

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION



1 Awarding Institution	Newcastle University
2 Teaching Institution	Newcastle University
3 Final Award	BSc (Hons.)
4 Programme Title	Sustainable Land and Business Management Sustainable Land and Business Management with Placement Countryside Management Countryside Management with Placement Year
5 UCAS/Programme Code	D455 1455U 1839U 1840U
6 Programme Accreditation	None
7 QAA Subject Benchmark(s)	Agriculture, forestry, agricultural science, food science and consumer science
8 FHEQ Level	6
9 Last updated	June 2025

10 Programme Aims

- 1 To provide students from varied educational backgrounds with an opportunity to study a range of social and environmental science subjects applied to the management of the UK countryside
- 2 To produce graduates with:
 - (i) a knowledge and understanding of a range of social and environmental sciences pertinent to management of the countryside in the UK and beyond;
 - (ii) a full repertoire of graduate key skills and the ability to utilise information from a variety of disciplines in a flexible and integrated way;
 - (iii) the ability to analyse problems and issues, synthesise potential resolutions and criticise alternatives.
- 3 To provide a flow of well-motivated graduates with the subject specific and key skills required by a range of employers both within the countryside and beyond.
- 4 To provide a programme which meets FHEQ level 6 requirements, and which takes appropriate account of the subject benchmark statements in agriculture, forestry, agricultural sciences, food sciences and consumer sciences
- 5 For those students taking a programme with placement, to provide students with a period of practical experience and the opportunity to develop their work place skills.

For students on the Placement Year programme:

- 6 Provide students with the experience of seeking and securing a position with an employer.
- 7 Facilitate independent self-management and proactive interaction in a non-university setting.
- 8 Provide a period of practical work experience that will benefit current academic study and longer-term career plans.
- 9 Enable students to ethically apply their knowledge and skills in the workplace, reflect upon their development and effectively evidence and articulate their learning in relevant future settings.

11 Learning Outcomes

The programme provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding, qualities, skills and other attributes in the following areas. The programme outcomes have references to the benchmark statements for Agriculture, forestry, agricultural science, food science and consumer science.

Knowledge and Understanding

On completing the programme students should be able to demonstrate a knowledge and understanding of:

- A1 the economic, social, political, and legal environment which provides the context for the management of land.
- A2 the key organisations and institutions operating in the UK countryside.
- A3 rural and agri-environmental policy at UK and European levels and its application to key social, economic and environmental problems.
- A4 the natural, historical and cultural factors that contribute to the character of the UK countryside.
- A5 current issues regarding sustainable development and management applied to land use both in the UK and internationally.
- A6 key concepts of underlying ecosystems management.
- A7 contemporary issues, policies and mechanisms for land use planning in the UK and internationally.
- A8 the management of land-based and other enterprises.
- A9 how diversity in plants and animals is influenced by physical and biological interactions with the environment.

For students on the Placement Year programme:

- A10 Apply personal and professional development strategies to prioritise, plan, and manage their own skills development and learning.
- A11 Research, select and apply relevant knowledge aimed at enhancing their own skills and effectiveness in specific duties at their placement.
- A12 Demonstrate an understanding of a work environment, how it functions and their contribution to it.
- A13 Relate their work-based learning to other areas of personal development, including academic performance.

Teaching and Learning Methods

The primary method of imparting knowledge and understanding is through lectures. These are supplemented by seminars, field classes, practical sessions and group discussion. The integrated context within which rural land management is undertaken (A1) is introduced during field visits in the first semester of stage 1 and developed through lectures and seminars and supported by guided reading. Classroom-based learning on the organisational context of the countryside (A2) and landscape character (A4) is also developed through fieldwork and site visits. Key issues in rural policy and planning (A7) are given a currency by the involvement of academic staff who play a role in the development of national strategies. Basic concepts of ecology and ecosystems management (A6) and plant and animal diversity (A9) are introduced at stage 1 through a combination of lectures and seminars and developed at stage 2. Following their introduction at stages 1 and 2, optional modules allow students to develop their interests in the management of rural enterprises (A8) to cover agriculture and other rural businesses.

Students are encouraged to supplement taught material through independent reading, with extensive reading lists provided. Students also enhance their learning through participation in student-centred project work and through exercises focusing on contemporary or developing countryside issues and reflecting material that have been exposed to through their lectures and reading.

Assessment Strategy

Knowledge and understanding of this subject primarily assessed by a combination of unseen examinations (essay-type questions, short answer questions, problem solving,

multiple choice [mainly at stage 1] and partly by way of coursework and case studies (A1-A9). Most modules include coursework, thus encouraging an element of formative, as well as summative, assessment.

Intellectual Skills

On completing the programme students should be able to:

- B1 critically evaluate arguments and evidence.
- B2 critically analyse relevant contemporary literature.
- B3 integrate knowledge from a variety of disciplines and apply it to rational decision making and problem solving in land management situations.
- B4 solve problems.

