

# BSc Botany and Zoology

For students entering Part 1 in October 2005

UCAS code: CC23

Awarding Institution:  
Teaching Institution:  
Relevant QAA subject benchmarking group(s):  
Faculty of Life Sciences  
Date of specification: 1 November 2006  
Programme Director: Dr. J.A. Hawkins  
Programme Adviser: Dr. J.D. Ross  
Board of Studies: Botany and Botany & Zoology  
Accreditation: None

The University of Reading  
The University of Reading  
Bioscience  
Programme length: 3 years

## Summary of programme aims

The programme aims to provide a thorough, degree-level education in the main areas of Botany and Zoology. It encompasses traditional studies of whole organism biology with a consideration of recent advances in areas such as biotechnology, biodiversity and genetics. It is designed to cater for students whose career aspirations can best be advanced by in-depth knowledge about both plants and animals, e.g. those intending to pursue careers in school teaching or conservation.

## Transferable skills

The University's Strategy for Teaching and Learning has identified a number of generic transferable skills that 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 and data handling, numeracy, problem solving, team working and use of information technology. There is also an opportunity for language study.

## Programme content

The programme that follows lists those modules that must be taken (compulsory modules). Students are required to choose additional modules, in consultation with their Programme Adviser, to make 120 credits in each Part. Additional modules will normally be selected from those offered by Plant Science, AMS, Geography or Soil Science. However, students lacking A-level Chemistry or an equivalent qualification must take *Chemistry for biologists* (BI1S10) in Part 1. In Part 2 the additional modules may include language modules offered by IWLP. In Parts 2 and 3, the additional modules should be drawn principally from Plant Science and AMS, and should involve approximately the same numbers of credits from each. **Please note: The additional modules must include two field courses, one in botany and one in zoology. Students may include a third field course if they wish.** The modules offered by Plant Science and AMS from which additional modules may be selected are listed below as optional modules.

## Part 1 (three terms)

### Compulsory modules (90 credits)

Module	Title	Credits	Level
PS1BA1	Plant world	10	C
PS1BA2	Plant physiology and development	10	C
BI1C10	Cell biology and biochemistry	10	C
BI1C11	Genetics and molecular biology	10	C
BI1M10	Biodiversity	10	C
BI1Z10	Ecology	10	C
BI1Z11	Community ecology	10	C
AM1Z10	The whole mammal	10	C

In addition, students without a post- 16 qualification in chemistry must take:

Module	Title	Credits	Level
BI1S10	Chemistry for biologists	10	C

**Optional modules (to make 120 credits in total)**

Module	Title	Credits	Level
AM1C13	Digestion and nutrition	10	C
AM1C14	Biochemistry and metabolism	10	C
AM1M11	Microbiology 1	10	C
AM1M12	Important microbes	10	C
AP1EF1	The UK food chain	10	C
GO1A1	Earth structure and processes	10	C
GO1B1	Earth materials	10	C
PS1AB2	Physical ecology	10	C
PS1BC2	Introductory botany	10	C
PS1HS1	Soil use and management	10	C
SS1A2	Soils, land and the environment	10	C

Or elsewhere from the programmes of other Schools subject to the agreement of the Programme Advisor.

After Part 1 exams, students may take either *Flora of the British Isles* (PS2BG3) or *Small animal management* (AM2Z40) both of which are held during term-time.

**Part 2 (three terms)**

**Compulsory modules (50 credits)**

Module	Title	Credits	Level
PS2BF3	Botany Part 2 field course (students are recommended to take PS2BG3 below) <b>OR</b>	10	I
AM2Z38	Field course	10	I
PS2AC4	Career management and transferable skills <b>OR</b>	10	I
AM2S31	Concepts and skills	10	I
PS2BB4	Evolution of plant biodiversity	10	I
AM2Z32	Vertebrate zoology <b>OR</b>	10	I
AM2Z34	Invertebrate zoology	10	I
AS2A1	Statistics for life sciences	10	I

**Optional modules (at least 30 credits from PS and 30 credits from AM modules)**

Module	Title	Credits	Level
PS2AB4	Weed biology and control	10	I
PS2AB5	Crop pests and integrated crop protection	10	I
PS2BC5	Ecological aspects of environmental assessment	10	I
PS2BD4	Plants and the environment	10	I
PS2BE5	Ecological biochemistry	10	I
PS2BG3	Flora of the British Isles	10	I
PS2HD4	Crop disease and its control	10	I
PS2NA4	Introduction to the history and philosophy of science	10	I
BI2B31	Macroevolution	10	I
BI2Z31	Microevolution	10	I
AM2Z32	Vertebrate zoology	10	I

