Programme Specification

Geography [Frenchay]

Version: 2026-27, v2.0, Validated

Contents

Section 1: Key Programme Details

Part A: Programme Information

Programme title: Geography [Frenchay]

Highest award: BSc (Hons) Geography

Interim award: BSc Geography

Interim award: DipHE Geography

Interim award: CertHE Geography

Awarding institution: UWE Bristol

Teaching institutions: UWE Bristol

Study abroad: No

Year abroad: Yes

Sandwich year: Yes

Credit recognition: No

School responsible for the programme: CATE School of Architecture and Environment, College of Arts, Technology and Environment

Professional, statutory or regulatory bodies:

Chartered Institution of Water and Environmental Management (CIWEM)

Institution of Environmental Sciences (IES)

Royal Geographical Society

Modes of delivery: Full-time, Sandwich

Entry requirements: For the current entry requirements see the UWE public website.

For implementation from: 01 September 2026

Programme code: FF8900

Section 2: Programme Overview, Aims and Learning Outcomes

Part A: Programme Overview, Aims and Learning Outcomes

Overview: The BSc Geography programme at UWE Bristol offers a coherent and professionally focused education that combines theoretical understanding with real-world application to develop skilled, confident, and practice-ready graduates. Teaching is delivered through a diverse blend of lectures, seminars, practical labs, workshops, and extensive fieldwork, with a strong emphasis on applied and experiential learning. Assessments are varied, inclusive, and progressively scaffolded across the programme. A strength of the programme is its comprehensive student support, with students and staff forming a strong learning community. Key aspects include structured formative and summative feedback, residential fieldweeks, and Academic Personal Tutoring. Research-informed teaching and a strong sense of community underpin the student experience, creating an inclusive and supportive environment where all learners are empowered to succeed.

Features of the programme: The BSc Geography degree has the following key features:

Applied geography – Our programme and modules are very applied in nature. Whilst students explore and appreciate important geographical and environmental concepts and theories, all modules and assessments have a clear application to practice.

Career focused – BSc Geography responds to the needs of a wide range of professions addressing challenges related to climate change and environmental challenges from rivers, coasts and ecology. Transferable and lifelong learning skills are embedded within the programme and, combined with multidisciplinary subject knowledge, aim to enhance students' employability and continuing professional development (CPD).

Personalised – BSc Geography provides a high quality personalised students

learning experience through residential fieldwork, APT provision, and strong student-staff learning communities.

Educational Aims: Students on BSc Geography develop an expert understanding of important geographical and environmental challenges facing society today. Students learn about the science of the physical environment and consider the application of this science and understanding to the effective and sustainable management of the environment. Our students explore these issues across global, national, regional and local scales.

Our vision is to develop skilled, adaptable geographers who apply critical thinking, problem-solving, and innovation to real-world environmental and societal challenges. With a strong career focus, we equip students with analytical, digital, and research skills alongside the ability to communicate effectively, manage projects, and make informed decisions. Through personalised support, immersive fieldwork, and a strong learning community, we empower graduates with the resilience, professionalism, and global awareness needed to thrive in diverse careers and make a meaningful impact.

Programme Learning Outcomes:

On successful completion of this programme graduates will achieve the following learning outcomes.

Programme Learning Outcomes

PO1. Explain and critically analyse physical processes which shape our natural environment across a range of spatial and temporal scales

PO2. Explain and analyse contemporary environmental and societal challenges and develop an ethical, global, and sustainable awareness of such issues

PO3. Propose and critically evaluate a range of environmental management strategies and techniques to address complex environmental and societal challenges and make evidence-based decisions

PO4. Design, execute and critically reflect upon geographical research projects involving both primary and secondary data collection and analysis

PO5. Show proficiency in and apply quantitative reasoning and digital technologies (such as GIS, statistical software and AI) to explore and assess geographical and environmental issues

PO6. Apply critical and creative thinking skills to help address complex environmental and societal challenges

PO7. Manage available resources and motivate themselves to optimally perform multiple complicated tasks within specified deadlines

