Postgraduate Programme Handbook - Academic Year 2023-24

About this Programme Handbook

This programme handbook provides you with information about how your programme is taught and managed, and how you will be assessed. It also provides information about key programme details and Northeastern University London (the University) facilities and services that will assist you while studying.

This handbook is accompanied by information on the Academic Handbook section of the University website, which can be found here.

If any changes are necessary, the Programme Handbook will be updated and the most recent version will be available on the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE).

Comment

If you would like to comment on the handbook contents, or have any ideas on how to improve the information provided, please send your comments by email to:

Quality Assurance

quality.assurance@nchlondon.ac.uk

Degree Programme

Programme Specification

The programme specification is the definitive record of your programme. It is approved by the University, and it can only be amended by following strict processes. The full document can be found here.

Course Descriptors

Each Course Descriptor, which can be found here is a definitive record of the course and is reproduced in an associated Course Syllabus which can be found on the VLE.

Who's Who on my Programme

Members of the Faculty for Humanities

Can be viewed here.

Members of the Faculty for Social Sciences

Can be viewed here.

Members of the Faculty for Computing, Maths, Engineering, and Natural Sciences

Can be viewed here.

Research Clusters

The University has seven research clusters. These are based around concentrations of research specialisms across the academic portfolio, and the University's research development strategy.

Artificial Intelligence, Ethics, and Misinformation (Dr Brian Ball)

Globalisation (Dr Pablo Calderon-Martinez)

Digital Humanities (Dr Dimitris Mylonas & Dr Andrea Kocsis)

Reimagining Higher Education in the Age of Artificial Intelligence (Dr Ioannis Votsis)

Cities; Past, Present, and Future (Dr Oliver Ayers)

Digital Governance (Dr Xuechen Chen)

Social Dynamics (Dr Sebastian Ille).

Each cluster will organise events, including research seminars and guest speakers, throughout the year. These are open to all students, and postgraduate students are strongly advised to attend as many of these as they can to support the development of their own research interests and expertise.

Associate Dean of Teaching and Learning (Students) and Director of Postgraduate Taught Programmes.

Dr Alison Statham leads on all aspects of the Student Experience and student engagement at the University. She also takes the academic lead on all matters of quality assurance as they relate to your programme.

Associate Dean of Teaching and Learning (Faculty)

 Dr Chiara Alfano leads on teaching, learning, and assessment design to ensure teaching and assessment methods for your programme and courses are appropriate, authentic, rigorous, and fair.

Professional Support Staff

The University has a team of staff available to help you with all matters for which you might need support, from academic to personal.

Registry

Can be viewed here.

Student Support and Development (SSD)

Can be viewed here.

Mental Health Adviser

mentalhealth@nchlondon.ac.uk

Quality Team

Can be viewed here.

Operations Team

Can be viewed here.

Student Visa or TIER 4 Visa Students

The University is required to report to the United Kingdom Visa & Immigration (UKVI) if a Student visa or Tier 4 Visa student interrupts, change programmes (if approved by the University), or withdraws from their studies. The UKVI will curtail your visa to 60 days and you will be required to return home. To ensure the break in studies or withdrawal complies with the University and the UKVI regulations you are required to make an appointment with the Visa and Immigration Compliance Manager.

Student visa or a Tier 4 visa student who began their undergraduate or postgraduate degree programme **before** September 2020 are not eligible to transfer to another programme from within the UK. You will need to leave the UK and make a new visa application from your home country for the new course. Please contact the Visa and Immigration Compliance Manager for further details.

New Student visa students who started their course from September 2020 and onwards, can only change their course after getting permission from the University to start their new course if all of the following apply:

- Your new course is at degree level or above.

- Your new course is not at a lower level than the current course.

- You will be able to complete your new course within your current period of leave (visa).

Registrar confirms either of the following:

- Your new course is related to the previous course for which you were granted leave as a Student visa student, meaning that it is either connected to your previous course, part of the same subject group, or involves deeper specialisation

    OR

- Your previous course and your new course in combination support your genuine career aspirations.

Please note that if you change your course, you must complete your new course within your existing period of the visa.

