PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

1	Awarding Institution	Newcastle University
2	Teaching Institution	Newcastle University
3	Final Award	MSc PGDip
4	Programme Title	MSc Clinical Linguistics and Evidence Based Practice (Research) PGDip Clinical Linguistics and Evidence Based Practice (Research)
5	Programme Code	MSc 5197F/P PGDip 3442F/P
6	Programme Accreditation	N/A
7	QAA Subject Benchmark(s)	N/A
8	FHEQ Level	7
9	Last updated	May 2013

10	Programme Aims

The purpose of this programme is to provide a sound basis in research methodology and evidence based practice in a flexible format so that the students' own area of interest, knowledge and expertise, whether in clinical linguistics, psychology, speech pathology or other discipline, can be developed within a research/EBP framework. The modules are selected to ensure students not only gain knowledge and understanding but also have opportunity to apply new knowledge and skills in the context of developing, managing and conducting a small scale research project. The aims are:

1   To provide an ESRC recognised Research Master's award benchmarked against
       ESRC Training Guidance
2   To provide foundational masters training to prepare students to take a PhD, specifically,
       the ESRC funded 1+3 PhD.
3   To ensure students gain a thorough grounding in the theory, approaches and research
methods of both the subject and social science more generally
4   To provide a programme which meets the requirements for a level 7 programme in the
FHEQ and complies with University policies and procedures

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.

Knowledge and Understanding

On completing the programme students should:

A1   have a thorough understanding of social science theory, approaches and research methods
A2   have a thorough knowledge and understanding of research methods in the discipline appropriate to the planned dissertation project and their future doctoral research
A3   have a thorough understanding of advanced scholarship and practice in areas within that discipline as well as an awareness of cutting edge research across the social sciences

Teaching and Learning Methods

Knowledge and understanding (A1-A3) are developed through lectures, seminars and tutorials. For A1 and A2, seminars involve group problem solving and discussion. Extensive private study is expected in preparation for lectures, seminars and tutorials. Students will be encouraged and expected to develop knowledge in their own area of specialism through independent reading and private study. This will be supported by the provision of reading lists, web-based materials and resources using Blackboard.

Assessment Strategy

Knowledge and understanding will be assessed by written assignments and the thesis (A1-A3). The nature of the written assignments will be such that a mix of theory, factual knowledge and practical application will be assessed. The nature of the thesis will ensure that key aspects of the taught modules of the Master's programme will be applied to the conduct of an original investigation and assessed through the written thesis document.

Intellectual Skills

On completing the programme students should be able to:

B1   collect and analyse theory, different approaches and data in a wide variety of formats
B2   evaluate literature in the discipline
B3   solve problems in the discipline

Teaching and Learning Methods

Intellectual skills are developed through critical appraisal of research studies (B1-B3) introduced in lectures and discussed in group seminars. Extensive private study is expected in preparation for lectures and seminars. This will be supported by the provision of reading lists, web-based materials and peer discussions using Blackboard Discussion Boards.

Assessment Strategy

Intellectual skills will be assessed by written assignments, including a systematic review and research application or manuscript, as well as the thesis (B1-B3). Key aspects of theoretical and applied knowledge within the content areas of (1) clinical linguistics and (2) evidence-based practice will underpin these assessments. The nature of the assessments will ensure that graduates possess all the key skills required to conduct a theoretical or evidence-based research project in a specialist area.

Practical Skills

On completing the programme students should be able to:

C1   undertake preparatory planning for a doctorate
C2   carry out a literature search and review
C3   use the information and study skills obtained to pursue doctoral level studies
C4   Design and conduct an original investigation relating to an assessment or intervention procedure or systematic review relevant to individuals with communication or swallowing disorders using the principles and methods of evidence-based practice;

C5 Undertake appropriate statistical and/or qualitative analyses related to an investigation and interpret the findings in light of the existing evidence and clinical practice.

