Programme Specification

1. **Awarding body**  
   University of London

2. **Teaching Institution**  
   Birkbeck College

3. **Programme Title(s)**  
   MA Social and Cultural Geography

4. **Programme Code(s)**  
   TMASOCGY_C

5. **UCAS code (if applicable)**  
   NA

6. **Home Department**  
   GEDS

7. **Exit Award(s)**  
   PG Cert Social and Cultural Geography  
   PG Dip Social and Cultural Geography

8. **Duration of Study (number of years)**  
   1 year FT, 2 year PT

9. **Mode of Study**  
   FT x PT x DL

10. **Level of Award (FHEQ)**  
    Level: 7

11. **Other teaching depts or institution (or not applicable)**  
    Dept of Psychosocial Studies

12. **Professional, Statutory Regulatory Body(PSRB) details (or not applicable)**  
    N/A

13. **QAA Benchmark Group (or not applicable)**  
    N/A

14. **Programme Rationale & Aims**

   **Rationale**  
   The Department of Geography, Environment and Development Studies does not offer a taught PG programme in Human Geography. The Department’s strategic aim in teaching and research is to be a centre of excellence in these three areas and, especially, in the study of the relationships between human geography, environmental geography and development studies. The new MA will provide a pathway from BSc Geography and the BSc Social Sciences. It will give GEDS a presence in the market for the PG study of human geography. It will enable existing staff in GEDS to teach to their research and will provide a pathway from which students can go onto study MPhil/PhD Geography.

   **Aims**  
   - Thorough understanding of contemporary approaches to critical social and cultural geography.
   - Research training in social science methods, either quantitative or qualitative.
   - Engagement with the department’s research through involvement in monthly research seminars.

   **Knowledge and skills**  
   - Knowledge of the fields of social and cultural geography, with a particular emphasis on the spatiality of social inequalities.
   - An understanding of social and cultural geography’s relationship to the wider field of human geography.
   - Application of social and cultural geography to the critical analysis of contemporary social processes, local and global.
   - Training in GIS (if appropriate option module taken).
   - Ability to undertake independent research.
**Entry Criteria**

Students should hold an Undergraduate Honours Degree 2 ii or higher in a relevant subject or an equivalent level of experience. Relevant subjects include *inter alia*: Geography, Anthropology, Social Sciences.

**Prospectus Entry**

This programme is designed to give students a thorough understanding of contemporary approaches to critical social and cultural geography, engaging with questions of inequality, identity and belonging, culture and conflict, critical cartographies, and the representation and power of cultural landscapes.

You will acquire skills to conduct independent research in academic and non-academic workplaces, with the programme offering training in research methods (qualitative and quantitative), critical thinking, information evaluation and argumentation. The programme also provides an excellent entry point into more advanced study for those interested in further postgraduate research.

With a focus on critical and socially-engaged research, the work of academics in the Department of Geography, Environment and Development Studies (GEDS) informs the structure and teaching of the MA. GEDS is at the forefront of research into social and spatial inequalities, urbanization, and environmental change with active research clusters in these fields. Students studying with us will also have the opportunity to access activities and research centres throughout the College including the Birkbeck Institute for Social Research and the Birkbeck Institute for the Humanities.

**Learning Outcomes**

**Subject specific:**

1. acquisition of a body of knowledge relevant to social and cultural geography;
2. understanding of the production of space as a social and cultural process;

**Intellectual:**

3. understand the connections between research, policy and social practice in relation to the management, representation and uses of space;
4. deal with complex issues systematically and creatively;
5. develop innovative approaches to research;
6. critical awareness of contemporary social and cultural issues.

**Practical and personal:**

7. exercise initiative and personal responsibility;
8. increase decision-making skills;
9. confident, independent learners.

**Learning, teaching and assessment methods**

The programme will be delivered using a range of teaching methods including: lectures, seminars, and presentations. Field trips will be offered to support student learning.

Taught courses will consist of one-term 10 week classes of one hour lectures and ninety minute seminars. Assessment for compulsory modules is by course work. For dissertations, students will be given 5 hours of supervision and additional classes in research methods.
Programme Description

The programme consists of two compulsory modules (60 credits in total), two optional modules (or optional modules worth 60 credits in total if modules of less than 30 credits are selected) and a dissertation, which is due at the end of September of the final year of study. These can be completed in the course of one year (full-time) or two years (part-time). Assessment is by coursework and the dissertation. Students will need 180 credits for the award of the MA degree.

