

Course Information Document: Undergraduate

For students starting in Academic Year 2020/21

1. Course Summary

Names of programme and award title(s)	BSc (Hons) Physical Geography BSc (Hons) Physical Geography with International Year (see Annex for details) BSc (Hons) Physical Geography with Work Placement Year (see Annex for details)
Award type	Combined Honours
Mode of study	Full-time
Framework of Higher Education Qualification (FHEQ) level of final award	Level 6
Normal length of the programme	3 years; 4 years with either the International Year or Placement Year between years 2 and 3
Maximum period of registration	The normal length as specified above plus 3 years
Location of study	Keele Campus
Accreditation (if applicable)	Not applicable
Regulator	Office for Students (OfS)
Tuition Fees	<p>UK/EU students:</p> <p>Fee for 2020/21 is £9,250*</p> <p>International students:</p> <p>Fee for 2020/21 is £15,000** (if combined with a non-laboratory-based Principal Subject)</p> <p>or £16,250** (if combined with a laboratory-based Principal Subject)</p> <p>The fee for the international year abroad is calculated at 15% of the standard year fee</p>

How this information might change: Please read the important information at <http://www.keele.ac.uk/student-agreement/>. This explains how and why we may need to make changes to the information provided in this document and to help you understand how we will communicate with you if this happens.

* These fees are regulated by Government. We reserve the right to increase fees in subsequent years of study in response to changes in government policy and/or changes to the law. If permitted by such change in policy or law, we may increase your fees by an inflationary amount or such other measure as required by government policy or the law. Please refer to the accompanying Student Terms & Conditions. Further information on fees can be found at <http://www.keele.ac.uk/studentfunding/tuitionfees/>

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2. What is a Combined Honours programme?

NB: all students who study a science Principal subject are candidates for the degree of Bachelor of Science (with Honours) (BSc Hons)

irrespective of their second Principal subject.

Combined Honours degrees are degrees that are taken in two different subjects, resulting in an X and Y degree title. If you are taking a Combined Honours programme, these will be the two subjects you applied for. These are referred to as your Principal Subjects.

In a Combined Honours degree you must take at least 135 credits in each Principal Subject (270 credits in total), accrued over all three levels of study, with at least 45 credits at each level of study (Levels 4, 5 and 6) in each of two Principal Subjects (90 credits per year). The remaining available credits can be filled with modules from these subjects or other subjects entirely.

As a Combined Honours student you can choose to study just one subject in your final year of study, taking a minimum of 90 credits in this subject. This will result in an X with Y degree title.

3. Overview of the Programme

Physical Geography at Keele explores the Earth's varied landscapes and the complex, potentially fragile, global systems that connect them. As a student at Keele you will learn about the rapidly evolving science at the heart of global environmental change and discover new ways of understanding and appreciating the natural world around us. What you learn here will equip you for future employment and for a lifelong appreciation of the world around you.

The first year involves a broad-based introductory programme that provides a platform from which knowledge, understanding and skills can subsequently be developed. The second year involves more in-depth and critical exploration of key issues within Physical Geography, practical "hands-on" experience of a range of geographical research techniques, and an opportunity to put these skills into practice during an overseas field course. The final year provides the opportunity for students to specialise in areas of most interest to them, offering a range of option modules that reflect the research expertise of staff members. Fieldwork is a crucial part of Geography, and field excursions both within the U.K. and overseas are integral to this programme. Students may also carry out an independent research dissertation on a topic of their choice in the final year.

4. Aims of the programme

The broad aims of the programme are to enable you to:

- establish a sound knowledge and understanding of the discipline that will serve as a basis for employment, postgraduate research or advanced study;
- explore the key elements of current knowledge and understanding of subjects within Physical Geography, including the research foundations and reliability of that knowledge and understanding;
- acquire a range of practical and technical skills and techniques appropriate to Physical Geography, and to use these skills to tackle geographical issues;
- make critical assessments of sources of information, to engage successfully in independent research, and to communicate ideas concisely and effectively;
- achieve a knowledge and understanding of a range of different approaches to Physical Geography, while recognising both the diversity of the discipline and its unifying themes;
- become expert in specific areas of the discipline that particularly interest you or have particular relevance to intended future employment.

The Physical Geography programme aligns itself closely with key aspects of the Keele Approach to Education (<http://www.keele.ac.uk/journey/>), including interdisciplinarity, sustainability, internationality and employability:

Interdisciplinarity

Physical Geography is an explicitly interdisciplinary subject synthesising material from areas such as geology, biology and meteorology to achieve a holistic engagement with Earth's surface and near-surface environments.

Taught by a range of expert staff with specialisms ranging from glaciology and paleoecology to social policy and anthropology, and taking advantage of close collaboration with other courses such as Geology and Environmental Science, Physical Geography at Keele adopts an interdisciplinary approach to teaching and encourages an interdisciplinary attitude in students and graduates. All students have the opportunity to combine Physical Geography with another subject in a Combined Honours programme, and even our most specialised Physical Geography modules allow students to identify and explore connections with other disciplines both in research and in the application of Physical Geography subject knowledge to specific real-world problems such as resource management and hazard mitigation. We offer core introductory lectures addressing interdisciplinarity in "Fundamentals of Physical Geography", modules explicitly combining diverse disciplines (e.g. Hydrology with Oceanography in "Dynamic Geographies"), module topics requiring interdisciplinary analysis (e.g. Water Resources), modules integrating students from different programmes in joint exercises (e.g. Natural Hazards), guest teaching in Physical Geography modules by staff from other subject areas and opportunities for extended interdisciplinary research projects in Dissertation modules.

