

Course Information Document: Undergraduate

For Academic Year 2025/26

1. Course Summary

Names of programme and award title(s)	BSc (Hons) Natural Sciences BSc (Hons) Natural Sciences with International Year (see Annex for details) BSc (Hons) Natural Sciences with Work Placement Year (see Annex for details)
Award type	Single 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)	n/a
Regulator	Office for Students (OfS)
Tuition Fees	UK students: Fee for 2025/26 is £9,535* International students: Fee for 2025/26 is £17,700** The fee for the international year abroad is calculated at 15% of the standard year fee The fee for the work placement year is calculated at 20% of the standard year fee

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 Single Honours programme?

The BSc Natural Sciences degree allows you to study a broad range of disciplines within a single honours programme.

The programme is highly interdisciplinary, drawing on the expertise of scientists in the fields of Biology, Mathematics, Psychology, Forensic Science, Chemistry, Physics, Computer Science, Environmental Science, Earth Science, and Geography. It is in keeping with Keele's commitment to offer a broad undergraduate degree programme, whilst providing opportunity for students to develop increased specialisation, or to maintain a broad science-based portfolio, within the structure of a Single Honours programme. Thus it enables students to gain, and be able to demonstrate, a distinctive range of graduate attributes.

Natural Sciences is available as a 3-year BSc or a 4-year MSci. The BSc is available for the following core disciplines: Astrophysics, Biology, Chemistry, Computer Science, Environmental Science, Forensic Science, Geology, Mathematics, Physical Geography, Physics and Psychology. The MSci is only available for Chemistry, Environmental Science, Forensic Science and Geology.

Students study the same module diets for the first two years on the BSc and MSci. Students may transfer between the BSc and MSci programmes up until the start of the third year of study. In the third year, MSci students increase their specialism in their core discipline to prepare them for full specialism in fourth year. Progression to the third year (Level 6) of the MSci Natural Sciences programme requires an average of at least 50% at Level 5 - students who do not attain this average are transferred automatically to the 3-year BSc Natural Sciences degree programme for Level 6.

These specifications refer solely to the BSc Natural Sciences programme. Students seeking further information on the 3-year BSc Honours Natural Sciences route are advised to consult the relevant programme specification.

3. Overview of the Programme

The BSc (Hons) degree programme in Natural Sciences provides you with the opportunity to combine your interests in one core discipline, multiple additional sciences, and interdisciplinary practice within the structure of a Single Honours degree programme. It aims to provide students with the scientific skills and expertise required to tackle many of the world's most pressing scientific and societal problems. The course at Keele draws on the expertise of scientists from within the Schools of Life Sciences; Chemical and Physical Sciences; Geography, Geology and the Environment; Psychology; and Computing and Mathematics, but also has close links with Keele's BA/MA Liberal Arts programme providing students with opportunity for cross-faculty, interdisciplinary debates about topical world issues. The degree structure is designed to cater for students who wish to continue to study multiple science subjects in an integrated manner at degree level and who are open minded, creative, inquiring and excited by the challenge of solving complex problems. It aims to produce graduates who have the interdisciplinary background, communication and problem-solving skills to address complex scientific problems in a changing world.

You will choose one core discipline as a named route, accounting for half of your learning, that ensures you have a solid grounding in an established discipline. The remaining half of your learning is through an even mix of programme-specific interdisciplinary modules that cover the full range of disciplines offered by the programme and your own choice of modules that allows you to mix and match different subjects. The programme-specific interdisciplinary sessions include shared learning with interdisciplinary Liberal Arts students to enable you to apply Natural Sciences effectively within the wider society in which we live and work.

At the end of your first year, there is flexibility to transfer between certain core discipline routes dependent on the modules you have taken. You are also able to move over to a Single Honours degree in your core discipline if you decide you want to fully focus on that one discipline. Depending on the modules you have taken as options or electives, you may also be able to transfer onto a Combined Honours programme.

Similarly, any first year student on a Single or Combined Honours programme at Keele for one of the BSc Natural Sciences core disciplines is also welcome to transfer into the second year of the BSc Natural Sciences.

