

**University of Plymouth**

Faculty of Science and Engineering

School of Geography, Earth and Environmental Sciences

**Programme Specification**

BSc (Hons) Geography with Ocean Science (0087)

September 2019

## 1. **BSc (Hons) Geography with Ocean Science**

### **Final award title**

BSc (Hons) Geography with Ocean Science

**UCAS code: F8F7**

**JACS code: F800**

2. **Awarding Institution:** University of Plymouth

**Teaching institution(s):** University of Plymouth

## 3. **Accrediting body(ies)**

Royal Geographic Society.

## 4. **Distinctive Features of the Programme and the Student Experience**

The BSc (Hons) Geography with Ocean Sciences programme at Plymouth is distinguished by:

**The variety of opportunities for specialist study**, in physical and environmental geography option modules and within Geography and Ocean Science core modules. This variety mirrors the breadth of subject matter within the disciplines and arises from the number of academic staff and the diversity of their specialist interests across the fields of Geography and Ocean Science.

The **research and scholarly activity of staff** provide strong support to our teaching. Commitment to personal research and scholarly activity are defining elements of both Geography and the School of Marine Science and Engineering's (SoMSE's) academic community. Staff members model the process of discovery that is encouraged in students, bringing enthusiasm and intellectual authority to their teaching

**Experiential learning** is 'learning by doing' and is shown, in Geography and Ocean Science, by the 'hands-on' approach to exploring the disciplines. We offer a substantial programme of experiential learning, especially in the Geography subject area, including an extensive fieldwork programme that is among the best of all HEI geography programmes in the UK, activities in scientific, IT and cartographic labs, debate and role-play, and work-based learning.

**Explicit preparation for employment** is a cornerstone of the curriculum and is seen particularly in opportunities for work placements (including the option to spend a year in industry) and module(s) that focus specifically on career development. In addition, the BSc Geography with Ocean Science programme provides ample opportunity for students to develop the personal transferable skills

valued by employers, such as problem-solving, team work and dealing with complexity and uncertainty.

**Independence, responsibility and autonomy** are developed in students through the carefully structuring of investigative tasks throughout the degree, culminating in the student-led dissertation at the final stage

Geography staff members provide individualised support for **students' academic and personal development**, primarily through an active personal tutoring system. The academic community of staff and students in both Geography and SoMSE has a positive atmosphere; academic staff members are accessible to students and relationships between staff and students are good. Further, students benefit from an exceptionally committed and well-qualified professional support staff.

## **5. Relevant QAA Subject Benchmark Group(s)**

Geography

[http://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Documents/Subject-benchmark\\_statement-Geography.pdf](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Documents/Subject-benchmark_statement-Geography.pdf)

## **6. Programme Structure**

The BSc (Hons) Geography with Ocean Science programme is modular. It takes a minimum of three years to complete, and most students complete one Stage of study each year. In addition, students may undertake a work experience placement between Stages 2 and 4, which does not contribute numerically to the final degree but leads to the University's Certificate of Professional Experience.

Geography has well-established exchange schemes with universities in the USA and Canada and most countries in continental Europe. Students may spend Stage 2 on such a scheme. Students on exchange must follow and pass an approved programme of study, and this needs to reflect both the Geography and Ocean Science components of the programme. This is likely to limit the number of potential destinations available but should not completely rule out the possibility of an exchange in Stage 2. The marks gained while on exchange do not contribute numerically to the final degree (thus the programme follows the University regulations, in that 10% of the final aggregate mark is calculated as from the best 80 credits in Stage 1 and the remaining 90% from all modules at Stage 4).

A complete Stage of study consists of 120 credits; in all three stages, modules are 20 credits each unless shown otherwise. At each stage, students study the compulsory or 'core' modules shown in Figure 1 and, at Stages 2 and 4, further modules are selected from a wide range of options. Table 1 lists the modules in each of these categories and Figure 1 shows the pattern of core and option modules needed to complete the programme.