Sustainability

Interactions between people and their environment are at the heart of Physical Geography, and the subject engages directly with challenges such as climate change, food security and energy choices. The subject matter and approach of Physical Geography is clearly aligned with two of the core areas of sustainability identified by Bone and Agombar, HEA, 2011: living within environmental limits and using sound science responsibly. The HEFCE (2008) strategic review asserted that "Teaching (or research) that is significant for

sustainable development will include a significant element related to either or both of the natural environment and natural resources, PLUS a significant element related to either or both of economic or social issues." Physical Geography clearly addresses both the natural environment and natural resources, and also puts those issues clearly into the context of economic and social issues. For example, all students take module ESC-10041 (People and Environment) that specifically explores those connections in the first year of the course, and module ESC-10038 (Practice of Physical Geography) in which we explore issues such as the wide ranging impacts of major earth-engineering works (landfills, reservoirs, etc.). Specialist modules such as Global Environmental Change (ESC-30018) and Glaciers & Glacial Geomorphology (ESC-30006) engage with the implications of economic developments on the natural environment. Many of our students take the opportunity to combine Physical Geography in a combined honours combination with another environmental discipline to expand their engagement with these issues

Internationality

Physical Geography is about the whole Earth as a global system and as a home to humankind. It is at its very core about achieving an insight into the way the world works that transcends physical and political boundaries and gives students a thorough appreciation of the international, global context of local issues. Physical Geography as a scientific and applied discipline is conducted as an international enterprise by scientists and practitioners from across the globe, and Physical Geography students will engage with their work to encounter international case studies, people and issues. In some topics, such as attitudes to the exploitation of Arctic resources, conflicting opinions are based on national affiliations or local contexts, and students are required to understand how those different international perspectives influence attitudes to the environment in their field of study. Many topics in Physical Geography are explicitly transnational (e.g. Global Environmental Change, module ESC-30018), and our teaching explicitly requires students to take an international perspective to scientific and applied issues. All Physical Geography students take part in an overseas field course, all are encouraged to consider opportunities for periods of international study, and all have the opportunity to engage in international work in their final-year dissertation project. Physical Geography at Keele focuses on the global context of local issues, and all students encounter transnational topics and international practitioners on a global stage.

Employability

Physical Geography students acquire a wide range of skills that are directly relevant both in vocationally specific Geographical careers and in non-Geography employment. Career-relevance is embedded within our course, parts of which (e.g. 2nd year practical programme) were developed in consultation with industrial partners to ensure that employability skills were included. In evidence to the UK Parliament Commons Select Committee on Business Innovation and Skills in 2010, Richard Waite, Managing Director of ESRI UK, said that *"Studying geography and learning how to utilise geographic information gives new employees many of the key skills that businesses are crying out for... But if business needs geographers now, this will be even more true in the future. Location is becoming increasingly recognised as an important factor in decision making."* *"A survey of 200 business leaders across the public and private sectors showed that the skills they are looking for in future employees are critical thinking (nominated by 78 per cent of businesses leaders as key for graduates), advanced analytical skills (76 per cent), understanding and interpreting complex data (71 per cent), advanced technology skills (57 per cent) ... all of which can be gained through a geography degree... As a company we therefore place a high value on the teaching of geography in Higher Education. ...there is evidence that the generic skills acquired through the study of geography are in high demand right across the business sector."* Richard Waite, Managing Director ESRI UK

5. What you will learn

The intended learning outcomes of the programme (what students should know, understand and be able to do at the end of the programme), can be described under the following headings:

- Subject knowledge and understanding
- Subject specific skills
- Intellectual skills
- Employability skills

Subject knowledge and understanding

Successful students will be able to:

- the contribution of research to the development of knowledge in Physical Geography
- the dynamic, plural and contested nature of the discipline
- patterns of spatial variation as dynamic characteristics of the physical environment
- characteristics, diversity and interdependence of places outside their own everyday experience
- the way that physical environments change through time
- the significance of spatial and temporal scale in physical processes
- the use of systems at a range of scales to conceptualise patterns, processes, interactions and change in the physical world
- different methodological strategies used in the observation, analysis, interpretation and representation of geographical information
- applications and limitations of Physical Geography in problem solving, wealth creation and improving quality of life

Teaching and learning employed to achieve these outcomes include: Formal classes (lectures, practicals, fieldcourses, seminars, workshops and tutorials); Directed reading and web-supported study; Independent study and reflection. The acquisition of knowledge and understanding underpins most of the programme, but is most explicitly addressed in lecture modules. The Dissertation ultimately

allows students to combine knowledge, understanding and skills in a research project.

Assessment of students' knowledge and understanding is achieved by: formative assessment in individual or small group tutorials; coursework essays, posters, technical reports and web-pages; in-class and online exercises and tests; individual or group oral presentations; end-of-course examinations.

Subject specific skills

Successful students will be able to:

- plan, design and execute a piece of research in Physical Geography, including production of a final report
- undertake effective Physical Geography fieldwork with due regard for safety and risk assessment
- work safely in a Physical Geography laboratory, with awareness of standard procedures
- prepare effective maps and diagrams using a range of appropriate technologies
- employ a variety of technical field and laboratory-based methods for the collection and analysis of spatial and environmental information including surveying and the use of GIS
- combine and interpret different types of geographical evidence

Subject specific skills are taught most explicitly in the practical and field course programmes and in the ISP modules. Teaching and learning strategies and methods employed to achieve these outcomes include: Practical classes, field courses and independent project work; Individual dissertation tutorials; Directed reading and independent study.

