	PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION (Undergraduate)	

1	**Awarding Institution**	Newcastle University
2	**Teaching Institution**	Newcastle University
3	**Final Award**	BA (Hons)
4	**Programme Title**	Digital Cultures and Media Digital Cultures and Media (with Year Abroad) Digital Cultures and Media (with Placement Year)
5	**UCAS/Programme Code**	P305 1612U 1613U
6	**Programme Accreditation**	N/A
7	**QAA Subject Benchmark(s)**	Communication, Media, Film and Cultural Studies
8	**FHEQ Level**	Level 6
9	**Date written/revised**	July 2022

10 Programme Aims

1. To provide students with a learning environment that cultivates personal and academic development by offering intellectually exciting and challenging experiences.
2. To produce professionals and graduates who can interpret, analyse and exercise critical judgement in the evaluation of theories, concepts, accounts and explanations produced within the fields of digital cultures, media, communications and cultural studies.
3. To give students the technical understanding necessary to support their interpretation, analysis and critical judgement with regard to socio technical systems.
4. To equip students with a knowledge and understanding of digital cultures and technologies, media, communicative and cultural activities across local and global situations and across historical and contemporary contexts.
5. To enable students to apply theories and concepts to the field of media, communication and culture and critically reflect on the reliability and validity of the resulting explanations.
6. To enable graduates to investigate problems and develop practical interventions by evaluating, students and employing the most appropriate digital skills, research methods, and analytical frames.
7. To help form innovative and versatile professionals who are able to effectively create, manage, analyse and disseminate information through new digital forms.
8. To provide students with the necessary knowledge of the political, legal and ethical aspects of socio-technical systems to enable them to act responsibly and inclusively.
9. To provide students with the necessary skills to work across a variety of group and independent modes of study, and within these to demonstrate flexibility, creativity and the capacity for critical self-reflection.
10. To provide students with the necessary transferable intellectual, vocational and employability skills appropriate to the contemporary employment market and post-graduate study.
11. To provide a qualification which fully meets the learning outcomes at Level 6 in the FHEQ.
12. To comply with prevailing University policies and QAA codes of practice.

For students on the Placement Year programme:
13. Provide students with the experience of seeking and securing a position with an employer.
14. Facilitate independent self-management and proactive interaction in a non-university setting.
15. Provide a period of practical work experience that will benefit current academic study and longer term career plans.
16. Enable students to ethically apply their knowledge and skills in the work place, reflect upon their development and effectively evidence and articulate their learning in relevant future settings.

For students on the Year Abroad programme:
17. Offer students the opportunity to develop graduate attributes which increase employability, particularly communication and (where applicable) language skills, intercultural competencies, adaptability, resilience and global awareness.
18. Gain insight into international Higher Education and experience differences in academic approach and learning environment.
19. Provide the opportunity to experience new areas of study outside of their usual programme of study at Newcastle University.

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 Communication, Media, Film and Cultural Studies.

Knowledge and Understanding

On completing the programme students should:

A1. Knowledge of key theories, concepts and perspectives in the fields of digital culture and media studies and an understanding of how to critically evaluate this knowledge.

A2. Knowledge of media, digital technologies, forms and cultures and understanding of how they organise meanings, experiences and affects.

A3. Knowledge of how digital forms both derive from and create cultures and groups

A4. Knowledge of how cultural contexts and cultural consumption mediated through digital forms control, create and challenge individual and collective identities, experiences and emotions.

A5. Knowledge of class, age, race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality and other social formations and how they shape and are shaped by the production, circulation and consumption of social, cultural and economic products, artefacts and commodities.

A6. Knowledge of the representational conventions through which meaning is made in different media and their varying social, cultural and use contexts.

A7. Knowledge of a variety of research methodologies and understanding of how their philosophical traditions and attendant practices are used to produce information about the media, communicative action and culture.

A8. Apply personal and professional development strategies to prioritise, plan and manage their own skills development and learning.

For Students on the Placement Year programme:

A9. Apply personal and professional development strategies to prioritise, plan, and manage their own skills development and learning.

A10. Research, select and apply relevant knowledge aimed at enhancing their own skills and effectiveness in specific duties at their placement.

