Programme Specification (Undergraduate) FOR ENTRY YEAR: 2026/27

Date created: 01/07/2025 **Last amended:** 11/06/2026 **Version no.** 2

1. Programme title(s) and code(s):

Biological Sciences International Foundation Year

This specification should be read in combination with the specification for the degree to which a student intends to progress for the full course structure, content and other information such as accreditation.

a) HECOS Code

HECOS Code	%
100345	100

b) UCAS Code (where required)

C199

2. Awarding body or institution:

University of Leicester

3. a) Mode of study

Full-time

b) Type of study

Campus-based

4. Registration periods:

The normal period of registration on the Foundation Year is one year (progressing to a 3 year UG degree).

The maximum period of registration for the Foundation Year is two years.

The Foundation Year is linked to the BSc Biological Sciences programme which has its own maximum registration period. The Foundation Year will contribute towards the maximum registration period of the BSc Biological Sciences programme; this is shown in the programme's specifications.

5. Typical entry requirements

GCSE: Grades 9-4 in five subjects, including Maths and one of: Combined Science, Biology, or Chemistry.

A-levels: Evidence of A-level study or equivalent. Other official national and international qualifications considered from across the world.

IELTS 5.5 or equivalent, with minimum 5.5 in each skill.

Students must be at least 17 on the programme start date.

See the STEM IFY Entry requirements page for examples of country-specific requirements.

6. Accreditation of Prior Learning

N/A

7. Programme aims

The programme aims to:

- Help students to develop mature professional and study skills that will equip them to thrive in a UG degree programme and beyond.
- Provide students who lack suitable entry qualifications with training in Biological Sciences that will enable them to progress onto the BSc Biological Sciences degree programme in the College of Life Sciences.
- Develop the transferable academic skills and English language knowledge required to succeed at the University of Leicester

8. Reference points used to inform the programme specification

- QAA Benchmarking Statement
- Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ)
- UK Quality Code for Higher Education
- University Education Strategy
- University Assessment Strategy [log-in required]
- University of Leicester Periodic Developmental Review Report
- External Examiners' reports (annual)
- United Nations Education for Sustainable Development Goals
- Student Destinations Data
- Programme specifications, external examiners reports, etc for the BSc Biological Sciences suite of programmes

9. Programme Outcomes

Unless otherwise stated, programme outcomes apply to all awards specified in 1. Programme title(s).

a) Discipline specific knowledge and competencies

i) Mastery of an appropriate body of knowledge

Intended Learning Outcomes	Teaching and Learning Methods	How Demonstrated?
Mastery of basic molecular basis of chemistry, biology and genetics of human and animal cells. Define basic physiological and genetic principles. Explain how cells function together at tissue/organ level; and the functioning of selected body systems.	Text books and other specially prepared pre-reading. Lectures, tutorials and workshops. Group work/peer learning. Regular coursework with timely feedback.	Regular coursework assessments. Group projects. Presentations. Assessed reflective essays. End of module examinations. Single best answer and multiple choice questions; short answer questions

ii) Understanding and application of key concepts and techniques

Intended Learning Outcomes	Teaching and Learning Methods	How Demonstrated?
Apply basic statistical concepts to datasets; interpret outcome. Demonstrate selected feedback and control mechanisms in the body. Discuss the impact of disturbance of normal control processes on body function.	Regular coursework questions with timely feedback. Group work/peer learning. Workshop sessions.	Regular coursework assessments. Essay. End of module/semester examinations.

iii) Critical analysis and appraisal of key issues and evidence

Intended Learning Outcomes	Teaching and Learning Methods	How Demonstrated?
Students should be able to explain the process of scientific enquiry, the roles of experiment and theory, the limits of science and the role of experimental error.	Lectures, workshops, practical, tutorials, resource-based learning, group projects, seminars	Practical report, tests, presentations

iv) Clear and concise presentation of material

Intended Learning Outcomes	Teaching and Learning Methods	How Demonstrated?
Students should be able to communicate scientific ideas through written material and oral presentations.	Lectures, seminars, written guidance. Formative feedback on presentations and reports.	Presentations, written reports, literature review.

