BA (Hons) Architecture

The Programme Team

Programme leader

Each programme has a programme leader, ultimately responsible for its mooth running and organisation. The programme leader for the Architecture programme is Manuel Cresciani.

Year Tutors

The role of year tutors is to coordinate the teaching, coursework, visiting speakers, attendance, etc. and generally ensure the smooth running of the course.
The Year Tutors are:

Year 1	Sandra Costa Santos
Year 2	Oliver Jones
Year 3	Kelly Mackinnon

Teaching team

The main staff you will come across are as follows:

Name	Room	Tel	Email
William Campbell	C202	227 4831	w.campbell@northumbria.ac.uk
Manuel Cresciani	D202	227 3063	manuel.cresciani@northumbria.ac.uk
Ben Elliott	C202	227 3004	b.elliott@northumbria.ac.uk
Andrea Couture	C202	227 3269	andrea.couture@northumbria.ac.uk
Peter Holgate	D203	227 3720	peter.holgate@northumbria.ac.uk
Paul Jones	D203	243 7279	p.jones@northumbria.ac.uk
Oliver Jones	C202	227 4787	oliver.g.f.jones@northumbria.ac.uk
Kelly MacKinnon	C202	227 4831	kelly.mackinnon@northumbria.ac.uk
Sebastian Messer	D201	243 7741	sebastian.messer@northumbria.ac.uk
Sandra Costa Santos	C202	243 7982	sandra.santos@northumbria.ac.uk
Paul Ring	C202	243 7015	paul.ring@northumbria.ac.uk
Stephen Roberts	C202	243 7891	stephen.roberts@northumbria.ac.uk
Kyung Wook Seo	D202	227 4818	kyung.seo@northumbria.ac.uk

Programme administration

Each programme has dedicated programme support who are responsible for the administration of your programme. Your Programme Support Coordinators are based in room B201, Ellison Building and can be contacted on 0191 227 4722.

How to contact tutors

Appointments

Academic staff teach on many modules/programmes and it is strongly advisable to make an appointment if you wish to see them preferably by email. Occasionally you may be able to have an immediate appointment, but don't be disappointed if you are asked to return at a mutually convenient time. Please contact staff to cancel if you are unable to make the arranged appointment.

Notice board and Blackboard

The main point of contact for staff with students is through either the programme notice board or via Blackboard announcements. These can inform you of timetable changes, assessment information or personal messages.

YOU MUST REGULARLY CHECK THE NOTICEBOARDS, EMAIL AND BLACKBOARD ANNOUNCEMENTS.

It is particularly important to check notices at the start of the semester when timetable changes are more likely and towards the assessment periods when important information will be displayed.

Matt Drury, Year 3 2008-2009 (winner of the 2010 Northern Design Competition Award for Architectural Design)

Room Locations

Much of your teaching will take place in Ellison Building C Block (C005 + C105) but you may be required to go to other parts of the University for classes. The building/room abbreviations will be explained when you receive your timetable.

Programme Structures

In line with other academic institutions, the University operates a unitised system of programmes. Each undergraduate degree is made up of three academic levels – levels 4, 5 and 6.

Level 4

Level 4 modules introduce the student to a range of formative studies to ensure a basic knowledge and understanding of the main programme subject areas which underpin the whole academic programme along with an insight into the structure of the industry and the professions operating within the Built Environment. Studio based design projects support the main subject areas providing an holistic introduction to the design process and associated skills and knowledge.

Level 5

Level 5 modules extend the factual knowledge and understanding in each of the main subject areas and are intended to increase a students ability to take responsibility for their own learning.

Level 6 – Final Year

This consolidates Levels 4 and 5 and provides the final academic challenge for the student as demonstrated by an ability to deal with decision making at strategic levels; identification and analysis of problems; to synthesise solutions. A major focus of activity will be modules aligned to the final year Design Projects where opportunities will be provided for each student to demonstrate their full range of personal transferable skills.

Modules

Each module on the course carries credit points:
Single module = 10 credit points
Double module = 20 credit points
Triple module = 30 credit points
Each 10 credits represents 100 hours of student workload which on average equates to about 6–7 hours per week of lectures, seminars, preparation, revision, assessment, etc. Staff contact time will be approx 10–15 hours per week. Your own self-managed study time should amount to approx 30–35 hours per week.

