


PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION	 Newcastle University
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1	Awarding Institution	Newcastle University
2	Teaching Institution	Newcastle University
3	Final Award	BSc Honours
4	Programme Title	Agriculture Agriculture with Placement Agriculture with Honours in Agronomy Agriculture with Honours in Animal Production Science with Placement Agriculture with Honours in Farm Business Management, Agriculture with Honours in Farm Business Management with Placement
5	UCAS/Programme Code	D400 1400U D444 1402U D402 1401U
6	Programme Accreditation	None
7	QAA Subject Benchmark(s)	Agriculture, forestry, agricultural sciences, food sciences and consumer sciences.
8	FHEQ Level	6
9	Last updated	September 2024

10	Programme Aims
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To develop students' knowledge and understanding of the principles of agriculture in terms of science and practice, by laying a broad foundation in applied animal and plant biology and aspects of economics and management of farming and agricultural systems that is informed by research. 2. To stimulate an informed interest in, and critical analysis of, the development and progress of agriculture and its relevance to the diverse range of human needs and expectations at national and international levels. 3. To build upon and consolidate the knowledge of science, management, economics and data analysis and manipulation as a basis for possible more advanced, post-graduate studies in appropriate fields of agriculture. 4. To develop and improve students' key skills. 5. To provide a programme which meets the FHEQ level 6 requirements which takes appropriate account of the subject benchmark statements in Agriculture, forestry, agricultural sciences, food sciences and consumer sciences. 6. To produce graduates that: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) have a sound knowledge and understanding of agriculture that is informed by current research and professional input, coupled with appropriate subject specific skills, to equip them for a wide range of careers in the industry or for post-graduate study. Key areas of employment include farm and business management, commerce, advisory and consultancy work, environmental conservation, scientific research, technical journalism and teaching. b). Possess well developed key skills in parallel with their academic and technical proficiency. These key skills include effective communication using a range of media,

competent use of Information Technology and library resources, the ability to work individually and in a team, the use of initiative and problem solving, efficient time management and work prioritisation.

c). Are highly employable in non-agriculturally orientated careers as well as in careers directly involved in the agriculture and ancillary industries.

d). For those students taking a programme with placement, to provide students with a period of practical experience and the opportunity to develop their work place skills.

For students on the Placement Year programme:

7 Provide students with the experience of seeking and securing a position with an employer.

8 Facilitate independent self-management and proactive interaction in a non-university setting.

9 Provide a period of practical work experience that will benefit current academic study and longer term career plans.

10 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 outcomes have references to the benchmark statements for agriculture, forestry, agricultural sciences, food sciences and consumer sciences.

Knowledge and Understanding

On completing the programme students should have gained and be able to demonstrate:

A1 The scientific and practical principles of agriculture based on a foundation of animal and plant biology and quantitative studies including economics and biometrics

A2 The applied aspects of animal and crop production, economics, marketing and management in the context of individual enterprises, agricultural systems and farm businesses

A3 The physical, environmental, social, financial and political factors that shape agriculture and its various components.

A4 The relevance of agriculture to increasingly diverse human needs and expectations at the local, national, international and global levels that stimulates informed interest and critical analysis.

A5 The inter-relationship between agriculture and other activities in the rural environment, the reasons for conflict and possible solutions and alternative forms of land use as the priorities for agriculture change and the concept of a sustainable agriculture involving conventional and organic systems of production.

A6 The pursuit of new knowledge and understanding in the various disciplines generated and informed by current research

For students on the Placement Year programme:

A7 Apply personal and professional development strategies to prioritise, plan, and manage their own skills development and learning.

A8 Research, select and apply relevant knowledge aimed at enhancing their own skills and effectiveness in specific duties at their placement.

A9 Demonstrate an understanding of a work environment, how it functions and their contribution to it.

A10 Relate their work based learning to other areas of personal development, including academic performance.

After Stages 1 and 2 students will have gained a bank of knowledge and understanding which provides them with a sound platform and the confidence to pursue one of the specific final year honours options in Stage 3.

