

**PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION
(Undergraduate)**



1	Awarding Institution	Newcastle University
2	Teaching Institution	Newcastle University
3	Final Award	BA (Hons)
4	Programme Title	Modern Languages Modern Languages (3-Year Programme) Modern Languages with Placement Year
5	UCAS/Programme Code	T901/1420U/1920U
6	Programme Accreditation	N/A
7	QAA Subject Benchmark(s)	Languages, Cultures and Societies
8	FHEQ Level	6
9	Last updated	May 2026

10 Programme Aims

1. To foster intercultural awareness and understanding, and an attitude of curiosity and openness towards different cultures and societies, through a selection of modules and, for students undertaking a placement abroad, the opportunity to spend time studying or working in the countries in which the languages students are studying are spoken.
 2. To provide students with knowledge and skills that prepare them for further intellectual development and further independent study.
 3. To provide a flexible programme of study through variety of student choice in modules in Modern Languages within an informed advisory framework.
 4. To give students the opportunity to spend time studying or working in the countries in which the languages they are studying are spoken.
 5. To develop proficiency in receptive (reading and listening), productive (writing and speaking), and mediating skills in one, two or three languages.
 6. To satisfy the requirements of a Level 6 programme as set out in the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ).
 7. To conform with University policies and QAA codes of practice.
 8. To meet the requirements of the Benchmark Statements for Languages, Cultures and Societies.
- T901 (YA study placement) only:
9. Offer students the opportunity to develop graduate attributes which increase employability, particularly communication and (where applicable) language skills, intercultural competencies, adaptability, resilience and global awareness.
 10. Gain insight into international Higher Education and experience differences in academic approach and learning environment.
 11. Provide the opportunity to experience new areas of study outside of their usual programme of study at Newcastle University.

T901 (YA work placement) and 1920U only:

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 ethically apply their knowledge and skills 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 Modern Languages.

Knowledge and Understanding

On completing the programme students should:

- A1 Have knowledge and understanding of the lexis, grammatical structures, registers and usage of one, two or three modern languages to BA Honours degree standard, and where taken as an option, other languages to ALTE Levels 3, 4 or 5 (see Statement of Standards).
- A2 Have knowledge and understanding of aspects of the history, society, culture and linguistic development of the relevant countries in East Asia, Europe and Latin America dependent upon the languages chosen for study and according to module selection (see section 12).
- A3 Have knowledge and understanding of certain areas of specialist study, according to module selection, in cultural studies, film, history, language, linguistics, literary studies and politics of the relevant countries in East Asia, Europe and Latin America (see section 12).
- A4 Have knowledge and understanding of the internal diversity and connections between cultures.
- A5 (For students opting to write a year- abroad project or dissertation) Have knowledge and understanding of a topic studied in-depth and independently.
- A6 (For T901 and 1920U only) Demonstrate the ability to adapt to different learning environments.

For 1920U only:

- A7 Apply personal and professional development strategies to prioritise, plan, and manage their own skills development and learning.
- A8 Research, select and apply relevant knowledge aimed at enhancing their own skills and effectiveness in specific duties at their placement.

A9	Demonstrate an understanding of a work environment, how it functions and their contribution to it.
A10	Relate their work based learning to other areas of personal development, including academic performance.

Teaching and Learning Methods

The primary means of imparting knowledge and understanding of the modern languages (A1) is via a mix of communicative, student-centred language teaching methods and formal linguistic instruction. In the case of A2-A3, knowledge and understanding are generally conveyed through lectures and seminars which guide students towards independent reading and enable students to self-assess and develop their learning through group discussion, take-home tasks; guided self-teaching activities; online discussion and online based group working; the preparation of presentations and/or reports. A4 is developed initially within the communicative language training framework and is further enhanced during the students' year abroad. In A5 (optional dissertation) one-to-one tutorials provide academic guidance, while the opportunity to carry out independent research allows students to apply and practise research skills.

