Dissertation guidelines

BSc Geography
BA/BSc Geography and Environment
BSc Environmental Management
BSc Environmental Science
BSc Development Studies with Environment

2015-16

Requirements to finalise in your degree programme

• Under the Common Awards Scheme, you will need to gain 360 credits in total at levels 4, 5 and 6 in order to finalise your degree.

• PT - you will normally have taken 90 CAS credits per year over 4 years.

• FT - you will normally have taken 120 CAS credits per year over 3 years.
You must have passed in 300 credits and hold marks between 30 and 39 in the other 60 credits after 3 attempts to successfully pass (this is known as a compensated fail).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualification</th>
<th>Credits needed</th>
<th>Minimum at upper level</th>
<th>Maximum at lower level</th>
<th>Number of Birkbeck modules</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Honours Degree</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>120 level 6</td>
<td>120 at level 4 (level 4 modules are not included in the calculation for the final classification)</td>
<td>12 modules (of 30 CATS each)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

You must complete EITHER:

- Geography/Environmental Research Project (GGPH073D6) OR
- Geography/Environmental Literature Review (GGPH067S6)

- Research Project is 8-10,000 words in length (excluding bibliography & appendices) and counts as 60 CATS points at level 6.

- Literature Review is 5,000 words in length (excluding bibliography) and counts as 30 CATS points at level 6.

Hence the number of taught modules you take in your final year will be dependent on your choices over Research Projects and Literature Reviews – therefore usually:

Complete a Research Project + 30 CATS of taught modules
OR
Complete a Literature Review + 60 CATS of taught modules
**Research Project (60 CATS)**

- You must produce a [400 word outline](#) of your project, including a provisional title, background and context for your project, as well as indicative research methods. Clearly state on the outline that you wish to submit a Research Project and NOT a Literature Review.
- The **deadline for submission of this outline is 24th April, 2015.** Submit this outline via Moodle/Turnitin – details to follow.
- You will be allocated a **supervisor in May 2014.**
- You may have up to **ONE meeting with your supervisor during term 3** to set up a suitable project - this meeting will usually be of no longer than 30 minutes duration. **Prepare** for these meetings by having an idea of the questions you wish your supervisor to consider.
- If you are unable to produce a suitable idea that can be taken forward as a project you may revert to a Literature Review on a suitable topic.
- To continue with the project you must submit a detailed [Research Project Proposal Form](#) by **July 2015**, again via Moodle/Turnitin.
- After that you should start your project with a view to having made substantial progress on the Project by the **start of the academic year in which you intend to finalise (2015-16).** If **you have not made adequate progress** by this point, your supervisor may suggest that you transfer onto the Literature Review.
- **Final module choice** will be made at the start of the 2015-16 academic year, ensuring you are including EITHER the Research project OR Literature Review AND that you have enough credit (CATS points) to finalise.
- You may have a **further TWO meetings with your supervisor during the 2015-16 academic year**, again of approximately 30 minutes duration.
- You may provide your supervisor with a detailed contents page and one draft chapter to look over and provide feedback during the autumn or spring terms.
- The **deadline for submission of your 8-10,000 word Project will be in April 2016.**

**Literature Review (30 CATS)**

- You are required to submit a [250 word outline](#) of your Literature Review. Clearly state on the outline that you wish to submit a Literature Review and NOT a Research Project.
- Deadline for submission of this outline is **24th April 2015.** Submit this outline via Moodle/Turnitin.
- Your outline will be checked by the Literature Review Co-ordinator - once it has been approved, you can start working on the Literature Review.
- Unlike the Research Project, you will **NOT be allocated a supervisor if you are undertaking a Literature Review.**
- A meeting with GEDS academic staff will take place in June 2015 to consider issues around producing a good Literature Review.
- **Final module choice** will be made at the start of the 2015-16 academic year, ensuring you are including the Literature Review AND that you have enough credit (CATS points) to finalise.
- You are required to submit an [updated 500 word Literature Review outline plus a bibliography of 10-15 references](#) (books, journal articles, edited book chapters) which are relevant to your Review. The deadline for submission of the outline and bibliography will be in **October 2015.** Submit this outline via Moodle/Turnitin.
- A workshop will be held in **November 2015** at which GEDS academic staff will meet with students to discuss their Literature Review outlines and bibliographies.
- A final workshop will be held in **February 2016** at which students will meet with GEDS academic staff to discuss any outstanding queries.
- The **deadline for submission of your 5,000 word Review will be in April 2016.**
Summary of key dates

Meeting for students on Monday 2nd March 2015

Submission of EITHER 250 (LR) OR 400 (RP) word outlines by Friday 24th April 2015

Final module choice by start of academic year 2015-16, ensuring you are including at least one of the pieces of work and that you have enough credit (CATS points) to finalise

Submission of all Research Projects and Literature Reviews in April 2016

Final date for late submissions (mitigating circumstances) with supporting documents will be in May 2016

Where to look for further help on module selection

- Please visit the GEDS web site next term (http://www.bbk.ac.uk/geds/current-students/)
- You will find up-to-date information on the modules running next year on your programme of study.
- By clicking the appropriate link on the timetable you will be able to access more detailed information on each module to assist with your choice.
- The CATS value and level is also indicated so you should select options that allow you to gain 360 CATS in total, but the precise number of taught credits needed will depend on whether you complete a Research Project or Literature Review.
- Updated copies of the guide to completing a Research Project or Literature Review, as well as the undergraduate handbook, will be available next term.
- The Guide to Completing a Research Project or Literature Review for Undergraduate Students that is currently on the above GEDS website is for those students finalising in 2015 – the format is similar EXCEPT:
  - the word counts differ
  - dates will be as above + to be decided