



## Programme Specification (PG)

Awarding body / institution:	Queen Mary University of London
Teaching institution:	Queen Mary University of London
Name of final award and programme title:	MSc Environmental Science by Research
Name of interim award(s):	
Duration of study / period of registration:	12 months full time/24 months part time
Queen Mary programme code(s):	F8S3 / F8S4
QAA Benchmark Group:	Environmental Science
FHEQ Level of Award:	Level 7
Programme accredited by:	NA
Date Programme Specification approved:	
Responsible School / Institute:	School of Geography

Schools / Institutes which will also be involved in teaching part of the programme:

School of Geography

Collaborative institution(s) / organisation(s) involved in delivering the programme:

### Programme outline

The MSc in Environmental Science by Research is designed to provide students with advanced level training in environmental science, enabling them to undertake research on a topic of their choice. The programme reflects the distinctive research interests and expertise of the School of Geography and is particularly aimed at students planning to undertake further research, particularly via a PhD. Unlike some other Environmental Science MSc degrees offered in the UK, it is a flexible programme that can be tailored to students' particular interests through the choice of an elective module and choice of research project.

### Aims of the programme

The programme aims to:

- provide students with the opportunity to investigate, in detail and to research standards, a topic of interest to them within environmental science.
- give students the opportunity to explore the main research approaches used within environmental science and the debates

on these approaches.

- provide students with training in key research methods and techniques that can be applied to their own research, in industry as an environmental practitioner and for pursuing an academic career.
- introduce students to a wide range of environmental knowledge and understanding at the forefront of the academic discipline informed by active research in the School's Earth Surface Science theme
- develop a wide range of intellectual, discipline-specific and key skills.
- develop a critical awareness of, and a continuing sense of enquiry in, environmental science.
- foster a range of personal attributes relevant to the world beyond higher education.

### What will you be expected to achieve?

The programme provides opportunities for students to achieve and demonstrate the following learning outcomes. These use the Benchmark statement in Environmental Science as a framework interpreted in ways which reflect the distinctive nature of our research and teaching in the School of Geography.

#### Academic Content:

A 1	The nature and scope of environmental science research.
A 2	The range of research approaches used within environmental science.
A 3	The research process.
A 4	Past and current research literature on a specific topic of interest within environmental science.
A 5	The contribution of your own research to the wider understanding of a specific topic.

#### Disciplinary Skills - able to:

B 1	Articulate and investigate testable research questions in environmental science.
B 2	Evaluate the utility of different research approaches for investigating a specific topic.
B 3	Design and plan a workable programme of research
B 4	Synthesise information from a range of sources, including your own research.
B 5	Critically evaluate and analyse results from a range of sources, including your own research.

#### Attributes:

C 1	Work autonomously and with others.
C 2	Develop critical self-awareness and self-management.
C 3	Communicate effectively in written and oral formats.
C 4	Design, implement and manage a project.
C 5	Generate primary data in the lab and/or field, or use secondary data (e.g. remotely sensed) independently to research standards.

### How will you learn?

This programme is taught by members of academic staff in the School of Geography. The School of Geography is committed to developing, maintaining and supporting excellence in teaching and learning, to innovation in teaching practice, and to fostering independent learning and critical thinking in our students, whilst providing appropriate levels of support to students in their learning.

The programme is delivered through a compulsory research skills training module, an elective subject specific module selected from level 6 or level 7 thematic and skills-based modules offered in the School of Geography in agreement with the programme organiser and an independent research project. All modules are assessed via coursework. The taught modules are delivered via lectures, seminars, one-one supervision, and attendance at research presentations by outside speakers and staff within the School. The project is supervised on a one-one basis by a member of the physical geography lecturing staff, with specific training in relevant laboratory or field skills from laboratory staff.

Students have access to a wide range of learning resources within the College. These include: the College Library, the University of London Library at Senate House and the first rate resources of other libraries with London collections (e.g. the British Library); a range of IT resources including networked PCs (with full internet and email privileges), and electronic learning resources (e.g. electronic academic journals); a dedicated Masters student room in the School of Geography.

All students are allocated two supervisors with whom they will meet on a regular basis throughout the programme.

Supervisors will have some expertise in the student's proposed area of dissertation research and may be drawn from across the School.

### How will you be assessed?

Students registered for the MSc in Environmental Science by Research take 30 credits worth of taught modules alongside pursuing a substantial research dissertation worth 150 credits. Student assessment will be varied but all based on coursework (e.g. essays, reports, data analysis). The research project will be the dissertation will be submitted in the format of a draft manuscript and supplementary material (e.g., extended literature review, detailed methodologies, additional data analysis) as appropriate to a relevant, peer-reviewed journal by agreement with the supervision team and programme convenor. The combined draft manuscript and supplementary material should not exceed 10000 words but will vary significantly based on subject content.

### How is the programme structured?

Please specify the structure of the programme diets for all variants of the programme (e.g. full-time, part-time - if applicable). The description should be sufficiently detailed to fully define the structure of the diet.

The programme is made up of 180 credits and is structured around a set of core, compulsory and elective modules. Students registered for this programme complete a core Independent Research Project module (GEG7321 150 credits) and one compulsory taught module (GEG7322 Research Skills for Environmental Science, 15 credits). Students are able to select ONE elective module from a range of thematic and skills based modules available in the School of Geography, selected according to their research topic and training needs. An elective module not selected from the list below can be taken, with prior agreement from the supervisory team and programme convenor. The compulsory module and elective module provide formal research training and will be completed in Year 1. The dissertation will begin in year one and span year 1 and year 2.

