



Module Specification

Tropical Expedition

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Part 1: Information

Module title: Tropical Expedition

Module code: USSK59-15-3

Level: Level 6

For implementation from: 2023-24

UWE credit rating: 15

ECTS credit rating: 7.5

College: College of Health, Science & Society

School: CHSS School of Applied Sciences

Partner institutions: None

Field: Applied Sciences

Module type: Module

Pre-requisites: Life on Earth 2023-24

Excluded combinations: None

Co-requisites: None

Continuing professional development: Yes

Professional, statutory or regulatory body requirements: None

Part 2: Description

Overview: Pre-requisites: Students must have taken USSK5C-30-1 Life on Earth or equivalent, for example, USSJ99-20-1

This module examines the ecology of tropical ecosystems and the field and analytical methods used to survey and assess these ecosystems. When possible, students will have the choice of going either on an expedition to Cuba or to

Madagascar. Students will attend workshops and tutorials relevant to their particular expedition.

Features: Not applicable

Educational aims: This module examines the ecology of tropical ecosystems and the field and analytical methods used to survey and assess these ecosystems. When possible, students will have the choice of going either on an expedition to Cuba or to Madagascar. Students will attend workshops and tutorials relevant to their particular expedition.

Outline syllabus:

Ecology and environments of tropical ecosystems. Including ecology of tropical populations of reptiles, birds, fish and mammals and the methods and techniques used to study them.

Techniques in floristic identification, diversity and collection. Assessment of plant species distribution and abundance in the tropics. Introduction to forest gap dynamics.

Techniques in faunistic identification, diversity and collection. Assessment of animal species distribution and abundance in the tropics. Factors affecting the diversity and distribution of tropical animals. Biological interactions and community structure. Symbiotic relationships.

Threats to tropical ecosystems and conservation measures. Examples may include coral reef conservation and reef health or conserving threatened primates or reptiles through tropical forest restoration.

Part 3: Teaching and learning methods

Teaching and learning methods: In the forests of either Cuba or Madagascar, students will be trained in tropical plant identification and the techniques used to describe and map trees within standard areas. A variety of survey methods will be introduced and used to assess animal populations. Techniques may include mist

netting of birds; transect techniques for reptiles, electronic monitoring of bat activity, tracking lemurs and species identification and insect identification and surveys. Additional lectures and practical training will be conducted in the evenings by UWE staff and staff from the University of Havana or by staff from the University of Antananarivo or from the conservation organisation Sadabe (Madagascar). These sessions will allow students to develop their taxonomic skills, discuss the day's activities, complete field notes and collate and analyse data.

All participants on the expedition to Cuba will be required to hold a PADI Open Water diving certificate, or an equivalent qualification, before leaving the UK. An appropriate training programme will be organised beforehand by the module team using qualified instructors. In Cuba, the field work programme will be divided into two discrete sections. Five days will be based in an area of dry deciduous tropical forest and five days will be based on diving on coral reefs. Students will be expected to become proficient in the identification of corals and coral reef fish and be able record data accurately and efficiently.

All participants on the expedition to Madagascar will be expected to familiarise themselves with the taxonomy and identification features of forest fauna and flora. Students will spend approximately 10 days at the forest field site and undertake a range of surveys to examine spatial and temporal differences in forest environments and the impact of restoration programmes. Students will actively engage in community based conservation projects and work alongside local students and researchers.

The cost of running the trip will be met by the students themselves. The faculty will fund the cost of staff supervising and teaching during the expedition.

Contact Hours:

The module will be delivered primarily during a 2 week expedition either to the Isle of Youth, off the coast of mainland Cuba or to a forest field site in Madagascar. In the event of unforeseen circumstances, such as political instability, an alternative locations may be used.

Preparation for the expedition will involve a series of workshops, tutorials and practical training at UWE. Sessions will be available during and after the expedition returns to co-ordinate and analyse data.

5 workshops at 2 hours/workshop: 10 hours

5 tutorials at 2 hours/tutorial: 10 hours

Residential field course at 6 hours/day: 84 hours

Module Learning outcomes: On successful completion of this module students will achieve the following learning outcomes.

MO1 Undertake ecological field work in tropical ecosystems and describe the problems and limitations of working in tropical environments

MO2 Undertake and describe in detail, field surveys to assess the populations of tropical fauna and flora

MO3 Critically evaluate field survey techniques used in tropical environments

MO4 Discuss current theories of tropical ecosystem ecology

MO5 Demonstrate core transferable skills through team work, project management, time management, independent research and communication

Hours to be allocated: 150

Contact hours:

Independent study/self-guided study = 46 hours

Face-to-face learning = 104 hours

Total = 150

Reading list: The reading list for this module can be accessed at [readinglists.uwe.ac.uk](https://uwe.rl.talis.com/modules/ussk59-15-3.html) via the following link <https://uwe.rl.talis.com/modules/ussk59-15-3.html>

Part 4: Assessment

Assessment strategy: The aims of this module are to develop practical skills and knowledge of the techniques used to study tropical ecosystems.