4. Aims of the programme

The broad aims of the programme are to:

- provide students with a sound scientific understanding of their selected 'core' science disciplines and the ability to apply this knowledge to help solve complex problems;
- gain a wide-range of laboratory and field-based skills, as appropriate to the student's chosen core science subjects, including the ability to carry out independent research;
- integrate scientific knowledge, and an awareness of social, economic and ethical issues, to address some of the World's most pressing societal concerns such as understanding the origins of the Universe, avoiding antibiotic drug resistance, mitigating climate change and providing long term food security;
- develop to a high professional standard, a broad range of employability skills including problem-solving, team work, independent research, communication and presentation skills.

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
- Key or transferable skills (including employability skills)

Subject knowledge and understanding

Successful students will be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- the benefits of an interdisciplinary approach to science;
- the role Natural Scientists can play in the resolution of major challenges facing society;
- interdisciplinary perspectives on world/societal issues.

Subject specific skills

Successful students will be able to:

- effectively search and critically review the academic literature relating to a current interdisciplinary debate/discourse;
- recognise and make choices between the different methodological approaches to interdisciplinary research;
- frame research questions, aims and objectives, and design effective and achievable research/ experimental projects;
- apply their knowledge, skills and experience to an aspect of current scientific research, through the use of established analytical scientific methods, literature review, data collection and interpretation;
- use a variety of evidence-based approaches to solve problems;
- apply reflection and critical skills to a wide range of issues;
- work with others to discover creative, innovative solutions to complex issues.

Key or transferable skills (including employability skills)

Successful students will be able to:

- locate, evaluate and make effective use of a wide range of university-level information sources;
- communicate clearly and effectively using appropriate scientific language and conventions in both written and oral forms;
- communicate complex ideas to lay audiences in a variety of forms;
- communicate reflective and critical ideas through advanced written and oral presentation skills.

The full range of intended learning outcomes that will be achieved by students taking the Natural Sciences degree programme will be highly dependent upon which combination of sciences* that they choose to study as 'core' and 'supporting'. Individual module specifications should be consulted for information on knowledge and understanding and skills obtained from optional modules within the degree programme, and for those modules taken as a supporting science. *The exact combination of subjects which can be taken as core and supporting is dependent upon timetabling restrictions (see 'What is the Structure of the Programme').

The Keele Graduate Attributes

The Keele Graduate Attributes are the qualities (skills, values and mindsets) which you will have the opportunity to develop during your time at Keele through both the formal curriculum and also through co- and extra-curricular activities (e.g., work experience, and engagement with the wider University community such as acting as ambassadors, volunteering, peer mentoring, student representation, membership and leadership of clubs and societies). Our Graduate Attributes consist of four themes: **academic expertise, professional skills, personal effectiveness, and social and ethical responsibility**. You will have opportunities to engage actively with the range of attributes throughout your time at Keele: through your academic studies, through self-assessing your own strengths, weaknesses, and development needs, and by setting personal development goals. You will have opportunities to discuss your progress in developing graduate attributes with, for example, Academic Mentors, to prepare for your future career and lives beyond Keele.

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
- Tutorials
- Laboratory Classes
- Problem-solving classes and workshops
- Screencasts
- Pre-laboratory and post-laboratory exercises
- Research projects
- IT instruction (spreadsheets, word-processing, chemical structure drawing, databases, textbook resources, information retrieval and literature searching)
- Group work
- Seminars with pre- and post-seminar discussions
- Interdisciplinary debates (links with BA Liberal Arts students)
- Self and peer-assessment for learning
- Information literacy activities
- Computer-aided learning (simulations and animations, online activities and exercises)
- Case studies
- Use of e-learning/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.

These learning and teaching methods enable students to achieve the learning outcomes of the programme in a variety of ways.

7. Teaching Staff

As Natural Sciences is such an interdisciplinary subject, staff from across the Faculty of Natural Sciences make contributions to the degree programme. The teaching and research profiles of the staff that deliver and support the Natural Sciences programme can be found at:

School of Geography, Geology and the Environment: <http://www.keele.ac.uk/gge/people/>

School of Chemical and Physical Sciences: <http://www.keele.ac.uk/chemistry/staff/>

School of Life Sciences: <http://www.keele.ac.uk/lifesci/people/>

School of Computing and Mathematics: <https://www.keele.ac.uk/scm/staff/>

School of Psychology: <https://www.keele.ac.uk/psychology/people/academic-stafflist/>

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 May.

