

## PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION



1	<b>Awarding Institution</b>	Newcastle University
2	<b>Teaching Institution</b>	Newcastle University
3	<b>Final Award</b>	International Foundation Certificate
4	<b>Programme Title</b>	International Foundation – Humanities and Social Sciences (Newcastle University International Study Centre)
5	<b>UCAS/Programme Code</b>	2960F / 2966F
6	<b>Programme Accreditation</b>	n/a
7	<b>QAA Subject Benchmark(s)</b>	n/a
8	<b>FHEQ Level</b>	3
9	<b>Date written/revised</b>	February 2025

### 10 Programme Aims

To provide a programme which:

1. equips international students with the English language competence they need to study at Certificate level at Newcastle University or in another UK HEI
2. provides students with the intellectual development they need to be academically capable of studying humanities and social science subjects at Certificate Level at Newcastle University or in another UK HEI
3. builds up students' study skills so that they are capable of entering UK HE, whilst also helping them to get accustomed to student life in the UK
4. provides practical experience of British university teaching methods
5. provides sufficient appreciation of British life, institutions and culture for both studying and living in the UK
6. enables students to develop confidence in communicating with native speakers
7. encourages students to undertake self-evaluation to help them assess their progress
8. aims to comply with University codes of practice.

### 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.

#### Knowledge and Understanding

On completing the programme students should:

- A1 have a basic knowledge and understanding of many aspects of British institutions and culture
- A2 understand some basic aspects of aspects of humanities and social sciences including the nature of knowledge and research in these broad areas.
- A3 have an in-depth understanding of a chosen (project or option) topic
- A4 have an appreciation of the culture of UK higher education and its expectations of students
- A5 have an understanding of English grammar and vocabulary, including the conventions of academic English
- A6 understand the basic requirements for writing a competent essay or report

#### Teaching and Learning Methods

Knowledge and understanding is primarily taught through recorded lectures supported by reading, seminar discussion, tutorials and asynchronous coursework. English is primarily

taught in smaller classes and reinforced through practice. The final project involves a large element of student research.
<b>Assessment Strategy</b>
Knowledge and understanding is assessed primarily through written coursework submitted online and tests administered through the VLE, but also through presentations delivered through video conferencing software and the project.
<b>Intellectual Skills</b>
On completing the programme students should be able to: B1 Use and interpret data B2 Evaluate arguments and evidence in written/spoken texts B3 Read academic texts with some degree of analytical skill B4 Argue a case orally or in writing B5 (where required) Use quantitative techniques
<b>Teaching and Learning Methods</b>
These skills are best taught and learned through practice, although the Study Skills module will provide students with advice on what is expected of UK students and strategies for developing these skills. The final project in particular reinforces B1-B4.
<b>Assessment Strategy</b>
The final project submitted online through the VLE provides a key piece of assessment of the development of intellectual skills, but so do other pieces of coursework and oral presentations. The Study Skills module will assess B1 and B2 in particular.
<b>Practical Skills</b>
On completing the programme students should be able to: C1 Develop strategies for effective note taking in lectures and seminars C2 Read and take notes from an academic text C3 Take part in a discussion in a seminar or tutorial context C4 Write an essay or report in an academic context in understandable English following the conventions of essay or report writing. C5 Present ideas and arguments in a clear and logical manner in written and oral English C6 Apply proper referencing and other aspects of good academic practice.
<b>Teaching and Learning Methods</b>
The study skills module and the project module will deliver C1, but the lessons learned will be reinforced in all the other modules. The English language skills will be taught through the English for Academic Purposes module largely through small group teaching seminars with plenty of practice. However, every other module will also use and reinforce these skills through asynchronous activities. Not only will students be taught how to develop these skills, but the academic modules will provide opportunities to put these skills into practice. C6 will be taught through Study Skills and in some of the EAP module.
<b>Assessment Strategy</b>
English language competency will be tested directly on an IELTS equivalent basis in the English for academic purposes module using a mixture of online tests and coursework submitted electronically covering reading, writing, speaking and listening. Other modules will indirectly assess English language competence and the ability to take notes and use sources, as they all require an ability to express ideas in English.
<b>Transferable/Key Skills</b>
On completing the programme students should be able to: D1 work as a member of a team with colleagues from other backgrounds and cultures D2 make oral presentations D3 use IT skills effectively D4 manage their time effectively D5 use library and information sources effectively D6 think and work effectively on their own when required D7 communicate effectively with native speakers D8 analyse their own strengths and weaknesses and take action accordingly.