The Intended Learning Outcomes of the BSc (Hons) Geography with Ocean Science programme are covered largely in the core modules; further substantive knowledge and understanding of geography and ocean science is provided in both core (Ocean Science) and option (Geography) modules at Stages 2 & 4, and these modules also provide opportunities to develop cognitive and intellectual, key, transferable, employment-related and practical skills.

First Year (core modules shaded grey, OS modules blue)	
<b>Semester A</b>	<b>Semester B</b>
GGP1205 Catchments and Coasts	GGP1206 Environment and Climate
GGX1205 Geographical Journeys	GGX1206 Sustainable Futures
OS102 Physical and Chemical Processes of the Oceans (core)	OS109 Introduction to Biodiversity and Marine Ecosystems (core)

Second Year (core modules shaded grey, OS modules blue)	
<b>Semester A</b>	<b>Semester B</b>
GGX2201 Principles and Applications of Geography I	GGX2202 Principles and Applications of Geography II
OS201 Global Ocean Processes (core)	OS204 Waves, Tides and Coastal Dynamics (core)
Option 1*	Option 2#
* Choose one from: GGP2200: Quaternary Environments and Archaeology GGP2201: Catchment and River Environments GGX2203: Geographical Information Systems	# Choose one from: GGX2204 Fieldwork in Geography GGP2204: Cold Environments ENVS 2005: Weather and Climate

Final Year (core modules shaded grey, OS modules blue)	
<b>Semester A</b>	<b>Semester B</b>
GGX3200: Dissertation in Geography	
OS303 Ocean Dynamics (core)	OS306 Coastal Geomorphology and Estuaries (core)
Option 1*	Option 2#
* Choose one from: GGP3200: Restoring Freshwater Environments GGP3206: Desert Environments GGX3203: Work Based Learning in Geography	# Choose one from: GGP3202: Tectonic Geomorphology GGP3204: Biological Conservation GGP3205: Global Climate Change GGX3201: Advanced Fieldwork in Geography

**Figure 1.** BSc (Hons) Geography with Ocean Science.

**Table 1.** Modules available in BSc (Hons) Geography with Ocean Science. All modules are 20 credits except where noted.

**Stage 1 (all core)**

GGX1205 Geographical Journeys  
GGX1206 Geography and Sustainability  
GGP1205 Catchments and Coasts  
GGP1206 Climate and Environment  
OS102 Physical and Chemical Processes of the Oceans  
OS109 Introduction to Biodiversity and Marine Ecosystems

**Stage 2**

*Core*

GGX2201 Principles and Applications of Geography 1  
GGX2202 Principles and Applications of Geography 2  
OS201 Global Ocean Processes  
OS204 Waves, Tides and Coastal Dynamics

*Options:* Distribution between semesters will vary from year to year

GGP2200 Quaternary Environments and Archaeology  
GGP2201 Catchment and River Environments  
GGP2202 Landscape Ecology (n.b. resting 2019-20)  
GGP2203 Coastal Environments (n.b. resting 2019-20)  
GGP2204 Cold Environments  
GGX2204 Fieldwork in Geography  
GGX2203 Geographical Information Systems

Stage 2 modules with fewer than 15 registered students in any given academic year will not run in that year.

**Stage 3**

Stage 3 consists of the optional work placement year. Students electing to take this year follow the non credit-bearing module below. The majority of students pass directly from Stage 2 to Stage 4.

APIE305 Placement in Geography

**Stage 4**

*Core*

GGX3200 Dissertation in Geography (40 credits)  
OS303 Ocean Dynamics  
OS306 Coastal Geomorphology and Estuaries

*Options:* Distribution between semesters will vary from year to year

GGP3200	Restoring Freshwater Environments
GGP3201	Long-term Ecology and Conservation (n.b. resting 2019-20)
GGP3202	Tectonic Geomorphology
GGP3204	Biological Conservation
GGP3205	Global Climate Change
GGP3206	Desert Environments
GGX3201	Advanced Fieldwork in Geography
GGX3203	Work Based Learning in Geography

Stage 4 modules with fewer than 15 registered students in any given academic year will not run in that year.

