

**PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION
(Undergraduate)**



1	Awarding Institution	Newcastle University
2	Teaching Institution	Newcastle University
3	Final Award	BA (Hons)
4	Programme Title	Modern Languages and International Relations Modern Languages and International Relations (3-Year Programme) Modern Languages and International Relations with Placement Year
5	UCAS/Programme Code	TL12/1942U/1943U
6	Programme Accreditation	N/A
7	QAA Subject Benchmark(s)	Language, Culture and Societies Politics and International Relations
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 languages, 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 broaden and deepen the students' understanding of the nature and significance of politics and international relations, and to develop the students' appreciation of the diversity of these disciplines in terms of both content and approaches.
3. To provide a flexible programme of study through a variety of modules in Modern Languages and International Relations, allowing students to specialise within the two disciplines according to their own objectives and interests.
4. To develop proficiency in receptive (reading and listening), productive (writing and speaking), and mediating skills in one or two languages; and to enhance students' cognitive skills, including analysing and presenting information, and core skills, such as adaptability, planning and organisation.
5. To offer a learning environment informed by research and scholarship in which students can learn about international relations as well as different cultures and societies from knowledgeable staff, their own study and from discussion and collaboration with fellow students.
6. To provide students with knowledge and skills that prepare them for further intellectual development, for further academic or independent study or for a wide variety of careers in the private, public or voluntary sector in the UK or abroad.
7. To satisfy the requirements of a Level 6 programme as set out in the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ).
8. To conform with prevailing University policies and QAA codes of practice.

9. To meet the requirements of the Benchmark Statements for Languages, Cultures and Societies, and Politics and International Relations.

TL12 (YA study placement) only:

10. 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.
11. Gain insight into international Higher Education and experience differences in academic approach and learning environment.
12. Provide the opportunity to experience new areas of study outside of their usual programme of study at Newcastle University.

TL12 (YA work placement) and 1943Uonly:

13. Provide students with the experience of seeking and securing a position with an employer.
14. Facilitate independent self-management and proactive interaction in a non-university setting.
15. Provide a period of practical work experience that will benefit current academic study and longer term career plans.
16. 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 and International Relations.

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 and societies.

- A5 Apply concepts, theories and methods used in the study of international relations to the analysis of political ideas, practices and issues in the international system.
- A6 Understand the political significance of multiple polities coexisting.
- A7 Demonstrate a knowledge and understanding of the origins, evolution and contemporary dynamics of the international system and the challenges to it.
- A8 Show an in-depth knowledge of self-selected specialisms within the discipline of international relations.
- A9 (For students opting to write a year-abroad project, or a final-year dissertation or project) Have knowledge and understanding of a topic studied in-depth and independently
- A10 (For TL12 and 1943U only) Demonstrate the ability to adapt to different learning environments.

For 1943U only:

- A11 Apply personal and professional development strategies to prioritise, plan, and manage their own skills development and learning.
- A12 Research, select and apply relevant knowledge aimed at enhancing their own skills and effectiveness in specific duties at their placement.
- A13 Demonstrate an understanding of a work environment, how it functions and their contribution to it.
- A14 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, for students undertaking a year abroad, is further enhanced during the students' year abroad. A5, A6 and A7 are developed via compulsory modules at stages 1 and 2, while A8 is achieved through a choice of optional modules available at Stages 2 and 3. In A5 to A8, core knowledge is principally imparted through lectures supplemented by handouts and sometimes by other visual media, such as videos and web sources. Seminars are intended to check and amplify students' understanding and to provide an opportunity to develop appreciation of issues through discussion and argument. Students are also expected and encouraged to develop their understanding by supplementing taught material with their own independent study. Guidance is provided on appropriate readings and where appropriate, web-based material, in all modules.

In A9 (optional project or dissertation) one-to-one tutorials or online communication 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, class tests (evaluating student understanding and progress), online written, audio or video submissions or unseen written, aural and oral examinations. Outcomes A2-4 are assessed by report, essay and/or unseen written examination, oral presentation & video presentation, (requiring independent, critical analysis and application of intellectual models, principles and theories). For students undertaking a year-abroad, outcome A4 is also assessed by reflective Tutor Posts, placement reports or cultural projects.

In A5 to A8, knowledge and understanding of the subject is assessed by a variety of methods: unseen and seen written examinations, multiple response examinations, oral examinations, essays, reports, projects and group work including simulations, projects and presentations.

Outcome A9 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 Question received thinking, and develop independent thinking and critical analysis.
- B3 Organise and present ideas coherently and persuasively, 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 inherent in the nature of the disciplines and their teaching and are developed throughout the curriculum through seminar preparation, group discussion and exercises, presentations 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, reports, projects), unseen written examinations or oral examinations. 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 or two languages to BA Honours degree standard.

C2	Perform a range of communicative tasks.
C3	Translate non-technical texts from and into the target language.
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	
<p>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; reading for gist exercises; summary and evaluation of texts in the modern language, and 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.</p>	
Assessment Strategy	
<p>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.</p>	
Transferable/Key Skills	
<p>On completing the programme students should be able to:</p>	
D1	Communicate with clarity, relevance and effectiveness, both orally and in writing,
D2	Interpersonal communication: To communicate clearly, relevantly and effectively and appropriately with others.
D3	Give oral presentations: To make clear, relevant and effective oral presentations to a variety of audiences.
D4	Teamwork: Work creatively and flexibly with others as part of a team, to be able to recognise and identify the views, opinions and contributions of others and work constructively with them to achieve shared objectives and goals.

