



## **Module Specification**

### **Sustainable Development: Principles and Practice**

Version: 2026-27, v2.0, Approved

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## Part 1: Information

**Module title:** Sustainable Development: Principles and Practice

**Module code:** UBGMF9-15-M

**Level:** Level 7

**For implementation from:** 2026-27

**UWE credit rating:** 15

**ECTS credit rating:** 7.5

**College:** College of Arts, Technology and Environment

**School:** CATE School of Architecture and Environment

**Partner institutions:** None

**Field:** Geography and Environmental Management

**Module type:** Module

**Pre-requisites:** None

**Excluded combinations:** None

**Co-requisites:** None

**Continuing professional development:** No

**Professional, statutory or regulatory body requirements:** None

## Part 2: Description

**Overview:** This module explores the fundamental nature, causes and consequences of sustainable and unsustainable development. It will also introduce some of the key frameworks that have been used to explain and implement the concept of sustainable development. A range of different theoretical approaches to understanding the relationship between human society and the natural environment will be examined, and as part of this, the interrelationship between environmental sustainability and human health and well-being will be explored.

**Features:** This module is offered as a stand alone CPD short course.

**Educational aims:** This module aims to engage students in learning about and analysis of sustainable and unsustainable development. Students will develop an ability to explain global mega-trends driving the need to transform the world to sustainability, how the UN's Sustainable Development Goals provide a framework for action and the differences between balancing and resolving interactions between social, environmental and economic issues in the context of sustainable development.

The module is designed to support students' development of self-awareness and recognition that delivering sustainable outcomes involves applying sustainability skills to overcome internal and external challenges. Students will plan, conduct and present an independent project with appropriate guidance and be supported to develop their ability to take a critical approach to academic literature, data and other sources of information.

**Outline syllabus:** Key elements of the syllabus will be explored both through case studies of attempts to implement sustainable development in a range of contexts and through learning exercises that give students experience of identifying potential applications of key concepts, frameworks and tools for practice.

Indicative topics include:

The problem of unsustainable development, including key global environmental and socioeconomic issues such as planetary limits, safe operating space, resource scarcity and inequalities.

History and evolution of the concept of sustainable development.

Models and processes for actioning sustainable development.

The impact of human interventions on social systems, cultural practices, community cohesion and individuals.

Different theoretical and conceptual frameworks for explaining the relationship between human society and the natural environment, and their philosophical and ethical underpinnings.

The interrelationship between environmental sustainability and human health and well-being, including social and physical determinants of health.

### **Part 3: Teaching and learning methods**

**Teaching and learning methods:** The module will be delivered through a combination of intensive workshops/seminars and online resources and facilitated discussion. The classroom sessions are designed to actively support the development of independent learning strategies by the students. The sessions combine formal lectures with a wide range of participative activities including case studies, problem-solving activities and group discussion. The sessions also require a significant amount of advance preparation by the students.

Students are encouraged to relate the knowledge and skills gained through the course to the working environment in a creative way and to be solution-focused in addressing current issues in the implementation of sustainable development. The independent study includes both preparatory reading for class sessions as well as reading that expands and deepens knowledge obtained through the class sessions.

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

**MO1** Demonstrate a critical understanding of the nature, causes and consequences of sustainable and unsustainable development and the ability to communicate effectively in written form about these issues.

**MO2** Explain and critique some of the key definitions and frameworks that are used to explain and implement the concept of sustainable development, and demonstrate an ability to utilise them in response to real-world challenges.

**MO3** Effectively communicate complex concepts of sustainable development and make recommendations on personal behaviour actions to a non-specialist audience in written and verbal form.

**Hours to be allocated:** 150

**Contact hours:**

Independent study/self-guided study = 114 hours

Face-to-face learning = 36 hours

**Reading list:** The reading list for this module can be accessed at [readinglists.uwe.ac.uk](https://uwe.rl.talis.com/modules/ubgmf9-15-m.html) via the following link <https://uwe.rl.talis.com/modules/ubgmf9-15-m.html>

## Part 4: Assessment

**Assessment strategy:** Assessment in this module engages students with current societal sustainability challenges. The assessment will require students to review literature and robust evidence of impact of a chosen action before making recommendations for making their chosen action more effective. This will enable students to bring their sustainable development knowledge, critical and systems thinking abilities to bear upon a real sustainability challenge.

Students will undertake formative discussions through the module to develop their understanding of the context for sustainable development. This will set them up to undertake a critical analysis of the potential efficacy of one of a selection of actions for supporting achievement of sustainable development.

The module mark is derived from an individual presentation (10 mins) of the written work followed by questions from the assessor.

Resit written assignment - a similar brief to that described above, which may include some topic changes.

**Assessment tasks:****Presentation (First Sit)**

Description: Individual presentation (10 mins) of written work (3000 words) followed by questions from assessor.

Weighting: 100 %

Final assessment: Yes

Group work: No

Learning outcomes tested: MO1, MO2, MO3

**Presentation (Resit)**

Description: Individual presentation (10 mins) of written work (300 words) followed by questions from assessor.

The presentation is timetabled.

Weighting: 100 %

Final assessment: Yes

Group work: No

Learning outcomes tested: MO1, MO2, MO3

**Part 5: Contributes towards**

This module contributes towards the following programmes of study:

Environmental Management [Frenchay] MSc 2026-27

Environmental Management [Frenchay] MSc 2026-27

Sustainable Development in Practice [Frenchay] MSc 2026-27

Sustainable Development in Practice [Frenchay] MSc 2026-27

Project Management [Frenchay] WITHDRAWN MSc 2026-27

Sustainable Development in Practice [Frenchay] MSc 2026-27

Sustainable Development in Practice [Frenchay] MSc 2026-27

MSc Environmental Management and Consultancy [Frenchay] MSc 2026-27