## **7. Programme Aims**

The aims of the BSc (Hons) Geography with Ocean Science programme at Plymouth are to:

Provide a wide-ranging, relevant and contemporary curriculum in physical and environmental geography and ocean science, enriched by the research and scholarly activity of staff and characterised by an active 'hands-on' approach to learning

Develop graduates who:

- Have thorough knowledge, understanding and practical experience in physical and environmental geography and ocean science
- Are critical, rational and creative thinkers
- Are confident, adaptable and independent learners
- Are readily employable and equipped for lifelong learning
- Are prepared to take a co-operative and responsible role in society.

## **8. Programme Intended Learning Outcomes**

### **8.1. Knowledge and understanding**

On successful completion graduates should have developed an understanding:

- 1) Of the complex and reciprocal nature of geographical processes, particularly those operating in the physical landscape and pertinent to ocean science
- 2) That geographical processes operate over a variety of scales in space and time
- 3) That spatial variation in geographical processes leads to pattern in the distribution of geographical phenomena, particularly in the landscapes of physical geography, the oceans and coasts, and to both distinctiveness and interdependence among places
- 4) Of the diversity of approaches to generating geographical knowledge, through experience of the epistemologies, theories, concepts and paradigms appropriate to studies in physical geography and ocean science

## **8.2. Cognitive and intellectual skills**

On successful completion graduates should be able to:

- 1) Discuss the contested and provisional nature of knowledge and understanding
- 2) Assess the reliability and validity of evidence, articulating weaknesses in the arguments of others
- 3) Develop a reasoned and sustained argument
- 4) Identify, formulate and evaluate questions or problems, particularly in contexts that are multi- or inter-disciplinary
- 5) Evaluate and synthesise information effectively from disparate sources

## **8.3. Key, transferable and employment-related skills**

On successful completion graduates should be able to:

- 1) Communicate effectively and fluently by written, oral and visual means, adapting material to different audiences in various settings
- 2) Work independently and organise their own learning
- 3) Search for, retrieve, sift, select and order information from a variety of sources including both academic and employers' literature
- 4) Reflect upon their learning processes, evaluating personal strengths and weaknesses
- 5) Apply numerical skills effectively and appropriately
- 6) Participate effectively and supportively in teams, meeting obligations to others

## **8.4. Practical skills**

On successful completion graduates should be able to:

- 1) Evaluate, select and apply appropriate techniques, to *collect* information pertinent to geography and ocean science
- 2) Evaluate, select and apply appropriate techniques, to *analyse* information, pertinent to geography and ocean science, in qualitative and quantitative forms
- 3) Evaluate, select and apply appropriate techniques, to *present* information pertinent to geography and ocean science
- 4) Plan, design, execute and report on an original geographical investigation, safely and with due regard to ethical considerations
- 5) Apply concepts and principles of knowledge about geography and ocean science to new issues and situations.



## 9. Admissions Criteria, including APCL, APEL and DAS arrangements

All applicants must have GCSE (or equivalent) Maths and English at Grade C or above. Further requirements are set out in Table 2.

A-level/AS-level	Normal minimum entry requirements are 108 - 112 UCAS points, a typical offer is 112 points from a minimum of 2 A-levels including C in Geography, excluding General Studies.
BTEC National Diploma/QCF Extended Diploma	BTEC 18 Unit Extended Diploma – These would be on an individual basis and depend upon the amount of Geography included.
Access to Higher Education at level 3	Pass a named Access to HE Diploma (e.g. Science, Humanities, Combined), (including GCSE English and Maths grade C /4 or above or equivalent) with at least 33 credits at Merit and to include at least 12 credits in Geography related units with Merits. If not studying Geography units please refer to Admissions Tutor who will look at on an individual basis (Humanities units have been accepted instead, for example).
Welsh Baccalaureate	120 points – can be accepted as a supplement to 2 A Levels, including Geography.
Scottish Qualifications Authority	280 points including C at Advanced Higher in Geography.
Irish Leaving Certificate	BBBBB in Highers including Geography. Irish Leaving Certificate Ordinary Level Grade C or above for English and Maths.
International Baccalaureate	28 points overall to include 5 at Higher Level Geography. English and Mathematics must be included.
Progression from Extended Science	Students who pass the Extended Science year are guaranteed progression to one of the Faculty's BSc (Hons) programmes. Detailed advice will be provided by the Admissions Tutor.