A11. Demonstrate an understanding of a work environment, how it functions and their contribution to it.

A12. Relate their work based learning to other areas of personal development, including academic performance.

For students on the Year Abroad programme:

A13. Demonstrate the ability to adapt to different learning environments.

Teaching and Learning Methods

Realising the outcomes for 1 -7 are achieved primarily through lectures with scholars who have national and international reputations in their field of study. These methods and strategies are supported by the use of:

A) a range of resources that include online content providers such as news sites and social media platforms, mobile apps, software, online data sources (such as Application Programming Interfaces - APIs) and
B) the hands-on exposure to contemporary media technologies such as Augmented Reality/Virtual Reality (AR/VR) physical platforms, networked devices, gaming platforms and interfaces

These are supplemented by seminars (1-7), practical sessions (3, 4, 6), tutorials (1-7), on-line content, and research supervision (1-7). Furthermore, computer clusters are used for the exploration of digital technologies (3, 4, 6). These methods are facilitated by strategies that involve individual and collective learning (small group, class and stage) for instance in our structured collaborations in stage 2 modules (MCH2019), support for a major project or dissertation in stage 3 and regular group 'crits' in practical modules.

All students at Stage 1 are given foundational knowledge in digital cultures and media. At Stage 2, students further their skills and knowledge. At Stage 3, students' knowledge and understanding is further advanced by compulsory modules covering theory and concepts alongside their research-based dissertation or major project. Teaching and learning methods are also enhanced by the involvement of professionals and practitioners from various media and culture industries. In addition, all students now pursue career and employability routes in-house through our industry-facing 'collaborating in digital cultures' modules in stage 2 and through options available through the careers service (NCL3000 and NCL3007). Opportunities are also available within a range of cultural and media industries.

Assessment Strategy

Knowledge and understanding are assessed by means of coursework, presentations and timed assessment.

Coursework: essays, projects, portfolios, seminar preparation;

Presentations: individual presentations, group presentations;

Research Led: research proposals, dissertation;

Practice based: Reflective logs, design or creative project, practical reports.

Exams: unseen examination.

The aim of the *coursework* enables students to explore their knowledge and understanding. Such methods encourage more sophisticated and critically inflected understanding of knowledge, theory and concepts. *Presentations* enable students to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding in a different mediums, whilst the *Research led* assessment encourages deeper understanding and sustained engagement with particular knowledges, theories and concepts. *Practice based* assessments are based upon individual and group projects allowing students to apply their knowledge in a practical context. *Exams* are primarily used to provide students with an opportunity to demonstrate their understanding of core knowledges.

Intellectual Skills

On completing the programme students should be able to:

B1. Interpret, analyse and exercise critical judgement in understanding and evaluation of major theoretical perspectives, concepts, and evidence presented in studies of digital cultures and media.

B2. Devise research questions or problems in the areas of digital cultures and media and select the most appropriate methods and resources to explicate those questions and / or develop practical interventions.

B3. Recognise how different theoretically informed perspectives contribute to different knowledges and understandings of and practical approaches to digital cultures and media and evaluate and navigate various epistemological approaches to the methods selected and the nature of the evidence that is consequently generated.

B4. Filter research data through coding strategies and provide critical interpretations of the significance of the data to the field of study.

B5. Reflexively analyse how positionality, biography, norms and values, ethical standpoints, cultural context and chronology shape research and practical processes.

B6. Demonstrate critical and / or creative writing skills across a range of media and cultural forms.

B7. Demonstrate professional communication skills in the media and cultural industries.

Teaching and Learning Methods

Students are given the opportunity to develop their subject specific skills in a range of forums. Across the degree students are required to support their knowledge and understanding, subject specific skills and cognitive skills through the collection of supporting evidence. Achievement of all the outcomes in this area is underpinned by lectures (1-6), workshops (1, 3, 7), seminars and tutorials (4, 6, 7, 8), ICT based modules (2) and individual research supervision (1-6). The development of these skills is also enhanced by the use of group led learning sessions (1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 8).

The main emphasis in this area is that of research inquiry. Core modules at every stage facilitate students' awareness of a variety of research methods (2) that are appropriate to media, communication and cultural studies. It is important that students' relationship with methodology intensifies as their degree progresses and they develop a methodology of research as part of their research led dissertation module.

