

**PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION
(Undergraduate)**



1	Awarding Institution	Newcastle University
2	Teaching Institution	Newcastle University
3	Final Award	BA (Hons) / BSc (Hons)
4	Programme Title	Archaeology Archaeology (with International Study Year)
5	UCAS/Programme Code	V400 1615U
6	Programme Accreditation	CifA
7	QAA Subject Benchmark(s)	Archaeology
8	FHEQ Level	Level 6
9	Last updated	Feb 2026

10 Programme Aims

The programme aims to produce undergraduates who:

1. Have a sound knowledge and understanding of the subject of archaeology and an in-depth knowledge and understanding of self-selected specialist areas within the subject.
2. Have developed a range of subject-specific skills (including those needed to carry out archaeological investigations) as well as the intellectual and key skills to equip them for lifelong learning.
3. Are aware of the role of the archaeological process and material remains in contemporary society.
4. Have been provided with an opportunity to study archaeology in an environment enhanced by research, and by the rich heritage resources of the British Isles (most particularly the North-East of England).
5. Will be capable of going on to further study, or undertaking a wide variety of jobs in archaeology, history, industry, commerce and the public sector.

The School of History, Classics and Archaeology aims to provide a programme:

6. In which teaching is informed by research, both relevant research in the discipline of archaeology, and research carried out by members of staff.
7. Which meets standards and complies with prevailing University policies and QAA codes of practice. Where courses of study take place outside the university during exchanges the standards will comply with the appropriate university policies on placements.
8. Graduates of the programme will have attained standards which at least meet Level 6 of the FHEQ and the QAA subject benchmarks for Archaeology.

For Students Undertaking the International Study Year:

1. 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.
2. Gain insight into international Higher Education and experience differences in academic approach and learning environment.
3. Provide the opportunity to experience new areas of study outside of their usual programme of study at Newcastle University.

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 statement for Archaeology.

Knowledge and Understanding

On completing the programme students should:

- A1 Be aware of the diverse sources of evidence used by archaeologists (including excavated, documentary, representational, artefactual, environmental and scientific data), knowledge of the nature of these forms of evidence, and a critical appreciation of the methodologies by which data can be acquired, analysed and interpreted from such sources.
- A2 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the basic concepts, theories and methods underpinning archaeology, with an ability to think critically about practice and interpretation in the subject area.
- A3 Have a broad and comparative knowledge of the prehistoric and historical archaeology of selected geographical regions and chronological periods.
- A4 Show knowledge and understanding at an intensive level of the sources and historiography, and/or the archaeological record and history of archaeological enquiry, relating to relatively short periods or limited topics in human history, acquired through studying with scholars at the forefront of their fields, in a cutting edge research environment.
- A5 Demonstrate knowledge of the origins and development of the discipline of archaeology.
- A6 Have acquired knowledge and understanding of national and regional archaeological remains and resources.
- A7 To understand archaeology as a professional practice in the UK and be aware of the value of the skills gained in fieldwork and other modules for future employment.

For Students Undertaking the International Study Year:

- A8 Demonstrate the ability to adapt to different learning environments.

Teaching and Learning Methods

The primary method of imparting knowledge and understanding (A1-A7) is lectures, supplemented by seminars and workshops and in the case of A1, A6 and A7 by participation in excavations, or other forms of practical fieldwork. A2 and A5 are introduced through the compulsory Stage 1 modules. A6 is developed through fieldtrips, contact with professional archaeologists working in the region, and museum visits. Seminars and workshops help to reinforce and amplify student learning gained in lectures. They also encourage independent study and throughout the programme students are encouraged to supplement taught material by independent study, for which they are given extensive support and guidance on source materials, including web-based material, and how to use these sources of information. A3 is developed through compulsory modules to provide an essential foundation, and expanded through optional modules selected by the student. A4 is taught both by lectures and seminars, and through the undertaking of an independent dissertation under staff supervision.

Assessment Strategy

Knowledge and understanding of the subject is primarily assessed by a diversity of written assignments, notably essays, projects, portfolios, and reports (A1-A7), with some unseen written examinations. In the case of A4 this is supplemented by submission of an undergraduate dissertation. Examinations primarily assess core information, and provide students with an opportunity to demonstrate their ability to structure a clear, concise and well-reasoned argument in a limited time period. Submitted essays and reports place more

emphasis on critical analysis and understanding. They enable students to demonstrate their employment of appropriate research techniques.

