

**PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION  
(Undergraduate)**



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|----------|---------------------------------|---|
| <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>              | BA (Hons)   |
| <b>4</b> | <b>Programme Title</b>          | English Language and Literature<br>English Language & Literature (with<br>Placement Year) |
| <b>5</b> | <b>UCAS/Programme Code</b>      | Q300<br>1461U   |
| <b>6</b> | <b>Programme Accreditation</b>  | n/a   |
| <b>7</b> | <b>QAA Subject Benchmark(s)</b> | English   |
| <b>8</b> | <b>FHEQ Level</b>               | 6   |
| <b>9</b> | <b>Date written/revised</b>     | March 2026  |

**10 Programme Aims**

(a) To produce graduates with:

- i. the knowledge, understanding, key and specific skills and general intellectual development required to make them employable in graduate positions in a wide range of employments or capable of undertaking a taught postgraduate programme
- ii. a knowledge of the main theoretical approaches to linguistic study; of the formal structures of the English language and of the history of the English language
- iii. an ability to formulate and evaluate falsifiable theories of linguistic phenomena
- iv. an ability to organise and analyse complex data and assess its significance
- v. a familiarity with the varieties of spoken and written English in the UK and worldwide, and with the language of literary texts from the Anglo Saxon, Medieval and Early Modern periods
- vi. a metalinguistic awareness of their native language
- vii. an awareness of the social and stylistic significance of linguistic variants
- viii. a knowledge of the range of literary texts from past and present cultures
- ix. an introduction to world literatures, creative writing, and film in English
- x. an ability to address the cultural and political contexts in which texts are produced and read
- xi. a familiarity with a variety of genres and forms
- xii. experience of a range of critical practices and an ability to reflect on those practices and their own
- xiii. an ability to reflect on the processes of creative writing.

(b) To provide a programme:

- i. in which teaching is informed by research, both in terms of research that is relevant to the discipline and with regard to research carried out by members of staff
- ii. which consistently attracts highly qualified applicants
- iii. which fully meets the requirements of the relevant Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) Benchmark statement
- iv. which complies with prevailing University policies and QAA codes of practice, and
- v. which fully meets the criteria for a level 6 award within the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications.

For Students Undertaking a Placement Year

1. Provide students with the experience of seeking and securing a position with an employer.
2. Facilitate independent self-management and proactive interaction in a non-university setting.
3. Provide a period of practical work experience that will benefit current academic study and longer term career plans.
4. Enable students to ethically apply their knowledge and skills in the work place, 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 aims and learning outcomes have references to the Subject Benchmark Statements for English.

**Knowledge and Understanding**

On completing the programme students should have knowledge and understanding of the following:

- A1. The nature of human language
- A2. Essential linguistic terminology and methodology
- A3. The structure of English and its relation to other languages
- A4. Varieties of English, and the geographical, social and contextual factors which produce them
- A5. Computational models of language
- A6. The acquisition of language
- A7. The intellectual context in which the English language is studied
- A8. The organization and analysis of data
- A9. A range of texts in English, across different media
- A10. Varieties of writing in English from different periods, places, and cultural perspectives
- A11. How language, culture, politics and technology affect the ways texts are produced and read
- A12. The complex relationships between texts, other forms of expression, and their contexts
- A13. A range of critical practices
- A14. Genre and generic conventions
- A15. The vocabulary of textual and theoretical analysis.

For Students Undertaking a Placement Year

- A16. Apply personal and professional development strategies to prioritise, plan, and manage their own skills development and learning.
- A17. Research, select and apply relevant knowledge aimed at enhancing their own skills and effectiveness in specific duties at their placement.
- A18. Demonstrate an understanding of a work environment, how it functions and their contribution to it.
- A19. Relate their work based learning to other areas of personal development, including academic performance.

