

BSc Geography and Economics (Regional Science)

UCAS code: LL17

Awarding Institution:

The University of Reading

Teaching Institution:

The University of Reading

Relevant QAA subject benchmarking group(s):

Geography, Economics

Faculty of Science

Programme length: 3 years

For students entering Part 1 in 2004

Date of specification: April 2004

Programme Director: Dr S. Bowlby

Programme Adviser: Dr P. McCann

Board of Studies: Regional Science

Accreditation:

Summary of programme aims

The programme aims to provide undergraduate students with both subject-specific knowledge (in the two disciplines involved) and general skills. It aims:

- to give students a thorough insight into the importance of a geographic perspective on human processes, including the interaction of processes operating at global, regional and local scales
- to develop an understanding of the working of economic processes of production and exchange and its applicability to a wide range of different situations
- to impart knowledge of the theory and practice of both economics and human geography, together with an ability to integrate their perspectives
- to encourage students to make appropriate use of theories and research findings from the social sciences in understanding spatial phenomena
- to develop students' skills in applying theoretical concepts, knowledge and philosophies to the understanding of particular environments, spatial differences and to decision-making
- to develop an understanding of the interaction between various types of social and economic processes in urban, regional and international systems

Transferable skills

The University's Strategy for Teaching and Learning has identified a number of generic transferable skills which all students are expected to have developed by the end of their degree programme. In following this programme, students will have had the opportunity to enhance their skills relating to career management, communication (both written and oral), information handling, numeracy, problem-solving, team working and use of information technology.

By the end of the programme students also should have acquired: critical and analytical skills; a basic competence in empirical research; an ability to place issues in a wider context, to make connections between apparently disparate events and issues, and to handle alternative ways of understanding particular situations; an ability to relate theoretical knowledge and ideas to practical real-world situations; writing, reasoning, verbal and presentation skills, and specific technical skills, such as computing, word-processing and statistics.

Programme content

The profile which follows states which modules must be taken (the compulsory part), together with lists of modules from which the student must make a selection in consultation with their programme adviser (the optional part). Students must take a combination of compulsory and optional modules making a total of 120 credits in each Part of the programme. In Part 1 optional modules can be drawn from anywhere in the University subject to any restriction which may be applied to particular module choices. The number of credits for each module is shown after its

title. Most modules are worth 20 credits, but there are two of 10 credits at Part 2, and one of 40 credits in Part 3.

Part 1 (three terms)		<i>Credits</i>	<i>Level</i>
<i>Compulsory modules</i>			
GG1H1	<i>Human Geography 1: Society and Space</i>	20	C
GG1H2	<i>Human Geography 2: Cores and Peripheries</i>	20	C
GG1IT	<i>Analytical and Communications Skills</i>	20	C
EC1F1A	<i>Introductory Economics I</i>	20	C
EC1F1B	<i>Introductory Economics II</i>	20	C
	<i>Another 20 credit module from a list of options in Economics or other Departments</i>	20	C
Part 2 (three terms)		<i>Credits</i>	<i>Level</i>
<i>Compulsory modules</i>			
GG2T	<i>Geographical Techniques</i>	20	I
EC201A	<i>Micro-Economics I.1</i>	20	I
EC201B	<i>Micro-Economics I.2</i>	10	I
EC202A	<i>Macro-Economics I.1</i>	20	I
EC202B	<i>Macro-Economics I.2</i>	10	I
<i>Optional modules:</i>			
4 modules chosen from			
GG2H1	<i>Geography of Development</i>	10	I
GG2H2	<i>Economic Geography</i>	10	I
GG2H3	<i>Philosophy and Methodology in Geography</i>	10	I
GG2H4	<i>Urban Geography</i>	10	I
GG2H5	<i>Historical Geography</i>	10	I
GG2H6	<i>Social and Cultural Geography</i>	10	I
GG2R	<i>Environmental Resources</i>	10	I
Part 3 (three terms)		<i>Credits</i>	<i>Level</i>
<i>Compulsory modules</i>			
GG375	<i>Case Studies in Regional Science</i>	20	H
EC324A	<i>European Urban and Regional Economics I</i>	20	H
<i>Optional modules:</i>			
20 credits of Economics chosen from the following modules:			
EC308A	<i>Business Economics I</i>	20	H
EC311A	<i>International Economics I</i>	20	H
EC312A	<i>Economics of Development I</i>	20	H
EC315A	<i>Economic Issues in Historical Perspective I</i>	20	H
EC320A	<i>Money and Banking I</i>	20	H
EC328	<i>Economics of Land, Development and Planning</i>	20	H
EC334A	<i>Environmental Economics I</i>	20	H
EC237A	<i>Processes of Long Term Political and Economic Change I</i>	20	H

