

**PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION
(Taught Postgraduate)**



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| 1 | Awarding Institution | Newcastle University |
| 2 | Teaching Institution | Newcastle University |
| 3 | Final Award | MA |
| 4 | Programme Title | Public History |
| 5 | Programme Code | 4169 F/P |
| 6 | Programme Accreditation | N/A |
| 7 | QAA Subject Benchmark(s) | N/A |
| 8 | FHEQ Level | Level 7 |
| 9 | Last updated | July 2021 |

10 Programme Aims

1. To enable students to develop their capacity to learn in preparation for, or as part of continuing professional development (CPD) and lifelong learning.
2. To provide students with the opportunity to gain the basic skills and knowledge required to continue with academic research in Public History at PhD level, or to enter the workplace in a public history role;
3. To expose students to cutting-edge research and practice in the sphere of Public History and encourage engagement by students with current staff research.
4. To meet the requirements of a level 7 qualification as defined by the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications.
5. To offer a programme that conforms University policies and to 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 in the following areas. The programme outcomes have references to the benchmark statements for History.

Knowledge and Understanding

On completing the programme students should:

- A1 Have an advanced level appreciation of the theoretical and analytical frameworks that historians bring to their subject.
- A2 Understand of the varieties of approaches to understanding, constructing and interpreting and reception of the past in the present in the present.
- A3 Understand the methodologies and sources used by specialists in the field of public history, and the ethical choices that accompany historical study and interpretation.
- A4 Have an advanced level understanding of public history practices including shared authority, collaborative working environments and reflexivity.

Teaching and Learning Methods

The primary methods of imparting knowledge and understanding [A1-A4] are group seminars, individual tutorials for the return of coursework, and self-directed learning. The final project will impart skills and knowledge through hands-on specialist research [A4].

Structured interactions (email, phone, skype) will be used to support students who will carry out their final project remotely.

The MA is structured so that all students undertake the same modules, with flexibility offered for students to focus on individual interests and make topic choices. Students will undertake two core module with other History MA students ('The Practice of History' and 'Research Skills') introducing them to key theoretical and analytical frameworks and methodological approaches to the study of history [A1, A2].

Two inter-connected modules ('Introduction to Public History' and 'Projects in Public History') will introduce students to key ideas and practices of public history [A3, A4]. These modules will introduce students to critical thinking and public history practice across a wide range of contexts, from the local to the global, with a focus on 'difficult' history and historical justice.

Throughout the programme students are encouraged to read and research widely using a range of different kinds of texts. Students are encouraged to use a wide range of learning resources, including books, journal articles, primary sources (e.g. Robinson Library Special Collections, Tyne and Wear Record Office, Northumberland Record Office, Newcastle City Library), audio visual (e.g. Box of Broadcasts, North East Film Archive) and on-line resources and databases available at the Robinson Library (e.g. JSTOR, DNB).

Assessment Strategy

Assessment for all modules will include written outputs to evaluate the student's attainment of the knowledge outcomes expected at an advanced level [A1-4]. The final project will assess by portfolio (including reflective essay), to what extent students have gained a deep knowledge and understanding of the theory, practice and ethics of public history.

Intellectual Skills

On completing the programme students should be able to:

- B1 Demonstrate subject-specific skills through training and research experience and have developed an ability to evaluate, analyse and interpret different sources of evidence relating to History;
- B2 Problem solve, including complex problems to which there is no single solution and in which the needs of a range of stakeholders must be taken into account;
- B3 Communicate ideas about the past and to evaluate the most appropriate methods of communication, depending on audience and context;
- B4 Undertake higher degree research through skills developed in the completion of short pieces of written work and a final project.

Teaching and Learning Methods

The subject-specific skills [B1] will be imparted through in-School training in the methodological approaches of historians via lectures, supplemented by group seminars, individual tutorials for the return of coursework, and self-directed learning. The structure of the MA is designed so that in all public history modules (except 'The Practice of History' and Research Skills Module) they will be expected to undertake group work. Using a flipped classroom pedagogy, students will be presented with a range of scenarios requiring problem solving and communication skills [B2, B3]. Researching and delivery a public history project will practice intellectual skills through hands-on specialist research [B4].

Assessment Strategy

Assessment for all modules and in particular the final presentation and portfolio will evaluate the student's attainment of the intellectual skills expected at an advanced level. [B1-4]

Practical Skills

On completing the programme students should be able to:

- C1 Demonstrate a wide range of transferable skills such as the marshalling of evidence, presenting a balanced written argument, and a critical analysis of textual and bibliographic evidence;
- C2 Plan and manage a project, including balancing the needs of a range of stakeholders.
- C3 Have good digital literacy and a basic understanding of a range of digital skills used in online public history work
- C4 Demonstrate a variety of additional skills according to their individual learning objectives including archive use, curating and data management.