AM2Z33	Animal behaviour	10	I
AM2Z34	Invertebrate zoology	10	I
AM2Z37	Aquatic biology	10	I
AM2Z41	Applied ecology	10	I
AP2A26	Forestry and woodlands	10	I
AP2A43	Small animal management	10	I
AP2A37	Practical nature conservation	10	I
LA1???	Institution wide language programme	10	C/I

### Part 3 (three terms)

#### Compulsory modules (70 or 80 credits)

Module	Title	Credits	Level
PS3BF8	Mediterranean botany Part 3 field course (If have done zoology field course in Part 2) <b>OR</b>	20	H
AM2Z38/ AM3Z80	a Zoology Field course (If have done botany field course in Part 2) <i>NB: only 20 Part 2 credits are allowed in Part 3</i>	10	H/I
PS3BAX AM3S75	Botany research project <b>OR</b> Project	40 40	H H
AM3Z79	Animal diversity	10	H
PS3BH8	Botany research skills	10	H

#### Optional modules (40 or 50 credits: at least 20 credits from AM and 20 credits from PS modules)

Module	Title	Credits	Level
PS3AB7	Crops and climate	10	H
PS3AF8	Plant tissue culture	10	H
PS3AG8	Weed ecology	10	H
PS3BA8	Biodiversity assessment and the sustainable use of plant resources	10	H
PS3BB8	Creating revisions, monographs, floras and information systems	10	H
PS3BC7	Conservation and biodiversity	10	H
PS3BD7	Physiological ecology	10	H
PS3BE8	Biodiversity informatics	10	H
PS3BF8	Botany Part 3 field course	10	H
PS3BG7	Diversity and identification of plants	20	H
PS3HH8	Plant developmental genetics and physiology	10	H
AP3A49	Seed science and technology	10	H
AM3Z72	Insects and society	10	H
AM3Z74	Conservation biology	10	H
AM3Z75	Evolutionary genetics and phylogeny	10	H
AM3Z76	Behavioural ecology and life history theory	10	H
AM3Z77	Research topics in ecology	10	H
AM3Z80	Marine biology field course	10	H

### Progression requirements

#### Part 1

To gain a threshold performance at Part 1 a student shall normally be required to achieve an overall average of 40% over 120 credits taken in Part 1, and a mark of at least 30% in individual modules amounting to not less than 100 credits. In order to progress from Part 1 to Part 2, a student shall normally be required to achieve a threshold performance at Part 1.

## **Part 2**

To gain a threshold performance at Part 2 a student shall normally be required to achieve: an overall average of 40% over 120 credits taken in Part 2, and a mark of at least 30% in individual modules amounting to not less than 100 credits. In order to progress from Part 2 to Part 3, a student shall normally be required to achieve a threshold performance at Part 2.

### **Summary of teaching and assessment**

Teaching is organised in modules. Teaching in Part 1 consists of lectures and practical classes. Some modules are assessed by 100% coursework but most are assessed by a combination of coursework (30%) and formal examination (70%).

In Part 2 and 3, lectures and practical classes continue to be important modes of teaching but they are increasingly supplemented by seminars, group work and field studies, including two Field Courses. Modules can be 100% in-course assessed but are more usually assessed by a combination of coursework (30%) and formal examination (70%). Part 2 contributes one third of the overall assessment and Part 3 the remaining two thirds. In order to be eligible for Honours, students must gain an overall weighted average of 40% and must gain at least 40% in the project module.

The assessment is carried out within the University's degree classification scheme, details of which are in the programme handbooks.

### **Admission requirements**

Entrants to this programme are normally required to have obtained:

UCAS Tariff: 260 points from no more than 4AL or AS subjects including C in at least two AL science subjects, plus Mathematics, Double Science and English at Grade B at GCSE level.

International Baccalaureat: 30 points

Scottish Highers BBBB (Biology B)

Irish Leaving Certificate: BBBBC (Biology B)

GNVQ is accepted and mature students are also encouraged to apply.

Admissions Tutor: Dr. J.A. Hawkins

### **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.

In addition to the above, the School of Animal and Microbial Sciences and the School of Plant Sciences have several well-equipped teaching laboratories and dedicated computer laboratories providing students with in-house access to on-line educational material. The AMS also houses an extensive Zoological museum and collection, while SPS has a herbarium, living collections and botanic garden. These provide rich sources of material and specimens that are incorporated into several modules.