v) Other discipline specific competencies

Intended Learning Outcomes	Teaching and Learning Methods	How Demonstrated?
Identify central aspects of integration of cellular activity in health and disease.	Lectures, skills and subject based tutorials. Group tasks with feedback. Computer practical classes. Guided independent study.	Examination. SAQ & Essay. Continuous assessment essay. Computer practical report.

b) Transferable skills

i) Oral communication

Intended Learning Outcomes	Teaching and Learning Methods	How Demonstrated?
Students should be able to communicate scientific ideas through oral presentations.	Lectures, seminars, written guidance (handbook). Formative feedback on presentations.	Individual and group presentations.

ii) Written communication

Intended Learning Outcomes	Teaching and Learning Methods	How Demonstrated?
Students should be able to communicate scientific ideas through written material.	Lectures, seminars, written guidance (handbook). Formative feedback on written coursework.	Essays. Scientific posters.

iii) Information technology

Intended Learning Outcomes	Teaching and Learning Methods	How Demonstrated?
Students should • be able to use electronic resources to find information • evaluate such information • use IT resources to process data • use IT to present data	Tutorials, IT induction sessions, advice in course materials and handbook, formative feedback on presentations	Individual and group presentations. Reflective essay of study skills and on feedback.

iv) Numeracy

Intended Learning Outcomes	Teaching and Learning Methods	How Demonstrated?
Represent and interpret data visually; mastery of simple calculations based on biometric data and drug doses.	Course materials, pre-reading, lectures, problem tutorials, formative feedback on coursework	Coursework submissions, end of module/semester examinations. .

v) Team working

Intended Learning Outcomes	Teaching and Learning Methods	How Demonstrated?
Working in groups to solve problems, prepare and deliver presentations.	Feedback in workshops. Formative feedback on presentations and reports.	Presentations (slides and posters) and reports. .

vi) Problem solving

Intended Learning Outcomes	Teaching and Learning Methods	How Demonstrated?
To apply scientific knowledge to a variety of problems	Lectures, workshops, formative feedback on regular coursework assessments.	Group presentations, regular coursework assessments, examinations.

vii) Information handling

Intended Learning Outcomes	Teaching and Learning Methods	How Demonstrated?
Students should be able to correctly process, average and present scientific data and draw appropriate conclusions from it	Skills workshops, course handbooks, formative feedback on coursework assessments.	Coursework assessments

viii) Skills for lifelong learning

Intended Learning Outcomes	Teaching and Learning Methods	How Demonstrated?
Students should • keep an ordered set of course notes • organise their time effectively • be able assimilate and draw accurate conclusions from a wide variety of data • to effectively communicate scientific conclusions in both written and oral form	Professional practice tutorials, compulsory attendance at core learning activities, specific instruction in lectures and seminars, formative feedback on presentations and written material	By keeping ordered notes, by attending sessions and being punctual, through regular coursework assessment and end of semester examinations, reports and presentations. Meeting deadlines. .

10. Progression points

This programme does not exactly follow the standard Senate Regulations governing undergraduate programmes of study.

The following additional progression requirements for this programme have been approved:

Modules:

- The Biological Sciences element of the programme is designed to be linear with Biological Sciences module BS0015, followed by modules , BS0012, BS00016 and BS0014 in this order.
- Students on the IFY will study the English language and skills modules in parallel with Biological Sciences modules - one English language and skills module in each semester.
- Modules are examined by a range of assessment methods as approved by Programme Approval Panels and specified in module specifications.
- Module specifications state how the components of a module will be combined to form a module mark and whether a particular mark must be gained in an individual component of the module to be passed.
- Students are given credit for a module when they have completed all the requirements of the module. All assessment requirements must be completed and a pass mark in for the module achieved. Students are required to submit or sit all assessments relating to a module,

except where a student has accepted mitigating circumstances and the Mitigating Circumstances Panel has approved an alternative course of action.

