

**PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION
(Undergraduate)**



1	Awarding Institution	Newcastle University
2	Teaching Institution	Newcastle University
3	Final Award	BSc (Honours)
4	Programme Title	Accounting Studies (NN49) Business Accounting and Finance with work placements (NN14)
5	UCAS/Programme Code	NN49
6	Programme Accreditation	Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales
7	QAA Subject Benchmark(s)	Accounting
8	FHEQ Level	Level 6
9	Last updated	May 2024

10 Programme Aims

To produce graduates with the following qualities:

- 1 the knowledge, understanding, key and specific skills and general intellectual development required to make them employable in graduate positions in accounting principally, but also in related fields and to make them capable of undertaking further study appropriate to their needs for future development;
- 2 NN14 provides considerable relevant work experience and associated skills development gained through relevant work placements, which form an integral part of the degree;
- 3 a capacity for inquiry, abstract logical thinking and critical analysis and the ability to work independently.

To offer a programme which:

- 4 meets the expectations of the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications for a level 6 award, the QAA benchmark statement for Accounting and the accreditation requirements of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales;
- 5 complies with prevailing University policies and QAA codes of practice.

11 Learning Outcomes

The programme outcomes have references to the benchmark statements for Accounting and provide students with opportunities to demonstrate disciplinary competency by developing knowledge and understanding of the theoretical concepts and analytical tools of finance and accounting in a professional context and applying the appropriate principles and theories to analyse information and generate solutions within their discipline.

Specifically, the programme provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding, qualities, skills and other attributes in the following areas:

- an understanding of accounting and finance in a business context through an approach which combines study of both the conceptual and the applied aspects of the disciplines studied;

- NN14 provides practical experience of the subjects studied through integrated work placements;
- the opportunity to complete the degree as part-qualified Chartered Accountants arising from the significantly greater degree recognition/credit afforded to the degree programme by the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW), compared with other accounting degrees;
- NN14 comprises both academic progress through performance in relevant University modules and integrated work placements with PwC, which contribute to the approved technical work experience required by ICAEW in order to qualify as a Chartered Accountant.

Knowledge and Understanding

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

- A1 The business context within which accounting and finance operate: including the ability to consider and evaluate ethical issues and make recommendations for the appropriate courses of action;
- A2 Financial reporting, including consideration of alternative recognition and measurement rules and of the impact of accounting choices;
- A3 The impact of accounting standards on financial reporting both in terms of UK standards and international standards, incorporating an understanding of key components of different countries accounting environments and how those environmental components differ globally;
- A4 Principles of management accounting, management control and pricing;
- A5 Business and financial strategy, valuation and decision making;
- A6 Audit and assurance, the work of the auditor and auditing standards;
- A7 Taxation of income and capital gains, tax planning, VAT and other relevant taxes and developments in the taxation system, including related ethical issues;
- A8 UK commercial and company law;
- A9 Financial management, risk and the operation of capital markets;
- A10 Relevant research in the disciplines studied, critical evaluation of theories and empirical evidence.

Teaching and Learning Methods

The primary method of imparting knowledge and understanding is through lectures and classes. Classes whether they be workshops, problem sessions or seminars enable students to develop their learning through practice and through discussion. The approach reflects the fact that accounting and finance is a subject which is very suitable for a problem-solving based approach to teaching and learning. Students will be encouraged to use various sources of reading – ICAEW workbooks, textbooks and articles – to supplement lecture material and to supplement classes. Students will also be encouraged to enhance their learning through student-centred project work and by analysing case studies.

Assessment Strategy

Knowledge and understanding is primarily assessed by unseen examinations, but also to some extent by various forms of coursework.

Intellectual Skills

On completing the programme students should be able to:

- B1 Appropriately record and summarise accounting transactions;
- B2 Prepare and analyse financial statements;
- B3 Analyse business operations for decision-making purposes;
- B4 Prepare and understand financial projections for decision-making and control;
- B5 Solve business problems using accounting and financial techniques;
- B6 Demonstrate an understanding of tax and investment planning;
- B7 Assess audit risk and analyse control systems;
- B8 Apply relevant quantitative skills required for accounting and finance;
- B9 Demonstrate an understanding of financial risk management and capital markets;
- B10 Demonstrate the professional attitudes required of a Chartered Accountant;
- B11 Apply technical and conceptual knowledge and skill to interdisciplinary problems;
- B12 Demonstrate numeracy by applying the appropriate computational techniques and technical accounting experience to interpret and critically evaluate the results within an accounting and finance setting.

Teaching and Learning Methods

Practical/professional skills will be demonstrated in lectures and classes. Follow-up classes include problem sessions and workshops to enable students to develop these skills in a supportive environment where help is available. Developing competence in these skills requires practice which students will gain through workshop activity and private study at the University as well as through work experience for NN14 students while on placement. Development of B10 will come in the final year of the programme, when the knowledge and skills acquired are applied to interdisciplinary cases.

Assessment Strategy

Practical/professional skills are assessed by unseen examinations, worksheets, projects and case studies, as well as via the placements (placements for NN14 students only).

Practical Skills

On completing the programme students should be able to:

- C1 Identify, extract and analyse relevant data;
- C2 Undertake critical evaluation of arguments and evidence;
- C3 Drawing conclusions from structured, and to a lesser extent from unstructured, problems using given data or data acquired by the student.

