

## Course Information Document: Undergraduate

### For Academic Year 2025/26

#### 1. Course Summary

|                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Names of programme and award title(s)</b>                                   | BA or BSc (Hons) Geography<br>BA or BSc (Hons) Geography with International Year (see Annex for details)<br>BA or BSc (Hons) Geography with Work Placement Year (see Annex for details)                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>Award type</b>                                                              | Combined Honours                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Mode of study</b>                                                           | Full-time                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Framework of Higher Education Qualification (FHEQ) level of final award</b> | Level 6                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>Normal length of the programme</b>                                          | 3 years; 4 years with either the International Year or Placement Year between years 2 and 3                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Maximum period of registration</b>                                          | The normal length as specified above plus 3 years                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Location of study</b>                                                       | Keele Campus                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Accreditation (if applicable)</b>                                           | Not applicable                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Regulator</b>                                                               | Office for Students (OfS)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Tuition Fees</b>                                                            | <p><b>UK students:</b></p> <p>Fee for 2024/25 is £9,250*</p> <p><b>International students:</b></p> <p>Fee for 2024/25 is £20,700**</p> <p>The fee for the international year abroad is calculated at 15% of the standard year fee</p> <p>The fee for the work placement year is calculated at 20% 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/>

\*\* These fees are for new students. We reserve the right to increase fees in subsequent years of study by an inflationary amount. Please refer to the accompanying Student Terms & Conditions for full details. Further information on fees can be found at <http://www.keele.ac.uk/studentfunding/tuitionfees/>

#### 2. What is a Combined Honours programme?

**NB:** the final award varies according to the choice of subject studied alongside Geography within this Combined Honours Route. The combination of Geography with a subject from Humanities & Social Sciences will lead to the award of a BA (Hons) degree. The combination of Geography with a subject from the Natural Sciences will lead to the award of a BSc (Hons) degree.

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

Geography is the integrated study of the people, places and landscapes of the Earth and is unique in bridging the social sciences (human geography) with its understanding of the dynamics of cultures, societies and economies, and the earth sciences (physical geography) with its understanding of physical landscape and environmental processes. The following excerpt from the Royal Geographical Society explains the important role of geography in modern society:

*"An understanding and enthusiasm for Geography, and the development of geographical knowledge, is essential for the 21st century in a world where population growth, rapid development, global environmental change, social and economic inequality, and resource depletion threaten the very planet on which we live. These problems place increasing burdens on cultural tolerance, the sustainable management of societies, natural resources including bio-diversity, and landscapes. Geographers have a key role to play in understanding and helping to solve these issues."*

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 with Human (BA) and Physical Geography (BSc), practical "hands-on" experience of a range of geographical research techniques, and an opportunity to put these skills into practice during fieldwork. The final year provides the opportunity to specialise in areas of most interest to the student, by selecting from a broad range of option modules that reflect staff members' cutting-edge research interests. Students have the option of field excursions at each level and can choose to carry out an independent research project 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:

- achieve a sound knowledge and understanding of a range of different specialisms within and approaches to Geography, while recognising both the diversity of the discipline and its unifying themes
- acquire a range of cognitive, generic and transferable skills, including practical and technical skills and techniques appropriate to Geography, and to deploy these skills to tackle a range of geographical issues and problems
- make critical assessments of sources of information, to engage effectively in their own independent research, and to communicate ideas in a concise and effective way.
- explore the key elements of current knowledge and understanding of subjects of study within Geography, including the research foundations and plural and contested nature of that knowledge and understanding.
- become expert in specific areas of the discipline or particular interest and/or relevance to future career pathways.

The Geography programme aligns itself closely with key aspects of 'The Keele Approach to Education', including interdisciplinarity, sustainability, internationality and employability:

#### Interdisciplinarity

Geography is an explicitly interdisciplinary subject synthesising material from a broad-range of subject areas such as geology, biology, history and sociology. 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, Geography at Keele adopts an interdisciplinary approach to teaching and encourages an interdisciplinary attitude in students and graduates. Even our most specialised Geography modules allow students to identify and explore connections with other disciplines both in research and in the application of Geography subject knowledge to specific real-world problems such as resource management and hazard mitigation.