Assessments 1 and 2:

The ability to record notes and collect accurate data in the field is assessed through two field logs. Taking part in a scientific expedition to the tropics provides students with a unique opportunity to work in a difficult environment with local experts. In these challenging conditions, students develop essential skills in endurance, tolerance, team working, organisation and time management. These are all key graduate skills. These skills are developed and demonstrated through the production of these comprehensive field logbooks.

Assessment 3 is based on achieving a satisfactory level of skill in field tests.

Assessment tasks:

Report (First Sit)

Description: Field Report 1

Weighting: 50 %

Final assessment: No

Group work: No

Learning outcomes tested: MO1, MO2, MO3, MO4, MO5

Report (First Sit)

Description: Field Report 2

Weighting: 50 %

Final assessment: No

Group work: No

Learning outcomes tested: MO1, MO2, MO3, MO4, MO5

Practical Skills Assessment (First Sit)

Description: Field Skills Assessment (Pass/Fail)

Weighting:

Final assessment: Yes

Group work: No

Learning outcomes tested: MO1, MO2

Report (Resit)

Description: Field Report 1

Weighting: 50 %

Final assessment: No

Group work: No

Learning outcomes tested: MO1, MO2, MO3, MO4, MO5

Report (Resit)

Description: Field Report 2

Weighting: 50 %

Final assessment: No

Group work: No

Learning outcomes tested: MO1, MO2, MO3, MO4, MO5

Practical Skills Assessment (Resit)

Description: Field Skills Assessment (Pass/Fail)

Weighting:

Final assessment: Yes

Group work: No

Learning outcomes tested: MO1, MO2

Part 5: Contributes towards

This module contributes towards the following programmes of study:

Integrated Wildlife Conservation {Top-Up} [Frenchay] BSc (Hons) 2023-24

Environmental Science [Sep][FT][Frenchay][3yrs] BSc (Hons) 2021-22

Biological Sciences [Sep][FT][Frenchay][3yrs] BSc (Hons) 2021-22

Wildlife Ecology and Conservation Science [Sep][FT][Frenchay][4yrs] MSci 2021-22

Environmental Science [Sep][FT][Frenchay][4yrs] MSci 2021-22

Biological Sciences [Sep][FT][Frenchay][4yrs] MSci 2021-22

Wildlife Ecology and Conservation Science [Sep][FT][Zoo][3yrs] BSc (Hons) 2021-22

Biological Sciences [Sep][SW][Frenchay][4yrs] BSc (Hons) 2020-21

Biological Sciences [Sep][SW][Frenchay][5yrs] MSci 2020-21

Wildlife Ecology and Conservation Science {Foundation} [Sep][FT][Zoo][4yrs] BSc (Hons) 2020-21

Wildlife Ecology and Conservation Science [Sep][SW][Frenchay][5yrs] MSci 2020-21

Environmental Science [Sep][SW][Frenchay][4yrs] BSc (Hons) 2020-21

Environmental Science {Foundation} [Sep][FT][Frenchay][4yrs] BSc (Hons) 2020-21

Wildlife Ecology and Conservation Science {Foundation} [Sep][FT][Frenchay][5yrs] MSci 2020-21

Environmental Science {Foundation} [Sep][FT][Frenchay][5yrs] MSci 2020-21

Environmental Science [Sep][SW][Frenchay][5yrs] MSci 2020-21

Biological Sciences {Foundation} [Sep][FT][Frenchay][5yrs] MSci 2020-21

Wildlife Ecology and Conservation Science [Sep][SW][Zoo][4yrs] BSc (Hons) 2020-21

Biological Sciences {Foundation} [Sep][FT][Frenchay][4yrs] BSc (Hons) 2020-21

Wildlife Ecology and Conservation Science {Foundation} [Sep][SW][Frenchay][6yrs] MSci 2019-20

Biological Sciences {Foundation} [Sep][SW][Frenchay][5yrs] BSc (Hons) 2019-20

Biological Sciences {Foundation} [Sep][SW][Frenchay][6yrs] MSci 2019-20

Environmental Science {Foundation} [Sep][SW][Frenchay][5yrs] BSc (Hons) 2019-20

Environmental Science {Foundation} [Sep][SW][Frenchay][6yrs] MSci 2019-20

Wildlife Ecology and Conservation Science {Foundation} [Sep][SW][Zoo][5yrs] BSc (Hons) 2019-20