

Section 1: Basic Data

Awarding institution/body: **UWE**

Teaching institution: **UWE**

Faculty responsible for programme: **FBE**

Programme accredited by:

Highest award title: **BA (Hons) Geography**

Default award title:

Interim award title: **DipHE Geography
CertHE Geography
BA Built and Natural Environments**

Modular scheme title: **Faculty of the Built Environment UG Scheme**

UCAS codes: **L700**

QAA subject benchmarking group(s): **Geography**

Valid until:

Valid from: **September 2003**

Authorised by: **UG Modular Scheme Director** Date:

Version code: **3**

Version year: **2005**

Section 2: Educational aims of the programme

This award concentrates on developing classical themes in contemporary human geography held together by the concept of the 'geographical imagination'. This concept emphasises the interrelationships between processes occurring at different spatial scales (local, national, global) to produce place-difference.

The award has the following aims :

1. To acquaint students from all walks of life with the basic traditions, modes of analysis and perspectives of human geographical enquiry.
2. To provide students with a comprehensive grounding in up-to-date themes and techniques in human geography.
3. To enhance students knowledge of our rapidly changing world in the context of understanding the interactions between environment and society.
4. To train students in a variety of core and specialist skills, including cartography, information and communication technologies, research design and management, writing and public speaking.

Section 3: Learning outcomes of the programme

A: Knowledge and understanding

By the end of the programme, the student should be able:

1. To demonstrate a strong basic knowledge of world geography, taking in political, economic, social, cultural and environmental issues.
2. To articulate an appreciation for the 'geographical imagination', that way of looking at the world which emphasises its spatial interconnections.
3. To understand how different discourses in human geographical enquiry contribute to academic scholarship.

It is important to stress that if a student decides to follow one of the routeways through the programme, i.e. either Urban Geography and the Built Environment OR Rural Geography and the Natural Environment, that they will be able to demonstrate and articulate the following subject-based competences :

For the Urban Geography and the Built Environment routeway these will include :

1. an appreciation of the complex processes of urban change as they relate to particular urban spaces and their modes of governance.
2. a detailed knowledge of urban planning, regeneration and heritage conservation.
3. a well developed sense of the historical context from which particular urban spaces have evolved.

For the Rural Geography and the Natural Environment routeway these will include :

1. a comparative knowledge of particular rural places and their changing landscapes in the context of globalisation.
2. an understanding of how rural spaces are fashioned by rural politics and policies to deliver particular outcomes.
3. an ability to articulate 'potentially sustainable scenarios' for rural and regional development in a variety of cultural contexts.

The successful completion of such a focused routeway would enable students to graduate with an enhanced profile which may be more attractive to potential employers.

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

Teaching is primarily delivered by lectures which include formative activities. These provide the key factual and theoretical frameworks across a range of core and optional modules.

Students are also taught in small groups (especially as level one undergraduates) which are designed to provide supportive learning environments for enhancing their scholarship. Stress is laid on 'active learning' in class situations which are designed to enable students to develop confidence and competence to become independent and deep learners outside of the 'safe' environment of staff and peer group support.

Learning how to learn, learning by doing, learning by experimentation and practice lie at the heart of developing knowledge and understanding.

Assessment

Regular testing of knowledge development and understanding is built into both formative and summative assessment strategies. Students are assessed by a wide range of methods which include essays, practical files, research design proposals, environmental diaries, personal reflective learning journals and group presentations. The package of assessment has been designed as a diverse, stimulating and wide-ranging diet which encourages knowledge acquisition as a key to understanding.

B: Intellectual skills

By the end of the programme, the student should be able:

1. To construct arguments (using evidence from the academic geography community) capable of withstanding rigorous intellectual challenge.
2. To provide evidence of their ability to conceptualise, operationalise and manage research projects in human geography to a successful conclusion.
3. To analyse arguments logically, identifying any flaws in reasoning and contrasting the merits of different arguments.

