

## **MSc in Environment and Development**

### **For students entering Part 1 in 2011/2**

Awarding Institution:	University of Reading
Teaching Institution:	University of Reading
Relevant QAA subject Benchmarking group(s):	
Faculty:	Life Sciences Faculty
Programme length:	1 years
Date of specification:	23/Aug/2011
Programme Director:	Dr Gavin Hilson
Programme Advisor:	
Board of Studies:	Graduate Institute of International Development and
Applied Economics	
Accreditation:	

### **Summary of programme aims**

This programme examines the policy challenges with promoting healthy environments in the developing world, providing an analytically rigorous but broad understanding of the Environment and Development agenda. Specifically, the programme provides students with:

- An in-depth overview of the inter-relationship between the environment and development at the global, national and local levels;
- A critical understanding of the nature of interactions between people and their environments, and how economic issues can create both environmental problems and provide solutions;
- An introduction to the essentials of environmental management and policymaking in a developing world context.

Students will develop a critical understanding of how environmental challenges in the developing world have been interpreted and are being addressed in policy-making circles, and equipped with the requisite analytical and conceptual skills to understand the links between development, poverty and the environment. The programme is designed for students interested in pursuing careers in environmental policy, planning and development in multilateral/bilateral organisations, government and Non-Government Organisations, academia and journalism. Students with backgrounds in either applied sciences or social sciences are encouraged to apply.

### **Transferable skills**

The programme requires a substantial amount of independent reading, research and study. Students are expected to take personal responsibility and show initiative in enhancing their knowledge and understanding of the field of Environment and Development. This programme will help students develop and refine their communication (oral and written), presentation, information handling, problem solving, and computer skills. Students will be required to work both independently and in groups, and manage their time in order to meet strict deadlines. Career planning, via choice of modules, will be an integral part of the programme.

### **Programme content**

*Postgraduate Certificate (60 credits):*

Students take 60 credits from Compulsory modules (IDM071, IDM073, IDM074, IDM001, APME58)

*Postgraduate Diploma (120 credits):*

Students take 60 credits from Compulsory Modules (IDM071, IDM073, IDM074, IDM001, APME58) and 60 credits from taught Optional Modules

*MSc in Environment and Development (180 credits):*

Students take 60 credits from Compulsory modules (IDM071, IDM073, IDM074, IDM001, APME58), 60 credits from Optional Modules and 60 credits from the dissertation (IDM072)

### *Compulsory modules (for MSc)*

<i>Code</i>	<i>Module title</i>	<i>Credits</i>	<i>Level</i>
IDM001	Perspectives on Development	20	7
IDM071	Research and Study Skills for Independent Learning	10	7
IDM073	Environment and Development: Problems and Policies	10	7
IDM074	Environment and Development: Case Studies	10	7

APME58	Resource and Environmental Economics	10	7
IDM072	Dissertation	60	7

*Optional modules (60 credits)*

APME68	The Ecological Economics of Climate Change	10	7
APME69	Climate Change Policy and Governance	10	7
REMRPP	Rural Policy and Planning	10	7
APME73	Appraisal of Agricultural and Rural Development Projects	20	7
APMA89	Water, Agriculture and Irrigation	10	7
IDM067	Research Methods for Development and Communication	10	7
IDM066	Communication and Innovation in Development	10	7
IDM068	Extractive Industries, the Environment and Developing Societies	10	7
APMA41	Agriculture in the Tropics	10	7
IDM046	Governance, Accountability and Development	10	7
IDM080	Involuntary Resettlement in Developing Countries	10	7
APMA92	Rethinking Agricultural Development: Searching for Solutions	10	7
APMA90	Climate Change and Food Systems	10	7

*The modules listed above are a sample of the modules available - students may select widely from the modules in the module guide subject to timetabling constraints.*

**Part-time or modular arrangements**

All students have the modular flexibility described in the 'Programme content' section above. Part-time students may build up their modular credits towards a Certificate, Diploma or MSc over an extended period.

**Progression requirements**

N/A

**Assessment and classification**

Teaching is organised in modules that typically involve a combination of lectures and seminars. Some lecture based modules are supported by workshops or computer lab sessions. Modules are assessed by a combination of course work and/or formal examination. Examinations will normally take place at the beginning of the Summer Term.

Prior to selection of dissertation topics students take part in organised, small group presentations and informal discussions led by relevant members of staff. A dissertation supervisor is appointed for each student.

The University's taught postgraduate marks classification is as follows:

**Mark Interpretation**

70 - 100% Distinction

60 - 69% Merit

50 - 59% Good standard (Pass)

**Failing categories:**

40 - 49% Work below threshold standard

0 - 39% Unsatisfactory Work

*For Masters Degree*

To qualify for Distinction, students must gain an overall average of 70 or more over 180 credits and a mark of 60 or more for the dissertation, and must not have any mark below 40.

To qualify for Merit, students must gain an overall average of 60 or more over 180 credits and a mark of 50 or more for the dissertation, and must not have any mark below 40.