**Table 2.** Admissions criteria for BSc (Hons) Geography with Ocean Science.

## 10. Progression criteria for Final and Intermediate Awards

Progression within BSc (Hons) Geography with Ocean Science and the award of intermediate awards, follows the University of Plymouth's Academic Regulations, available at <http://www1.plymouth.ac.uk/extexam/pages/academic-regulations.aspx>

## 11. Exceptions to Regulations

None.

## 12. Transitional Arrangements

2018/19	2019/20
GGX2200	GGX2204
GGX1201 & GGX1202	GGP1205
GGX1203 & GGX1204 & GEES1003PP	GGP1206
GGX1200	GGX1205
GGP2203	ENV2005

## 13. Mapping and Appendices:

### 13.1. ILOs against modules mapping

<b>Knowledge and understanding</b>		
On successful completion graduates should be able to demonstrate an understanding:		
	Core modules	Option modules at Stages 2 & 4
1) Of the complex and reciprocal nature of geographical processes, particularly those operating in the human landscape	GGX1205, GGX1206, OS102, OS109, GGP1205, GGP1206 GGX2204, GGX3200	All stage 2 All stage 4
2) That geographical processes operate over a variety of scales in space and time	GGX1205, GGX1206, OS102, OS109, GGP1205, GGP1206 GGX2204, GGX3200	All stage 2 All stage 4
3) That spatial variation in geographical processes leads to pattern in the distribution of geographical phenomena, particularly in the human landscape, and to both distinctiveness and interdependence among places	GGX1205, GGX1206, OS102, OS109, GGP1205, GGP1206 GGX2204, GGX3200	All stage 2 All stage 4
4) Of the diversity of approaches to generating geographical knowledge, through experience of their epistemologies, focussing on those of the social sciences and humanities,	GGX1205, GGX1206, OS102, OS109, GGP1205, GGP1206 GGX2204, GGX3200	All stage 2 All stage 4

with appropriate reference to those of the natural sciences		
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<b>Cognitive and intellectual skills</b>		
On successful completion graduates should be able to:		
	Core modules GGX	Option modules at Stages 2 & 4
1) Discuss the contested and provisional nature of knowledge and understanding	GGX1205, GGX1206, OS102, OS109, GGP1205, GGP1206 GGX2204, OS201, OS204 OS303, OS306 GGX3200	All stage 2 All stage 4
2) Assess the reliability and validity of evidence, articulating weaknesses in the arguments of others	GGX1205, GGX1206, OS102, OS109, GGP1205, GGP1206 GGX2204, OS201, OS204 OS303, OS306 GGX3200	All stage 2 All stage 4
3) Develop a reasoned and sustained argument	GGX1205, GGX1206, OS102, OS109, GGP1205, GGP1206 GGX2204, OS201, OS204 OS303, OS306 GGX3200	All Stage 2 All Stage 4
4) Identify, formulate and evaluate questions or problems	GGX2204, GGX3200	
5) Evaluate and synthesise information effectively from disparate sources	GGX1205, GGX1206, OS102, OS109, GGP1205, GGP1206 OS201, OS204 OS303, OS306 GGX2204, GGX3200	All Stage 2 All Stage 4

