PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION (Taught Postgraduate)	

1	**Awarding Institution**	Newcastle University
2	**Teaching Institution**	Newcastle University
3	**Final Award**	MA
4	**Programme Title**	MA Global Sustainable Futures
5	**Programme Code**	4185 F/P
6	**Programme Accreditation**	N/A
7	**QAA Subject Benchmark(s)**	N/A
8	**FHEQ Level**	7
9	**Last updated**	February 2026

10 Programme Aims

1. To equip students with the knowledge and skills required to identify challenges to and solutions for sustainable futures.

2. To offer a research and teaching environment in which students can learn from knowledgeable staff, their own study, and interaction with other students.

3. To equip students with the conceptual and analytical skills needed to achieve an advanced knowledge and understanding of their chosen field.

4. To develop students' skills in undertaking and completing self-designed research papers and dissertations.

5. To produce graduates who, if suitably qualified, will be capable of embarking upon research degrees in their chosen field.

6. To produce graduates capable of successfully pursuing careers in government and non-government agencies, business, the media, and other areas where an advanced knowledge and understanding of their chosen field is needed or desirable.

7. To meet the needs of stakeholders.

8. To provide a programme which meets the FHEQs requirements of level 7.

9. To comply with prevailing University policies and 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 areas relevant and specific to the degree programme and more broadly social science methods and methodologies; geographical and regional studies; independent learning; cooperative group work; individual presentations skills.

Knowledge and Understanding

On completing the programme students should:

A1 Have an advanced knowledge and understanding of their chosen field.

A2 Have knowledge of approaches and methods in social science research and of the techniques required to carry out advanced research.

A3 Have a foundation of specialist knowledge and research skills from which they can embark upon careers with significant international dimensions or pursue a postgraduate research degree in their chosen field.

A4 Understand the theoretical basis of research in their chosen field.

Teaching and Learning Methods

The primary means of imparting knowledge and understanding is seminars and lectures (A1-A4). Throughout the programme students are strongly encouraged to engage in independent reading for which they are given extensive support and guidance on reading materials and their appropriate use. Students are strongly supported by staff in their completion of self-designed research projects.

Assessment Strategy

Knowledge and understanding are primarily assessed by research projects which are designed to assess theoretical and conceptual understanding and the capacity of students to relate knowledge through case studies and other empirically focused projects (A1-A4).

Intellectual Skills

On completing the programme students should be able to:

B1 Synthesise information from a variety of primary and secondary sources

B2 Analyse, evaluate, and interpret the principal source materials for their chosen field.

B3 Plan, conduct, and communicate research through research papers.

B4 Have the theoretical and practical skills that will enable them to successfully complete an MA dissertation.

Teaching and Learning Methods

Cognitive skills are developed through seminars (B1-B2), research projects (B2-B3, B4) and through working with the supervisors of their research projects and dissertations (B3). Students are encouraged to develop cognitive skills through analysis of case studies (B1), independent reading and designing research projects (B2-B4).

Assessment Strategy

Intellectual skills are examined through research papers and the MA research dissertation (B1-B4).

Practical Skills

On completing the programme students should be able to:

C1 Critically evaluate key arguments.

C2 Critically evaluate the most important texts and themes.

C3 Present a reasoned and informed position both in writing and in spoken presentations.

C4 Identify, locate, and retrieve scholarly and other materials relevant to their degree.

Teaching and Learning Methods

Critical skills are developed through independent reading and encouraging active participation individually and in groups in seminar settings (C1-C3). Formal spoken presentations (C3) and written research projects (C1-C4) are informed by appropriate materials some of which references are provided to students and others of which students have to locate.

Assessment Strategy

Practical skills are assessed through research projects, essays, presentations, and other assessments throughout most modules (C1-C4).

Transferable/Key Skills

On completing the programme students should be able to:

D1 Take responsibility for his/her own learning and personal professional development.

D2 Manage time and prioritise tasks by working to deadlines.

D3 Communicate effectively to others when working in seminar group settings.

D4 Make effective use of appropriate resources including journals and other online materials.

Teaching and Learning Methods

Student self-learning and time and task management are encouraged in weekly seminars and one on one research supervision sessions (D1-D2). Communication is practiced in weekly seminars (D3). Students are directed to appropriate journals and provided information concerning appropriate internet usage (D4).

Assessment Strategy

Self-learning is assessed in the context of the timely submission of research projects and assignments (D1-D2). Effective use of electronic resources is assessed in the context of their analysis and correct presentation in research projects and other assignments (D4).

12 Programme Curriculum, Structure and Features

Basic structure of the programme

One year full time or two years part time.
180 credits (120 coursework, 60 dissertation).
100 credits compulsory (1 x 20 credit module, 2 x 10 credit modules and 1 x 60 credit dissertation), 80 optional credits.

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

Problem and solutions-based teaching

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.

Generic Information

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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: Find a Degree | Postgraduate | Newcastle University (ncl.ac.uk)

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.