Assessment Strategy

Knowledge and understanding of the modern language (A1) is assessed by written continuous assessment and class tests (evaluating student understanding and progress), and unseen written, aural and oral examinations. Outcomes A2-3 are assessed by essay and/or unseen written examination, oral presentation & video presentation, (requiring independent, critical analysis and application of intellectual models, principles and theories). Outcome A4 is assessed during the year abroad by reflective Tutor Posts and in some cases a work placement report. Outcome A5 is assessed by a cultural project carried out abroad, or a final-year dissertation or project.

Intellectual Skills

On completing the programme students should be able to:

- B1 Gather, synthesise and evaluate information
- B2 Undertake independent, critical analysis
- B3 Organise and present ideas within the framework of a structured and reasoned argument, oral or written
- B4 Apply appropriate methodologies to specialist areas of study
- B5 (For those who choose to write a dissertation) Design a research project and select and employ appropriate research methodologies

Teaching and Learning Methods

B1-4 skills are developed through seminar preparation and presentation, group discussion and written assignments. B5 is developed through one-to-one tutorials to facilitate the development of independent study and research skills through student self-evaluation.

Assessment Strategy

B1-4 are assessed by means of course work (e.g. essays, oral presentations) and unseen written examinations. They are also assessed as part of oral examinations. They may also be assessed by dissertation. B5 is assessed by dissertation / final-year project.

Practical Skills

On completing the programme students should be able to:

- C1 Show receptive (reading and listening) and productive (writing and speaking) skills in one, two or three languages to BA Honours degree standard
- C2 Perform a range of communicative tasks
- C3 Translate non-technical texts from and into the target language, develop competent liaison interpreting skills
- C4 Make effective use of language reference materials, such as grammars, dictionaries and corpora
- C5 Practice independent language learning
- C6 Make effective use of (and appropriately reference) a wide range of information sources, including qualitative and quantitative data, library, internet and other electronic sources, and governmental and non-governmental information.
- C7 (For students opting to write a year- abroad project, or a final-year dissertation or project) Undertake, and report upon, an independently conducted research exercise.

Teaching and Learning Methods

Learning outcomes C1-2 are achieved via communicative, student-centred skills training, (e.g. developing and practising reading skills, enhancing listening skills through language laboratory work, liaison interpreting, analysing and practising different writing skills, and conducting oral discussion and presentation, both individually and as part of a team), and formal grammar instruction (e.g. guided study exercises, and use of IT resources). C1-2 skills may be further enhanced by delivery of specified modules in the target language. These skills are developed and consolidated during the year abroad. C3 is achieved by guided translation into and out of the target language, and analysis of translation techniques; liaison interpreting in and out of the target language; reading for gist exercises; summary and evaluation of texts in the modern language, working in the modern language. C4-5 are achieved in the teaching of C1-3, and further enhanced by study skills sessions as detailed in section 13 (below). Self-access language learning is also encouraged in order to further both C4 and C5. C6 is developed through lecture and seminar preparation, lectures, seminars, exercises, individual and group presentations, debates across all modules.

C7 is developed particularly in undertaking a research project or a dissertation in the final stage of the programme.

Assessment Strategy

C1-3 are assessed by written continuous assessment and class tests (evaluating student progress) and unseen written examination (reading, writing, translating and interpreting skills), aural examination (listening and writing skills) and oral examination (listening, speaking and interpreting skills). Skills C4 and C5 are not formally assessed. C6 is assessed in all the programme assessment in various forms such as essays, projects and presentations. C7 is assessed by dissertation / final-year project.