- D5 Planning and organisation: Manage one's time, make plans and set priorities in order to achieve an objective, manage projects and meet pre-specified deadlines.
- D6 Adaptability: To be receptive to feedback, to manage resources effectively and to be self-critical and operate in a variety of environments.
- D7 Information literacy: To be able to gather, manage and evaluate information from a variety of sources, including using the library and bibliographic research resources.
- D8 Problem solving: To identify, analyse, interpret and solve intellectual and practical problems.
- D9 Computer literacy: To be able to use information technology in a variety of ways including AI, word-processing, data bases, VLEs, presentation software, e-mail and the Internet as learning and research tools.
- D10 Numeracy: to understand and evaluate the use of quantitative evidence.
- D11 Initiative: To be able to take action unprompted and to assume responsibility.
- D12 (For TL12 only) Adapt and operate in a different cultural environment
- For 1943U 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, and D3 are enhanced through seminars and seminar preparation, discussions, written assignments, group projects, simulations, oral presentations and examinations. Interpersonal communication (D2) is fostered throughout the programme but particularly through seminars, group projects, simulations and oral examinations. D3 and D4 is developed through seminar activities, team presentations, projects, simulations and oral examinations. Planning and organisation (D5), adaptability (D6), as well as problem solving (D8) are developed throughout the programme but are particularly developed in time constrained activities in class, projects and dissertation modules. D6 is also developed through communicative language training, and is later enhanced during the student's year abroad. D7-9 are fostered and practiced throughout the programme, but in particular through seminar preparation and presentation, written assignments and research-based modules. D7 and 9 are 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. Numeracy (D10) is used in many modules throughout the programme but is explicitly taught in the compulsory international relation research methods modules.

Assessment Strategy

D1 and D3 is assessed by essay, dissertation, projects, unseen written examination and oral examinations and assessed presentations. D2 and D4 is assessed via assessed

seminar presentations team, oral examinations and projects (and also the work placement report), D5, D7-8 and D11 are assessed in a number of ways, including written assignments, unseen examinations, assessed seminar preparation and presentation and self-directed language coursework. Adaptability (D6) is principally fostered, rather than assessed, and takes such forms such as written feedback on essays, language course work, reports, dissertations and projects and feedback on examination performance, but it is assessed via the reflective Tutor Posts produced during the year abroad. Computer literacy (D9) is diffusely assessed through the programme, for example, via requirements for word-processing of written work and the use of Powerpoint presentations. D10 is frequently assessed via unseen written examinations, essays, reports, projects and dissertations, in modules with a significant empirical content.

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 one or two of the following languages: Chinese, Japanese, French, German, Portuguese, 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 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 year abroad are reflective 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/or 20 for Level B languages, and at least 40 credits of compulsory International Relations modules. In Stage 2 students are required to study 40 credits of compulsory language modules for Chinese and Japanese and 20 credits for all other languages. They also have to study a compulsory International Relations 20-credit module. In Stage 4 students are required to study 40 credits for Chinese and Japanese and 20 credits for all other 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. At each Stage students must have at least 40 credits of language modules (including language-related cultural modules) and 40 credits of International Relations modules. The remaining 40 credits can be made up of either language or international relations modules.

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 study one or two languages. 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, C1-6). 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 intellectual skills (B1-3) and effective practice in key transferable skills (especially outcomes D1-5). In International relations, the programme provides the students with a general foundation in the main discipline of International Relations including key concepts, study and research skills, as well as an introduction to key themes such as Power, Inequality, and international connections.

At Stage 2 students study one or two languages. In addition to the compulsory practical language modules, 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, for those studying Level C Spanish or Level C French *ab initio* options in Catalan or Italian and for those studying Level B or C Chinese or Japanese an *ab initio* option on Korean language is available. 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, C1-6), practise cognitive skills in the target language (B1-3) as well as key transferable skills (such as 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. In International Relations, Stage 2 focuses on reinforcing students research and analytical skills and offering more in-depth understanding of themes introduced in Stage 1. This allows students to begin to specialise in certain areas if they wish. They can also select new areas of study, such as EDI and social issues linked to race, poverty and gender, or modules focusing on new geographical areas such as Africa or the Middle East.

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 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 between one semester and one academic year pursuing courses of study at a university or comparable institution in China or Japan. The School of Modern Languages and the School of Geography, Politics and Sociology have a number of student exchange programmes and/or formal links with Universities in France, Belgium, Germany, Austria, Spain, Portugal, Latin America, China and Japan.

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 (D2, D5); students preparing a dissertation will have the opportunity to develop knowledge and cognitive skills in this area too (A9, B5).

At Stage 4 (Stage 3 for students on 1942U) students study one or two languages. 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, C1-6) as well as the cognitive abilities of analysis and structured argumentation (B2-3). A wide range of more specialised options in education, 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. Students selecting 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 (including A2, 3, & 5, C1 & 4, B1-5, D1, 5, 7, 8). In International Relations, students take at least 40 credits of options that allow them to undertake a research project or a dissertation or deepen their

understanding and knowledge of themes and geographical areas introduced in Stage 1 or 2. This allows further specialisation in the subjects of their choice.

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

- Fully-integrated programme focusing on Languages and International Relations.
- Flexibility in terms of the level of languages taken (post A level and I) including East Asian Languages.
- Possibility of movement across degree programmes across the School of Modern Languages depending on options taken.
- Flexible optional year-abroad.
- Flexible and optional research-based modules in final year.

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/>