


<b>PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION (Undergraduate)</b>	 <b>Newcastle University</b>
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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 Honours
<b>4</b>	<b>Programme Title</b>	History History (with International Study Year) History (with Placement Year)
<b>5</b>	<b>UCAS/Programme Code</b>	V100 1463U 1466U 1625U
<b>6</b>	<b>Programme Accreditation</b>	N/A
<b>7</b>	<b>QAA Subject Benchmark(s)</b>	History
<b>8</b>	<b>FHEQ Level</b>	Level 6
<b>9</b>	<b>Last updated</b>	February 2025

<b>10</b>	<b>Programme Aims</b>
	<p>1 The purpose of the programme is to provide opportunities for students to study UK, European, American, and World History across a variety of places and times.</p> <p>2 The programme is designed for students to acquire the transferable skills of the historian, to develop confidence and facility with independent learning, to undertake specialised research projects, and to acquire skills relevant to employment.</p> <p>3 To offer a research-led environment in which students can learn about History from knowledgeable staff, their own study and from discussion with fellow students.</p> <p>4 Our graduates should have an awareness of changing historical phenomena over a long period of space and time, and of the methodological and critical skills of history as a discipline. They should investigate historical problems in depth, gather and filter information from a variety of sources, use source materials critically, and be able to assimilate, appreciate, and critique historiographical arguments and traditions.</p> <p>5 Our graduates should be prepared for a range of outcomes such as further study or undertaking a wide variety of jobs in industry, commerce or the public sector.</p> <p>6 The programme will meet standards and comply with prevailing University policies and QAA codes of practice. Where courses of study take place outside the university during international exchange programmes the standards will comply with the appropriate university policies on placements.</p> <p>7 Graduates of the programme will have attained standards which at least meet Level 6 of the FHEQ and the QAA subject benchmarks for History.</p> <p><u>Additional aims of the Placement Year form of the programme:</u></p> <p>1 To provide students with the experience of seeking and securing a position with an employer.</p> <p>2 To facilitate independent self-management and proactive interaction in a non-university setting.</p>

3 To provide a period of practical work experience that will benefit current academic study and longer term career plans.

4 To enable students to ethically apply their knowledge and skills in the workplace, 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 History.

### **Knowledge and Understanding**

On completing the programme students should:

A1 Have an understanding of key historical concepts.

A2 Have knowledge and understanding of the complexity, variety and diversity of history.

A3 Have knowledge and understanding of key themes in world history, and an ability to detect similarities, differences, patterns and interconnections in the histories of different geographical regions and periods over a long period of time.

A4 Have knowledge of a wide range of primary source material and an understanding of how such material should be interpreted and evaluated.

A5 Understand how to critically evaluate scholarship, in terms of both argument and use of evidence, and how to weigh competing arguments against each other.

A6 Have knowledge and understanding at an intensive level of the sources and historiography relating to relatively short periods or more focused topics in history.

A7 Understand how to reflect critically on the nature of the discipline and profession of history.

For students on the Placement Year programme:

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, the primary method of imparting knowledge and understanding (A1-A6, but especially A1-3) is through lectures, with seminars and workshops used to reinforce and amplify student learning gained in lectures. As students progress through the programme, seminars and guided independent study become increasingly important as a means to support the broader and deeper development of knowledge and understanding represented by A4, A5, and A6; this is reflected in the increased complexity of seminar tasks, in the greater scope and

volume of reading lists, and in skills training and short independent research projects, undertaken in both compulsory and optional modules. At Stage 3, in particular, teaching is delivered almost exclusively through seminars, workshops, and tutorials, with very few lectures. Throughout the programme, students are encouraged to supplement taught material with independent study, for which they are given support and guidance through materials such as module handbooks, reading lists, and virtual learning sites, as well as seminars. A1 and A7 are taught partly through compulsory modules at Stages 1 and 3. A4 and A6 are taught through intensive seminar work, and also by the undertaking of an independent research project under staff supervision.

### **Assessment Strategy**

Knowledge and understanding of the subject are primarily assessed by written assignments – including but not limited to essays, documentary commentaries, position papers, and literature reviews – and unseen and take-home written examinations. Formative assessment, including submission of written work and participation in seminar discussion, also tests students on A1-A7. In the case of A4-6, shorter essays and exams are supplemented by submission of extended pieces of work at Stages Two and Three, including an undergraduate dissertation.

