

Programme Specification

BSc Environmental Management and Sustainability

For students entering Part 1 in September 2026

UCAS Code: F750

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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.

Awarding Institution	University of Reading
Teaching Institution	University of Reading
Length of Programme	3 years
Length of Programme with placement/year abroad	BSc Environmental Management and Sustainability with Study Year Abroad - 4 years (internal transfer only) BSc Environmental Management and Sustainability with Placement Year - 4 years (UCAS Code: D447)
Accreditation	N/A
QAA Subject Benchmarking Group	Agriculture, horticulture, forestry, food, nutrition and consumer sciences Earth sciences, environmental sciences and environmental studies

Programme information and content

How to sustainably manage the environments in which we live, work and relax is one of the biggest and most exciting challenges we currently face. Our land and water bodies are facing increasing conflicts related to their management for different purposes. This degree aims to provide a sound understanding of the functioning of natural and human-influenced environments, acquisition and analysis of environmental data, development of management strategies and plans, implementation of appropriate management methods, and will help you develop the personal and transferable skills relevant to employment in the environmental management and sustainability sector. These include environmental monitoring, experimentation, GIS, Environmental Impact Assessment, Environmental Management Systems and sustainability metrics.

Through core modules in key subjects you will develop essential skills and knowledge for understanding and sustainably managing the main components of the environment.

Part 1:	Part 1 provides a grounding in the components of natural and managed environments and the interactions between them. It introduces the underlying concepts and principles relating to impacts of human activities on the environment and sustainability. The curriculum covers both global issues and ways in which environmental management and sustainability is practiced at local levels. Students have the opportunity to develop skills
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	in the acquisition, interpretation and presentation of quantitative and qualitative data.
Part 2:	Part 2 fosters development of knowledge and critical understanding of how scientific and socio-economic research is integrated and applied to the development of environmental management strategies. It supports the development of a range of skills in the acquisition of environmental information, and the analysis and presentation of data. Students are exposed to professional practice in the area of environmental management and sustainability through interaction with practitioners, site visits, a placement opportunity and a residential field course.
Placement/Study abroad year:	Students can work or study for a year away from Reading between Part 2 and Part 3 as part of the 4-year programme.
Part 3:	Part 3 provides opportunities for students to apply skills in research and enquiry through an independent research project. Modules focus on the practicalities of management for organisations working in the sector and allow students to develop skills in problem solving and decision making in complex situations, drawing on relevant research in the area. It promotes application of an interdisciplinary approach to the formulation of appropriate management strategies to address environmental problems and promote sustainability. Students will attend a residential fieldcourse giving exposure to real world examples of environmental management for sustainability.

Programme Learning Outcomes - BSc Environmental Management and Sustainability

During the course of the Programme, you will have the opportunity to develop a range of skills, knowledge and attributes (known as learning outcomes) For this programme, these are:

	Learning outcomes
Breadth and depth of knowledge	
1	Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the components of natural and managed ecosystems and the interactions between them, and the methods and techniques for assessing, monitoring and studying the impacts of human activities on natural and managed ecosystems.
Use and applicability to real-world problems	
2	Describe and evaluate the environmental issues relating to land management and other human activities and their underlying socio-economic drivers, along with interdisciplinary approaches to the formulation of appropriate management strategies to address environmental problems.

3	Discipline- specific skills Apply appropriate environmental assessment, monitoring and planning methodologies and develop management plans for a number of objectives.
4	Autonomous learning Analyse and solve problems through application of knowledge and critical thought, to demonstrate effective decision making in a range of contexts and scenarios.
5	Critical evaluation Consume and appraise research critically by understanding the fundamental principles of research and enquiry in environmental management including moral, ethical and methodological factors
6	Ability to undertake research Acquire, critically appraise, synthesise and summarise information, data and literature from a variety of sources, to build balanced arguments integrating a range of evidence, and present findings in a range of formats.
7	Ability to reflect Identify goals, evaluate performance and areas for personal development in relation to academic studies and career planning, and develop the personal effectiveness required for lifelong learning and a professional working life.
8	Ability to communicate Communicate accurately and confidently to a variety of audiences in a range of formats, employing appropriate language.
9	Self efficacy, curiosity, adaptability, resilience Identify goals and manage time to achieve them, to demonstrate a broad awareness of career possibilities within environmental management and sustainability, and to plan appropriate steps towards career goals
10	Inter-cultural competence Act with integrity and responsibility in all aspects of study and work, including upholding academic integrity, valuing diversity and different viewpoints, and developing a global outlook.
11	Ability to collaborate Conduct themselves in a professional manner and to collaborate and work effectively in a team.
12	Placement year By the end of the Placement Year programme, students will have contextualised their academic learning in a placement role relevant to their programme of studies and developed their professional experience, skills and knowledge, contributing significantly towards their continuous learning and career prospects as graduates