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

Keynote lectures introduce and define the nature of intellectual skills. The development of intellectual skills is reinforced during workshops and seminars through strategies which engage students with focused activities designed to widen and deepen intellectual rigour in class. These workshops provide immediate feedback to questions raised, develop confidence in 'on the spot' thinking and raise awareness of the importance of active engagement with key ideas from a range of sources and intellectual standpoints. Written formative work also provides the opportunity for students to test and modify their point of view in response to feedback.

Assessment

A variety of methods are employed to test intellectual skills, in particular, coursework including essays. Presentations enable students to offer, test, modify and evidence their point of view. Research proposals and projects assess the logic and rigour of arguments made, whilst critical evaluations and summaries of geographical writing further develop students' knowledge of the intellectual core and nature of human geography research.

C: Subject, Professional and Practical Skills

By the end of the programme, the student should be able:

1. To demonstrate a fluency in the basic techniques inherent in the 'geographer's art' namely map reading, map making and analysis of spatial patterns.
2. To show an understanding of the importance of geographical scale and the role of empirical research as a tool for interpreting place development.
3. To recognise the importance of risk assessment within the context of geography as an essentially field-based discipline.
4. To show competence in the use of statistical analysis.
5. To utilise appropriate technical and subject-based skills which may offer potential solutions to problems encountered in professional life.

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

Keynote lectures within the Geography skills spine introduce and define the concepts and nature of geographical skills acquisition. Other modules, for example, GIS and Remote Sensing introduce a range of other subject-specific skills.

Field visits (both day and residential field courses) allow the practical application of subject skills, including the development of an awareness of health and safety issues.

The development of practical/subject related skills is designed to enhance student competences and to begin the process of professionalising student attitudes and attributes.

Assessment

The assessment of subject-related practical skills is undertaken through a range of assessment techniques, for example, computer exams, statistics tests and coursework associated with the field course.

D: Transferable skills and other attributes

By the end of the programme, the student should be able:

1. To demonstrate professional transferable skills such as literacy, numeracy, ICT, project management, problem solving and research design.
2. To demonstrate a well practised fluency in basic professional skills such as independent work organisation, group work dynamics and time management.
3. To demonstrate awareness of and respect for other people's perspectives.

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

Students' literacy, numeracy and IT skills are tested diagnostically early in their first year and support is provided as appropriate. The diversity of the student cohorts require staff to tailor formative work to enable students with somewhat different educational profiles to extend their learning capacity.

Small group workshops and practical classes allow students to engage with a range of essential academic and personal transferable skills acquisition.

Group work in interdisciplinary environments across the faculty promote an awareness of alternative viewpoints and the need to address real world situations and scenarios which occur constantly outside the academy.

Providing students with pastoral care and academic progress interviews further enables checks on skills development and personal growth to be monitored and actions to remedy problems put in place.

Assessment

A variety of assessment methods are employed to test transferable skills.

Group oral and visual presentations and accompanying reports test team working and communication skills.

The assessment of literacy, IT skills and time management is embedded in the level 1 modules in particular. At subsequent levels, they will form part of the assessment criteria for coursework as appropriate.

Section 4: Programme structure

FIGURE 1: AWARD STRUCTURE DIAGRAM

BA (HONS) GEOGRAPHY

Definitive for students entering 2005-06

Recommended Routeway for FT Students

YEAR 1

SEM 1	Geographical Analysis UBGL8W-20-1	Geographical Enquiry UBGL8X-20-1	Physical Geography UBM109S1	Environmental Issues UBM102S1	Processes of Urban Change UBU105S1	Introduction to Human Geography UBM113S1
SEM 2						

YEAR 2

SEM 1	Field Study (Geography) UBGL9B-20-2	Philosophy and Development of Geography UBGL9K-20-2	OPTIONS 60-80 credits from: Geography of Tourism UBGL9C-20-2 Changing Geography of Europe UBGL9Q-20-1 The Making of the British Landscape UBGL98-20-2 Global Development UBGL9D-20-2 Rural Issues & Futures UBPL3G-20-2			Shared Elective
SEM 2						Shared Elective