<b>Key, transferable and employment-related skills</b>		
On successful completion graduates should be able to:		
	Core modules GGX	Option modules at Stages 2 & 4
1) Communicate effectively and fluently by written, oral and visual means, adapting material to different audiences	GGX1205, GGX1206, OS102, OS109, GGP1205, GGP1206 GGX2204, GGX3200	All Stage 2 All Stage 4
2) Work independently and organise his/ her own learning	GGX3200	All Stage 2 All Stage 4
3) Search for, retrieve, sift, select and order information from a variety of sources including both academic ones as well as employers' literature	GGX1205, GGX1206, OS102, OS109, GGP1205, GGP1206 OS201, OS204 OS303, OS306 GGX2204, GGX3200	All Stage 2 All Stage 4
4) Reflect upon his / her learning process, evaluating personal strengths and weaknesses	GGX1205, GGX1206, GGX2201, GGX2202	
5) Apply numerical skills effectively and appropriately	GGX1205, GGX1206, OS102, OS109, GGP1205, GGP1206 GGX2204, GGX3200	
6) Participate effectively and supportively in teams, meeting obligations to others	GGX1205, GGX1206, GGX2204	

<b>Practical skills</b>		
On successful completion graduates should be able to:		
	Core modules GGX	Option modules at Stages 2 & 4
1) Evaluate, select and apply appropriate techniques, to collect geographical information	GGX1205, GGX1206, OS102, OS109, GGP1205, GGP1206 GGX2204, GGX3200	All Stage 2 All Stage 4
2) Evaluate, select and apply appropriate techniques, to analyse geographical information, in qualitative and quantitative forms	GGX1205, GGX1206, OS102, OS109, GGP1205, GGP1206 GGX2204, GGX3200	All Stage 2 All Stage 4
3) Evaluate, select and apply appropriate techniques, to present geographical information	GGX1205, GGX1206, OS102, OS109, GGP1205, GGP1206 GGX2204, GGX3200	All Stage 2 All Stage 4
4) Plan, design, execute and report on an original geographical investigation, safely and with due regard to ethical considerations	GGX2204 GGX3200	
5) Apply concepts and principles of geographical knowledge to new issues and situations	GGX2201, GGX2202 GGX3200	All Stage 2 All Stage 4

## 13.2 Assessment against modules mapping

Module	Credit	E1	E2	C1	P1	A1
<b>Stage 1 (all core)</b>						
GGX1205 Geographical Journeys	20			100%		
GGX1206 Geography and Sustainability	20			50%	50%	
GGP1205 Catchments and Coasts	20			40%	60%	
GGP1206 Climate and Environment	20	50%		50%		
OS102 Physical and Chemical Processes of the Oceans	20	50%		50%		
OS109 Introduction to biodiversity and Marine Ecosystems	20	50%		50%		
<b>Stage 2</b>						
<i>Core</i>						
GGX2201 Principles and Applications of Geography 1	20			70%	30%	
GGX2202 Principles and Applications of Geography 2	20			70%	30%	
OS201 Global Ocean Processes	20	50%		50%		
OS204 Waves, Tides and Coastal Dynamics	20			100%		
<i>Options</i>						
GGP2200 Quaternary Environments and Archaeology	20	50%		50%		
GGP2201 Catchment and River Environments	20	50%		50%		
GGP2203 Coastal Environments (n.b. resting 2019-20)	20	50%		30%	20%	
GGP2202 Landscape Ecology (n.b. resting 2019-20)	20	50%		50%		
GGX2204 Fieldwork in Geography	20			50%	50%	
GGX2203 Geographical Information Systems	20	50%		50%		
ENVS2005 Weather and Climate	20	50%		50%		

<b>Stage 4</b>						
<i>Core</i>						
GGX3200 Dissertation in Geography	40			100%		
OS303 Ocean Dynamics	20			100%		
OS306 Coastal Geomorphology and Estuaries	20	40%		60%		
<i>Options</i>						
GGP3200 Restoring Freshwater Environments	20			60%	40%	
GGP3201 Long-term Ecology and Conservation (N.b. Resting 2019-20)	20			60%	40%	
GGP3202 Tectonic Geomorphology	20			70%	30%	
GGP3204 Biological Conservation	20			100%		
GGP3205 Global Climate Change	20			100%		
GGP3206 Desert Environments	20	50%		50%		
GGX3201 Advanced Fieldwork in Geography	20			70%	30%	
GGX3203 Work Based Learning in Geography	20			70%	30%	