C6. Communicate the findings of a clinical investigation to a professional audience in the form of a conference presentation and a manuscript suitable for submission to a scientific journal.

Teaching and Learning Methods

All the modules will involve a combination of lectures, seminars and other small-group teaching methods, and will all require extensive and focused private study. Seminars will involve group discussions of key readings, both in terms of the theory underpinning clinical practice (C2,6) and the quality of the evidence conveyed in the research investigations. Group discussions and debate will be a key feature of a number of the modules in the programme, but in particular, the Critical Appraisal II module. Skills to develop students' ability to design and carry out an original research investigation (C3, 4, 5) and conduct appropriate statistical analyses (C5) will be developed through lectures, seminars and tutorials, in addition to independent learning that will take place as a result of conducting a study.

In research methods and design practical skills in (C1, 2, 4,5) will be developed through lectures, seminars and computer-based practical sessions

Skills involved in communicating the findings of a clinical investigation (C5) will be developed through lectures, seminars and tutorials. Extensive private study is expected in preparation for lectures and seminars. This will be supported by the provision of reading lists, web-based materials and peer discussions using Blackboard Discussion Boards.

Assessment Strategy

Practical skills will be assessed through the design and conduct of an original research investigation and communicated in the form of a thesis and poster presentation (C1-C6). These will also be assessed by written assignments, a computer-based MCQ and a short presentation (C3-C4). C5 will be assessed through the thesis and a poster presentation to peers. Key aspects of theoretical and applied knowledge within the content areas of (1) clinical linguistics/speech and language pathology and (2) evidence-based practice will underpin these assessments. The nature of the assessments will ensure that graduates possess all the key skills required to conduct an original research investigation at doctoral level

Transferable/Key Skills

On completing the programme students should be able to:

D1   Write in a suitable academic style
D2   Present ideas effectively orally in a variety of formats
D3   Manage their own workload effectively so as to meet deadlines
D4   Analyse theory, different approaches and quantitative and qualitative data effectively
D5   Demonstrate library and IT skills related to conducting research

Teaching and Learning Methods

Scientific writing, analysis and presentation of data and ideas will be developed and practised through all modules (D1-4). Library and IT skills (D5) will be developed and practiced throughout the programme, through lectures and practicals. Extensive private study is expected in preparation for lectures and seminars. This will be supported by the provision of reading lists, web-based materials and peer discussions using Blackboard Discussion Boards.

Assessment Strategy

Transferable and Key skills (D1-4) will be assessed during modules (formative) and through written assignments (summative). Assessments are planned so that students are required to use new skills cumulatively, with the master's thesis being a demonstration of the practical use of all skills (D1-4)

12	**Programme Curriculum, Structure and Features**

Basic structure of the programme

The programme consists of a mixture of generic research training modules offered by the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences Research Training Programme combined with more specialised modules based in the subject covering both research training and specialist knowledge. The dissertation, undertaken at the end of the programme, provides the capstone which pulls together the varying strands of the programme.

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

The programme is designed to equip students for PhD study in the discipline and to be part of an ESRC 1+3 award.

Programme regulations (link to on-line version)

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

13	**Criteria for admission**

Entry qualifications
At least a good 2:1 in a relevant subject area

Admissions policy/selection tools
Application form with telephone or face to face interview where necessary

Non-standard Entry Requirements
Candidates with outstanding professional experience may be admitted

Additional Requirements

Level of English Language capability
IELTS 7 (or equivalent) Minimum of 6.5 in Listening and Speaking elements required

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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/*

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.

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.

Numeracy support is available through Maths Aid and help with academic writing is available from the Writing Development Centre (further information is available from the Robinson Library).

Academic and Pastoral support
Each undergraduate and taught postgraduate student will be assigned a personal tutor.*
A personal tutor is one part of a wider network of advice and guidance available to students to support their personal and general academic development. The module leader acts as the first point of contact for subject-specific academic advice. Thereafter the Degree Programme Director or Head of School may be consulted. Issues relating to the programme may be raised at the Student-Staff Committee, and/or at the Board of Studies. Within the academic unit, students may also receive additional academic and pastoral advice from a range of other student-facing staff including degree programme directors, dissertation/project supervisors, and administrative support staff.
*Arrangements may vary for students taking special types of provision.

