

Programme Specification

MSc in Agriculture and Development (full-time)

PFTZAGRDEVHM

MSc Agriculture and Development (part-time)

PPTZAGRDEVHM

For students entering in 2027/28

This document sets out key information about your Programme and forms part of your Terms and Conditions with the University of Reading.

Awarding Institution	University of Reading
Teaching Institution	University of Reading
Length of Programme	MSc in Agriculture and Development (full-time) - 1 years MSc Agriculture and Development (part-time) - 2 years
Accreditation	N/A
Programme Start Dates	September
QAA Subject Benchmarking Group	N/A

Programme information and content

The aim of this MSc course is to enable students to thoroughly understand the role of agriculture and of agricultural research for development in the context of the research-to-development continuum. A flexible programme is offered, including a Horticulture pathway. The course will help prepare students for a variety of future, agriculture-centred roles including employment in international aid and development agencies, roles in businesses or public sector organisations, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and government departments.

Programme Learning Outcomes

-MSc in Agriculture and Development (full-time)

During the course of the Programme, you will have the opportunity to develop a range of skills, knowledge and attributes (known as learning outcomes) For this programme, these are:

	Learning outcomes
1	Explain the roles and contributions of agriculture and horticulture to human development as: a source of food, nutrition and livelihoods security, a complex set of inter-related economic activities, a provider of ecosystem services, as a cultural activity, and as contributing towards achieving the UN's Sustainable Development Goals.
2	Understand, describe and critically reflect upon the different bio-physical, economic and social environments in which farming systems of especially Low- and Middle-Income countries (LMICs) are managed and the scope for their sustainable intensification to meet the needs of a changing population.
3	Identify and evaluate the recent developments in agricultural research in response to international challenges such as climate change, environmental sustainability, ecosystem services, genetic modification, and globalisation of the food system.

4	Evaluate the factors and processes in the application of agricultural knowledge, science and technology for development, and explain how to enhance the relevance, quality and impact of agricultural scientific research for sustainable intensification at a range of levels, from local through national to international.
5	Demonstrate a critical, comparative understanding of the different contributions of appropriate policy responses to farming system changes by countries at different levels of per capita wealth and diverse household incomes.
6	Demonstrate the ability to conduct independent and relevant research that takes full account of both qualitative and quantitative research methods and data.
7	Strengthen professional competence and apply sound communication, teamwork and time management skills.
8	Suggest, design, conduct, analyse and present an independent research project.

You will be expected to engage in learning activities to achieve these Programme learning outcomes. Assessment of your modules will reflect these learning outcomes and test how far you have met the requirements for your degree.

To pass the Programme, you will be required to meet the progression or accreditation and award criteria set out below.

Module information			
The programme comprises 180 credits, allocated across a range of compulsory and optional modules as shown below. Compulsory modules are listed.			
Compulsory modules			
Module	Name	Credits	Level
ADMDIS	Dissertation	60	M
ADMEAH	Experimental Agriculture	20	M
ADMRAS	Rethinking Agricultural Systems	20	M
ADMRFD	Research for Development	20	M
ADMTPD	Theories and Practices of Development	20	M
ADMTRC	Agriculture in the Tropics	20	M
<i>The remaining 20 credits will be made up of one optional module available in the School of Agriculture, Policy and Development.</i>			
Part-time or flexible modular arrangements			
The programme can be taken part-time over two years. In the first year of study, a student will normally be required to complete modules totalling no less than 60 credits and no more than 80 credits. This should include:			
ADMRAS Rethinking Agricultural Systems			
ADMTPD Theories and Practices in Development			
ADMTRC Agriculture in the Tropics			

In the second year of study, a student will normally be required to complete the compulsory module ADMRFD Research for Development, the ADMDIS Dissertation module and any remaining compulsory and optional modules. The programme must be completed within two years.

Placement opportunities

N/A

Study abroad opportunities

N/A

Optional modules

The optional modules available can vary from year to year. An indicative list of the range of optional modules for your programme can be found online in the Course Catalogue. Details of optional modules for each part, including any additional costs associated with the optional modules, will be made available to you prior to the beginning of the Part in which they are to be taken and you will be given an opportunity to express interest in the optional modules that you would like to take. Entry to optional modules will be at the discretion of the University and subject to availability and may be subject to pre-requisites, such as completion of another module. Although the University tries to ensure you are able to take the optional modules in which you have expressed interest this cannot be guaranteed.