Assessment of students' subject-specific skills is achieved (depending on option choices) by: a 6,000 or 11,000 word independent research project (dissertation); a formal research proposal and risk assessment; in-class exercises and tests; coursework essays, posters, technical reports and web-pages; fieldcourse or practical class reports.

Intellectual skills

Successful students will be able to:

- assess the merits of contrasting theories, explanations and policies
- analyse and solve problems
- make reasoned decisions
- evaluate evidence and make critical judgements
- make critical interpretations of data and text
- abstract and synthesise information
- develop a reasoned argument
- take responsibility for their own learning and develop a habit of reflection upon that learning

Intellectual skills are developed throughout the course, and handled most explicitly in tutorial, workshop and practical classes, as well as in the dissertation and in individual progress interviews. Teaching and learning strategies and methods employed to achieve these outcomes include: Formal classes (lectures, practicals, fieldcourses, seminars, workshops and tutorials); Individual dissertation tutorials and Individual progress interviews; Independent project work; Directed reading and web-supported study; Independent study and reflection.

Assessment of students' intellectual skills is achieved (depending on option choices) by: Tutorial assignments and group discussion; a 6,000 or 11,000 word independent research project; Coursework presentations; End of course examinations; Practical class exercises; Formative assessment and feedback in individual progress interviews.

Employability skills

Employability Skills are embedded within the modules in all three years in order to equip students with core skills and knowledge, which are transferable into post-University experience. In addition, where relevant, modules seek to highlight relevant employment opportunities for geography graduates. Generic employability skills included within the programme include:

- **Written communication skills:** The development of written communication skills is a key element of the programme. Students complete various written assignments in all three years including essays, poster presentations, technical reports and a large dissertation. Specific training is provided in the year 1 tutorial programme, addressing academic writing skills such as referencing.
- **Oral presentation skills:** Students gain experience in oral presentation skills within many modules including the year 1 tutorial programme.
- **Communication skills:** Students are encouraged to discuss and debate ideas in small-group tutorial sessions in year 1, and are encouraged to discuss specific aspects of their work with their peers and their module tutors. This is facilitated by the open-door policy operated by the geography staff.
- **Problem solving:** The ability to resolve problems with complex solutions is an important part of the programme and is included within a number of module assessments and fieldwork activities.

- **Fieldwork skills:** Students are introduced to a range of field skills such as surveying during the course of the degree programme. They are also trained in risk assessment techniques that are central to safe working in the field.
- **Numeracy skills:** Numerous practical exercises include the analysis and manipulation of numerical datasets. The first year practical programme in particular involves the geographical application of a variety of statistical techniques.
- **Working independently:** Successful completion of the degree programme requires students to work independently. This ranges from the wider reading required to expand on material covered within the lectures, to the final completion of a major independent research project in year 3.
- **Literature searching:** In years 2 and 3 in particular, students are required to make use of journal literature. Effective engagement with these advanced sources requires the development of sophisticated search skills that are introduced in the year 1 tutorials and further developed in the year 2 programme.
- **Team working:** Team work is an integral part of the field courses in years 1 and 2 and students therefore have numerous opportunities to work as part of a team. Some modules include assessments that require students to work as a group (e.g. ESC-20029: Practical Physical Geography).
- **IT skills:** Key IT skills are taught to all undergraduates at the beginning of Year 1. Instruction is given in core software applications (e.g. spreadsheet software) so that all students have the same level of core knowledge of essential computing techniques. Particular emphasis is placed on the use of industry-standard GIS software (ArcGIS) to analyse, visualise and integrate spatial datasets.
- **Learning to Learn:** The first-year tutorial programme recognises the challenge posed by the transition from Secondary to Higher Education (Goal 2, University and School Learning and Teaching Strategies) and consequently focuses on introducing students to the key study skills required to work effectively in a university environment (e.g. time management, note taking, use of feedback and reflection, how to find relevant literature, referencing and plagiarism etc.). This is facilitated by the small-group learning and close support from a nominated member of staff from their arrival at Keele.

Keele Graduate attributes

Physical Geography at Keele University is proud of its distinctive educational environment, which is designed to enable students to develop into *distinctive graduates* able to balance *specialist and expert knowledge* with a *broad outlook* and an *independent approach*. Keele identifies a set of distinctive graduate attributes that characterise successful Keele students.

The content, structure and intended learning outcomes of our programme, which are described in this Programme Specification, are explicitly designed to facilitate the achievement of these capabilities.

Specifically, we provide:

- opportunities throughout Physical Geography to develop the subject-specific skills and knowledge that are at the heart of the programme
- opportunities throughout Physical Geography to develop personal and professional attributes, abilities and attitudes appropriate to lifelong learning, employability and citizenship
- opportunities within the wider Keele framework to develop a broad set of attributes that are not subject specific but define an intellectually well-rounded and confident graduate
- a supportive network of staff within Physical Geography who aim to demonstrate these attributes by their own example and who are dedicated to working alongside students exploring and developing them as they progress through the programme.

Engagement with this programme will enable you to develop your intellectual, personal and professional capabilities. At Keele, we call these our ten Graduate Attributes and they include independent thinking, synthesizing information, creative problem solving, communicating clearly, and appreciating the social, environmental and global implications of your studies and activities. Our educational programme and learning environment is designed to help you to become a well-rounded graduate who is capable of making a positive and valued contribution in a complex and rapidly changing world, whichever spheres of life you engage in after your studies are completed.