## **Sustainability**

Interactions between people and their environment are at the heart of Geography, and the subject engages directly with challenges such as climate change, food security and energy choices. The Geography programmes at Keele emphasise the links between geography and the UN sustainability goals so that students not only become aware of these sustainability concepts but are able to use and disseminate that knowledge as Geographers towards a more sustainable future (section 1.10, Subject Benchmark Statement for Geography). From 2022/23, all Geography students have the option to choose routes of elective study called the Global Challenge Pathways, of which one pathway entitled 'Climate Change & Sustainability' enables students to develop the skills, understanding and drive to become agents of change to tackle climate change and wider sustainability challenges.

## **Internationality**

Geography focuses explicitly on processes and phenomena that occur at a range of scales including the global scale. These can range from the examination of migration and the flows of people to the local and regional impacts of climate change. 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. Geography as a scientific and applied discipline is conducted as an international enterprise by scientists and practitioners from across the globe, and 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 Geography are explicitly transnational and our teaching explicitly requires students to take an international perspective to scientific and applied issues. All Geography students 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. Geography at Keele focuses on the global context of local issues, and all students encounter transnational topics and international practitioners on a global stage. This is reflected with our options of UK-based fieldwork and/or overseas fieldwork.

## **Employability**

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. Other learning opportunities include GGE's Undergraduate Research Opportunities Programme (UROP) - this allows students to gain invaluable experience of research outside of their immediate studies, whilst further enhancing skills and employability.

## **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 demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

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

Teaching and learning employed to achieve these outcomes includes: formal classes (lectures, practicals, seminars, workshops and field courses); directed reading and engagement with VLE resources; independent study and reflection. The development of subject-specific knowledge is a key element of the programme that is most explicitly addressed within the lecture-based modules. The final-year dissertation provides an explicit opportunity in the latter stages of the programme to apply knowledge and understanding to the resolution of a geographical research project.

Assessment of subject-specific knowledge and understanding is achieved by a broad range of assessment types including: formative assessment in individual meetings or small-group seminars, coursework essays, posters, technical reports, literature reviews, reflective diaries, dissertations, field-course assessments, in-class and online tests, and oral presentations.

## **Subject specific skills**

Successful students will be able to:

- plan, design and execute a piece of research in Geography, including production of a final report
- undertake effective fieldwork with due regard for safety and risk assessment
- work safely in a scientific laboratory, with awareness of standard procedures
- prepare effective maps and diagrams using a range of appropriate technologies
- employ a variety of technical, statistical, qualitative and laboratory-based methods for the collection and analysis of spatial, social, and environmental information
- assess and use different types of documentary data sources
- combine and interpret different types of geographical evidence
- recognise moral and ethical issues involved in geographical debates
- effectively employ a range of specialist software to address a variety of geographical problems (e.g. use of GIS software to visualise and analyse geographical data)

Assessment of students' subject-specific skills is achieved primarily through practical assignments and portfolios, formative exercises, field course exercises and projects, a formal research proposal and risk assessment, and the final-year dissertation.

## **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
- make effective use of a broad range of literature sources (e.g. search for relevant books and journal articles and assess their quality and reliability).

Intellectual skills are developed throughout the programme but are addressed most explicitly within the practicals and field courses in years 1 and 2 (Research Methods in Human Geography, Environmental Impact Assessment: Practical Geographical and Environmental Skills, Space and Society, Earth's Changing Landscapes); and the dissertation supervision meetings in the final year. Particular attention is paid to key transition skills in the year 1 practical programme, covering for example essay writing skills and information literacy skills. Students also have the opportunity to learn additional intellectual skills within the Personal Development theme of the Keele Approach to Education and through engagement with away day sessions run in collaboration with Student Learning.

Assessment of intellectual skills is achieved through a range of means including group discussions, coursework and examination essays, literature reviews, reflective diaries, practical exercises, practical exercises, fieldwork exercises and the final-year dissertation.

