UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER

Programme Specification

(Undergraduate)

For students entering in 2020/21

Date amended:June 2020

1. Programme Title(s) and UCAS code(s):

BSc (Hons) Physical Geography F840 BSc
BSc (Hons) Physical Geography with a year Abroad *
BSc (Hons) Physical Geography with a Year in Industry*

* Selected when on course

2. Awarding body or institution:

University of Leicester

3. a) Mode of study:

Full time

b) Type of study:

Campus-based

4. Registration periods:

BSc (Hons) Physical Geography

The normal period of registration is three years

The maximum period of registration is five years

BSc(Hons) Physical Geography with a year abroad and BSc (Hons) Physical Geography with a Year in Industry

The normal period of registration is four years

The maximum period of registration is six years

5. Typical entry requirements:

ABB A level. Any three A levels usually required; Geography is not required. Two AS levels can be considered in place of one A level towards the total. General Studies accepted. BBB + EPQ at grade B, two AS-levels considered in place of one A-level. General Studies accepted. Key Skills also welcome. International Baccalaureate: Pass Diploma with 32 points

6. Accreditation of Prior Learning:

APL will not be accepted for exemptions from individual modules, however may be considered for direct entry to year 2, on a case by case and subject to the general provisions of the University APL policy.

7. Programme aims:

The BSc in Physical Geography aims to:

- develop students' knowledge and understanding of environmental systems and cycles, patterns and processes of environmental change and human-environment interactions at local to global scales;
- present a contemporary view of the world drawing on the breadth of the many

geographical traditions in Physical Geography;
- provide an intellectually challenging and stimulating curriculum that draws on the research expertise of staff in the department and enables students to develop indepth knowledge and understanding of specialised areas of physical geography;
- develop students' awareness of space and the world, and formulate geographical explanations for the phenomena they encounter;
- develop students' abilities to explore varied modes of geographical theories, techniques and concepts to analyse and explain the modern world;
- develop students' abilities to use and apply appropriate field, statistical and survey methods to analyse issues from a geographical perspective; and
- provide a learning experience in which students can develop and demonstrate a range of transferable skills necessary for effective independent learning;
- provide opportunities to develop employability skills, and career and personal development planning.

The BSc in Physical Geography with a Year Abroad aims, additionally, to:

- Widen students' experiences of worldwide Geography, the physical experience of social society and environmental place
- Expose students to specialist elements of Geography that may not be taught at Leicester;
- Deepen students' understanding of Geography through exposure to its ideas at a senior level for an additional year.

The BSc in Physical Geography with a Year in Industry aims, additionally, to:

- Provide experience of applications of geography and other professional skills in industry and to reinforce knowledge through their use in different environments

8. Reference points used to inform the programme specification:

- QAA Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications in England Wales and Northern Ireland
- QAA Benchmark statement for Geography 2014
- PDR report (May 2015)
- University Learning Strategy
- University Employability Strategy
- NSS (2016)
- First Destination Survey
- External Examiner's Reports

9. Programme Outcomes:

Ignite blended learning combines online and on campus teaching and learning methods

Intended Learning Outcomes	Teaching and Learning Methods	How Demonstrated?
(a) Discipline specific knowledge and competencies		
(i) Mastery of an appropriate body of knowledge		
Demonstrate mastery of an appropriate body of geographical knowledge including patterns and processes of environmental systems and cycles and environmental change.	Lectures, tutorials, seminars, computer-aided learning and computer-based practicals, laboratory based practicals, directed readings, independent research, student centered learning, presentations and discussion.	Essays, essay-based examinations, dissertations, presentations, contributions to discussion, practical reports, objective testing, problem-based exercises, field & lab notebooks, review papers, bibliographies
Intended Learning Outcomes	**Teaching and Learning Methods**	**How Demonstrated?**
(ii) Understanding and application of key concepts and techniques		
Demonstrate knowledge of the different approaches to geographical explanation and interpretation. Demonstrate a competence in the varied methods of interpreting the physical environment. Recognise the ways in which physical & environmental processes lead to the distinctiveness of places.	Lectures, tutorials, seminars, directed reading, independent research, computer practicals, group learning. Tutorials, seminars, directed reading, independent research, computer practicals, laboratory based practicals, group learning. Lectures, tutorials, seminars, directed reading, independent research, computer practicals, group learning.	Essays, essay-based examinations, dissertations, presentations, contributions to discussion, practical reports, objective testing, problem based exercises.
(iii) Critical analysis of key issues		
Critical evaluation of the theoretical, philosophical and methodological perspectives employed in physical geography; geography's role in inter-disciplinary studies within natural sciences; and the role of physical geography in contemporary society. Awareness of advantages and problems of varied geographical methods of analysis. Critical reflection on research observations presented in the literature and own empirical research.	Lectures, tutorials, seminars, directed reading, independent research, computer practicals, group learning. Tutorials, seminars, directed reading, independent research, computer practicals, group learning Tutorials, seminars, directed reading, independent research, computer practicals, group learning	Essays, essay-based examinations, dissertations, presentations, contributions to discussion, practical reports, objective testing, problem based exercises.
(iv) Clear and concise presentation of material		
Use a variety of geographical and general methods to present information to a range of different audiences.	Tutorials, seminars, independent research, computer practicals, group learning.	Writing tasks, design, mapping and visualization tasks (e.g. posters, magazines), contributions to discussion, dissertations (presentation of independent research), presentation skills.