Further information about the Keele Graduate Attributes can be found here: <http://www.keele.ac.uk/journey/>

6. How is the programme taught?

Learning and teaching methods used on the programme vary according to the subject matter and level of the module. They include the following:

- Lectures
- Field courses
- Practical classes
- Tutorials
- Project work
- Seminars, group presentations and workshops
- Lectures
- Individual progress interviews, including personal development planning
- Directed reading and independent study
- A research dissertation
- Interactive online e-learning via the Keele Learning Environment (KLE)

Apart from these formal activities, students are also provided with regular opportunities to talk through particular areas of difficulty, and any special learning needs they may have, with their Personal Tutors or module lecturers on a one-to-one basis.

7. Teaching Staff

Physical Geography is a modular degree programme taught within the School of Geography, Geology and the Environment, which includes lecturers with expertise in Geography, Earth Sciences and Environmental Sciences. All the current Physical Geography lecturers hold PhDs and most are internationally recognised experts in their fields.

Physical Geographers have won the annual Keele University "Excellence in Teaching" award five times, including individual awards for excellence in teaching to four members of staff and a team award for excellence to the whole programme. Two members of the Physical Geography teaching team have been awarded National Teaching Fellowships (NTF) by the Higher Education Academy. Staff details are available at <http://www.keele.ac.uk/gge/people/>

The University will attempt to minimise changes to our core teaching teams, however, delivery of the programme depends on having a sufficient number of staff with the relevant expertise to ensure that the programme is taught to the appropriate academic standard.

Staff turnover, for example where key members of staff leave, fall ill or go on research leave, may result in changes to the programme's content. The University will endeavour to ensure that any impact on students is limited if such changes occur.

8. What is the structure of the Programme?

The academic year runs from September to June and is divided into two semesters. The number of weeks of teaching will vary from course to course, but you can generally expect to attend scheduled teaching sessions between the end of September and mid-December, and from mid-January to the end of April. Our degree courses are organised into modules. Each module is usually a self-contained unit of study and each is usually assessed separately with the award of credits on the basis of 1 credit = 10 hours of student effort. An outline of the structure of the programme is provided in the tables below.

There are three types of module delivered as part of your programme. They are:

- Compulsory modules - a module that you are required to study on this course;
- Optional modules - these allow you some limited choice of what to study from a list of modules;
- Elective modules - a free choice of modules that count towards the overall credit requirement but not the number of subject-related credits.

A summary of the total credit requirements per year is as follows, with a minimum of 90 subject credits (compulsory plus optional) required for each year across both of your Principal Subjects. This document has information about *Physical Geography* modules only; please also see the document for your other subject.

For further information on the content of modules currently offered, including the list of elective modules, please visit:

<https://www.keele.ac.uk/recordsandexams/modulecatalogue/>

Year	Compulsory	Optional		Electives	
		Min	Max	Min	Max
Level 4	60	0	0	0	0
Level 5	60	0	0	0	0
Level 6	0	45	60	0	15

In year 3 there is the option to choose to specialise in one of your subjects, taking a minimum of 90 credits in this subject rather than taking modules from both subjects.

Module Lists

Level 4

Compulsory modules	Module Code	Credits	Period
Fundamentals of Physical Geography	ESC-10039	15	Semester 1
Geographical Skills	ESC-10035	15	Semester 1-2
The Practice of Physical Geography	ESC-10038	15	Semester 2
People and the Environment	ESC-10041	15	Semester 2

Level 5

Compulsory modules	Module Code	Credits	Period
Practical Physical Geography	ESC-20029	15	Semester 1
Regional Landsystems	ESC-20030	15	Semester 1
Dynamic Geographies (15 credits)	ESC-20050	15	Semester 2
Geographical Research Training	GEG-20009	15	Semester 2

Students choosing to do the international year take the compulsory module 'GEG-20034: International Study Module'.

Students choosing to do the work placement year take the compulsory module 'ESC-30042: Work Placement Year'.

Level 6

Students take either 60 credits from the options below, or 45 credits from this list plus 15 credits from an elective outside this list. Students may take no more than one of the ISPs on this list, and do not need to take a Geography Independent Study Project (ISP) as long as there is an ISP included within their overall combined honours module diet.

If you choose to specialise in Physical Geography in your final year you will take either 120 credits from the list below, or 105 credits from this list plus 15 credits from an elective outside this list. Students must take one of the two Dissertation ISP options below.

Optional modules	Module Code	Credits	Period
Glaciers and Glacial Geomorphology	ESC-30006	15	Semester 1
Natural Hazards	ESC-30009	15	Semester 1
Global Environmental Change	ESC-30018	15	Semester 1
Applied GIS	ESC-30044	15	Semester 1
Geography Double Dissertation - ISP	GEG-30006	30	Semester 1-2
Geography (Single) Dissertation - ISP	GEG-30008	15	Semester 1-2
Water Resources	ESC-30020	15	Semester 2
Coastal Environments	ESC-30027	15	Semester 2
Inspirational Landscapes	GEG-30014	15	Semester 2

If you choose to specialise in this subject in your final year you will study the following modules:

