

**BSc Geography (Human)**  
**For students entering Part 1 in 2009/0**

**UCAS code: L722**

Awarding Institution:	University of Reading
Teaching Institution:	University of Reading
Relevant QAA subject Benchmarking group(s):	Geography
Faculty:	Science Faculty
Programme length:	3 years
Date of specification:	13/Apr/2011
Programme Director:	Dr Kevin White
Programme Advisor:	Dr Kevin White
Board of Studies:	Geography
Accreditation:	None

**Summary of programme aims**

The programme aims to provide undergraduate students with both subject-specific knowledge and general skills. It aims:

- to give students a thorough insight into the importance of a geographic perspective on human processes, including the manner in which these processes operate at global, regional and local scales
- to impart knowledge of the theory and practice of human geography
- 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 understanding of the interaction between various types of social and economic processes in urban, regional and international systems
- to develop an understanding through fieldwork and other forms of experiential learning
- to develop skills in how to interpret, analyse and tackle geographical issues
- to develop interdisciplinary aspects of knowledge
- to promote students' ability to engage in lifelong learning.

The programme aims to produce graduates with both subject-specific skills and knowledge in Geography and a range of cognitive, generic and transferable skills.

**Transferable skills**

During the course of their studies at Reading, all students will be expected to enhance their academic and personal transferable skills in line with the University's Strategy for Learning and Teaching. In following this programme, students will have had the opportunity to develop such skills, in particular relating to communication, interpersonal skills, learning skills, numeracy, self-management, use of IT and problem solving, and will have been encouraged to further develop and enhance the full set of skills through a variety of opportunities available outside their curriculum.

**Programme content**

The profile which follows states which modules are compulsory, together with lists of optional modules from which the student must make a selection in consultation with their programme adviser. Students must take a combination of compulsory and optional modules making a total of 120 credits in each Part of the programme. The number of credits for each module is shown after its title. At Part 1 students may take all their modules in Geography or opt to take modules in other departments. In Part 2 students take a combination of core compulsory and optional modules. Part 3 students write a dissertation (40 credits) and select from a list of Geography modules that are approved each year. The actual list of modules available may vary from year to year according to staffing.

**Part 1 (three terms)**

*Compulsory modules*

<i>Mod Code</i>	<i>Module Title</i>	<i>Credits</i>	<i>Level</i>
GG1GT	Geographical Techniques	20	4
GG1HGE	Geography and the Global Economy	10	4
GG1HPP	People and Places in the Global Economy	10	4

GG1SC	Social and Cultural Geography	10	4
GG1HGT	Human Geography Skills and Concepts	20	4

*Group 2: Optional modules (take 50 credits):*

GG1C	Climatology	10	4
GG1D	Hydrology	10	4
GG1SB	Soils and Biogeography	10	4
GG1GS	Geomorphology	10	4
GG1EI	Environmental Issues	10	4

*Approved modules from other departments*

**Part 2 (three terms)**

*Compulsory modules*

<i>Mod Code</i>	<i>Module Title</i>	<i>Credits</i>	<i>Level</i>
GG2FH	Human Geography Fieldclass	20	5
GG2HP	History and Philosophy of Geography	10	5
GG2TP	Team Projects	10	5
GG2CDS	Career Development Skills	10	5

In addition, students must select:

- At least 20 credits from Group 2
- At least 30 credits from Group 3
- Remainder from group 3, 4, or 5

*Group 2*

GG2WP	Web Page Development	10	5
GG2GIS	GIS & Digital Cartography	10	5
GG2P9	Remote Sensing	10	5
GG2P10	Image Processing	10	5

*Group 3*

GG2CG	Cultural Geography	10	5
GG2H1	Geographies of Development	10	5
GG2H2	Economic Geography	10	5
GG2H4	Urban Geography	10	5
GG2ER	Energy Resources	10	5
GG2SG	Social Geography	10	5

*Group 4*

GG2BC	Biogeography and Conservation	10	5
GG2P3	Human Activity and Environmental Change	10	5
GG2ER	Energy Resources	10	5
GG2P5	Hydrological Processes	10	5
GG2P1	Geomorphological Hazards	10	5

*Group 5*

Approved modules from other departments, including Institution-Wide Language Programme

**Part 3 (three terms)**

*Compulsory modules*

<i>Mod Code</i>	<i>Module Title</i>	<i>Credits</i>	<i>Level</i>
GG3D	Dissertation	40	6

### *Optional modules:*

4 modules (80 credits) chosen from a list of modules approved each year.

Those currently approved include:

GG344	Culture and Development in Africa	20	6
GG3SU	Sustainability	20	6
GG311	Social Inequalities and Difference	20	6
GG324	Urban Governance	20	6
GG321	Work, Employment and Development	20	6
GG315	Geographies of Children and Youth	20	6
GG362	Water Resources	20	6
GG3CC	Climate Change	20	6
GG334	Glacial and Periglacial Geomorphology	20	6
GG361	Aquatic Environments: Problems and Management	20	6
GG342	Environmental Modelling	20	6
GG3AP	Air, Pollution, Effects and Control	20	6
GG340	Biodiversity and Conservation Field Class	20	6
GG3PR	Human Geography of the Polar Regions	20	6

*Up to 20 credits from approved modules provided by other departments*

### **Progression requirements**

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 and achieve an average mark of 40% in the modules GG1SC, GG1HGE, GG1HPP and GG1HGT.