(v) Critical appraisal of evidence with appropriate insight		
Formulate appropriate questions for geographical inquiry, and gather and utilise suitable evidence in answering them. Read, analyse and reflect critically and contextually on geographical texts and other source materials.	Tutorials, seminars, directed reading, independent research, computer practicals, group learning. Tutorials, seminars, directed reading, independent research, computer practicals, group learning.	Writing tasks, design, mapping and visualization tasks, contributions to discussion, dissertations (presentation of independent research), presentation skills.
Intended Learning Outcomes	**Teaching and Learning Methods**	**How Demonstrated?**
(vi) Other discipline specific competencies		
Conduct an independent piece of geographical research from problem formulation to evidence collection, result presentation and discussion. Use specialised techniques and approaches for the collection, interpretation and explanation of geographical processes and information. Use specialised techniques and approaches for the presentation of geographical information.	Dissertations; group and independent research. Field courses, computer practicals, laboratory practicals, lectures. Dissertations; group and independent research. Field courses, computer practicals, laboratory practicals, lectures. Dissertations; group and independent research. Field courses, computer practicals, laboratory practicals, lectures.	Dissertations; group and independent research. Field reports, group and independent research; dissertations; tutorials; objective testing; laboratory reports. Field reports, group and independent research; dissertations; design, mapping and visualization tasks.
(b) Transferable skills		
(i) Oral communication		
Demonstrate clear, fluent and coherent oral expressions of geographical issues. Participate effectively in group discussions of geographical issues.	Seminars, tutorials, field courses. Seminars, tutorials, field courses.	Seminar and tutorial presentations, contributions to discussions.
(ii) Written communication		
Present coherent and fluent geographical arguments in a variety of written formats.	Seminars, tutorials, group working.	Essays, essay-based examinations, dissertations, practical reports.
(iii) Information technology		
Use information technology in general, and geographical information systems in particular to explore and analyse geographical concepts and information. Use IT to effectively support geographical studies, including the use of IT for bibliographic research, and written and visual presentation of information.	Induction programme, computer practical classes and independent research. Computer practical classes, group and independent research.	Computer-based exercises. Independent research, dissertation, problem solving exercises, essays, web pages, posters, group reports.

(iv) Numeracy		
Use statistical and graphic techniques to explore, analyse and visualise geographical concepts.	Lectures; computer practical classes, independent research	Computer-based exercises. Independent research, dissertation,
(v) Team working		
Work effectively and collaboratively in teams to collectively explore geographical concepts and tasks.	Tutorials, seminars, team problem solving, field courses.	Seminar and tutorial working, problem solving exercises.
Intended Learning Outcomes	**Teaching and Learning Methods**	**How Demonstrated?**
(vi) Problem solving		
Explore geographical problem spaces with contemporary discourses and approaches	Tutorials, seminars, team problem solving, field courses.	Computer-based exercises. Independent research, dissertation, problem solving exercises.
(vii) Information handling		
Gather, retrieve and manipulate geographical evidence and information in support of geographical arguments Analyse information from a variety of sources to develop and construct geographical arguments and interpretations.	Tutorials, seminars, directed reading, independent research, computer practicals, team problem solving, field courses. Tutorials, seminars, directed reading, independent research, computer practicals, team problem solving, field courses.	Essays, essay-based examinations, dissertations, practical reports., seminar and tutorial working, problem solving exercises, team problem solving
(viii) Skills for lifelong learning		
Demonstrate intellectual development and independence through the setting of research tasks and the solving of geographical problems.	All of the above particularly, independent research and seminar presentations	All of the above, particularly, dissertations, seminars, essays, independent research.
Reflect upon own learning and use personal development planning to plan personal, academic and career development.	All of the above, particularly tutorials, Personal and Development Planning	Discussions with personal and other tutors; Curriculum vitae writing. Employability & career development module.
Manage time effectively to meet targets and deadlines.	All of the above, particularly independent research and self-directed study.	All of the above, particularly, dissertations, seminars, essays, independent research.