#### Academic Year of Study

Module Title	Module Code	Credits	Level	Module Selection Status	Academic Year of Study	Semester
Independent Research Project	GEG7321	150	7	Core	1	Semesters 1-3
Research skills for environmental science	GEG7322	15	7	Compulsory	1	Semesters 1 & 2
Advanced Readings	GEG7142	15	7	Elective	1	Semester 1 or 2
Flood Risk Management and Modelling	GEG7314	15	7	Elective	1	Semester 2
River Assessment and Restoration	GEG7317	15	7	Elective	1	Semester 1
Biogeoscience and ecosystem services	GEG7313	15	7	Elective	1	Semester 2
Environmental Pollution	GEG7226	15	7	Elective	1	Semester 1
Advanced Geospatial Science	GEG6230	15	6	Elective	1	Semester 1
Nature-based climate solutions	GEG6232P	15	6	Elective	1	Semester 2
Geospatial Science	GEG5223	15	5	Elective	1	Semester 2
Volcanoes, climate change and society	GEG6229	15	6	Elective	1	Semester 2
Ancient Human Occupation of Britain	GEG6225	15	6	Elective	1	Semester 2

#### What are the entry requirements?

Normally an upper second class honours degree or higher in Geography, Earth or Environmental Sciences or a cognate discipline (or equivalent international qualification) together with two supportive academic references. We actively encourage applications from students who have developed an interest in any aspect of environmental science at undergraduate level, and/or who have relevant work experience. Candidates are expected to have good English language ability and to meet the standard of the IELTS – or equivalent – at a level of 7.0. International students should refer to the country-specific admissions information on the 'International students' webpage ([www.qmul.ac.uk/international/](http://www.qmul.ac.uk/international/)). The application process requires students to engage with a

potential supervisor who is prepared, in principle, to supervise their proposed research, and applicants must submit a research proposal as part of the application process.

### **How will the quality of the programme be managed and enhanced? How do we listen to and act on your feedback?**

The Staff-Student Liaison Committee provides a formal means of communication and discussion between schools/institutes and its students. The committee consists of student representatives from each year in the school/institute together with appropriate representation from staff within the school/institute. It is designed to respond to the needs of students, as well as act as a forum for discussing programme and module developments. Staff-Student Liaison Committees meet regularly throughout the year. Each school/institute operates a Learning and Teaching Committee, or equivalent, which advises the School/Institute Director of Taught Programmes on all matters relating to the delivery of taught programmes at school level including monitoring the application of relevant QM policies and reviewing all proposals for module and programme approval and amendment before submission to Taught Programmes Board. Student views are incorporated in the committee's work in a number of ways, such as through student membership, or consideration of student surveys.

All schools/institutes operate an Annual Programme Review of their taught undergraduate and postgraduate provision. APR is a continuous process of reflection and action planning which is owned by those responsible for programme delivery; the main document of reference for this process is the Taught Programmes Action Plan (TPAP) which is the summary of the school/institute's work throughout the year to monitor academic standards and to improve the student experience. Students' views are considered in this process through analysis of the Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) and module evaluations.

### **What academic support is available?**

The programme convenor has overall responsibility for the programme and, after the supervisor, is the first point of contact for programme-related enquiries. Students are allocated a supervisory team of 2 academic supervisors in the School of Geography for the Individual Research Project module.

### **Programme-specific rules and facts**

NA

### **How inclusive is the programme for all students, including those with disabilities?**

Queen Mary has a central Disability and Dyslexia Service (DDS) that offers support for all students with disabilities, specific learning difficulties and mental health issues. The DDS supports all Queen Mary students: full-time, part-time, undergraduate, postgraduate, UK and international at all campuses and all sites.

Students can access advice, guidance and support in the following areas:

- Finding out if you have a specific learning difficulty like dyslexia
- Applying for funding through the Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA)
- Arranging DSA assessments of need
- Special arrangements in examinations
- Accessing loaned equipment (e.g. digital recorders)
- Specialist one-to-one study skills tuition
- Ensuring access to course materials in alternative formats (e.g. Braille)
- Providing educational support workers (e.g. note-takers, readers, library assistants)

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• Access to specialist mentoring support for students with mental health issues and Autistic Spectrum Disorders.

### Links with employers, placement opportunities and transferable skills

The programme will equip students with a range of transferable skills and attributes sought by diverse graduate employers, in line with the Queen Mary Statement of Graduate Attributes. In addition, the programme will provide students with knowledge and understanding relevant to employment in organisations such as Environment Agency, Defra, Natural England, Centre for Ecology and Hydrology, British Geological Survey and environmental consultancies. The opportunity to develop links with partner organisations as part of the research project will create work experience opportunities and provide insights into the structure and operation of these organisations.

## Programme Specification Approval

Person completing Programme Specification:

Prof Kate Spencer

Person responsible for management of programme:

Kate spencer

Date Programme Specification produced / amended by  
School / Institute Learning and Teaching Committee:

06 January 2021

Date Programme Specification approved by Taught  
Programmes Board: