

**PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION  
(Undergraduate)**



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|----------|---------------------------------|--|
| <b>1</b> | <b>Awarding Institution</b>     | Newcastle University   |
| <b>2</b> | <b>Teaching Institution</b>     | Newcastle University   |
| <b>3</b> | <b>Final Award</b>              | BA (Hons)  |
| <b>4</b> | <b>Programme Title</b>          | English Literature<br>English Literature with Placement Year |
| <b>5</b> | <b>UCAS/Programme Code</b>      | Q306<br>1548U  |
| <b>6</b> | <b>Programme Accreditation</b>  | n/a  |
| <b>7</b> | <b>QAA Subject Benchmark(s)</b> | English  |
| <b>8</b> | <b>FHEQ Level</b>               | 6  |
| <b>9</b> | <b>Date written/revised</b>     | July 2021  |

**10 Programme Aims**

- (a) To produce graduates with:
- i. the knowledge, understanding, key and specific skills and general intellectual development required to make them employable in graduate positions in a wide range of employments or capable of undertaking a taught postgraduate programme
  - ii. a knowledge of the range of texts from past and present cultures
  - iii. an introduction to world literature, creative writing, and film in English
  - iv. an ability to address the cultural and political contexts in which texts are produced and read
  - v. a familiarity with a variety of genres and forms
  - vi. experience of a range of critical practices and an ability to reflect on those practices
  - vii. an ability to reflect on the processes of creative writing.
- (b) To provide a programme:
- i. in which teaching is informed by research, both in terms of research that is relevant to the discipline and with regard to research carried out by members of staff
  - ii. which consistently attracts highly qualified applicants
  - iii. which fully meets the requirements of the relevant Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) Benchmark statement,
  - iv. which complies with prevailing University policies and QAA codes of practice, and
  - v. which fully meets the criteria for a level 6 award within the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications.

For Students Undertaking a Placement Year

- (c) Provide students with the experience of seeking and securing a position with an employer.
- (d) Facilitate independent self-management and proactive interaction in a non-university setting.
- (e) Provide a period of practical work experience that will benefit current academic study and longer term career plans.
- (f) 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.

## 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 aims and learning outcomes have references to the Subject Benchmark Statements for English.

### Knowledge and Understanding

On completing the programme students should have knowledge and understanding of the following:

- A1. Varieties of texts, including film, in English
- A2. Varieties of writing in English from different periods
- A3. How language, culture, politics and technology affect the ways texts are produced and read
- A4. The complex relationship between text and context
- A5. A range of critical practices
- A6. Genre and generic conventions
- A7. The vocabulary of textual and theoretical analysis.

#### For Students Undertaking a Placement Year

- A8. Apply personal and professional development strategies to prioritise, plan, and manage their own skills development and learning.
- A9. Research, select and apply relevant knowledge aimed at enhancing their own skills and effectiveness in specific duties at their placement.
- A10. Demonstrate an understanding of a work environment, how it functions and their contribution to it.
- A11. Relate their work based learning to other areas of personal development, including academic performance.

### Teaching and Learning Methods

At Stage 1 knowledge and understanding (A1 – 7) is acquired via lectures, seminars and student-led study groups (directed sessions where students meet to discuss set material without their seminar tutor). At Stage 2 they are acquired via lectures, seminars, study groups, tutorials and independent study, especially the Independent Research Project (A1 – 7). At Stage 3, a third of a student's time is dedicated to independent work, which will typically take the form of a Dissertation, developing more advanced knowledge and understanding (A1 - 7). At all stages, students are encouraged to supplement taught material through independent reading. Guidance on further reading will be provided by the module director and/or the seminar tutor.

### Assessment Strategy

Where there is a single assessment of knowledge and understanding on a module, it will normally be via an unseen examination of 3 hours or submitted work of 4000, 4500 or 10,000 words in length. Many modules have mixed forms of assessments, and many have mid-module assignments. Where this is the case, the lengths for exams and essays are determined on a *pro rata* basis.

Examinations provide students with the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding in an unseen context. To ensure these elements of the degree are assessed, all students will be required to take at least one examination during both Stage 1 and Stage 2 (A1 – 7).

Submitted work enables students to further demonstrate knowledge and understanding; it also enables them to demonstrate their knowledge of the scholarly protocols of the discipline. All students will have written at least one essay of 4000 words by the time they have completed Stage 2, a requirement that means all students will have been assessed

on the extent to which they have developed in-depth knowledge and understanding (A1 – 7) before they start Stage 3. At Stage 3 they will be asked to demonstrate deeper knowledge and understanding in the assessment of both specialised option modules and independent study modules.