OPTIONAL PLACEMENT

YEAR 3

SEM 1	Dissertation B UBGL9W-20-3	Inter-disciplinary Issues UBIL4N-10-3	OPTIONS: 60 - 80 from: Cities in Transition UBHLBQ-20-3 Urban Regeneration UBHLED-20-3 Heritage Culture and Place (formerly Managing the Urban Heritage) UBGL6K-20-3 Studies in Rural Change UBGLA3-20-3 Tourism, Communities & Conservation UBGLA4-20-3 Environmental Management in the Third World: Managing Protected Areas UBGL6B-20-3 Geography and Sustainability in North America UBGL6L-20-3 GIS & Remote Sensing Applications UBGL6M-20-1 Urban Regeneration UBHLED-20-3			
SEM 2						

- full time structure

Introduction

This award concentrates on developing critical themes in human geography, whilst developing intellectual and transferable skills. Subject knowledge and transferable skills are delivered within a compulsory programme of integrated skills modules. The range of optional modules at levels two and three provides opportunity for developing subject specialisms. The overall aim of the award structure is to provide a diverse programme of learning opportunities centred around the development of intellectual competence and rigour. The learning environment is designed to allow active participation and experimentation through the provision of a range of demanding intellectual challenges to groups and individuals.

Progression and levels

At level 1 of the award, students take six compulsory modules which seek to consolidate their geographical knowledge and train them in the methods and skills required for studying geography at university level. The modular diet includes study across a range of material of contemporary concern to human geographers researching environmental issues, globalisation, urban processes and the importance of the physical geographical context within which such research takes place.

Level 2 students take five modules which develop their skills, techniques and understanding of doing research in human geography. They engage with core modules which examine the philosophy and development of the geography discipline, in addition to developing field study methods which culminates in a foreign field course. The school currently offers three field venues, namely Andalucia in southern Spain, Brittany in northern France and Tunisia in north Africa. In addition to this core diet students take three module options, as well as one module equivalent from Faculty-wide electives which can include institution-wide European languages.

Final year students carry out an individual dissertation, an inter-disciplinary module and four module options. The dissertation is an opportunity for students to demonstrate their ability to design, research and deliver a quality piece of geographical scholarship. It is the culmination of their period of study in

human geography and provides a showcase for their research talents.

The skills spine

The skills spine provides the vehicle through which cognitive skills, professional competences, transferable skills are developed alongside subject knowledge. It is supported by a rich diet of modular choice throughout levels 2 and 3 of the award.

At level 1, Geographical Analysis provides students with an opportunity to use and develop their skills in designing, collecting, interpreting and presenting spatial data. It develops students' field techniques and IT, including word processing, statistical analysis and Geographical Information Systems (GIS). Geographical Enquiry engages students with a range of essential academic skills necessary for developing their thinking and research in geography (reading, note taking, reviewing and referencing literature, reflective practice). Students consider the nature of geography and appreciate the diversity of approaches that can be brought to solve geographical problems. The module introduces concepts developed in the level 2 Philosophy and Development of Geography.

At level 2, Field Studies deepens geographical understanding by developing a range of more advanced methods, skills and techniques which allow students to enhance their expertise in data collection, data analysis, spatial enquiry, data interpretation and evaluation. It allows 'hands-on' experience of undertaking geographical research in a foreign field location, an activity that is known to promote deeper learning. It subjects students to different physical environments and cultural experiences which are vital in understanding the differentiation of place. The module acts as a support mechanism as students approach their final year dissertation. Philosophy and Development of Geography develops an understanding of the theory and ideology of geography and its relationship to other disciplines. Students learn how the development of the subject in the past has led to a range of different approaches in the present. A number of key issues in contemporary geography are examined critically.