PO8. Communicate confidently in a range of written, visual and verbal formats

PO9. Operate successfully within teams, leading when required, in order to meet common goals

PO10. Demonstrate the skills and attributes of an adaptable and resilient practitioner and which foster lifelong learning and reflective practice

Assessment strategy: Assessment:

Modules across the BSc Geography programme offer a diverse suite of assessment methods and styles. Student knowledge and understanding is assessed in a variety of coursework assessment methods, including essays, practical portfolios, technical reports and management plans (e.g. environmental management plans), research proposals, research projects, and presentations. The scheduling and amount of assessment is consistent with an effective and appropriate measurement of the achievement of the intended learning outcomes.

At Level 4 assessment provides a variety of opportunities for students to demonstrate their abilities in both individual and group settings, and particularly their ability to articulate clearly and accurately the concepts and frameworks that are fundamental to the study of geography. Assessments are also focused on students developing and demonstrating core academic and technical skills. A key feature of the programme assessment strategy at Level 4 is building assessment and feedback literacy through sequential and iterative integrated assessment across a number of core modules. This builds students confidence in completing university-level assessments and sets them up to be successful and independent learners in the more challenging higher levels of study. Most assessments at Level 4 will be short written assignments and practical output compilations.

At Level 5 the assessments reflect the programme design of developing an expert understanding of the science of the natural environment through a range of disciplines. The assessments for these modules enable students to demonstrate the depth of their knowledge and the sophistication of their thinking. In these assessment students will be required to demonstrate higher level academic and technical skills. Most assessments at Level 5 will be professional/research reports and practical output compilations.

At Level 6 assessment requires students to produce substantial, detailed and sophisticated pieces of work that reflect a wide range of reading, advanced practical and technical skills, and a high level of independent thought. Students engage in a range of student-led activities that encourage them to work independently, notably their dissertation/capstone projects. In many assessment students will also need to defend and justify decisions using academic reasoning and data-based evidence. Emphasis is placed on evaluating students' depth of knowledge, critical thinking and ability to sustain credible arguments. Most assessments at Level 6 will be high quality professional/research reports and presentations to simulate professional and graduate level tasks.

These approaches are in keeping with the range of module learning outcomes and the diversity of student needs. Throughout a clear focus is placed on application of knowledge to investigate real-world geographical and environmental problems, and this is achieved via laboratory classes, computer-based learning, fieldwork, and group-based problem-solving activities. There are also a number of group-work based assessments throughout the programme – these are generally associated with fieldwork-based assessments but are also included in other modules teaching and assessment as appropriate. However the majority of coursework tasks are independent.

The programmes assessment approach challenges students, promoting adaptability and flexibility in seeking and receiving information, and preparing them for the likely way in which they will have to apply their knowledge in their professional careers.

To support students the programme team establishes and makes available to students an assessment calendar to minimise the submission of multiple assessments on the same submission date and considers approaches to encouraging sustained engagement by spreading assessments across the semester.

Each piece of assessment is documented and provided to students via a standardised assessment brief template. This includes essential information about the assessment and also provides students with clear guidance on how to be successful in the task.

Appropriate measurement against learning outcomes is achieved by internal and external scrutiny of assessment, consistent with University Academic Regulations and Procedures.

Feedback:
Throughout the programme there is clear messaging to students regarding the value of receiving and actioning both formative and summative feedback.

Early in the programme as part of the residential fieldweek and modules with practical-based iterative and integrated assessment strategies students are continuously encouraged by staff to engage with formative feedback opportunities, this can come in a range of formats such as verbal 1-2-1 feedback discussions or written comments and self-reflection and evaluation. On completion of an assessment task students are provided with clear and actionable summative feedback on their work. Students receive feedback in a variety of formats, both written and verbal. Typically, students will be presented with an annotated copy of the marking criteria so that they can clearly benchmark their performance and consider actions for future improvement. In the early assessments it is also highlighted to students where their performance was improved due to the receipt and actioning of formative feedback, thus highlighting its value to students and developing good practice. Working through this cycle of formative and summative feedback with students continuously over the course of Level 4 through fieldwork and iterative assessment strategies builds assessment and feedback literacy early in

the programme to support continuous engagement and academic achievement.