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.

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

<i>Mark</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>
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

### **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.

### **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: 320 points, 100 points in Geography.

Total points must include at least 2 A2 passes.

Total points exclude Key Skills and General Studies.

International Baccalaureate: 31 points including 6 in Geography

Irish Highers: 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:** Professor S Morse

### **Support for students and their learning**

University support for students and their learning falls into two categories. Learning support is provided by a wide array of services across the University, including: the University Library, the Student Employment, Experience and Careers Centre (SEEC), In-session English Support Programme, the Study Advice and Mathematics Support Centre teams, IT Services and 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, School Senior Tutors, the Students' Union, the Medical Practice and advisers in the Student Services Centre. The Student Services Centre is housed in the Carrington Building and offers advice on accommodation, careers, disability, finance, and wellbeing. Students can get key information and guidance from the team of Helpdesk Advisers, or make an appointment with a specialist adviser; Student Services also offer drop-in sessions and runs workshops and seminars on a range of topics. For more information see [www.reading.ac.uk/student](http://www.reading.ac.uk/student)

### **Career prospects**

A Reading geography degree is designed to assist graduate employment in three ways:

Firstly, it provides a basis for employment in fields directly or indirectly related to the content of the degree course, though this often involves a post-graduate qualification. Examples are jobs in teaching (in universities, colleges, schools and field centres), regional and economic planning, computing, transport management, conservation, land evaluation, civil engineering.

Secondly, a Reading geography degree enhances employment prospects because of the rigorous academic training regardless of the subject matter. Again, most other jobs usually involve further (in-service) training. Examples of such careers include insurance, banking, accountancy, civil service, armed forces and commercial management.

Thirdly, employers are attracted by the impressive quantitative/numeracy skills acquired in the degree programme, together with their experiences in computer usage, field projects (at home and abroad) and the planning/execution of the major dissertation research programme. Employers are seeking the flexible, skilled and adaptable geography graduates produced at Reading.

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

As part of the Part 3 programme, students can spend one term, either term 7 or term 8, studying at a European University under the ERASMUS exchange scheme. Study undertaken abroad substitutes for study in Reading. There is a well-established and active programme in Human Geography with the University of Groningen, The Netherlands. Links have also been established with the University of Trier, Germany. The Erasmus programmes are co-ordinated by Dr S. Lloyd-Evans.

During your time at Reading you will also have the opportunity to develop non-vocational skills, gain new work experiences, and further boost your employability through a diverse range of other placement opportunities. The University's Student Employment, Experience and Careers Centre (SEEC) provides all Reading students with information about a wide range of placement opportunities, including the Summer Enterprise Experience and Discovery internship scheme, the Community Service Volunteering scheme (tutoring in local schools), the Student Associates Scheme (work experience in local schools), and the Undergraduate Research Opportunities Programme.

### **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. Processes, concepts and techniques in human geography.
2. The nature of change and the significance of spatial relationships within human and physical environments.
3. Fundamental concepts of human geography such as environment, place, spatial variation, and representation of landscape and environment
4. Geographic perspectives on social and physical processes and their interaction at global, regional and local scales.
5. The main methodological strategies used in the analysis of geographical information.
6. The application of geographical concepts, techniques and expertise to problem solving.

### Teaching/learning methods and strategies

Most of the knowledge required for the basic topics is discussed in formal lectures supported by smaller group discussions and practicals.

At Part 2 knowledge is also gained through a 1-week fieldclass and practical work.

In Part 3 the specialised option modules include writing detailed assessments of set topics, making oral presentations and joining in group discussion.

#### *Assessment*

Most knowledge is tested through a combination of coursework and unseen formal examinations. Oral presentations also contribute.

## 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*

1-6 are covered extensively in the core modules; 7-9 are given wide scope in the optional modules.

### 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. Analyse geographic problems using a variety of techniques and principles.
4. Evaluate policies from a geographic standpoint
5. Communicate both orally and in writing critical analysis of geographic and environmental issues
6. Plan, organise and write a report on an independent project
7. Plan and undertake field surveys
8. Analyse data gathered from the field and be aware of its limitations

### Teaching/learning methods and strategies

Modules concentrate on formal geographic reasoning. Problem solving forms an important part of class work.

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

The assessed work in the specialised options involves 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 Part 2 projects and the 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 a 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 degree programme. Seminars in Parts 2 and 3 involve group discussions and oral presentations. Part 2 work includes preparation of group projects. 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 a Part 2 Career Management Skills course with lectures and self paced computer-based assignments. Also, one-to-one meetings with career staff can be arranged.

*Assessment*

IT skills are assessed directly at Part 1. 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 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 process or external sources, such as professional bodies, requires a change to be made. In such circumstances, a revised specification will be issued.**