### **Intellectual Skills**

On completing the programme students should be able to:

- B1. critically evaluate arguments and evidence
- B2. develop an awareness of the complex interplay between text and context
- B3. organise and present ideas as part of a structured written argument
- B4. organise and present ideas as part of a structured oral presentation
- B5. design a research project and select and employ appropriate research methodologies.

### **Teaching and Learning Methods**

Intellectual skills are promoted through seminars, study groups and tutorials. At Stage 1 students are given guidance to ensure that they can debate effectively, evaluate arguments and evidence and present information to a group. Skills B1, 2, and 3 are introduced and practised in stage 1. These skills are developed further at Stage 2. Here a greater emphasis on small group work and the presentations that form the spine of the Independent Research Project become key to refining a student's intellectual skills (B3 and B4 in particular). At Stage 3, more specialised modules and the greater emphasis on independent work focus students on developing the skills identified in B5.

### **Assessment Strategy**

Examinations provide students with the opportunity to demonstrate their intellectual skills by asking them to structure a clear, concise and well-reasoned argument in a limited time period and to address interpretive problems in an unseen context. The degree's assessment strategy means that all students will be assessed by exams at least once at Stage 1 and again at Stage 2 (B1 and B3).

Submitted work is also key to the assessment strategy for intellectual skills. Submitted work enables students to expand on these skills, demonstrate a self-reflexive awareness of their approach and show they can use appropriate techniques, theories and methodologies (B2, B3, B5). To ensure these skills are assessed fully, all students, by the time they have completed Stage 2, will have written at least one essay of 4,000 words before they start Stage 3.

At Stage 3 they will be asked to demonstrate more advanced intellectual skills in the assessment of both specialised option modules and independent study modules.

### **Practical Skills**

On completing the programme students should be able to:

- C1. practise critical skills in the analysis of texts (literature, film and other media as appropriate);
- C2. engage imaginatively and critically in the reading of complex texts;
- C3. exercise and develop a sensitivity to verbal creativity;
- C4. analyse a range of texts employing relevant theoretical perspectives;
- C5. apply scholarly bibliographic skills appropriate to the subject.

### **Teaching and Learning Methods**

At Stage 1 practical skills are acquired via lectures, seminars, study-groups and tutorials (C1 – 5). Seminars, study groups and tutorials give students the opportunity to discuss ideas and critical practices introduced in the lectures. At Stage 2 they are acquired via lectures, seminars, study groups, tutorials and independent study (C1 – 5). At Stage 3

more specialised modules and the increased emphasis on independent study offers students the chance to further refine all of these practical skills.

### **Assessment Strategy**

Examinations provide students with the opportunity to demonstrate their practical skills by asking them to prepare and then produce a clear, concise and well-reasoned argument in a limited time period and engage in practical analysis in an unseen context. The degree's assessment strategy means that all students will sit an exam at least once at Stage 1 and again at Stage 2, ensuring that practical skills, particularly C1 – 3 are assessed.

Submitted work enables students to expand on these practical skills; it also enables them to demonstrate their employment of appropriate research techniques (C4). They also learn scholarly bibliographic skills appropriate to the subject (C5). To ensure these skills are assessed fully, all students, by the time they have completed Stage 2, will have written at least one essay of 4,000 words before they begin stage 3.

At Stage 3 they will be asked to demonstrate more advanced practical skills in the assessment of both specialised option modules and independent study modules (particularly on the Independent Essay and Dissertation modules).

### **Transferable/Key Skills**

On completing the programme students should be able to:

- D1. plan and complete essays and project-work
- D2. write and speak to different audiences
- D3. co-ordinate multiple projects
- D4. use information technology (word processing; the internet)
- D5. gather, evaluate and organise material
- D6. summarise and assimilate information
- D7. communicate and debate effectively
- D8. work to deadlines or within specified time-limits
- D9. work and negotiate with others, with a sensitivity to cultural contexts
- D10. work effectively both in a team and independently
- D11. present information to a group in a structured and coherent way.
- D12. display an excellent knowledge of the English language and of its proper use, including a correct application of grammar, syntax and spelling rules.

#### For Students Undertaking a Placement Year

- D13. Reflect on and manage own learning and development within the workplace.
- D14. Use existing and new knowledge to enhance personal performance in a workplace environment, evaluate the impact and communicate this process.
- D15. Use graduate skills in a professional manner in a workplace environment, evaluate the impact and communicate the personal development that has taken place.