Educational aims of The Programme

The programme is studied in the wider context of the natural and built environments and is informed by current and prospective professional practice as well as research and academic debate. There is a vocational focus which aims to equip graduates with those personal and professional skills that are necessary for employment, whilst broadening understanding of the changing needs of society, concepts of sustainable development of the built environment, and the maintenance of appropriate ethical standards and the regulatory framework within which work is conducted.

The programme aims to develop a range of students' abilities to enable them to:

- work collaboratively within an interdisciplinary environment
- evaluate and apply relevant methodologies
- be independent thinkers and learners
- demonstrate the appropriate use of IT
- challenge routine and influence change
- evaluate data and solve problems
- manage information communicate
- effectively

The programme prepares the graduate for a wide range of opportunities in a rapidly changing professional context.
The BA (Hons) course offers a balanced education, focussing on the discipline and practice of architectural design underpinned with a knowledge of cultural, physical and historical context, technology and environmental principles and management. This proposal continues to aim to achieve the objectives set out first in the 1994 HEFCE report on architecture and the 1992 Burton report on architectural education to "equip students

Second year design charrette review

for a wider role within a changing building industry", and "provide an education in architecture for less specialised careers". The educational philosophy is in accordance with the principle of promoting "degrees with particular emphasis on design, technology and basic management skills", as recommended by the CIC in 1993, and is in line with thinking, which encourages variation in courses. The programme is prescribed by the ARB and validated by the RIBA until 2018, so honours graduates are exempt from Part I of the professional examinations and progress to further study towards an architectural qualification if they so wish. Consequently the design of the programme has incorporated the requirements of the "Prescription of qualifications: ARB Criteria (May 2002)" which have also been adopted and approved by the RIBA, the QAA Benchmarking Document, and the EC Architect's Directive (1985).

The programme aims to:

- develop the ability to design buildings and spaces with an awareness of context, through research, reflection, iteration and the application of specific knowledge.
- develop an open-minded, rational and analytical approach to the solution of design problems.
- develop an understanding of architectural activity within the broader context of the built environment through the acquisition of personal and general management skills.
- promote the academic, personal and professional development of all students and foster their ability to become reflective practitioners and lifelong learners .
- equip the graduate with an appropriate level of knowledge, practical and transferable skills to progress to the next stage of their architectural education, or roles within the built environment and related professional areas.

This will be achieved through the following objectives, to:

- demonstrate a rational, analytical and enquiring approach to the solution of design problems, which recognises sustainable issues, and environmental and technological constraints and opportunities.
- show skills and confidence in their intuitive, creative and innovative abilities.
- exercise visual sensitivity relative to understanding the nature of requirements that transcend functional adequacy in the built environment.
- understand the constraints within the discipline of design through appropriate formal study of related theory and technologies.
- express a critical perspective on design through a background of related historical visual and cultural studies, and an appreciation of contemporary influences on design. form an understanding and personal engagement
- with ethical, professional and social responsibilities when designing for the built environment. recognise that the practice of design is an economic, cultural
- and humanising force that stretches beyond national boundaries, through a balanced programme of activities outside the University.
- communicate design outcomes using appropriate visual, verbal and computer-based means.
- be able to research, formulate and respond to programmes or briefs that are appropriate to specific contexts and circumstances.
- demonstrate an application of the broader issues of management in the design and creation of buildings through reflection and application to projects.
- analyse problems, and use innovation, logical and lateral thinking in their solution.
- be flexible and adaptable in the approach to and development of an issue, problem or opportunity.

Aims and objectives

Design is a complex process that involves the application of implicit as well as explicit knowledge and intuitive as well as rational thinking. It requires a sophisticated interaction of art, technology, human, organisational and practice-based knowledge and skills by the individual both in a personal and in an interactive team context. The programme curriculum is designed to facilitate the development of these attributes in the students and through this support their learning, employability and future development. The essential character of the programme is derived from its experiential and holistic approach, strong emphasis being placed upon information retrieval, communication and personal enquiry.
The modules are largely evolved around student centred learning strategies. They are predominantly project or assignment based, and rely on experiential learning. Studio projects and lecture content is supported by site visits, European study trips and visting lectures. Students are encouraged to make extensive use of design studios, workshops, and computing laboratories to develop knowledge, skills, techniques and understanding. The interaction of the student body in this respect is regarded as a critically important factor in the learning process. The development of practical skills and techniques in the early modules includes workshops, seminars and demonstrations followed by hands on experience through assignment work. The intention is that students begin to plan and apply techniques and use facilities to develop and communicate ideas as appropriately as possible and as a fully integrated working practice within the design process. Students are introduced to the different levels and complexities of design problem-solving on an incremental basis. This enables them to consolidate and develop a confidence in their learning outcomes, and later to develop an individual approach to their design investigations. Peer group critiques are used to review projects, encourage synergy and teamwork and prompt students to present and share the value of their work. Design projects are supported by a concurrent series of lectures and seminars in theoretical and contextual studies to increase students' understanding of the relationship between the subject matter and design practice. Type and timing of assignment work within the supporting modules is designed to integrate with, and emphasise the holistic nature of design This structure ensures that students gradually develop an appreciation of the integrative nature of key knowledge disciplines to the design process. While some lectures impart theoretical and academic knowledge, other sessions are specially devised to encourage a design-based approach to the acquisition, application and interpretation of theoretical principles. This is achieved by involving the student in active participation and debate.

Students are encouraged to become student members of the RIBA, and local RIBA, Northern Architecture and related events are publicised within the Department.

In the third and final year of study, students are counselled about employment opportunities, alternative professional routes and progression to Part II courses. The Year-Out programme and the Part II programme have now been running for over five years .

Programme learning outcomes

Learning Outcomes of Programme Specified in terms of performance capabilities to be shown on completion of the programme/ pathway. Please identify numerically to correspond to the map of learning outcomes in section 18.

Design is central to the programme, and students need to develop a knowledge and understanding of design as a process, an intellectual skill, and a practical activity. An understanding of the cultural context, technological and environmental issues, and how they influence design, and the knowledge and skills to communicate and manage this process, are essential to the successful development of the student's the design and research abilities. Learning outcomes are therefore expressed within the headings of knowledge and understanding, intellectual, practical, and transferable skills, as aspects of design, cultural context, technology and environment, communication and management.

Knowledge and understanding Students

will be able to:

1. Demonstrate the way that analysis, research, context, budget, preparation and development of a brief inform a design proposal.
2. Show an understanding of architectural histories and theories, of physical, artistic and cultural contexts, and their use in informing the design process
3. Demonstrate the impact on design of regulatory frameworks, the needs and aspirations of clients or users, the roles of those who collaborate in the making process and the impact of the design upon the wider community.
4. The impact of environment, structure and technologies on design.
5. Show an understanding of the principles of building technologies, structure, environmental design and construction methods, in relation to human well-being, a sustainable environment, the properties and meanings of materials and their use, and process of assembly, together with the regulatory frameworks, and health & safety considerations that guide design and building construction
6. Show awareness of the influences on the contemporary built environment of individual buildings, the design of cities, past and present societies and wider global issues.
7. Demonstrate knowledge of the histories and theories of architecture and urban design, the history of ideas, and the related disciplines of art, cultural studies and landscape studies.
8. Show an awareness of the principles of business management and how a small business operates.
9. Demonstrate knowledge of how buildings are designed and built in the context of architectural and professional practice and the framework of the construction industry within which it operates.

Intellectual skills Students

will be able to:

1. Form considered judgements about the spatial, aesthetic, technical and social qualities of a design within the scope and scale of a wider environment.
2. Reflect upon, and relate their ideas to, a design and to the work of others.
3. Be able to conceptualise, investigate and develop the design of three-dimensional objects and spaces.
4. Be able to conceive architectural designs on a specific site within the broader landscape and context of urban planning.
5. Be able to research, formulate and respond to programmes or briefs that are appropriate to specific contexts and circumstances.
6. Be flexible and adaptable in the approach to and development of an issue, problem or opportunity
7. Show an ability to respond to a broad constituency of interests and to the social and ethical concerns of the subject, and be able to listen, and critically respond to, the views of others and appreciate the importance of communication and dialogue in the development and discussion of design ideas.
8. Identify and evaluate management styles.

Practical skills Students

will be able to:

1. Demonstrate coherent architectural designs, that integrate social, aesthetic and technical requirements, demonstrate the integrative relationship of structure, building materials and constructional elements and the integrative relationship between climate, service systems and energy supply.
2. Work as part of a team.
3. Demonstrate skills in using appropriate manual visual communication methods in a variety of media to convey and evaluate design ideas and proposals
4. Demonstrate skills in using two and three dimensional electronic communication methods of conveying design ideas.
5. Use verbal and written communication methods to clearly describe and critically appraise design ideas and proposals.
6. Understand and use the conventions of architectural representation
7. Develop an ability to listen and critically respond to the views of others, and engage in informed dialogue.