Teaching and learning delivery

The programme demands extensive independent reading, research and critical thinking.

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.

Elements of your programme will be delivered via digital technology. Some modules may include group work.

The scheduled teaching and learning activity hours and amount of technology enhanced learning activity for your programme will depend upon your module combination. In addition, you will undertake some self-scheduled teaching and learning activities, designed by and/or involving staff, which give some flexibility for you to choose when to complete them. You will also be expected to undertake guided independent study. Information about module study hours including contact hours and the amount of independent study which a student is normally expected to undertake for a module is indicated in the relevant module description.

Accreditation details

N/A

Assessment

The programme will be assessed through a combination of written examinations, coursework (including class tests) and oral examinations. Further information is contained in the individual module descriptions.

Progression

Part-time and modular progression requirements

If there are specific progression requirements that a part-time student needs to meet before they can progress into the second year, these should be listed here. Any specific compulsory modules should be listed with their module code.

Classification

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 Master's Degree

The following conditions must be satisfied for the award of a Master's degree:

Award of a Master's degree

- (i) an overall weighted average of 50% or more over 180 credits
- (ii) a mark of 50% or more in at least 120 credits
- (iii) no credits with a mark below 40%
- (iv) a mark of 50% or more for the Dissertation

In addition to the threshold conditions for the award of a Master's degree, the following **further** conditions must be satisfied for a classification of Distinction or Merit:

Distinction

An overall weighted average of 70% or more over 180 credits

OR

an overall weighted average of 68% or more over 180 credits and marks of 70% in at least 90 credits

AND

Where the dissertation is included in the conditions for the award of a Master's degree, a mark of at least 60% in the dissertation

AND

No marks below 40%.

Merit

An overall weighted average of 60% or more over 180 credits

OR

an overall average of 58% or more over 180 credits and marks of 60% in at least 90 credits

AND

No marks below 40%.

For Postgraduate Diploma

The following conditions must be satisfied for the award of a Postgraduate Diploma:

Award of a Postgraduate Diploma

(i) an overall weighted average of 50% or more over 120 credits

(ii) a mark of 50% or more in at least 80 credits

(iii) no credits with a mark below 40%

In addition to the threshold conditions for the award of a Postgraduate Diploma, the following further conditions must be satisfied for a classification of Distinction or Merit:

Distinction

An overall weighted average of 70% or more over 120 credits

OR

an overall weighted average of 68% or more over 120 credits and marks of 70% in at least 60 credits

AND

No marks below 40%.

Merit

An overall weighted average of 60% or more over 120 credits

OR

an overall average of 58% or more over 120 credits and marks of 60% in at least 60 credits

AND

No marks below 40%.

For Postgraduate Certificate

The following conditions must be satisfied for the award of a Postgraduate Certificate:

Award of a Postgraduate Certificate

(i) an overall weighted average of 50% or more over 60 credits

(ii) No credits with a mark below 40%.

Details of the classification method is given in detail in the [Assessment Handbook](#) under:

- Section 19: Awards: Postgraduate Master's, Postgraduate Diploma, Postgraduate Certificate

Please note that there may be a specific version for your year of entry.

Additional costs of the programme

For farm visits, you will need Wellington boots (£15), waterproof jacket and trousers (£50-£100). Should you need to purchase these, approximate costs are shown in brackets.

Costs are indicative and may vary according to optional modules chosen and are subject to inflation and other price fluctuations. Estimates were calculated in 2026.

Students may consider purchasing a laptop to help support their learning. Information on recommended device specifications can be found on the [DTS Student Hub](#).

For further information about your Programme please refer to the Programme Handbook and the relevant module descriptions, which are available at <http://www.reading.ac.uk/module/>. The Programme Handbook and the relevant module descriptions do not form part of your Terms and Conditions with the University of Reading.

MSc in Agriculture and Development (full-time) for students entering in session 2027/28
4 August 2026

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