### **Teaching and Learning Methods**

Key/transferable skills are developed through tutorials, seminars, lectures and study groups. At Stage 1 students are given advice to ensure that they can debate effectively, negotiate with others and present information to a group. Skills D1 - 12 are introduced and practised in the stage 1 compulsory modules.

All of these skills are promoted further at Stage 2 with continued emphasis on small group work, and with increased opportunity for independent study. The Independent Research Project with workshops based on compulsory student presentations is key to the teaching and learning strategy for key/transferable Skills and will require students to draw on D1 – 12. The Career Development modules offered by the University Careers Service further enhance employability skills if the students opt to take them.

At Stage 3, students will refine their key/transferable Skills further, particularly in the course of studying more specialised modules and as they devote more time to independent work in taking either the Dissertation or two Independent Essay modules (D1, D5, D8). The option to take work placement modules at Stage 3 gives students the chance to further refine their key/transferable Skills. They also have the option of taking the University Careers Service's Advanced Career Development modules for Stage 3 students, which further enhances their employability.

### **Assessment Strategy**

Assessment of key/transferable skills is implicit in course work at all levels. At Stage 2 all students will undertake an independent research project, which assesses many of the skills listed above and in particular D7 and D11. At Stage 3 independent work will assess D1, D6 and D8.

## **12 Programme Curriculum, Structure and Features**

### **Basic structure of the programme**

The programme is studied over three years full-time; it is divided into modules, which have a value of 10 or 20 credits, or, in the case of the Dissertation only, 40 credits (with every 20 credits representing 200 hours of student learning).

At Stage 1, students are given a thorough introduction to a range of literatures (including film texts) and the skills required for their studies. The tutorials in the stage 1 compulsory modules give students the opportunity to practise, experiment with and develop this knowledge and these skills. Across Stage 1, there is an emphasis on small group teaching (tutorials and seminars) to enable the acquisition of academic, practical and key skills. Working alongside these modules, stage 1 modules give students a broader view of the inter-relationships between texts and a sense of the significance of mythologies and traditions in shaping literary discourses.

These compulsory modules are complemented at Stage 1 by 40 credits of optional modules. Students might choose modules from those offered by other schools, or from our own options.

At Stage 2, students choose from a range of modules that are aimed at developing their knowledge of key areas of literary study in terms intended to give them a broad, contextual knowledge of particular areas. Required to take at least two modules from before 1900 and at least two post 1900, they will study a range of literature from across the periods in their work. They will also be expected to complete an Independent Research Project, which allows them to specialise in a topic of their own choosing (and design) and fosters the skills needed to plan their work effectively and write at length. Further, the option to study poetry, script & prose at stage 2 gives students the chance to develop their experience of and expertise in creative writing.

At Stage 3, students choose four taught modules from a wide menu of specialist options. The aim at Stage 3 is to give students the chance to build on the experience they have gained in Stages 1 and 2 and to make choices based on their own particular interests, at the same time as it gives them the opportunity to study with staff teaching material that draws on their own particular research expertise. The only restriction imposed upon students is that some of their choices must focus on the earlier periods, a requirement that ensures they have coverage of the subject. The menu of options is further enhanced by the placement module which allows student to take up a work placement as part of their studies. They also have the option of taking the University Careers Service's Advanced Career Development modules for Stage 3 students, which further enhances their employability.

In addition to their 80 credits of taught modules, Stage 3 students take 40 credits of independent study. This may take the form of a 10,000 word Dissertation or a File of

Original Literary Work. In exceptional circumstances, and with the module leader's approval, students may replace the Dissertation with two Independent Essay modules (4,500 word essays that extend the work done in an individual module). As with the taught modules at Stage 3, the emphasis here is on developing in-depth and advanced level knowledge and understanding and fostering cognitive and key skills. The Independent Essay and Dissertation also introduce students applying for postgraduate degrees to advanced research skills.

Students have the option to take part in a Careers Placement Year in-between Stage 2 and 3 of their programme. They will be transferred on to programme code 1548U.

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

All undergraduates in the School of English Literature, Language and Linguistics may elect to study abroad for one semester, typically the second semester of year two. Currently SELLL has links with institutions in Europe and with universities in North America.

SELLL students can also take advantage of University and Faculty-led programmes (including exchanges with universities in Canada and Australia).

**Programme regulations (link to on-line version)**

[Q306 Programme Regulations 23-24](#)

**13 Support for Student Learning**

Generic information regarding University provision is available [here](#).

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

Generic information regarding University provision is available [here](#).

*Accreditation reports*  
n/a

*Additional mechanisms*  
n/a

**15 Regulation of assessment**

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.