Transferable/Key Skills

On completing the programme students should be able to:

- D1 Communicate clearly and effectively, both orally and in writing

- D2 Give oral presentations
- D3 Manage one's time, make plans and set priorities in order to achieve an objective
- D4 Work creatively and flexibly with others as part of a team, and, in the case of the YA project, the ability to conduct an effective interview
- D5 (For T901 only) Adapt and operate effectively within a different cultural environment
- D6 Use library and bibliographic research resources
- D7 Analyse and solve problems
- D8 Use IT effectively, such as word processing, email, databases, online environments and the use of the Internet as a research and study tool

For 1920U only:

- D13 Reflect on and manage own learning and development within the workplace.
- D14 Use existing and new knowledge to enhance personal performance in a workplace environment, evaluate the impact and communicate this process.
- D15 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

D1 is enhanced through seminar presentations, discussions, and written assignments. Skills D2-3 and D6-8 are practised through seminar preparation and presentation. D3 and D6-8 are further developed through written assignments and research-based modules. D4 is developed through team presentations and projects (including the YA project). D5 is developed initially through communicative language training, and is later enhanced during the student's year abroad. D8 is further enhanced through the use of IT resources in language teaching and as an organisational tool for certain modules. D6 and D8 skills are also developed during induction (see 13 below).

Assessment Strategy

D1 is assessed by essay, dissertation and unseen written examination, (written communication), while both D1 and D2 are assessed via assessed seminar presentations and oral examinations (oral communication). D3 and D6-7 are assessed in a number of ways, including written assignments, unseen examinations, assessed seminar preparation and presentation, self-directed language coursework and preparation for language classes. D4 is assessed via team presentations and projects (and also the work placement report). D5 is assessed via the reflective Tutor Posts produced during the year abroad. D8 is assessed in a number of ways including the preparation of written assignments and seminars.

12 Programme Curriculum, Structure and Features

Basic structure of the programme

The programme is studied over four years full-time based on 30 weeks attendance per annum. Students study *either* one language (if French, German or Spanish) or two *or* three of the following languages: Chinese, Japanese, French, German, Portuguese, and Spanish. Stages 1, 2 and 4 of the programme are spent in residence attending Newcastle

University; Stage 3 is an optional year during which students may either spend the whole year in a country where one of the languages studied is spoken, or split the year between two or even three countries where the target languages are spoken, or spend the year on placement in the UK. Each year or stage requires the study of modules with a total credit value of 120. 20 credits of module study represent 200 hours of student work, including lectures and other teaching (such as seminars), private study, preparation of coursework and exam preparation and revision. Larger modules are proportionately heavier in their work content. The weighting of compulsory practical language modules varies between 20 and 40 credits depending on the target language and the Stage at which it is being studied. All other modules at Stages 1, 2 and 4 are generally 20 credits in weight. Modules undertaken during the optional YA are Year Abroad Tutor Posts (100 credits) and Study or Placement or Project year-abroad modules (20 credits). Students taking a Placement Year in the UK in Stage 3 will take one x 120 credit module, which is pass/fail but does not contribute to the final degree classification.

In Stage 1 students are required to study 40 credits of compulsory practical language modules for Level A languages and 20 for Level B languages. These language modules must be passed for the purposes of progression to Stage 2. In Stage 2 students are required to study 40 credits of compulsory language modules for Level B Chinese and Japanese and 20 credits for all other Level B and C languages. In Stage 4 students are required to study 40 credits for Level C or Level D Chinese and Japanese and 20 credits for all other Level C and D languages. In addition to the compulsory practical language modules students must take further modules to bring their credit weighting up to a total of 120 credits at Stages 1, 2 and 4. These modules are chosen from the range of modules offered at the appropriate stage in that particular year in the School of Modern Languages. For a student to have a language named on their degree certificate they must have studied a total of 80 credits in compulsory language modules and designated language specific optional modules across Stages 2 and 4.

The compulsory practical language modules are conducted mainly in the foreign language; optional modules are taught in a combination of the target language and English, varying from module to module and from year to year. The range of options includes those that are language specific and provided by the relevant constituent sections of the School of Modern Languages and those that are open to all students of modern languages and are provided by colleagues across the School.