The two compulsory modules are Critical Social Geographies and Contesting Culture. These will equip you with a thorough understanding of critical perspectives on social and cultural geography.

A 15,000 word dissertation on a subject of your choice will be supported with supervision and research methods training.

You can choose option modules from a wide range across the department and, with the agreement of both programme directors, across the school.

Sample structure

Critical Social Geographies (compulsory, 30 credits)
Contesting Culture (compulsory, 30 credits)
Option one (30 credits)
Option two (30 credits or combination equalling 30 credits)
Dissertation (compulsory, 60 credits)

Study Resources

We offer student support, research training and a range of resources, including a monthly research seminar, contacts with research centres within and external to Birkbeck, public and private sector organisations, professional bodies and researchers at other academic institutions.

For students studying the GIS option, we provide access to GIS software (ArcGIS, free to UK-based students, and IDRISI, available at student rates) and GIS practicals (ESRI Virtual Campus, IDRISI and self-contained).

Further study opportunities

If you are interested in further research, we offer a range of PhD/MPhil programmes in Geography.

Programme Structure

Full Time programme

Year 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Module Code</th>
<th>Module Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
<th>Status</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>SSGE062S7</td>
<td>Critical Social Geographies</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Compulsory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>SSGE079S7</td>
<td>Contesting Culture</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Compulsory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>SSGE063D7</td>
<td>Dissertation, Social and Cultural Geography</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Compulsory</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Optional modules worth 60 credits in total from the indicative list below</td>
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### Part Time programme

#### Year 1

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Level</th>
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<th>Module Title</th>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>SSGE062S7</td>
<td>Critical Social Geographies</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Compulsory</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>SSGE079S7</td>
<td>Contesting Culture</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Compulsory</td>
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#### Year 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Module Code</th>
<th>Module Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>SSGE063D7</td>
<td>Dissertation, Social and Cultural Geography</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Compulsory</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Optional modules worth 60 credits in total</td>
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#### Indicative List of Options:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
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<th>Module Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
<th>Status</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>FDRE017S7</td>
<td>'Race', Racism, Postcoloniality</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>GGPH003H7</td>
<td>Critical Geographies of Nature</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Optional</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>SSGE080S7</td>
<td>Cities and Urban Inequalities (Level 7)</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Optional</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>SSGE007S7</td>
<td>Anthropology, Culture and Development</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Optional</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>FDDV021S7</td>
<td>Material and Visual Cultures of Development</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Optional</td>
</tr>
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<td>7</td>
<td>GGPH035H7</td>
<td>Introduction to GIS</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Optional</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>SSGE065H7</td>
<td>GEDS Research Methods Training (accredited),</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>(only taken in combination with GGPH035H7)</td>
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### Regulations

- **Admissions**
  
  This programme adheres to the College Admissions Policy  

- **Credit Transfer**
  
  Accredited Prior Learning will be considered in line with the College Policy on Accredited Prior Learning  
  [http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/rules/AccreditedPriorLearning.pdf](http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/rules/AccreditedPriorLearning.pdf)

- **Programme Regulations**
  
  This programme adheres to the College Common Awards Scheme  
  [http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/rules/casregs.pdf](http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/rules/casregs.pdf)

- **Programme Specific Regulations (or not applicable)** N/A

### Student Support and Guidance

All Birkbeck students have access to a range of student support services, details can be found on our website here:  
[http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/facilities](http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/facilities)
The College has rigorous procedures in place for the monitoring and enhancing its educational provision. This includes regular monitoring of programmes drawing on feedback from various sources including external examiner's reports, student feedback, student achievement and progression data. In addition, departments are reviewed every four to five years through the internal review process that includes external input.

For more information please see the Academic Standards and Quality website: [http://www.bbk.ac.uk/registry/about-us/operations-and-quality](http://www.bbk.ac.uk/registry/about-us/operations-and-quality)

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<tbody>
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<td>24</td>
<td><strong>Programme Director</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td><strong>Start Date (term/year)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td><strong>Date approved by TQEC</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td><strong>Date approved by Academic Board</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td><strong>Date(s) updated/amended</strong></td>
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