

**PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION
(Undergraduate)**



1	Awarding Institution	Newcastle University
2	Teaching Institution	Newcastle University
3	Final Award	BA (Hons)
4	Programme Title	English Language
5	UCAS/Programme Code	Q302
6	Programme Accreditation	n/a
7	QAA Subject Benchmark(s)	English
8	FHEQ Level	6
9	Last updated	April 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 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 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.
- (b) To provide a programme:
- i. in which teaching is informed by research, both relevant research in the discipline and 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.

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 benchmark statements for Linguistics and 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, its history and 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. Basic techniques of data collection and analysis in different fields of linguistic study
- A9. The relation between data and theory, in particular the central role of hypothesis formation and testing
- A10. The lexis, grammatical structures, registers and usage of a foreign language
- A11. Aspects of the history, society, culture and linguistic development of a foreign country
- A12. Intercultural awareness and understanding (an appreciation both of the internal diversity and transcultural connectedness of cultures).

Teaching and Learning Methods

At Stages 1 and 2, knowledge and understanding (A1 – 12) 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 3, independent work is built into the programme, through the Short-form Dissertation. Alternatively, students can choose to take an optional Long-form Dissertation, developing more advanced knowledge and understanding (A1 –9). 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 between 4,000 and 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.

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 5000 words 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 – 9) by the time they graduate.

At Stage 3 they have the option of writing a 10,000 word Dissertation, in which they will be asked to demonstrate more developed knowledge and understanding.

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 our daily lives - and of English as a global language;
- B5. critically evaluate arguments and evidence;
- B6. develop an awareness of the complex interplay between data and context;
- B7. organize and present ideas as part of a structured written and/or oral argument;
- B8. design a research project and select and employ appropriate research methodologies;
- B9. learn foreign languages more easily.

Teaching and Learning Methods

Intellectual skills are promoted through seminars, study groups and tutorials. In the seminars at Stage 1, emphasis is placed on the practical acquisition of skills for language and linguistic analysis (B1-3). Skills B1-9 are introduced and practised in the weekly tutorials of all stage 1 modules. These skills are developed further at Stage 2. Here a greater emphasis on small group work and the presentations that are an integral part of several modules at Stage 2 give students the opportunity to refine their intellectual skills (B7 and B8 in particular). At Stage 3, more specialised modules and the greater emphasis on independent work focusses students on developing the skills identified in B8. Skill B9 is developed through the foreign language modules.

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 (B2, B3, B5, B7). 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 (B2, B3, B5, B7). To ensure these skills are assessed fully, all students, by the time they have completed Stage 2, will have written at least one essay between 2,000 and 4,000 words before they start Stage 3. At Stage 3 they will be asked to demonstrate more developed intellectual skills in the assessment of 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, using appropriate models and techniques;
- C3. compare different linguistic frameworks and their motivation;
- C4. work with data and theory in English language study in a way that demonstrates understanding of the relation between them;
- C5. address specific analytical, psychological and cultural issues posed by language and English in particular;
- C6. apply scholarly bibliographic skills appropriate to the subject;
- C7. use a foreign language for communication and/or as linguistic data.

Teaching and Learning Methods

At Stages 1 and 2, practical skills are acquired via lectures, seminars and study-groups (C1 – 7). Seminars and study groups give students the opportunity to discuss ideas and methods introduced in the lectures. 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 – 7).

Submitted work enables students to expand on these practical skills; it also enables them to demonstrate their employment of appropriate research techniques and theoretical perspectives (C2, C4). They also learn scholarly bibliographic skills appropriate to the subject (C6). 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 2,000 words before they begin Stage 3. At Stage 3 they will be asked to demonstrate more developed practical skills in their assessments.

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. use information technology (word processing; data software; etc.), as appropriate to a specific project
- 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 the use of standard English grammar, syntax and spelling rules.

Teaching and Learning Methods

Key/transferable skills are developed through tutorials, seminars, lectures and study groups. Skills D1 - 13 are introduced, practised and refined in the stage 1 modules and practised across Stages 2 and 3.

All of these skills are promoted further at Stage 2 with continued emphasis on small group work, and with increased opportunity for independent study. 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 (D1, D5, D8). The option to take the University Careers Service's Advanced Career Development modules for Stage 3 students gives them the chance to further refine their key/transferable Skills, and to enhance their employability.

Assessment Strategy

Assessment of key skills is implicit in course work 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.

12 Programme Curriculum, Structure and Features

Basic structure of the programme

The programme is studied over three years full-time; it is divided into study units or modules, which have a value of either 10 or 20 credits, or, in the case of the Dissertation only, 40 credits. Each 10 credit module represents 100 hours of student learning, and each 20 credit module, 200 hours.

At each Stage the student is required to take and be assessed in modules to the value of 120 credits. At Stage 1 students are given an overview of ideas about the nature of language and are provided with a thorough grounding in the basic knowledge and skills of the three areas of language and linguistic study: syntax, phonology and socio-/historical linguistics. Stage 1 modules introduce students to the practical skills of linguistic analysis which they will need at Stages 2 and 3. The stage 1 modules introduce students to academic skills: written English, preparing an essay and a presentation. An emphasis is placed at Stage 1 on small group teaching to enable the acquisition of academic, practical and key skills. Stage 1 language students also take a further 40 credits outside their subject.

Stages 2 and 3 of Q302 are designed to provide academic progression, and an increasing range of choice. Stage 2 offers a choice of intermediate modules which build on the Stage 1 experience and cover major areas within English Language and Linguistics. These modules prepare students for the more specialised optional modules at Stage 3, which provide an opportunity for students to pursue their particular interests and to acquire advanced knowledge and skills. All Q302 students at Stage 3 take a Short-form Dissertation (5000 words) or a Long-Form Dissertation (10,000 words). These cultivate skills in independent research and in the planning and writing of extended pieces of work, which enhance students' employability and/or prepare them for postgraduate work.

At Stages 2 and 3 students have the opportunity, if qualified, to take a module in English Literature or an outside module such as the Career Development module or a language module.

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

All undergraduates in the School of English Literature, Language and Linguistics can elect to study abroad for one semester, typically the second semester of year two or the first semester of year three. 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).

Students in Stage 3 of Q302 may take career development modules.

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/docs/>

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.