Assessment and Progression:

- The performance of all students will be reviewed by a Board of Examiners to determine whether they have met the requirements to progress to the next level of study.
- The pass mark for all module assessments is 40.00%
- To progress to the next level students must have achieved a mark of at least 40.00% in all modules and and also meet any specified qualifying marks for assessments within individual modules

Students note that:

- You only resit assessments that are necessary for you to progress or to enable you with the opportunity to achieve a level 3 Foundation Certificate.
- If you resit any assessment, the maximum mark for that assessment which will be recorded in your student record will be capped at the pass mark of 40.00%. In determining progression to year 1 undergraduate studies your resit mark will be capped at the progression mark (according to the overall CWA percentage level).
- You will automatically be offered resits (if you can pass the module with the resit marks as described above)
- If you have an (accepted) mitigating circumstance for an assessment that requires you to resit, you will be offered a 'first-sit' for that assessment instead of a 'resit'. There are two differences. One difference is that all assessments may be given a first-sit: for example, labs can be given a first-sit but not a resit. The second difference is that in a 'first-sit' the maximum possible mark is 100.00%, whereas in a 'resit' the maximum possible mark is 40.00%.

Reassessment will ordinarily be offered on one occasion only. However, if certain coursework assessment components are not resittable, it will be detailed in the module specification documents.

If you fail to meet the progression requirement in an assessment component with a specific progression requirement (as detailed in the module information), a resit of the assessment component will be offered even if the module has been passed overall.

- The performance of students who have undertaken re-assessments will be reviewed by a Board of Examiners.
- Students who have met the requirements of the modules for which they have been re-assessed will progress to the next level.
- No third attempt at an assessment, with or without residence, will be allowed.
- Where, due to accepted mitigating circumstances, a student has not been able to complete two attempts at relevant assessments the Board of Examiners may consider, at its discretion, the award of further attempts via a repeat year.
- Following progression to Year 1, normal Senate Regulations will apply.
- Students on the Biological Sciences (with Foundation Year) BSc will under no circumstances be allowed to transfer to the MBChB Medicine (with Foundation Year), or Physiotherapy (with a Foundation Year)

In cases where students have failed to meet a requirement to progress they will be required to withdraw from the course. At the end of the foundation year students may receive a level 3

Foundation Certificate. To receive a level 3 Foundation Certificate students must have passed all modules in the foundation year at 40.00%.

a) Course transfers

N/A

b) Year abroad

N/A

c) Year in Industry

N/A

11. Criteria for award and classification

The Foundation Year does not follow the standard Senate Regulations for undergraduate taught provision in Year 0 (see above).

Years 1, 2 and 3 of the Biological Sciences BSc will follow the standard scheme of award and classification set out in Senate Regulation 5.

12. Special features

The programme will be designed to maximise opportunities for digital and online teaching, learning, collaboration, assessment and support.

Students on this programme will advance through the four quadrants of the University of Leicester Research-inspired Education Framework as follows:

RiE Quadrant	Narrative
	During the Foundation Year, students experience research-briefed, research-based and research–oriented education. Staff research interests inform the design of teaching sessions and assessments, and research-active staff are involved in their delivery. Students undertake guided research tasks, in which they begin to explore published research content, and undertake framed enquiry through practical classes. They are well prepared for our BSc and MBiolSci programmes in which we deliver the Research Inspired Education Framework in full, as described below.
Research-briefed Bringing staff research content into the curriculum.	**Research-briefed**: Staff introduce their research interests to each student cohort, linking their research to relevant teaching topics. All lecture-based modules include information on research that underpins current knowledge. First-year modules feature "flagship" lectures from leading researchers, demonstrating how fundamental knowledge and skills are applied in cutting-edge research. In later years, specialised modules reflect staff research programmes. Practical classes, workshops, and authentic assessments are based on real-world research.
Research-based Framed enquiry for exploring	**Research-based:** From their Foundation Year, students engage in laboratory and fieldwork, gaining insight into the scientific method, hypothesis testing and data handling. Experimental and research study design are formally taught and practiced in Year 2, through core *Research Skills* modules where students work in teams to devise and present original research proposals.