Intellectual Skills

On completing the programme students should be able to:

- B1 Locate, extract, evaluate and analyse different sorts of data.
- B2 Use analytical reasoning and critical skills in reading, writing and debating.
- B3 Use appropriate evidence to support a sustained argument or line of reasoning.
- B4 Adapt effectively to new and/or unexpected questions or problems.
- B5 Demonstrate intellectual independence.

Teaching and Learning Methods

Intellectual skills (B1-B5) are developed through exercises and guidance in lectures, in seminars, and lab sessions/practicals supplemented in the case of B1-B3 by written feedback and by discussion with staff. Students are encouraged to acquire such skills during the completion of a range of written assignments, notably essays and reports. Intellectual skills (B1-B5) are also encouraged by group and one-to-one discussion and debate in lectures and seminars, and (in the case of B2) through oral presentations. B1 and B4 are also developed in the course of fieldwork placements.

Assessment Strategy

Intellectual skills B1-B3 and B5 are assessed by written assignments, including unseen written examinations, and are also be assessed in the dissertation. B4 is primarily assessed by unseen written examination.

Practical Skills

On completing the programme students should be able to:

- C1 Produce clear, succinct, accurate, well-planned and coherent presentations in both written and oral forms.
- C2 Appreciate different interpretations of past events and processes, and be able to argue for and contest particular theories and points of interpretation.
- C3 Use practical and fieldwork skills in the observation and study of the physical remains of past societies, and the investigation, recording, collection, excavation and presentation of archaeological materials.
- C4 Appreciate the political and social significance of archaeological remains, and take a responsible attitude to their study, interpretation, preservation and presentation.
- C5 Apply the research skills required to process and evaluate historical and archaeological data, and produce thereby a dissertation.
- C6 Understand the issues involved in project management and manage a project to completion.

Teaching and Learning Methods

Written and oral presentation techniques (C1) are initially fostered in the compulsory skills modules in Stage 1, and via the Cite Them Right Course. They are developed via feedback on written and oral work throughout Stages 1-3, and via computer-cluster practical sessions. Oral presentation techniques are further developed (for example through question and answer sessions at the close of presentations) in compulsory and elective modules at Stages 2 and 3. Aspects of many subject-specific skills (C2, C4, C5) are taught in lectures and in seminars, supplemented by assigned work. C1, C2 and C5 are further acquired through research skills whilst training students for their dissertation research, through preparation of the dissertation itself, and in the course of dissertation supervisions. C3 is taught through participation in excavations, field trips, museum visits, and laboratory work and/or modules involving artefact handling and analysis. C4 is addressed initially in

Stage 1 through the compulsory Introduction to Archaeology module and supported in later stages through lectures, seminars and fieldwork across a number of modules. Students become aware of issues involved in project management (C6) through fieldwork and fieldwork modules and are supported in managing their own project in dissertation workshops.

Assessment Strategy

The ability of students to deploy practical skills C1-C4 effectively is assessed primarily by means of unseen written examination, written assignments, and the dissertation. C5 and C6 are assessed via the dissertation. Artefact analysis and observational skills (C3) are assessed in a range of material-based modules. Practical skills relating to fieldwork are assessed through the stage 2 fieldwork module.

Transferable/Key Skills

On completing the programme students should be able to:

- D1 Listen and take notes effectively.
- D2 Work independently, both in completing directed reading and assignments and in pursuing, with guidance, a self-directed research trajectory - for example by writing a dissertation.
- D3 Employ a variety of IT skills (including word-processing and spread sheet programmes, PowerPoint, email, *Canvas* and the internet).
- D4 Communicate information and ideas in writing, verbally and through oral and graphic presentations.
- D5 Adapt to varied working environments, problems and challenges.
- D6 Work with others in producing written and oral reports and presentations, work as part of a team in a fieldwork environment, and respect the viewpoints of others.
- D7 Manage their time effectively, and be able to meet deadlines.

For Students Undertaking the International Study Year

- D8 Adapt and operate in a different cultural environment.