How We Will Communicate With You

Outside of induction meetings, lectures, tutorials, or other scheduled sessions, the University email system and Canvas Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) will be the main methods of relaying important information to you. Emails will be sent to your University email address, which you need to check regularly. Any hard copy correspondence will be sent to the address on your student record. It is important that you keep this up to date via your account details held by Student Support and Development.

Other methods of communication are via noticeboards as well as announcements in class.

Key Information about the Academic Year & Timetables

Academic Year

The Academic Year governs the University's academic operations and service provision and within this, we have set term dates and examination periods.

The key term dates in 2023-24 can be downloaded and viewed from the programme information section of the faculty homepage on the VLE.

Your Timetable

Timetables can be viewed via CELCAT, the University's timetabling application. During induction in Freshers' Week, training sessions on how to use CELCAT are held, and a 'how to' guide can be found on the VLE.

Teaching and Learning Strategy

Can be downloaded and viewed here.

Teaching and Learning

Lectures

Lectures provide both context and content for topics in the course being studied. They are aimed at providing guidance, stimulation, and orientation, as well as transmitting factual information where relevant. A typical lecture may last for up to two hours. You are expected to attend all the lectures in courses for which you are enrolled. They will be interactive and may require you to be familiar with the topic beforehand so that students can participate constructively. It is important to learn quickly how to take notes.

Please arrive promptly to your lectures; a few minutes will be allowed at the beginning and end of lectures for students travelling to or from lectures in other buildings. There will be an opportunity for students to raise questions for discussion in lectures and usually the last 15-20 minutes of each lecture hour will be devoted to questions and discussion. The responsibility of lecturers and students alike is to attain clarity, to understand, and to master the topic in question.

Different lecturers have different styles of lecturing and provide different lecture aids in the course of them; some use PowerPoint, others handouts, others do neither. Encountering a variety of teaching styles and approaches in university lectures is a good thing for students because it encourages students to profit from different ways of thinking and learning. All of the styles are tried and tested and of great value in their own way. Never be afraid to ask a question, however worried you might be that it will seem silly or stupid to others: most of the others will be glad you asked it.

Important points to note about lectures:

- Lectures provide a crucial guide to the subject and a framework for your own reading.

- Try to follow the arguments made by the lecturer while taking notes.

- Try to follow up the reading as soon as possible. If you leave it until later in the year you will have forgotten some of the ideas.

- Prepare in advance of lectures by reading the relevant topic.

Seminars

Seminars are student led sessions. Students are expected to be prepared to not only contribute to seminars by providing arguments and solutions but also to lead discussions and invite comments and suggestions from colleagues.

It is important for students to fully engage during seminars while demonstrating mutual respect and acknowledgement of others' opinions.

Office Hours

All course tutors offer weekly office hours. These give you the opportunity to speak with them about any aspects of the course, such as to receive feedback on an assessment, or to ask a question related to a discussion in class. Office hours for each course tutor take place via Zoom, and are scheduled in Celcat, from where you can book a slot which then goes into your and their diary as a firm appointment. It is not mandatory for you to use office hours. However, if you do book an appointment, then are unable to honour it, please let the tutor know, and cancel it, so that someone else can access it if required.

Academic Support

Course tutors are your first point of contact if you are struggling with English writing or Maths. They will work with you to support your development in these areas. However,

it might be the case that a student requires more targeted support. This is provided by Academic Support. Where advisable, tutors will refer students to Academic Support, give an indication of the particular need to be addressed, and advise students to make an appointment with either an English and Academic Writing Adviser or a Maths Skills Adviser. If your tutor suggests a referral to Academic Support, please take advantage of this provision.

You can book an appointment with Academic Support via TargetConnect.

Academic Advisors

There is an academic advisor for each faculty. They will offer guidance and support with your course choices for the final year.

The academic advisor for the Faculty of Computing, Mathematics, Engineering, and Natural Sciences can be contacted here.

The academic advisor for the Faculty of Humanities can be contacted here.

The academic advisor for the Faculty of Social Sciences can be contacted here.

