Graduate Diploma in Ecology and Conservation

& corresponding course units for the
BSc Biodiversity and Conservation
BSc Environmental Management
BSc Environmental Science
Graduate Diploma in Ecology & Environment
Extra-mural Certificate/Diploma in Ecology & Conservation

COURSE HANDBOOK
2009-10
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NOTE

This course handbook is for all students registered for the Graduate Diploma in Ecology and Conservation, the extra-mural Certificate/Diploma in Ecology & Conservation and for all BSc Environment students taking modules in this programme. A new version of the handbook is prepared each year – please make sure that you have the current version.

The Handbook is supplemented by further information which will be sent to students on registration. Further documentation (including e-versions of much of the material in this handbook, together with course handouts, notes, and study skills material, all of which you can download) is available on the dedicated course web pages www.bbk.ac.uk/environment/materials. In order to access these web pages you will need a username and password. These will be issued to registered students at the first meeting of your course, or you can email the programme Administrator on environment@bbk.ac.uk.
Introduction

Target Audience and Aims
This programme is designed for students who wish to achieve an informed and integrated understanding of the diversity and organisation of life, the inter-relationships between organisms and their environment and the dynamics of natural and human-made ecosystems and of the UK and international political, social, legislative and administrative framework of conservation.

The Graduate Diploma in Ecology and Conservation provides a sound academic base for all those who wish to understand the principles and practice of wildlife conservation and ecosystem management and for those wishing to enter employment or already engaged in these fields, either professionally or as volunteers. It also provides valuable supplementary training for those professionally concerned with environmental management, spatial planning, visitor interpretation and education. It will be of interest and practical value to all who are concerned about the quality and future of the world in which we live.

Programme content
The programme provides a flexible pathway of study, based on three ‘core’ classroom-based modules, a range of optional field-based modules and an independent student project dissertation, as follows.

Core modules
These are each offered annually normally as a series of at least twenty weekly ‘classroom’ meetings each of 2 hours (September to Easter) plus field visits, as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>CATS*¹ points</th>
<th>FHEQ level*²</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Core 1</td>
<td>Ecological Communities</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Core 2</td>
<td>Species and Populations</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Core 3</td>
<td>People Policies and Practice</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each module is assessed by written assignments (30% of marks) and an end of year written examination, held in May or June (70% of marks). Modules may be taken in any order but those without prior knowledge of the subject are advised to take Ecological Communities first. Courses for each module are normally available in different evenings of the week, so that students may take more than one module in any year (but see note below).

Optional practical half modules
These each take the form of at least 30 contact hours normally offered as 2 or 3 linked weekends or 1 week full time study.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>CATS points</th>
<th>FHEQ level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Surmon</td>
<td>Ecological Survey and Monitoring</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Envedint</td>
<td>Environmental Education and Interpretation</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manplan</td>
<td>Conservation Management Planning</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other practical half-modules are occasionally available, in a range of subjects, currently including Archaeological and Cultural Resource Conservation, Marine and Coastal

¹ The number of UK Credit Award and Transfer Scheme (CATS or credit) points indicate the ‘quantity’ of study under the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS): 30 points = a full module, equivalent to between 40 – 60 contact hours.
² These ratings indicate the ‘level’ of study under the framework for higher education qualifications (FHEQ) of the UK National Qualifications Framework (NQF). Level 5 roughly equivalent to 1st or 2nd year undergraduate; 6 to the 2nd or 3rd year of undergraduate study.
Zone Management, Environmental Communication, Environmental Ethics, and European Environmental Policy. Further field modules are in the process of development, on invertebrate taxonomy and identification and in ornithological studies.

Each practical module is assessed by a written assignment (100% of marks, which may include course based or group work).

Only a selection of modules will be offered in any given year. A list of modules and their dates for each session is normally published in the preceding May.

Optional Dissertation, Literature Review* or Practical Investigation Report.

Several options are available for students who wish to develop their knowledge and/or skills in ecology and conservation within an area of their own particular interest. The Literature Review* option requires you to undertake a critical analysis of existing published (secondary) sources. The Practical Investigation Report option requires you to analyse original (primary) data collected by yourself.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>CATS points</th>
<th>FHEQ level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Litrev</td>
<td>Literature Review* (module) OR</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prac</td>
<td>Practical Investigation Report (module)</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please note that admission to the Dissertation/ Literature Review* and Practical Investigation Report above is at the discretion of the Director of Studies who must approve your topic and adviser before you begin.

Pattern and Progression of Study

Students wishing to satisfy the requirements of the Graduate Diploma need normally to complete ALL THREE Core Modules, above.

In addition they must complete a further 30 credits at level 6 from the options indicated. This could involve completing: TWO practical half modules OR a Literature Review* OR a Practical Investigation Report.

In exceptional circumstances it may be possible to complete the Graduate Diploma in a single year.

More usually, studies are spread over two or more years. In this case, Ecological Communities is normally taken first. Studies for the Diploma must normally be completed within four years from the first date of registration.

Graduate Certificate

Students who fail to complete the Diploma but who successfully complete a minimum of 45 credits at level 6 and 15 at level 5 are eligible for the award of the Graduate Certificate in Ecology and Conservation.

*subject to validation
Entrance requirements

The programme is open in principle to all applicants and no formal qualifications are required for entry. However most students will show evidence of achievement at first degree level OR be able to demonstrate other evidence of capacity to undertake the course, normally in the form of professional or field experience. An interview may be required.

Applicants who do not possess a first degree or relevant experience should complete Ecological Communities before they proceed to other modules of the programme. With this exception, students may take more than one module in any given year. Please note however that students may not formally register for the Practical Investigation Report until they have successfully completed two core modules, however all students should start planning their project topic well before registration.

The programme is demanding both intellectually and physically and requires a good deal of personal commitment. Students should normally expect to have to devote two or three times as much time to independent study as is involved in attendance at classes.

In appropriate circumstances, and at the discretion of the Course Director, students with a good first degree (second class honours or above) in a cognate subject (covering similar ground to that of the three core modules) or who possess other formal qualifications in biology, geography or environmental science, may receive exemption from study equivalent to that of the Graduate Certificate. They would usually be required to complete a nominated core module and submit a Practical Investigation Report to be determined by the Course Director.

The Birkbeck BSc Environment programme

The Graduate Diploma in Ecology and Conservation programme is integrated as a ‘vertical slice’ through the Birkbeck environment degrees, the BSc Biodiversity and Conservation, the BSc Environmental Science, and the BSc Environmental Management. Many classes will consist of a mix of BSc and Diploma students.

Lateral transfer is possible between the BSc and the Diploma. For example Diploma students wishing to transfer to the BSc will be given remission from any modules that they may have completed in (and their marks will be carried over to) the BSc and vice versa. Students wishing to consider such a transfer should discuss this with the appropriate BSc Course Director.

Information about these awards is given separately in the Course Handbook prepared for each award, available from the Department of Geography, Environment and Development Studies.
Module Descriptions

Core (full) Modules

Core 1. Ecological Communities: Structure and Function


Ecology and management of specific habitats - Ecological characteristics including climate, geology, fauna and flora. Historical development, human impacts and conservation management. Two or more contrasting habitats to be studied eg woodland, heathland, moorland, chalk grassland, freshwater, lakes, intertidal.

Practical techniques - Methods and procedures for community sampling and taxonomic identification. Data collection and interpretation for site survey and monitoring.

Assessment:
Coursework (30% of marks) and a written examination (70% of marks).

Reading
Core 2. Species and Populations

Biodiversity - Definitions of species. Speciation and the number of species, species distribution - historical factors and biogeography, measuring diversity, endemism and isolation, biodiversity in the tropics.


Species conservation - Patterns and causes of species extinction, the problems of managing small populations and the loss of genetic variation, in-situ and ex-situ conservation, population harvesting, conservation of specific groups eg large mammals, migratory birds, fish, arthropods. Introductions, archaeophytes & neophytes.

Practical techniques - Population sampling and monitoring for different taxonomic groups. Handling and interpretation of ecological data.

Assessment:

Coursework (30% of marks) and a written examination (70% of marks).

Reading


See also Sutherland (1996) in Ecological Survey and Monitoring module.
Core 3. People, Policy and Practice


Ecosystem, habitat and species protection Historical overview. UK institutional and organisational structure. Protected area designations. Sites and landscapes. Law related to species and habitat conservation. International and European conservation law and conventions.

People and nature conservation Perceptions of nature and environmental ethics. Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and the voluntary sector. Global politics and sustainable development.

Practical techniques Case studies demonstrating the interaction between ecological, historical, socio-economic and political factors and the conservation response, including site visits.

Assessment:
Coursework (30% of marks) and a written examination (70% of marks).

Reading
The social, political and organisational aspects of this module changes continually and it is therefore impossible to recommend particular books to cover the whole course, although those listed below will provide a good introduction:


Students are also advised to scan current periodical and broadcast media and to use the web as a resource. Excellent journals to which students might subscribe include ECOS and British Wildlife and magazines such as Wildlife, the RSPB quarterly magazine, Plantlife and other voluntary sector journals.