Transferable/key skills

Students will be able to:

1. Manage and appraise his/her own working procedures, and hence develop practices of reflection and of lifelong learning.
2. Develop an ability to listen and critically respond to the views of others, and engage in informed dialogue
3. An ability to select and use appropriate visual, graphic, written, verbal, digital and electronic means to communicate effectively to the intended interest group.

4. Manage time and work to deadlines.
5. Analyse problems, and use innovation, logical and lateral thinking in their solution.
6. Be flexible and adaptable in the approach to and development of an issue, problem or opportunity.

Learning resources and assessment strategies

Delivery of the programme will be enhanced by a range of learning materials such as workbooks, web-based resources and the internet. In levels 5 and 6, projects are developed with nationally recognised local practices, so that students have the opportunity to gain from structured contact with practitioners during tutorials and reviews. Senior members of staff from the practices are involved in the development, teaching, review and feedback of these studio projects.

As the students move into Level 6, there is an increasing emphasis on taking responsibility for their own learning, as evidenced by contemporary influences in architectural design, the research paper in project management, and their approach to the design projects.

The aim of the assessment strategy will be to offer the students a variety of methods to test their knowledge and understanding; intellectual, practical and transferable skills; and to prepare them for practice. Formative assessment involves reflective logbooks, self and peer group critiques, staff feedback in seminars, tutorials and interim reviews, experimentation in workshops and laboratories and practical exercises with live buildings. 50% of the summative assessment will be based on the development of a portfolio resulting from the studio projects (BE1113),
(BE0441),
(BE1056), (BE1114), (BE0886), (BE0623).

Throughout the course, assignments in supporting modules are aligned to studio projects; Year One BE1378 and BE0828, Year Two: BE1168 and BE 0969, Year Three:BE0888, BE0911 and BE1200.

Research, analytical and communication skills are demonstrated in the assignment in BE1200, seminar papers and presentations BE0884 and BE0823 and exam in BE0970.

The RIBA/ARB criteria

The curriculum is designed to meet the academic requirements for exemption from Part I of RIBA examinations and to satisfy the ARB criteria for the prescription of qualifications. By the end of Level 6, students are able to show in their design and academic portfolios that they satisfy the RIBA/ARB criteria. These are:

Design

Students will demonstrate coherent architectural designs that integrate knowledge of:

- The ways that analysis, research, context, budget, preparation and development of a brief inform a design proposal.
- The regulatory frameworks, and health and safety considerations that guide design and building construction.
- Architectural histories and theories, of physical, artistic and cultural contexts, and their use in informing the design process.

And ability to:

- Work as part of a team.

Technology and Environment

Students will demonstrate, within coherent architectural designs and academic portfolio, the ability to integrate knowledge of:

- The principles of building technologies, environmental design and construction methods, in relation to:
  - human wellbeing
  - the welfare of future generations
  - the natural world consideration of
  - a sustainable environment
  - use of materials
  - process of assembly
  - structural principles
  - The impact on design of legislation, codes of practice and health and safety both during the construction and occupation of a project

Cultural Context

Students will demonstrate within coherent architectural design and academic portfolio awareness of:

- The influences on the contemporary built environment of individual buildings, the design of cities, past and present societies and wider global issues

Knowledge of:

- The histories and theories of architecture and urban design, the history of ideas, and the related disciplines of art, cultural studies and landscape studies

And ability to:

- Form considered judgements about the spatial, aesthetic, technical and social qualities of a design within the scope and scale of a wider environment.
- Reflect upon, and relate their ideas to, a design and to the work of others.

Communication

Students will demonstrate within coherent architectural designs and academic portfolio ability to:

- Use visual, verbal and written communication methods and appropriate media (including sketching, modelling, digital and electronic techniques) to clearly and effectively convey and critically appraise design ideas and proposals.
- Use the conventions of architectural representations from two-dimensional and three-dimensional graphics to computer generated and physical models.
- Listen, and critically respond to, the views of others.

Management Practice and Law

At Part 1 students will demonstrate within an academic portfolio an awareness of:

- The principles of business management and how a small business operates.

A knowledge of:

- How buildings are designed and built in the context of architectural and professional practice and the framework of the construction industry within which it operates.

And ability to:

- Manage and appraise their own working practices, whether working independently or collaboratively.

