



Module Specification

Environment and Behaviour

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Part 1: Information

Module title: Environment and Behaviour

Module code: UBGMXJ-30-3

Level: Level 6

For implementation from: 2023-24

UWE credit rating: 30

ECTS credit rating: 15

Faculty: Faculty of Environment & Technology

Department: FET Dept of Geography & Environmental Mgmt

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: Not applicable

Features: Not applicable

Educational aims: An understanding of how human factors affect the environment is crucial if we are to influence and change people's behaviour and attitudes towards its stewardship. Those that will (eventually) work in environmental organisations will benefit from an understanding of the similarities and differences of the people that

they work with both within and outside their organisation, as such this module focuses on human behaviour and its' relationship with the environment.

Outline syllabus: Students will consider the very earliest developmental issues in the formation of values and attitudes that begin in childhood and develop over time. We will consider how and when attitudes and values develop and what their main influencers are. The module will introduce the area of environmental education and examine different approaches and influences to considering the importance, inclusion and effectiveness of sustainable education. Measuring environmental attitudes and behaviours are important for developing baselines and in this module we will explore the different approaches to measuring attitudes and being able to evidence changes over time. The module will focus on when and how values and attitudes can be adapted and changed with consideration of the latest theoretical developments (for example; Theory of Planned Behaviour/ Protection Motivation Theory), leading to sustainable changes in behaviour. This will lead us to consider ambivalence, denial and dissociation leading to non-engagement and non-action within the environmental field.

The module will focus on our connection with nature and the effects of nature on human behaviour, and consider both sides of the nature/nurture debate to analyse different theoretical standpoints. We will explore theories such as Biophilia and Place Attachment, encouraging students to engage with the latest research findings and relate and apply them to policies and practice.

With a focus on changing attitudes and consequently behaviours we will consider how individual and societal changes influence how we behave against different political and cultural backdrops. An understanding of group processes is crucial and we will explore by looking at examples of how group processes operate. Using the Social Identity Theory we will consider the important role that groups play in environmental issues.

With a focus on encouraging pro-environmental behaviour we will consider how effective different approaches are using case studies and research findings. Theories of behaviour change will be applied to different examples in analysing

effectiveness. Students will be introduced to a range of research methodologies that are used primarily by environmental psychologists to design and conduct research that can inform and develop understanding of the molar relationship between the environment and behaviour. Following the principles of environmental psychology where research is solution and real world focused, students will design their own pilot research with consideration of factors such as bias, ethics, and research technique with a focus on how research can be effectually applied to environmental settings.

Part 3: Teaching and learning methods

Teaching and learning methods: An important part of this module and its' assessment is developing the student's autonomy in their learning and so students are encouraged to choose a reading area to focus on alongside the module contact sessions. Students will access literature and evaluate research papers from pre-selected academic journals (e.g. Environment and Behaviour and/ or Environmental Psychology). Each week the contact sessions begin with guided discussions where students share the content of a paper that they have chosen and read during the week. As such the students build up their own personal 'library' of academic papers, and get to hear about what their peers are reading. Interactive learning approaches like this are used throughout this module.

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

MO1 Critically evaluate relevant theories and research approaches to understanding the relationship between human behaviour and the environment

MO2 Appraise research methods used in research focused on environmental behaviour and make informed decisions about appropriate research design for a range of issues

MO3 Critique academic research and apply knowledge from theory and research to real-life environmental issues.

MO4 Explain how individual and group processes influence human behaviour and apply this to environmental issues

MO5 Explain how human attitudes and values develop and the factors that affect the strength of their formation, and how these influence environmental behaviour.

MO6 Examine sustainable attitude and behaviour change strategies and consider their merits and problems.

MO7 Practise autonomy in searching and reading academic literature, dissecting and sharing this with peers and using it to inform research design.

MO8 Consider the importance of environmental education in creating sustainable change and the factors that influence this.

Hours to be allocated: 300

Contact hours:

Independent study/self-guided study = 228 hours

Face-to-face learning = 72 hours

Total = 300

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

Part 4: Assessment

Assessment strategy: The module will be assessed by two components, Components A (50%) and B (50%).

Presentation - A visual display – e.g: poster / PowerPoint accompanying a 10-minute presentation. With a focus on methodology students will need to set themselves a research question.

Portfolio - Includes a written explanation focused on the explanation of one of the theories included in the module and its' application to an environmental issue that is affected by human behaviour (for example this could be an explanation of Biophilia and then an application of Biophilia to the issue of lack of connection to nature). Also includes a critique of an academic paper – this assesses the skills that students will have learned throughout the module through their personal and directed reading. Additional supporting material for the presentation is developed over the year and included in the portfolio. This will be informed by the literature that they have been choosing and sharing with their peers weekly. Students then justify an appropriate research methodology that will address their question, considering the careful details that a good research design requires to produce rigorous and meaningful data. Students then test out their design, carrying out a pilot study. Finally the students reflect on the methodology and research design and evaluate its' effectiveness, considering alternatives. Embedded in this assessment is developing the students' ability to reflect on their own practice and appreciate how they may affect the research process through their design and implementation strategies.

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

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

Assessment tasks:

Presentation (First Sit)

Description: Poster Presentation (10 minutes)

Weighting: 50 %

Final assessment: Yes

Group work: No

Learning outcomes tested: MO2, MO3, MO4

Portfolio (First Sit)

Description: Class exercise portfolio (2000 words)

Weighting: 50 %

Final assessment: No

Group work: No

Learning outcomes tested: MO1, MO3, MO5, MO6, MO7, MO8

Portfolio (Resit)

Description: Class exercise portfolio (2000 words)

Weighting: 50 %

Final assessment: No

Group work: No

Learning outcomes tested: MO1, MO3, MO5, MO6, MO7, MO8

Presentation (Resit)

Description: Presentation (10 mins)

Weighting: 50 %

Final assessment: Yes

Group work: No

Learning outcomes tested: MO2, MO3, MO4

Part 5: Contributes towards

This module contributes towards the following programmes of study:

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

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

Environmental Management {Foundation} [Sep][FT][Frenchay][4yrs] - Not Running
BSc (Hons) 2020-21