

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION



1	Awarding Institution	Newcastle University
2	Teaching Institution	Newcastle University
3	Final Award	BA (Hons)
4	Programme Title	BA (Hons) Architecture and Urban Planning
5	UCAS/Programme Code	K190
6	Programme Accreditation	N/A
7	QAA Subject Benchmark(s)	Town and Country Planning (2008) and Architecture (2010)
8	FHEQ Level	6
9	Last updated	July 2012

10 Programme Aims

- 1 To provide a grounding in the disciplines of architecture, planning and urban design with a focus on the interfaces between the three
- 2 To develop an understanding of urban development and the role of built environment professionals therein.
- 3 To equip graduates with transferable skills in the built environment, which could lead to many varied career paths including, community activists, environmental officers, project managers, film makers, journalists and other creative industry specialists.
- 4 To extend what professionals can achieve in the built environment through alternative approaches to professional practice
- 5 To introduce collaborative and participatory practices in the built environment
- 6 To provide a programme which complies with University policies and meets the requirements of the FHEQ for a level 6 programme.
- 7 To provide a programme which fully meets the requirements of the QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education

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 Demonstrate understanding of the role of design, particularly as a communication tool, in the built environment
- A2 Evaluate arguments for intervention in the built environment and an understanding of processes for change and the role of professionals in achieving it
- A3 Evaluate political, legal, institutional and administrative frameworks and procedures in relation to the built environment.
- A4 Demonstrate an understanding of the complexities of issues and problems pertaining to the built environment, particularly in relation to alternative practice.

<p>A5 Demonstrate an understanding of theory and make appropriate connections between theory and practice.</p> <p>A6 Demonstrate a critical understanding of values and ethics in built environment intervention.</p>
<p>Teaching and Learning Methods</p> <p>The primary means of conveying knowledge and understanding in stages two and three is through lectures (A2-6). Stage One has a large orientation to design practice (A1). The large scale use of 2 hour teaching blocks enable lectures to be interactive and often part-delivered in workshop mode. In addition there is a strong emphasis on presentations through seminar presentations either singly or in groups (A1, 3 and 6) and A4 is taught partly through project work with students working on specific problems. Throughout the course the students are expected to supplement their classroom work with independent reading. In addition, the undergraduate programme is almost wholly supported with material on Blackboard. In attaining A3 and 4, students undertake independent research with regular supervisions from staff.</p>
<p>Assessment Strategy</p> <p>Knowledge and understanding of the subject are tested in a variety of ways. Generally these are assessed through design studio, course work or unseen written examination (A1-6) but not all three. Studio and course work tests the ability to research and reflect on material often gained largely in private study, while unseen examinations test the ability to bring together material from the whole module in succinct arguments.</p>
<p>Intellectual Skills</p> <p>On completing the programme students should be able to:</p> <p>B1 Define and analyse problems effectively and appropriately.</p> <p>B2 Develop research skills and experience in the context of the School's research interests.</p> <p>B3 Make effective use of evidence and information.</p> <p>B4 Articulate reasoned arguments.</p>
<p>Teaching and Learning Methods</p> <p>Intellectual skills are developed through research and design projects (B1 and 2); supervisions (B1, 2 and 4); group project work (B3); and study skills sessions. Students are expected to undertake independent research and design work having framed their own research questions. The emphasis in cognitive skill development is to learn by doing.</p>
<p>Assessment Strategy</p> <p>Cognitive skills B1-4 are largely assessed through course work including design work, essays and reports (B1 and 3), the production of a research outline, dissertation (B2), project work based on field work (B2); group presentations (B3); seminar papers (B4). B4 is also tested in the junior years by unseen written examination.</p>
<p>Practical Skills</p> <p>On completing the programme students should be able to:</p> <p>C1 Formulate and propose cogent courses of action as responses to built environment problems through activism, policy design, strategy-making and design communication.</p> <p>C2 Evaluate and effectively utilise a variety of methods and processes to achieve C1.</p>

Teaching and Learning Methods
Practical subject-specific skills are introduced and developed through project and design work where students work individually and in teams to problem solve and to present ideas for action. Students are encouraged and expected to undertake field-work to develop their skills.
Assessment Strategy
These skills are tested through Crits and in project work presentations.
Transferable/Key Skills
On completing the programme students should be able to: D1 Effectively and fluently communicate information, ideas, principles, arguments and proposals through written, graphic, oral and electronic means, and demonstrate effectively ,written, numeracy, oral, IT and literacy skills. D2 Work effectively individually and in groups.
Teaching and Learning Methods
Transferable skills are well embedded in the programme and are taught and developed in design studio, seminars, project work, and study skills group tutorials (D1 and 2). In addition, the ability to work effectively in groups is developed through project work and through seminars. This development of transferable skills is encouraged through course work (D1 and 2) and through group activities such as project work and local field work.
Assessment Strategy
Assessed by design project, unseen examination, essay writing, report writing, seminar papers, and dissertation. D2 is assessed through project work and group presentations.