**Teaching and Learning Methods**

At Stage 1 knowledge and understanding (A1 – 15) is acquired via lectures, seminars and student-led study groups (directed sessions where students meet to discuss set material

without their seminar tutor). At Stage 2 they are acquired via lectures, seminars, study groups, tutorials and independent study (A1 –15). At Stage 3, independent work is built into the programme, through the Extended Study in English Language/Linguistics or the Independent Essay in English Literature. Alternatively, students can choose to take a capstone dissertation, developing more advanced knowledge and understanding (A1 –15). These capstone dissertations take the form of a long-form essay; a digital exhibition; a scholarly digital edition; or a placement and project. Programmes students also have the option to do a creative portfolio as a capstone (prose, poetry, theatre script, screenwriting). At all stages, students are encouraged to supplement taught material through independent reading. Guidance on further reading will be provided by the module director and/or the seminar tutor.

### **Assessment Strategy**

Where there is a single assessment of knowledge and understanding on a module, it will normally be via an unseen examination of 3 hours or submitted work of 4,000 or (for capstone modules) up to 10,000 words in length. Many modules have mixed forms of assessments, and many have mid-module assignments. Where this is the case, the lengths for exams and essays are determined on a *pro rata* basis. Many modules divide their assessments into 'formative' and 'summative' assessment, where the former do not count towards the overall mark but provide clear structured preparation and practice for those assessments that do.

Examinations provide students with the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding in an unseen context.

Submitted work enables students to further demonstrate knowledge and understanding; it also enables them to demonstrate their knowledge of the scholarly protocols of the discipline. All students will have written at least one essay of over 3,000 words in length by the time they have completed Stage 3, a requirement that means every student will have been assessed on the extent to which they have developed in-depth knowledge and understanding (A1 – 15) by the time they graduate.

Many of the Language/Linguistics modules include assessment through coursework in which students are required to demonstrate knowledge and skills in collecting and analysing data sets. Another form of assessment, used in several of the Language/Linguistics modules, is oral presentations, usually done in groups. These give students an opportunity to demonstrate subject-based knowledge and understanding in a setting involving collaboration and oral communication.

### **Intellectual Skills**

On completing the programme students should be able to:

- B1. collect, analyse and evaluate data
- B2. analyse and critically evaluate argumentation
- B3. compare and evaluate differing intellectual frameworks and theoretical models
- B4. apply a developed appreciation of the role of language in everyday life – and of English as a global language
- B5. critically evaluate arguments and evidence
- B6. develop an awareness of the complexity of intermedial and intertextual relations in context
- B7. organise and present ideas as part of a structured written argument
- B8. organise and present ideas as part of a structured oral presentation
- B9. design a research project and select and employ appropriate research methodologies.
- B10. generate new creative work

### Teaching and Learning Methods

Intellectual skills are promoted through seminars, study groups and tutorials. At Stage 1 students are given guidance to ensure that they can debate effectively, evaluate arguments and evidence and present information to a group. In the Language seminars, emphasis is placed on the practical acquisition of skills for language and linguistic analysis (B1-3). Skills B1-10 are introduced and practised in the compulsory modules and/or practised in the weekly tutorials. In Literature, Skills B5-10 are introduced and practised in the compulsory modules at Stage 1. These skills are developed further at Stage 2. Here a greater emphasis on small group and independent work gives students the opportunity to refine their intellectual skills (B7-9 in particular). At Stage 3, more specialised modules and the greater emphasis on independent work focuses students on developing the skills identified in B9. **At all stages of the degree students have opportunities to engage in creative ways with the programme content (B10).**

### Assessment Strategy

Examinations provide students with the opportunity to demonstrate their intellectual skills by asking them to structure a clear, concise and well-reasoned argument in a limited time period and to address interpretive problems in an unseen context.

Submitted work is also key to the assessment strategy for intellectual skills. It enables students to expand on these skills, demonstrate a self-reflexive awareness of their approach and show they can use appropriate techniques, theories and methodologies (B6, B7, B9, B10). To ensure these skills are assessed fully, all students, by the time they have completed Stage 2, will have written at least one essay of at least 2,500 words before they start Stage 3. At Stage 3 they will be asked to demonstrate more developed intellectual skills in the assessment of, in particular, the research modules.