## **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 and in some cases involve activities and assignments that replicate those undertaken in related professions (e.g. Environmental Impact Assessment: Practical Geographical and Environmental Skills, Water in the Environment). Students can also elect

to take a work-placement module in year 2 that provides an explicit opportunity to gain direct experience of a professional working environment.

Successful students will develop proficiency in the following skill sets:

- **Written communication skills:** The development of written communication skills is a key element of the programme and students are required to complete various written assignments in all three years including essays, poster presentations, technical reports and a large dissertation.
- **Oral presentation skills:** Students gain experience in oral presentation skills within various modules including the year 2 UK-based field courses and various option modules
- **Communication skills:** Students are encouraged to discuss and debate ideas within small-seminar sessions within year 1. In addition, students are continually encouraged to discuss specific aspects of their work with their peers and with their module tutors.
- **Problem solving skills:** The ability to resolve problems with complex solutions is an important part of the programme and is included within a range 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
- **Independent research skills:** 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
- **Information literacy skills:** Effective engagement with a range of advanced sources requires the development of sophisticated search skills and an ability to engage with material at the forefront of the discipline.
- **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. Environmental Impact Assessment: Practical Geographical and Environmental Skills)
- **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

## Keele Graduate attributes

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 Geography to develop the subject-specific skills and knowledge that are at the heart of the programme
- opportunities throughout 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 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 the Geography degree 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. The Programme Specification illustrates the ways in which these attributes can be achieved through what we include in the course.

Further information about the Graduate Attributes in the context of Keele's Approach to Education can be found

at: <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:

- Interactive Lectures
- Field courses
- Practical classes
- Project work
- Seminars, group presentations and workshops
- Individual and small-group consultations
- 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 Academic Mentors or module lecturers on a one-to-one basis.

## 7. Teaching Staff

Geography is a modular degree programme taught within the School of Life Sciences, which includes lecturers with expertise in Geography, Earth Sciences, Environmental Sciences and Sustainability. All Geography teaching staff are actively involved in Geography research and/or scholarship and most are internationally recognised experts in their fields.

Geographers have won the annual Keele University "Excellence in Teaching" award a number of times, including individual awards for excellence in teaching and a team award for excellence to the whole programme. Staff details are available at <https://www.keele.ac.uk/lifesci/ourpeople/>

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 mid-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 two 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.

### Global Challenge Pathways

This programme includes the option for you to take a Global Challenge Pathway. These modules offer you an exciting opportunity to work with students and staff from different disciplines to explore topical global issues such as power and conflict, health inequalities, climate change, generative AI, social justice, global citizenship, and enterprise from different perspectives.

Global Challenge Pathways can be taken as one 15-credit module at Levels 5 and 6. For more information about our Global Challenge Pathways please visit:

<https://www.keele.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/globalchallengepathways/>

### Modern Languages or Certificate in TESOL

Alternatively, you could choose to study modules with the University Language Centre. The Language Centre offers three pathways; The Language Specialist, The Language Taster, and The Trinity Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Language (TESOL). Language Centre modules are available separately for students

at Level 4. At Levels 5 and 6 they are included within the Global Challenge Pathways.

If you choose the Language Specialist pathway, you will automatically be enrolled on a Semester 2 Modern Language module as a continuation of your language of choice as a faculty funded 'additional' module. Undertaking a Modern Languages module in Semester 2 is compulsory if you wish to continue to the Language Specialist Global Challenge Pathway the following academic year.

For more information about Language Centre option modules available to you please visit the following webpages.