Notes on assessment for the core modules

Coursework for the core modules will consist of two assignments (30% of marks). The coursework assignments will be circulated by the course tutor to whom it must be submitted for marking by dates specified in the same document. Please read the submission notes accompanying your assignment tasks very carefully, and note the deadlines given. If you do not submit your work as directed it may not be accepted for marking. You are advised to keep a copy of all work submitted.

Work submitted after the deadline given on the assignment sheet will be classed as a late submission. If you miss the deadline you should still submit your work as soon as you can (either to your tutor in class or to the administrator), but should also be aware that late submissions will be subject to a penalty. If there is good reason why the work is late (eg illness), you may wish to apply for Mitigating Circumstances. Mitigating Circumstances forms are available from the Administrator and should normally completed and returned, together with documentary evidence supporting your claim, such as a medical certificate, within 7 days of the deadline. Please do not delay submission of your form in order to submit your coursework at the same time – just send your form in and then submit your coursework as soon as you are able to do so. Unsubstantiated claims such as “being busy at work”, “not
feeling very well”, “the printer not working” etc are not sufficient and will not be accepted as grounds for mitigation.

Work will be marked, as long as it is received by 5pm on Friday 23 April 2010, but you will not receive your mark or comments before the exam. Mitigating Circumstances applications will be reviewed by a Mitigation Sub-board of the Board of Examiners which will decide whether the work will be accepted, and whether a penalty mark should be applied.

For further information about Mitigating Circumstances please see page 22 and visit www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/rules.

Examinations: The 3-hour unseen examination for each core module constitutes 70% of the module assessment. Examinations will normally be held in May/June each year. Dates of examinations will normally be available in early March each year, and full details of the venue, candidate numbers etc confirmed by Registry in April/May (approx 3 weeks prior to the date of the examination).

Moderation: All coursework, marked and unmarked, must be (re)submitted to the Administrator by 5pm on Friday 23rd April so that it can be moderated in time for the Board of Examiners in June/July.
Optional practical (half) modules

**Ecological Survey and Monitoring**

*(Not available 2009-10)*

Objectives of (and differences between) ecological survey and monitoring. Survey and sampling strategies.

Vegetation analysis and habitat classification.

Survey techniques for invertebrates, selected vertebrate groups and environmental variables.

Analysis and interpretation of numerical data, parametric, non-parametric and multivariate statistics.

**Assessment:** Either a critical assessment of a portfolio of ecological survey, monitoring and data analysis or a practical monitoring regime for a named site, species or issue.

**Reading:**


**Environmental Education and Interpretation**

Principles and objectives of environmental education and interpretation.

Formal and informal, personal and non-personal interpretive and educational techniques.

Access management, amenity provision and visitor management.

Staff, financial and project management; safety and legal requirements.

Marketing and presentation.

**Assessment:** Either a critique of existing interpretive provision or policy or an analysis and plan relating to interpretive or educational provision, access, marketing or management.

**Reading:**


**Conservation Management Planning**

Principles of management planning for sites, species and landscapes

Alternative formats and procedures related to institutional and ecological contexts, Structured formats (EN, RSPB), adaptive approaches (Coutryside Agency, CabeSpace). Management agreements (e.g. for agroenvironmental schemes)

Description and assessment. Evaluation criteria. Integrated evaluation and systems approaches. Management objectives, policies and techniques. Work programming and project management.

Stakeholder consultation and participation. Applications of computers (CMS/PPRS).

**Assessment:** Either a critical assessment of the management plan of process on the study area or alternate area or a study of a particular aspect or problem of the management planning process.
Reading:


Notes on Assessment

Coursework for the practical field modules must be undertaken as specified at the start of each session, and must be submitted by the date specified, normally 6 weeks from the end of the module, to the Administrator for Ecology and Conservation, (see contact details for full address). **DO NOT send it to the course tutor.** You are advised to keep a copy of your work.

Work submitted after the deadline given on the assignment sheet will be classed as a late submission. If you miss the deadline you should still submit your work as soon as you can, but should also be aware that late submissions will be subject to a penalty. If there is good reason why the work is late (e.g., illness), you may wish to apply for Mitigating Circumstances. Mitigating Circumstances forms are available from the Administrator and should normally completed and returned, together with documentary evidence supporting your claim, such as a medical certificate, within 7 days of the deadline. *Please do not delay submission of your form in order to submit your coursework at the same time – just send your form in and then submit your coursework as soon as you are able to do so.* Unsubstantiated claims such as “being busy at work”, “not feeling very well”, “the printer not working” etc. are not sufficient and will not be accepted as grounds for mitigation.

Work will be marked, as long as it is received by 5pm on Friday 23 April 2010, but you will not receive your mark or comments before the exam. Mitigating Circumstances applications will be reviewed by a Mitigation Sub-board of the Board of Examiners which will decide whether the work will be accepted, and whether a penalty mark should be applied.

For further information about Mitigating Circumstances please see page 22 and visit http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/rules.

Moderation: All coursework, marked and unmarked, must be (re)submitted to the Administrator by 5pm on Friday 23rd April so that it can be moderated in time for the Board of Examiners in June/July.
Literature review* and practical investigation report

NB this is a summary of the Guidance to intending candidates on procedures for the project dissertation which is revised annually. Before starting any work you should make sure that you have a copy of the most recent version of this Guidance, which takes precedence over the information below.

Summary. The Project is intended to provide the opportunity for you to develop and demonstrate your understanding in Ecology and Conservation by undertaking an independent research project on a subject to be agreed with the Director of Studies under the supervision of a specialist Adviser appointed by the Department.

Students may opt to register for EITHER a Literature Review*, OR a Practical Project Report. This should normally be a maximum of 6,000 words and must be submitted by 1st May of the year of registration. It is rated at 30 credits at Level 6.

Eligibility and preparation. Registration is normally restricted to those who have successfully completed at least two of the core modules on the Diploma programme. We recommend also that you should register for (and preferably complete) at least one practical (half) module relevant to your chosen topic before starting.

In preparation you should begin to think about possible project topics as early as possible. Once you have some preliminary ideas, you should begin your literature search, paying particular attention to authors or academics (especially those working in or near London, in universities and colleges, including Birkbeck) who in due course might be willing to act as your Adviser. This early ‘desk research’ will help you to expand the range of possible topics, but you will then need to narrow this down to a shortlist of (say) three topics or projects which are of particular interest to you and which seem feasible within the constraints of location, time and resources at your disposal.

You should discuss these ideas as widely as possible, with your course tutors, co-students and others. You should also attend one of the Dissertation Students’ Evenings. These are held normally twice a year, in autumn and spring, at dates that will be circulated to classes in advance, but you can also enquire of the programme Administrator (see below) with whom you must book in advance so that we have an idea of numbers attending (there is no charge for attendance). These evenings give you a chance to discuss your ideas in more detail, to receive preliminary advice, and to hear from students who have already started their projects about ‘work in progress’.

You should plan your preparation from the start. For example your initial literature search may feed into the literature review in your dissertation so you should keep a complete record of every source you consult, so that you can go back to it (or use the reference) later. Your records might be on file cards, but it makes sense to trial a bibliographic software package (such as Endnote). You will need to consult a range of sources including refereed journals, library texts (and Birkbeck’s e-library) and web-based sources. More advice will be given on this at the dissertation students’ evenings.

You should also make an appointment with the award Administrator to spend an hour or two looking through some past student dissertations. Dissertations cannot be removed from Birkbeck premises, however we will try to find you somewhere to sit and read in peace so that you can form some idea of the standard required, and of possible approaches that you might take. The level and standard expected of the project is at least equivalent to that of a final year (honours) undergraduate project where this would constitute one-third of the workload for that year. Failed dissertations are not retained by the University.

*subject to validation

* More advice on this initial literature search will be provided at the Dissertation Students’ Evenings.
1. **Topics.** No ‘rules’ (other than to those given in the Schemes of Study) are laid down as to admissible topics (though course tutors may be happy to suggest possible topics if asked) but in general it is clear that diploma topics should be related to the course material. The range of possible topics - and approaches - to a dissertation are very broad indeed, but in general it is likely that your project will include:

i) a broad critical survey of *secondary* sources (e.g. published literature)

ii) a practical investigation or case study involving the collection of primary data (which may or may not be numerical). This could (for example) be an ecological investigation of a particular **site** (habitat) or **population** (species), or an investigation of a **particular problem** to do with conservation, for example, public attitudes, the policies of a conservation organisation or the operation of legislation.

The requirement for a dissertation will enable you to demonstrate your ability to discover and synthesise existing knowledge and also to carry out original research in the chosen area.

Please note that any practical investigation involving human subjects may need clearance in advance from the College Ethics Committee. You need to allow time for this in your planning.