You will be expected to engage in learning activities to achieve these Programme learning outcomes. Assessment of your modules will reflect these learning outcomes and test how far you have met the requirements for your degree.

To pass the Programme, you will be required to meet the progression or accreditation and award criteria set out below.

In addition to the learning outcomes stated above if you are on a placement or study abroad programme you will have the opportunity to develop the following learning outcome:

Additional Learning outcomes	
Study Abroad	
By the end of the Study Abroad Programme, students will have adapted to international study contexts in order to achieve the required academic outcomes determined by the host institution.	
Placement	
By the end of the Placement Year programme, students will have contextualised their academic learning in a placement role relevant to their programme of studies and developed their professional experience, skills and knowledge, contributing significantly towards their continuous learning and career prospects as graduates.	

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
AD1EEM	Ecology and Environmental Management	20	4
AD1GLI	International Development: Global and Local Issues	20	4
AD1GLS	Global Sustainability: Challenges and Prospects	20	4
AD1KSE	Key Skills for Environmental Management and Sustainability	20	4

The remaining 40 credits will be made up of optional modules available in the School of Agriculture, Policy and Development or from an approved list of modules.

Part 2 Modules:

Module	Name	Credits	Level
AD2DAS	Data Skills	20	5
AD2EMP	Environmental Management and Sustainability in Practice	20	5
AD2TEM	Tools for Environmental Management and Sustainability	20	5

The remaining 60 credits will be made up of optional modules available in the School of Agriculture, Policy and Development or modules from an approved list.

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

Module	Name	Credits	Level
AD2PPY	Professional Placement Year	120	5
OR			
AD2SAY*	Study Abroad Year	120	5
OR			
AD2PSA*	Professional Placement with Study Abroad Experience	120	5

Students can undertake a placement year (minimum duration applies) between Part 2 and 3 of the programme. They can also choose to study abroad for a year or they can combine these for a semester abroad and a placement experience (minimum duration applies). ***Students will only be eligible for AD2SAY and AD2PSA if they meet the criteria and if places are available in the overseas institutions – places are not guaranteed.**

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
AD3RES	Independent Research Project	40	6
AD3TRS	Transitions to Sustainability	20	6

The remaining 60 credits will be made up of optional modules available in the School of Agriculture, Policy and Development or modules from an approved list.

Placement opportunities

You have 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.

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.

Teaching and learning delivery:

The programme explores complex environmental problems and recognises that a broad range of disciplinary expertise is required to both understand these challenges and to begin to address them. This programme also acknowledges the increasing recognition that universal 'one-size-fits-all' approaches are not often appropriate, and that a lack of contextual knowledge can lead to unintended outcomes. To this end, the programme seeks to embed learning through fieldwork, case studies, real world examples and independent research.

In spite of the inherently interdisciplinary nature of the subject, the programme structure recognises that the focus of many graduate level jobs may require additional understanding of either the environmental or the socio-economic context. The optional modules span both the environmental and ecological sciences, but also economics, business and human geography, and you will have the ability to tailor your course to meet your needs.

You will gain knowledge and understanding through a programme of lectures, seminars and projects in core and optional modules at Parts 1, 2, and 3 and through independent study. Work is mainly on an individual basis, although there are team-work elements. Modules are delivered in an interactive way, with opportunities to explore ideas and receive formative feedback through class exercises and activities. In later parts of the Programme, students are expected to work on additional problems on their own and in groups, seeking help when required.

Practical skills are learnt progressively over the duration of the Programme. Research methods are introduced in core modules at Part 1 and developed in Part 2 leading to an independent research project in Part 3 where ability to apply knowledge and undertake fieldwork is demonstrated. Career development skills are specifically highlighted in a core module in Part 2.

