

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION**Newcastle
University**

1 Awarding Institution	Newcastle University
2 Teaching Institution	Newcastle University
3 Final Award	MA
4 Programme Title	International Relations
5 UCAS/Programme Code	4030 F/P
6 Programme Accreditation	N/A
7 QAA Subject Benchmark(s)	N/A
8 FHEQ Level	Level 7
9 Date written/revised	July 2021

10 Programme Aims

- 1 To offer a research environment in which students can learn about International Relations (IR) from knowledgeable staff, their own study, and interaction with other students
- 2 To equip students with the conceptual and analytical skills needed to achieve an advanced knowledge and understanding of contemporary IR and international politics
- 3 To develop students' skills in undertaking and completing self-designed research papers and dissertations
- 4 To provide a conversion course for students whose undergraduate degree is not in IR or which did not include a significant component of IR
- 5 To produce graduates capable of successfully pursuing careers in government agencies, business, the media and other areas where an advanced knowledge and understanding of IR and contemporary international politics is needed or desirable
- 6 To meet the needs of stakeholders
- 7 To provide a programme which meets the FHEQs relevant at level 7

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: IR theory; social science methods and methodologies; international politics topics; independent learning; cooperative group work; individual presentations skills

Knowledge and Understanding

On completing the programme students should:

- A1** Have an advanced knowledge and understanding of contemporary IR and international politics
- A2** Have knowledge of the more important approaches and methods in social science research and of the techniques required to carry out advanced research
- A3** Have a foundation of specialist knowledge and research skills from which they can embark upon careers with significant international dimensions or pursue a postgraduate research degree in IR and related academic disciplines
- A4** Have the theoretical and practical skills that will enable them to successfully complete an MA dissertation

Teaching and Learning Methods

The primary means of imparting knowledge and understanding is seminars. Throughout the MA programme students are strongly encouraged to engage in independent reading for which they are given extensive support and guidance on reading materials and their appropriate use. Students are strongly supported by staff in their completion of self-designed research projects.

Assessment Strategy

Knowledge and understanding are primarily assessed by research projects both of which are designed to assess theoretical and conceptual understanding and the capacity of students to relate knowledge through case studies and other empirically focused projects.

Intellectual Skills

On completing the programme students should be able to:

- B1** Synthesise information from a variety of primary and secondary sources
- B2** Analyse, evaluate and interpret principal source materials
- B3** Plan, conduct and communicate research through research papers
- B4** Understand the theoretical basis of IR research.

Teaching and Learning Methods

Cognitive skills are developed through seminars, research projects and supervision of research projects and dissertations. Students are encouraged to develop cognitive skills through analysis of case studies, independent reading and designing research projects.

Assessment Strategy

Intellectual skills are examined through research papers and the MA dissertation.

Practical Skills

On completing the programme students should be able to:

- C1** Critically evaluate key arguments in IR
- C2** Critically evaluate the most important texts and themes in IR
- C3** Present a reasoned and informed position both in writing and in spoken presentations
- C4** Identify, locate, and retrieve appropriate paper and electronic materials relevant to IR

Teaching and Learning Methods

Critical skills are developed through independent reading and encouraging active participation individually and in groups in seminar settings. Formal spoken presentations and written research projects are informed by appropriate materials in international studies some of which references are provided to students and others of which students themselves have to locate.

Assessment Strategy

Practical skills are assessed through research projects.

Transferable/Key Skills

On completing the programme students should be able to:

- D1** Take responsibility for his/her own learning and personal professional development

D2 Manage time and prioritise tasks by working to deadlines
D3 Communicate effectively to others when working in seminar group settings.
D4 Make effective use of appropriate resources including journals and other online materials

Teaching and Learning Methods

Student self-learning and time and task management is encouraged in weekly seminars and one on one research supervision sessions. Communication is practiced in weekly seminars. Students are directed to appropriate journals and provided information concerning appropriate internet usage.

Assessment Strategy

Self-learning is assessed in the context of the timely submission of research projects. Effective use of electronic resources is assessed in the context of their analysis and correct presentation in research projects.

12 Programme Curriculum, Structure and Features

Basic structure of the programme

One year full time or two years part time.
180 credits (120 coursework, 60 dissertation)
100 credits compulsory (2 x 20 credit modules and 1 x 60 credit dissertation), 80 optional credits

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

Rigorous compulsory training in the Theories of International Relations

Programme regulations (link to on-line version)

[4030 Programme Regulations 23-24](#)

13 Support for Student Learning

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

[Generic Information](#)

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.

[Generic Information](#)

16 Regulation of assessment

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

[Generic Information](#)

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

The University Prospectus (see <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/postgraduate/>)

The University Regulations (see <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).