

**PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION
(Taught Postgraduate)**



1	Awarding Institution	Newcastle University
2	Teaching Institution	Newcastle University
3	Final Award	MLA/MA
4	Programme Title	Master of Landscape Architecture/Master of Arts in Landscape Architecture
5	Programme Code	4157F/4177
6	Programme Accreditation	Landscape Institute
7	QAA Subject Benchmark(s)	Landscape Architecture (K310)
8	FHEQ Level	7
9	Last updated	May 2025

10 Programme Aims

The Master of Landscape Architecture is a conversion course for graduates with a non-cognate undergraduate award. The programme consists of a 120 credits conversion course and a 180 credits Masters Year.

Entry for 'conversion' students assumes a high level of academic ability in a related subject area, as well as a broad understanding of the discipline of landscape architecture, usually combined with specialist knowledge and/or skills in at least one directly relevant area.

The Masters Year is shared with the MA in Landscape Architecture, which in turn is a final postgraduate qualification for students who have already completed a degree in Landscape Architecture (accredited by the Landscape Institute, UK), or international equivalent. Cognate Graduates (from non-LI accredited undergraduate programmes) will also be considered if able to demonstrate comparable skills and knowledge gained through previous study and/or professional experience.

The overall aim is to educate students in the theories, methods and practice of landscape architecture. The programme is therefore concerned with the student's development through:

1. The acquisition of advanced knowledge and understanding of theories, concepts and information relating to landscape architecture and its context.
2. The development of advanced skills in literacy, design and communication.
3. The development of the advanced skills and understanding required to make informed decisions and recommendations relating to future change in the landscape.
4. The development of advanced skills and experience in working individually and collectively to achieve specified tasks in the study, design and planning of landscapes, both urban and rural.
5. The development of advanced skills and experience in independent learning and in the in-depth study of specialised areas of landscape architecture.
6. To provide a programme which satisfies the requirements of Level 7 of the FHEQ.
7. To provide a programme which complies with prevailing University policies and QAA codes of practice.

8. To equip graduates for practice in landscape-related disciplines

11 Learning Outcomes

The programme provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate systematic knowledge and understanding of landscape architecture and its interface with planning and architecture. Students will develop an advanced capacity for conducting relevant research and for thinking critically about the design of place and space. They will gain advanced skills to enable them to deal with complex aspects of landscape planning, design and management in a creative and innovative way. Through studio-based projects, students will refine their design skills and develop the ability to critically compare and analyse landscape projects and styles in a range of contexts. Students will be able to synthesise and apply technical knowledge drawn from diverse sources in the resolution of landscape proposals, combining plant and construction technologies within integrated designs. They will be able to present written and visual work to a professional standard, and to reflect critically upon their personal practice and ethics.

Knowledge and Understanding

On completing the programme students should:

A1 Demonstrate advanced understanding and critical thinking about landscape architecture as a form of action concerned with creating and managing space and place.

A2 Demonstrate an advanced understanding of the complexities of landscape issues and problems and be able to integrate knowledge and skills from different areas of the curriculum

A3 Have acquired advanced knowledge and understanding of the way landscape has been conceptualised and theorised at different times and in different places, informed by relevant research findings and relevant practice.

A4 Have gained insight into the philosophies, ideologies and critical positions which underpin different approaches to landscape.

Teaching and Learning Methods

Intended Learning Outcome	Teaching Method
A1	Lectures, guided reading, seminars, studio projects, site visits
A2	Studio projects, site visits
A3	Lectures, guided reading, seminars
A4	Lectures, guided reading, seminars

Assessment Strategy

Intended Learning Outcome	If assessed	Method of Assessment
A1	Yes	Coursework, including assessed essays and studio projects
A2	Yes	Studio projects, both individual and group
A3	Yes	Coursework, including assessed essays and response diaries.
A4	Yes	Coursework, including assessed essays and response diaries

Intellectual Skills

On completing the programme students should be able to:

B1. Define and critically analyse problems effectively and appropriately drawing on current research and knowledge.

B2. Effectively collect, synthesise and utilise evidence and information.

B3. Synthesize effective design solutions to problems given in the form of design briefs.

B4. Articulate reasoned arguments, drawing on a range of information sources.

B5. Develop research skills and experience in the context of the School's research interests.

Teaching and Learning Methods

Intended Learning Outcome	Teaching Methods
B1.	Lectures, seminars, independent reading, studio projects.
B2.	Seminar preparation, essays, studio projects
B3.	Studio projects
B4.	Essays, seminar preparation, tutorials, independent reading.
B5.	Essays, seminar preparation, tutorials, independent reading.

Assessment Strategy

Intended Learning Outcome	If assessed	Method of Assessment
B1.	Yes	Coursework, including assessed essays and studio projects.
B2.	Yes	Assessed essays and studio projects.
B3.	Yes	Studio projects.
B4.	Yes	Coursework, including assessed essays and studio projects.
B5.	Yes	Coursework, including assessed essays and studio projects.

Practical Skills

On completing the programme students should be able to:

C1 Respond creatively to complex landscape architectural briefs, generating well-considered design proposals that show understanding of context.