Optional modules	Module Code	Credits	Period
Glaciers and Glacial Geomorphology	ESC-30006	15	Semester 1
Natural Hazards	ESC-30009	15	Semester 1
Global Environmental Change	ESC-30018	15	Semester 1
Applied GIS	ESC-30044	15	Semester 1
Contemporary Topics in Environmental Science	ESC-30045	15	Semester 1
Environment and Sustainability Case Study	ESC-30046	15	Semester 1
Geography Double Dissertation - ISP	GEG-30006	30	Semester 1-2
Geography (Single) Dissertation - ISP	GEG-30008	15	Semester 1-2
Water Resources	ESC-30020	15	Semester 2
Coastal Environments	ESC-30027	15	Semester 2
Inspirational Landscapes	GEG-30014	15	Semester 2
Trees in their Environment	LSC-30017	15	Semester 2

9. Final and intermediate awards

Credits required for each level of academic award are as follows:

Honours Degree	360 credits	<p>You will require at least 120 credits at levels 4, 5 and 6</p> <p>You must accumulate a minimum of 135 credits in each Principal Subject (270 credits in total), with at least 45 credits at each level of study (Levels 4, 5 and 6) in each of two Principal Subjects (90 credits per year). Your degree title will be 'subject X and subject Y'.</p> <p>If you choose to study one Principal subject in your final year of study a minimum of 90 credits in that subject is required. Your degree title will be 'subject X with subject Y'.</p>
Diploma in Higher Education	240 credits	You will require at least 120 credits at level 4 or higher and at least 120 credits at level 5 or higher
Certificate in Higher Education	120 credits	You will require at least 120 credits at level 4 or higher

International Year option: in addition to the above students must pass a module covering the international year in order to graduate with a named degree including the 'international year' wording. Students who do not complete, or fail the international year, will be transferred to the three-year version of the programme.

Work Placement Year option: in addition to the above students must pass a non-credit bearing module covering the work placement year in order to graduate with a named degree including the 'with Work Placement Year' wording. Students who do not complete, or fail the work placement year, will be transferred to the three-year version of the programme.

10. How is the Programme Assessed?

The wide variety of assessment methods used on this programme at Keele reflects the broad range of knowledge and skills that are developed as you progress through the degree programme. Teaching staff pay particular attention to specifying clear assessment criteria and providing timely, regular and constructive feedback that helps to clarify things you did not understand and helps you to improve your performance. The following list is representative of the variety of assessment methods used on your programme:

- **End of semester examinations** test the ability of the student to describe, explain, and critically discuss the principles of the subject and to demonstrate competence in applying these principles to applications and to solve problems from appropriate

areas of the discipline.

- **Essays** allow you to demonstrate your ability to articulate ideas clearly using argument and reasoning skills and with close reference to the contexts and critical concepts covered in the modules. Essays also develop and demonstrate research and presentation skills (including appropriate scholarly referencing).
- **Technical reports** - structured proformas and reports are formal summaries of work that test students' understanding of the practical aspects of the programme and develop the skills necessary to enable students to present and analyse their results.
- **Reflective diaries** require students to keep a record of their critical or creative responses to the work of the module. They are assessed on the quality of this reflection and on their ability to respond constructively to the challenges and difficulties they encounter in the process of their own creative development and learning.
- **Maps and Poster presentations** demonstrate the ability of the student to present complex concepts and information in a clear and concise manner, to interact and communicate effectively to a wide range of professional environments, including to both scientific and non-scientific audiences.
- **In-class and online exercises** taken either conventionally or online via the Keele Learning Environment (KLE) assess students' subject knowledge and their ability to apply it in a more structured and focused way.
- **Individual or group oral presentations** assess individual student's subject knowledge and understanding. They also test their ability to work effectively as members of a team, to communicate what they know orally and visually, and to reflect on these processes as part of their own personal development.
- **Field course notebook and portfolios** assess work that has been carried out in the field, and typically include field notebooks, research proposals, short quizzes and both oral and written presentations. The specific assessment portfolio will vary according to the field course destination and subject focus. Fieldwork is a distinctive core component of all the Geography courses.
- **Research proposals** require students to develop an independent research project and think through theoretical problems surrounding methodology and practical concerns relating to, for example, availability of sample, financial restrictions, and time limits. This form of assessment is key to the development of independent research skills and a portfolio of employability skills.
- **Independent Project work** test student's knowledge of different research methodologies and the limits and provisional nature of knowledge. They also enable students to demonstrate their ability to formulate research questions and to answer them using appropriate methods.

Marks are awarded for summative assessments designed to assess your achievement of learning outcomes. You will also be assessed formatively to enable you to monitor your own progress and to assist staff in identifying and addressing any specific learning needs. Feedback, including guidance on how you can improve the quality of your work, is also provided on all summative assessments within three working weeks of submission, unless there are compelling circumstances that make this impossible, and more informally in the course of tutorial and seminar discussions.

11. Contact Time and Expected Workload

This contact time measure is intended to provide you with an indication of the type of activity you are likely to undertake during this programme. The data is compiled based on module choices and learning patterns of students on similar programmes in previous years. Every effort is made to ensure this data is a realistic representation of what you are likely to experience, but changes to programmes, teaching methods and assessment methods mean this data is representative and not specific.

Undergraduate courses at Keele contain an element of module choice; therefore, individual students will experience a different mix of contact time and assessment types dependent upon their own individual choice of modules. The figures below are an example of activities that a student may expect on your chosen course by year stage of study. Contact time includes scheduled activities such as: lecture, seminar, tutorial, project supervision, demonstration, practical classes and labs, supervised time in labs/workshop, fieldwork and external visits. The figures are based on 1,200 hours of student effort each year for full-time students.

Activity

	Scheduled learning and teaching activities	Guided independent Study	Placements
Year 1 (Level 4)	30%	70%	0%
Year 2 (Level 5)	30%	70%	0%
Year 3 (Level 6)	22%	78%	0%

12. Accreditation

This programme does not have accreditation from an external body.