These criteria were extracted from The ARB document criteria. For further details refer to the ARB website:

http://www.architecture.com/RIBA/Becomeanarchitect/Assets/Files/ValidationProcedures2011-SECONDREVISION2MAY2014.pdf http://www.arb.org.uk/files/files/ARB_Criteria_pt1.pdf

Year structure and approach

Extracts from Programme Specification: BA Architecture

The programme is project-led and most learning takes place in design studios. This enables a highly creative approach to design within realistic parameters, and helps to acquire the essential skills and techniques. The projects will be supported by lectures, seminars, tutorials, group work, CAD-based learning, practical events in workshops and laboratories, field study visits, directed and independent learning. Throughout the course, projects are designed to have input from clients, engage with the development of briefs and relate to real sites. Students experience an interdisciplinary environment in which there will be opportunities to work alongside students of interior architecture and other built environment disciplines.

First Year (Level 4)

First year is about the development of awareness of issues, knowledge of simple technologies and the acquisition of fundamental skills.

The projects are designed to develop a preliminary insight into the process of design through a series of individual and group exercises, which encourage experimentation with space and form, and the investigation of context, precedent, programme, and environmental and technological constraints and opportunities, together with an increasing ability to communicate these ideas. Studio-based studies are supported by modules which introduce concepts of sustainability, and environmental, structural and constructional technologies, and cultural influences on design. Communication skills are practised in design projects and supported by a module in visual communications (which includes drawing, computer aided drafting and model making), and team working, verbal and written skills within the management module. An appreciation of management is introduced through the use of the management portfolio, where students are able to reflect on personal responses to projects and relate these to the principles introduced in the supporting management module.

At the end of the first year the students should have a preliminary insight and introduction into the process of design, should have demonstrated a successful application of their developing knowledge and skills to a simple building problem on a real site. This approach gives the student the confidence to tackle the more complex design problems in Level 5. There is the opportunity for those students who are not satisfactorily developing in design, to transfer to a more appropriate programme, subject to the approval of the relevant programme leader.

Second Year (Level 5)

In second year students are concerned with larger scale, more complex design problems, with an emphasis on place, context and meaning, as well as the application of more sophisticated technologies to create successful design solutions.

Design projects are central to the programme, with the students working with briefs for buildings with a variety of spaces on urban sites with historical and cultural issues to address, and physical and spatial constraints. Studies involve site and spatial analysis, planning and organisation, and the demonstration of an understanding and imaginative application of material, structure, constructional and environmental knowledge. Students will engage with client and briefing issues, and continue to demonstrate their developing understanding of personal, team working and management skills. Communication skills are developed within the design project modules.

Modules in historical and cultural influences on architecture, technologies, spatial and structural studies and lighting design support projects, and module assignments are designed to be relevant and underpin project work. The management theme is developed by a module, which addresses issues at a more intellectual viewpoint through the investigation of teamwork, motivation and leadership.
By the end of second year students will be able to present both the process and the outcomes of their design investigations using appropriate visual, oral and written skills, reflect upon the results, and will have developed confidence in their ability to address complex design issues.

Third Year (Level 6)

The final year is designed to encourage exploration, enjoy programme, and demonstrate how complex cultural, technological and environmental issues can be integrated in realising imaginative solutions to significant public buildings. This is achieved through two major projects.
The first project is specifically urban. Although the objectives are the same as the first, the environment presents a different set of constraints and opportunities, and gives the opportunity to explore some of the issues of place and process, involving a broader urban context than that immediately surrounding the site. The second project is
set in an open landscape. It provides a flexible platform for looking at narrative as well as form and function in analysing and expressing an aesthetic response.Each project examines an aspect of technology in detail as part of
the design process. This is closely linked with the environmental and technical design module.

As well as specific analysis, the objective is to understand how technology is integrated with the design process and how it both affects
and is affected by it. The first project concentrates on constructional technologies, the second environmental and sustainable issues, and the last investigates and demonstrates the integration of environmental services, construction and structure.
These are supported by modules on contemporary influences on architectural design and architectural and design project management, where constraints and processes in the realisation of buildings are examined in preparation for practice. The students have an opportunity to deepen their understanding by preparing a research paper on an issue related to the practice of architecture. The second project is set in an open landscape. It provides a flexible platform for looking at narrative as well as form and function in analysing and expressing an aesthetic response.
There is a national requirement that all programmes of study have a publicly available 'Programme Specification'.
The Programme Specification provides an account of the 'Learning Outcomes' of a programme of study (broadly – the student's capabilities of the programme) and how these are to be achieved in a structured way by progression through the programme.
This section of the handbook is based on the Programme Specification for your programme. The full and definitive version can be found at
http://www.northumbria.ac.uk/programmespecs/.

Programme Structure

The grid structures for each year are shown below.

First Year Structure (Level 4)							
Semester 1	Space and Design Investigations BE0441	Introduction to Architectural Technologies BE1378	Architectural & Design Projects 1 BE1113	Human Comfort: Environment Awareness BE0828 (10 credits)	Management Principles, and Practice BE0884	An Introduction to Architectural History and Theory BE1057	Introduction to Architectural Communication BE1056
Semester 2	(20 credits)	(20 credits)	(30 credits)		(10 credits)	(10 credits)	(20 credits)

Second Year Structure (Level 5)					
Semester 1	Historical and Contemporary Influences on Architectural Design BE0970	Architectural & Design Projects 2 Semester two only BE1114	Architectural Design Projects Semester one only BE0886	Technology and Environmental Applications BE1168	Communicating Architecture BE0969
Semester 2	(20 credits)	(30 credits)	(30 credits)	(30 credits)	(10 credits)

Year 3 (Final Year) (Level 6)					
Semester 1	Contemporary Influences on Architecture BE1199	Constructional and Structural Design BE0888	Architectural and Design Project Management BE1200	Environment and Systems Integration BE0911	Architectural Design BE0623
Semester 2	(20 credits)	(20 credits)	(10 credits)	(10 credits)	(60 credits)

Assessment Regulations For Northumbria Awards

The Assessment Regulations for Northumbria Awards (ARNA) are the standard regulations which apply to all of the University's academic programmes. Any variations to ARNA have to be approved for a particular programme.
For full details please go to the **http://northumbria.ac.uk/arna**

Compensation

Failure in modules may be compensated at the discretion of the Examination Board and subject to Professional Body requirements. Compensation is only applied provided the level average has been met and is only permitted where a module mark of at least 30% has been attained. Up to 20 credits may be compensated at Level 4.

Non-compensatable Modules

The ARB and RIBA have a requirement that all modules covering aspects of the syllabus described in their 'Prescription of Qualifications' must be passed. On the advice of the RIBA, this is interpreted as meaning that all modules in second year (Level 5) and final year (Level 6) must be passed. Details of non-compensatable modules are given below;

Year/level	Module No.	Module Title	Credits
Level 4	BE1113	Architectural & Design Projects 1	30
	BE0441	Space and Design Investigations	20
Level 5	BE0114	Architectural & Design Projects 2	30
	BE0886	Architectural Design Projects	30
	BE1168	Technology and Environmental Applications	30
	BE0970	Historical and Contemporary Influences on Architectural Design	20
	BE0969	Communicating Architecture	10
Level 6	BE0623	Architectural Design	60
	BE0888	Constructional and Structural Design Architectural	20
	BE1200	and Design Project Management Contemporary	10
	BE1199	Influences on Architecture Environment and	20
	BE0911	Systems Integration	10

Requirements to gain the award

Under the University modular system, each student must achieve a total of 360 credit points to receive an honours degree. Normally, this is divided into three academic years, each year equal to 120 credit points. Each year is then divided into two semesters, with the equivalent of 60 points of study each semester. In some cases subjects are taught in multiple modules, and some single modules are taught across both semesters. Full details of the requirements to progress through the award are given in ARNA Section 4, see web link above.

External Examiners

In its latest Quality Code for Higher Education published in October 2011, the Quality Assurance Agency requested details of external examiners be published in our documentation. Listed below is an outline of external examiners currently in place:

Name	Job Title	Company
Professor Alex Wright	Head of Architecture	University of Bath
Richard Collis	Partner	FCB Studios, Bath
Professor Nick Dunn	Urban Design	University of Lancaster

Module descriptors

Module Descriptors give information about each module (subject) Delivered on your programme.
How to Obtain a Module Descriptor from the University's Website
First, open up Internet Explorer or Netscape Navigator and log into the Northumbria University website at http://northumbria.ac.uk/. Click on:

1. My Northumbria
2. Module Search
3. Type in module code
4. Click on 'Go'

Or alternatively, type the following address into your browser:
http://nuweb.northumbria.ac.uk/live/webserv/mod.php

Assessment Processes Explained

Why are assessments necessary ?
Assessment makes an essential contribution to your education. It acts to motivate you to focus and reflect on your learning and to apply and synthesise your knowledge. It also permits you to gauge your progress and act to address any weaknesses. Assessment methods are therefore an integral part of the learning process. From the University's perspective, it enables your tutors to monitor your progress, measure your attainment, maintain standards on the programme, and determine your final degree classification.

How can you be sure that the assessments are appropriate and relevant ?
The mix of assessments across each programme is carefully selected to enable students to demonstrate a range of skills and knowledge which become progressively more challenging level-by-level. Assessment techniques are chosen to fit the subject discipline and reflect the expectations of employers and accreditation bodies. Each assessment task is aligned with module and programme learning outcomes and contributes in part to the development of discipline-specific knowledge and understanding, academic, practical or transferable skills.

How can you be sure that the assessments which are set are fair ?
Individual assessment tasks are written by Module Leaders and are subject to peer-review by other staff in the Department before they are agreed and distributed to students. In addition, External Examiners, who are colleagues from other Universities and (for professionally accredited programmes) from industry, are appointed to ensure that the standards at Northumbria are appropriate, and a key role is to review the assessment questions and marking schemes.

How do we inform you about the criteria we use to judge your work ?
Generic grade descriptors by level of study are supplied within your Handbook. These reflect the increasing demands and expectations of standards as students progress through their programme. In addition, you are supplied with specific assessment criteria at the module level as part of your coursework specifications.

How do we undertake marking ?
Marking involves staff allocating marks according to defined marking criteria that have been approved in advance. Assessments may be marked by a single staff member or a team of markers (depending on the size of the module). These are invariably the staff who delivered the module and their expertise in the subject discipline is assured. If the work is marked by a team, initial meetings and sample marking is undertaken to establish common expectations in relation to the marking criteria to minimise variations across markers.

How do you know that marking is fair ?
Once all the marking has been completed for an assessment, a sample of the work is selected for 'moderation'. The sample size is proportional to the number of scripts and is selected from the whole range of marks. Student work is anonymous during the marking and moderation process and your name will only be revealed once all the marks have been agreed following the sample check. Prior to the Examination Board, the External Examiner also verifies the appropriateness of the marks awarded within the sample, and it is only at the Exam Board stage that the marks are fully approved. If there are disparities between markers during the moderation process, then additional work may be sampled and third markers may be called upon to resolve any differences. By the end of the whole process the Exam Board must report that it is satisfied that the marks that have been awarded are a true reflection of the quality of the work.

Why does it take 4 weeks to mark your work ?
Although 20 working days (4 weeks) may seem to you like a long time for work to be marked and returned to you, it is important that we allocate sufficient time for staff to carefully consider the work, so that the mark allocated fairly reflects the quality of your submission. Tutors' marking workloads have to be considered in relation to the other academic duties they have to perform. We estimate that, on average, each assessment takes approximately 20-30 minutes to mark and provide feedback. In addition, once marked, all assessments have to be moderated (see above) to ensure fairness and consistency.

What level of feedback should you expect ?
Feedback is a vital part of your learning process and will occur throughout your engagement with academic staff. Informal levels of feedback will often occur in lectures, seminars, lab work and project activities, and through the use of in-class activities and questioning. More formal feedback occurs during the assessment process and usually involves staff writing comments on scripts that are returned to students. Whilst there will invariably be differences in the styles that individual staff members adopt to provide feedback, their comments should serve 3 main purposes: (1) to explain the mark awarded; (2) to identify strengths within the work; and (3) to indicate areas that could be improved on for future work.

What should you do with the feedback you receive ?
It is imperative that you collect all your assessment scripts so that you benefit from the feedback comments provided by the tutors. Your feedback provides you with the key opportunity to use assessment to improve your learning. Hence, if you have any problems understanding the feedback on your work, you should arrange a meeting with the staff member to clarify their comments.

It is important to review the comments you have received on all your work to identify any consistent issues that have arisen across several pieces of assessment.

This will help you formulate an action plan to deal with recurring weaknesses affecting your attainment. The Skills Plus programme managed by the University Library is an extremely valuable resource for students who require general advice such as 'Writing Assignments', 'Preparing for Exams' or 'Thinking Critically'.

The libraries at City Campus and Coach Lane provide access to a wide range of print and electronic resources including over half a million print books, over 700,000 eBooks and more than 50,000 electronic journals. More details can be found on the University Library website: http://library.northumbria.ac.uk/home

City Campus Library (number 14 on City Campus map) is housed near the Student Union building (number 30 on City Campus map).