Either

20 credits of either a Geography or Economics module chosen from the list of approved modules and 40 credits of Geography modules: those currently approved are:

GG320	<i>Tourism in the Third World</i>	20	H
GG322	<i>Measuring Sustainable Development</i>	20	H
GG310	<i>People and the Land on Film</i>	20	H
GG311	<i>Social Inequalities and Difference</i>	20	H
GG324	<i>Urban Governance and Regeneration</i>	20	H
GG321	<i>Work, Employment and Development</i>	20	H
GG313	<i>Rural Social Geography</i>	20	H
GG322	<i>Postcolonial Africa</i>	20	H

Or

20 credits of a Geography module chosen from the list of approved modules given above above, and:

GG3DRS	<i>Dissertation in Regional Science</i>	40	H
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Progression requirements

In order to progress from Part 1 to Part 2, a student shall normally be required to:

- achieve an overall average of 40% in 120 credits taken in Part 1; and
- achieve an average mark of 40% in the 80 credits of modules GG1H1, GG1H2, EC1F1A and EC1F1B; and
- achieve a mark of 40% or above for modules representing 100 of the 120 credits and a mark of 35% or above for the remaining 20 credits, provided that the candidate has pursued the course for this remaining 20 credits with reasonable diligence and has not been absent from the examination without reasonable cause.

In order to progress from Part 2 to Part 3, a student shall normally be required to:

- achieve an overall average of 40% in the 120 credits taken in part 2; and
- achieve a mark of 40 % or above for modules representing 100 of the 120 credits and a mark of 35% or above for the remaining 20 credits..

Final Degree Assessment: 40% Part 2 and 60% Part 3.

Summary of teaching and assessment

There are a whole variety of teaching and assessment methods used in the degree programme modules. A typical module would involve lectures and either seminars or practicals. Many of the modules are assessed with some continuous assessment and a written exam. However, a number of modules are totally continuously assessed or totally written exam.

There is a university-wide marking scheme and classification of honours.

Mark	Interpretation
70% - 100%	First Class
60% - 69%	Upper Second Class
50% - 59%	Lower Second Class
40% - 49%	Third Class
35% - 39%	Below Honours Standard
0% - 34%	Fail

Admission requirements

Entrants to this programme are normally required to have obtained:

Grade C or better in English Language and Mathematics in GCSE/O Level

UCAS Tariff: 280 points, 100 points in Geography or Economics

Two AS grades are accepted as one A2

Two 3-unit vocational A-levels accepted as one 6-unit course

Scottish Advanced Highers and Highers: 300 points, 100 points in Geography

International Baccalaureate: 31 points including 6 in Geography

Irish Leaving Certificate: BBBB

We welcome deferred-entry applications from those wanting to take a gap year between school and university, and from mature students and students with special needs, for whom we may take a broader view of entry requirements. For those with special needs we are happy, when necessary, to take a flexible approach to field-work and practical work requirements, and to make appropriate arrangements for note taking and examinations.

Admissions Tutor: Dr K White

Support for students and their learning

University support for students and their learning falls into two categories. Learning support includes IT Services, which has several hundred computers and the University Library, which across its three sites holds over a million volumes, subscribes to around 4,000 current periodicals, has a range of electronic sources of information and houses the Student Access to Independent Learning (S@IL) computer-based teaching and learning facilities. There are language laboratory facilities both for those students studying on a language degree and for those taking modules offered by the Institution-wide Language Programme. Student guidance and welfare support is provided by Personal Tutors, the Careers Advisory Service, the University's Special Needs Advisor, Study Advisors, Hall Wardens and the Students' Union.

Career prospects

Regional Science graduates have the broad measure of literacy, numeracy and 'graphicacy' characteristic of geographers, together with a firm understanding of economic principles and processes. Together with the computing knowledge that is also gained, these open up a wide variety of careers. These include accountancy, computer work, management posts in business and industry, banking, insurance and retailing. Some Regional Science graduates wish to pursue a career making direct use of their degree study. This can be in central and local government and in firms engaged in economic development consultancy and similar work, as well as in postgraduate study and teaching. There is highly a highly respected MSc in Regional Science run by the Economics and Geography Departments at Reading for those who wish to take the latter route.