The University also offers a wide range of institutional services and support upon which students can call, such as the Writing Development Centre, Careers Service and Student Wellbeing Service. This includes 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 Student Union 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 team 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-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.

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 Student-Staff Committee and/or the Board of Studies. New modules and major changes to existing modules are subject to approval by the Faculty Learning, Teaching and Student Experience Committee.

Programme reviews
The Board of Studies conducts an Annual Monitoring and Review of the degree programme and reports to Faculty Learning, Teaching and Student Experience Committee. The FLTSEC takes an overview of all programmes within the Faculty and reports any Faculty or institutional issues to the Faculty Learning, Teaching and Student Experience Committee.

External Examiner reports
External Examiner reports are considered by the Board of Studies. The Board responds to these reports through Faculty Learning, Teaching and Student Experience Committee. External Examiner reports are shared with institutional student representatives, through the Student-Staff Committee.

Student evaluations
All modules, and the degree programme, are subject to review by student questionnaires. Informal student evaluation is also obtained at the Student-Staff Committee, 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 Student-Staff Committee and the Board of Studies.

Faculty and University Review Mechanisms
Every six years degree programmes in each subject area undergo periodic review. This involves both the detailed consideration of a range of documentation, and a review visit by a review team (normally one day in duration) which includes an external subject specialist and a student representative. Following the review a report is produced, which forms the basis for a decision by University Learning, Teaching and Student Experience Committee on whether the programmes reviewed should be re-approved for a further six year period.

Accreditation reports

Additional mechanisms

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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. There are reassessment opportunities, with certain restrictions. Limited compensation up to 40 credits of the taught element and down to a mark of 40% is possible for candidates who commenced their programme in 2013/14 or earlier. For students starting their programme in 2014/15 or later, no compensation is possible.

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, following recommendation from the Board of Studies. The External Examiner is expected to:
   i.   See and approve assessment papers
   ii. Moderate examination and coursework marking
   iii. Attend the Board of Examiners
   iv. 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: http://www.ncl.ac.uk/marketing/services/print/publications/ordering/

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

Intended Learning Outcome	Module codes
A1	SPE8301, SPE8302, SPE8306, HSS8004, HSS8007
A2	SPE8304, SPE8302, SPE8306, HSS8004, HSS8007
A3	SPE8320, SPE8302, SPE8306, HSS8004, HSS8007
A4	SPE8304, SPE8301, SPE8307, SPE8302, HSS8004, HSS8007
B1	SPE8304, SPE8301, SPE8302, SPE8306, HSS8004, HSS8007
B2	SPE8304, SPE8306, HSS8004, HSS8007
B3	SPE8304, SPE8302, SPE8306, HSS8004, HSS8007
B4	SPE8304, SPE8302, SPE8301, HSS8004, HSS8007
C1	SPE8320, SPE8320, SPE8302, SPE8306, HSS8004, HSS8007
C2	SPE8320, SPE8302, SPE8306, HSS8004, HSS8007
C3	SPE8307, SPE8320, SPE8302, SPE8306, HSS8004, HSS8007
C4	SPE8304, SPE8301, SPE8320, SPE8302, SPE8306, HSS8004, HSS8007
C5	SPE8301, SPE8306, SPE8307, HSS8004
C6	SPE8307
D1	SPE8304, SPE8301, SPE8320, SPE8302, HSS8004, HSS8007
D2	SPE8304, SPE8301, SPE8320, SPE8302, SPE8307, HSS8004, HSS8007
D3	SPE8301, SPE8302, SPE8307, HSS8004, HSS8007
D4	SPE8301,SPE8320, SPE8302, SPE8306, HSS8004, HSS8007