### **Intellectual Skills**

On completing the programme students should be able to:

- B1 Use analytical reasoning and critical skills in reading, writing and debating
- B2 Use appropriate evidence to support a sustained argument or line of reasoning
- B3 Compare and evaluate contrasting and conflicting ideas and material
- B4 Adapt effectively to new and/or unexpected questions or problems
- B5 Demonstrate intellectual independence

### **Teaching and Learning Methods**

Cognitive skills (B1-B5) are developed through guidance in lectures and exercises in seminars, supplemented in the case of B1-B3 by written feedback and by tutorials with staff. B1-B5 are also encouraged by group and one-to-one discussion and debate in seminars, workshops, and tutorials. In all cases, students are expected to prepare for these exercises and discussions by working through guided reading lists in their own time, both before and after the classes; they are also expected to carry out wider independent reading, with guidance from staff but also (increasingly) through their own explorations.

### **Assessment Strategy**

Cognitive skills B1-B3 and B5 are assessed by written assignments, including unseen written examinations, and in the (compulsory) dissertation. B4 is primarily assessed by unseen written examinations, which require students to select relevant material from broader knowledge, and adapt knowledge and understanding to new framings or perspectives.

### **Practical Skills**

On completing the programme students should be able to:

- C1 Listen actively and take effective notes
- C2 Study independently
- C3 Locate, critically read, evaluate, and digest historical material

<p>C4 Understand different views and interpretations of particular historical events, and alternative past and present mental worlds</p> <p>C5 Produce clear, succinct, accurate, well-planned and coherent presentations of results, in both written and oral forms</p> <p>C6 Process and evaluate historical sources and produce thereby an extended piece of work</p> <p>C7 Conceptualise, plan, and carry out a research project</p>
<b>Teaching and Learning Methods</b>
<p>Listening and note-taking (C1) are taught via a Stage 1 skills module, and developed principally in lectures but also in seminars. Note-taking is also a feature of independent study. Other subject-specific skills (C2-C6) are taught in lectures and in seminars, supplemented by assigned work (C2-C3, C5). C6 is further taught via dissertation supervisions. C7 is introduced in compulsory modules at Stage 1, and taught in a further compulsory module at Stage 2, as well as in dissertation seminars and tutorials. Such skills (C2-C7) are developed and practiced in written assignments, notably essays, documentary commentaries, problem-solving exercises done in class or in private study time. Preparation of oral presentations also helps develop C2 and C4-C5.</p>
<b>Assessment Strategy</b>
<p>The ability of students to deploy subject-specific skills (C1-C5) effectively is assessed primarily by means of unseen written examination, written assignments and also in dissertations. C6 and C7 are assessed via an undergraduate dissertation.</p>
<b>Transferable/Key Skills</b>
<p>On completing the programme students should have the following skills:</p> <p>D1 Computer literacy  D2 Written Communication  D3 Problem Solving  D4 Interpersonal Communication  D5 Initiative  D6 Oral Presentation  D7 Adaptability  D8 Teamwork  D9 Basic numeracy  D10 Planning and Organising</p> <p><u>For students on the Placement Year programme:</u></p> <p>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.</p>
<b>Teaching and Learning Methods</b>
<p>Transferable skills are principally learned and practiced in guided independent study and preparation of assignments. Teaching and practice is offered in lectures and in seminars (D2-D8, D10), particularly in skills modules at all Stages (D2-D3, D5, D10), supplemented in the case of D1, D3, D5, D8, and D9 by workshops. Assigned work also helps to inculcate D2, D3 and D10. Communication skills (D2, D4) are further refined in seminars. Transferable skills are developed and practiced in written assignments such as essays and documentary commentaries (D2-D3, D5, D10) supplemented in the case of D3, D4, D6, D7, D8, D10 by</p>

individual or group presentations. Oral debate in seminars or tutorials supplies the opportunity to develop D4 and D6. Specific problem-solving exercises help to develop some basic numeracy (D9); computer literacy (D1) is taught through training in the use of digital library resources at Stages 1 and 2, and practiced by the word-processing of written assignments and problem-solving exercises such as bibliographic tasks. D8 is fostered by group presentations and assignments.

### **Assessment Strategy**

D6 and D8 are assessed by means of the grading of individual and group presentations. D9 is assessed by means of specific workshop tasks. D2, D3, D7, D10 are assessed by a combination of unseen examination (D2, D3, D7) and written assignments (D2, D3, D10), and can also be assessed in the dissertation. In the case of D2 this is supplemented by assessed workshop tasks. Computer literacy (D1) is assessed as part of the process of grading written assignments and also forms part of specific workshop tasks. D4 is assessed in some Stage 2 modules, through the grading of seminar participation.

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

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

Duration: 3 years  
Stages: 3  
Number of credits per stage: 120

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

The core goal of the History programme at Newcastle is to enable our students to explore independently, with curiosity, empathy, and insight. They should learn as an individual as well as part of a team; they should be resistant to easy answers, attentive to nuance and context, sensitive to multiple perspectives, and intrigued by different histories; they should, in short, research deeply and think broadly.