The use of IT is embedded in many modules, as well as specialised modules offered in the Programme. Effective communication of scientific and/or socio-economic concepts, oral presentations and teamwork are embedded in modules from Part 1 onwards. Time management is essential for effective submission of work and completion of the course.

Elements of your programme will be delivered via digital technology.

The scheduled teaching and learning activity hours and amount of technology enhanced learning activity for your programme will depend upon your module combination. In addition, you will undertake some self-scheduled teaching and learning activities, designed by and/or involving staff, which give some flexibility for you to choose when to complete them. You will also be expected to undertake guided independent study. Information about module study hours including 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

You will be assessed through a wide variety of methods, all of which are designed to develop employability skills. These include written assignments, group projects, oral presentations, in-class tests, examinations and assignments designed to test particular skills. Further information is contained in the individual module descriptions.

Progression

Part 1

To achieve a threshold performance at Part 1, a student will normally be required to:

- (i) Obtain an overall weighted average of 40% over 120 credits taken in Part 1;
- (ii) Obtain a mark of at least 40% in individual modules amounting to not less than 80 credits taken in Part 1; and
- (iii) Obtain marks of at least 30% in modules amounting to 120 credits. (A Fail in a Pass/Fail module will be treated as not meeting the minimum threshold requirement for progression or classification. Pass/fail modules are excluded from weighted average calculations but must be passed to avoid failure of the Part or degree.)

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.

Students are able to transfer from a Joint or Major/Minor Honours programme to a Single Honours programme in one of their joint subject areas at the end of Part 1, subject to:

- Meeting the University Threshold Standard at the end of Part 1; and
- Achieving marks of at least 40% in at least 40 credits of modules (e.g., 2 x 20 credit modules) in the subject to which they wish to transfer; and
- Meeting any programme-specific progression rules for the Part 1 Single Honours Programme to which they wish to transfer.

NB Students taking a Major/Minor programme may only transfer to a Single Honours programme in the Major subject and must meet the above requirements.

Students should seek advice about the titles of programmes they may be eligible to transfer to.

Students who transfer from a Joint or Major/Minor Honours programme to a Single Honours programme may not have taken all of the Part 1 modules listed in the Single Honours Programme Specification. The modules which they have taken will be shown on their Diploma Supplement.

Part 2

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

- (i) Obtain a weighted average of 40% over 120 credits taken in Part 2; and
- (ii) Obtain marks of at least 40% in individual modules amounting to at least 80 credits taken in Part 2; and
- (iii) Obtain marks of at least 30% in individual modules amounting to at least 120 credits. (A Fail in a Pass/Fail module will be treated as not meeting the minimum threshold requirement for progression or classification. Pass/fail modules are excluded from weighted average calculations but must be passed to avoid failure of the Part or degree.)

In order to progress from Part 2 to Part 3, a student must achieve a threshold performance.

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.

Professional/placement year

Students are required to pass the professional placement year/study abroad year in order to progress on the programme which incorporates the professional placement year/study abroad year. Students who fail the professional placement year/study abroad year transfer to the non-placement year version of the programme.

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 study abroad

Part 2: one-third

Study abroad: Year abroad not included in the classification

Part 3: two-thirds

Details of the classification method is given in detail in the Assessment Handbook under:

- Section 17: Awards (Bachelor's), or
- Section 18: Awards (Integrated Master's programmes). Students who do not progress to Part 4 of the Integrated Master's will normally be subject to the method detailed under Section 17: Awards (Bachelor's)

Please note that there may be a specific version of the above for your year of entry.

Additional costs of the programme

You should ensure that you bring with you to University a waterproof coat and trousers and a pair of wellington boots (£15) and/or sturdy footwear e.g. walking boots (£50 – 100) for field work and visits (should you need to purchase these, approximate costs are in brackets). Depending on choice of optional modules, you may also require a laboratory coat which you can bring with you or purchase from the University when you arrive (£12).

Costs for the two compulsory residential field courses are covered by the fees. Participation in additional field courses if chosen as optional modules is subject to additional fees. These are typically in the range £1000-£2000, depending on the venue, and are publicised prior to enrolment for optional modules.

Costs are indicative and may vary according to optional modules chosen and are subject to inflation and other price fluctuations. Estimates were calculated in 2025.

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 Environmental Management and Sustainability for students entering Part 1 in session 2026/27

8 July 2025

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