

**PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION
(Undergraduate)**



1	Awarding Institution	Newcastle University
2	Teaching Institution	Newcastle University
3	Final Award	BA (Hons)
4	Programme Title	Chinese Studies / Japanese Studies Chinese Studies / Japanese Studies (3-Year Programme) Chinese Studies / Japanese Studies with Placement Year East Asian Studies East Asian Studies with Placement Year
5	UCAS/Programme Code	TT12/1425U/1922U 1923U/1924U
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 allow students to establish and consolidate a linguistic foundation on which to build competence in the language systems of Chinese OR Japanese.

2 To allow students to develop and consolidate receptive (reading and listening) and productive (writing and speaking) skills in Chinese OR Japanese.

3 To provide students with a general knowledge and understanding of cultural, sociological, geographical, political, media studies and/or literary theories methodologies, dependent on choices of disciplinary pathway through the stages.

4 To allow students to pursue a deeper knowledge and understanding within selected social sciences or humanities pathways, including cultural studies, Chinese and Japanese history, East Asian societies, politics and international relations, political geography, gender studies, literary studies, and film and media studies.

5 To foster intercultural awareness and understanding (an appreciation both of internal diversity and of trans-cultural connectedness of cultures) and an attitude of curiosity and openness towards different cultures.

6 To foster particular intellectual skills (information gathering, synthesis and analysis) and key (transferable) skills (oral and written communication, oral presentation, organisation, adaptability and flexibility, self-study skills for language learning and IT skills) and to allow students to apply and practise those skills.

7 To give students the opportunity to pursue an inter-disciplinary and multi-disciplinary approach to learning, thus stretching the mind, stimulating the imagination, and creating a versatile graduate profile.

8 To satisfy the requirements of a Level 6 programme as set out in the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ).

9 To conform with prevailing University policies and QAA codes of practice.

10 To meet the requirements of the Benchmark Statements for Languages, Cultures and Societies.

TT12 only:

11 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.

12 Gain insight into international Higher Education and experience differences in academic approach and learning environment.

13 Provide the opportunity to experience new areas of study outside of their usual programme of study at Newcastle University.

1922U and 1924U only:

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

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

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

17 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 have a knowledge and understanding of:

A1 A knowledge and understanding of the phonetic, syntactic, and orthographic systems of Chinese OR Japanese to BA (Hons) degree standard. See statement of standards.

A2 A general knowledge and understanding of cultural, sociological, geographical, political, media studies and/or literary theories and methodologies. See section 12.

A3 A deeper knowledge and understanding of selected social sciences or humanities pathways, including cultural studies, Chinese and Japanese history, East Asian societies, politics and international relations, political geography, gender studies, literary studies, and film and media studies.

A4 (For students opting to write a year- abroad project or a Dissertation) An in-depth knowledge, appropriate to undergraduate level, of a self-chosen aspect of Chinese OR Japanese language, culture, history, society, politics, geography, literature or film.

A5 Intercultural awareness and understanding (an appreciation both of internal diversity and of trans-cultural connectedness of cultures).

A6 (For TT12, 1922U and 1924U only) Demonstrate the ability to adapt to different learning environments.

For 1923U and 1924U 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 Chinese OR Japanese language systems (A1) is via communicative, student-centred language teaching methods (guided discovery). Some formal linguistic instruction is also employed, though only as a vehicle for achieving communicative competence.

In the case of A2, knowledge and understanding of cultural, sociological, geographical, political, media studies and/or literary theories, are conveyed through a combination of lectures, seminars and tutorials, which encourage students to conceptualise societies, cultures and polities.

Regarding A3, knowledge and understanding are generally conveyed through lectures and seminars, which guide students towards independent reading and enable students to check their learning through group discussion and teamwork. Some options also employ group-learning exercises, which encourage students to research and analyse case materials with a view to pooling information. Other options employ workshops in order to encourage student discussion, to provide a conceptual framework within which students can develop their knowledge and understanding (Communications), to give students a chance to carry out tasks of summary, analysis, critique and evidence gathering (History), and to apply theoretical and analytical frameworks to case studies around the world (Geography).