By the end of the programme the process and results of accumulating and consolidating knowledge and understanding of the areas outlined above will provide a sound basis for possible more advanced, post-graduate studies in appropriate fields of agriculture.

Teaching and Learning Methods

Lectures are the main way of imparting knowledge and understanding (A1-A6) but seminars and small group tutorials are also used: seminars and tutorials are led by staff and/or students and occasionally by visiting speakers. Practical classes feature predominantly in Stage 1 with visits to the University farms. Visits to the University and other farms, food processing plants and research stations are more frequent at Stages 2 and 3. Workshops introducing and applying computer software packages or specific case studies also feature, and some of these are led by specialists from the industry. Students are encouraged to contribute to their own learning experience by independent reading. They are provided with references to books, scientific papers and other learning materials to enhance their understanding of specific subject areas. Group work exercises encourage a collective approach and responsibility for gathering knowledge and the sharing of understanding. The Induction Week programme includes exercises that introduce and practice various learning methods and strategies appropriate to each stage of the programme.

Assessment Strategy

Primarily assessed by unseen, written examinations supported by a variety of different forms of coursework that includes essays, projects, case studies and other exercises. Most modules include coursework, thus ensuring an element of formative as well as summative assessment. Seminar, tutorial and poster presentation exercises assess knowledge and understanding that is demonstrated verbally. The general paper and dissertation module at Stage 3, (which are not directly supported by lectures or seminars) assess students' abilities to independently acquire knowledge and understanding (A4-A6).

Intellectual Skills

- On completing the programme students should be able to:
- B1** Critically analyse arguments and evidence derived from a range of sources
 - B2** Solve problems based on information either gathered or presented. Data analysis and interpretation
 - B3** Gather, extract and evaluate relevant information
 - B4** Evaluate the contribution of individuals to the learning experience by peer assessment.

Teaching and Learning Methods

Seminars provide the main opportunity for students to evaluate evidence and formulate objective and coherent arguments (B1-B4). Problem solving skills (B2) are developed in tandem with the range of activities described above that are designed to develop their subject-specific/professional skills. Students are directed to a range of information sources that enhance their analytical and interpretative faculties. Students learn through problem-solving, handling data and discussion. Students are encouraged to justify their opinions in discussion, in case studies and in their dissertation where they practice production of reasoned arguments and analysis.

Assessment Strategy

The range of methods described in both A and C also provides an opportunity to assess cognitive skills (B1-B4): in the form of seminars (B1, B3 and B4), case studies (B2 and B4) and essay writing (B1 and B3). The dissertation module is a major vehicle for the assessment of all the cognitive skills (B1-B4).

Practical Skills

- On completing the programme students should be able to:
- C1** Undertake laboratory and field experimentation, record agricultural data and undertake the design and sampling of experiments, both desk based and in practice, crop walking for pest and disease identification, animal behaviour studies
 - C2** Analyse a range of physical and financial data arising from agricultural enterprises, conventional and organic farming systems, research experiments, climatic and soil maps
 - C3** Prepare and present advisory reports, case studies.
 - C4** Communicate with professionals involved in the industry.
 - C5** Use specific computer software for crop and animal enterprise recording and management, ration formulation, resource use.

