

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

1	Awarding Institution	Newcastle University
2	Teaching Institution	Newcastle University
3	Final Award	BA Hons
4	Programme Title	Geography and Planning
5	UCAS/Programme Code	LK74
6	Programme Accreditation	N/A
7	QAA Subject Benchmark(s)	Geography and Planning
8	FHEQ Level	6
9	Date written/revised	Jan 2014

10 Programme Aims

The purpose of the degree programme is to support and structure students' general higher education and intellectual development. The degree offers students a number of different pathways through the disciplines of geography and planning, and the opportunity of studying issues in depth from both geography and planning perspectives. In particular the programme aims:

- To provide the theoretical and practical training necessary to equip graduates with the transferable and analytical skills appropriate for graduate employment.
- To provide an applied dimension of study, enabling the graduate to be capable of working in urban or rural policy fields, in public or private practice and with a wide range of other professionals.
- To equip students for further study.
- To provide graduates with a coherent understanding of the social science perspective in their chosen specialist areas of planning and geography.
- To provide students with the opportunity to organise facts, deploy logic and received theory and, through the use of oral, literary and numeracy skills, analyse problems and issues, synthesise potential solutions and criticise alternatives.
- To contribute to the University's objectives by providing high quality research-led teaching.
- To encourage students to develop a self-motivated attitude to academic study and future professional development.
- To provide a programme which, through the choice of themes and modules, enable students to study substantial elements of the Geography and/or Town and Country Planning benchmarks.
- To provide a supportive environment in the departments such that the students enjoy their learning experience.

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. The programme outcomes have references to the benchmark statements

Knowledge and Understanding

A1 Students will acquire a theoretical understanding of the subjects of geography and planning and their interrelationships;
A2 Students will develop areas of specialist knowledge in geography and planning through their choice of themes.

A3 Students will acquire the methods of enquiry and the technical competence to enable them to carry out research.

A4 Students will gain an advanced understanding of particular cross-disciplinary themes such as: Urban and regional development; Environmental management; Social and cultural development; and Planning and Urban design.

A5 Students will develop an understanding of current research findings in selected areas.

Teaching and Learning Methods

Specialist knowledge and understanding, (A1-5) are primarily imparted via lectures, workshops, tutorials, seminars and case studies.

Throughout stage 1 and the compulsory components of stages 2 & 3 students are taught the initial elements of the main themes of the degree, and initial research methods, (A3), to enable them to undertake study at this level.

Through the choice of particular pathways through the disciplines of geography and planning students are able to study issues in depth from a planning and/or geography perspective, (A1,2&4).

Throughout both the compulsory and optional elements of the programme students are encouraged and expected to engage in independent reading and, where appropriate, fieldwork, (A5).

Participation in workshops, tutorials and seminars aids the development of understanding.

Assessment Strategy

Knowledge and understanding are assessed by a variety of means, (partly depending on module choices), including;

- Unseen written examinations
- Coursework
- Dissertation
- Poster Presentation
- Multiple choice questions

The written papers are specifically intended to assess knowledge of core information while coursework and dissertations place more emphasis on the development of analysis and understanding of the concepts within a wider context. Poster presentations emphasise the collection and presentation of knowledge while multiple choice questions emphasise detailed knowledge of specific subjects.

Intellectual Skills

B1 The ability to undertake a critical evaluation of arguments and evidence.

B2 The ability to describe and critically assess the value and limitations of information on a given subject.

B3 The ability to extract, synthesise and present information and data.

Teaching and Learning Methods

Cognitive skills are introduced and developed from Stage 1 introductory modules to Stage 3 advanced modules. B1-B3 are principally developed through seminars, projects and group work where students can discuss and learn to evaluate arguments and evidence. B3 is developed widely throughout the optional subjects but specifically within the dissertation. Students enhance their learning through independent reading, case studies and field work. The dissertation provides a means of demonstrating all of these skills.