For new (Level 4) students please visit: <https://www.keele.ac.uk/study/languagecentre/>

For current (Level 5 and Level 6) students please visit: <https://www.keele.ac.uk/students/academiclife/global-challenge-pathways/>

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For further information on the content of modules currently offered, please visit: <https://www.keele.ac.uk/recordsandexams/modulecatalogue/>

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 *Geography* modules only; please also see the document for your other subject.

| Year    | Compulsory | Optional (Minimum) | Optional (Maximum) |
|---------|------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Level 4 | 60         | 0                  | 0                  |
| Level 5 | 45         | 15                 | 15                 |
| Level 6 | 0          | 60                 | 60                 |

#### Level 4

BSc Geography has 60 compulsory credits:

| Compulsory modules                          | Module Code | Credits | Period       |
|---------------------------------------------|-------------|---------|--------------|
| Academic, Professional and Fieldwork Skills | ESC-10094   | 30      | Semester 1-2 |
| Fundamentals of Physical Geography          | ESC-10039   | 15      | Semester 1   |
| People and the Environment                  | ESC-10041   | 15      | Semester 2   |

BA Geography has 60 compulsory credits:

| Compulsory modules                          | Module Code | Credits | Period       |
|---------------------------------------------|-------------|---------|--------------|
| Academic, Professional and Fieldwork Skills | ESC-10094   | 30      | Semester 1-2 |
| Human Geographies                           | GEG-10013   | 15      | Semester 1   |
| People and the Environment                  | ESC-10041   | 15      | Semester 2   |

#### Level 4 Module Rules

Students combining Geography with Environmental Science share ESC-10041 in the two subjects and so will take an extra 15 credit module from Environmental Science (determined by that programme).

#### Level 5

Students take 45 compulsory credits plus 15 credits from options from the list below or the GCP:

45 Compulsory credits for BSc students:

| <b>Compulsory modules (BSc)</b>                                                  | <b>Module Code</b> | <b>Credits</b> | <b>Period</b> |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|----------------|---------------|
| Geographical and Environmental Field Skills                                      | ESC-20106          | 15             | Semester 2    |
| Environmental Impact Assessment: Practical Geographical and Environmental Skills | ESC-20108          | 15             | Semester 1    |
| Earth's Changing Landscapes                                                      | ESC-20110          | 15             | Semester 1    |

45 Compulsory credits for BA students:

| <b>Compulsory modules (BA)</b>                                       | <b>Module Code</b> | <b>Credits</b> | <b>Period</b> |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|----------------|---------------|
| Geographical and Environmental Field Skills                          | ESC-20106          | 15             | Semester 2    |
| Space and Society                                                    | GEG-20015          | 15             | Semester 1    |
| Research Methods in Human Geography and Environmental Sustainability | GEG-20050          | 15             | Semester 1    |

Optional modules for BA students:

| <b>Optional modules (BA)</b>                      | <b>Module Code</b> | <b>Credits</b> | <b>Period</b> |
|---------------------------------------------------|--------------------|----------------|---------------|
| Geographic Information Science and Remote Sensing | ESC-20132          | 15             | Semester 1    |
| Earth's Changing Landscapes                       | ESC-20110          | 15             | Semester 1    |
| Making Better Worlds                              | GEG-20046          | 15             | Semester 2    |
| Flexible Work Placement (Level 5)                 | NAT-20011          | 15             | Semester 1-2  |

Optional modules for BSc students:

| <b>Optional modules (BSc)</b>                     | <b>Module Code</b> | <b>Credits</b> | <b>Period</b> |
|---------------------------------------------------|--------------------|----------------|---------------|
| Geographic Information Science and Remote Sensing | ESC-20132          | 15             | Semester 1    |
| Water in the Environment                          | ESC-20100          | 15             | Semester 2    |
| Space and Society                                 | GEG-20015          | 15             | Semester 1    |
| Flexible Work Placement (Level 5)                 | NAT-20011          | 15             | Semester 1-2  |

## Module Lists

### Level 6

Combined Honours students must take 60 credits from modules listed below or may take 45 credits from this list plus a module from the GCP. Students do not need to take the Dissertation in Geography as long as there is an ISP included within their overall Combined Honours module diet.