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 this 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 either be taken as one 15-credit module at Levels 4, 5 and 6, or 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/>

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

A summary of the credit requirements per year is as follows.

Core discipline routes through the BSc Natural Sciences

Students studying BSc Natural Sciences choose one core discipline from the following options as their named route through the programme:

- Biology (route code NSC-BIOSH)
- Geology (route code NSC-GEOSH)
- Physics (route code NSC-PHYSH)

The module diet at Level 4 (Year 1) and Level 5 (Year 2) follows the equivalent for the Combined Honours programme in that subject.

At Level 6, students continue to take 75-90 credits from their core discipline.

Overall structure of credits per year for the BSc Natural Sciences

	Year 1 (Level 4)	Year 2 (Level 5)	Year 3 (Level 6)
Core interdisciplinary BSc/MSc Natural Sciences and BA/MA Liberal Arts	15 credits	15 credits	15 credits
Core discipline (compulsory and/or options)	60 credits	60 credits	90 credits
Natural Sciences option modules or Global Challenge Pathways modules	45 credits	45 credits	0 credits
Natural Sciences dissertation	none	none	15 credits

Module Lists

Level 6

Compulsory modules	Module Code	Credits	Period
Grand Challenges in Society	NAT-30001	15	Semester 1-2
Natural Sciences Interdisciplinary Research Project	NAT-30004	15	Semester 1-2

Level 6 option modules

All options at Level 6 are taken from the core discipline

Structure of each core discipline through the programme:

Option modules from the core discipline (when applicable) are listed in module diets as Option Group A
(information shown: Module title, module code, credits, semester)

BIOLOGY

Level 6 BSc Natural Sciences, Biology core discipline

- 45 credits compulsory and 45 credits options

Compulsory modules

Research Project, LSC-30102, 30 credits, Semester 1-2

Employability and communication skills in Bioscience, LSC-30090, 15 credits, Semester 1-2

Professional Development in Bioscience, LSC-30106, 0 credits, Semester 1-2

Optional modules

Choose a minimum of 30 and a maximum of 45 Credits from option Group A

Option Group A

Ecotoxicology and Risk Assessment ESC-30056 15 Semester 1

Animals and Society GEG-30021 15 Semester 1

Insect Ecology and Pest Management LSC-30070 15 Semester 1

Conservation Biology LSC-30043 15 Semester 1

Tropical Biology Field Course LSC-30066 15 Semester 1*

Human Evolution LSC-30030 15 Semester 2

Cancer Biology LSC-30061 15 Semester 2

Plant Science and Sustainability LSC-30076 15 Semester 2

Animal Welfare LSC-30072 15 Semester 2

Blue Economy: sustainable futures with an ocean focus ESC-30108 15 Semester 2

Environmental and Wildlife Forensics FSC-30029 15 Semester 2

Choose a minimum of 0 and a maximum of 15 Credits from option Group B

Option Group B

Flexible Work Placement (Level 6) NAT-30008 15 Semester 1-2

Professional Experience in Education NAT-30012 15 Semester 1-2

Biology core discipline Level 6 (BSc Natural Sciences) Module Rules

*Tropical Biology Field Course (LSC-30066) is only available to students who have previously taken the pre-semester field trip to Malaysia.

GEOLOGY

Level 6 BSc Natural Sciences, Geology core discipline

- 90 credits options

Optional modules

Independent Research Dissertation ESC-30144 30 credits Semester 1-2

Geoscience: Independent Field Project - ISP ESC-30032 30 Semester 1-2

Volcanic and Magmatic Processes ESC-30033 15 Semester 2

Advanced Geological Field Techniques ESC-30138 15 Semester 2

Applied GIS ESC-30152 30 Semester 1

Engineering and Applied Geology ESC-30156 30 Semester 2

Structures and Sub-Surface Processes ESC-30140 30 Semester 2

Extractive Resources and Critical Minerals ESC-30146 30 Semester 1

Natural Hazards ESC-30009 15 Semester 2

Clean Technology ESC-30040 15 Semester 1

Extinction! ESC-30106 15 Semester 1

Flexible Work Placement (Level 6) NAT-30008 15 Semester 1-2

Professional Experience in Education NAT-30012 15 Semester 1-2

Geology core discipline Level 6 (BSc Natural Sciences) Module Rules

Students must choose EITHER ESC-30144 Independent Research Dissertation OR ESC-30032 Geoscience: Independent Field Project