C2. Develop an ability to evaluate materials (both hard and soft), processes and techniques that apply to complex landscape architectural projects and integrate these into feasible design proposals.

C3. Present work effectively in a variety of media.

C4. Present design ideas orally.

Teaching and Learning Methods

Intended Learning Outcome	Teaching Methods
C1.	Design studio tutorials and critical reviews.
C2.	Design studio tutorials and critical reviews, guided reading, lectures, site visits.

C3.	Design studio tutorials and critical reviews.	
C4.	Design studio tutorials and critical reviews.	
Assessment Strategy		
Intended Learning Outcome	If assessed	Method of Assessment
C1.	Yes	Assessed studio projects.
C2.	Yes	Assessed studio projects.
C3.	Yes	Assessed studio projects.
C4.	Yes	Presenting work at critical reviews of studio projects.
Transferable/Key Skills		
On completing the programme students should be able to: D1. Communicate effectively through the use of visual, verbal and written methods and through appropriate media including sketching, modelling, and digital techniques. D2. Demonstrate self-direction, originality and creativity in tackling and solving problems D3. Work effectively as part of a team D4. Develop personal self-management skills such as setting priorities and time management D5. Listen and critically respond to the views of others. D6. Employ relevant mathematical techniques and computer software to develop and communicate ideas and concepts.		
Teaching and Learning Methods		
D1 Ability to communicate effectively is learnt through producing essays and reports and (primarily) by presenting design work at critical reviews. D2 Is learned particularly through time management guidance as part of the studio tuition process, and the requirement to meet deadlines for submitting essays and presenting studio work. D3 is learned through design group work D4 is learned and applied through the coordination of different assignments for different modules. D5 is learned through design tutorials and crits, and group work D6 is learned through skills workshops and through the use of computer software for different design project.		
Assessment Strategy		
D1 is assessed through the submission of a range of different written essays and reports and through presenting design work at critical reviews. D2 is assessed through the production of essays and studio project work, including a major thesis design over the summer period. D3 is assessed through peer review assessment. D4 is not directly assessed. D5 is assessed as part of the design studio assignments. D6 is assessed as part of the design studio assignments.		
12 Programme Curriculum, Structure and Features		
Basic structure of the programme		

The two-year MLA programme and the one-year MA programme (stage 2 only) comprise of core studio modules, each with a specific thematic focus and each designed to be experimental and exploratory in nature. All design studio modules, in turn, build on one another towards the final studios in stage 2 where students synthesise their learning through a research by design thesis project that spans two studios. Students are encouraged to use experimental and arts-based methods in their fieldwork, research and modes of representation, and to critically reflect and contextualize the work within current landscape architecture debates and theories. Students are supported throughout their design thesis via design tutorials. Interim critical reviews occur at key points in the design process, prior to the final assessment review, where verbal feedback is provided on a formative basis.

Studio modules are supported and strengthened by core, non-studio-based modules integral to the programme including Green Infrastructure, Landscape Theory and Landscape History as well as Professional Practice and Law. All modules (studio and non-studio based) are coordinated to ensure interrelatedness. The broad scope of the programme curricular acknowledges and reflects the multifaceted nature of landscape practice and envisages landscape planning, design and management as conduits for planetary health and well-being.

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

The Master of Landscape Architecture is a Landscape Institute accredited two-year conversion course for graduates with a non-cognate undergraduate award. The Masters Year is shared with the MA in Landscape Architecture, which in turn is a final postgraduate qualification for students who have already completed an accredited undergraduate qualification in the subject or in a cognate discipline. Upon graduation, students from the programme are able to become Associate Members of The Landscape Institute and can access The Pathway to Chartership to work towards becoming a fully chartered landscape professional.

The MLA and MA are curated around the ethos of Landscape Architecture for Planetary Health & Well-being. This ethos roots our curricular within the present and pressing context of the climate and biodiversity crises.

Our programmes offer students the opportunity to explore their own positionality as future landscape architects and to consider the power and influence they may have as designers intervening in landscapes and communities (both human and non-human). Students are encouraged to think about how they can contribute to the wider profession of Landscape Architecture and to develop their own professional values and ethics.

Art and ecology, as they relate to landscape, form a unifying thread through all design studio modules. Each design studio promotes design as research and invites students to employ experimental and arts-based methods in their practice. Students are also offered opportunities to work alongside tutors as co-researchers...

The programmes have close ties with local landscape practices. Teaching across modules is supported by several external tutors, many of whom work in practice and bring their knowledge and experience to teaching on our programme.

Programme regulations (link to on-line version)

[Programme Regulations 2026-27](#)

13 Support for Student 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

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

Accreditation reports

The MLA holds Full Accreditation with the Landscape Institute (awarded June 2023). As part of the accreditation, the programme has a Landscape Institute appointed Professional Review Group that critically reviews students' work twice a year to ensure the course maintains the standards required of an accredited course and reflects the need of the profession.

Additional mechanisms

N/A

15 Regulation of assessment

Generic information regarding University provision is available at the following link.

https://www.ncl.ac.uk/ltds/assets/documents/qsh_progspec_generic_info.pdf

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.