Learning Resources

Libraries

On certain weeks a large proportion of your reading will be provided or suggested on the VLE for you to read on screen or download and print. However, the material on the VLE will never be completely sufficient, nor will online resources. You will also need to find books. When you do find a book, be wise and selective about how much of it you read.

The University's students have full membership access to the City of London's research libraries including Guildhall Library, the London Metropolitan Archives and the Small Business Research + Enterprise Centre, as well as its lending libraries at the Barbican Centre, Shoe Lane and Artizan Street.

This includes full access to all facilities offered at these libraries, including study space, wifi, printing, book borrowing privileges and access to digital resources.

The University can also provide students with a membership to Senate House Library, one of the UK's largest academic libraries for arts, humanities & social sciences. Located in central London, it is home to over two million books and over 1800 archives and special collections.

Students have full access to its borrowing, digital, and print services. The University Collection has its home in one of the most spacious and beautiful reading rooms within Senate House Library. The Collection contains classic texts and contemporary

commentaries which have been chosen by the University's faculty for their direct relevance to the degree syllabi taught at the University.

In addition to the above resources, students are also eligible for a reader's card to use the British Library – one of the greatest research libraries in the world. As it is a copyright library, it has copies of all new books published in the UK, and many of those published abroad, making it an excellent resource when more detailed research is required.

Online Resources

Students have access to the VLE, which is the University's method for sharing lecture and tutorial material and other course materials. Students should not, however, regard the VLE as sufficient for their research: independent research, and literature searches, are required for most assignments, with the exception of highly technical Economics courses.

Northeastern University London students have full access to the digital resources available from Northeastern University's Library. Northeastern University is redefining the library service in the 21st century with over 800,000 e-books and over 100,000 electronic journals. It also offers a number of helpful resources including a 24/7 LibChat service, one-to-one assistance from subject specialist librarians and workshops and events throughout the year.

Assessment and Feedback

The purpose of this section is to provide you with all the information you need to support you for the assessments in your Master's programme. The University is committed to providing you with support, enabling you to perform at your best in the assessments. The aim of the assessment is to enable students to demonstrate the knowledge and skills that they have developed over the course.

All students are required to attempt **all** assessments, in accordance with the Assessment Regulations contained within AQF7 Academic Regulations for Taught Awards Part C.

All summative assessments in the programme will be subject to the above regulations. General information relating to summative assessments can be found in the programme specification here.

Types of Assessment

Formative Assessment

Formative assessment is designed to provide students with opportunities to consolidate their understanding and develop their powers of expression, as well as

providing opportunities to receive constructive feedback. It helps students to develop and build on their knowledge and skills.

Students are formatively assessed on work for their programmes by faculty who, through seminars, provide students with the opportunities to develop an understanding of, and the necessary skills to demonstrate good academic practice. The feedback which the students receive from the seminars is very timely, constructive and developmental. Formative assessment may take various forms such as short exams, student presentations and/or discussions. Again, tutors provide timely feedback on the formative assessments.

Feedback can be given to students during the seminars, depending on the group size and material presented. These seminars in particular provide opportunities for tutors and students to reflect on progress and performance. Each student takes responsibility for completing a piece of formative work on a regular basis, as well as for intelligent discussion of said pieces of work. Students understand that it is their responsibility not only to attend, but to contribute to seminars, and actively communicate with lecturers to improve the quality of sessions.

Summative Assessment

Summative assessment provides a measure of achievement made in respect of a student's performance in relation to the learning outcomes of the course. It also dictates the student's ability to progress to the next stage of the programme.

Only the results from your summative assessments go towards your overall degree classification.

The summative assessments are held over the academic year. To ensure appropriate scheduling, the Registrar has overall control of the summative assessment timetables and ensures that you have a reasonable amount of time between exams to support your preparation. The Registrar collaborates with the Head of Faculty to ensure Programme Specifications are met and marking deadlines and feedback deadlines are achievable.

The summative assessment timetables are prepared, confirmed and published well in advance, enabling you to organise your workload.