10. Progression points:

A key progression point is the requirement to pass the dissertation proposal for GY2435 before progression to GY3420 can be considered. An opportunity to resit is allowed in July; a further fail at this point will result in a resit without residence, with no immediate progression to Year 3. Further failure will trigger a withdrawal from the course. In all other respects, progression follows Senate Regulation 5.

For Year in Industry Variant:

Progression onto the Year in Industry placement preparation module will require a 1st year CWA of 50%. Students who undertake the placement preparation module, but do not obtain a placement or do not satisfactorily complete (attendance, participation and completion of set tasks) the placement year will be transferred to the standard degree programme.

11. Scheme of Assessment

The programme follows the standard scheme of award and classification set out in Senate Regulation

12. Special features:

Study in the field remains an integral part of the geography curriculum and the department runs field courses to a number of destinations around the world. Staff are engaged in internationally recognised research in the three principal areas of geography: Human Geography, Physical Geography, and Earth Observation and Geographical Information Science, specialising in Globalisation and Difference, Environment and Culture Development and Transition, Environmental Processes and Change in Low Latitudes, and Land Cover Mapping and Surface Modelling.

Placements

Students undertake a year in industry between the second and third years of their programme. Progression onto the Year in Industry placement preparation module will require a 1st year CWA of 50%. Students who undertake the placement preparation module, but do not obtain a placement or do not satisfactorily complete (attendance, participation and completion of set tasks) the placement year will be transferred to the standard degree programme.

As a condition of the 'with Industry' programme, students are required to undertake preparatory training during the second year of their degree.

Students are responsible for securing their own placement but will receive support in this from the Career Development Service. .

Once in placement, students will need to register their University 'attendance' by logging on to a dedicated Blackboard site once a week. In the course of the placement the student will receive one or two visits from a member of staff. The second 'visit' can be in the form of a Skype call. Should a student secure an overseas placement both visits will typically be delivered via a Skype call.

While in placement, students will be required to complete an online log. The placement log requires students to undertake reflective activities which are marked on a pass/fail basis. This, together with the final summative reflective report, constitutes the assessment for the placement year. Students have to submit the final report within one month of finishing the placement, and are allowed to resubmit once if required.

If a student fails to secure a placement or does not meet the academic progression requirements at the end of year 2, they will be transferred to the non-industry variant of their degree programme.

13. Indications of programme quality

External Examiner's reports have repeatedly praised the breadth of the education and the dedication of the staff.

14. External Examiners

The details of the External Examiner(s) for this programme and the most recent External Examiners' reports can be found here.

Appendix 1: Programme structure (Programme regulations)

BSc PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY

FIRST YEAR MODULES

SEMESTER 1

Core Modules		**Credits**
GY1431	EVOLUTION OF THE EARTH SYSTEM	15
GY1422	INTRODUCING LEICESTER GEOGRAPHIES	15
GY1423	EXPLORING OUR DIGITAL PLANET	15

Optional Modules

15CREDITS OF OPTIONAL MODULES SELECTED FROM		**Credits**
SP1020	SPANISH LANGUAGE (BEGINNERS) 1	15
FR1020	FRENCH LANGUAGE FOR BEGINNERS 1	15
GL1103	PALAEOBIOLOGY AND THE STRATIGRAPHIC RECORD	15
	Semester Total	**60**

SEMESTER 2

Core Modules		**Credits**
GY1432	LANDSCAPE-ECOSYSTEM DYNAMICS	15
GY1433	FIELD AND LABORATORY TECHNIQUES FOR PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHERS	15
GY1421	WORKING WITH GEOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION	15

Optional Modules

15 CREDITS OF OPTIONAL MODULES SELECTED FROM:		**Credits**
SP1021	SPANISH LANGUAGE (BEGINNERS) 2 (S2)	15
FR1021	FRENCH LANGUAGE FOR BEGINNERS 2 (S2)	15
GY1412	ENVIRONMENT/NATURE/SOCIETY	15
BS1070	BIODIVERSITY AND BEHAVIOUR	15
	Semester Total	**60**