<b>Teaching and Learning Methods</b>
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The Study Skills module's recorded lectures will introduce students to these key skills and provide guidance on techniques, with practice occurring largely in the other modules and in small group teaching delivered in the Study Skills module.
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<b>Assessment Strategy</b>
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Some groupwork is required and students' success in working in teams will therefore be assessed via the quality of the end product. Several assessed oral presentations are built into the module and will be delivered as present in person or through video conferencing software. D3-D6 will be assessed via coursework assessment and in particular through the project. The study skills module will also assess teamwork and essay writing. D7 will be facilitated through the Study Skills module which will have guest speakers for particular topics requires attendance of an undergraduate module. It will also be developed through the EAP modules and through extra-curricular activities. D8 will be developed particularly via the Study Skills module.
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<b>12 Programme Curriculum, Structure and Features</b>
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<b>Basic structure of the programme</b>
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A one year 120 credit programme which combines the study of English for academic purposes with the study of study skills, a Global challenges module, an Introduction to the Study of Humanities and Social Sciences module as well as, an Introduction to Sociology module..
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<b>Key features of the programme (including what makes the programme distinctive)</b>
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The combination of English for academic purposes, study skills and academic content in an environment designed to support international students and bring them up to the standard required for entry to an undergraduate programme.
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<b>Programme regulations (link to on-line version)</b>
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<a href="https://www.ncl.ac.uk/regulations/programmeregandspec/">https://www.ncl.ac.uk/regulations/programmeregandspec/</a>
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<b>13 Support for Student Learning</b>
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The Student Services portal provides links to key services and other information and is available at: <a href="http://www.ncl.ac.uk/students">http://www.ncl.ac.uk/students</a>
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<i>IUP Online plus support</i>
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In-country support programme, aimed directly at students. This encompasses four mains areas: enhancement workshops, designed to help students get the most out of their online programme with topics such as adapting to online learning, understanding overseas study culture; pre-departure briefings, for students who are planning to transition to a centre; engagement and transition: help with students and parent questions about transitioning to centres; onboarding for Academic English – to ensure students get to grips with technological skills in first few weeks of AE term.
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<i>Orientation – Preparing for Study</i>
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Orientation week will help students prepare for studies at the Newcastle University International Study Centre. Students will be asked to complete set tasks to ensure they 1. are able to use the Virtual Learning Environment (Canvas) 2. are able to use technology in the most effective way 3. understand how flexible and online learning work; 4. know what is expected of them as a student of the Newcastle University International Study Centre; 5. become familiar with the University and the City; 6. make friends with other students and become part of a Learning Community; 7. develop new learning skills; 8. understand the range of support services available to them; 9. know what to expect on arrival in the UK; 10. know the importance of Induction Week
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<i>Induction</i>
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During the first week of the first semester students attend an induction programme. New students will be given a general introduction to University life and the University's principal support services and general information about the Newcastle University International Study
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Centre and their programme, as described in the Student Handbook (in Canvas). New and continuing students will be given detailed programme information and the timetable of lectures/practicals/labs/ tutorials/etc. This will be delivered via a bespoke programme for all students and will allow for some limited drop in sessions.

#### *Technical support*

Alongside the University's NUIT helpdesk, and Canvas chat and phone support, we have a dedicated Centre help desk for student support, which covers a range of issues students might have in accessing materials, engaging or joining live seminars and/or submitting online academic tasks/assessments.

#### *Study skills support*

Students will learn a range of Personal Transferable Skills, including Study Skills, as outlined in the Programme Specification. Some of this material, e.g. time management is covered in the appropriate Induction Programme. Students are explicitly tutored on their approach to both group and individual work.

#### *Academic support*

The initial point of contact for a student is with a tutor or module leader, or their personal tutor (see below) for more generic issues. Thereafter the Academic Manager, Assistant Academic Manager, Academic Director or Centre Director may be consulted. Issues relating to the programme may be raised at the Student-Staff Committee, and/or at the Board of Studies.

#### *Pastoral support*

All students are assigned a personal tutor whose responsibility is to monitor the academic performance and overall well-being of their tutees. The personal tutor is the first point of contact used when engagement and attendance become a concern. The Newcastle University International Study Centre also provides placement and progression support to help students secure appropriate destination degree programmes when progression grades have not been achieved for Newcastle programmes. This provides support students to make applications to Newcastle and elsewhere through UCAS for UG students or through PG portals. In addition the Centre makes use of the range of support services, including the Student Advice Centre, the Counselling and Wellbeing team.

#### *Support for students with disabilities*

The University's Disability Support Service provides help and advice for disabled students at the University - and those thinking of coming to Newcastle. It provides individuals with: advice about the University's facilities, services and the accessibility of campus; details about the technical support available; guidance in study skills and advice on financial support arrangements; a resources room with equipment and software to assist students in their studies.

The Centre has a SEN coordinator who works across all academic and English programmes, providing support for students and colleagues as appropriate. The SEN coordinator liaises closely with University Student Wellbeing and Disability service to ensure consistency and coherence of support provision.

