optional	1-3, 9	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	1, 2, 3, 4	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
GEO2051	Optional	1-3, 9	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	1, 2, 3, 4	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
	Optional	1, 4-8, 10	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	1, 2, 4, 5	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7
GEO2099	Optional	1, 4-7, 10	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	1, 2, 4, 5	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7
GEO2103	Optional	1, 4-8, 10	1-4	1, 4, 5	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
GEO2104	Optional	1, 4-8, 10	1-4	1, 2, 4, 5	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
	Optional	1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	4, 5	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7
	Optional	1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 10	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	1, 2, 4, 5	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7
GEO3064	Optional	1, 2, 3, 10	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	2, 3, 4	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
GEO3065``	Optional	1, 4-7, 10	1-4	4, 5	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
GEO3067	Optional	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 9, 10	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	4	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
GEO3069	Optional	1, 2, 3, 10	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	2, 3, 4	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
GEO3070	Optional	1, 2, 3	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	4	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
GEO3071	Optional	1, 2, 3, 10	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	4	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
	Optional	1, 2, 3, 10	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	4	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
GEO3073	Optional	1, 2, 3	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	4	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
	Optional	1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 10	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	4, 5	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
	Optional	1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	4, 5	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7
GEO3105	Optional	1, 4, 5, 6, 10	1-4	2-4	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7
	Optional	1, 4-7, 9, 10	1-4	4, 5	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
GEO3110	Optional	1, 2, 4, 5, 6	1, 4	1, 3, 5,	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7

Optional modules to add GE02015, GEO3101, GEO3108, GEO3112, GEO3113, GEO3114