Teaching and Learning Methods
Professional skills relevant to agricultural applications are demonstrated in specific lectures, seminars, laboratory classes, computing sessions, workshops and field visits (C1-C5). Module leaders and demonstrators facilitate development of these skills. Students acquire skills (C1-C5) through a 'hands-on' approach in the most applied modules.
Assessment Strategy
The methods outlined in A also test the development of subject-specific/professional skills (C1-C5). The use of case-studies and report writing and presentation as major methods of assessment not only enhances knowledge and understanding but also improves subject specific and professional skills (C1-C5). As well as being practised skills may be assessed as an integral part of the assessment programme. For example, students may produce advisory and business plans relevant to agricultural businesses (C2,C3), develop software applications (C5), design experiments and collect and analyse physical and financial data (C1).
Transferable/Key Skills
On completing the programme students should be able to: D1 Work effectively as part of a team D2 Exhibit computer literacy in the gathering of information from a wide range of sources together with the processing and interpretation of numerical information. D3 Communicate effectively both in the form of oral presentations to large and small groups, and via the written word in essays, reports and in poster presentations D4 Show the ability to work independently, to manage time effectively, to use initiative and be adaptable. For students on the Placement Year programme: D5 Reflect on and manage own learning and development within the workplace. D6 Use existing and new knowledge to enhance personal performance in a workplace environment, evaluate the impact and communicate this process. D7 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
The use of PCs and data analysis (D2) feature throughout all three Stages of the programme and are complemented with a range of computer simulation exercises (D2). As well as contributing directly to key skills, they also contribute to the other learning outcomes A, B and C. Oral communication and presentational skills (D3) are practised, particularly in seminars and tutorials, with increasing frequency from Stage 1 to Stage 3. Several modules involve teamwork (D1). All modules involve independent, student-centred work requiring completion by specific deadlines (D4). Students learn through the production of essays, reports, case studies etc. Emphasis is placed on time management throughout the programme and in particular during initial induction sessions.
Assessment Strategy
The strategy and methods used to assess learning outcomes A, B and C provide an integrated approach to the development of key skills D1-D4 from a broad base. The dissertation module AGR399 is also a major vehicle for the assessment of key skills (D2-D4).

12 Programme Curriculum, Structure and Features
Basic structure of the programme
Stages 1 and 2 give a foundation in all of the topics essential for Agriculture and are the same for all students on the programme. Students who commenced their studies prior to September 2023 - Stage 3, students choose one of the four Honours options - D444 Agronomy, D422 Animal Production Science, D402 Farm Business Management, D400 Agriculture. The title of the degree awarded depends on the final honours option e.g. BSc in Agriculture with Honours in Agriculture, Agronomy, Animal Production Science or Farm Business Management.

For Students commencing studies from 2023 onwards Stage 3, students choose one of the two Honours options - D402 Farm Business Management, D400 Agriculture.

The programme is studied over three year's full time. The academic year consists of two semesters, with 11 weeks of teaching and 2 or 3 weeks for the assessment programme.

At each Stage, modules to a total credit value of 120 are studied. The distribution of these 120 credits between the semesters may be 60:60, 50:70 or 70:50.

Students on the Placement Year programme will be on placement year between Stages 2 and 3 of their programme.

All placements will be undertaken in line with the University's placement policy <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/itds/assets/documents/qsh-workplacement-pol.pdf>

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

The programme provides a thorough coverage of the main scientific, environmental and economic aspects of agriculture, the science of animal and crop production and the economics of farm business management.

Stage 1 is multidisciplinary, considering all aspects of the subject and provides the scientific and quantitative foundation upon which the more applied and specialised study at Stages 2 and 3 respectively is based. Modules cover crop and soil science, animal physiology, genetics, plant and animal pests and diseases, introductions to economics and business management, the use of personal computers (PCs) and data analysis etc. There is a combination of lectures, laboratory practicals, PC workshops and visits to the two University Farms, Cockle Park and Nafferton.

Stage 2 focuses on the three main strands of soil management, animal production, crop production and farm business management and their interdependence, applying the knowledge and understanding gained at Stage 1 and building on the key skills which have been introduced. Production is considered in the wider context of management, socio-economics and its relationship with the rural environment as a whole. At Stage 3, students specialise and take one specialist option. In each option there are compulsory credits (including a 20-credit dissertation) that define the subject area. Modules may be chosen from a range on offer that includes most of the compulsory modules for each honours option and others from across the Faculty. This allows students to choose modules that make up one third of their final year study and so formulate a programme that concentrates on their major interests.

For students taking the route with placement there is an opportunity to undertake a 9-12 month placement between stages 2 and 3.

Programme regulations (link to on-line version)

[D400-1401U](#)

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](#)

Accreditation reports

Additional mechanisms

15 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: <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.