Assessment Strategy
Cognitive skills are primarily assessed by means of continuous assessment in the form of essays, case studies, reports and to a more limited extent via unseen written examinations.
Practical Skills
C1 Quantitative and qualitative skills required for research in geography and planning. C2 Specialist skills associated with choice of themes and modules. C3 Spatial analytical skills. C4 Problem solving skills in geography and planning.
Teaching and Learning Methods
<p>The teaching of quantitative and qualitative skills (C1), is delivered through specific compulsory modules in stages 1 & 2. Teaching on these modules includes lectures, seminars, practicals, design appraisals and IT training sessions.</p> <p>Optional specialist skills (C2), (e.g.: environmental appraisal), are taught within modules and reflect the curriculum of the module.</p> <p>Across the degree programme students are exposed to a variety of spatial analytical skills, (C3), appropriate to a graduate of Geography and Planning.</p> <p>Problem solving skills (C4) are developed across the compulsory elements of the degree and to a varied extent in the optional programme.</p> <p>Students are encouraged to develop subject specific skills through individual reports and essays, projects, field-trips, case studies and through their dissertations. Students are supported in independent reading via the provision of reading lists, web sites and other course documentation. Opportunities are available for group discussion to encourage the development of the students learning experience.</p>
Assessment Strategy
Subject specific skills are assessed by means of essays, presentations, examinations, field trips and class exercises. Some or all of C1-3 are examined in Stage 3 by means of the dissertation.
Transferable/Key Skills
D1 The ability to communicate by means of well prepared presentations and documents. D2 The ability to use the library and other information sources. D3 The ability to plan, organise and prioritise work activities in order to meet deadlines. D4 The ability to work independently showing initiative. D5 The ability to solve problems. D6 The ability to work in teams.
Teaching and Learning Methods
An introduction to all (D1-6) key skills is taught formally in Stage 1 and developed further throughout the programme. Communication skills, (D1), are developed in written coursework, projects, field trip presentations, poster presentations and via the dissertation. Specific modules support numerate skill development. Use of information sources, (D2), is developed in research methods modules. Self management, (D3), is promoted through a strict coursework and assessment timetable. Problem solving skills, (D5), are promoted via lectures seminars and workshops at all stages. The dissertation provides an opportunity for the development of a range of key skills, (D1-5), and particularly the ability to work independently, (D4). Teamwork, (D6) is developed in projects and field trips.

Assessment Strategy

All of the key skills are assessed by means of continuous assessment in the form of essays, case studies poster presentations and projects. Many key skills, depending on subject chosen, are assessed within the dissertation.

12 Programme Curriculum, Structure and Features

Basic structure of the programme

See Annex 2

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

Wide ranging choice within the framework of human geography and planning.

Programme regulations (link to on-line version)

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

13 Criteria for admission

The main criterion for admission is that the student should be capable of achieving the learning outcomes of the degree. This is assessed either from evidence of previous examination successes or via interview or both. All students who are offered a place will be invited to an Open Day.

GCSEs required

No special requirement.

A-Level Subjects and Grades

Generally 3 A levels required for entry at ABB-BBB, including Geography.

Scottish Highers

AABBB-BBBBB at Higher Grade including Geography. Combinations of Highers and Advanced Highers accepted.

BTEC

Level 5 HND – to include at least 150 credits and Merit grade

BTEC Level 3 Extended Diploma – Overall DDM-DMM

Alternative entry qualifications

Appropriate overseas qualifications will be considered, as well as A levels. Mature students will be considered on their merits. All students without conventional qualifications will be interviewed.

Full list of entry requirements found here

<http://www.ncl.ac.uk/undergraduate/degrees/lk74/entryrequirements/>

Any Additional Requirements

None

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 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

Assessment Rules and Honours classification

The minimum pass mark is 40% for each module.

Most modules are assessed by a combination of unseen written examination and coursework, although some are 100% examination and some 100% coursework.

Information on assessment is available in the degree programme handbooks and in the module outlines.