2. **Registration.** As soon as you have some clear ideas regarding your intended dissertation topic you should commit these to paper and send or e-mail them to the Director of Studies (see below) together with your contact details (including telephone). We would normally expect a 2 – 3 page outline of what you intend to do, including:

- **Background:** relevant personal information (location, resources, time available &c)
- **Objectives:** what you want to find out through your project
- **Methods:** how you intend to do this
- Indicative **list of sources** (references) consulted to date (so that we have an idea of how much background reading you have done so far)
- **Names of possible advisers** (if you have found someone who seems particularly suitable).

Don’t worry if your outline is incomplete or if information is missing. What is important is that you have thought about it, and that you have something on paper under each of the headings, above.

Once the Director of Studies is satisfied that you have a worthwhile and feasible topic (this may take several emails and/or telephone conversations, perhaps a meeting) and that there is a suitable adviser prepared to supervise you, you will be asked to complete a **Dissertation Registration Form**, to pay the **Dissertation Registration Fee** (equivalent to the standard core module fee) and we will contact your **Dissertation Adviser** to put you formally in touch. Registration can take place at any time of year, but it is best to try to reach this stage by the early autumn or the early spring in order that you have a full twelve months (for a 1st May submission) to benefit from contact with your Adviser and to complete your Dissertation.

3. **Advice.** As soon as possible after registration, you should arrange a meeting with your Adviser to discuss your project further. You should take a draft of your Dissertation Registration Form with you, so that you can discuss this with your Adviser and amend the details of your intended project as necessary. Once you have agreed these with your Adviser you should make sure that s/he signs this (and that both of your contact details are included) and sign it yourself. You should then return the signed form to the Director of Studies (keeping a copy for yourself). If everything is in order your Dissertation Registration Form will be lodged with your records at the Department, and your Adviser will be formally contracted and will be paid the first instalment of the fee. Any subsequent significant changes to the detail of the project must be agreed by all three parties (you, your Adviser, and the Director of Studies) and a new form signed and submitted.

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4 A list of topic areas supervised by current lecturers for the Certificate is given in the course handbook. However in many cases it may be appropriate for you to have an adviser from elsewhere.

5 This is included in the annual degree fee for B.Sc students.
It is expected that the main source of advice and help in the design and execution of the project and in the preparation of your dissertation will be your Adviser, to whom you should submit regular reports. Contact may be letter, telephone or person, as agreed between you and your adviser. In general you may expect a total of around six hours of your adviser’s time, so you need to use it well, and plan your contact through the life of your project.

It is your responsibility to initiate and maintain contact with your Adviser, to make sure you are happy with the advice you receive, and to let us know if things are not going as well as you would like. A good deal of advice will clearly be necessary in the early stages of project planning, and again in the stages of writing up before submission. You need to make sure you secure advice on each stage of your project, and, with the agreement of your adviser, submit your final draft for comment as soon as possible so that you are both happy that the dissertation meets the required standard.

4. Liability. Any arrangements made for advice from other sources, access to survey sites, use of libraries &c. are a matter for the student. Neither Department nor College can accept any liability (financial or otherwise) in respect of commitments entered into by the student or by the Adviser or for any injury, loss or damage sustained by you or by third parties. You should familiarise yourself with the College and Department codes of safety for fieldwork.

5. Dissertation Students Meetings. You will be expected to attend both the Autumn and Spring Dissertation students’ evenings during your registration. At the first meeting we will expect you to make a formal presentation of your project proposal to tutors and other dissertation students, as well as those who have not yet started and are looking for ideas. At the second meeting you will be required to present a report of work in progress to other students and to the Director of Studies. Dates of these meetings for the each session will be announced each September.

6. Submission. You should submit TWO copies of your dissertation, to arrive by the date specified on your Dissertation Registration Form, to the Administrator for ecology and conservation at the address below. **DO NOT send it to your Adviser or to the Director of Studies.** You are strongly advised to keep a third duplicate copy yourself in case of loss.

One copy (at least) of your dissertation must be submitted **permanently bound in hard covers** (not in a ring binder) with your name, the title of the award (‘e.g. Graduate Diploma in Ecology and Conservation’ or ‘B.Sc. xxx’) and the year of submission on the spine. Your name, the dissertation title, and the year should also be on the front cover, all in block letters. This bound copy will not be returned to you, but will be kept by the Department for inspection by other students.

The other copy of your dissertation may if you wish be securely ring-bound (i.e. not in a plastic folder or file), and will be returned to you. In all other respects, both copies should be identical.

At the front of your dissertation you must include:
- a title page, setting out the title of your dissertation; your name; the degree for which you are studying; your place of study (Birkbeck College, University of London); and the date of submission;
- a declaration in the following terms: “I certify that the work submitted herewith is my own and that I have duly acknowledged any quotation from the published or unpublished work of other persons”
- Approximate number of words (excluding any material in appendices, etc.)
- a contents page;
- a separate page listing all figures, tables and photos as appropriate.
Please note that the text should be typed double-spaced, 10 – 12 font size, on one side only of A4 paper, with a minimum 1" margin on either side; and with illustrated material on paper the same size as the typescript, folded if necessary (separate loose maps and diagrams are not accepted).

You should also submit a short summary (no more than 1,000 words). It is the policy, where appropriate, to encourage publication of Diploma students’ work. With your agreement, a summary of your own dissertation may be published in Ecology and Conservation Studies (the bulletin of the Ecology and Conservation Studies Society ISSN 01446582).

Together with your bound copy you are required also to submit a copy of your dissertation in electronic form, on CD-ROM in Microsoft WORD or rich text format. This is required to comply with the College’s policy on plagiarism. The disc will be retained and lodged separately from the bound copy of your dissertation.

Your dissertation, together with the adviser’s report and the original project agreement will be submitted to the Internal and External Examiners for marking. If deemed necessary you may be called to the Department for oral examination. The Diploma is awarded at Pass, Merit, and Distinction standards. Results of the examination will normally be announced within three months after submission.

A student who fails to submit his/her dissertation by the due date will be marked absent. A student may be permitted to submit in the following year at the discretion of the Director of Studies, and subject to the payment of a further examination fee. If further teaching or advice from the University or Adviser is required this will require re-registration for the Diploma and payment of a further full session's fees. No extension will be permitted beyond the maximum of two sessions from the date of first registration.

Reading:

The dissertation guidelines include suggestions for a number of texts on planning and executing your research dissertation which you could consult.

You should also make sure you read some past student dissertations as suggested in the instructions above.
Assessment

Each module completed will be graded as Pass/Fail, and the overall mark (%) achieved will be given. The pass mark is 40% at undergraduate level, and 50% at postgraduate level. Assessment varies according to the aims of the module. Coursework, examination scripts and dissertations are all marked to a common scale.

The overall grade for the Diploma is based on the average mark achieved across all Level 6 modules taken, weighted according to its credit points rating. The Award itself will be graded as Pass/Merit/Distinction (Pass is 40-59%, Merit is 60-69% and Distinction is 70% or higher.)

Coursework

Marks will normally be distributed according to the following elements, in a manner appropriate to the assignment set:

- **Approach and structure**: Your assignment structure should be appropriate to the task set. It should be clear and easy to follow. Good presentation is important. Please do not submit assignments (or pages) in plastic envelopes [as we cannot then comment on the script.]

- **Content and balance**: Marks will be given for breadth of coverage as well as for selective detail and illustrative examples. All material should be succinct and relevant to the question. Unless required by the question, theories and concepts do not need to be explained, rather your understanding of them should be demonstrated by the way you apply or use them.

- **Analysis and conclusions**: An important criterion of final year graduate and postgraduate work is the power of independent critical analysis and insight. Work which merely repeats or summarises course material is unlikely to receive a high mark. Conclusions should be clearly stated.

- **Expression and clarity**: Marks will be given for clear expression and deducted for errors of grammar or for major stylistic faults. Proof reading is important. Grammatical and spelling errors will be penalised. Watch for irritating habits like inappropriate apostrophe’s!

- **Background research, including citation of and references to relevant literature**: All coursework is expected to demonstrate knowledge and understanding beyond the material presented in class. Sources consulted should be acknowledged in a bibliography. The work of others (including electronic and web sources) should always be acknowledged by means of references using standard citation formats.

Criteria for marking undergraduate coursework

All coursework should cite references and/or give a bibliography as appropriate. All marks given are provisional until verified by the appropriate exam board. The mark for any piece of work may be changed by the exam board.

- **70% and above**: An excellent or outstanding piece of work. Demonstrates knowledge and understanding of concepts and debates and an ability to think critically. Makes well structured arguments that may be theoretically informed, with very good use of relevant evidence. There will be clear evidence of awareness of current/relevant debates. Offers a wide range of references, and is fully and correctly referenced throughout. Marks over 80% indicate an exceptional piece of work which excels in all these areas.

- **60-69%**: A very good piece of work and complete examination of the task. Clear evidence of understanding of concepts or ideas. Offers analysis and a clear argument backed by appropriate examples/evidence. Well written, organised and presented. Good use of sources with evidence correctly cited.

- **50-59%**: A satisfactory to good answer. Approach and content gives some evidence
of reading and awareness of debate but may be too descriptive or generalised or needing a clearer focus. May have some gaps in argument, planning or use of evidence. Some evidence of engagement with and analysis of concepts presented in the module. Appropriate sources adequately cited.