Students must choose EITHER ESC-30138 Advanced Geological Field Techniques OR ESC-30033 Volcanic and Magmatic Processes

Students may only choose a maximum of one (or none) of the following modules: Flexible Work Placement (level 6); Professional Experience in Education; Global Challenge Pathway.

PHYSICS

Level 6 BSc Natural Sciences, Physics core discipline

- 45 credits compulsory and 45 credits options

Compulsory modules

Electromagnetism PHY-30012 15 Semester 1

Physics Project - ISP PHY-30007 15 Semester 1-2

Optional modules

Choose a minimum of 30 and a maximum of 45 Credits from option Group A

Option Group A

Cosmology PHY-30001 15 Semester 1

Binary Stars and Extrasolar Planets PHY-30024 15 Semester 1

Life in the Universe PHY-30025 15 Semester 1

Particle Physics and Accelerators PHY-30033 15 Semester 1

Data Analysis and Model Testing PHY-30027 15 Semester 1

Quantum Mechanics II PHY-30029 15 Semester 2

General Relativity, Black Holes and Gravitational Waves PHY-30035 15 Semester 2

Choose a minimum of 0 and a maximum of 15 Credits from option Group B

Option Group B

Flexible Work Placement (Level 6) NAT-30008 15 Semester 1-2

Professional Experience in Education NAT-30012 15 Semester 1-2

Physics core discipline Level 6 (BSc Natural Sciences) Module Rules

The following modules may be delivered in either Semester 1 or 2: PHY-30001, PHY-30024, PHY-30025, PHY-30027, PHY-30033, PHY-30029 and PHY-30035

9. Final and intermediate awards

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

Honours Degree	360 credits	You will require at least 120 credits at levels 4, 5 and 6
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:

- **Unseen closed and open book examinations** in different formats test students' knowledge and understanding of the subject. Examinations may consist of essay, short answer and/or multiple choice questions, and paper comprehension.

- **Assessed Problem Sheets** assess the student's skills in solving numerical and other problems within the discipline by drawing on their scientific understanding and knowledge, and experience of experimental techniques
- **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).
- **Laboratory reports** - structured proformas and full lab reports are formal summaries of work carried out in the laboratory and test students' understanding of the practical aspects of the programme and develop the skills necessary to enable students to present and analyse their results.
- **Class tests** 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.
- **Technical reports** are formal, structured 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.
- **Information retrieval exercises** require students to locate and analyse information of different types from the internet, various databases, scientific publications and textbooks. The information is then presented in a prescribed written format.
- **IT assignments and computer-based exercises** (e.g. spreadsheets exercises) - various activities designed to assess students ability to use software to retrieve, analyse and present scientific data in a variety of formats.
- **Dissertations** enable students to explore in depth an area of particular interest through a substantial piece of focused research and writing, and test their ability to formulate and answer research questions.
- **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.
- **Short reports** for which students are required to write up their own account of small group studies and discussions on particular topics.
- **Research projects and reports** 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.
- **Oral and poster presentations and reports** assess individual students' 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.
- **Portfolios** may consist of a range of different pieces of work but routinely include a requirement that students provide some evidence of critical reflection on the development of their own learning.
- **Peer assessment:** In some cases students will be involved in marking other students' work, usually with a prescriptive marking guide. This helps students to appreciate where marks are gained and lost and gives them the opportunity to see the common mistakes made by other students.
- **Reviews** of other scholars' work test students' ability to identify and summarise the key points of a text and to evaluate the quality of arguments and the evidence used to support them. In the case of work based on empirical research, reviews also assess students' knowledge of research methodologies and their ability to make critical judgements about the appropriateness of different strategies for collecting and analysing data.
- **Video/screencast presentations** require students to produce a short video or screencast on a given topic and assess students' knowledge and understanding, and ability to communicate what they know orally and visually, and to reflect on these processes as part of their own personal development.
- **Experimental projects** test students' knowledge of research methodologies and their ability to carry them out. They also enable students to demonstrate their ability to formulate research questions, design experiments, carry them out and analyse the results.

