Programme Specification

BSc Global Sustainable Development **UCAS Code: L900**

For students entering Part 1 in September 2027 **UFGSD**

UFGSDSY

UFGSDWY

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	3 years
Length of Programme with placement/year abroad	BSc Global Sustainable Development with Study Year Abroad - 4 years (internal transfer only) BSc Global Sustainable Development with Placement Year - 4 years (UCAS Code: L901)
Accreditation	N/A
QAA Subject Benchmarking Group	Geography, Politics and IR, Anthropology, Economics, Agriculture, Horticulture, Forestry, Food and Consumer Sciences

Programme information and content	
The programme aims to provide you with a degree-level understanding of the complex global dynamics affecting the planet's resources, climate, food systems, and the politics of development. Through the course of the degree, students are exposed to critical thinking in global sustainable development, capturing key ideas in global sustainable development policy and practice, illustrated with rich use of case studies from around the world. The crossuniversity programme incorporates a wealth of multi-disciplinary expertise, including from geography, economics, international relations and, agriculture.	
Part 1:	Introduces you to a broad range of themes within global sustainable development across global and local levels; you will learn about contrasting visions and histories of development, key issues in development, economics and sustainability. It also provides a basic grounding on studying for a university degree, facilitates the professional development of students through individual and team based learning, and builds communication skills for a range of audiences.
Part 2:	Provides you with the opportunity to apply and expand on knowledge gained in Part 1 through consolidating understanding of core development theories, introducing research methods for global sustainable development that can later be applied to a research project, and permitting students to further specialise in subject areas dependent on their interests and career aspirations.
Placement/Study abroad year:	Students can work or study for a year away from Reading between Part 2 and Part 3 as part of the 4-year programme.

Part 3:	Gives you the opportunity to undertake an individual research project on a chosen topic, whilst developing deeper knowledge in a range of areas related to global development. You will explore the role of power in development. You can also learn about communication in development and socio-economic, environmental and political change around the world.

Programme Learning Outcomes - BSc Global Sustainable Development

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	Describe and evaluate historical and contemporary processes of development over space and time.
2	Describe and evaluate a range of established sustainable development theories and key concepts.
3	Demonstrate an awareness of the inter-related character of social, economic, environmental and political processes in shaping global sustainable development.
4	Demonstrate knowledge of key actors in development across local, national, international and multilateral levels of analysis and show knowledge of the causes and impacts of poverty at these levels of analysis. Demonstrate an awareness that development poses questions in both 'developed' and 'developing' nations.
5	Describe and evaluate process and practice in global sustainable development, including participatory approaches to sustainable development. Demonstrate knowledge of methods, approaches and tools used by development organisations.
6	Understand the specific characteristics of development research, with a particular emphasis on ethical research and equitable partnerships.
7	Demonstrate an ability to utilise both qualitative and quantitative approaches to data collection, and the ability to analyse both qualitative and quantitative data.
8	Conduct independent research. Synthesise and evaluate published material from a range of sources and produce a logically-argued and well-written capstone project.
9	Demonstrate a broad awareness of career possibilities within development, and plan appropriate steps towards career goals.
10	Demonstrate sound communication skills through a variety methods, formats and types, showing an appreciation of the needs of different audiences.
11	Conduct themselves in a professional manner, manage their own time and work as a team.
12	Use a range of appropriate IT software with confidence.

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.

In addition to the learning outcomes stated above if you are on a placement or study abroad programme you will have the opportunity to develop the following learning outcome:

Additional Learning outcomes
Study Abroad By the end of the Study Abroad Programme, students will have adapted to international study contexts in order to achieve the required academic outcomes determined by the host institution. **Placement** By the end of the Placement Year programme, students will have contextualised their academic learning in a placement role relevant to their programme of studies and developed their professional experience, skills and knowledge, contributing significantly towards their continuous learning and career prospects as graduates.

Module information

Each part comprises 120 credits, allocated across a range of compulsory and optional modules as shown below. Compulsory modules are listed.

Part 1 Modules:

Module	Name	Credits	Level
AD1AVC	Alternative Voices: Changing Perspectives of Global Sustainable Development	20	4
AD1EEN	The Economic Environment	20	4
AD1GLS	Global Sustainability: Challenges and Prospects	20	4
AD1IGD	Key Issues in Global Development	20	4
AD1PPY	Building Career Confidence and Placement Year Preparation for Part 1	0	4

Your remaining credits will be made up of optional modules from selected modules from the School of Agriculture, Policy and Development and from an approved list, subject to timetabling constraints. The optional modules provide a choice of subjects or a guided selection of topics such that the student can tailor the programme to match their interests and career aspirations. Students also have the option to select a language module.

Part 2 Modules:

Module	Name	Credits	Level
AD2AGD	Approaches to Global Development	20	5
AD2DIP	Development in Practice	20	5
AD2RMG	Research Methods for BSc Global Sustainable Development	20	5

Students undertaking the placement year will be required to take AD2PYP Preparing for Placement Year Part 2.

Your remaining credits will be made up of optional modules from selected modules from the School of Agriculture, Policy and Development and from an approved list, subject to timetabling constraints. The optional modules provide a choice of subjects or a guided selection of topics such that the student can tailor the programme to match their interests and career aspirations. Students also have the option to select a language module.

Modules during a placement year or study year (if applicable):

Students on the Placement Year or Study Abroad Year will take either:

Module	Name	Credits	Level
AD2PPY	Professional Placement Year	120	5
OR			
AD2SAY	Study Abroad Year	120	5
OR			
AD2PSA*	Professional Placement with Study Abroad Experience	120	5

Students can undertake a placement year (minimum duration applies) between Part 2 and 3 of the programme. They can also choose to study abroad for a year or they can combine these for a semester abroad and a placement experience (minimum duration applies). ***Students will only be eligible for AD2SAY and AD2PSA if they meet the criteria and if places are available in the overseas institutions – places are not guaranteed.**

If you take a year-long placement or study abroad, Part 3 as described below may be subject to variation.

Part 3 Modules:

Module	Name	Credits	Level
AD3DFD	Digital for Development: Transformation or Tyranny?	20	6
AD3DSS	Dissertation (BSc Global Sustainable Development)	40	6
AD3PDV	Power and Development	20	6
AD3WPR	Workplace Ready: Bridging the Gap Between University and Employment	0	6

Your remaining credits will be made up of optional modules from selected modules from the School of Agriculture, Policy and Development and from an approved list, subject to timetabling constraints. The optional modules provide a choice of subjects or a guided selection of topics such that the student can tailor the programme to match their interests and career aspirations. Students also have the option to select a language module.

Placement opportunities

You have the opportunity to undertake a credit-bearing placement as part of your Programme. This will form all or part of an optional module. You will be required to find and secure a placement opportunity, with the support of the University.

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:

You will be taught primarily through a mixture of lectures, tutorials and seminars, depending on the modules you choose. Some modules may include group work and/or supervised project work.

Elements of your programme will be delivered via digital technology.

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 1
To achieve a threshold performance at Part 1, a student will normally be required to:

(i) Obtain an overall weighted average of 40% over 120 credits taken in Part 1; and
(ii) Obtain a mark of at least 40% in individual modules amounting to not less than 80 credits taken in Part 1; and
(iii) Obtain marks of at least 30% in modules amounting to 120 credits. (A Fail in a Pass/Fail module will be treated as not meeting the minimum threshold requirement for progression or classification. Pass/fail modules are excluded from weighted average calculations but must be passed to avoid failure of the Part or degree.)

In order to progress from Part 1 to Part 2, a student must achieve a threshold performance.

The achievement of a threshold performance at Part 1 qualifies a student for a Certificate of Higher Education if they leave the University before completing the subsequent Part.

Students considering transferring to another programme should seek guidance from their designated Support Centre in the first instance.

Part 2
To achieve a threshold performance at Part 2, a student shall normally be required to:

(i) Obtain a weighted average of 40% over 120 credits taken in Part 2; and
(ii) Obtain marks of at least 40% in individual modules amounting to at least 80 credits taken in Part 2; and
(iii) Obtain marks of at least 30% in individual modules amounting to at least 120 credits (A Fail in a Pass/Fail module will be treated as not meeting the minimum threshold requirement for progression or classification. Pass/fail modules are excluded from weighted average calculations but must be passed to avoid failure of the Part or degree).

In order to progress from Part 2 to Part 3, a student must achieve a threshold performance.

The achievement of a threshold performance at Part 2 qualifies a student for a Diploma of Higher Education if they leave the University before completing the subsequent Part.

Professional/placement year

Students are required to pass the professional placement year/study abroad year in order to progress on the programme which incorporates the professional placement year/study abroad year. Students who fail the professional placement year/study abroad year transfer to the non-placement year version of the programme.

Classification

Bachelors' degrees
The University's honours classification scheme is based on the following:

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

The weighting of the Parts/Years in the calculation of the degree classification is:

Three year programmes:
Part 2: one-third
Part 3: two-thirds

Four year programmes, including Study abroad / Placement year
Part 2: one-third
Study abroad / Placement year: Year abroad / Placement year not included in the classification
Part 3: two-thirds

Details of the classification method is given in detail in the Assessment Handbook under:

- Section 17: Awards (Bachelor's), or
- Section 18: Awards (Integrated Master's programmes). Students who do not progress to Part 4 of the Integrated Master's will normally be subject to the method detailed under Section 17: Awards (Bachelor's)

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

Additional costs of the programme

If you undertake a Placement Year, associated costs will vary according to the nature and location of the placement and/or the study abroad host institution, and individual travel and subsistence arrangements.

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.

BSc Global Sustainable Development for students entering Part 1 in session 2027/28
3 September 2026
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