**40-49%**: An adequate piece of work. Task examined but major areas may not have been addressed. Evidence of some reading and attempt to address the question or topic but generally descriptive and/or not well supported by evidence or examples. Planning, structuring and presentation relatively weak. Limited understanding of concepts or ideas. Barely adequate use of sources, often over-dependent on material covered in class. Sources may be inadequately cited.

**30-39% FAIL**: A partial and superficial response to the task. Uses a minimal range of reading or shows no evidence of reading. May be repetitious consisting of a string of weak assertions/opinions which may not relate to each other and without supporting evidence. Very poor planning and presentation. No awareness of theoretical perspectives or misunderstanding of key concepts. Sources inadequately cited or not cited.

**0-29% FAIL**: Very poor work. Little or no understanding of subject. Poorly organised and confused argument. Little or no evidence of planning or presentation skills. Question not addressed and little or no knowledge of the topic.

**Examinations**

Written examinations are normally held on a Friday in May or early June. The date of the examination will normally be notified to you in early March. In April/May (approximately 3 weeks before the date of the examination), Details of the time and venue, together with your candidate number will be available online at “My Birkbeck” (see www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck and log on to your profile) approximately 3 weeks before the exam. You should print off your exam notice(s) and take it (them) with you to the exam(s).

**Award**

All grades are reviewed and confirmed at the Examination Board in July, and results are normally released to students in August.

To be eligible for the award of Certificate or Diploma students must attend the classes provided regularly, undertake the work required in each course and satisfy the examiners in the prescribed assessment. **Regular attendance amounting to 75% of the possible student contact hours in each module is required in order for students to be eligible for assessment.** If you fail to meet this requirement your coursework will not be marked and you will fail your module.

Please note that to fulfil the regulations and be eligible for a ‘pass’ you MUST submit in every element of the assessment for each module. For example, for the core modules, you must submit BOTH pieces of coursework as well as sit the examination. Securing an ‘average’ pass but omitting one or both pieces of coursework means that you will fail. The Exam Board has the power to waive this requirement in exceptional circumstances, but only if these circumstances are explained in full (by submitting a Mitigating Circumstances form with supporting evidence) in writing, by the student, well in advance.

**Credit transfer and remission**

The College may at its discretion recognise for academic purposes prior certified or experiential learning. Intending students who have successfully completed module(s) at an equivalent level to this award from another institution, or who consider that their professional or volunteer experience may be such as to entitle them to receive credit towards
(and thus remission for one or more modules of) the Graduate Diploma should apply for
Accredited Prior Learning (APL) credits well in advance of starting their studies. A maximum
of 60 credits may be awarded towards the Graduate Diploma. No APL credits may be
awarded towards the Graduate Certificate.

Regulations for Taught Programmes of Study 2009 – 10

Undergraduate Programmes Undergraduate Programmes include the following Awards:
Certificate of Higher Education
Diploma of Higher Education
Graduate Certificate
Graduate Diploma
Foundation Degree
Bachelors’ Degree (BA or BSc)

Extra-Mural Certificates and Diplomas are also undergraduate level awards.

From 2009-10, Birkbeck’s undergraduate programmes will be offered as part of the College’s
Common Award Scheme. All Undergraduate Programmes will therefore have common
regulations and a common structure.

Detailed regulations are available in the Regulations for Taught Programmes of Study, which
can be downloaded from the College website (http://www.bbk.ac.uk/reg/regs). Some brief
details on key policies are included here.

If you commenced an award, including an Extra-Mural Certificate/Diploma prior to 2008/9,
the structure of the award is not changed and you will normally be subject to the regulations
which applied when you started the award.

However, the module marking scheme, late submissions, assessment offences and
mitigating circumstances policies apply to all students.

What does this mean for me?

The Common Awards Scheme is a new set of regulations or rules. This section of the
handbook details what this means for your Certificate/Diploma studies.

Assessment/Module Classification

Assessments will be graded as:

- P - Pass
- F - Fail
- NS – Non-submission
- XT – Late without penalty
- UP – Suspected Assessment Offence
- AO – Assessment Offence
- MS - Missing
- W - Withdrawn from the element of assessment or module

Modules will be graded as:

- P - Pass
- FR- Fail (Reassessment)
- F - Fail

The pass mark will be 40% (Under-Graduate) and 50% (Post-Graduate)
Failure and Re-Assessment of a Module

**Boards of Examiners**
Full details are in the Regulations for Taught Programmes of Study. In summary:
- The Board of Examiners is responsible for confirming marks.
- The Board of Examiners decide, within the regulations, whether a fail can be “compensated” (i.e. whether you can be awarded credit for a module even if you have not actually passed); whether you will need to re-take the module or whether you will be able to attempt a re-assessment.

**Re-take**
- For any module on an undergraduate programme, if your module result is less than 30% any subsequent attempt to pass the module will normally be a “re-take”.
- A re-take requires attendance at the module’s lectures and seminars as well as another attempt at the assessment.
- This attempt will be capped at 40%.

**Note:** where a pass mark has been given for a module, it is not possible for the student to re-submit work to further improve the mark.

**Re-assessment**
- If you obtain a module result of between 30% and 39% for any module on an undergraduate programme then the Board of Examiners may offer “re-assessment” as an alternative to a “re-take”.
- Re-assessment is where a student will re-attempt a failed element of a failed module; it does not require attendance at lectures and seminars.
- You will not normally be reassessed in elements that you have already passed.
- You may be required to take an alternative form of assessment for failed elements as part of re-assessment.
- The timing of any re-assessment will normally be at the next normal assessment opportunity.
- This attempt will be capped at 40%.

**Attempts and Re-takes**
- You will normally be offered three attempts at passing a module (the original attempt plus two further attempts, each of which will either be a re-assessment or a re-take).
- After this, if the module has not been passed it will be classed either as a “compensated fail” or a fail.
- In some cases this will mean that it will not be possible for you to gain the award that you have registered for; in such cases, your registration will normally be terminated.
- Second and third attempts are capped at 40%; you cannot retake a module to gain a higher mark, unless a deferral is granted due to mitigating circumstances (see below).

**Compensated Fails**
- The following awards **cannot** count any compensated fails: Certificate of Higher Education; Diploma of Higher Education; Graduate Certificate; Graduate Diploma; Postgraduate Certificate; Postgraduate Diploma

**Late Submission**
- No extensions may be awarded by an individual academic member of staff.
- Late submitted work may be subject to a penalty (normally 40% (50% PG)), but the student is also given their ‘real’ mark.
- Documented mitigating circumstances must be provided to be considered by the Mitigation Sub-committee.
Mitigating Circumstances

Mitigating Circumstances are defined as “Unforeseen, unpreventable circumstances that significantly disrupt performance in assessment.” This should not be confused with long term issues such as medical conditions, for which the College can make adjustments before assessment. Contact the Team Leader for details.

Please note that discussing your claim with a member of staff does not constitute a submission of a claim of mitigating circumstances. Please see the following information for details of the processes to be followed.

- Claims should be submitted on the standard College claim form
- Where mitigating circumstances are accepted:
  a) Students will be offered the opportunity for a reassessment without penalty.
  b) If the student is within 2% of the pass mark, the board may raise the mark, but also offer the reassessment opportunity.
- A Mitigating Circumstances claim should be submitted if valid detrimental circumstances result in:
  a) Late or non-submission of assessment
  b) Non-attendance of examination
  c) Poor performance in assessment
- For a claim to be accepted you must produce independent documentary evidence to show that the circumstances:
  d) Have detrimentally affected your performance, or will do so
  e) Were unforeseen
  f) Were out of your control and could not have been prevented
  g) Relate directly to the timing of the assessment affected.

Guidance on what may constitute acceptable mitigating circumstances is available from [http://www.bbk.ac.uk/reg/regs](http://www.bbk.ac.uk/reg/regs). You should note that this is not an exhaustive list, and that each case will be considered on its merits.

Outcomes

- If no case is made, or the mitigating circumstances are not accepted, then the penalty mark will stand.
- If a case is made and accepted then the examination board may allow the “real” mark to stand.
- A student who fails to attend or submit one or all elements of assessment for reasons judged to be valid by the Mitigating Sub-committee of the Board of Examiners may be allowed to be assessed as if for the first time. This shall be known as a ‘deferral’. Any request for deferral should be made on the Mitigating Circumstances form.

If you feel that your mark was lower than it might have been because of mitigating circumstances, you should be aware that individual marks will almost never be changed in the light of mitigating circumstances. Where mitigating circumstances are accepted, and it is judged by an examination board that these circumstances were sufficiently severe to have affected your performance in assessment the usual response will be to offer you another opportunity for assessment without penalty, at the next available opportunity.