The programme is designed to broaden and deepen students' perspectives on the past, situated in a sense of both short-term contingency and long-term historical developments; it is also designed with the needs and expectations of modern students in mind, with the aim of giving them the systematic training they need to flourish as independent learners. At all Stages, students are able to develop and practice core skills within the context of varied and challenging historical topics.

Compulsory at Stage 1 are three modules: the skills modules Evidence & Argument (A5) and Historical Sources & Methods (A1, A4), which cover a range of cognitive, subject-specific and key skills (B1, B3, C1-C5, D1-D6); and the historiography module What Is History For? (A2, A5, A7). . All three introduce students to key historical concepts and the nature and diversity of history as an academic discipline (A1-A2).

Evidence & Argument, in particular, is designed to help students with the transition between school and University study of history, teaching key skills (notably C1-C5 and D1-D2) in conjunction with attention a specific historical debate (A5); Historical Sources & Methods leads students towards writing their first University-level independent research essay (C6). History Lab I and II, introduce students to a wide range of different historical topics (A2, A3) through case studies of historical 'problems' (A4, A5, A7; B1-B5; C1-C5; D2-4, D6-7). Public History (A2, A7) encourages the engagement of historians with the wider world and requires students to undertake oral presentations and group work on digital communication.

Stage 2 provides the opportunities for specialisation, while also sustaining the skills training from Stage 1. There is one compulsory module: Crafting History, in which students work towards identifying a deeper research question, and developing a proposal for a project to answer it (A6-A7; C6-C7; etc.). A connected optional module is

Researching History, in which students build upon what they learned at Stage 1 to write a second independent research essay (A4-A6; B1-B5; C2-C6; D1-D5). The other five modules at Stage 2 are optional, and provide students with the opportunity to develop further knowledge and understanding of periods, places, topics and themes drawn from countries and periods as far varied as Ancient Greece, Colonial India, modern China, medieval Syria, Anglo-Saxon England, and the United States. Stage 2 modules are generally on narrower topics than Stage 1 modules, but most are in some way cross-cultural, cross-regional and cross-temporal, with the aim of encouraging students to think about the diversity of history, make unexpected connections, and go some way to 'decolonizing' the curriculum (A2, A3, B3, C4). They are studied at a more intensive and demanding level than those at Stage 1. Modules at Stage 2 continue the development of cognitive (B1-B5) and subject-specific skills (C1-C5). Transferable skills (D1-D8, D10) are also developed at Stage 2.

At Stage 3 the study of history is done at a still more intensive level. This is ensured principally through the Special Subjects, chosen from a wide range of topics drawn from different continents and centuries, as varied as the Vikings, American Civil Rights, and the NHS. In a Special Subject, students develop their knowledge and understanding of a relatively narrow historical topic and its related primary sources (A1, A6). Special Subjects, taught by subject specialists, represent the point at which teaching is enriched by staff research interests most fully; they may be understood in some ways as semester-long collaborative research projects, in which staff and students learn from each other through close collective reading of primary source texts. They further develop knowledge and understanding of aspects of history, and aid the development of a deep understanding of historical concepts, historical diversity and of the nature of the historical profession (A1-2, A7). Transferable skills (D1-D8, D10) are further developed at Stage 3, with one Special Subject offering some development of numeracy (D9).

At Stage 3 all students write a dissertation. The dissertation, like all Stage 2 and Stage 3 modules, develops cognitive (B1-B5) and subject-specific skills (C1-C5), but also provides students with the opportunity to develop research skills (C6, C7) and produce an extended study.

In addition, students take one compulsory module at Stage 3: Reading History, and may also take Public History in Practice. Like all Stage 2 and Stage 3 modules these develop cognitive (B1-B5) and subject-specific skills (C1-C5), but in so far as it requires the ability to locate specific examples of historical writing in a methodological, interpretative and theoretical context (A1, A5, A7, B3), Reading History places particular emphasis on the understanding of broad historical concepts and intellectual independence (B4-B5) specific kinds of knowledge and understanding (A3-A7). It also requires a range of transferable skills (D2-D7), with some variations of the module encouraging the development of numerical skills (D9).

Students can opt to study abroad in-between Stages 2 and 3. These students transfer to programme code 1463U and complete two compulsory modules. These modules do not contribute to their overall degree classification but students must pass in order to continue to Stage 3 on the 1463 code.

Students may alternatively opt to take part in a careers placement year. These students transfer to programme code 1466U and complete one compulsory module. This module does not contribute to their overall degree classification but students must pass in order to continue to Stage 3 on the 1466U code.

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

[Programme Regulations 2025-26](#)

**13 Support for Student Learning**

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

<b>14    Methods for evaluating and improving the quality and standards of teaching and learning</b>
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Generic information regarding University provision is available [here](#).

*Accreditation reports*

N/A

*Additional mechanisms*

N/A

<b>15    Regulation of assessment</b>
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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/>

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.