

**PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION
(Undergraduate)**



1	Awarding Institution	Newcastle University
2	Teaching Institution	Newcastle University
3	Final Award	BA Hons
4	Programme Title	Geography and Urban Planning Geography and Urban Planning (with Placement Year)
5	UCAS/Programme Code	LK74 1453U
6	Programme Accreditation	N/A
7	QAA Subject Benchmark(s)	Geography and Urban Planning
8	FHEQ Level	6
9	Last updated	March 2026

10 Programme Aims

The purpose of the degree programme is to support and structure students' general higher education and intellectual development. The degree offers students a number of different pathways through the disciplines of geography and planning, and the opportunity of studying issues in depth from both geography and planning perspectives. In particular the programme aims:

- 1 To provide the theoretical and practical training necessary to equip graduates with the transferable and analytical skills appropriate for graduate employment.
- 2 To provide an applied dimension of study, enabling the graduate to be capable of working in urban or rural policy fields, in public or private practice and with a wide range of other professionals.
- 3 To equip students for further study.
- 4 To provide graduates with a coherent understanding of the social science perspective in their chosen specialist areas of planning and geography.
- 5 To provide students with the opportunity to organise facts, deploy logic and received theory and, through the use of oral, literary and numeracy skills, analyse problems and issues, synthesise potential solutions and criticise alternatives.
- 6 To contribute to the University's objectives by providing high quality research-led teaching.
- 7 To encourage students to develop a self-motivated attitude to academic study and future professional development.
- 8 To provide a programme which, through the choice of themes and modules, enables students to study substantial elements of the Geography and Planning benchmarks.
- 9 To provide a supportive environment in the departments such that the students enjoy their learning experience.

10 To provide a programme which satisfies the requirements of Level 6 qualifications under the FHEQs.

11 To comply with prevailing University policies and QAA codes of practice.

For Students Undertaking a Placement Year

12 Provide students with the experience of seeking and securing a position with an employer.

13 Facilitate independent self-management and proactive interaction in a non-university setting.

14 Provide a period of practical work experience that will benefit current academic study and longer-term career plans.

15 Enable students to apply their knowledge and skills ethically 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 the subjects of Geography and Planning.

Knowledge and Understanding

On completing the programme:

A1 Students will acquire a theoretical understanding of the subjects of geography and planning and their interrelationships.

A2 Students will develop areas of specialist knowledge in geography and planning through their choice of themes.

A3 Students will acquire an understanding of methods of enquiry and the technical competence to enable them to carry out research.

A4 Students will gain an advanced understanding of particular cross-disciplinary themes such as: urban and regional development; environmental management; social and cultural development; and planning and urban design.

A5 Students will develop an understanding of current research findings in selected areas.

For Students Undertaking a Placement Year

A6 Apply personal and professional development strategies to prioritise, plan and manage their own skills development and learning.

A7 Research, select and apply relevant knowledge aimed at enhancing their own skills and effectiveness in specific duties at their placement.

A8 Demonstrate an understanding of a work environment, how it functions and their contribution to it.

A9 Relate their work-based learning to other areas of personal development, including academic performance.

Teaching and Learning Methods

Specialist knowledge and understanding, (A1-5) are primarily imparted via lectures, workshops, tutorials, seminars and case studies.

Throughout Stage 1 and the compulsory components of Stages 2 & 3 students are taught the initial elements of the main themes of the degree, and initial research methods (A3) to enable them to undertake study at this level. Through the choice of particular pathways through the disciplines of geography and planning students are able to study issues in depth from a planning and geography perspective, (A1, 2 & 4).

Throughout both the compulsory and optional elements of the programme students are encouraged and expected to engage in independent reading and, where appropriate, fieldwork. Participation in workshops, tutorials and seminars aids the development of understanding.

Assessment Strategy

Knowledge and understanding are assessed by a variety of means, (partly depending on module choices), including;

- Unseen written examinations
- Coursework
- Dissertation
- Poster Presentation
- Multiple choice questions

The written papers are specifically intended to assess knowledge of core information while coursework and dissertations place more emphasis on the development of analysis and understanding of the concepts within a wider context. Poster presentations emphasise the collection and presentation of knowledge while multiple choice questions emphasise detailed knowledge of specific subjects.