EXAMS NOTE: A candidate who through illness, or other cause acceptable to the College, is prevented from attending any course examination may submit a mitigating circumstances form, with supporting evidence, and request that they sit the exam the following year. This request may only be granted if all coursework has been submitted in the year of enrolment on that module.
Assessment Offences and Plagiarism

What is an assessment offence?
An assessment offence is academic dishonesty; that is, the act of taking somebody else’s work and presenting it as your own or helping others to present work as their own (whether in an essay or examination). If you knowingly assist another student to plagiarise (for example, by willingly giving them your own work to copy from), you are committing an assessment offence.

The College treats all assessment offences seriously. It makes strenuous efforts to detect plagiarism, including using web-based software that can provide clear evidence. If you are in any doubt as to what constitutes acceptable conduct you should consult your personal tutor or another member of academic staff. The College has a wide range of sanctions that it may apply in cases of plagiarism, including the termination of a student’s registration in the most serious cases.

Examples of plagiarism include (but are not restricted to):
- copying the whole or substantial parts of a paper from a source text (e.g. a web site, journal article, book or encyclopaedia), without proper acknowledgement
- paraphrasing another’s piece of work closely, with minor changes but with the essential meaning, form and/or progression of ideas maintained
- piecing together sections of the work of others into a new whole
- procuring a paper from a company or essay bank (including Internet sites)
- submitting another student’s work, with or without that student’s knowledge
- submitting a paper written by someone else (e.g. a peer or relative) and passing it off as one’s own
- representing a piece of joint or group work as one’s own.

The assessment offences policy describes three stages in the process for dealing with assessment offences [http://www.bbk.ac.uk/reg/central_pages/plagiarism]:

Stage 1: The subject team will resolve first or minor and uncontested offences.
Stage 2: This allows for a formal school investigation, where a student wishes to contest the allegation or penalty, where there is an allegation of a repeat offence or for more serious cases.
Stage 3: This involves a centrally convened panel for third and serious offences, dealt with under the Code of Student Discipline – http://www.bbk.ac.uk/reg/regs/discipline_pdf

Other Policies
In addition to the policies above, other College academic-related policies include:

Termination of Registration
Procedures for Dealing with Special Examination Arrangements
Suspension of Regulations

To see these policies, please see the Common Awards Scheme website:

http://www.bbk.ac.uk/reg/regs
Transitional Arrangements

The College has converted all its Extra-Mural Certificate/Diploma courses into Certificates of Higher Education and Graduate Certificates/Diplomas. From September 2008 the Extra-mural Certificate and Extra-mural Diploma in Ecology and Conservation have been replaced by the Graduate Diploma in Ecology and Conservation.

Students who enrolled on and passed at least one core module of the Extra-mural Certificate in 2007-8 or earlier, or who have already been awarded the extra-mural Certificate in Ecology & Conservation should normally complete the Certificate, or progress from the extra-mural Certificate to the extra-mural Diploma under old regulations.

Alternatively, extra-mural Certificate students may transfer to the Graduate Diploma and complete that award by successfully completing all three core modules and either the Practical Investigation Report or TWO optional practical modules, or other optional modules if and when advised.

The overall result awarded for the Graduate Diploma is calculated from marks obtained on modules completed at level 6 only.
Preparation for the Programme

Preliminary reading

Students are encouraged to read periodicals such as *Biological Conservation* and *Conservation Biology*, *British Wildlife* and *Ecos*, as well as scholarly journals available in the Birkbeck (and other) libraries.

Students are also advised to scan current periodical and broadcast media and to use the web as a resource. Excellent journals to which students might subscribe include *ECOS* and *British Wildlife* and magazines such as *Wildlife*, the RSPB quarterly magazine, *Plantlife* and other voluntary sector journals.

The following texts are recommended as preliminary reading:


*Students with a limited background in biology* may find it useful to have a general biology text, such as Purves W.K., Orians G. H. & Heller H. C. 1995 *Life: The Science of Biology*. New York: Sinauer Bbk=570LIF


You should make yourself familiar with Birkbeck’s excellent library facilities, including e-journals and on-line archive sources of published material.

*Background reading on habitats and wildlife* will be relevant to most sections of the course. Examples of books available in the Birkbeck library include: Rackham, O 2006 *Woodlands* London: HarperCollins The New Naturalist Library Bbk=508.31520941RAC and see neighbouring books on heathland, (chalk) grassland, wetlands, coast &c

*‘Philosophical’ books on nature and humans* will also be relevant particularly to Module 3; for example in addition to Adams (2003) you may wish to take a look at Leopold A. 1949 *A Sand County Almanac* Oxford: Oxford University Press Bbk= 508.775LEO
Student Support and Study Skills

“My Birkbeck” website – the student handbook

For full information about the services and support available to students, as well as information regarding course regulations, assessment, etc, please visit the “My Birkbeck” website at

www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck where you will find information on such subjects as:

- **Student guides**: our guides provide easy access to information across this website, including [Student help](#).
- **Course administration**: all the procedural information you need, from application, enrolment and registration, to exams and assessment.
- **Student support**: we offer you a range of student support services, including learning support and skills training, careers advice, computing and IT support and library services.
- **About you**: get information on your student records, student card(s), getting proof that you’re a student and other personal information.
- **Forms and cover sheets**: covering general areas such as disability, finance, childcare. Forms specific to your course will be provided by your award administrator.
- **Rules and regulation**: governing admission, assessment and award at Birkbeck.

Throughout this handbook you will find web links to various pages from this website.

**Birkbeck Students’ Union**

Birkbeck Students’ Union promotes welfare issues, represents students’ interests on College committees and provides social activities via events and societies. All students are automatically members of the union (although you can opt out if you wish) which entitles them to benefit from all the facilities and services we offer. Birkbeck Union is affiliated to the National Union of Students (NUS).

**Support services**

- Counselling (free, confidential and independent service dealing with personal issues)
- Advice Centre (free drop-in service offering general advice and referrals)
- Skills for Life Workshops (free workshops in essay writing, time management, presentation skills, etc.)
- Student Representation (course representation, appeal cases, discrimination, harassment, etc.)

**Facilities and services**

- Union Shop selling light snacks and drinks, stationery and Birkbeck-branded items, all at reasonable prices. Located in the basement of the main building and is open Monday to Friday from 12pm – 9.00pm and Saturdays from 10am – 4pm.
- NUS cards for discounts on goods, theatre, cinema, etc.
- Student magazine, *The Lamp and Owl*

**Social activities**

- Newly renovated and student affordable bar with regular entertainments, Sky TV and a pool table.
- Twenty societies, ranging from archaeology to football.
- Access to the University of London Union (ULU) bars, fitness facilities, swimming pool and retail outlets, located next door to Birkbeck Malet Street building.
To get your membership card, come to the Union Office in the main Birkbeck building on Malet Street between 2pm – 9pm Monday to Friday, term time, and bring a passport photograph and your college ID card.

For further details, call 020 7631 6335, email administrator@bcsu.bbk.ac.uk, visit www.bbk.ac.uk/su or come and see us on Fourth Floor, Malet Street, London WC1E 7HX

**Disability support**

At Birkbeck there are students with a wide range of disabilities including dyslexia, visual or hearing impairments, mobility difficulties, mental health needs, HIV, ME, respiratory conditions etc. Many of them have benefited from the advice and support provided by the College’s disability service.

**Assessing Your Needs**

We recommend that you declare your disability and outline any needs you may have on your enrolment form, to enable us to assess how we can assist you. Where you state that you have additional needs, Birkbeck will contact you to discuss your needs, agree the support to be provided and make the necessary funding arrangements, with the aim of having support in place before you start your course. A place on the course will be reserved for you in the meantime.

**The Disabled Students Allowance**

Students with disabilities who are studying for certificate awards and who meet the eligibility criteria, may apply for the Disabled Students’ Allowance (DSA).

The type of assistance that can be funded from the DSA depends on the nature of your disability, but may include:

- Special equipment, such as a computer, so you can work from home
- Specialist software to assist you if you have a visual impairment, dyslexia or mobility difficulty
- Specialist orthopaedic chairs and other postural aids
- A digital recorder so that you can record lectures; a radio-aid or portable induction loop
- Assistance with a non-medical personal helper: for example, note-takers, sign language interpreters, readers, personal assistants and dyslexia tutors
- Books and photocopying
- Additional travel costs.

The DSA is non-means-tested, and there are no age limits. We can assist you in applying to your local authority for this allowance. An application form is available from the Disability Office and we can help you complete it. The form must be signed and stamped by the College before it is sent to the local authority.

**The Personal Assistance Scheme**

Some students need a personal assistant to provide support on their course, for example a note-taker, sign language interpreter, reader, personal assistant, disability mentor or dyslexia support tutor. Birkbeck has a Personal Assistance Scheme to assist you with recruiting, training and paying your personal assistant. These assistants are usually funded by the DSA. Please contact Steve for information on this scheme.

**Support in the College**

Below are examples of support that Birkbeck could provide:

- If you have a mobility difficulty, we will endeavour to ensure that your course is held in an accessible building.
- If you have a hearing impairment, we have a range of portable and fitted induction loops available.
If you have a visual impairment, we may be able to provide you with handouts in accessible formats.

