

**PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION  
(Taught Postgraduate)**



<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>	MA
<b>4</b>	<b>Programme Title</b>	History
<b>5</b>	<b>Programme Code</b>	4135 F/P
<b>6</b>	<b>Programme Accreditation</b>	N/A
<b>7</b>	<b>QAA Subject Benchmark(s)</b>	N/A
<b>8</b>	<b>FHEQ Level</b>	Level 7
<b>9</b>	<b>Last updated</b>	April 2026

**10 Programme Aims**

1. To increase postgraduate recruitment in the School of History, Classics and Archaeology (domestic and international students) with a new, flexible PGT programme;
2. To provide greater choice and flexibility in the range of taught PG degrees in HCA within existing module provision;
3. To provide students with a range of learning opportunities (in relation to analytical, key research, and subject-specific skills) within the discipline of History;
4. To provide a curriculum that is responsive to the research training requirements of the AHRC (career pathway to a PhD and beyond);
5. To enable students to develop their capacity to learn in preparation for, or as part of continuing professional development (CPD) and lifelong learning;
6. To provide access to Higher Education to students from a variety of educational backgrounds, and to provide a bridge to further postgraduate qualifications;
7. To provide students with the opportunity to gain the basic skills and knowledge required to continue with academic research in History at PhD level, or to enter the workplace in a variety of professions requiring high levels of skill such as literacy, research, and project management;
8. To expose students to cutting-edge research environments in the sphere of History and encourage engagement by students with current staff research;
9. That the programme meets the requirements of a level 7 qualification as defined by the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications;
10. That the programme conforms to University policies and to QAA 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
- Intellectual Skills
- Practical Skills
- Transferable/Key Skills

The programme outcomes have references to the benchmark statements for History

### **Knowledge and Understanding**

On completing the programme students should:

- A1 Have an advanced level knowledge of History from a variety of chronological and thematic perspectives;
- A2 Understand the theoretical and analytical frameworks that historians bring to their subject;
- A3 Understand the methodologies and sources which are used by specialists in this field;
- A4 Possess the detailed knowledge which comes from undertaking a sustained original piece of historical research (a dissertation).

### **Teaching and Learning Methods**

The primary methods of imparting knowledge and understanding [A1-A4] are group seminars, individual tutorials for the return of coursework, and self-directed learning.

Structured interactions (email, phone, skype) will be used to support students who will carry out dissertation work remotely.

The structure of the MA is designed so that all students take a compulsory module ('The Practice of History') introducing them to key theoretical and analytical frameworks [A2]. They will develop their knowledge of History and the methodologies and sources used by historians in various fields [A1-3] through taking additional Optional modules. The dissertation will impart skills and knowledge through hands-on specialist research [A4].

Throughout the programme students are encouraged to read widely and extensive bibliographies are supplied. Students are encouraged to use a wide range of learning resources, such as books, journal articles, primary sources (e.g. Robinson Library Special Collections, Tyne and Wear Record Office, Northumberland Record Office, Newcastle City Library, Northumbria and Durham University Libraries, Literary and Philosophical Society Library) and on-line resources and databases available at the Robinson Library (e.g. JSTOR, DNB).

### **Assessment Strategy**

Assessment for all modules is by written work and will evaluate the student's attainment of the knowledge outcomes expected at an advanced level. [A1-4]

The dissertation will assess to what extent students have gained a deeper knowledge and understanding of a particular aspect of History and its significance within the existing historiography of this disciplinary field.

### **Intellectual Skills**

On completing the programme students should be able to:

- B1 Demonstrate subject-specific skills through training and research experience and to have developed an ability to evaluate, analyse and interpret different sources of evidence relating to History;
- B2 Develop the ability to undertake higher degree research through completion of short pieces of written work and a dissertation;
- B3 Practice a wide range of intellectual skills such as the marshalling of historical evidence;
- B4 Articulate in written form an advanced level of knowledge about their dissertation topic

### **Teaching and Learning Methods**

The subject-specific skills will be imparted through in-School training in the methodological approaches of historians [B1] via lectures, supplemented by group seminars, individual tutorials for the return of coursework, and self-directed learning.

The structure of the MA is designed so that all students take a compulsory Module ('The Practice of History') introducing them to key methodological frameworks [B2] They will develop

the intellectual skills demanded in the practice of History and the methodologies and sources used by historians in various fields [B1-3] through the compulsory module and a semester 1 and 2 Dissertation Training Module. Research and writing a dissertation will practice intellectual skills through hands-on specialist research [B4].

### **Assessment Strategy**

Assessment for all modules is by written work and will evaluate the student's attainment of the intellectual skills expected at an advanced level. [B1-4]

The dissertation will assess to what extent students have mastered the intellectual skills required in analysing and writing up a thesis on a particular aspect of History and its significance within the existing historiography of this disciplinary field.