To qualify for Passed, students must gain an overall average of 50 or more over 180 credits and a mark of 50 or more for the dissertation. In addition, the total credit value of all modules marked below 40 must not exceed 30 credits and of all modules marked below 50 must not exceed 55 credits.

#### *For PG Diploma*

To qualify for Distinction, students must gain an overall average of 70 or more over 120 credits and must not have any mark below 40.

To qualify for Merit, students must gain an overall average of 60 or more over 120 credits and must not have any mark below 40.

To qualify for Passed, students must gain an overall average of 50 or more over 120 credits. In addition, the total credit value of all modules marked below 40 must not exceed 30 credits and of all modules marked below 50 must not exceed 55 credits.

#### *For PG Certificate*

To qualify for a Postgraduate Certificate, students must gain an overall average of 50 or more over 60 credits. In addition, the total credit value of all modules marked below 40 must not exceed 10 credits.

### **Admission requirements**

Entrants to this programme should have a good first degree, or equivalent, in a relevant subject. In exceptional circumstances, where an applicant does not hold a degree or its equivalent, consideration will be given to the applicant's professional experience and evidence of a high level of academic performance at the Further Education level.

Some prior training in economics would be an advantage for the module in environmental economics but is not a prerequisite. Where necessary students will be given appropriate preparatory/ background reading and guidance in this subject area.

**Admissions Tutor:** The Programme Director is responsible for admissions.

### **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-sessional 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)

A Research and Study Skills module (IDM071) is available to support learning throughout the taught component of the programme and to develop independent learning skills required for successful completion of the Dissertation.

### **Career prospects**

Students who have followed this programme have found successful employment in the UK, Europe and in the developing world in a wide variety of environmental and development settings; these have included bi- and multi-lateral aid agencies, Non-Governmental Organisations and in government - especially at local and regional levels. Within these organisations, graduates of the MSc in Environment and Development are engaged in a wide range of tasks which include:

- Forest conservation management projects
- Rare bird and wetland conservation
- Waste management policy formulation
- Water catchment management
- Environmental protection and refugee management

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

With the agreement of the supervisor, students may be allowed to study abroad or take up placements during the Summer Term as part of their dissertation work.

### **Programme Outcomes**

#### **Knowledge and Understanding**

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

1. The theories and concepts in the analysis of the environment and processes of environmental change (social, economic, political and technical)
2. The appropriate concepts and tools to analyse the interaction between the environment and development

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

Mixture of lectures, seminars, directed reading, group and individual project work, individual and group presentation, guided readings and guidance on key sources of reference material. Feedback and guidance are important elements complementing and emphasis on self-directed study

##### *Assessment*

By coursework and, in some cases, formal examinations; coursework to include essay assignments and presentations

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

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

1. Structure, analyse and evaluate theoretical and conceptual issues and the bases for their relevance in the environment
2. Think logically and analytically and to understand the difference between positive and normative statements relating to environmental issues
3. Identify key environmental approaches and evaluate them with reference to practice and outcome.
4. Comprehend the rapidly evolving discourse of the environment and development and the factors influencing both the change and the pace of change.

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

Students are frequently challenged in all teaching situations to complete logical arguments, analyse problems, seek and evaluate alternative explanations, and justify held beliefs. Long essay, debate, group work and presentations provide the principal vehicles by which intellectual skills are developed

##### *Assessment*

By formative tests and presentations. Other assignments, including coursework and, in some cases, formal examinations; dissertation

##### **C. Practical skills - *able to*:**

1. Evaluate the bases of alternative environmental policy approaches
2. Evaluate the bases of the multiple meanings of key concepts in the discourse of the environment and development
3. Evaluate the appropriateness and effectiveness of alternative environmental strategies.
4. Effectively apply a range of frameworks useful in the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of environmental interventions and processes.
5. Identify, access, evaluate, synthesise, analyse, collate and represent data relevant to the critical evaluation of environmental issues in a developing or developed economy context.

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

Students are required to undertake and understand a wide range of reading, from traditional published sources, web-based material and other grey literature relating to environmental policy and practice. This includes both directed reading and through researching their own sources of information. Discussion in lectures and seminars emphasises the use of empirical evidence, and the strengths and weaknesses of alternative theories, methodologies and practices  
1-5 are achieved through lectures, seminars, presentations, case studies, group work, and dissertation

##### *Assessment*

Long essays, presentations and unseen examinations

**D. Transferable skills - able to:**

1. Communicate knowledge and opinions effectively to a wide range of people through choosing and using among a variety of means
2. Reflect and evaluate his/her own academic progress and its implications for emerging/changing professional practice
3. Identify, access, evaluate, synthesise, analyse, collate and represent data relevant to the issue at hand.
4. Manage time and prioritise workloads in the context of changing demands

**Teaching/learning methods and strategies**

The presentation of well-researched written work is a fundamental element of the programme and requires the application of all the skills listed in 1-5. This is complemented and reinforced by enhanced oral skills, developed through lecture and seminar discussions, tutorials and group activities

*Assessment*

By formative tests and presentations. Other assignments, including coursework and, in some cases, formal examinations; dissertation

**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.**