Progression is subject to the University's Undergraduate Progress Regulations and Examination Conventions. Degree classification is based on the weighted average of results for stages 2 and 3, with stage 3 results accounting for 66.6% and stage 2 for 33.3%

Common Marking Scheme

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

	Honours	Non-honours
<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 Learning, Teaching and Student Experience Committee, following recommendation from the Board of Studies. The External Examiner is expected to:

Approve assessment

Review samples of examination scripts and coursework to check standards and assessment procedures

Attend the Examination Board meeting

Report back to the University

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.

Annex 1

Mapping of Intended Learning Outcomes onto Curriculum/Modules

Module	Type	Intended Learning Outcomes			
		A	B	C	D
GEO1010	Compulsory	1,5	1		1
GEO1015	Compulsory	1,5		3	1,2
GEO1018	Compulsory		1,2,3	1,3	1,6
TCP1014	Compulsory	1,5			1
TCP1027	Compulsory	1,5	1	3	1,2
TCP1019	Compulsory	1,5	1		1
TCP1023	Compulsory	3	1,2,3	1,3,4	1,5
TCP1024	Compulsory	1,3,5	1,2,3	4	1,2,4,6
TCP2027	Compulsory	3	1,2,3	1,2,3,4	1,2,3,5
TCP2025	Optional	1,3,5	1,2,3	1,3,4	1,5
TCP2023	Optional	1,2,5	1		1
GEO2103	Optional	1,2,5	1		1
GEO2110	Optional	1,2,5	1		1
GEO2047	Optional	1,2,5	1		1
GEO2099	Optional	1,2,5	1		1
TCP2005	Optional	1,2,5	1		1
TCP2028	Optional	1,2,5	1		1
TCP2030	Optional	1,2,5	1		1
NCL2007	Optional		2		1,3
TCP3099	Compulsory	1,2,3,4,5	1,2,3	1,2,3,4	1,2,3,4,5
GEO3041	Optional	1,2,4,5	1	2,4	1,2,5
GEO3061	Optional	1,2,4,5	1	2,4	1,2,5
GEO3063	Optional	1,2,4,5	1	2,4	1,2,5
GEO3102	Optional	1,2,4,5	1	2,4	1,2,5
GEO3106	Optional	1,2,4,5	1	2,4	1,2,5,6
GEO3108	Optional	1,2,4,5	1	2,4	1,2,5
GEO3114	Optional	1,2,4,5	1	2,4	1,2,5
GEO3125	Optional	1,2,4,5	1	2,4	1,2
GEO3129	Optional	1,2,3	1,3	1,2,4	1,2,3,4,6
GEO3130	Optional	1,2,4,5	1	2,4	1,2,5
GEO3131	Optional	1,2,4,5	1	2,4	1,2,5
GEO3132	Optional	1,2,4,5	1	2,4	1,2,5
TCP3054	Optional	1	1	2	1,5
TCP3053	Optional	2,3,4	1	2,4	4,5
TCP3049	Optional	2,3,4	1,2	2,3	1,3,4
TCP3052	Optional	2,3,4	1,2,3	2,3,4	1,2,3,4,5,6
NCL3007	Optional		2		1,3

Annex 2

1. Stage 1

- (a) Unless otherwise stated modules are not core.
 (b) All candidates shall take the following compulsory modules:

<i>Code</i>	<i>Descriptive title</i>	<i>Total Credits</i>	<i>Credits Sem 1</i>	<i>Credits Sem 2</i>	<i>Level</i>	<i>Type</i>
GEO1010	Interconnected World	(20)	(10)	(10)	4	
GEO1018	Geographical Analysis	(20)	(10)	(10)	4	
GEO1015	Contemporary human geography of the UK	(20)	(10)	(10)	4	
TCP1014	Planning Processes	(10)		(10)	4	
TCP1027	Shaping Towns	(20)	(20)		4	
TCP1019	Economics of Development I	(10)		(10)	4	
TCP1023	Geographical Information Systems	(10)		(10)	4	
TCP1024	Reading the City	(10)	(10)		4	

2. Stage 2

- (a) All candidates shall take the following compulsory module:

<i>Code</i>	<i>Descriptive title</i>	<i>Total Credits</i>	<i>Credits Sem 1</i>	<i>Credits Sem 2</i>	<i>Level</i>	<i>Type</i>
TCP2027	Research skills	(20)		(20)	6	

- (b) All candidates shall select modules to the value of 100 credits from the list below (which is subject to availability). Students are advised to select 60 credits from semester 1 and 40 from semester 2 in order to give you a 60/60 credit balance.

