

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION



1	Awarding Institution	Newcastle University
2	Teaching Institution	Newcastle University
3	Final Award	Master in Arts
4	Programme Title	International Financial Analysis
5	Programme Code	4050
6	Programme Accreditation	N/A
7	QAA Subject Benchmark(s)	Masters Awards in Business and Management
8	FHEQ Level	7
9	Last updated	Revised March 2012 Reapproved April 2014 (no changes) Revised June 2014

10 Programme Aims

- 1 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.
- 2 To offer students a broad, coherent, balanced and comprehensive portfolio of modules, appropriate to a pre-experience masters degree. Covering the main disciplines of financial management.
- 3 To expose students to a variety of teaching and learning experiences, including lectures, tutorials, case analyses, and projects.
- 4 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.
- 5 To enable students effectively to gather data, both qualitative and quantitative, from library, IT and other sources.
- 6 To develop students' analytical and critical abilities in dealing with business concepts and practices.
- 7 To conform with University and QAA policies and codes of practice and with the Higher Education Qualifications Framework.
- 8 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.

<p>A2 A detailed understanding of the issues and problems appropriate to international financial management.</p> <p>A3 An understanding of how to evaluate critically ideas, concepts and practices related to accounting, finance and investment.</p> <p>A4 Knowledge of financial environments and institutions and how environmental components differ across countries and the markets in which they operate.</p> <p>A5 Key research in the disciplines studied (including research by members of staff where relevant.)</p> <p>A6 The ability to identify ethical issues and make recommendations for appropriate courses of action.</p>
Teaching and Learning Methods
<p>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).</p>
Assessment Strategy
<p>Knowledge and understanding (A1 – A6) is assessed by unseen exams, various forms of coursework – essays requiring critical analysis, reports, case studies, presentations and dissertations.</p>
Intellectual Skills
<p>On completing the programme students should be able to:</p> <p>B1 Quantitative skills required for managing investments.</p> <p>B2 Critical analytical skills to relate theory to practice.</p> <p>B3 Analysis of business information and operations for decision-making.</p>
Teaching and Learning Methods
<p>The skills set {B1, B2, B3} is developed by lectures, small group sessions and presentations.</p>
Assessment Strategy
<p>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.</p>
Practical Skills
<p>On completing the programme students should be able to:</p> <p>C1 Problem solving within the context of accounting and finance.</p> <p>C2 The ability to gather, synthesise and evaluate information.</p> <p>C3 Independent critical analysis.</p>

Teaching and Learning Methods
The skills set {C1, C2, C3} is developed by lectures, small group sessions and presentations.
Assessment Strategy
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.
Transferable/Key Skills
<p>On completing the programme students should be able to:</p> <p>D1 Use appropriate verbal/written communication skills to convey information tailored in content, style and presentation to the needs of their intended audience.</p> <p>D2 Where relevant demonstrate numeracy by applying the appropriate computational techniques and interpreting or critically evaluating the results within a business setting.</p> <p>D3 Work within a team contributing appropriately and effectively towards the team based activity.</p> <p>D4 Ability to work independently, time-manage, show initiative and adaptability.</p>
Teaching and Learning Methods
The skills set {D1, D2, D3, D4} is developed by lectures, small group sessions and presentations.
Assessment Strategy
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 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 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/programme/>

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) with no sub score below 6.0. Pre-sessional courses in English are available where needed, and a charge is levied for these courses.

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-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 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 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

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

None.

Additional mechanisms

None.

16 Regulation of assessment

Pass mark

The pass mark is 50% (Postgraduate Programme)

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

<50	Fail
50-59	Pass
60-69	Pass with Merit
70 or above	Pass with Distinction

Summary description applicable to postgraduate Certificate and Diploma programmes

<50	Fail
50 or above	Pass

Role of the External Examiner

An External Examiner, a distinguished member of the subject community, is appointed by the University 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

Module	Type	Intended Learning Outcomes			
		A	B	C	D
NBS8001	Compulsory	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	1, 2	1, 3	1, 2, 4
NBS8002	Compulsory	1, 3	2	1, 2, 3	1, 2, 4
NBS8003	Compulsory	1, 3, 5	2, 3	1, 3	2, 4
NBS8004	Compulsory	1, 3, 6	1, 2	1, 2, 3	1, 2, 4
NBS8005	Compulsory	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	2, 3	1, 2, 3	1, 2, 4
NBS8006	Compulsory	1, 3, 4, 6	2, 3	1, 2, 3	1, 2, 3, 4