Intellectual Skills

On completing the programme students should be able to demonstrate:

B1 The ability to undertake a critical evaluation of arguments and evidence.

B2 The ability to describe and critically assess the value and limitations of information on a given subject.

B3 The ability to extract, synthesise and present information and data.

Teaching and Learning Methods

Cognitive skills are introduced and developed from Stage 1 introductory modules to Stage 3 advanced modules. B1-B3 are principally developed through seminars, projects and group work where students can discuss and learn to evaluate arguments and evidence. B3 is developed widely throughout the optional subjects but specifically within the dissertation. Students enhance their learning through independent reading, case studies and field work. The dissertation provides a means of demonstrating all of these skills.

Assessment Strategy

Cognitive skills are primarily assessed by means of continuous assessment in the form of essays, case studies, reports and to a more limited extent via unseen written examinations.

Practical Skills
On completing the programme students should be able to demonstrate: C1 Quantitative and qualitative skills required for research in geography and planning. C2 Specialist skills associated with choice of themes and modules. C3 Spatial analytical skills. C4 Problem solving skills in geography and planning.
Teaching and Learning Methods
The teaching of quantitative and qualitative skills (C1) is delivered through specific compulsory modules in Stages 1 & 2. Teaching on these modules includes lectures, seminars, practicals, design appraisals and IT training sessions. Optional specialist skills (C2) are taught within modules and reflect the curriculum of the module. Across the degree programme students are exposed to a variety of spatial analytical skills, (C3), appropriate to a graduate of Geography and Urban Planning. Problem solving skills (C4) are developed across the compulsory elements of the degree and to a varied extent in the optional programme. Students are encouraged to develop subject specific skills through individual reports and essays, projects, field trips, case studies and through their dissertations. Students are supported in independent reading via the provision of reading lists, web sites and other course documentation. Opportunities are available for group discussion to encourage the development of the students' learning experience.
Assessment Strategy
Subject specific skills are assessed by means of essays, presentations, examinations, field trips and class exercises. Some or all of C1-4 are examined in Stage 3 by means of the dissertation.
Transferable/Key Skills
On completing the programme students should be able to demonstrate the ability to: D1 Communicate by means of well-prepared presentations and documents. D2 Use the library and other information sources. D3 Plan, organise and prioritise work activities in order to meet deadlines. D4 Work independently showing initiative. D5 Solve problems. D6 Work in teams. <u>For Students Undertaking a Placement Year</u> D7 Reflect on and manage own learning and development within the workplace. D8 Use existing and new knowledge to enhance personal performance in a workplace environment, evaluate the impact and communicate this process. D9 Use graduate skills in a professional manner in a workplace environment, evaluate the impact and communicate the personal development that has taken place.

Teaching and Learning Methods
An introduction to all (D1-6) key skills is taught formally in Stage 1 and developed further throughout the programme. Communication skills (D1) are developed in written coursework, projects, field trip-related presentations, poster presentations and via the dissertation. Specific modules support numerate skill development. Use of information sources (D2) is developed in research methods modules. Self-management (D3) is promoted through a strict coursework and assessment timetable. Problem solving skills (D5), are promoted via lectures, seminars and workshops at all stages. The dissertation provides an opportunity for the development of a range of key skills (D1-5) and particularly the ability to work independently (D4). Teamwork (D6) is developed in projects and field trips.
Assessment Strategy
All of the key skills are assessed by means of continuous assessment in the form of essays, case studies, poster presentations and projects. Many key skills, depending on subject chosen, are assessed within the dissertation.

12 Programme Curriculum, Structure and Features
Basic structure of the programme
Stage 1: All students take 120 credits of compulsory modules covering Geography and Planning. Stage 2: All students take 20 credits of compulsory research skills and then 100 credits of optional modules from those available in the regulations. Stage 3: All students take a compulsory 40 credit dissertation module and a further 80 credits from those available in the regulations. On completion of Stage 2 and before entering Stage 3, students may, as part of their studies for the degree, spend a year in a placement with an approved organisation. Permission to undertake the placement is subject to the approval of the Degree Programme Director. Students complete one 120 credit Careers Service module during their placement year. Students undertaking this option are transferred to degree programme code 1453U.
Key features of the programme (including what makes the programme distinctive)
Wide ranging choice within the framework of human geography and planning.
Programme regulations (link to on-line version)
Programme Regulations 2026-27
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/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.