### Practical Skills

On completing the programme students should be able to:

- C1. practise critical argumentation in language study
- C2. gather, analyse and evaluate linguistic data
- C3. compare different linguistic frameworks and their motivation
- C4. understand the relation between data and theory in English Language study
- C5. address specific analytical, psychological and cultural issues posed by language and English in particular
- C6. practise critical skills in the analysis of texts across a range of media
- C7. explore how literature and/or language produce and reflect cultural change
- C8. engage imaginatively and critically in the reading of complex literary and non-literary texts
- C9. exercise and develop a sensitivity to verbal creativity
- C10. analyse a range of texts employing relevant theoretical/critical perspectives
- C11. apply scholarly bibliographic skills appropriate to the subject

### Teaching and Learning Methods

At Stage 1 practical skills are acquired via lectures, seminars, study-groups and tutorials (C1 – 11). Seminars, study groups and tutorials give students the opportunity to discuss ideas and critical practices introduced in the lectures. At Stage 2 they are acquired via lectures, seminars, study groups, tutorials and independent study (C1 – 11). At Stage 3 more specialised modules and the increased emphasis on independent study offers students the chance to further refine all of the practical skills.

### Assessment Strategy

Examinations provide students with the opportunity to demonstrate their practical skills by asking them to prepare and then produce a clear, concise and well-reasoned argument in a limited time period and engage in practical analysis in an unseen context (C1 – 10).

Submitted work constitutes a venue for students to showcase insights gained from skillful engagement with literary and linguistic material (C2, 5, 6-9); it also enables them to demonstrate their employment of appropriate research techniques and theoretical perspectives (C10). They also learn scholarly bibliographic skills appropriate to the subject (C11). To ensure these skills are assessed fully, all students, by the time they have completed Stage 2, will have written at least one essay of over 2,500 words before they begin Stage 3 they will also have tackled a variety of assessment tasks, from keyword essays through to quantitative data analysis. At Stage 3 they will be asked to demonstrate more developed practical skills in the assessment of modules.

### **Transferable/Key Skills**

On completing the programme students should be able to:

- D1. plan and complete essays and project-work
- D2. write and speak to different audiences
- D3. co-ordinate multiple projects
- D4. deploy a range of digital skills for research and communication
- D5. gather, evaluate and organise material
- D6. summarise and assimilate information
- D7. communicate and debate effectively
- D8. work to deadlines or within specified time-limits
- D9. work and negotiate with others, with a sensitivity to cultural contexts
- D10. work effectively both in a team and independently
- D11. present information to a group in a structured and coherent way
- D12. analyse complex data effectively and present it concisely
- D13. display an excellent knowledge of the English language and of its proper use, including a correct application of grammar, syntax and spelling rules.

#### For Students Undertaking a Placement Year

- D14. Reflect on and manage own learning and development within the workplace.
- D15. Use existing and new knowledge to enhance personal performance in a workplace environment, evaluate the impact and communicate this process.
- D16. 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**

Key/transferable skills are developed through tutorials, seminars, lectures and study groups. At Stage 1 students are given advice to ensure that they can debate effectively, negotiate with others and present information to a group. Skills D1 - 13 are introduced and practised the stage 1 compulsory modules.

All of these skills are promoted further at Stage 2 with continued emphasis on small group work, and with increased opportunity for independent study, including in-class presentations which require students to draw on D1 – 13. The Career Development modules offered by the University Careers Service further enhance employability skills if the students opt to take them.

At Stage 3, students will refine their key/transferable Skills further, particularly in the course of studying more specialised modules and as they devote more time to independent work in taking a research module (D1, D5, D8). The option to take work placement modules at Stage 3 gives students the chance to further refine their key/transferable Skills. They also have the option of taking the University Careers Service's Advanced Career Development modules for Stage 3 students, which further enhances their employability.