Assessment Strategy

Subject specific skills are assessed through coursework, presentations, and timed assessment.

Coursework: essays, projects, group portfolio, seminar preparation, seminar tasks.

Presentations: Individual presentations, group presentations.

Research Led: primary research, research proposals, and dissertation.

Practice based: Reflective logs, design or creative project, practical reports.

Exams: Timed assessments, seen and unseen examinations.

The aim of the *coursework* is to measure students' ability to interpret, analyse and recognise how different knowledges and understandings shape the fields of media, communication and cultural studies. *Presentations* enable the demonstration of the application of their subject specific skills. *Research led and practice based methods of assessment* allow students to apply perspectives in order to explain phenomena and they also enable students to adapt their skills to the everyday world and to apply their knowledge in a practical context.

Practical Skills

On completing the programme students should be able to:

C1. Collect and select relevant information from a variety of sources including journals, archives, databases, reports, monographs, web pages and research papers
C2. Manage multiple sources of information containing a variety of perspectives and effectively disseminate ideas in an organised, coherent and logical manner.
C3. Adapt existing theories, concepts and explanations to explore new and emerging areas and / or inform practice in the fields of digital cultures, media, and communication.
C4. Devise and realise practical interventions in digital cultures through the production of digital media or other digital applications, platforms and technologies..
C5. Test and evaluate digital media using a range of appropriate methods

Teaching and Learning Methods

Developing students' skills in identifying, organising and applying knowledge is accomplished through lectures (1-3). However, seminars and tutorials are predominantly used as means to enable students to discuss, learn to evaluate and demonstrate their skills (1 – 4). Practical teaching in digital media take place in computer labs (4, 5) and these are supported by practical drop in sessions to support independent skills learning.

Specific teaching strategies such as group and individual problem solving sessions (1-4), computer assisted learning (1- 4), and research supervision (1-4) are also used to facilitate students' critical appreciation and application of theories and concepts in the field of media, communication and cultural studies. Email surgeries are also used where students can have designated one to one contact on a weekly basis.

Such strategies operationalise a range of resources that include online content providers such as news sites and social media platforms, mobile apps, software, online data sources (such as APIs) and rely on the hands on exposure to contemporary media technologies such as AR/VR physical platforms, networked devices, gaming platforms and interfaces.

Assessment Strategy

Subject specific skills are assessed through coursework, presentations, and timed assessment. These include:

Coursework: Essays, Projects, Group portfolio, Seminar preparation, Computer based workbook; *Presentations:* Individual presentations, Group presentations;

Research Led: Primary research, Research proposals, Dissertation;

Exams: Seen examination.

Practice based: Reflective logs, design or creative project, practical reports.

Career planning and employability skills are now assessed through specific career-related modules offered as part of programme. .

These methods of assessment enable students a thorough and systematic application of their cognitive and practical skills.

The *coursework* allows students to put into effect their analytic skills and capacities to critically evaluate in an in depth and systematic fashion and to use them to inform the production of digital media. Presentations enable students to relate both their thinking and the artefacts they produce to specific audiences and to gain experience in using presentation techniques. *Research led and practice based methods of assessment* provide an opportunity to apply cognitive thinking to real life phenomena in the field of digital cultures and media.

Transferable/Key Skills

On completing the programme students should be able to:

D1. Gather, organise and deploy ideas and information in order to formulate arguments and critical evaluations.

D2. Cogently communicate by means of well-prepared, clear and confident presentations, and coherent, concise written documents.

D3. Apply communication skills when dealing with a range of audiences such as clients, professionals and employers

D4. Use library and other information resources skilfully and appropriately.

D5. Solve problems.

D6. Use digital technologies skilfully and appropriately from basic competencies, such as data analysis and word processing, to more complex skills, such as creating digital media.

D7. Plan, organise and prioritise work activities to a given length, format, brief and deadline.

D8. Work productively in a group or team showing abilities at different times to listen, contribute and lead effectively.

D9. Work independently, in self–directed ways and with initiative.

D10. Identify and create action plans on the basis of career/employability sessions.