Teaching and Learning Methods

Listening and note-taking (D1) are developed principally in lectures but also in seminars, including attendance at the oral presentations of other students. Note-taking is also a feature of independent study (D2). D2 and D6 are fostered throughout Stage 1 and through guidance provided in our comprehensive Degree Programme Handbook. At Stage 3, D2, D6 and D7 are further developed through dissertation research training and through preparation of the dissertation. IT skills (D3) are practiced by the word-processing of written assignments and in the preparation of PowerPoint presentations. Web-based bibliographic research and the use of digitised resources is encouraged (for example via the University's Online Reading List facility), and module leaders use the on-line *Canvas* system for the provision of course materials. Communication skills (D4) are learnt and practiced in question-and-answer sessions in lectures, in the preparation of group assignments and presentations (both written and oral), and in the course of fieldwork. Adaptability (D5) and team working skills (D6) are especially developed in the course of fieldwork placements at Stages 2 and 3. Students undertaking fieldwork encounter entirely new working environments, people and problems, and develop interpersonal skills and a flexible, adaptive approach as a result

Assessment Strategy

D4 (oral communication) and D6 are assessed by means of the grading of oral and written group presentations. D1, D2, D3, D4 (written communication), D5 and D7 are assessed by a combination of unseen examinations, written assignments, and the dissertation. IT skills (D3) are assessed as part of the process of grading written work.

12 Programme Curriculum, Structure and Features

Basic structure of the programme

Duration: 3 years

Stages: 3

Number of credits per year: 120

Balance of credits (compulsory/optional): 100 C in Stage 1, 40 C in Stage 2, 40 C in Stage 3

Students have the option to take part in an International Study Year in-between Stage 2 and 3 of their programme. They will be transferred on to programme code 1615U.

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

This Single Honours Degree programme inspires graduates to think about the human past, and the varied ways in which archaeologists can investigate and interpret material remains from that past. The programme centres around three compulsory subject areas:

Prehistory; Historical Archaeology (Romans-present); and Theory and Practice.

We place a good deal of emphasis on practical, 'hands on' training in this programme, and alongside the introductory modules taken by all Stage 1 students, those on the V400 programme take *Stuff: Living in a Material World*, which introduces key skills in material culture studies at an early stage in their degree. At Stage 2 students take a compulsory module in Archaeological Theory, and undertake practical fieldwork training. They can also choose from a range of thematic and practical electives (options). At Stage 3, students work towards a dissertation, developing skills in project management and learning the value of skills developed through the programme for future employment. They chose modules from a range of electives to develop interests and specialisms. A high level of professional experience and research expertise of staff in material culture, combined with access to the collections of the Great North Museum: Hancock support regular contact with artefacts across modules at all stages. At Newcastle, our students are able to study aspects of Archaeology from prehistory right through to the 21st century.

Students can also elect to be awarded with a BSc in Archaeology, provided they meet the required credits earned through completing modules in archaeological science. In Stage 1, students have the opportunity to take modules in Biology, Earth Sciences, depending on A-level qualifications, and a clear foundation is provided by the compulsory module Introduction to Archaeological Science. In Stage 2, the modules Archaeological Theory and Interpretation alongside Fieldwork and Post-Excavation ensure students understand frameworks underpinning creation and collection of archaeological data, with scientific interpretation and skills provided by Animals, Plants and People: An Introduction to Environmental Archaeology. At Stage 3, students work towards a dissertation, developing skills in project management and learning the value of skills developed through the programme for future employment; this dissertation can also be a laboratory-based project.

Programme regulations (link to on-line version)

[Programme Regulations](#)

13 Support for Student Learning

Generic information regarding University provision is available [here](#).

Resources specifically supporting learning in Archaeology

Students have access to the library located at the Great North Museum — an unrivalled collection of works on archaeology, natural history and history. Good local history libraries are also available at the Newcastle Central Library and the library of the Literary and Philosophical Society.

Students also have access to the extensive artefact collections of the Great North Museum (the premier museum for the north-east of England and the 'gateway' to the Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site). Information on these and other local resources is listed on the School web-site (<http://www.ncl.ac.uk/historical/>) and on individual staff websites.

Students have access to the Wolfson Laboratory, which specialises in material culture analysis, populated with a suite of reference collections (e.g. animal bone; ceramic) and specialist equipment including high spec microscopy and a CT-scanner. Health and safety training is provided in advance of lab use, and specialist equipment use is supported by training and supervision. Specialist geomorphological and soil analyses and teaching are undertaken in the EarthSlides lab.

14 Methods for evaluating and improving the quality and standards of teaching and learning

Generic information regarding University provision is available [here](#).

Accreditation reports

[to add – URL for ClfA accreditation report]

Additional mechanisms

N/A

15 Regulation of assessment

Generic information regarding University provision is available [here](#).

In addition, information relating to the programme is provided in:

The University Prospectus: <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/undergraduate/degrees/#subject>

Degree Programme and University Regulations: <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/regulations/>

Please note. This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and of the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve if she/he takes full advantage of the learning opportunities provided.