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

| Optional modules                                      | Module Code | Credits | Period       |
|-------------------------------------------------------|-------------|---------|--------------|
| Global Environmental Change                           | ESC-30018   | 15      | Semester 1   |
| Geomorphology: Earth Surface Processes and Landscapes | ESC-30158   | 15      | Semester 1   |
| Animals and Society                                   | GEG-30021   | 15      | Semester 1   |
| Sustainability in the Global South                    | GEG-30043   | 15      | Semester 1   |
| Work Placement Year                                   | ESC-30042   | 120     | Semester 1-2 |
| Independent Research Dissertation                     | ESC-30144   | 30      | Semester 1-2 |
| Sustainable Futures Consultancy                       | ESC-30148   | 30      | Semester 1-2 |
| Applied GIS                                           | ESC-30152   | 30      | Semester 1-2 |
| International Geographical Field Course               | GEG-30045   | 30      | Semester 1-2 |
| Flexible Work Placement (Level 6)                     | NAT-30008   | 15      | Semester 1-2 |
| Professional Experience in Education                  | NAT-30012   | 15      | Semester 1-2 |
| Natural Hazards                                       | ESC-30009   | 15      | Semester 2   |
| Clean Technology                                      | ESC-30040   | 15      | Semester 2   |
| Blue Economy: sustainable futures with an ocean focus | ESC-30108   | 15      | Semester 2   |
| Inspirational Landscapes                              | GEG-30014   | 15      | Semester 2   |
| Social and Spatial Justice                            | GEG-30041   | 15      | Semester 2   |

## Level 6 Module Rules

Major Route modules are the same as Level-6 modules except:

- Major route students MUST take ESC-30144 Independent Research Dissertation as a compulsory module as a compulsory module.

Please note: You cannot take both Flexible Work Placement (Level 5) and Flexible Work Placement (Level 6). You also cannot take both Flexible Work Placement (Level 6) and Professional Experience in Education.

## 9. Final and intermediate awards

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

|                                        |             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|----------------------------------------|-------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Honours Degree</b>                  | 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> |
| <b>Diploma in Higher Education</b>     | 240 credits | You will require at least 120 credits at level 4 or higher and at least 120 credits at level 5 or higher                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>Certificate in Higher Education</b> | 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:** students also have the opportunity to participate on the work placement year as part of their degree. Completing a placement improves the skills and attributes gained from your degree and also improves your graduate employment prospects.

## 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:

- **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 students' 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 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, 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

|                         | <b>Scheduled learning and teaching activities</b> | <b>Guided independent Study</b> | <b>Placements</b> |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Year 1 (Level 4)</b> | 26.6%                                             | 68.2%                           | 5.2%              |
| <b>Year 2 (Level 5)</b> | 27.3%                                             | 70.6%                           | 2.1%              |
| <b>Year 3 (Level 6)</b> | 22.1%                                             | 77.9%                           | 0%                |

## 12. Accreditation

The accrediting body for Geography, the Royal Geographical Society (RGS) does not accredit combined honours programmes, but this programme comprises modules shared by the Single Honours Geography course, which is accredited by the RGS.

## 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, 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. Please note that students cannot take both a Global Challenge Pathway (GCP) and the semester abroad option.

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 who meet external eligibility criteria 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.

## 15. Additional Costs

### Field Course Costs

#### COMPULSORY FIELD TRIPS:

ALL students undertake compulsory field courses as part of their studies - these are provided at no cost.

The University provides significant financial support for the compulsory fieldwork elements of the degree programme and the costs of travel and accommodation for compulsory field courses are fully paid for by the University. Students are responsible for their own subsistence.

#### OPTIONAL FIELD TRIPS:

The programme offers an optional UK residential field course at year 2 and optional overseas field trips as part of third-year modules. The cost of this is subsidized by the University but you will incur additional costs of independently arranged travel.

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. The first instalment is non-refundable due to the need to pre-book accommodation etc. in advance. The costs of field courses are indicated at the start of the year, with details clearly communicated to students.

#### INDEPENDENT RESEARCH PROJECT:

ALL students undertake an independent research project in their final year, which MAY include fieldwork. 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. We reserve the right to change the venues of field courses due to both cost and academic considerations. Some field courses are fully or partly catered for. Others are self-catered and students are expected to purchase meals (e.g., lunch and/or evening meal).