### **Practical Skills**

On completing the programme students should be able to:

- C1 Demonstrate a wide range of transferable skills such as the marshalling of evidence, presenting a balanced written argument, and a critical analysis of textual and bibliographic evidence;
- C2 Demonstrate a variety of additional skills according to their individual needs, e.g. computer literacy, archive use and data management;
- C3 Present a balanced written argument;
- C4 Be competent in basic computer literacy.

### **Teaching and Learning Methods**

All taught modules include classes given by a number of professional historians who research and teach in the area about which they lecture. All contributors use a wide range of examples from their own field of expertise in History. Group work provides students with the opportunity to develop and practice their practical skills [C1-4] through, for example, preparation for and oral contribution to seminars, shorter formative pieces of written work, and the final dissertation.

Research training (at School level), tutorials, guided reading, feedback on outline proposals, and continuous supervision provide the basis for students to develop the practical skills required to complete their dissertations.

### **Assessment Strategy**

Assessment for all modules will evaluate the student's attainment of the practical skills expected at an advanced level. [C1-4]. All written pieces of work in the taught modules require students formatively to gather, evaluate, analyse, and interpret evidence, using the skills identified in History as benchmark skills within the discipline [C1-4]. The dissertation represents the summative task in detailed practice of all of these practical skills.

The dissertation, which must be formatted and presented using qualitative and (where appropriate) quantitative methods in accordance with the formatting styles set out in the School handbook, will assess to what extent students have mastered the practical skills required in analysing and writing up a thesis on a particular aspect of History and its significance within the existing historiography of this disciplinary field.

The optional Public History modules offer a diverse range of assessments including, portfolios, blog writing and oral presentations, which will add to the range of additional skills (C2) students obtain through the programme.

### **Transferable/Key Skills**

On completing the programme students should be able to demonstrate:

- D1 Critical reasoning

D2	Gathering and using information
D3	Applying concepts
D4	Evaluation, analysis, and interpretation
D5	Empathy

<p><b>Teaching and Learning Methods</b></p> <p>In specific research training modules, students will be introduced through lectures and seminars to:</p> <p>[A] How to plan and execute a piece of extended historical research [D1-5].</p> <p>[B] Effective interpersonal/oral communication techniques, taught through the School Research Training Modules. Students practice and develop these skills by contributing orally either as groups or individually in seminars for each taught module [D2, 3-4].</p> <p>[C] Team working. This is practiced through the rest of the programme through seminar work [D3]. The modules covering Public History place a major emphasis on group work, with a 'flipped classroom pedagogy' as central to the approach.</p> <p>[D] Planning and organization. Students practice and develop these crucial skills through keeping to programme deadlines and by planning and organizing their written work, including the dissertation [D4-5].</p> <p>[E] Computer literacy. This is then practiced and developed throughout the programme through submission of coursework and then the dissertation, which will require an empathetic understanding of the research undertaken [D5].</p>
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<p><b>Assessment Strategy</b></p> <p>Critical reasoning [D1] is assessed in each of the modules on this programme. Assignments will be mostly essay-based, reflecting the dominance of this form of writing within the discipline, but other written work may be set, such as writing a research log, or compiling a database as part of a research assignment.</p> <p>Gathering information and applying concepts [D2-3] are a critical part of the teaching and learning experience for this programme, for example, during individual feedback sessions, and group seminars. As with other comparable Masters level degree programmes in History around the country, performance in oral communication does not form a part of the assessment.</p> <p>Evaluating, analysing and interpreting evidence with empathy are assessed throughout the programme through the student's ability to meet deadlines and successfully complete the programme [D1-4].</p>
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<p><b>12 Programme Curriculum, Structure and Features</b></p>
<p><b>Basic structure of the programme</b></p> <p>One year full time or two years part time.  180 credits (120 coursework, 60 dissertation)  100 credits compulsory (2 x 20 modules and 1 x 60 credit dissertation) 80 optional credits</p>
<p><b>Key features of the programme (including what makes the programme distinctive)</b></p> <p>This programme is tailored with maximum flexibility so that students not wishing to specialise in one type of History can draw upon a wide range of modules across a wide range of time periods and different geographical areas, and diverse specialist approaches (e.g. the History of</p>

Medicine, Public History). It provides robust skills training at an advanced level appropriate to the methodologies and concepts required in the practice of historical research, leading to a dissertation in any chosen field, providing that the supervisory expertise is available (in consultation with the Degree Programme Director). The programme incorporates the opportunity to acquire and/or develop specialist skills (e.g. language training) an Independent Study, and/or take a module in a complementary discipline (e.g. Politics).

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

[Programme Regulations 2627](#)

**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/postgraduate/courses/>

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.