At Stage 1, students may study one, two or three languages, at least one of which must be at Level B. Only one language may be studied *ab initio* (Level A). In the compulsory practical language modules the students develop the language skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking; these modules also provide knowledge and understanding of the target language and its cultural context as well as the foundations of subject-specific skills (outcome A1, 2, & 4, C1-5). Students choose additional credits from a range of introductory modules within the School of Modern Languages in linguistics, film, literature, society and institutions; these modules enhance knowledge and understanding of the language and of specialist areas (outcomes A2, A3) as well as providing an introduction for cognitive skills (B1-3) and effective practice in key transferable skills (especially outcomes D1-4).

At Stage 2, students may study one, two or three languages, at least one of which must be at Level C. In addition to the compulsory practical language modules additional credits are chosen from a range of options in film, history, linguistics, literature, media, politics and visual arts. For those students studying Level B or C German an *ab initio* option in Dutch language is available and for students studying Level C French or Spanish can choose an *ab initio* option in Italian or Catalan. Students studying Level B or C Chinese or Japanese can choose an *ab initio* option in Korean. Students continue to develop the language skills of reading, writing, listening, speaking and translation; language modules are designed to develop these skills in preparation for the forthcoming year abroad (outcome A1, 2, & 4, C1-5), practise cognitive skills in the target language (B1-3) as well as key transferable skills (D1, 2, 4 & 6). The optional modules are intended to be as broad-ranging as possible to allow informed choices to be made about more specialised final-year options; they develop knowledge and understanding of the language in relation to specialist areas of

study (A2-3), while at the same time providing a sufficient introduction to critical skills and methodology appropriate to the area (B1-4) and further advancing key transferable skills (especially outcomes D1-2, 6-7).

At Stage 3 students generally may *either* spend the whole year in a country where one of the target languages is spoken, working as a teaching assistant in a school or college, or studying at a university, or undertaking an approved work placement, *or* split the year between two or even three countries where the target languages are spoken, studying at universities or undertaking approved work placements. However, students wishing to study Chinese or Japanese at Stage 4 are required to spend either one semester or a complete academic year pursuing courses of study at a university or comparable institution in the relevant country. The School of Modern Languages has a number of student exchange programmes and/or formal links with Universities in France, Germany, Austria, Spain, Portugal, Latin America, China and Japan.

The optional Year Abroad is assessed by means of reflective Tutor Posts plus one of an independent project, a work placement report or marks achieved at the host university. While all aspects of knowledge, understanding and language skills will be developed during Stage 3, there will be particular opportunities for increasing intercultural awareness and understanding (A4), for developing self-study skills for language learning (C5), for developing organisational and interpersonal skills (D3-5); students preparing a dissertation will have the opportunity to develop knowledge and cognitive skills in this area too (A5, B5).

At Stage 4 (Stage 3 for students on 1420U), students may study one, two or three languages, at least one of which must be at Level D. The language modules at Stage 4 are taught on the basis that students have reached a high (Level C) or very high level (Level D) of competence during their year abroad. The emphasis now is on sophisticated use of language in all skills (A1, 2 & 4, C1-5) as well as the cognitive abilities of analysis and structured argumentation (B2-3). A wide range of more specialised options in film, history, linguistics, literature, media, politics and visual arts takes the cognitive skills to a much higher level of development, including greater emphasis upon independent analytical skills, use of appropriate methodologies and problem-solving skills (B1-4, D1-3, 6-7). Students writing a dissertation as well as those preparing an extended essay will develop their knowledge and understanding as well as their subject-specific, cognitive and transferable skills over a broad range of outcomes (A2, 3, & 5, C1 & 4, B1-5, D1, 3, 6 & 7).

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

Flexibility in terms of the number of languages taken (post A-level and *ab initio*) including East Asian Languages. Possibility of movement across degree programmes within the School depending on options taken.

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](#)

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](#)

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: <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.