

Programme Specification

BSc Biological Sciences

For students entering Part 1 in September 2022

UCAS Code: C100

UFBIOL

UFBIOL2

UFBIOLSCWY

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This document sets out key information about your Programme and forms part of your Terms and Conditions with the University of Reading.

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| Awarding Institution | University of Reading |
| Teaching Institution | University of Reading |
| Length of Programme | 3 years |
| Length of Programme with placement/year abroad | BSc Biological Sciences (students from Taylor's University) - 3 years BSc Biological Sciences with Professional Experience - 4 years (UCAS Code: C101) BSc Biological Sciences with Professional Experience (students from Taylor's University) - 4 years |
| Accreditation | N/A |

Programme information and content

The programme aims to provide students with the opportunity to study biology at scales ranging from biomolecular processes to global ecological systems. The programme is concerned especially with the diversity of living organisms and includes study of the biology of all types of organisms, from microorganisms to flowering plants and mammals, at levels ranging from the molecular, biochemical and cellular to the physiological, environmental and ecological.

Our aim is to produce biologists with the knowledge, skills and determination to tackle challenges ranging from wildlife conservation to the treatment of disease. In addition to scientific knowledge we aim to provide transferrable skills of importance in a wide variety of careers. These skills include:

1. The ability to assess, evaluate and present scientific data.
2. The ability to design and undertake a programme of scientific investigation and to effectively communicate the aims and results of this investigation.
3. A range of laboratory-based practical skills and laboratory and field-based practical skills.

| | |
|---------|---|
| Part 1: | Part 1 of our programme will provide the student with a foundation of core skills and knowledge through a number of introductory modules examining key biological principles such as cell biology, genetics, evolutionary biology and microbiology. In addition students will be given training in key skills such as |
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|---------|---|
| | careers development, presentation skills and statistics. Students can tailor their own programme to meet their interests or career aspirations with a wide choice of optional modules. Learning will be delivered via lectures, practical classes, field work and tutorials. |
| Part 2: | In Part 2 you will explore more specialised topics, building on the learning from Part 1. Students will study crop venoms and poisons as a topic that provides insight into a wide range of biological topics and will continue to develop key skills. |
| Part 3: | Part 3 gives students the opportunity to further develop their understanding of specialised biological subjects, taking their understanding to the latest research and developments in the field. Students choose and develop a final year research project culminating in the writing of a dissertation which will develop their project management and research skills in their area of interest. |

Module information

Each part comprises 120 credits, allocated across a range of compulsory and optional modules as shown below. Compulsory modules are listed.

Part 1 Modules:

| Module | Name | Credits | Level |
|---------|--|---------|-------|
| BI1BEC1 | Building Blocks of Life | 20 | 4 |
| BI1EAD1 | Introduction to Evolutionary Processes | 20 | 4 |
| BI1S1 | Introductory Microbiology | 10 | 4 |

In addition, students must take one of the following modules:

| Module | Name | Credits | Level |
|---------|-----------------------------------|---------|-------|
| BI1BM12 | Key Skills in Biomedicine | 10 | 4 |
| BI1EZ12 | Key Skills in Ecology and Zoology | 10 | 4 |

Also, students without AS or A2-level Chemistry or an equivalent qualification must take:

| | | | |
|--------|-------------------------------------|----|---|
| CH1FC1 | Fundamental Concepts in Chemistry 1 | 10 | 4 |
|--------|-------------------------------------|----|---|

Students will choose further modules, to achieve a total of 120 credits. Your remaining credits will be made up of optional modules from selected modules from the School of Biological Sciences and across the University, subject to Programme Advisor approval and timetabling constraints. Students also have the option to select a language module.

Part 2 Modules:

| Module | Name | Credits | Level |
|---------|--------------------|---------|-------|
| BI2EVP5 | Venoms and Poisons | 10 | 5 |

In addition, students must take one of the following modules:

| Module | Name | Credits | Level |
|---------|-------------------------------------|---------|-------|
| BI2BM45 | Key Skills in Biomedicine 2 | 10 | 5 |
| BI2EZ45 | Key Skills in Ecology and Zoology 2 | 10 | 5 |

Students will choose further modules, to achieve a total of 120 credits. Students may take a maximum of 90 credits (including compulsory modules) in any one term. Alternative modules may be chosen from the School of Biological Sciences or, exceptionally, from other Schools. Timetable restrictions may apply. Students also have the option to select a language module.

Modules during a placement year or study year (if applicable):

Students on the 4 year version of the programme will take one 120 credit module during their placement year.

Part 2 (continued) modules:

Students may be permitted to undertake a placement year between Part 2 and Part 3 of the programme. In such cases students will transfer to a 4-year programme. The placement year should not normally be shorter than nine months full-time.

If you take a year-long placement or study abroad, Part 3 as described below may be subject to variation.

Part 3 Modules:

| Module | Name | Credits | Level |
|--------|------------------|---------|-------|
| BI3RP3 | Research Project | 40 | 6 |

The remaining 80 credits will be made up of optional modules from selected modules from the School of Biological Sciences or modules from an approved list, subject to timetabling constraints.