<i>Code</i>	<i>Descriptive title</i>	<i>Total Credits</i>	<i>Credits Sem 1</i>	<i>Credits Sem 2</i>	<i>Level</i>	<i>Type</i>
GEO2047	Political Geography	(20)	(10)	(10)	5	
GEO2099	Economic Geography	(20)	(10)	(10)	5	
GEO2103	Globalization, Culture and Development	(20)		(20)	5	
GEO2110	Social Geographies	(20)	(10)	(10)	5	
TCP2005	Housing Policy	(20)	(20)		6	
TCP2023	Understanding Sustainable Development	(20)		(20)	6	
TCP2025	Researching Local Economies	(20)	(20)		6	
TCP2028	Understanding Cities	(20)	(20)		6	
TCP2030	Urban Poverty: A Global Perspective	(20)	(20)		6	
NCL2007	Career Development for 2 nd year students	(20)	(10)	(10)	5	

3. Stage 3

(a) All candidates shall take the following compulsory module:

<i>Code</i>	<i>Descriptive title</i>	<i>Total Credits</i>	<i>Credits Sem 1</i>	<i>Credits Sem 2</i>	<i>Level</i>	<i>Type</i>
TCP3099	Dissertation	(40)	(20)	(20)	6	

(b) All candidates shall select modules to the value of 80 credits from the list below (which is subject to availability).

Students are advised to select 40 credits each semester in order to give a 60/60 credit balance.

<i>Code</i>	<i>Descriptive title</i>	<i>Total Credits</i>	<i>Credits Sem 1</i>	<i>Credits Sem 2</i>	<i>Level</i>	<i>Type</i>
GEO3041*	Geography of Commodities	(20)	(20)		6	
GEO3061	Ethno-development: Development with identity	(20)	(20)		6	
GEO3063	Militarism: Space and Society	(20)		(20)	6	
GEO3102**	Geopolitics	(20)	(10)	(10)	6	
GEO3106***	Producing Africa: Globalisation and representation	(20)		(20)	6	
GEO3108	International and Historical Perspectives on Race	(20)	(20)		6	
GEO3114*	Local and regional development	(20)	(10)	(10)	6	
GEO3125	Caribbean Societies: Development, Voice and the Everyday	(20)		(20)	6	
GEO3129****	Everyday Geographies	(20)		(20)	6	
GEO3130	Mapping the city: the urban form, transformation, and experience	(20)	(10)	(10)	6	
GEO3131	Aerial Geographies	(20)	(10)	(10)	6	
GEO3132	Climate Change Debate: science Politics and Public Views	(20)	(10)	(10)	6	
TCP3054	Planning Theory and Politics	(20)	(20)		6	
TCP3053	Development Management	(20)		(20)	6	
TCP3049	Planning Strategies	(20)	(20)		6	
TCP3052*****	Strategies into Action	(20)		(20)	6	
NCL3007*****	Career Development for Final Year Students	(20)	(10)	(10)	6	

* Students must have previously taken GEO2099 Economic Geography (Preferred for GEO3041)

** Students must have previously taken GEO2047 Political Geography

*** Students must have previously taken GEO2103 Globalisation, Culture, Development

**** Students must have previously taken one from GEO2047, GEO2099, GEO2103, GEO2110

***** Students must have previously taken TCP3049 Planning Strategies

***** Students cannot take Career Development in both the second and third year.