13. University Regulations

The University Regulations form the framework for learning, teaching and assessment and other aspects of the student experience. Further information about the University Regulations can be found at: <http://www.keele.ac.uk/student-agreement/>

If this programme has any exemptions, variations or additions to the University Regulations these will be detailed in an Annex at the

end of this document titled 'Programme-specific regulations'.

A student who has completed a semester abroad will not normally be eligible to transfer onto the International Year option.

Students are expected to attend all practical classes, tutorials, seminars, fieldcourses and lectures. Attendance at all these sessions is monitored and checked by the academic support staff and course directors. Students who display a poor attendance record for no good reason may be subject to disciplinary action.

Students are required to follow the guidelines provided in the Safety and Fieldcourse Handbooks. Instructions contained in course, year and module handbooks constitute part of the regulations.

14. Other Learning Opportunities

Study abroad (semester)

Students on the programme have the potential opportunity to spend a semester abroad in their second year studying at one of Keele's international partner universities.

Exactly which countries are available depends on the student's choice of degree subjects. An indicative list of countries is on the website (<http://www.keele.ac.uk/studyabroad/partneruniversities/>); however this does not guarantee the availability of study in a specific country as this is subject to the University's application process for studying abroad.

No additional tuition fees are payable for a single semester studying abroad but students do have to bear the costs of travelling to and from their destination university, accommodation, food and personal costs. Depending on the destination they are studying at additional costs may include visas, study permits, residence permits, and compulsory health checks. Students should expect the total costs of studying abroad to be greater than if they study in the UK, information is made available from the Global Education Team throughout the process, as costs will vary depending on destination.

Whilst students are studying abroad any Student Finance eligibility will continue, where applicable students may be eligible for specific travel or disability grants. Students studying in Erasmus+ destinations may be eligible for grants as part of this programme. Students studying outside of this programme may be eligible for income dependent bursaries at Keele. Students travel on a comprehensive Keele University insurance plan, for which there are currently no additional charges. Some governments and/or universities require additional compulsory health coverage plans; costs for this will be advised during the application process.

Study Abroad (International Year)

A summary of the International Year, which is a potential option for students after completion of year 2 (Level 5), is provided in the Annex for the International Year.

Work Placement Year

A summary of the Work Placement Year, which is a potential option for students after completion of year 2 (Level 5), is provided in the Annex for the Work Placement Year.

Other opportunities

Fieldwork is an important part of geographer's training, providing the opportunity to acquire and practice field-based skills, to develop skills of observation and recording and to work as an effective member of a team.

15. Additional Costs

Physical Geography Programme Costs

Field Course Costs

All students will do mandatory field courses as part of their degree programme. There is a range of field courses and costs are dependent on degree route, module choices and the nature of the independent project work taken by students.

The University provides significant financial support to subsidise the cost of the field course programme for students. Students will have the option to choose field course destinations that involve no additional cost, or to choose destinations that, although still subsidised, will involve some additional cost to the student. In order to help students manage their field course costs, the payments are spread over the course of the academic year in which you participate in the field course, normally October, February and May. The first instalment is non-refundable due to the need to pre-book accommodation, flights, etc. in advance. The costs of field courses are indicated at the start of the year, with details posted on student notice boards to enable students to make informed decisions on the choices available.

First Year Students

There are no charges to year 1 students taking field courses in the first year of their programme. The University pays for these costs.

Second Year Students

Indicative costs for field courses based on previous academic years:

One-week, compulsory residential field course, normally to EITHER Almeria, southern Spain (no additional cost) OR Iceland (approximately £750-850).

Third Year Students

ALL Physical Geography students may undertake a dissertation, which MAY include fieldwork that is normally carried out during the summer vacation between years 2 and 3. Students are responsible for organising their own transport and accommodation as well as paying any costs incurred whilst carrying out fieldwork. These costs are extremely variable as they are dependent on where the student carries out their project. Costs are minimal if the project work is undertaken in the students' local area.

IMPORTANT:

Students are expected to have adequate clothing for field trips. Costs are only for indicative purposes and correct at the time of printing. Costs are dependent on the options chosen by students and susceptible to changes in the number of students taking field courses and changes in external factors such as flight and accommodation costs outside the University's control. In addition, we reserve the right to change the venues of field courses due to both cost and academic considerations.

Activity	Estimated cost
Field courses - cost depends on student's choice of destination. Typically Almeria, southern Spain (no additional cost) or Iceland (approx. £750-850)	£0-850
Equipment: Waterproof clothing and footwear for field courses	£100
Total estimated additional costs	£100-950

These costs have been forecast by the University as accurately as possible but may be subject to change as a result of factors outside of our control (for example, increase in costs for external services). Forecast costs are reviewed on an annual basis to ensure they remain representative. Where additional costs are in direct control of the University we will ensure increases do not exceed 5%.

As to be expected there will be additional costs for inter-library loans and potential overdue library fines, print and graduation. We do not anticipate any further costs for this undergraduate programme.

16. Annex - International Year

Physical Geography with International Year

Please note: in order to be eligible to take the International Year option your other subject must also offer this option. Please refer to the information published in the course document for your other subject.