Optional modules:

The optional modules available can vary from year to year. An indicative list of the range of optional modules for your programme can be found online in the Course Catalogue. Details of optional modules for each part, including any additional costs associated with the optional modules, will be made available to you prior to the beginning of the Part in which they are to be taken and you will be given an opportunity to express interest in the optional modules that you would like to take. Entry to optional modules will be at the discretion of the University and subject to availability and may be subject to pre-requisites, such as

completion of another module. Although the University tries to ensure you are able to take the optional modules in which you have expressed interest this cannot be guaranteed.

Additional costs of the programme

You will require a laboratory coat which you can bring with you or purchase from the University when you arrive (£12).

Participation in any residential field based optional modules offered, is subject to fees payable by the student.

If you undertake a Placement Year, associated costs will vary according to the nature and location of the placement and/or the study abroad host institution, and individual travel and subsistence arrangements.

Costs are indicative, but will vary according to module choice and are subject to inflation and other price fluctuations. The estimates were calculated in 2021.

Placement opportunities

Placement: You may be provided with the opportunity to undertake a credit-bearing placement as part of your Programme. This will form all or part of an optional module. You will be required to find and secure a placement opportunity, with the support of the University.

If you take the 4 year degree with Placement Year, you are required to undertake a compulsory placement as part of your Programme (see section above on Placement). You will be supported in finding this placement.

Study Abroad: You may have the opportunity to undertake a Study Abroad/Placement year during your Programme. This is subject to you meeting academic conditions detailed in the Programme Handbook, including obtaining the relevant permissions from your School, and the availability of a suitable Study Abroad placement. If you undertake a Study Abroad placement, further arrangements will be discussed and agreed with you.

Teaching and learning delivery:

You will be taught through lectures, seminars/tutorials, laboratory and field practicals and supervised project work. The contact hours for your Programme are dependent on module choice. Information about module contact hours can be located in the relevant module description.

Total study hours for each Part of your programme will be 1200 hours. The contact hours for your programme will depend upon your module combination; an average for a typical set of modules on this programme is Part 1 - 324 hours, Part 2 - 300 hours, Part 3 - 276 hours. In addition to your scheduled contact hours, you will be expected to undertake guided independent study. Information about module contact hours and the amount of independent study which a student is normally expected to undertake for a module is

indicated in the relevant module description.

Accreditation details

N/A

Assessment

The programme will be assessed through a combination of written examinations and coursework, assessed via a range of methods.

Progression

The University-wide rules relating to 'threshold performance' as follows

Part 1

- (i) obtain an overall weighted average of 40% in 120 credits
- (ii) obtain a mark of at least 30% in individual modules amounting to at least 100 credits taken in Part 1.

In order to progress from Part 1 to Part 2, a student must achieve a threshold performance.

The achievement of a threshold performance at Part 1 qualifies a student for a Certificate of Higher Education if they leave the University before completing the subsequent Part.

Part 2

To gain a threshold performance at Part 2, a student shall normally be required to:

- (i) obtain a weighted average of 40% over 120 credits taken at Part 2; and
- (ii) obtain marks of at least 40% in individual modules amounting to at least 80 credits; and
- (iii) obtain marks of at least 30% in individual modules amounting to at least 120 credits, except that a mark below 30% may be condoned in no more than 20 credits of modules owned by the Department of Mathematics and Statistics.

In order to progress from Part 2 to Part 3 in the 3 year programme, a student must achieve a threshold performance

In order to progress from Part 2 to Part 3 in the 4 year programme, a student must achieve a threshold performance and obtain a pass in the professional/work placement or study abroad year. Students who fail the professional/placement year transfer to the non-placement year version of the programme.

The achievement of a threshold performance at Part 2 qualifies a student for a Diploma of Higher Education if they leave the University before completing the subsequent Part.

In order to be eligible for Honours, students must gain;

(i) an overall weighted average mark of 40%, at least 40% in modules amounting to 80 credits in Part 3; and

(ii) must gain a mark of at least 40% in the Research Project module.

For a Pass degree, candidates must have an average of at least 35% and at least 40% in modules amounting to 60 credits in Part 3, and must gain a mark of at least 35% in the Research Project module.

Classification

Bachelors' degrees

The University's honours classification scheme is based on the following:

| Mark | Interpretation |
|------------|------------------------|
| 70% - 100% | First class |
| 60% - 69% | Upper Second class |
| 50% - 59% | Lower Second class |
| 40% - 49% | Third class |
| 35% - 39% | Below Honours Standard |
| 0% - 34% | Fail |

The weighting of the Parts/Years in the calculation of the degree classification is:

Three year programmes:

Part 2: one-third

Part 3: two-thirds

Four year programmes, including professional/work placement or study abroad:

Part 2: one-third

Placement/Study Abroad Year abroad not included in the classification

Part 3: two-thirds

For further information about your Programme please refer to the Programme Handbook and the relevant module descriptions, which are available at <http://www.reading.ac.uk/module/>. The Programme Handbook and the relevant module descriptions do not form part of your Terms and Conditions with the University of Reading.

BSc Biological Sciences for students entering Part 1 in session 2022/23

10 January 2025

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