PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION		Newcastle University

1	**Awarding Institution**	Newcastle University
2	**Teaching Institution**	Newcastle University
3	**Final Award**	MA Town Planning
4	**Programme Title**	As above
5	**Programme Code**	5801
6	**Programme Accreditation**	Royal Town Planning Institute
7	**QAA Subject Benchmark(s)**	N/A
8	**FHEQ Level**	7
9	**Last updated**	28/03/2012

10   Programme Aims

1   to develop advanced research skills and the ability to critically evaluate and utilise current research
2   to enable students to develop depth of knowledge and/or skills in a particular area of town planning, underpinned by current and relevant research
3   to meet the professional requirements of the Royal Town Planning Institute as a 'combined' programme
4   to meet the criteria for Masters level qualifications as laid down in eth QAA's National Qualifications Framework
5   to comply with University policy and QAA codes of practice

11   Learning Outcomes

The programme provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding, qualities, skills and other attributes through independent research and take forward the outcomes of the Diploma in Town Planning (K495). The programme outcomes have references to the benchmark statements for Planning.

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Knowledge and Understanding

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On completing the programme students should:

A1   demonstrate depth of knowledge in selected areas of planning

Teaching and Learning Methods

Students develop research proposal in TCP8911 (as part of Diploma year and credit bearing or non-credit bearing in MA programme if not studied previously).   TCP8911 provides 12x2 hours of research skills sessions.   Students are supported with individual supervisory support throughout their dissertation study and the discussions help to develop the student's depth of knowledge. The dissertation is a significant piece of independent study culminating in a written dissertation submission.

Assessment Strategy

Through Dissertation (60 credits)

Intellectual Skills
On completing the programme students should be able to: B1   Demonstrate high level of ability in the use of established techniques for research and enquiry to produce and utilise knowledge within planning
Teaching and Learning Methods
TCP8911 provides 12x2 hours of research skills sessions culminating in identification of topic and development of research proposal. Students are supported with individual supervisory support throughout their dissertation study and the discussions help to develop the student's depth and use of knowledge. The dissertation is a significant piece of independent study culminating in a written dissertation submission.
Assessment Strategy
Written dissertation proposal and dissertation.
Practical Skills
On completing the programme students should be able to: C1   Identify appropriate methods for planning orientated research
Teaching and Learning Methods
Through TCP8911 research skills and methods applicable to planning related research are introduced and consolidated through development of research proposal and further in undertaking the dissertation research. Addition teaching support through dissertation supervision is provided.
Assessment Strategy
Research proposal and dissertation.
Transferable/Key Skills
On completing the programme students should be able to: D1   Take responsibility for his/her own time management, learning and professional development D2   Communicate ideas and concepts clearly in a range of formats
Teaching and Learning Methods
Both are developed progressively through proposal development, supervisory discussions and in undertaking the original and independent dissertation research study.
Assessment Strategy
Dissertation.

12	Programme Curriculum, Structure and Features

Basic structure of the programme

This programme provides the opportunity for students who have completed the Diploma in Town Planning (K495, 120 credits) at Newcastle University to convert their Diploma into a masters level qualification (MA in Town Planning) through additional study. Therefore, these specifications should be read in conjunction with those of K495.

If students have studied and passed TCP8911 in their Diploma year, after registration they must successfully pass the Dissertation module TCP8099 (60 credits) only.
If students have not studied TCP8911 in their Diploma year, after registration they must successfully pass TCP8911 as a non-credit bearing module (10 credits semester 1 studied remotely if desired which requires the submission of a dissertation proposal as the assessment) and then successfully pass the Dissertation module TCP8099 (60 credits).

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

The programme provides the opportunity for student who have already completed and passed 120 credits of study in the Diploma of Town Planning at Newcastle University to undertake further study through dissertation only to convert this award to an MA.

Programme regulations (link to on-line version)

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

13	Criteria for admission

Entry qualifications
Students must have successfully passed the Diploma in Town Planning at Newcastle University only.

Admissions policy/selection tools
Pass Diploma Town Planning at Newcastle University and have a minimum II.2 degree from this University).

Non-standard Entry Requirements
n/a

Additional Requirements
Students must apply in the academic year of their Diploma award or in the immediate year following their Diploma award.

Level of English Language capability
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/*

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 support
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 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 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-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 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, Learning and Student Experience Committee.

Programme reviews
The Board of Studies conducts an Annual Monitoring and Review of the degree programme and reports to Faculty Teaching, Learning and Student Experience Committee. The FTLSEC takes an overview of all programmes within the Faculty and reports any Faculty or institutional issues to the University Teaching, Learning 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 Teaching, Learning 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
The programme is subject to the University's Internal Subject Review process. Every six 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 one-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, Learning 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. 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		**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

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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

Either

Intended Learning Outcome	Module codes (Compulsory in Bold)
A1	**TCP8099**
B1	**TCP8099** (and TCP8911 if taken in MA year)
C1	**TCP8099** (and TCP8911 if taken in MA year)
D1	**TCP8099** (and TCP8911 if taken in MA year)
D2	**TCP8099** (and TCP8911 if taken in MA year)

Or

Module	Type	Intended Learning Outcomes			
		A	**B**	**C**	**D**
XYZ1001	Compulsory	1	1, 2, 3	4	2, 3