There is an extensive range of specialist equipment in Birkbeck’s Library and computer laboratories, which you may be able to access.

Examinations
Students with disabilities and dyslexia may be eligible for special arrangements for examinations and class tests e.g. extra time, use of a word processor, amanuensis, enlarged examination papers etc. In order to receive special arrangements students must provide Medical Evidence of their disability (or an Educational Psychologist's Report if you are dyslexic). The closing date for making special examination arrangements is the 15th March and beyond this date consideration will only be given to emergency cases.

Further Information
You can get a copy of our Disability Handbook from the Disability Office or by visiting www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/facilities/disability . The Disability Office also provides advice and information at College Open Evenings. For further information, or to make an appointment, please contact the Disability Office on 020 7631 6336, fax 020 7631 6303 or email disability@bbk.ac.uk Alternatively, text us on 07910 821 998.

Study skills support
Learning Support & Skills training provides students with advice and information about where they can access a range of courses and other activities designed to develop personal and professional skills and to improve the learning experience.

Typical support offered may include:
- 1 : 1 tutorials (one hour)
- Focused drop-in sessions for reading and note-taking; mind mapping; researching and planning an essay; structuring and writing up an essay
- Revision and exam skills sessions
- English Grammar drop-in sessions
- Basic IT support and training (WP for producing an essay)
- Study skills days
- Web-based resources and training

Please refer to www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/facilities/support/contact or call one of the following contacts for further information or to book a session:

- email: studyskills@bbk.ac.uk
- Workshop and tutorial bookings: 020 3073 8042
- General enquiries: 020 7631 6683

English language support
Birkbeck College provides a range of resources and courses for English language support and assistance. In the first instance, please refer to Student Support www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/facilities .

Careers advice
Most students are interested in developing their careers, either within their current field of work or in a completely new direction. The Specialist Institutions’ Careers Service (SICS), located next door to Birkbeck, offers expertise and experience in working with students and graduates of all ages and at all stages of career development. In particular, you can take advantage of the following:
• Early evening advisory service: Booked 20 minute sessions specifically for Birkbeck part-
timers available Wednesday evenings during term-time.
• Drop-in quick-query advice: Available Monday–Thursday’s, 2.00pm–4.30pm. These 15-20
minute sessions are ideal for helping you to develop your CV, look over your application
forms or covering letters, preparing for job interviews or simply to begin to get your career
ideas into focus.
• Longer or in-depth Career Guidance interviews: these are suitable for complete career
beginners, those looking to change or develop their careers further as well as those who are
thinking of undertaking further study. This service is also ideal for those who would like to
practice for a forthcoming job interview.
• The Careers Information Room: Here you will find a huge range of resources providing
detailed information in areas such as; general career choice and your options once you
graduate, further or postgraduate study and information on helping you fund this study,
working or studying abroad, writing CVs and application forms and vacancies with graduate
recruiters as well as part-time and vacation type vacancies.
Much of this information is FREE to take away, so pop in and help yourself and read through
it in your own time.
• SICS also offers the opportunity to practice aptitude tests similar to those used by
employers, take part in Myers Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) personality assessment
workshops; and runs a Careers Development Programme which are seminars designed to
help you with all aspects of career planning, interview preparation and applications.
• Birkbeck students are also encouraged to join the free online service SICSAlert, where you
will receive information about forthcoming career events & courses, employer presentations
as well as vacancy news that is of interest to you direct to your email inbox.
www.careers.lon.ac.uk/sics/alert
For further details contact:
The Specialist Institutions’ Careers Service (SICS)
4th. Floor, ULU Building
Malet Street, London WC1E 7HY
tel: 020 7866 3600
tel: 020 7866 3601
e-mail: sics@careers.lon.ac.uk
web: www.careers.lon.ac.uk/sics

For more information about careers visit www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck and search for
"careers".

Birkbeck IT Services

There are two or three large rooms in the main building and one in the basement of Senate
House that make computer terminals available to Birkbeck students. This gives you free
access to word processing should you require it, as well as an e-mail account and entry to
the internet. There are many, constantly growing resources available on the Internet (aside
from the usual entertainments of very sad Home Pages), and it is becoming an increasingly
vital element of academic research.

The College constantly runs a rotating series of courses introducing students to word
processing packages, negotiating the Internet, PowerPoint, and other skills. Visit
www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/facilities/support/computing-skills for more information. Sign
up early for these courses as are very popular.

For more information about IT services visit
www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/facilities/computing.

Your BBK e-mail account
All students at Birkbeck College are given a Birkbeck e-mail account. This account makes it easy for us to contact you if we need to advise you about room changes or other important issues. You can activate your account as soon as you have your library card.

To activate your account, go to the ITS website at http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/facilities/computing/contact. If you already have an active personal e-mail account, such as yahoo or hotmail, you can link your BBK account to this. Please note that e-mails from the Blackboard facility will be sent to Birkbeck e-mail accounts.

**Birkbeck e-learning environment**

Blackboard e-learning facilities will be used for a number of Ecology modules. Your tutor will advise you if Blackboard is active for your module. Once you have your library card, you can activate your Birkbeck e-mail account and start using Blackboard. Please go to the following website to access Blackboard:

https://www.ble.uk/webapps/portal/frameset.jsp

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**College Library Resources**

The library website lists internet resources on study skills at: www.bbk.ac.uk/lib/studyres.html

There are a number of useful study guides available, such as:


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**Web resources**

Further resource material (including advice on study skills, past examination papers etc) is available on the Birkbeck website, see

- Birkbeck CEPAR http://www.bbk.ac.uk/ceresearch/cepar/ go to the bottom right of the page and click ‘Protected Area’
- Birkbeck Institute of Environment http://www.bbk.ac.uk/environment/materials

For either of the above you will need a username and password which will be given to you on registration, or contact the programme Administrator.

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**Financial Support**

If you wish to enquire about sources of financial support at Birkbeck please call Student Finance on 020 7631 6362 between 12.00 noon and 5pm, Monday-Friday during term time, or visit:

http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/aig.

For other information on student financial support, go to: www.dfes.gov.uk/studentsupport/ and click on “Students”.

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Bodies Associated with this Award

Ecology and Conservation Studies Society

The ECSS is the Student Society for the Certificate and Diploma in Ecology and Conservation. The Society was formed in March 1980 and aims to provide a common focus for the varied but interconnected interests of all students, past and present (including those following any element of the programme as part of another scheme of study) their lecturers, tutors and examiners.

In addition any student at Birkbeck whose course of study relates to the Society's areas of interest or who is studying or working in the area is eligible to join ECSS as a full member.

The ECSS aims are:

To foster interest in conservation based on sound ecological principles, and to maintain that interest by contact with members, through the Society's meetings and publications.

To keep members up-to-date on literature, new concepts and practical field study techniques, and to provide opportunities for participation in research.

To maintain and encourage links with the University of London, and to make the value of the Certificate and Diploma in Ecology and Conservation more widely known and appreciated.

In order to do this, the ECSS has a large range of activities. It:

Publishes a Bulletin thrice yearly - Ecology and Conservation Studies - which includes original articles, news, views and information. Also, various publications through the Society's Information Resources Group.

Provides lectures and seminars on ecological and conservation topics.

Arranges field visits (where possible to places not normally open to the public); residential weekends and longer excursions; informal meetings where members can exchange ideas and make friends.

Organises self-help groups: for the exchange of ideas between members who teach environmental subjects; also occasional field meetings to improve identification skills.

Encourages active participation by members in the work of the local County Naturalists' Trusts and other conservation bodies operating in the Greater London area and the Home Counties.

Subscriptions are currently £15 per year, due in January. The Society's subscription income is aimed to cover producing and distributing its Bulletin, and general administrative costs. Other activities involving significant expense are charged on a break-even basis. When events are open to non members, members' rates are normally preferential.

Membership applications and subscriptions should be sent to: the Hon Treasurer Ms Shirley Gear, 65 Wordsworth Drive, Bletchley, Milton Keynes, MK3 5HR. Tel: 01908 370329

Further information can be found on the Society’s website, http://www.bbk.ac.uk/environment/prospective/ecss.

Birkbeck Institute of Environment

Launched in 2006, the Birkbeck Institute of Environment (IoE) aims to bring together all the inter-disciplinary environment teaching and research activities being undertaken in the College.

The IoE brings together all the undergraduate, postgraduate and continuing professional development programmes on environmental topics offered by Birkbeck, together on the College website for the first time. In promoting interdisciplinary teaching, the Institute of
Environment website aims to enable more students to undertake the programmes by making the educational experience more manageable and effective.

Over the coming year, the goal will be to also create an interdisciplinary 'home' for all environment-related research which can be used as a resource by students, academics and policy-makers from outside the College.

Administered by The Department of GEDS, the Institute for the Environment involves a number of Birkbeck Departments (GEDS, Biology, Management and Economics,) and provides central administrative and student support for the College's environmental programmes. See \[http://www.bbk.ac.uk/environment/\] or contact the IoE co-ordinator email: k.ellwood@bbk.ac.uk  tel: +44 (0) 20 7631 6473.

