

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION



1	Awarding Institution	Newcastle University
2	Teaching Institution	Newcastle University
3	Final Award	MSc
4	Programme Title	Global Conservation
5	UCAS/Programme Code	5514F
6	Programme Accreditation	Not applicable
7	QAA Subject Benchmark(s)	Environmental Studies (ES3) Biosciences
8	FHEQ Level	Level 7
9	Date written/revised	July 2025

10 Programme Aims

We aim to equip graduates with an understanding of the major global biodiversity challenges and an understanding of efforts to address them. We do this through introducing students to contemporary global issues that staff, and collaborators, are working on and which require knowledge to understand and analyse, and critical thinking to address. The emphasis is on current and emerging issues so that our graduates will be equipped to gather and synthesise relevant knowledge to address conservation problems, understand and interpret the policy landscape, develop ways of addressing these issues and communicate research to inform policy. The programme has a strong emphasis on understanding diverse cultural, ecological and political contexts, and their importance in achieving the Convention on Biological Diversity's vision of 'living in harmony with nature'.

11 Learning Outcomes

The programme provides opportunities for students to develop and apply competencies in the following areas.

On completing the programme students will be able to demonstrate the following competencies:

1. Knowledge Application

Apply detailed analyses of biodiversity issues and context across diverse stakeholders (e.g. government, civil society, academic) to find creative and future focused solutions to global environmental challenges. Critically evaluate and provide evidence-based arguments to inform policy by drawing on appropriate academic knowledge and sources.

2. Information Literacy

Find, read, evaluate and use appropriate literature; be able to analyse, synthesise and summarise information critically with recognition that information is likely contested, subjective, and provisional, particularly in the light of dynamic global policy contexts.

3. Practical Skills

Design and implement scientific studies and/or analyses independently using appropriate and robust practices to address a relevant scientific problem or policy challenge.

4. Data Literacy

Generate insights or test hypotheses using data independently. Find, evaluate, visualise, analyse and interpret data appropriately. Design and use data demonstrating understanding of responsible data curation.

5. Communication

Critically question and give clear and accurate accounts of complex and contested concepts and diverse world views from within the discipline. Make convincing arguments and engage with styles and formats appropriate to a diverse audience.

6. Digital Literacy

Create and present original material for key stakeholders drawing on appropriate digital resources. Reflect on and adapt to emerging technologies to enhance the impact of key scientific messages.

7. Ethics Literacy

Apply relevant research-policy ethics within appropriate global frameworks, legislation and practice. Demonstrate understanding of, and compliance with, the ethical and moral obligations of being a student, scientist, and global citizen.

8. Collaboration

Demonstrate both professional and interpersonal skills to enhance team performance in diverse contexts, incorporating negotiation and self-evaluation as well as reflecting on the contributions of fellow team members.

9. Professional Skills & Career Management

Approach learning and assessments as professional exercises. Reflect on experiences to critically evaluate potential career options and make informed decisions about professional goals. Confidently identify the relevant skills, experiences and disciplinary expertise that your degree has helped to develop and how these equip you for your future career.

10. Integrated Problem Solving

Demonstrate critical thinking to tackle complex, multidimensional problems for outcomes that can be uncertain, to produce reasoned, evidence-informed and innovative solutions.

Teaching and Learning Methods

Competencies 1-10 are embedded in the curriculum across the different modules of the degree programme and all competencies are further developed through the project module. There are specific modules that give explicit opportunities for development of individual competencies.

Students take part in a variety of problem-solving activities (10), including design of projects. Students complete a wide range of authentic formative and summative assessments designed to aid learning based on their own policy work, conducted in teams or alone (5-6, 8).

Assessment Strategy

Competencies (1-10) are assessed by a combination of coursework assignments, including a project report, research prospectus, risk assessment and scoping exercise as well as an online exam and a number of group presentations. Formative feedback is provided throughout the course to allow students to assess and develop their competencies and consolidate their learning.

12 Programme Curriculum, Structure and Features

Basic structure of the programme

<p>The MSc is a one-year programme consisting of modules totalling 180 credits worth of study. Taught modules total 120 credits which provide structured learning from September to March and the project module in Semester 3 carries a value of 60 credits.</p> <p>Module credit values vary between 20 and 60. 20 credits represents 200 hours of student activity and 60 credits 600 hours of student activity.</p>
<p>Key features of the programme</p> <p>A distinguishing and defining feature of this MSc is to provide existing professionals and graduates with a flexible training programme, while facilitating increased levels of interaction between Newcastle University, professional bodies and other organisations operating across the sector, nationally and internationally.</p> <p>To achieve this, we will build on the expertise of staff and their strong networks with organisations across the world to deliver international policy and management components, augmented by disciplinary strengths in areas including species conservation, biodiversity assessments and spatial planning.</p> <p>The programme aims to give students a breadth of knowledge that will give them a great deal of flexibility in their future career paths. Along with a conceptual understanding of global biodiversity conservation, the programme will give students an understanding of how science-policy interactions work, including science writing for policy, and provide the opportunity to consider global challenges such as how to measure the effectiveness of conserved areas.</p> <p>The third semester provides the opportunity to undertake a substantial research project, working closely with a research group in the School, as well as potential co-supervision from a national or international collaborator.</p> <p>At the end of the course, students will have gained vocational employability skills that have been embedded throughout their programme. Students are encouraged from the beginning of the degree programme to become independent learners and develop key transferable competencies.</p>
<p>Programme regulations (link to on-line version)</p> <p>5514F</p>

<p>13 Support for Student Learning</p> <p>Generic information regarding University provision is available at the following link.</p> <p>Generic Information</p>
<p>14 Methods for evaluating and improving the quality and standards of teaching and learning</p> <p>Generic information regarding University provision is available at the following link.</p> <p>Generic Information</p> <p><i>Accreditation reports</i> N/A</p> <p><i>Additional mechanisms</i></p> <p><i>Mechanisms for gaining student feedback</i> Feedback is channelled via the Student-Staff Committee and the Board of Studies.</p> <p><i>Faculty and University Review Mechanisms</i> Every six years degree programmes in each subject area undergo Learning and Teaching Review. This involves both the detailed consideration of a range of documentation, and a review visit by a review team (normally one day in duration) which includes an external subject specialist</p>

and a student representative. Following the review a report is produced, which forms the basis for a decision by University Education Committee on whether the programmes reviewed should be re-approved for a further six year period.

15 Regulation of assessment

Generic information regarding University provision is available at the following link.
[Generic Information](#)

In addition, information relating to the programme is provided in:

The University Prospectus: <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/undergraduate/degrees/#subject>

Degree Programme and University Regulations: <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/regulations/docs/>

Please note. This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and of the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve if she/he takes full advantage of the opportunities provided.