Teaching and Learning Methods

Data skills (C1) are principally developed through project work and through skills sessions in induction and within modules. In addition such skills will also be developed on placement for NN14 students. Critical evaluation skills (C2) are principally developed through seminar activity and through writing essays. Problem solving skills (C3) are developed through workshop activity and problem classes, as well as through work experience. Students can further enhance their intellectual skills through private study and through undertaking case study analysis and project work.

Assessment Strategy

Such skills are assessed primarily through projects and work placements (C1), unseen examinations and coursework (C2 and C3), although problem solving will also form part of the assessment of the placements for NN14 students.

Transferable/Key Skills

On completing the programme students should be able to:

- D1 Use the appropriate verbal/written communication to convey information to a particular audience, tailoring the content, style and presentation to the intended audience;
- D2 Demonstrate the ability to work independently, through managing own learning, time management, showing initiative and adaptability;
- D3 Demonstrate the ability to work within a team (during core modules and whilst on placement) contributing appropriately and effectively towards the team based activity;
- D4 Demonstrate professionalism in the interaction with colleagues and client's staff in the workplace and in personal presentation and conduct.

Teaching and Learning Methods

These are introduced to students through sessions within modules in year one. Students are introduced to presentation skills, networking, time management, professional and business ethics and other transferable skills in order to better prepare them for the placements in years 2, 3 and 4 and ultimately their working career. IT and numeracy skills are taught within specific modules through lectures and workshops, and are used and developed further in other modules. Oral communication skills are developed (in particular) through seminars and presentations, as well as through the work placements. Students have the opportunity to develop their study skills throughout the programme. Teamwork skills are developed through the use of group projects and group presentations in certain modules. These are also developed through the work placements.

Assessment Strategy

The key (transferable) skills will be assessed throughout the placements for NN14 students. In addition, D1 and D2 are assessed through unseen examinations and coursework and D3 is assessed through group projects and presentations. D4 is assessed through completion of the work placements, in particular personal development as a result of feedback received.

12 Programme Curriculum, Structure and Features

Basic structure of the programme

The programme is studied over four years. Stage 1 shares a largely common first year with N400 (Accounting and Finance) and is delivered in the normal academic year. Stages 2, 3 and 4 are based on a longer year, starting in September but finishing in June to accommodate the placement and the taught programme.

Each stage requires the study of modules with a credit value of 120. Modules vary in size from 15 to 40 credits. Placements are offered for the NN14 degree programme at stages 2, 3 and 4 are each worth 40 credits, as they form an integral part of the degree. They will be assessed against expected performance criteria on a pass/fail basis. Placements are not offered for the NN49 degree programme and accordingly stages 2, 3 and 4 of this programme comprise 80 taught credits each. Students are not recruited directly to this programme and it exists only to provide a fall back route to graduation for students from the NN14 degree.

Stage 1 provides a multi-disciplinary foundation covering not only accounting and finance but also law, economics, IT, quantitative methods, the financial environment and business. The emphasis in accounting and finance is mostly on the applied aspects of the discipline, with the key techniques being introduced. Stage 1 also includes the cultivation of Professional Skills so as to develop students' practical, professional and transferable skills.

Building on Stage 1, Stages 2 and 3 aim to further develop students' knowledge and skills, with an emphasis on the technical and professional aspects of accounting and finance. The syllabus includes modules that have been designed to satisfy the learning outcomes of the ICAEW's Professional Level examinations.

Finally, Stage 4 concentrates on developing higher level academic skills, appropriate to an undergraduate programme. These include skills of analysis and critical evaluation, knowledge of research issues and their impact on practice and the requirement to apply knowledge in an integrated manner thereby demonstrating the ability to synthesise knowledge from different subject areas. The Stage 4 placement for NN14 students falls in the period November to April and the teaching programme is again split into two blocks, one starting in September and the other after Easter. Assessment takes place in June.

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

A key feature of both the NN14 and the NN49 degree programmes is the progress that they enable students to make towards ICAEW's Chartered Accountant Qualification.

Some modules allow exemption from corresponding papers in the ICAEW Certificate and Professional Level examinations, subject to students achieving a mark of 50% or 55% or more as appropriate in the relevant assessment (an ICAEW pass). However, for University purposes, in terms of progression and awards for the degree programme, these modules will be considered in the usual way.

Placement modules contribute to the approved technical work experience required by ICAEW to qualify as an ICAEW Chartered Accountant. The placements form part of the Business Accounting and Finance degree programme but are not offered with the Accounting Studies degree programme.

Programme regulations (link to on-line version)

[NN49 Programme Regulations 2024-25](#)

13 Support for Student Learning

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

Support for Students on Placement

Whilst on placement students are contacted by their personal tutor and in addition they are encouraged to contact the placement Module Leader or Degree Programme Director if there encounter any problems. In addition to the University support mechanisms, PwC offer support for the students via placement buddies and counselling managers.

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

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

Accreditation reports

Relevant staff from the University and ICAEW meet periodically to review and monitor progress and to identify and resolve any operational issues. An annual meeting is held between the University and ICAEW at which the External Examiner for the programme attends and delivers a report.

Additional mechanisms

A Project team comprising representatives from the University, PwC and ICAEW oversees the operation of the degree programme including the placements. Where relevant, agreed policy (especially with regard to the placements) is taken forward to the Board of Studies for approval.

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.