#### *Learning resources*

The University's main learning resources are provided by the Robinson and Walton Libraries (for books, journals, online resources), and Information Systems and Services, which supports campus-wide computing facilities.

## **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.

[https://www.ncl.ac.uk/ltds/assets/documents/qsh\\_progspec\\_generic\\_info.pdf](https://www.ncl.ac.uk/ltds/assets/documents/qsh_progspec_generic_info.pdf)

## 15 Regulation of assessment

### *Pass mark*

#### *Academic modules*

Modules will be marked on a 0-100 scale. The pass mark for academic modules is 40. The following forms of assessment may be used: class tests, seen and unseen examinations, coursework, oral tests, presentations, group-work.

#### *English for Academic Purposes*

These modules are internally assessed, using Newcastle's English Language Proficiency Scale (and benchmarked against IELTS). Modules will be marked on a 0-90 scale with 50 being equivalent to IELTS 5.0, 60 equivalent to IELTS 6.0, 65 equivalent to IELTS 6.5, etc. The pass mark for the English for Academic Purposes modules is 60.

Satisfactory completion of the Foundation Certificate requires that:

- (a) the average mark over all academic modules, taking due account of the credit value, is not less than 40;
- (b) no single mark for any academic module is below 35;
- (c) marks of less than 40 are compensated in academic modules, provided the total credit value of these modules does not exceed 20;
- (d) the average mark for English for Academic Purposes is not less than 60 (equivalent to IELTS 6.0) with no competence (reading, writing, listening and speaking) below 55
- (e) no compensation for English for Academic Purposes is permitted

A student who fails a module will be able to have one further attempt to achieve a pass for that module. Students will not be permitted to proceed to a degree programme at Newcastle University carrying a failure in any module.

Performance higher than a basic pass (in both academic modules and English for Academic Purposes) will be required for entry into Newcastle University degree programmes as specified in the progression requirements for specific degree programmes.

### *Marking Scheme*

Newcastle University International Study Centre employs the following marking scheme:

<40	Fail
40-49	Pass
50-59	Good
60-69	Very Good
70-79	Excellent
80+	Outstanding

For the English for Academic Purposes (EAP) module, the following will apply: Note:

The required pass mark for the module is 60 (an average of the four subskills (reading, listening, writing and speaking)). The required competence level (as determined by UKVI regulations) in each subskill is 55. A minimum mark of 55 in all subskills as well an average of 60 across all four components is required to pass the EAP module.

If a student has achieved a module mark of 60 or more but has one or more subskill mark of less than 55, then in line with Programme Regulations the student has not passed the module. In this case, the student will be required to re-sit only those subskills where they have failed to achieve the competence level of 55.

A student will only be granted one re-sit opportunity.

The second attempt result achieved at the subskill level will be capped at 60, but the overall module mark will be uncapped. The overall module mark will be calculated as an average of the capped mark(s) achieved at the second attempt, together with any first attempt subskill

mark(s) where a re-sit was not required. This is to ensure that the University is provided with the student's actual English language competence level and that the re-sit capping penalty is only attached to those components being retaken.

University selectors (via admissions) will be provided with uncapped subskill marks if the achievement is higher than 60 and the progression requirement is also higher.

*Role of the External Examiner*

An External Examiner, a distinguished member of the subject community, is appointed by the University following recommendation from the Board of Studies. The External Examiner is required to:

- i. confirm whether the standards of the University's awards meet or exceed the academic standards specified in external reference points such as the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications, the UK Quality Code, subject benchmark statements, and, where appropriate, the requirements of professional, statutory and regulatory bodies;
- ii. confirm whether the academic standards of the University's awards are consistent with those of similar programmes in other UK higher education institutions;
- iii. report on whether the University's processes for assessment measure student achievement rigorously and fairly and are conducted in line with University policies and regulations;
- iv. identify, where appropriate, examples of exemplary practice and innovation in learning, teaching and assessment;
- v. comment on opportunities to enhance the quality of the learning experience provided to students.

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

The University Prospectus (see <https://www.ncl.ac.uk/undergraduate/>)

The Newcastle University International Study Centre Brochure (see <https://www.intostudy.com/en/universities/newcastle-university>)

The University Regulations (see <https://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.

## Mapping of Intended Learning Outcomes onto Curriculum/Modules

Module	Type	Intended Learning Outcomes			
		A	B	C	D
INU0102 / INU0502	Comp	5, 6	2, 3	1, 4	2, 7
INU0122 / INU0522	Comp	4, 6	1, 2, 3, 4	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8
INU0127 / INU0527	Comp	1	1, 2, 3	2, 3, 4, 5	1, 6
INU0112 / INU0512	Comp	1	1, 3	2, 3, 4, 5	1, 2, 6
INU0113 / INU0513	Comp	2, 3	1, 3	2, 3, 4, 5	6