### **Assessment Strategy**

Assessment of key/transferable skills is implicit in coursework at all levels. Presentation skills are formally assessed (by tutor and peers) in those modules which have an oral presentation as part of the summative assessment. At Stage 3 independent work will assess D1, D6 and D8 with especial rigour.

Throughout stages 2 and 3, a number of literature modules offer 'public-facing' assignments, which require students to adapt their research to a variety of different imagined audiences (D2, D7, D9).

## **12 Programme Curriculum, Structure and Features**

### **Basic structure of the programme**

The programme is studied over three years full-time; it is divided into modules, which have a value of 20 credits (with every 20 credits representing 200 hours of student learning). Most capstone modules have a value of 40 credits, although a short-form dissertation with a value of 20 credits is also available.

At Stage 1 students are given a thorough introduction to content in both English Literature and English Language. On the Literature side, a range of literatures in different media forms and the skills required for their studies, in particular close reading and theoretical approaches and methodologies. The accompanying seminars give students the opportunity to practise, experiment with and develop this knowledge and these skills. There is an emphasis on small group teaching to enable the acquisition of academic, practical and key skills. The compulsory modules give students a broader view of the inter-relationships between literary texts and a sense of the significance of mythologies and traditions in shaping literary discourses. On the Language side, students are given a thorough grounding in the basic knowledge and skills of two central areas of language and linguistic study: syntax and phonology. Stage 1 modules also introduce students to the various forms linguistic data may take and the practical skills of linguistic analysis which they will need at Stages 2 and 3.

At Stage 2, on the literature side, students must choose at least two modules, with the aim being to develop their knowledge of key areas of literary study in terms intended to give them a broad, contextual knowledge of the subject. Required to take at least one module from before 1800 and one post-1800, they will study a range of literature in their work; some of these literature modules also offer opportunities for students to be assessed on creative engagements with the course material. On the language side, they will be required to take at least two modules from the menu of specialist options available and through their studies develop in-depth expertise on particular subject areas. Beyond that, they will choose whether to make up another 20 credits by studying either a further literature module, or one from the English Language menu. Students also have the option of taking 20 credits of independent work in literature.

At Stage 3, students must take at least four taught modules from a wide menu of specialist options offered in English Language/Linguistics and English Literature. The aim at Stage 3 is to give students the chance to build on the experience they have gained in Stages 1 and 2 and to make choices that reflect their own particular interests, at the same time as it gives them the opportunity to study with staff teaching material that draws on their own particular research expertise. The menu of options is further enhanced by the ability to take up a work placement as part of their studies. The remaining 40 credits may be completed by either a) taking a further optional module from the English Language or the English Literature menus in conjunction with completing a 20-credit capstone module comprising a 5,000 word Dissertation on a topic in Language, or b) completing one of a number of a 40-credit capstone modules. These capstone modules may take the form of an 8,000-word Dissertation on a topic in Literature; a 10,000 word Dissertation on a topic in Language; a digital exhibition of 30-60 items with an accompanying word count of 3500-

4500 words; a scholarly edition of 4000-5000 words and an accompanying editorial introduction of 4000-5000 words; a placement portfolio and dissertation totalling 10,000 words; or a creative portfolio of prose, poetry, screenwriting, or theatre script. As with the taught modules at Stage 3, the emphasis in both 20- and 40-credit capstone modules is on developing in-depth and advanced level knowledge and understanding and fostering cognitive and key skills. The research modules also introduce students applying for postgraduate degrees to advanced research skills.

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

All undergraduates in the School of English Literature, Language and Linguistics may elect to study abroad for one semester, typically the second semester of year two. Currently SELLL has links with institutions in Europe and with universities in North America.

SELLL students can also take advantage of University and Faculty-led programmes (including exchanges with universities in Canada and Australia) and career development modules.

Students have the option to take part in a Careers Placement Year in-between Stage 2 and 3 of their programme. They will be transferred on to programme code 1461U.

#### **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.