International Year Programme
<p>Students registered for this Combined Honours programme may either be admitted for or apply to transfer during their period of study at Level 5 to the Combined Honours programme in both their principal subjects, providing that they meet the progression criteria outlined in this document. Students accepted onto the International Year programme will have an extra year of study at an international partner institution after they have completed Year 2 (Level 5) at Keele.</p> <p>Students who successfully complete both the second year (Level 5) and the International Year will be permitted to progress to Level 6. Students who fail to satisfy the examiners in respect of the International Year will normally revert to the Combined Honours programme without the International Year and progress to Level 6 on that basis. The failure will be recorded on the student's final transcript.</p> <p>Study at Level 4, Level 5 and Level 6 will be as per the main body of this document. The additional detail contained in this annex will pertain solely to students registered for the International Year option.</p>
International Year Programme Aims

In addition to the programme aims specified in the main body of this document, the international year programme of study aims to provide students with:

1. Personal development as a student and a researcher with an appreciation of the international dimension of their subject
2. Experience of a different culture, academically, professionally and socially

Entry Requirements for the International Year

Students may apply to the 4-year programme during Level 5. Admission to the International Year is subject to successful application, interview and references from appropriate staff.

The criteria to be applied are:

- Academic Performance (an average of 60% across all modules in Semester 1 at Level 5 is normally required. Places on the International Year are then conditional on achieving an average mark of 54% across all Level 5 modules with no module fails. Where no Semester 1 marks have been awarded performance in 1st year marks and ongoing 2nd year assessments are taken into account)
- General Aptitude (to be demonstrated by application for study abroad, interview during the 2nd semester of year 2 (Level 5), and by recommendation of the student's personal tutor, 1st and 2nd year tutors and programme director)

Students may not register for both an International Year and a Placement Year.

Student Support

Students will be supported whilst on the International Year via the following methods:

- Phone or Skype conversations with Study Abroad tutors, in line with recommended Personal Tutoring meeting points.
- Support from the University's Global Education Team

Learning Outcomes

In addition to the learning outcomes specified in the main text of the Programme Specification, students who complete a Keele undergraduate programme with International Year will be able to:

1. Describe, discuss and reflect upon the cultural and international differences and similarities of different learning environments
2. Discuss the benefits and challenges of global citizenship and internationalisation
3. Explain how their perspective on their academic discipline has been influenced by locating it within an international setting.
4. Apply their experiences abroad to the specific graduate attributes associated with their Physical Geography degree.
5. Integrate, apply and develop fundamental geographical principles to describe and explain phenomena and solve problems in the context of selected topics within contemporary Physical Geography.

Please note that students on Combined Honours programmes with International Year must meet the subject-specific learning outcomes for BOTH their principal subjects.

These learning outcomes will all be assessed by the submission of a satisfactory individual learning agreement, the successful completion of assessments at the partner institution and the submission of the reflective portfolio element of the international year module.

Course Regulations

Students registered for the International Year are subject to the programme-specific regulations (if any) and the University regulations. In addition, during the International Year, the following regulations will apply:

Students undertaking the International Year must complete 120 credits, which must comprise *at least 40%* in the student's discipline area.

This may impact on your choice of modules to study, for example you will have to choose certain modules to ensure you have the discipline specific credits required.

Students are barred from studying any module with significant overlap to the Level 6 modules to be studied on their return. Significant overlap with Level 5 modules previously studied should also be avoided.

Additional costs for the International Year

Tuition fees for students on the International Year will be charged at 15% of the annual tuition fees for that year of study, as set out in Section 1. The International Year can be included in your Student Finance allocation, to find out more about your personal eligibility see: www.gov.uk

Students will have to bear the costs of travelling to and from their destination university, accommodation, food and personal costs. Depending on the destination they are studying at additional costs may include visas, study permits, residence permits, and compulsory health checks. Students should expect the total costs of studying abroad be greater than if they study in the UK, information is made available from the Global Education Team throughout the process, as costs will vary depending on destination.

Students studying in Erasmus+ destinations may be eligible for grants as part of this programme. Students studying outside of this programme may be eligible income dependent bursaries at Keele.

Students travel on a comprehensive Keele University insurance plan, for which there are currently no additional charges. Some Governments and/or universities require additional compulsory health coverage plans; costs for this will be advised during the application process.

17. Annex - Work Placement Year

Physical Geography with Work Placement Year

Work Placement Year summary

Students registered for this programme may either be admitted for or apply to transfer during their studies to the 'with Work Placement Year' option (NB: for Combined Honours students the rules relating to the work placement year in the subject where the placement is organised are to be followed). Students accepted onto this programme will have an extra year of study (the Work Placement Year) with a relevant placement provider after they have completed Year 2 (Level 5) at Keele.

Students who successfully complete both the second year (Level 5) and the Work Placement Year will be permitted to progress to Level 6. Students who fail to satisfactorily complete the Work Placement Year will normally revert to the 3-year programme and progress to Level 6 on that basis. The failure will be recorded on the student's final transcript.

Study at Level 4, Level 5 and Level 6 will be as per the main body of this document. The additional detail contained in this annex will pertain solely to students registered for the Work Placement Year option.

Work Placement Year Programme Aims

In addition to the programme aims specified in the main body of this document, the Work Placement Year aims to provide students with:

1. Substantial experience of work with a relevant placement provider, including familiarisation with the professional working environment;
2. The opportunity to apply academic theory to real situations in the work place and to expand your employability skills.