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)	28%	72%	0%
Year 2 (Level 5)	26%	74%	0%
Year 3 (Level 6)	12%	88%	0%

12. Accreditation

The BSc Natural Sciences Degree is accredited by The Society for Natural Sciences

The BSc Natural Sciences with Psychology as a core discipline is accredited by the British Psychological Society.

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'.

14. Other Learning Opportunities

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

Fieldwork is an essential part of a scientist's training in Biology, Earth Science, Physical Geography and Environmental Science, providing both the opportunity to acquire and practice field-based skills, to develop skills of observation and recording and to work as effective members of a team.

Keele is ideally located to be able to integrate a large component of field work into its environmental science programmes with a wide range of habitats in easy reach, including the Keele campus itself with its lake system and extensive woodlands, in addition to the mining and industrial heritage of the local area providing ideal opportunities for the study of the impact of these activities on the environment.

15. Additional Costs

Biology - Field Course Costs

Students taking Biology as a core or supporting science, who choose to take module LSC-20055, will do an 8-

day compulsory field course accommodated at Bangor University during the summer vacation between the first and second years. The School of Life Sciences meets the cost of this, but the student will be expected to pay for their own travel to Bangor, and maintenance costs during the field course (for example food, appropriate clothing, etc.).

Environmental Science - Field Course Costs

Students taking Environmental Science as a core science will do a compulsory field course as part of module ESC-20106. The School of Geography, Geology and the Environment meets the travel and accommodation costs of this field course but students should note that field courses may be fully or only partly catered for.

Physical Geography - Field Course Costs

Students taking Physical Geography as a core science will do a compulsory field course as part of module ESC-20106. The School of Geography, Geology and the Environment meets the travel and accommodation costs of this field course but students should note that field courses may be fully or only partly catered for. Students also have the option of an overseas field course for Advanced Geographical Fieldwork GEG-30033. Students contribute towards the cost of this fieldcourse

All Natural Sciences students undertake an independent research project in their final year. For some students, this MAY include additional field work that is normally carried out during the summer vacation between years 2 and 3. Students are responsible for organizing 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 the nature of a student's project and where the student chooses to carry 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.

Activity	Estimated Cost
Field courses - compulsory for students taking module LSC-20055 (8-day residential field course hosted at Bangor University and paid for by the School of Life Sciences).	£0
Travel - compulsory travel to Bangor University for students taking module LSC20055	Variable
Field courses - optional field course for students taking GEG-30033 (Geography core science only)	£500
Field courses - compulsory for students taking module ESC-20106 week-long residential field course paid for by the School of Geography, Geology and the Environment. Students may have to pay towards meals, depending on venue.	£0
Equipment - waterproof clothing and suitable footwear for field courses if taking Biology, Environmental Science or Earth Sciences as a core science.	£200
Total estimated additional costs	Variable - depends on student's pathway through the Natural Sciences programme

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

Natural Sciences with International Year

International Year Programme

Students registered for this Single Honours programme may either be admitted for or apply to transfer during their period of study at Level 5 to the International Year option. Students accepted onto this option will have an extra year of study (the International Year) 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 standard 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 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 tutor, 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 Natural Sciences degree programme;
5. Integrate, apply and develop interdisciplinary principles and perspectives to solve global-scale problems.

In addition, students who complete the International Year will be able to:

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.

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 they will study 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 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

Natural Sciences 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 employability skills.

Entry Requirements for the Work Placement Year

To proceed to the Work 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 3-year 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
- 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 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

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

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Previous documents

Version No	Year	Owner	Date Approved	Summary of and rationale for changes
1	2024/25	RICHARD JONES	12 August 2024	
1	2023/24	CLARE HOLDSWORTH	08 February 2023	
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