SECOND YEAR MODULES

SEMESTER 1

Core Modules		**Credits**
GY2431	DATA ANALYSIS	15

Optional Modules

45 CREDITS SELECTED FROM:**		**Credits**
GY2433	CATCHMENT SYSTEMS	15
GY2434	THE DYNAMIC BIOSPHERE:	15
GL2107	MAJOR EVENTS IN THE HISTORY OF LIFE	15
BS2059	CONSERVATION BIOLOGY	15
GY2420	CLIMATE CHANGE: IMPACTS, VULNERABILITY AND ADAPTATION	15
	Semester Total	**60**

SEMESTER 2

Core Module		**Credits**
GY2435	GEOGRAPHICAL RESEARCH DESIGN (OVERSEAS FIELD COURSE)*	30

Optional Modules

30 CREDITS SELECTED FROM:**		Credits
GY2422	GEOGRAPHY IN EDUCATION	15
GY2436	AN INTRODUCTION OF PAST GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGES	15
GY2421	GEOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION SCIENCE	15
GY2424	REMOTE SENSING FOR GEOGRAPHERS	15
BS2078	A FIELD GUIDE TO EVOLUTION	15
	Semester Total	**60**

YEAR LONG		**Credits**
FR2018	FRENCH LANGUAGE POST-BEGINNERS YEAR 2	30

*Qualifying mark of 40% in dissertation proposal is required for progression into year 3

** In the second year up to 30 credits may be drawn from an approved list of year two modules that may also include modules from other science departments, or language modules. This list will be introduced via a year talk with documentation on Blackboard at the end of Year 1.

THIRD YEAR MODULES

SEMESTER 1

Core Modules		**Credits**
GY3420	GEOGRAPHY DISSERTATION	30

Optional Modules

30 CREDITS OF APPROVED OPTIONAL MODULES SELECTED FROM:		Credits
GY3430	CALIFORNIAN DRYLANDS	15
GY3431	NEOTROPICAL RAINFORESTS	15
GY3425	CRITICAL DIGITAL GEOGRAPHIES	15
GY3433	UNDERSTANDING ECOSYSTEMS AND ENVIRONMENTS OF THE DISTANT PAST	15
GY3435	WATER QUALITY PROCESSES AND MANAGEMENT	15
	Semester Total	**60**

SEMESTER 2

Optional Modules		**Credits**
60 CREDITS OF APPROVED OPTIONAL MODULES SELECTED FROM:		
GY3421	INFORMATION VISUALISATION	15
GY3437	THE BIOSPHERE IN THE EARTH SYSTEM	15
GY3434	STABLE ISOTOPES IN THE ENVIRONMENT	15
GY3436	AFRICAN DRYLANDS	15
GY3438	RIVER DYNAMICS	15
GY3439	UNDERSTANDING THE TROPICAL FORESTS OF SE ASIA	15
GY3426	RESEARCH COMMUNICATION	15
BS3080	BEHAVIOURAL ECOLOGY	15
	Semester Total	**60**

BSc PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY WITH A YEAR ABROAD

Approved institutions for Geography include those listed at http://www2.le.ac.uk/offices/international/overseas-exchange/outgoing/where-can-I-go/exchanges-by-academic-subject/geography.

FIRST SECOND AND FINAL YEAR MODULES

Regulations for the first and second year are the same as for the B.Sc. Physical Geography. Regulations for the fourth year of the course are the same as for the third year of the B.Sc. Physical Geography.

THIRD YEAR MODULES

The third year will be spent abroad in the USA, Canada, Finland, Spain, Germany and the Netherlands taking approved courses in one of the institutions associated with the Department of Geography. Level 3 modules from the Geography and Environmental Sciences Departments of the host Institution, plus introductory language modules, to the same overall credit value per year as Leicester. A small proportion of modules in other subjects may be taken by prior agreement of the International Officer in the Department of Geography, University of Leicester. Students will be required to reach a prescribed level of attainment in the work done abroad (a pass in Leicester terms according to the mark translation). Any student failing the year abroad component will revert back to the standard Leicester variant of their degree.