Entry Requirements for the Work Placement Year

To proceed to the Placement Year, students must normally achieve an average of 55% across all Year-1 and Year-2 Semester 1 modules. If students do not meet these requirements, they will revert to the Combined Honours Human Geography programme. Students have the opportunity to apply directly for the 4-year 'with work placement year' degree programme, or to transfer onto the 4-year programme at the end of Year-1 and in Year-2 at the end of Semester 1. Students who are initially registered for the 4-year degree programme may transfer onto the 3-year degree programme at any point in time, prior to undertaking the year-long work placement. Students who fail to pass the work placement year, and those who fail to meet the minimum requirements of the work placement year module (minimum 30 weeks full time (1,050 hours), or equivalent, work placement), will be automatically transferred onto the 3-year degree programme.

The criteria to be applied are:

- A good University attendance record and be in 'good academic standing'.
- Passed all Year-1 and Year-2 Semester 1 modules with an overall module average of > 55%
- Students undertaking work placements will be expected to complete a Health and Safety checklist prior to commencing their work experience and will be required to satisfy the Health and Safety regulations of the company or organisation at which they are based.
- (*International students only*) Due to visa requirements, it is not possible for international students who require a Tier 4 Visa to apply for direct entry onto the 4-year with Work Placement Year degree programme. Students wishing to transfer onto this programme should discuss this with student support, the academic tutor for the work placement year, and the Programme Lead. Students should be aware that there are visa implications for this transfer, and it is the student's responsibility to complete any and all necessary processes to be eligible for this programme. There may be additional costs, including applying for a new Visa from outside of the UK for international students associated with a transfer to the work placement programme.

Students may not register for both an International Year and a Work Placement Year.

Student Support

Students will be supported whilst on the Work Placement Year via the following methods:

- Regular contact between the student and a named member of staff who will be assigned to the student as their University supervisor. The University supervisor will be in regular contact with the student throughout the year, and be on hand to provide advice (pastoral or academic) and liaise with the Placement supervisor on the student's behalf if required.
- Two formal contacts with the student during the placement year: the University supervisor will visit the student in their placement organization at around the 5 weeks after placement has commenced, and then visit again (or conduct a telephone/video call tutorial) at around 15 weeks into the placement.
- Weekly supervision sessions will take place with the placement supervisor (or his/her nominee) throughout the duration of the placement.

Learning Outcomes

In addition to the learning outcomes specified in the main text of the Programme Specification, students who complete the 'with Work Placement Year' option will be able to:

1. evaluate their own employability skills (via a SWOT analysis);
2. create Intended Learning Outcomes for their placement in order to develop the skills areas which they have identified as needing further enhancement;
3. develop, through practice in the work place, the work-related skills identified through their SWOT
4. analysis and Intended Learning Outcomes;
5. apply academic theory learned as part of their taught degree to real situations in the work place;
6. reflect on their work placement activities and evaluate the impact on their own employability skills;
7. explain how the sector of the placement operates and identify the skills required to pursue careers within the sector.

These learning outcomes will be assessed through the non-credit bearing Work Placement Year module (ESC-30042) which involves:

1. the submission of a mid-placement portfolio comprising a SWOT analysis, action plan and an evaluation of the student's performance based on the placement supervisor's initial report;
2. the submission of a final placement report comprising a reflective diary and an evaluation of the student's performance based on the placement supervisor's final report.

Regulations

Students registered for the 'with Work Placement Year' option are subject to programme-specific regulations (if any) and the University regulations. In addition, during the Work Placement Year, the following regulations will apply:

- Students undertaking the Work Placement Year must successfully complete the zero-credit rated 'Work Placement Year' module (ESC-30042);
- Students must pass Assessment 1 (mid-placement portfolio) with a mark of 40% in order to continue to take their work placement and pass the Work Placement module;
- Students failing Assessment 1 at first attempt will be required to withdraw from the Work Placement and be transferred onto the 3-year programme;
- In order to ensure a high quality placement experience, each placement agency will sign up to a placement contract (analogous to a service level agreement).
- Once a student has been accepted by a placement organisation, the student will make a pre-placement visit and a member of staff identified within the placement contract will be assigned as the placement supervisor. The placement supervisor will be responsible for ensuring that the placement experience meets the agreed contract agreed with the University.
- The placement student will also sign up an agreement outlining his/her responsibilities in relation to the requirements of each organisation.

Students will be expected to behave professionally in terms of:

(i) conforming to the work practices of the organisation; and

(ii) remembering that they are representatives of the University and their actions will reflect on the School and have an impact on that organisation's willingness (or otherwise) to remain engaged with the placement.

Additional costs for the Work Placement Year

Tuition fees for students on the Work Placement Year will be charged at 20% of the annual tuition fees for that year of study, as set out in Section 1. The Work Placement Year can be included in your Student Finance allocation; to find out more about your personal eligibility see: www.gov.uk

Students will have to bear the costs of travelling to and from their placement provider, accommodation, food and personal costs. Depending on the placement provider additional costs may include parking permits, travel and transport, suitable clothing, DBS checks, and compulsory health checks.

A small stipend may be available to students from the placement provider during the placement but this will need to be explored on a placement-by-placement basis as some organisations, such as charities, may not have any extra money available. Students should budget with the assumption that their placement will be unpaid.

Eligibility for student finance will depend on the type of placement and whether it is paid or not. If it is paid, this is likely to affect student finance eligibility, however if it is voluntary and therefore unpaid, should not affect student finance eligibility. Students are required to confirm eligibility with their student finance provider.

International students who require a Tier 4 visa should check with the Immigration Compliance team prior to commencing any type of paid placement to ensure that they are not contravening their visa requirements.

Version History

This document

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Previous documents

Version No	Year	Owner	Date Approved	Summary of and rationale for changes
1	2019/20	PETER KNIGHT	13 December 2019	