



Course Information Sheet for entry in 2019-20

MSc in Nature, Society and Environmental Governance

About the course

The rate and complexity of environmental change poses profound economic, social and political challenges for contemporary society. Developing ways to address these challenges demands intellectual rigour, innovation and flexibility, as well as the capacity to think across existing disciplinary boundaries.

This course is grounded in the conviction that responses to political and environmental challenges requires researchers and practitioners trained in the social sciences, with the ability to think flexibly across disciplinary and sectorial boundaries. It will enable you to develop a theoretically sophisticated and empirically grounded understanding of the dynamic relations between environment, society and policy.

To this end, the course draws on the methods and approaches from across the social sciences, including fields such as human geography, anthropology, environmental economics, science and technology studies, and corporate environmental management. It also facilitates dialogue between researchers and practitioners concerning contemporary issues of environmental policy and politics.

Teaching takes place through lectures, seminars and workshops which provide in-depth exploration of key environmental issues. Field trips and external visits are an important component of the teaching delivery and include an induction field course in the UK and a three-day European field course.

The specific objectives of the course are:

- to provide broad and critical engagements with key debates in the environmental social sciences, focussing on the relations between nature and society, science and politics, and urban natures
- to foster an understanding of the applied practices of environmental policy and the challenges of real-world environmental governance
- to develop your conceptions of, and skills in, the methods and practices of contemporary environmental social sciences, providing critical foundations for further study by research
- to integrate you into world leading research in the School of Geography and the Environment by providing core teaching and supervision by research-active staff
- to enhance your personal and professional development.

There are nine core modules organised under three themes: policy and governance, theory and analysis, and research skills. These modules are assessed by written examination. You will also study two electives which are each assessed through a 4000 word essay. You will also write an individual dissertation of 15,000 words.

Elective modules

These offer a tutorial-style teaching and discussion environment within smaller groups, based on a suite of contemporary research themes that reflect the specific interests of core faculty and visiting research associates. The teaching aim is to foster discussion and debate between academic staff and students to identify and explore theory, methods and practice in an academic space that encourages a critical dialogue.

Dissertation

An independent and original dissertation is an integral component of the course. In order to equip you with the necessary skills to undertake high quality research, a suite of training activities is offered to develop key transferable skills in order for you to be able to execute high quality independent and original research, and to expose students to applied research methods used widely in academic and professional research.

Changes to courses

The University will seek to deliver this course in accordance with the description set out above. However, there may be situations in which it is desirable or necessary for the University to make changes in course provision, either before or after registration. For further information, please see the University's Terms and Conditions.