In the optional Dissertation component (A4), one-to-one tutorials provide academic guidance, while the opportunity to carry out independent research allows students to apply and practise research skills. Dissertation workshops foster peer learning and peer support.

A5 is developed initially within the communicative language training framework and, for those taking a year abroad, is further enhanced during the student's semester or year abroad in China OR Japan.

Assessment Strategy

Knowledge and understanding (A1) is assessed by unseen written Continuous Assessment tests and Portfolio of Writing Assignments (evaluating student understanding and progress), then unseen written examination, aural examination and oral examination.

A2 is usually assessed by a combination of coursework assignments, essay and/or unseen written examination (all requiring critical analysis and application of ideas).

A3 is usually assessed by essay (requiring critical analysis and application of ideas) and/or unseen written examination (in some cases multiple choice examination or computer assessed examination). Some options employ a portfolio of research materials in order to test understanding of theoretical and methodological frameworks. Others (for example, History options) use 'gobbets' (documentary commentaries) as a means of assessing skills of reading and research. Some Politics options use briefing papers to test students' ability to present and analyse key data.

A4 is assessed by a cultural project carried out abroad or a dissertation, while Outcome A5 is assessed via reflective Tutor Posts completed during the YA.

Intellectual Skills

On completing the programme students should be able to:

- B1 Gather, synthesise, and evaluate information
- B2 Carry out 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 opt to write a dissertation) Design a research project, and select and employ appropriate research methodologies

Teaching and Learning Methods

B1-4 skills are initially developed at Stage 1 and are then enhanced variously through seminar preparation and presentation, group-learning exercises, workshops, group discussion, and data collection and analysis for the dissertation (where taken as an option). B1 skills are further developed through assessed project work, and B4 skills through critical case studies, or portfolio. B5 skills are developed at dissertation workshops and through one-to-one tutorials to facilitate the development of independent study and research skills through student self-evaluation.

Assessment Strategy

B1-4 skills are assessed by a range of coursework tasks, including continuous assessment tests (language modules), coursework assignments, essays, documentary commentaries, briefing papers, oral presentations, portfolio, project and critical case study. They are also assessed by prepared or unseen written examination, and as part of oral examinations (language modules). B1-5 may be assessed by dissertation/final year project, where taken as an option.

Practical Skills

On completing the programme students should be able to:

- C1 Demonstrate receptive (reading and listening) and productive (writing and speaking) skills in Chinese OR Japanese to BA (Hons) degree standard
- C2 Perform a range of communicative tasks
- C3 Demonstrate mediating skills - the ability to translate non-technical texts from

<p>and into the target language, and (in the case of Level D language modules) competent professional liaison interpreting skills</p> <p>C4 Make effective use of language reference materials, such as grammars, dictionaries and corpora</p> <p>C5 Practise independent language learning.</p> <p>C6 Make effective use of, critique (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.</p> <p>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.</p>
<p>Teaching and Learning Methods</p> <p>Learning outcomes C1-2 are achieved via communicative, student-centred skills training, e.g. developing and practising reading (skimming and scanning) skills, enhancing listening skills through language laboratory work, exemplifying and practising different writing styles, and conducting oral discussion and presentation, both individually and as part of a team. They are further consolidated through formal grammar instruction, e.g. guided study, drills and exercises, and use of IT resources. These skills are developed and consolidated during the year abroad in China OR Japan.</p> <p>C1-3 are 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; and summary and evaluation of texts in the target language.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>C6 is developed through lecture and seminar preparation, lectures, seminars, exercises, individual and group presentations, debates across all modules.</p> <p>C7 is developed particularly in undertaking a research project or a dissertation in the final stage of the programme.</p>
<p>Assessment Strategy</p> <p>C1-3 are assessed by unseen written continuous assessments (evaluating student progress) and unseen written examination (reading, writing and translating skills), aural examination (listening 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, critical commentaries, projects and presentations. C7 is assessed by dissertation / final-year project.</p>
<p>Transferable/Key Skills</p> <p>On completing the programme students should be able to:</p> <p>D1 Communicate clearly and effectively, both orally and in writing</p> <p>D2 Give oral presentations</p> <p>D3 Manage time, make plans and set priorities in order to achieve an objective</p> <p>D4 Work creatively and flexibly with others as part of a team</p> <p>D5 (For TT12 only) Adapt and operate effectively within a different cultural environment</p>

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 1923U and 1924U only:

D9 Reflect on and manage own learning and development within the workplace.

D10 Use existing and new knowledge to enhance personal performance in a workplace environment, evaluate the impact and communicate this process.

D11 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 skills are enhanced through seminar presentations and discussions, group-learning exercises, workshops and group discussion and through written assignments. In the case of language modules, they are developed through communicative skills training. Skills D23 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. D5 is developed initially through communicative language training and is later enhanced during the student's year abroad in China OR Japan. 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 (written communication) is assessed variously by coursework assignments, essays, briefing papers, critical commentaries, portfolio, project, critical case study, and dissertation, and by prepared or unseen written examination. D1 (oral communication) and D2 are assessed via assessed seminar presentations (some Politics and SML modules) and oral examinations (language modules). 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. D5 is assessed via the reflective tutor posts produced during the year abroad in China OR Japan. D8 is assessed in a number of ways including the preparation of various types of written assignment, seminars and dissertation (where taken as an option).

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* the Chinese or the Japanese language. For all students (whether starting *ab initio* at Level A language OR entering post- A level at Level B language), Stages 1, 2 and 4 of the programme are spent in residence attending Newcastle University, while Stage 3 is an optional year (one semester or a full academic year) spent in China or Japan studying an approved language course at a host university. The School of Modern Languages has formal Undergraduate exchange agreements with a large number of universities in mainland China and Japan. Tuition fees in both directions are waived. Students also have the option to spend 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.

For those who choose to take it, the Year Abroad is fully accredited, and assessment is by means of reflective Tutor Posts plus marks in language exams obtained at the host university. While all aspects of knowledge, understanding and language skills will be developed during the intercalating year, there will be particular opportunities for increasing intercultural awareness and understanding (A5), for developing self-study skills for language learning (C5), and for developing organisational and interpersonal skills (D3-5). Students preparing a dissertation will have the opportunity to develop knowledge and intellectual skills in this area too (A4, B1-5).

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. Compulsory practical language modules comprise 40 credits per Stage. Other modules taken while in residence at Newcastle University are 20 credits in weight,.

At Stage 1, students are required to study 40 credits of core practical language. These language modules must be passed for the purposes of progression to Stage 2. At Stage 2, students are required to study 40 credits of core language, which must be passed for the purposes of progression to Stage 3. At Stage 3, students pursue an optional year abroad. At Stage 4, students are required to study 40 credits for either Level C or Level D Chinese OR Japanese, depending on their level of entry at Stage 1. 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 and other contributing Schools within the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences (GPS; HCA; ECLS).

Students who opt not to take a year abroad may choose not to study Chinese or Japanese language in final year and be awarded with a degree in East Asian Studies. The 40 credits to replace the language credits must be taken from suitable SML optional modules.

The core practical language modules are taught in both English and Chinese OR Japanese, with the relative proportion of each medium corresponding to the language level; optional modules are taught in English, although key concepts are also introduced in the target language (Chinese OR Japanese). The range of optional modules includes those that are China- or Japan-specific and those that are social science- and theory-based. Modules are taught by five Schools within the HASS Faculty (SML; GPS; HCA; ECLS; APL). A few modules have a pre-requisite requiring study of a related course in a previous year.

At Stage 1, students who take Level A language are given a thorough grounding in the basic knowledge of the chosen language system (Chinese OR Japanese) and its cultural context, as well as in basic reading, writing, listening and speaking skills in that language. Students who take Level B language consolidate and build upon the knowledge of the language system and further develop those skills acquired at A-level as a preparation for the period of study abroad. All students start to develop skills necessary for becoming better language learners as well as certain intellectual and key (transferable) skills (A1, B1-3, C1-2, C4-5, D1-4, D7-8). This core linguistic foundation is supplemented by 2 compulsory modules designed to introduce them to the cultures of China and Japan respectively (A3). Students then develop their understanding within selected social sciences and humanities pathways (including cultural studies, historical studies, sociology, politics and international relations, political geography, gender studies, literary studies, and film and media studies), with a view to providing them with the conceptual tools useful for the study of East Asian societies and cultures (A3). These modules also provide an introduction for intellectual skills (Outcomes B1-4) and effective practice in key (transferable) skills (D1-4, D6-8).

At Stage 2, students who took Level A language at Stage 1 consolidate and build upon the linguistic foundation formed at Stage 1, deepening their knowledge of the chosen language system (Chinese OR Japanese), improving their reading, writing, listening and speaking skills in preparation for the period of study abroad, and enhancing their language learning skills as well as certain intellectual and key (transferable) skills (A1, B1-3, C1-2, C4-5, D1-4, D7-8). Students who took Level B language at Stage 1 further consolidate and enhance practical language skills (reading, listening, writing, and speaking in the target language – C1-2), with a view to gaining sufficient language competence to cope in general, personal, social, and business contexts. They also continue to develop specific key (transferable) skills (D1, 3, 4, 7, 8), All students then choose from a list of optional modules designed to further develop their understanding within selected social sciences and humanities pathways (Korean, cultural studies, historical studies, sociology, politics and international relations, political geography, gender studies, literary studies, and film and media studies). Most modules are China- or Japan-specific; all are broadly relevant to the study of East Asian societies and cultures (A3). These modules further enhance the intellectual skills introduced at Stage 1 (B1-4) and provide further practice in key (transferable) skills (D1-4, D6-8).

At Stage 3, students choose whether or not to spend a year (either one semester or a full academic year) in the target country (China OR Japan), consolidating and enhancing practical skills (reading, listening, writing, and speaking in the target language –C1-2) as well as specific key (transferable) skills, including adaptability within a different cultural environment (D1, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8), and developing intercultural awareness and understanding (A5). They may also take the opportunity to gather data relating to one self-chosen aspect of Chinese/Japanese language, culture, society, politics, geography, literature or film (where opting to take a Dissertation at Stage 4 – A4, B1-5, C1-2, D1, D3, D5-8).

At Stage 4 (Stage 3 for students on 1425U and 1923U), students who took Level B language at Stage 2 further deepen their knowledge and understanding of the chosen language system (Chinese or Japanese), and further develop reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills, with a view to gaining sufficient language competence to cope in general, personal, social, and business contexts. Students who took Level C language at Stage 2 develop advanced writing skills (C1-2), and begin to develop mediating skills in the chosen language; competence is enhanced through guided translation (into and out of the target language) and analysis of translation techniques; liaison interpreting (into and out of the target language); reading for gist exercises; and summary and evaluation of texts in the target language (C3). In addition, all students further enhance their language learning skills (A1, B1-3, C1-2, C4-5, D1-4, D7-8). All students then choose from a list of optional modules in order to further develop understanding within selected social sciences and humanities pathways (Korean, cultural studies, historical studies, sociology, politics and international relations, political geography, gender studies, literary studies, and film and media studies). Most modules are China- or Japan-specific; all are broadly relevant to the study of East Asian societies and cultures (A3). These modules further enhance the intellectual skills introduced at Stages 1 and 2 (B1-4) and provide further practice in key (transferable) skills (D1-4, D6-8). An optional dissertation module allows students to explore in depth one aspect of Chinese OR Japanese language, culture, society, politics, geography, literature or film, while fostering certain intellectual skills, practical skills and key (transferable) skills (A4, B1-5, C1-2, D1, D3, D5-8).

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

The programme combines a linguistic specialism in Chinese OR Japanese with a specific or all-round competence in one or more social sciences and humanities disciplines, allowing students to apply different social science theories and methodologies to the study of East Asia. It fosters an approach to East Asian studies that is both interdisciplinary and multi-disciplinary, and aims to produce uniquely attractive and versatile graduates. The programme is also unique in that it offers flexible entry and exit levels for language modules: those who have appropriate level of language can start from lower-intermediate and take further advanced level in the final year, while those who start from scratch can take either advanced or further advanced depending on their level at the end of Stage 3.

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.
