

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

.Name, title and level of final qualification(s)	MSc Environment and Sustainability PG Dip Environment and Sustainability PG Cert Environment and Sustainability (Level 7)
Name and title of any exit qualification(s)	PG Dip Environment and Sustainability PGCert Environment and Sustainability
Awarding Body	University of London
Teaching Institution(s)	Birkbeck, University of London
Home school/other teaching departments	School of Social Sciences
Location of delivery	Central London, online, flexible
Language of delivery and assessment	English
Mode of study, length of study and normal start month	Full-time (1 year) Part-time (2 years) October, January
Professional, statutory or regulatory body	N/A
QAA subject benchmark group(s) Higher Education Credit Framework for England	N/A
Birkbeck Course Code	MSc: TMSENSIP_C - on-campus study TMSENSON_C - online study TMSENSMX_C - flexible study TMSENSUJ_C – January start, on campus study PG Dip: TPDENSIP_C - on-campus study TPDENSON_C - online study TPDENSMX_C - flexible study PG Cert: TPCENSIP_C - on-campus study TPCENSON_C - online study TPCENSMX_C - flexible study
HECoS Code	100381 environmental sciences
Start date of programme	Autumn 2013
Date of programme approval	Spring 2013
Date of last programme amendment approval	June 2025
Valid for academic entry year	2025-26
Programme Director	Simon Pooley
Date of last revision to document	30/06/2025

Admissions requirements

A second-class honours degree (2:2 or above) or equivalent.. However, we welcome applicants without traditional entry qualifications as we base decisions on our own assessment of qualifications, knowledge and previous work experience. We may waive formal entry requirements based on judgement of academic potential. This is at the discretion of the admissions tutor, and will be subject to College approval.

Course aims

The MSc in Environment and Sustainability aims to provide an advanced-level grounding in sustainable responses to a broad range of environmental issues. It explores the relationship between policy, practice and the ecological environment and the development of effective strategies for addressing the threats and opportunities posed by environmental issues.

Students are required to complete 180 credits, comprising 3 compulsory modules (30 credits each), a research training module (not credited), and an option module (30 credits or 2x 15 credit modules) and a dissertation (60 credits). For the two-year (PT) version, compulsory modules will be undertaken in the first year in Environment and Policy; Environmental Science for Environmental Management; and Sustainable Business Practice. By engaging with academic, professional and popular literature students will gain an informed understanding of the key issues in the two important areas of science and policy. They will be able to assess the effectiveness of different policy approaches and critically evaluate different environmental issues.

In the second year of the PT programme (first year for FT students), students will further develop their research skills in the Research Methods module, and choose an option module to take their own interests further (e.g Energy and Climate Change, Global Nature Conservation, Introduction to Geographic Data Science or other Birkbeck modules) and research for a dissertation to conduct an in-depth study of real environmental challenges.

Course structure

Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credit	Comp Core/ Option	Likely teaching term(s)
MSc Environment and Sustainability, Full-time – 1 year, October Start					
7	SSGE011S7	Environment and Policy	30	Comp	T2
7	SSGE025S7	Environmental Science for Environmental Management	30	Comp	T1
7	SSGE110S7	Sustainable Business Practice	30	Comp	T3
7	SSGE083Z7	Research Methods Training	0	Comp	T1-3
7	Various	Option	30	Option	T2 or 3
7	SSCE061D7	Dissertation Environmental MSc	60	Core	T2-3
Part-time – 2 years, October start					
Year 1					
7	SSGE011S7	Environment and Policy	30	Comp	T2
7	SSGE025S7	Environmental Science for Environmental Management	30	Comp	T1

Year 2					
7	SSGE110S7	Sustainable Business Practice	30	Comp	T3
7	SSGE083Z7	Research Methods Training	0	Comp	T1-3
7	Various	Option	30	Option	T1 or 2
7	SSCE061D7	Dissertation Environmental MSc	60	Core	T2-3