At level 3, the dissertation allows students to design and implement a quality piece of independent geographical research. The module requires students to take responsibility for their own learning and to demonstrate the critical and reflective abilities they have gained over their period of academic study. It equips students with the knowledge and skills they require to undertake post-graduate research and it refines personal transferable and subject-related skills that enhance professional development and employability. Interdisciplinary issues develop student personal discipline, responsibility and diplomacy in dealing with organisations outside the university and encourages them to consider an issue from a contrasting range of perspectives. Such skills determine the ability of students to perform as effective and competent graduate professionals in their future careers.

Routeways

After undertaking a common first year, this human geography degree utilises the flexible structures of modularisation to allow students to follow one of two major 'routeways' focusing on either 'Urban Geography and the Built Environment' or 'Rural Geography and the Natural Environment'. It is equally possible to select options across a broad range of regional geography modules to suit particular students' interests. If students choose one of the 'routeways' they must be aware that pre-requisites exist on some modules which demand the successful completion of certain modules at level 2 before certain level 3 modules can be studied.

Core modules	Optional modules	Target Award																														
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Section 5: Entry requirements

Applicants must possess Maths and English GCSE at grade C or above.

See also the Standard faculty entry requirements apply.

Section 6: Assessment Regulations

The Modular Assessment Regulations of the University Modular Scheme provide the framework for assessment on this award.

Section 7: Student learning: distinctive features and support

1. Support for learning

The teaching staff of the Faculty provide a friendly, enabling environment for learning. They are active researchers aware of modern advances within the discipline and they combine research with teaching to provide a set of stimulating learning experiences. Teaching is mostly by lectures and small group seminars. Computer-based learning and fieldwork are important elements in all years of study. Residential field courses are UK-based in year one, whilst locations in year two currently range from Brittany in north-west France, Andalucia in southern Spain and Tunisia in north Africa.

The award team is committed to the promotion of reflective learning and independent thought so that students discover their own ways of becoming effective learners. Increasing use is being made of the World Wide Web for disseminating learning resources and the intranet for accessing module and assessment information. These advances encourage self-paced and distance learning as a supportive data base to the stimulation of the lecture theatre and seminar room. The skills spine provides students with quality support mechanisms throughout the programme which enables them to develop their own unique routeways through the award.

2. Options for placements and international exchanges

Students have the opportunity to undertake a placement year after completing their first two levels of study. Placements connect university study with work, allowing the application of academic geography to a professional environment. It also provides students with experience with which to enrich their final year of study. In addition, an academic exchange with an American university for second year students is about to be established. This provides students with one semester of academic study in a different culture and acts to further enrich their academic development in geographical studies.

3. Employability

The award offers the opportunity to pursue an undergraduate programme in human geography that consciously combines classic themes of the discipline with the acquisition of professional and transferable skills. It explores contemporary issues and methods in human geographical enquiry as it develops graduates' ability to apply their enhanced geographical imagination to the work place. Graduates are attractive to employers due to their breadth of skills and their positive personal qualities.

Our graduates are securing employment opportunities in a wide range of careers which includes environmental consultancy, nature conservation, Government, industry, finance, further education and research and teaching.

Section 8: Reference points/benchmarks

The evolution, structure and content of BA (Hons) Geography have been informed (and continue to be informed) by a number of key reference points from the HE, School and academic geography communities :

1. The Geography Benchmark Statement

This document provided guidance for articulating the nature and development of the award.

2. University and Faculty strategies for teaching, learning and assessment

Reference was made to University and Faculty policy documents in this area, including a framework for skills acquisition

3. Geography in the National Curriculum

The rediscovery and redevelopment of students' 'geographical imaginations' is a key imperative for the award. We define the geographical imagination as the ability to evaluate the interrelations between processes occurring at different spatial scales (local, national and global) and to evaluate critically the complex processes of place-making. Changes in the National Curriculum mean that the important task of developing this geographical imagination in our students continues to play an important role in our own curriculum development.

4. Staff research interests and expertise

The design of the programme, in particular, the range of options available has been shaped by the strengths of active research staff.