In Starting Block sessions for Levels 5 and 6 students are similarly encouraged to access and reflect on their summative feedback from assessments completed in the previous year, so that they can address commonly occurring issues limiting their performance.

In all modules the marking criteria are clearly communicated to students via assessment briefs and throughout delivery referred to for students to benchmark progress. All modules also include clear and scheduled formative feedback opportunities.

As Academic Personal Tutoring (APT) is a successful and core element of the student experience on the programme assessment performance and feedback is also reviewed on a 1-2-1 basis with students. This allows for students to understand their feedback and be presented with clear and actionable steps to continuously improve.

Student support: Core aspects of student support on BSc Geography include:

Structured and Scaffolded Curriculum: Progressive development of knowledge, skills, and autonomy across levels.

Academic Personal Tutoring (APT): Regular 1-to-1 academic and personal guidance throughout the programme.

Formative and Summative Feedback: Regular, clear, and actionable feedback to support improvement and reflection.

Diverse Teaching and Assessment Methods: Inclusive delivery (lectures, workshops, practicals, fieldwork) and varied assessment formats.

Supportive Learning Environment: Inclusive teaching culture where student

challenges are addressed openly and supportively.

Peer and Community Support: Emphasis on cohort building and peer learning through group work and field activities.

Assessment and Feedback Literacy: Early development of skills to understand and apply feedback and assessment criteria.

Assessment Calendar and Clear Briefs: Timetabled deadlines and standardised assessment briefs for clarity and workload management.

Early Student Engagement Activities: Starting Block and Level 4 residential fieldweek to build community and academic confidence.

Professional Development Support: Modules and services focused on career planning, employability, and networking.

Access to Professional Services: Integrated support from Library, Careers Service, and other UWE resources.

Part B: Programme Structure

Year 1
Full time and sandwich students must take 120 credits from the modules in Year 1.

Year 1 Compulsory Modules (Full Time and Sandwich)
Full time and sandwich students must take 120 credits from the modules in Compulsory Modules (Full Time and Sandwich).

Module Code	Module Title	Credit
UBGMA1-15-1	An Introduction to Geographic Information Systems and Remote Sensing 2026-27	15
UBGLYD-30-1	Dynamic Earth 2026-27	30

UBGLXD-30-1	Environmental Challenges 2026-27	30
UBGMVN-15-1	Field Study in Physical Geography 2026-27	15
UBGLXU-30-1	Contemporary Global Issues 2026-27	30

Year 2
Full time and sandwich students must take 120 credits from the modules in Year 2.

Year 2 Compulsory Modules (Full Time and Sandwich)
Full time and sandwich students must take 60 credits from the modules in Compulsory Modules (Full Time and Sandwich).

Module Code	Module Title	Credit
UBLFN9-15-2	Applied Geographic Information Systems (GIS) 2027-28	15
UBGMJ6-15-2	Professional Development 2027-28	15
UBGLYG-30-2	Researching Physical Geography 2027-28	30

Year 2 Optional Modules (Full Time and Sandwich)
Full time and sandwich students must take 60 credits from the modules in Optional Modules (Full Time and Sandwich).

Module Code	Module Title	Credit
UBGMRR-15-2	Climate Change: Challenges for the 21st Century 2027-28	15
UBGMH3-15-2	Ecology 2027-28	15
UBGMKA-15-2	Environmental Assessment 2027-28	15
UBGMWN-15-2	Meteorology 2027-28	15
UBGMLE-15-2	Understanding Coastal Dynamics 2027-28	15
UBGMLV-15-2	Understanding River Dynamics 2027-28	15

Year 3
Full time students must take 120 credits from the modules in Year 3.
Sandwich students must take 15 credits from the modules in Year 3.