Opportunities for study abroad or for placements

There is no provision for study abroad within the Regional Science degree structure.

Educational aims of the programme

The programme aims to produce graduates with subject-specific skills and knowledge in both Economics and Geography with a particular emphasis on understanding issues of urban and regional development. An important feature of the degree is its emphasis on the critical comparison and integration of material and perspectives from the two disciplines.

Programme Outcomes

The programme provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding, skills, qualities and other attributes in the following areas:

Knowledge and Understanding

<p>A. Knowledge and understanding of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Economic processes of production and exchange2. The fundamental concepts and techniques of microeconomics and macroeconomics.3. Fundamental concepts of human geography such as environment, place, spatial variation, and representation of landscape and environment4. Geographic perspectives on social processes and their interaction at global, regional and local scales.5. Interaction between social and economic processes in urban, regional and international systems6. Theory and practice in economics and human geography and the potential for their integration.	<p><i>Teaching/learning methods and strategies</i></p> <p>Most of the knowledge required for the basic topics is discussed in formal lectures supported by smaller group discussions on set questions.</p> <p>At Part 2 knowledge is also gained through a 1-week field class and practical work.</p> <p>In Part 3 the specialised option modules include writing detailed assessments of set topics, making oral presentations and joining in group discussion</p> <p><i>Assessment</i></p> <p>Most knowledge is tested through a combination of coursework and unseen formal examinations. Short tests and oral presentations also contribute.</p>
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Skills and other attributes

B. Intellectual skills – able to:

1. think logically
2. develop a reasoned argument
3. organise tasks into a structured form
4. abstract and synthesise information
5. critically judge and evaluate evidence
6. assess the merits of contrasting theories, explanations and policies
7. transfer appropriate techniques and knowledge from one subject area to another
8. organise and reflect upon their own learning
9. recognise the moral and ethical issues involved in academic and policy debates

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

The need to think logically and analytically permeates the compulsory modules in the course. Skills 2-7 are developed in essay writing, and continuously assessed project work and the dissertation. 8 is developed throughout the entire programme. 9 is developed both in discussion groups, readings and written work.

The more specialist topics provide many opportunities to apply and develop these skills through the analysis of a range of problems in a wide variety of contexts.

Assessment

1-5 are covered extensively in the core modules; 6-8 are given wide scope in the optional modules and the Case Studies module.

C. Practical skills – able to:

1. present a chain of reasoning
2. apply theoretical concepts and knowledge to the understanding of particular environments and spatial differences and to decision-making
3. using a variety of techniques and principles, analyse economic and geographic problems
4. evaluate policies from an economic and geographic standpoint
5. communicate both orally and in writing critical analyses of economic, geographic and environmental issues
6. plan, organise and write a report on an independent project

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

The core subjects in economics concentrate on formal economic reasoning. Problem solving forms an important part of class work especially in Parts 2 and 3.

In geography the ability to use all these skills is developed through essay writing, practicals, field work and small group discussions.

In both disciplines the specialised options involve writing detailed assessments of set topics.

Assessment

All skills are tested through a combination of coursework, including both problem solving and essays, and through unseen examinations. 6 is assessed directly by means of the large number of essays prepared in Parts 1, 2 and 3. It is also assessed in a Part 2 project and the (optional) Dissertation.

D. Transferable skills – able to:

1. use IT (word-processing, spreadsheets databases, email and www))
2. apply skills of numeracy, graphicity and computation to data analysis
3. communicate ideas in a logical way in both writing and speech
4. give oral presentations
5. contribute to group discussions of an economic or geographic problem
6. use library resources both on- and off-line
7. manage time
8. plan career strategy

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

The use of IT is initiated in the Part 1 IT and Statistics module and further developed in the Part 2 Geographical Techniques module. Word processing is required throughout the Part 2 and 3 course units

Seminars in Parts 2 and 3 involve group discussions and oral presentations. Part 2 work includes preparation of a group project

Library and internet resources have to be used continuously in the preparation of essays and project work

The highly structured system of deadlines for assessed work requires good time management

Career planning is taught through lectures and self paced computer-based assignments as well as one-to-one meetings with career staff

Assessment

IT skills are assessed directly at Part I. Most skills are tested indirectly through the preparation of course and project work.

Please note: This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably expect to achieve and demonstrate if he/she takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information on the learning outcomes, content and teaching, learning and assessment methods of each module can be found in module and programme handbooks.