Summative Coursework

For each piece of summative coursework, the University prepares an **Assessment Brief** which provides you with all the information required for you to complete and submit your summative coursework. It identifies the course, level, weighting, word length and submission date at the top of the document. The date by which you should receive your feedback is also published.

The task itself is clearly written and followed by the assessment criteria and learning outcomes that you will be required to meet in order to be successful with the assessment.

The assessment regulations are also listed for your reference, should you have extenuating circumstances or if your assignment is submitted late. If you do experience problems with submitting your assignment, please contact Registry for help.

Written assignments should be submitted electronically on the VLE, unless requested otherwise by the Course Leader or stated on the Assessment Brief.

Hard (paper) copies of essays and other electronic submissions are only required if specifically indicated by the Course Leader or as stated on the Assessment Brief.

Dissertation/Project related

The purpose of the dissertation is not only to assess the students' ability to construct a substantial and self-directed piece of research, but as the culmination of their studies, to demonstrate their ability to reflect on advanced aesthetic, theoretical and cultural issues in the context of a case study, and their ability to find and deploy evidence with intellectual integrity and maturity. It is an opportunity to express themselves at length with fluency, clarity, and coherence.

In preparation for their dissertation and viva (if applicable), time will be spent also individually, in supervisions, in response to the student's specific research challenge.

A submitted dissertation should be no longer than 110% of the length specified by the assignment brief. The word count includes everything in the main body of the text (including titles, subtitles, captions, inline references, quotes, citations, lists, footnotes, and other written elements), but does not include bibliographies, appendices (which should be kept to a minimum), or words embedded within tables or graphs.

There is no regulatory/mandatory penalty for exceeding the word count by more than 10%, but students should be aware that the marker will not include any additional work, after the 110% limit has been reached, within the allocation of marks. Students may therefore be penalised for a failure to be concise, and for failing to conclude their work within the approximate length specified. Likewise, a failure to meet the maximum word limit may result in lower marks based on the quality of the work because they may not have included the necessary information required for the assessment.

Further information on Dissertations is available in the Dissertation Course Descriptor (available on the VLE).

Examinations

Lecturers will provide you with information in order to help you prepare for examinations, which may include revision sessions and mock exams. You will also be invited to a FOCUS on Examinations session by SSD. If your course runs within a single semester, the examination will take place in the final week of that semester. If your course runs across both the Autumn and Spring semesters, the examination will take place in the final week of the Spring semester.

Assessment Planner

All summative assessments are included in the Assessment Planner found on the VLE.

For reference, you can find the term dates here.

Assessment Submission Procedure

All postgraduate summative essays are submitted on-line, using Canvas, by **12 noon** on the submission date. This follows University policy and this deadline is set so that Registry are available to provide advice at the time of submission. You are strongly advised not to submit your essay right up to the deadline in case of technical problems.

All summative essays are put through the plagiarism software, Turnitin. The member of faculty marking the assessment will get a copy of the Turnitin report. Any irregularities will be investigated.

Conduct of Assessment

The conduct of assessment is regulated by policies that can be found here.

Anonymous Marking

Unless otherwise stated, all assessments are marked anonymously. For further information, please refer to the Assessment Brief for particular courses. The Assessment Briefs are published on the course pages on the VLE.

Extenuating Circumstances

Throughout your studies, you will be required to complete and submit, or sit, a wide range of assessments. This will require you to balance your workload and use time-management skills to ensure that assessments are submitted to stated deadlines. However, the University recognises that there may be serious adverse circumstances outside of a student's control that prevent them from completing assessments and that it is in their best interests that any extenuating factors should be considered when determining student results in the case of summative assessments.

For longer term difficulties, there are other support options and you must discuss this with either your Personal Tutor or with the Student Support and Development Team (SSD), to ensure that both you and the University take all possible precautions to keep these difficulties from affecting your studies. Students must provide the Student Wellbeing Team with any relevant information regarding personal circumstances that may affect their on-going performance or a specific assessment, which they wish to be

taken into account. This information should be provided as soon as reasonably possible, using the Extenuating Circumstances Policy.