**Centre for European Protected Area Research**

London University Centre for Protected Area Research (CEPAR) was established at Birkbeck in 1998 to integrate a range of research, consultancy and training activities in protected area policy and management. CEPAR is a constituent research centre of Birkbeck Institute of Environment (IoE) and of the joint Birkbeck/UCL Bloomsbury Institute of the Natural Environment (BINE). It enjoys strong links with other academic institutions within the University of London, with UK statutory countryside and conservation organisations (such as Natural England) and with non-governmental organisations (including the National Trust) as well as with European and international bodies, including the IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA) and the Federation of Nature and National Parks of Europe (EUROPARC).

The central mission of CEPAR is to examine how sustainability can be delivered in protected areas in the wider Europe (east and west). CEPAR's core staff specialise in management planning, sustainable tourism, education and interpretation, environmental policy and politics, agri-environmental policy, and sustainable rural development, with particular reference to the operation of European protected areas. CEPAR also draws on a wide multi-disciplinary range of associate staff whose skills and expertise have been harnessed in a variety of research, consultancy and training activities. See \[http://www.bbk.ac.uk/environment/research/cepar\]
Course Team and Contacts

If you have not yet registered for the Diploma, but are interested in doing so, you should contact the Administrator as below.

If you are an existing student currently registered on the Diploma programme, your first point of contact for should always be the Course Tutor for the course you are currently studying. Failing this, you should contact the Administrator or the Team Leader, as below, who will refer your enquiry to the appropriate person.

If you are a BSc student, you should also contact your Award Coordinator, as below.

Administrative Staff

Team Leader for Ecology and Conservation: Margaret George
Telephone 020 7079 0784, email m.george@bbk.ac.uk

Administrator for Ecology and Conservation: Amanda Inniss
Telephone 020 3073 8065, email environment@bbk.ac.uk

Correspondence and coursework should be sent to:
Administrator for Ecology and Conservation
Birkbeck, University of London
Dept of Geography, Environment & Development Studies
Malet Street, London WC1E 7HX
Telephone 020 3073 8065
Fax 020 7631 6498
Email environment@bbk.ac.uk
Web www.bbk.ac.uk/study/ce/environmentstudies/index.html

Academic Staff

The course is delivered through a panel of lecturers who work together as a course team. If you wish to contact any of them please email as below or contact the or the Administrator as above, who will deal with your query direct, or pass you on to the appropriate person.

Associate Lecturers The course tutors include *(DS = Dissertation supervision)*

Prof. Bill Chaloner BSc PhD FRS. Bill is a palaeobotanist, a world authority on Palaeozoic plants (and a Fellow of the Royal Society) who pioneered the reconstruction of past environments through the study of pollen, spores and fossils. **DS:** botanical survey and monitoring.

Dr Oliver Cheesman BSc PhD. Oliver is an ecologist with a particular interest in insect conservation. After ten years with CAB International, he now works as a freelance consultant and on a voluntary basis. Amongst other activities, he chairs Invertebrate Link (JCCBI) and works with the UK Overseas Territories Conservation Forum. **DS:** insect ecology.

Brian Day BA (Hons) MSc. Having spent twenty-five years practising housing and social welfare law, Brian has sought to apply that expertise to the field of conservation law. He is specially interested in the philosophy of nature conservation, education and the field of conservation ethics. **DS:** legal, philosophical and educative aspects of conservation.

Dr Brian Ferry BSc PhD. Brian is an ecologist and botanist with a special interest in lower plants. As Director of Dissertation Studies, Brian is responsible for advising intending students on their project dissertation and literature review. Contact b.ferry@fll.bbk.ac.uk **DS:** botanical survey and monitoring; taxonomy, invasive species.
Mike Fry BA, BSc, LLM is a solicitor and a trustee of the London Wildlife Trust. He is the author of the standard text on wildlife law *A Manual of Nature Conservation Law* (see Module 3)  

**DS:** The EU Wild Birds and Habitats Directives.

Dr Barry Giles BSc PhD is an all-round ecologist with a special interest in bogs. Barry was Senior Lecturer in Ecology at London Metropolitan University. As Academic Adviser for the Certificate and Diploma, Barry liaises with tutors and is responsible for coordinating resources on the programme. Contact b.giles@fll.bbk.ac.uk  

**DS:** botanical survey and monitoring, past environments.

Dr Karen Haysom BSc PhD is an animal ecologist with interests in insect community ecology and bats. She has worked on various agro-ecology projects in Scotland and England and is now Director of Conservation at the Bat Conservation Trust.  

**DS:** animal survey and monitoring, especially vertebrates.

Dr Elaine Porter BSc PhD is a research botanist and plant biochemist at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew. She is particularly interested in plant chemical defences, the taxonomic uses of plant chemicals, botany and ethnobotany.  

**DS:** botanical survey and monitoring.

Richard Clarke BSc MTech FLS is Senior Lecturer at Birkbeck Institute of Environment. Originally an ecologist, his principal current interest is in the relation between conservation and sustainable development. As Award Coordinator, he has overall responsibility for the academic structure and delivery of the Ecology and Conservation programme at Birkbeck College. Contact r.clarke@bbk.ac.uk  

**DS:** conservation politics, especially protected areas.

You may contact all the above through the Birkbeck Institute of Environment by email at environment@bbk.ac.uk or by post, c/o the Administrator. When you do so, please make it clear who your query is addressed to.

**BSc Students**

BSc students should contact the appropriate BSc Course Director for their programme, as below:

**BSc Biodiversity and Conservation**

School of Biological and Chemical Sciences, main college building (entrance in Torrington Square):

Please contact Dr Martin Ingrouille (Tel: 020 7631 6333, email: m.ingrouille@bbk.ac.uk)  

Administrator: Farah Zakaria (Tel: 020 7631 6260, email: f.zakaria@bbk.ac.uk)

**BSc Environmental Science, BSc Environmental Management.**

School of Geography, main college building (entrance in Torrington Square):

Please contact Dr Sian Sullivan (Tel: 020 7631 6474, email: s.sullivan@bbk.ac.uk) or Dr Martin Frost (Tel: 020 7631 6270, email: m.frost@bbk.ac.uk)

Administrator: Eva Peters (Tel 020 7631 6473, email: secretary@geog.bbk.ac.uk).
Useful Forms

Further copies of the forms below are available from the Administrator for Ecology and Conservation. They are also available on the website http://www.bbk.ac.uk/environment/materials

However there may be occasions when it will be appropriate for you to photocopy and use those reproduced below, as follows:

Course enquiry/ registration form. Please copy this and use it to register for new modules. You can also copy this to give to friends or colleagues who may be interested in this or other programmes offered at Birkbeck.

Coursework coversheet. You need to attach a completed coversheet to EVERY piece of coursework submitted for assessment – coursework will not be accepted without one. If you have run out of yellow coversheets, you can photocopy this one.

Health and safety registration form. For all field courses we need to have details of any medical conditions (and for residential courses, of dietary requirements) and, in case of emergency, your doctor and next-of-kin. The form is also available on http://www.bbk.ac.uk/environment/materials/specprof/medsafe. In signing it you acknowledge that you have read, and will abide by the Code of Practice for Fieldwork Safety which is available on http://www.bbk.ac.uk/so/policies/fllfield/#7

Project dissertation registration form. You can copy this and use it as a record of where you have got to in planning your dissertation project. Before you start your Dissertation we will need to agree a fresh one of these, which we will use as a basis for contracting your Adviser, and for our own records.

Mitigating circumstances form. Copies are available from the Administrator, or on the website. If you are claiming mitigating circumstances you should complete and submit this form, within 7 days of the deadline for your work, to the Administrator. See www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/rules for more details.
**Specialist Module Registration Form**

**COMPLETE IN BLOCK LETTERS BEFORE SUBMISSION**

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<th>Name of Student</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Telephone daytime</th>
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1. **Module choices***

Please indicate the module of your choice below

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<th>Title of Module title</th>
<th>Location of module</th>
<th>Date of module</th>
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2. **Module changes***

If you wish to *withdraw* from a module previously registered please give details below.

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<th>Title of Module title</th>
<th>Location of module</th>
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3. **Declaration**

I confirm that I have read, and that I agree to abide by the College’s Health and Safety Policy and the Department’s guide on Safety in Fieldwork**; and that I have notified the Team Leader in writing of any medical conditions of other circumstances which might affect my own, or others’ health, safety or wellbeing.

Signed ___________________________ Date ________________

* Note that if you fail to attend any module or give less than six week’s notice of withdrawal, you are likely to have to reimburse the College for losses on accommodation and other costs.

** Available from the Administrator for Environment or on [http://www.bbk.ac.uk/so/policies/icefield](http://www.bbk.ac.uk/so/policies/icefield)
**Coursework coversheet**

**Birkbeck Institute of Environment**

**SCIENCE AND ENVIRONMENT COURSEWORK COVERSHEET**

You must attach a cover sheet to each piece of coursework you submit for assessment. You are strongly advised to keep a duplicate copy of all coursework submitted in case of loss. After the marked coursework has been returned to you must keep it safely (together with this coversheet). You will be required to submit your coursework for final assessment prior to each year’s Examination Board for adjudication by the External Examiner.