12 Programme Curriculum, Structure and Features
Basic structure of the programme
<p>Year One is closely allied with existing programmes in architecture and planning, particularly BA Architecture.</p> <p>Year Two develops the key building blocks of the programme with two bespoke modules covering the theories of alternative practice and a range of other material from existing APL programmes.</p> <p>Year Three focuses on dissertation and project work with some taught elements and optional specialist material from elsewhere in the Faculty. The alternative practice theme is also continued into Year three with a module on co-producing space which will involve community participation. We would expect and encourage wide ranging dissertation topics, expecting students to focus their dissertation around their particular interests ranging between planning, architecture and alternative practice.</p>
Key features of the programme (including what makes the programme distinctive)
<p>The programme represents an innovative degree course aimed at students who have an interest in architecture, cities and the ways places come into being and are governed and managed, both through formal and less formal processes. It draws from existing programmes, but includes a strand of core modules designed specifically for the programme centred on ideas of “alternative practice”. Such modules focus on traditions of radical planning and radical urbanism, community planning and community architecture. A feature is the ways buildings and places are co-constructed among communities, users and professionals and how they are governed beyond the mainstream of professional practice.</p>

The concept of alternative practice is inspired by the work of radical architects and planners who have argued that specialised, professional ways of speaking and behaving can alienate people. They have argued that new, alternative, forms of practice are needed which engage better with people and communities, and encourage them to participate actively in the world around them. Through practical case studies, historical examples, theoretical ideas and a live community project, we will introduce these new ideas about how architecture and cities could be developed.

Most of the modules compulsory on the programme work at the edge of architecture and planning promoting an integrated understanding of the management of built environment processes. Other modules taken from existing programmes deal with regular practice more centrally. In the final year modules from elsewhere in the Faculty further open up the terrain of enquiry to students fascinated with the ways cities and urban practices come into being and the trans-disciplinary challenges created therein.

The course is then an alternative to professionally accredited ones. Alternative, in the sense that it provides a general overview of the professions and academic disciplines of planning and architecture; equipping graduates with transferable skills in the built environment and public engagement. Alternative, too, in that it is formulated to extend what professionals can achieve in the built environment. Both architects and planners have become concerned with the potentially introvert nature of the professions. Radical practitioners and theorists in both disciplines have questioned the distance that training, accreditation and specialised ways of speaking can put between professionals and the people who they work and design for. Relevant professional bodies are not always good at addressing these problems, and have contributed to the marginalisation of the professions in the construction industry and in society more broadly. This new, exciting and thought-provoking undergraduate degree introduces the context of the two professions – in the UK and on a global scale – but it also questions the ever-increasing professionalisation of the built environment, and the corresponding disempowerment of ‘ordinary’ people. Its graduates will be well equipped to follow a number of career paths: including consultancy, community activism and development, and progressive government roles.

A key feature of the proposal is the possibility for students to transfer to the accredited programmes (and in from the accredited programmes). Thus stage 1 will seek accreditation from RIBA and RTPI and will provide routes in to: BA Architecture for those students wanting to, and able to demonstrate, their architectural design abilities; and in to BA Town Planning for those students wanting to pursue an accredited planning programme.

Programme regulations (link to on-line version)

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

13 Criteria for admission

Entry qualifications

ABB or above in any subject disciplines, excluding general studies.

Admissions policy/selection tools

Non-standard Entry Requirements

Equivalent experience may be considered

Additional Requirements

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 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
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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 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 University 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 stages* are subject to review by student questionnaires. Informal student evaluation is also obtained at the Student-Staff 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 students' views on the quality of the learning and teaching. 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.

*With the exception of intercalating years and the final stages of undergraduate programmes.

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

16 Regulation of assessment

Pass mark

The pass mark is 40

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 re-assessment 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 **1:2**

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

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:

- See and approve assessment 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: <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/undergraduate/>

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
ARC1007	Compulsory	1	1	1,2	1
TCP1025	Compulsory	2,3,5	1,3,4	1,2	1,2
ARC1013	Compulsory	1,4	1,3	1,2	1
ARC1008	Compulsory	1,2,4,5,6	3,4	1	1
ARC1014	Compulsory	1,4	1,3	1,2	1
TCP1014	Compulsory	2,3,4	1,3,4	1	1
ARC1011	Compulsory	1,2,4,5,6	1,3,4	1	1
APL1007	Compulsory	1,2,3,4,5,6	3,4	1	1

TCP2027	Compulsory	1,5,6	1,2,3,4	1	1
TCP2028	Compulsory	1,4,5	1,4	1	1
ARC2002	Compulsory	1,2,3,4,5,6	1,3,4	1	1
APL2001	Compulsory	1,2,3,4,5,6	1,3,4	1	1
TCP2005	Optional	2,4,5,6	1,4	1	1
TCP2006	Optional	1,2,4,5	1,4	2	1
TCP2023	O	2,3,4,5,6	1,4	2	1,2
TCP2025	O	2,3,4,5	1,2,3,4	1,2	1,2
TCP2029	O	2,3,4,5,6	3,4	1	1
TCP2030	O	2,3,4,5,6	3,4	1	1
TCP3099	C	2,3,4,5,6	1,2,3,4	1,2	1
TCP3049	C	1,2,3,4,5,6	1,2,3,4	1,2	1,2
APL3001	C	1,2,3,4,5,6	1,2,3,4	1,2	1,2
TCP3051	O	2,3,4,5,6	1,2,3,4	1	1
TCP3054	O	2,3,4,5,6	1,3,4	1	1
GEO3105	O	2,4,5,6	1,3,4	1	1
GEO3120	O	2,4,5	1,3,4	1	1
GEO3122	O	2,4,5,6	1,3,4	1	1
SEL3339	O	2,5	1,3,4	1	1
SOC3073	O	2,4,5	1,3,4	1	1