For students on the Placement Year programme:
D11. Reflect on and manage own learning and development within the workplace.

D12. Use existing and new knowledge to enhance personal performance in a workplace environment, evaluate the impact and communicate this process.

D13. Use graduate skills in a professional manner in a workplace environment, evaluate the impact and communicate the personal development that has taken place.

For students on the Year Abroad programme:
D14. Adapt and operate in different cultural environment.

Teaching and Learning Methods

Teaching methods and strategies that are employed to achieve these objectives are both standard lectures (1, 2, 3, 4, 7), computer lab workshops (2-9), workshop sessions (2, 4, 5), library based interactive sessions (4, 5, 6), seminars (1, 2, 5, 8), web based learning (1, 2, 7, 9). Tutorials and research supervision focus on solving problems and working independently (5, 9).

At Stages 1, 2 and 3 students have the opportunity to do modules which allow them to develop skills covering employability in the media and culture industries. These modules involve the direct application of theories, concepts and perspectives to problems faced by local organisations and companies. (10).

Seminars, where appropriate, involve presentations by students providing discussion and analysis of research/case study explorations. Across the three stages students will undertake both individual and group based practical projects.

Assessment Strategy

Key skills are assessed through:

Coursework: Essays (1-9), Projects, Portfolios (1, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9)   Seminar preparation (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9);

Presentations: Individual presentations (1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 9) Group presentations (1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 8);

Research Led: Research Proposals (1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9); Dissertation; (1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9)

Practice-based: Group and individual practical projects (1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9) Reflective logs (1, 3, 5, 7, 8, 9)

Exams: Timed assessments, seen and unseen examinations.

The aim of the *coursework* is to enable students to practice and hone their key skills. Such methods encourage more sophisticated and critically inflected understanding of knowledge, theory and concepts. *Presentations* enable students to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding in a different medium, whilst the *Research led* assessment encourages deeper understanding and sustained engagement with particular knowledges, theories and concepts. *Exams* are primarily used to allow students to demonstrate their understanding of core knowledges and concepts. *Practice based* assessments enable students to adapt their skills to the everyday world, to apply their knowledge in a practical context and to develop skills in both group and independent, self-directed working.

12 Programme Curriculum, Structure and Features
Basic structure of the programme
(i) Basic structure of the programme a. The programme is studied over three years full-time for students on P305 and over four years full time for students on 1612U and 1613U b. The programme is made up of three stages for P305students. Stage 1 modules are Certificate level; Stage 2 modules are Intermediate level; Stage 3 modules are Honours level. Students are required to study 90 credits at the appropriate level. c. The programme is made up of four stages for 1612U and 1613U students. Stage 1 modules are certificate level and Stage 2 modules are Intermediate level. Students on 1612U spend a year abroad in between Stage 2 and 3 with DPD discretion. Students on 1613U spend a year on a work placement between Stage 2 and 3. These years do not contribute to the overall degree classification. Stage 3 modules are Honours level. Students are required to study 90 credits at the appropriate level. d. The overall credit value of the programme is 360. e. Each stage requires the study of modules with a credit value of 120. Each stage is made up of a mixture of *compulsory* (modules that must be taken) and *optional* modules. *Compulsory* modules ensure that a baseline of Certificate, Intermediate and Honours level knowledge, skills and understanding are acquired by all students. *Optional* modules enable students to gain broader knowledge and skills in consonant subject areas. **(ii) Key Features of the Programme** The programme contains a number of distinctive features: - The programme critically integrates theory and practice with respect to digital cultures and media, providing students with opportunities to mobilise academic theories and analytic skills in the production of new digital forms. - Research and problem solving, including the development of critically informed practical interventions is a central concern of the programme. - Prepares students to contribute, theoretically and/or practically to digital cultural and media workplaces.
Programme regulations (link to on-line version)
P305 Programme Regulations 23-24

13 Support for Student Learning
Generic Information Generic information regarding University provision is available here.

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

Generic Information

Generic information regarding University provision is available here.

Accreditation reports
N/A

Additional mechanisms
N/A

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15   Regulation of assessment

Generic Information

Generic information regarding University provision is available here.

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

The University Prospectus: http://www.ncl.ac.uk/undergraduate/degrees/#subject

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.