BSc PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY WITH A YEAR IN INDUSTRY

FIRST YEAR MODULES

SEMESTER 1

Core Modules		Credits
GY1431	EVOLUTION OF THE EARTH SYSTEM	15
GY1422	INTRODUCING LEICESTER GEOGRAPHIES	15
GY1423	EXPLORING OUR DIGITAL PLANET	15

Optional Modules

15 CREDITS OF OPTIONAL MODULES CHOSEN FROM THE FOLLOWING		Credits
SP1020	SPANISH LANGUAGE (BEGINNERS) 1	15
FR1020	FRENCH LANGUAGE FOR BEGINNERS 1	15
GL1103	PALAEOBIOLOGY AND THE STRATIGRAPHIC RECORD	15
	Semester Total	**60**

SEMESTER 2

Core Modules		Credits
GY1432	LANDSCAPE-ECOSYSTEM DYNAMICS	15
GY1433	FIELD AND LABORATORY TECHNIQUES FOR PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHERS	15
GY1421	WORKING WITH GEOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION	15

Optional Modules

15CREDITS OF OPTIONAL MODULES SELECTED FROM:		Credits
SP1021	SPANISH LANGUAGE (BEGINNERS) 2 (S2))	15
FR1021	FRENCH LANGUAGE FOR BEGINNERS 2 (S2)	15
GY1412	ENVIRONMENT/NATURE/SOCIETY	15
BS1070	BEHAVIOUR AND DIVERSITY	15
	Semester Total	**60**

SECOND YEAR MODULES

SEMESTER 1

Core Modules		Credits
GY2431	DATA ANALYSIS	15

Optional Modules

45 CREDITS SELECTED FROM:**		Credits
GY2433	CATCHMENT SYSTEMS	15
GY2434	THE DYNAMIC BIOSPHERE:	15
GL2107	MAJOR EVENTS IN THE HISTORY OF LIFE	15
BS2059	CONSERVATION BIOLOGY	15
GY2420	CLIMATE CHANGE: IMPACTS, VULNERABILITY AND ADAPTATION	

Semester Total 60

SEMESTER 2

Core Module

GY2435	GEOGRAPHICAL RESEARCH DESIGN (OVERSEAS FIELD COURSE)*	30

Optional Modules

30 CREDITS SELECTED FROM:** ^		Credits
GY2422	GEOGRAPHY IN EDUCATION	15
GY2436	AN INTRODUCTION OF PAST GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE	15
GY2421	GEOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION SCIENCE	15
GY2424	REMOTE SENSING FOR GEOGRAPHERS	15
BS2078	A FIELD GUIDE TO EVOLUTION	15

Semester Total 60

YEAR LONG

FR2018	FRENCH LANGUAGE POST-BEGINNERS YEAR 2	30

*Qualifying mark of 40% in dissertation proposal is required for progression into year 3

** In the second year up to 15 credits per semester may be modules from outside Geography.

YEAR LONG

ADGY2200	Placement Preparation	0

THIRD YEAR

Students who gain an industry placement will be assessed as per the standard model for undergraduate placements in the College of Science and Engineering. The marks from this year will not be included in the final degree assessment.

FINAL YEAR MODULES

SEMESTER 1

Core Modules		Credits
GY3420	GEOGRAPHY DISSERTATION	30

Optional Modules

30 CREDITS OF APPROVED OPTIONAL MODULES SELECTED FROM:		Credits
GY3430	CALIFORNIAN DRYLANDS	15
GY3431	NEOTROPICAL RAINFORESTS	15

GY3425	CRITICAL DIGITAL GEOGRAPHIES	15
GY3433	UNDERSTANDING ECOSYSTEMS AND ENVIRONMENTS OF THE DISTANT PAST	15
GY3435	WATER QUALITY PROCESSES AND MANAGEMENT	15
	Semester Total	**60**

SEMESTER 2

Optional Modules		**Credits**
60 CREDITS OF APPROVED OPTIONAL MODULES SELECTED FROM:		
GY3421	INFORMATION VISUALISATION	15
GY3437	THE BIOSPHERE IN THE EARTH SYSTEM	15
GY3434	STABLE ISOTOPES IN THE ENVIRONMENT	15
GY3436	AFRICAN DRYLANDS	15
GY3438	RIVER DYNAMICS	15
GY3439	UNDERSTANDING THE TROPICAL FORESTS OF SE ASIA	15
GY3426	RESEARCH COMMUNICATION	15
BS3080	BEHAVIOURAL ECOLOGY	15
	Semester Total	**60**

Appendix 2: Module specifications

See module specification database: http://www.le.ac.uk/sas/courses/documentation

Appendix 3: Skills matrix