Coach Lane Library is situated on the East Side of the Campus, in F Block (number 16 on Coach Lane Campus map).

City Campus library is open 24/7 during term time and from 9am to midnight during vacation times. Coach Lane library is open 7am until midnight (Monday to Friday), 9am until midnight (Saturday and Sunday). Opening hours are prominently displayed in the foyers of the library buildings, any changes are advertised on the Library website and on social media. Opening hours vary during bank holidays and are subject to change, so please check before you travel.

You will need to keep your smartcard with you to gain access to and leave the libraries. Your Smartcard is a universal card which not only gives access to the Libraries and other University buildings, but it also allows you to print, copy, scan, borrow books and make cashless payments.

The Library Catalogue can be accessed on and off-campus through the University Library website and the dedicated catalogue computers on each floor of both Libraries. The catalogue can be used to search for books and eBooks located in the University Library. It is quick and easy to use and will give you the information you need to locate the material on the shelves or read online. eBooks can be read on and off-campus, anytime, anywhere. NORA can be used to search for, and retrieve, up-to-date scholarly materials including articles, reports and statistics that are relevant to your studies. You can browse through all the online resources relating to your subject in one place including databases, journals and websites.

Students are entitled to borrow up to 15 items at any one time. Items can be issued using the self-issue machines on the ground floor of City and Coach Lane Libraries. You can renew your library books online through the MyLibrary section of MyNorthumbria or via the Library Catalogue.

Northumbria students can use other libraries such as the Robinson Library at Newcastle University and Newcastle City Library using the SCONUL access scheme. For more information see the Library SCONUL information page: http://library.northumbria.ac.uk/sconul-holiday

The Northumbria Skills Programme is a comprehensive skills programme designed to develop the key skills you need to succeed at university and beyond provided by the Library. It runs throughout the year and provides classroom style skills sessions on many topics including academic writing skills, giving accomplished presentations, and referencing your work correctly, as well as regular drop in surgeries. Some sessions are bookable; simply consult the timetable on the Northumbria Skills Programme website: http://library.northumbria.ac.uk/skillsdev-nsp

Skills Plus is the Library's collection of online learning materials, with a focus on digital literacy and study skills that can be accessed on and off-campus. Using these resources is an excellent way to develop your skills through a range of online tutorials with quizzes, video demonstrations and printable help guides.
http://nuweb2.northumbria.ac.uk/library/skillsplus/topics.html?l3-0

If you need help or advice, on or off campus, you can contact Ask4Help. The Ask4Help service provides you with help and support to access a range of University services including Library, Disability Support, Student Finance and Careers. The quickest way to find answers to some of the most popular questions asked by students is to look at Ask4help online. You can also contact us by phone and speak to a member of our dedicated enquiry team or email us your questions.

www.northumbria.ac.uk/ask4help
ask4help@northumbria.ac.uk
0191 227 4646

Northumbria Students' Union (NSU) is here to make sure you have the best experience possible. NSU is one of the largest and most exciting Unions in the country and that's all because of YOU. We represent you, the student, on all levels, on the issues students are concerned about; receiving a great academic experience, being very employable when you graduate, being safe on campus and in the city and having a fantastic time while a student.

NSU is run by students for students. You can have your say in what NSU does and how it is run, by contacting your Sabbatical Officers or by coming along to Student Council

MEMBERSHIP: As a student of Northumbria University you are automatically a member of the Students' Union. We also sell NUS Extra Card from the Students' Union at both Coach Lane and City Campus giving you discounts in shops and online, but you don't need one to use any of our services.

DIVERSE: Your Students' Union is a place which brings together students from all walks of life, all parts of the country and the world and many different cultures. NSU provides lots of opportunities for you to Get Involved, make lasting friendships, increase employability and have FUN!

INDEPENDENT: NSU is independent of the University, with its own staff, services and decision-making structure. Run by students for students, providing the best services and opportunities for students we push for change from the University to deliver for students. Find our more at our You Said, SU Did page. If you need advice about academic appeals or other issues, we can help. Check out the Advice Page.

VALUE: Your NSU offers the best value for money, and everything you spend goes straight back into the Students' Union to fund all the activities that we run for you.

If you would like more information check out the website www.mynsu.co.uk or come and see us at our offices in City, Coach Lane and London.