MSc Environment and Sustainability, Full-time – 1 year, January start					
7	SSGEO11S7	Environment and Policy	30	Comp	Spring,
7	SSGEO83Z7	Research Methods Training	0	Comp	Spring/ Summer
7	Various	Optional Module	30	Option	Spring/sum mer
7	SSGE110S7	Sustainable Business Practice	30	Comp	Summer
7	SSGEO25S7	Environmental Science for Environmental Management	30	Comp	Autumn
7	SSCE061D7	Dissertation Environmental MSc	60	Core	Summer, Autumn
MSc Environment and Sustainability, Part-time – 2 years, January start					
Year 1					
7	SSGEO11S7	Environment and Policy	30	Comp	Spring,
7	SSGE110S7	Sustainable Business Practice	30	Comp	Summer
7	SSGEO25S7	Environmental Science for Environmental Management	30	Comp	Autumn
Year 2					
7	SSGEO83Z7	Research Methods Training	0	Comp	Spring/ Summer
7	Various	Optional Module:	30	Option	Spring
7	SSCE061D7	Dissertation Environmental MSc	60	Core	Summer and Autumn

PG Dip Environment and Sustainability, Full-time – 1 year, October start					
7	SSGE011S7	Environment and Policy	30	Comp	2
7	SSGE025S7	Environmental Science for Environmental Management	30	Comp	1
7	SSGE110S7	Sustainable Business Practice	30	Comp	1
7	Various	Option	30	Option	T2 or 3
PG Dip Environment and Sustainability, Part-time – 2 years, October start					
Year 1					
7	SSGE011S7	Environment and Policy	30	Comp	T2
7	SSGE025S7	Environmental Science for Environmental Management	30	Comp	T1

Year 2					
7	SSGE110S7	Sustainable Business Practice	30	Comp	T1
7	Various	Option	30	Option	T2 or 3
PG Cert Environment and Sustainability, Part-time – 1 or 2 years					
7	SSGE011S7	Environment and Policy	30	Comp	T2
7	SSGE025S7	Environmental Science for Environmental Management	30	Comp	T1
Indicative options modules for MSc and PG Dip:					
7	SSGE010S7	Climate Change: Science & Mitigation *	30	Option	T1
7	SSGE125S7	International Development & Social Justice *	30	Option	T1
7	SSGE115S7	Geospatial Programming & Spatial Machine Learning	30	Option	T1
7	SSGE126S7	Urban Sustainability *	30	Option	T1
7	SSGE116S7	Environmental Observation By Remote Sensing	30	Option	T2
7	SSGE117S7	GeoAI For Social And Urban Applications	30	Option	T2
7	FDDV016S7	Race, Environment & International Development *	30	Option	T2
7	SSGE111S7	Living With Climate Change *	30	Option	T2
7	SSGE112S7	Energy & Climate Change *	30	Option	T3
7	SSGE127S7	Critical Infrastructures For Sustainability	30	Option	T3
7	SSGE113S7	Introduction to Geographic Data Science	30	Option	T1
7	SSGE114S7	Spatial Data Analytics	30	Option	T2
7	SSGE103S7	Global Nature Conservation Level 7 *	30	Option	T2

All core and compulsory modules are delivered via hyflex allowing in-person and online attendance. Options marked with * are planned to be delivered via hyflex for 2025/6.

The following options are expected to run **in-person** only and so cannot be taken by student on the fully online routes.

- SSGE113S7 Introduction to Geographic Data Science
- SSGE114S7 Spatial Data Analytics
- SSGE115S7 Geospatial Programming and Spatial Machine Learning
- SSGE116S7 Environmental Observation by Remote Sensing
- SSGE117S7 GeoAI for Social and Urban Applications
- SSGE127S7 Critical Infrastructures for Sustainability - London Thames Fieldtrip

Core: *Module must be taken and passed by student*

Compulsory: *Module must be taken but can be considered for compensated credit (see CAS regulations paragraph 24)*

Option: *Student can choose to take this module*

How you will learn

Your learning and teaching is organised to help you meet the learning outcomes (below) of the course. As a student, we expect you to be an active learner and to take responsibility for your learning, engaging with all of the material and sessions arranged for you.

Each course is divided into modules. You will find information on the virtual learning site (Moodle, see Academic Support below) about each of your modules, what to expect, the work

you need to prepare, links to reading lists, information about how and when you will be assessed.

Your learning for this course will be organised around the activities outlined below.

Teaching on this course is a combination of lectures (pre-recorded) and seminars. Lectures are designed to provide you with an outline or overview of the topic, to engage you with the material and direct you to other resources. They are a springboard for your own learning. Seminars are group sessions where you will be asked to contribute to discussion or group work around the topic, with material set in advance for which you need to prepare. There is an opportunity to choose a fieldwork expedition as your option module.