### **Career prospects**

Recent graduates have followed a diversity of careers in academia, in research institutions, in school teaching, in conservation and in biologically related commercial sector activities.

### **Opportunities for study abroad or for placements**

A number of students have spent parts of their final year studying in European universities through the Socrates programme, and it is anticipated that such exchanges will continue.

### **Educational aims of the programme**

The programme aims to provide a thorough, degree-level education in Botany and Zoology, enabling graduates to capitalise on the range of career opportunities outlined above under Career Prospects.

### **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***

##### **A. Knowledge and understanding of:**

1. The fundamental concepts of biology and their application to botanical and zoological systems.
2. The range of animal and plant diversity.
3. Selected aspects of animal and plant diversity in terms of structure, function and environmental relationships.
4. Statistics as applied to biological data.
5. A selection of more specialised optional topics.

##### **Teaching/learning methods and strategies**

These topics are presented in formal lectures combined with laboratory based practical classes and fieldwork, including residential field courses.

Tutorial sessions are incorporated into some modules to support the formal teaching. Smaller group teaching is more common in Parts 2 and 3.

In Part 3 students will be able to select more specific areas for in-depth study and will also undertake a research project with one-to-one supervision by a member of academic staff. Throughout the course, students are encouraged to discuss with their lecturers any points where the students' understanding is perceived as weak.

##### *Assessment*

Most knowledge is tested through a combination of coursework and unseen formal examinations. Some modules will be 100% assessed by coursework (e.g. field courses) or by a written report (e.g. research project). The coursework also serves to provide feedback on student progress.

## ***Skills and other attributes***

### **B. Intellectual skills – able to:**

1. Think logically and organise tasks into a structured form.
2. Assimilate knowledge and ideas based on wider reading and through the internet.
3. Transfer appropriate knowledge and methods from one topic to another (both previously experienced and novel) within the overall subject area.
4. Understand the evolving state of knowledge in the rapidly developing science of biology.
5. Understand the analysis of numerical data as applied to biology.
6. Construct and test hypotheses.
7. Plan and conduct and write a report on an independent project.

### **Teaching/learning methods and strategies**

Elements of the coursework are specifically designed to stimulate learning and reinforcement of the skills outlined under 1-5. Skill 5 ties in with practical skill 5. Students learn skills 6-7 in certain modules such as the field courses. The Part 3 research project develops an ability for independent research (skills 6-7) as well as reinforcing many of the other intellectual skills.

#### *Assessment*

Skills 1-4 are essential to permit the student to perform well in most modules of coursework and in examinations, including the integrating paper of the final examinations. Skill 5 is important in field course and other practical reports. All skills are tested to varying extents by the Part 3 research project presentation.

### **C. Practical skills**

Both in relation to botanical and zoological studies, to be able to:

1. Carry out practical work with minimal risk (both to self and to others).
2. Undertake laboratory tasks and techniques.
3. Undertake fieldwork tasks and techniques.
4. Design and undertake a programme of scientific investigation.
5. Analyse data using appropriate statistical methods, including by computer.

### **Teaching/learning methods and strategies**

Skills 1-3 are acquired during formal practical classes, both in the laboratory and the field. Mini projects during field courses will introduce skills 4-5. Statistical analysis of data is incorporated into appropriate practical classes and is also required for projects.

The design, conduct and completion of the research project in Part 3 brings together and reinforces these practical skills.

#### *Assessment*

By practical laboratory and fieldwork reports and in the finals practical examinations. These skills are essential to permit the student to perform well in coursework including the Part 3 research project.

**D. Transferable skills – able to:**

1. Use IT.
2. Communicate scientific ideas by a variety of methods including in writing, orally and by the use of posters.
3. Use library resources both paper and electronic.
4. Manage time.
5. To work independently.
6. Work as part of a team.
7. Plan a career.

**Teaching/learning methods and strategies**

The use of IT and other skills is embedded throughout the programme and is a major and essential element of some modules.

Teamwork (6) and time management (4) are both essential elements of mini projects during field courses. The research project is likely to require application of skills 1-5. Students are encouraged to discuss future careers with personal tutors, other relevant staff and members of the Careers Advisory Service.

*Assessment*

The skills 1-6 will enhance to performance of students in coursework, in the research project and in unseen examinations, including in Part 3 practical examinations.

**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 be expected 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 the module description and in the programme handbook. The University reserves the right to modify this specification in unforeseen circumstances, or where the process of academic development and feedback from students, quality assurance processes or external sources, such as professional bodies, requires a change to be made. In such circumstances, a revised specification will be issued.**