The costs below are only for indicative purposes and correct at the time of printing:

| Activity                                                                                                    | Estimated Cost           |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Field courses - compulsory (year 1 and year 2) no charge to students.                                       | £0.00                    |
| Travel to optional field course (year 3, only available to major-route students) (depending on destination) | £200.00 - £700.00        |
| Equipment - waterproof and appropriate clothing and footwear for field courses                              | £200.00                  |
| <b>Total estimated additional costs</b>                                                                     | <b>£200.00 - £900.00</b> |

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 programme.

## 16. Annex - International Year

### 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.

|                                     |
|-------------------------------------|
| <b>International Year Programme</b> |
|-------------------------------------|

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.

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.

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.

### **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 55% 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 55% across all Level 5 modules. Students with up to 15 credits of re-assessment who meet the 55% requirement may progress to the International Year. 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 Academic Mentor, 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 Academic Mentoring 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 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 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](http://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 who meet external eligibility criteria 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**

### **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. the opportunity to carry out a long-term work-based learning experience in a geography focused role.
2. enhanced employability skills training

### **Entry Requirements for the Work Placement Year**

Admission to the Work Placement Year is subject to successful application, interview and references from appropriate staff. 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, (\* or equivalent, work placement), will be automatically transferred onto the 3-year degree programme.

\* We recommend where possible students undertake a placement of between 9 - 12 months on a full-time basis to maximize academic and personal growth. However, the Faculty of Natural Sciences Work / Professional Placement Year mandates a minimum of 24 weeks in duration, ideally on a full-time basis, but no less than 21 hours per week. This enables those undertaking an unpaid placement to work on a part-time basis alongside their placement.

The criteria to be applied are:

- A good University attendance record and be in 'good academic standing'.
- Academic Performance (an average of 50% across all modules in Semester 1 at Level 5 is normally required. Places on the Work Placement Year are then conditional on achieving an average mark of 50% across all Level 5 modules. Students with up to 15 credits of re-assessment who meet the 50% requirement may progress to the Work Placement Year. Where no Semester 1 marks have been awarded performance in 1st year marks and ongoing 2nd year assessments are taken into account)
- 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:

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)
- 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](http://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**

**Date Approved:** 06 August 2025

### ***What's Changed***

ESC-30108 changed to SEM2 not SEM1.

### **Previous documents**

| <b>Version No</b> | <b>Year</b> | <b>Owner</b>     | <b>Date Approved</b> | <b>Summary of and rationale for changes</b>                                                                                                                                                                 |
|-------------------|-------------|------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1.2               | 2025/26     | CLARE HOLDSWORTH | 23 July 2025         | Flexible Work Placement (Level 5) corrected to only appear at Level 5                                                                                                                                       |
| 1.1               | 2025/26     | CLARE HOLDSWORTH | 27 June 2025         | Optional module changes: ESC-30108 and ESC-30158 changed to SEM1 instead of SEM2; ESC-30040 changed to SEM2 instead of SEM1. Optional modules added: NAT-20011, NAT-30008, NAT-30012. Module rules updated. |
| 1                 | 2025/26     | CLARE HOLDSWORTH | 13 March 2025        |                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| 1                 | 2024/25     | PETER KNIGHT     | 14 June 2024         |                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| 1                 | 2023/24     | DANIEL ALLEN     | 08 February 2023     |                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| 1                 | 2022/23     | ANTONIA LAW      | 28 March 2022        | Removal of optional module ESC-20096 Weather, Climate and Society                                                                                                                                           |
| 1                 | 2021/22     | DANIEL ALLEN     |                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| 1.2               | 2020/21     | ANTONIA LAW      | 28 March 2022        | Minor changes to Level 6 optional modules                                                                                                                                                                   |
| 1.1               | 2020/21     | DANIEL ALLEN     | 23 March 2021        | Level 6 modules updated                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 1                 | 2020/21     | PETER KNIGHT     |                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| 1                 | 2019/20     | EDWARD MCCAULEY  | 27 August 2019       |                                                                                                                                                                                                             |