Teaching and Learning Methods

All taught modules include classes given by a number of professional historians who research and teach in the area about which they lecture. The majority of taught modules include input from public historians and others whose work connects with public history. All contributors use a wide range of examples from their own field of expertise in History. Group work provides students with the opportunity to develop and practice their practical skills [C1-4] through, for example, preparation for and oral contribution to seminars, shorter formative pieces of written work, and the final project. Research training (at School level), tutorials, guided reading, feedback on outline proposals, and continuous supervision provide the basis for students to develop the practical skills required as public historians [C4]. In semester one they will undertake a module specifically focussed on exploring the differences and similarities between public history projects, aimed at developing their project planning skills [C2]. Throughout the course, students will be taught and will practice planning and organisation through keeping to programme deadlines and by planning and organizing their written work, including the final project [C2]. Digital literacy is practiced and developed throughout the programme through submission of coursework [C3].

Assessment Strategy

Assessment for all modules will evaluate the student's attainment of the practical skills expected at an advanced level. [C1-4]. All written pieces of work in the taught modules require students formatively to gather, evaluate, analyse, and interpret evidence, using the skills identified in History as benchmark skills within the discipline [C1-4]. Basing assessments around project planning, including a grant proposal and project plan, will specifically focus the skills needed to develop their final project [C2]. The final project represents the summative task in detailed practice of all of these practical skills.

Transferable/Key Skills

On completing the programme students should be able to:

- D1 Demonstrate critical reasoning
- D2 Demonstrate high level written, verbal and visual communication skills that take into account the needs of the audience.
- D3 Work collaboratively with people from a range of different backgrounds
- D4 Gather and use information in a way that takes into account the context and ethics.

Teaching and Learning Methods

In specific research training modules, students will be introduced through lectures and seminars how to plan and execute a piece of extended historical research [D1-4]. Students will develop effective interpersonal/oral communication techniques, taught through the School Research Training Modules and specifically the 'Oral History and Public

History' module. Students practice and develop these skills by contributing orally either as groups or individually in seminars for each taught module [D2, D3]. Team working is practiced throughout the programme through seminar work [D3].

Assessment Strategy

Critical reasoning [D1] is assessed in each of the modules on this programme. Assignments will cover a range of different forms of written working including essays, blogs, web pages, writing a research log, or compiling a database as part of a research assignment [D2]. The majority of taught modules will include at least one public-facing assessment, and students will be taught to consider the audience for this work [D2]. Gathering information and applying concepts [D4] are a critical part of the teaching and learning experience for this programme, for example, during individual feedback sessions, and group seminars. Group work in seminars and assessed group assignments will develop students' skills in collaborative ways of working, which are core skills for public historians [D3]. Evaluating, analysing and interpreting evidence with empathy are assessed throughout the programme through the student's ability to meet deadlines and successfully complete the programme [D1-4].

12 Programme Curriculum, Structure and Features

Basic structure of the programme

One year full time or two years part time.
180 credits compulsory (120 coursework, 60 public history project)

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

A focus on historical justice and ethics including complex topics such as reparations, runs as a theme throughout the programme, developing graduates who combine the core skills of historians with empathy, cultural competency, community working and communication skills.

The programme provides robust skills training at an advanced level appropriate to the methodologies and concepts required in the practice of historical research, with 40 credits of the taught programme combined with Newcastle University's broader history MA programme.

The remaining 80 coursework credits focus on the skills and practices required by public historians. In each module, students will complete at least one public-facing assignment, leading to a final portfolio that can be used for self-promotion to future employers or clients. The programme draws on Newcastle University's strengths in oral history and digital cultures to provide students with a range of skills to prepare them for work in a wide variety of history industries, ranging from community historical interpretation to video game production. Overall, the programme will produce critical thinkers capable of working across the sector, arming them with theories and creativity to engage in the production of popular history a changing world.

The final independent project is developed in consultation with an external industry mentor, and supervised by a historical expert from within Newcastle University's extensive research expertise (in consultation with the Degree Programme Director). This combination provides the flexibility for students to work with small independent community practitioners as well as large regional or national public history institutions, depending on their area of interest.

Programme regulations (link to on-line version)

[4169 Programme Regulations 21-22](#)

13 Support for Student Learning

Generic information regarding University provision is available at the following link.

https://www.ncl.ac.uk/ltds/assets/documents/qsh_progspec_generic_info.pdf

14 Methods for evaluating and improving the quality and standards of teaching and learning

Generic information regarding University provision is available at the following link.

https://www.ncl.ac.uk/ltds/assets/documents/qsh_progspec_generic_info.pdf

Accreditation reports

N/A

Additional mechanisms

N/A

15 Regulation of assessment

Generic information regarding University provision is available at the following link.

https://www.ncl.ac.uk/ltds/assets/documents/qsh_progspec_generic_info.pdf

In addition, information relating to the programme is provided in:

The University Prospectus: <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/postgraduate/courses/>

Degree Programme and University Regulations: <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/regulations/docs/>

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.