existing knowledge. **Research-oriented** Students critique published research content and process. **Research-apprenticed** Experiencing the research process and methods; building new knowledge.	**Research-oriented:** Familiarity with research publications is introduced in Foundation Year and Year 1 tutorials and builds throughout our programmes, particularly in the Year 2 *Research Skills* modules. In year 3, students critically evaluate published research through essays, articles, presentations and debates. The third-year project requires students to frame their research within the context of existing knowledge via a literature review, emphasising the provisional and incomplete nature of scientific knowledge. **Research-apprenticed:** In the third-year capstone project, students build on their prior learning to create new knowledge. Experimental projects may involve laboratory, field or computer-based work, generating and analysing novel data. Analytical projects answer scientific questions through systematic literature reviews, meta-analyses, surveys, and/or new analysis of provided data. Education projects enable students to conduct research in local schools or colleges.

As part of studying at a research-intensive university, students on this programme have the following extra or co-curricular opportunities available to them to gain exposure to research culture:

Students receive an annual Research Newsletter summarising recent research and linking to publications by staff who teach on the programme, highlighting their high-profile research and impact on society, the economy and healthcare. This is designed to encourage students to apply for a range of summer research internships, which may be funded by learned societies. Students are supported to identify and apply to internal and external research internships and summer research programmes by a dedicated member of our academic staff.

Teaching on this programme will be research-informed (it draws consciously on systematic inquiry into the teaching and learning process itself) in the following way:

The School of Biological Sciences supports all staff involved in teaching to gain a recognised Higher Education teaching qualification in which they demonstrate their use of teaching theory to support their own practice and reflect on their current teaching and continuing professional development. We also run a regular 'BioEd matters' seminar and workshop series in which internal and external speakers present pedagogical research, report back on teaching conferences and teaching innovations, and support best practice through reflection and evaluation.

12b. The programmes to which students may progress from this foundation year carry professional accreditation. Please see the relevant programme specification for detail. Please note that the accreditation applies only to the degree to which a student progresses. The foundation year alone does not carry independent professional accreditation.

13. Indications of programme quality

The programme – including individual modules – will be reviewed on an annual basis. An external examiner will be appointed. The standard University structure of Learning and Teaching Team, Programme Team, Panels and Boards of Examiners and Staff-Student Committees will be put in place.

14. External Examiner(s) reports

The details of the External Examiner(s) for this programme and the most recent External Examiners' reports for this programme can be found at exampapers@Leicester [log-in required]

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Appendix 1: Programme structure (programme regulations)

The University regularly reviews its programmes and modules to ensure that they reflect the current status of the discipline and offer the best learning experience to students. On occasion, it may be necessary to alter particular aspects of a course or module.

Biological Sciences (with International Foundation Year) BSc

Level 3/Year 0 2026/27

Credit breakdown

Status	Year long	Semester 1	Semester 2
Core	n/a	60 credits	60 credits
Optional	n/a	n/a	n/a

120 credits in total

Core modules

Delivery period	Code	Title	Credits
Sem 1	BS0015	Fundamental Topics in Biological Sciences	15 credits
Sem 1	BS0012	Introduction to Medical Sciences	30 credits
Sem 1	BS0017	Academic English Language and Skills for Biological Sciences 1	15 credits
Sem 2	BS0016	Fundamental Topics in Human Biology and Behaviour	15 credits
Sem 2	BS0014	Biological Sciences: Molecules to Systems	30 credits
Sem 2	BS0018	Academic English Language and Skills for Biological Sciences 2	15 credits

Notes
N/A

Appendix 2: Module specifications

See undergraduate module specification database [log-in required] (Note - modules are organized by year of delivery).