Students on the sandwich delivery can undertake a work placement year or a study abroad year. Students undertaking the work placement year take UBGLVX-15-3 Placement. Students
undertaking the study abroad year take UBGLWC-15-3 Study Abroad

In accordance with University academic regulations, to undertake the work placement or study abroad year students must obtain a minimum of 200 credits, at least 90 of which are at Level 2 or above. To undertake a work placement year, the student must be in approved employment for a minimum of 1000 work hours. To undertake a study abroad year, the student must be in approved study at an international institution and be enrolled for a minimum of 30 ECTS. Both the work placement and study abroad years must be authorised in advance by the programme leader.

Students who take UBGLVX-15-3 or UBGLWC-15-3 must take UBGMVD-15-3 (Independent Project) instead of the longer UBGMQD-30-3 Extended Independent Project.

Year 3 Compulsory Modules (Sandwich)
Sandwich students must take 15 credits from the modules in Compulsory Modules (Sandwich).

Module Code	Module Title	Credit
UBGLVX-15-3	Placement 2028-29	15
UBGLWC-15-3	Study Abroad 2028-29	15

Year 3 Compulsory Project Modules (Full Time)
Full time students choose projects from Option A or Option B.

Year 3 Compulsory Project Modules (Full Time) - Option A
Full time students may take 30 credits from the modules in Compulsory Modules (Full Time) - Option A.

Module Code	Module Title	Credit

UBGMQD-30-3	Extended Independent Project 2028-29	30

Year 3 Compulsory Project Modules (Full Time) - Option B
Full time students may take 30 credits from the modules in Compulsory Modules (Full Time) - Option B.

Module Code	Module Title	Credit
UBGMVD-15-3	Independent Project 2028-29	15
UBGMYQ-15-3	Professional Experience 2028-29	15

Year 3 Optional Modules (Full Time)
Full time students must take 90 credits from the modules in Optional Modules (Full Time).

Module Code	Module Title	Credit
UBGMJC-30-3	Advanced Geographical Expedition 2028-29	30
UBGMJT-30-3	Biogeography and Conservation 2028-29	30
UBGMSU-30-3	Advanced GIS and Remote Sensing Applications 2028-29	30
UBGMQR-30-3	Hazard and Disaster Management 2028-29	30
UBGMXD-30-3	Managing Rivers and Coasts 2028-29	30
UBGMME-30-3	Water and Energy Futures 2028-29	30

Year 4
Sandwich students must take 105 credits from the modules in Year 4.

Year 4 Compulsory Project Module (Sandwich)
Sandwich students must take UBGMVD-15-3 Independent project.

Module Code	Module Title	Credit
UBGMVD-15-3	Independent Project 2029-30	15

Year 4 Optional Modules (Sandwich)
Sandwich students must take 90 credits from the modules in Optional Modules (Sandwich).

Module Code	Module Title	Credit
UBGMJC-30-3	Advanced Geographical Expedition 2029-30	30
UBGMJT-30-3	Biogeography and Conservation 2029-30	30
UBGMSU-30-3	Advanced GIS and Remote Sensing Applications 2029-30	30
UBGMQR-30-3	Hazard and Disaster Management 2029-30	30
UBGMXD-30-3	Managing Rivers and Coasts 2029-30	30
UBGMME-30-3	Water and Energy Futures 2029-30	30

Part C: Higher Education Achievement Record (HEAR) Synopsis

This programme examines the physical environment and its management by society. It studies the structures present within the natural world and the processes responsible for shaping them. Based on this understanding of environmental structures and processes, this programme identifies human impacts upon the environment and ways in which these can be managed sustainably. Graduates from this programme can make informed judgments on the most appropriate means of managing the natural environment and have the analytical and communication skills necessary to be successful in a range of graduate employment positions.

Part D: External Reference Points and Benchmarks

The programme is accredited by the Royal Geographical Society (with IBG), Chartered Institute of Water and Energy Managers and also the Institute of Environmental Sciences. The ethos and core knowledge and competencies of these accrediting bodies has supported the continuous development of the programme.

Part E: Regulations

Approved to University Regulations and Procedures.