Mark Scheme

Common Assessment Mark Scheme

The University uses the common assessment marking scheme to mark all taught programmes leading to an award of the University. This ensures that a consistent and transparent approach to the way in which students are assessed, marked and reported on across all taught programmes is used. It also enables comparable levels of student achievement to be recognised (in line with the *UK Quality Code* Theme Assessment).

A variance to the common assessment marking scheme, for instance due to specific programme requirements, must be agreed at programme approval. In such cases a Variance to the Academic Regulation Form will be completed at programme approval noting the modified marking scheme and will be communicated to students through their Programme Handbook.

Pass Mark

For all summative assessments, the pass mark is 50%.

Marking Procedure

Summative assessments will be marked anonymously by the faculty member teaching the course. They will then be internally moderated by another faculty member from the same faculty. Once the internal moderation procedure has been concluded, all the scripts will go to the External Examiner for moderation. The final marks will be presented to the Assessment Board/Examination Boards for final ratification and approval. Further information is included within the Marking, Moderation and Feedback Policy.

Masters Taught Awards Classification

Students who satisfy the requirements for a Master's degree may be awarded a Master's degree with Merit if they have fulfilled the following criteria:

- Attained a mark of 62% or above in 60 credits, including the dissertation stage.

- Attained a mark of 58% or above in at least half of the remaining credits.

Students who satisfy the requirements for a Master's degree may be awarded a Master's degree with Distinction if they have fulfilled the following criteria:

- Attained a mark of 72% or above in 60 credits, including the dissertation stage.

- Attained a mark of 68% or above in at least half of the remaining credits.

Assessment Regulations

The Assessment Regulations are included within AQF7 Academic Regulations for Taught Awards Part C.

Feedback And Results

The University believes that students need clear feedback on assessments in a timely manner, so that students can learn and improve. Upon submitting an assignment, you should receive feedback no more than three weeks after submission.

The results you receive are provisional until the relevant Assessment Boards have met to ratify the results for all students.

Publication Of Course And Progression Results

Provisional results will be published to students after the Boards.

Appeals

The University has processes which can be followed to query/appeal the results approved by an Assessment Board. For further information, please click here.

Recognition Of Prior Learning

The University recognises that learning can be achieved in many ways, and for those students who can demonstrate prior experience or certificated learning they may be able to gain recognition for academic credit against an award. For further information, please click here.

External Examiner

The name of the External Examiner courses and information on the role of the External Examiner can be found in the External Examiner section on the faculty homepage on the VLE. Further information on External Examining is included in AQF11 External Examining on the Academic Quality Framework section of the website.

Careers

The University is built on a tradition of engagement with the world and is committed to supporting its students to grow as innovative problem solvers through academic study, careers support, and experiential learning opportunities.

Throughout their time at the University, students have access to Careers Advisers who can help them to maximise their employability potential in line with their individual aspirations and talents.

The University's Careers Advisory Service hosts a series of engaging events and opportunities with guest speakers, alumni and industry panels across a range of sectors, as well as providing access to an electronic Careers Centre, with features and functionality for careers guidance, interview advice and job searching.

Students will be guided through the creation of a CV, LinkedIn Profile, Interview training and job applications.

Set to open its doors by January 2024, the University's new entrepreneurship hub supports entrepreneurial activities and competencies across students, alumni, faculty, staff, and the wider community, and nurtures a diverse range of innovative ventures.

The Legal Bit

When you enrolled on your programme, you agreed to the Terms and Conditions of the year of entry.

The undergraduate programmes at the University are designed, taught, examined and validated by the University.

Student Intellectual Property Rights (IPR)

A key aim of the University is to encourage and facilitate discovery, development and application of intellectual property (IP), maximising the benefit to the University, staff and you, as well as to wider society. Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) are rights that are used to protect ideas, intellectual creation, invention or design.

As a general principle the University recognises undergraduate and taught postgraduate students as owners of Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) over work they produce in the course of their studies as a registered student of the University unless (i) the work makes significant use of the University's financial, human or intellectual resources (beyond the level normal for academic teaching), and/or (ii) the work involves other students or external partners.

In cases (i) and/or (ii), appropriate IPR arrangements will be made explicit case-by-case between the University, the student(s), and any external partners.