

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION



1	Awarding Institution	Newcastle University
2	Teaching Institution	Newcastle University
3	Final Award	MA
4	Programme Title	Master of Arts in Urban Design by Thesis Only
5	Programme Code	4113
6	Programme Accreditation	N/A
7	QAA Subject Benchmark(s)	N/A
8	FHEQ Level	7
9	Last updated	March 2010

10 Programme Aims

To help the students gain a more in depth understanding of a chosen area within urban design and enhance their design skills through the opportunity to undertake a large individual piece of work.

To provide holders of the Diploma in Planning and Urban Design to convert their Diploma to an MA by undertaking a 60 credit dissertation.

To provide a programme which satisfies the requirements of the FHEQ for a level 7 programme

To provide a programme which complies with University regulations and codes of practice.

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:

- Theoretical understanding of contemporary debates in urban design
- design and graphic skills at masterplanning scale from 1:1250 – 1:500
- experience in creating and evaluating briefs set in a particular socioeconomic context
- experience in masterplanning, design coding, urban design strategies
- enhanced communication skills

Knowledge and Understanding

On completing the programme students should:

- A1 Have an advanced and deeper understanding of areas in Urban Design informed by research findings and up-to-date professional practice
- A2 Have an understanding of research methods in urban design
- A3 Have a good theoretical understanding of contemporary debates in urban design

Teaching and Learning Methods

- Seminars/meeting to discuss potential ideas for projects
- One to one meetings with assigned tutors to help steer the project
- A number of interim presentations of literature review, analysis and design proposals
- Individual and group design tutorials and the design stage

Assessment Strategy

- Assessed piece of writing at the end of semester 2, which has been presented in an interim review before hand and received feedback.

Intellectual Skills

On completing the programme students should be able to:

- B1 Be able to translate theory into practice
 B2 Be able to critically analyse and synthesise information for a variety of sources
 B3 Be able to construct and support arguments on theory and design decisions

Teaching and Learning Methods

The students will already have had a series of theoretical seminars as part of the Diploma in Planning and Urban Design. They have weekly sessions with the tutor to discuss their ideas and be directed to the right literature. They receive feedback on their written work as well as design work weekly by their tutors.

Assessment Strategy

The written and drawn components of the work are assessed separately.

Practical Skills

On completing the programme students should be able to:

- C1 Be able to contextualise an urban design issue within a contemporary theoretical framework
 C2 Be competent in applying the above theoretical framework in a masterplanning/design coding exercise
 C3 Identify a brief for a site taking into consideration the physical but also socioeconomic context
 C4 Be competent in presenting work in written graphic and verbal format at an advanced level
 C5 Be able to critically evaluate design proposals

Teaching and Learning Methods

- Seminars/meeting to discuss potential ideas for projects
- One to one meetings with assigned tutors to help steer the project
- A number of interim presentations of literature review, analysis and design proposals
- Individual and group design tutorials and the design stage

Assessment Strategy

The written and drawn components of the work are assessed separately. The final document which includes the theoretical paper and place analysis as well as design is sent to the external examiner beforehand, and the designs are presented to him/her as well.

Transferable/Key Skills

On completing the programme students should be able to:

- D1 Communicate effectively verbally, in writing and graphics
 D2 Deal with a complex project in a short period of time and self motivate/organise
 D3 Be able to accept feedback and incorporate into improving their work

Teaching and Learning Methods

- Through crits, students engage in debate of supporting their work, and have to demonstrate progress in subsequent meetings/crits
- Students are given a number of opportunities for formal presentations in front of a group where they have had to talk and show their graphic work using PowerPoint or

boards
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interim stages help students to be on schedule with their work using milestones
Assessment Strategy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interim presentations and submissions ensure that these points are being assessed

12 Programme Curriculum, Structure and Features
Basic structure of the programme
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 credits in semester 2 with weekly tutorials and seminars 50 credits in semester 3 (May to September) following the structure of the MA in Urban Design, supported by personal arranged tutorials with an external practitioner
Key features of the programme (including what makes the programme distinctive)
The programme takes the form of a top-up dissertation which allows holders of the Diploma in Planning and Urban Design to convert their Diploma into an MA.
Programme regulations (link to on-line version)
http://www.ncl.ac.uk/regulations/programme/

13 Criteria for admission
<i>Entry qualifications</i> : Applications are only accepted by Candidates Holding the Diploma in Planning and Urban Design from Newcastle University in to the MA in Urban Design and holding a 60% and over (Merit). Such candidates shall be required to register in the academic year immediately after obtaining the Diploma and do so as part-time students.
<i>Level of English Language capability</i> IELTS 6.5 (or equivalent)

14 Support for Student Learning
The Student Services portal provides links to key services and other information and is available at: http://www.ncl.ac.uk/students/
<i>Induction</i> 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.
<i>Study skills support</i> Students will learn a range of Personal Transferable Skills, including Study Skills, as outlined in the Programme Specification. Some of this material, e.g. time management is covered in the appropriate Induction Programme. Students are explicitly tutored on their approach to both group and individual projects.
Numeracy support is available through Maths Aid and help with academic writing is available from the Writing Centre (further information is available from the Robinson Library).
<i>Academic support</i> The initial point of contact for a student is with a lecturer or module leader, or their tutor (see below) for more generic issues. Thereafter the Degree Programme Director or Head of School may be consulted. Issues relating to the programme may be raised at the Staff-Student Committee, and/or at the Board of Studies.

Pastoral support

All students are assigned a personal tutor whose responsibility is to monitor the academic performance and overall well-being of their tutees. In addition the University offers a range of support services, including one-to-one counselling and guidance or group sessions / workshops on a range of topics, such as emotional issues e.g. Stress and anxiety, student finance and budgeting, disability matters etc. There is specialist support available for students with dyslexia and mental health issues. Furthermore, the Union Society operates a Student Advice Centre, which can provide advocacy and support to students on a range of topics including housing, debt, legal issues etc.

Support for students with disabilities

The University's Disability Support Service provides help and advice for disabled students at the University - and those thinking of coming to Newcastle. It provides individuals with: advice about the University's facilities, services and the accessibility of campus; details about the technical support available; guidance in study skills and advice on financial support arrangements; a resources room with equipment and software to assist students in their studies.

Learning resources

The University's main learning resources are provided by the Robinson and Walton Libraries (for books, journals, online resources), and Information Systems and Services, which supports campus-wide computing facilities.

All new students whose first language is not English are required to take an English Language Proficiency Test. This is administered by INTO Newcastle University Centre on behalf of Newcastle University. Where appropriate, in-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.

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 Board of Studies and/or the School Teaching and Learning Committee. 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. The FTLC takes an overview of all programmes within the Faculty and reports any Faculty or institutional issues to the University 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 results from student surveys are considered as part of the Annual Monitoring and Review of the programme and any arising actions are captured at programme and School / institutional level and reported to the appropriate body.

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

Additional mechanisms

16 Regulation of assessment

Pass mark

The pass mark is 50%

Course requirements

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

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

Summary description applicable to postgraduate Masters 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, following recommendation from the Board of Studies. The External Examiner is expected to:

- i. Moderate dissertation marking
- ii. Attend the Board of Examiners
- iii. Report to the University on the standards of the programme

In addition, information relating to the programme is provided in:

The University Prospectus: <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/postgraduate/>

The School Brochure

Degree Programme and University Regulations: <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

Module	Type	Intended Learning Outcomes			
		A	B	C	D
ARC8098	Compulsory	1,2,3	1, 2, 3	1,2,3,4,5	1,2,3