**COMPLETE IN BLOCK LETTERS BEFORE SUBMISSION**

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<tr>
<th>Name of Student</th>
<th>Title of Award</th>
<th>Year and term</th>
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<th>Name of Module/Block</th>
<th>Date of Module/Block</th>
<th>Taught by</th>
<th>Location or venue</th>
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I certify that the attached is my own work/was prepared as part of organised group work for my class*. (*Delete as appropriate)

I understand that I may be penalised by the assessors by a reduction in marks and even refused credit, if I use the words of other people without acknowledgement. Where I have used the words of other people in my work, I have **on each occasion**, acknowledged the source, giving the name of the author and the title of the work referred to.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Signature</th>
<th>Date work submitted</th>
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<th>Title/Subject of Course Work (student to complete)</th>
<th>Marking Scheme</th>
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<td>50% and above</td>
<td>Pass</td>
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<tr>
<td>49% and below</td>
<td>Pass</td>
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<tr>
<td>40% and above</td>
<td>Pass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39% and below</td>
<td>No credit</td>
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</table>

First marker’s comments and advice (detailed comments are given overleaf and/or on script)

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<th>Name _______________________</th>
<th>Date __________</th>
<th>Recommended Mark …………%</th>
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Second marker’s comments and advice (more comments may be given overleaf and/or on script)

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<th>Name _______________________</th>
<th>Date __________</th>
<th>Final Mark …………………%</th>
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Comments

1) Approach and Structure

2) Content and Balance

3) Analysis and Conclusions

4) Expression and Clarity

5) Sources and references

General/other
Health and safety registration form
Birkbeck Institute of Environment
Personal Medical, Diet and Fieldwork Safety Record

Please complete all sections of the form below to the best of your ability. The information is required so that we can be aware of any potential problems and respond appropriately in the event of an emergency. All information provided will be treated sympathetically and in confidence.

Please return the completed form to:
Administrator for Environment, Institute of Environment, Birkbeck, Malet Street, WC1E 7HX.
Telephone 020 3073 6085 email environment@bbk.ac.uk

Your name: Course of study/ award/ module:

Home address:

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<th>Telephone (work):</th>
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<th>Mobile:</th>
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NAME OF NEXT OF KIN or other person to be contacted in the event of emergency:

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<th>Telephone (work):</th>
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Diet OMNIVORE/ VEGETARIAN/ OTHER:

(please indicate any special dietary requirements):
NAME OF YOUR DOCTOR:  
ADDRESS:  

TELEPHONE:  
Can you swim? Y/N

When did you last receive a tetanus booster? (If 10 or more years ago you should have another one before fieldwork begins)

ARE YOU now or have you recently suffered from any condition which may be relevant to your safety or comfort during the course, e.g. epilepsy, giddiness, blackouts, fainting, asthma, allergies, diabetes, heart or lung complaints, other physical disability, claustrophobia or recent surgical operations? If so, please give details:

ARE YOU presently receiving medical treatment for any condition? If so, please state reasons, the nature of the condition, and of the treatment including details of any drugs currently prescribed:

ANY OTHER INFORMATION: (Please state below or supply on a separate sheet if necessary)

STUDENT DECLARATION
I have received, read, understood and will abide by the Department’s Code of Practice for Safety during Excursions and Fieldwork including its Appendix One – Code of Practice for Safety for Individual Fieldwork.  
*Available on http://intra.bbk.ac.uk/so/flsaf.htm  
I have received, read, understood and will abide by the significant findings from the supplementary risk assessment for this particular fieldtrip. - If applicable. See overleaf.  
I have disclosed above any medical or health conditions which may affect my ability to undertake fieldwork and/or my safety in the field.  
I undertake to conduct myself responsibly with regard for the safety of myself and others.  
I understand that I am responsible for my own arrangements for travel and accident insurance.  
Signature: Date:
Project dissertation registration form
Birkbeck University of London
Graduate Diploma in Ecology and Conservation/ Environment BSc Final Year Project

Dissertation Registration and Record
This form should be completed in line with the Guidance notes to intending candidates on procedures for the project dissertation and the instructions at the end of this form

Student’s name in full ………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………..
Student’s contact details
Postal address e-mail

Adviser’s name in full:
………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………..
Adviser’s contact details
Postal address e-mail

Telephone

Brief description of dissertation:

Provisional title (this may well change by the time the Dissertation is submitted):

Objectives (the particular things you want to find out through your project):

Methods (how the objectives will be achieved, e.g. survey methodology):

Intended date of submission (1st May of the current academic year):

/OVER
Signatures
(Student)

(signed)…………………………………………………………
(date) …../...../.....

(Adviser)

(signed)…………………………………………………………
(date) …../...../.....

(Director for Dissertation Studies)

(signed)…………………………………………………………
(date) …../...../.....

PLEASE NOTE:
This form should not completed until the broad outlines of the project, including provisional title and the name of
the Adviser have been agreed with the Director for Dissertation Studies for the Diploma/ BSc as appropriate. By
this time the student should already have prepared a 2-3 page outline of what is proposed and this can be revised
and attached to this form – the information above is essentially a summary for record purposes.
Completion of this form should be the outcome of discussion between the adviser and student. When an outline
of the proposed work has been agreed, the student should complete the form and both student and adviser should
sign and date it. The form should then be sent (with any attachments) to the Director for Dissertation Studies who
will confirm that it is in order and the Department will then use it as the basis for contracting the adviser (the
original will be lodged with the student's records).

NB. For any research involving human subjects an Ethics Form must also be completed and approval secured
from the Ethics Committee before work is begun.

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY:
Date received by Administrator:
Payment made to Adviser (date)

Part 1…………………
Part 2…………………
MITIGATING CIRCUMSTANCES CLAIM FORM  
Academic Session: 2009/2010

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON MITIGATING CIRCUMSTANCES SEE  
www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/administration/certificate-exams/mitigating-circumstances

- You must submit this form at the earliest opportunity, and at the latest 7 days after the final examination for your programme for the year. If you submit this form after this time without good cause then your claim will not be considered. Degree Examination Boards may, at their discretion, set an absolute deadline after which no application for consideration of mitigating circumstances will be considered.
- Claims that do not include relevant information or documentary evidence will not be considered.
- Acceptance of Mitigating Circumstances Claims is at the discretion of the College only.
- All information submitted as a claim of mitigating circumstances will be treated as confidential.

All claims should include wherever possible original independent documentary evidence, e.g. medical certificate. If you fail to provide this information your claim may not be considered.

N.B. You may resubmit a previously rejected claim only if it is supported by significant additional evidence.

Late claims should give valid reasons for the late submission of the claim.

Please complete the following information

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E-Mail Address .................................................................
You will be normally notified of the decision by email

Please list all modules for which you are submitting a claim of Mitigating Circumstances

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Module Code</th>
<th>Module Title</th>
<th>Assessment affected (e.g. examination, first coursework, in-class test)</th>
<th>Coursework</th>
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<td>Deadline</td>
<td>Date submitted</td>
<td>Date of examination</td>
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/OVER
FURTHER DETAILS:
Please complete the following information by ticking the appropriate box and completing the related columns.

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<tr>
<th>What original evidence have you submitted?</th>
<th>Tick</th>
<th>Dates covered by the evidence</th>
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<td>Doctor's note or other medical evidence</td>
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<td>Police letter or form</td>
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<td>Employer's letter (part-time students only)</td>
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<td>Death Certificate</td>
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<td>Other (Please specify)</td>
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Please explain how the circumstances have affected your work and/or studies

GROUP WORK - If you are submitting a claim for group work you must list the names and ID numbers (if known) of all the other members of the group. Use the boxes below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Surname</th>
<th>First Name</th>
<th>ID Number (if known)</th>
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If you are submitting your claim after the deadline (7 days before the assessment takes place) please indicate the reasons – documentary evidence should be provided

I confirm that the above information is correct

........................................................................ Date ........................................

Your signature

Return this form to your Administrator as soon as possible.

SCHOOL OFFICE USE ONLY

RECEIVED: SITS:
Further Information

Programme regulations and the content of this handbook change from time to time; students should ensure that they keep up-to-date with the current situation.

Regulations are published separately on the conduct of courses, classes and final assessment.

Details of the courses provided for each module is available on-line and in the certificates and short courses Prospectus, published in April each year.

Further information about this award and other awards and courses provided by the Department of Geography, Environment and Development Studies may be obtained from:

Administrator for Ecology and Conservation
Dept of GEDS
Birkbeck, Malet Street, WC1E 7HX.
Telephone: 020 3073 8065
Email: environment@bbk.ac.uk

Web: http://www.bbk.ac.uk/study/ce/environmentstudies/index.html

Online Prospectus: http://www.bbk.ac.uk/study/all_courses/