The programme is part of the Birkbeck Flexible Masters with modules being taught using hyflex technology allowing synchronous online and in-person delivery, and so students can select to study online, in person or flexibly.

How we will assess you

The course will use a variety of assessment methods. Assessment is used to enhance your learning rather than simply to test it. For most of the modules associated with this course, your assessment will be through the following types of assessment.

Short written exercises, including reports and reading diaries; essays which will develop in length and expected complexity as you progress through your studies; quizzes and multiple-choice questionnaires; group activities like interactive strategic games or presentations.

Learning outcomes (what you can expect to achieve)

'Learning outcomes' indicate what you should be able to know or do at the end of your course. Providing them helps you to understand what your teachers will expect and also the learning requirements upon which you will be assessed.

At the end of this course you should be able to deliver on the following:

Subject Specific:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of central global environmental problems.
2. Assess the effectiveness of different environmental policy approaches.
3. Develop in-depth knowledge in particular specialist areas of environment.

Intellectual:

4. Understand, summarise and discuss research articles relating to both science and social science aspects of the environment.
5. Communicate environmental concepts and issues to academic, professional and lay audiences.
6. Undertake a substantial independent research project.
7. Communicate and collaborate effectively with other students.

Practical:

8. Master a range of research methodologies and data analysis tools and apply one or more to their own research project.

Personal / Social:

9. Actively take part in discussions with tutors and peers.
10. Plan effectively and organise work schedules.
11. Complete work in accordance with deadlines.
12. Communicate and collaborate effectively with other students.

Careers and further study

You will find Geography graduates in the following kinds of roles:

Managers, researchers, practitioners, policymakers, educators across a wide range of sectors including business, HR and finance; legal, local and national government; nature conservation; social and health sectors; marketing, engineering and construction, education professionals, clerical and secretarial, information technology and others.

Birkbeck offers a range of careers support to its students. You can find out more on the [careers pages of our website](#).

Academic regulations and course management

Birkbeck's academic regulations are contained in its [Common Award Scheme Regulations](#) and Policies published by year of application on the Birkbeck website.

You will have access to a course handbook on Moodle and this will outline how your course is managed, including who to contact if you have any questions about your module or course.

Support for your study

Your learning at Birkbeck is supported by your teaching team and other resources and people in the College there to help you with your study. Birkbeck uses a virtual learning environment called Moodle and each course has a dedicated Moodle page and there are further Moodle sites for each of your modules. This will include your course handbook.

Birkbeck will introduce you to the Library and IT support, how to access materials online, including using Moodle, and provide you with an orientation which includes an online Moodle module to guide you through all of the support available. You will also be allocated a personal tutor and provided with information about learning support offered within your School and by the College.

[Please check our website for more information about student support services](#). This covers the whole of your time as a student with us including learning support and support for your wellbeing.

Quality and standards at Birkbeck

Birkbeck's courses are subject to our quality assurance procedures. This means that new courses must follow our design principles and meet the requirements of our academic regulations. Each new course or module is subject to a course approval process where the proposal is scrutinised by subject specialists, quality professionals and external representatives to ensure that it will offer an excellent student experience and meet the expectation of regulatory and other professional bodies.

You will be invited to participate in an online survey for each module you take. We take these surveys seriously and they are considered by the course team to develop both modules and the overall courses. Please take the time to complete any surveys you are sent as a student.

We conduct an annual process of reviewing our portfolio of courses which analyses student achievement, equality data and includes an action plan for each department to identify ongoing enhancements to our education, including changes made as a result of student feedback. Our periodic review process is a regular check (usually every four years) on the courses by department with a specialist team including students.

Each course will have an external examiner associated with it who produces an annual report and any recommendations. Students can read the most recent external examiner reports on the course Moodle pages. Our courses are all subject to Birkbeck Baseline Standards for our

Moodle module information. This supports the accessibility of our education including expectations of what information is provided online for students.

The information in this programme specification has been approved by the College's Academic Board and every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information it contains.

Programme specifications are reviewed periodically. If any changes are made to courses, including core and/or compulsory modules, the relevant department is required to provide a revised programme specification. Students will be notified of any changes via Moodle.

Further information about specifications and an archive of programme specifications for the College's courses is [available online](#).

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