Teaching and Learning Methods

Encouraging students to consider information critically and justify their interpretation develops intellectual skills (B1). Literature review (B2) is introduced and practiced at stage 2 and developed in the stage 3. This is done through tutorials, fieldwork and lectures. The Dissertation and Research Preparation module encourages an early focus on understanding rather than on learning facts, and an emphasis on problem solving is then developed in key modules at stages 2 and 3 (B4) especially through exercises focusing on land-related problems. The ability to handle and interpret information from a variety of disciplines (B3) in a decision-making context, is an integral element of the course and is particularly developed in the countryside management module at stage 3.

Students learn through participation in problem-solving exercises, research projects, data handling and discussion. Students are encouraged to justify opinions through discussion, oral presentations and in their special study research projects where they practice the production of reasoned arguments and logical conclusions.

Assessment Strategy

Intellectual skills are assessed by unseen examinations (B1, B3, B4), assignments (B1, B3, B4), oral presentations (B2), case studies (B3, B4) and the stage 3 dissertation (B1, B2, B3). Literature reviews (B2) are produced in stages 2 and 3 to enable both formative and summative assessment.

Practical Skills

On completing the programme students should be able to:

- C1 develop and critically appraise management strategies for a range of private and public good issues in the countryside.
- C2 gather and interpret qualitative and quantitative data.
- C3 use suitable techniques to analyse qualitative and quantitative data.
- C4 develop management plans for managed countryside sites
- C5 apply appropriate techniques to communicate with a range of stakeholders.
- C6 describe, evaluate and categorise landscape character.
- C7 use economic and qualitative techniques to evaluate a range of rural and environmental policies.

Teaching and Learning Methods

Skills are introduced through lectures and developed through a variety of approaches. Data handling (C2) and analysis (C3) are developed through exercises, tutorial and seminar sessions, while the design and appraisal of management strategies (C1) is supported through case studies and appropriate exercises. Management planning (C4), oral communication (C5) and landscape character assessment (C6) are developed through field visits and where appropriate supported by case study exercises. Policy evaluation (C7) is introduced in the context of landscape and environmental impact assessment and specialist economic and qualitative approaches are introduced in a specialist stage 3 module delivered by an active researcher in this field.

Students acquire skills (**C1-C7**) through hands-on practical experience, a variety of problem or case-study based exercises, and through application of appropriate techniques to their dissertation. The latter presents a less structured and more creative learning opportunity that requires greater exercise of judgement on the part of the student.

Assessment Strategy

Practical skills are assessed by way of examinations (**C1-C3, C7**) and coursework (**C1-C7**), including applied case studies (**C2 and C4**), oral presentations (**C5**) and field class exercises (**C4 and C6**).

Transferable/Key Skills

On completing the programme students should be able to:

- D1 communicate in writing and orally in a manner appropriate to the target audience.
- D2 work independently, through managing own learning, time management, showing initiative and adaptability.
- D3 work successfully as a member of a team.
- D4 use library resources and information technology effectively.

For students on the Placement Year programme:

- D5 Reflect on and manage own learning and development within the workplace.
- D6 Use existing and new knowledge to enhance personal performance in a workplace environment, evaluate the impact and communicate this process.
- D7 Use graduate skills in a professional manner in a workplace environment, evaluate the impact and communicate the personal development that has taken place.

Teaching and Learning Methods

These are introduced to students through the induction programme and skills sessions within modules. IT and library (**D4**) skills are introduced early in programme within skills or knowledge-based modules and may be further developed and practised in other modules later in the course. Oral communication skills (**D1**) are developed within a skills module and practised through a range of individual and group presentations at stages 2 and 3. Written communications skills (**D1**) are developed through essays and coursework exercises. Teamwork skills (**D3**) are developed through group-based exercises and assignments beginning in the first induction week. The final year special study develops the ability to work independently (**D2**), requiring students to develop time management skills, and requiring them to show initiative and adaptability. Students have the opportunity to develop further work and study skills through optional modules offered in conjunction with the Careers Service and by attending extra-curricular sessions organised by the careers service and promoted in careers sessions included in lectures at stages 2 and 3.

Students learn through the production of essays, case study exercises, and critiques of written materials. Oral presentations are required from students at stages 2 and 3. Emphasis is placed on effective study habits and time management throughout the programme

Assessment Strategy

These skills are assessed through the production of coursework (**D1-D4**) and the stage 3 special study (**D1, D2, D4**). Oral presentations, sometimes using PowerPoint or posters, test the ability to communicate in a variety of media (**D1**) and in a manner appropriate to the target audience. Teamwork skills (**D3**) developed in group exercises are assessed formatively through tutorial debriefs. Independent working and time management (**D2**) are assessed summatively in the stage 3 dissertation. Library and IT skills (**D4**) are assessed in coursework exercises and also in the development of dissertations at stage 3.

12 Programme Curriculum, Structure and Features

Basic structure of the programme

BSc Sustainable Land and Business Management is a three-year degree programme delivered over three stages (1, 2 and 3) within each of which students are expected to study modules to a total of 120 credits. At each stage students must study some compulsory and some optional modules.

Students on the Placement Year programme will be on placement year between Stages 2 and 3 of their programme.

All placements will be undertaken in line with the University's placement policy [Placement - workplace policy](#)

Key features of the programme (including what makes the programme distinctive)

This programme comprises a distinctive mix of modules taken from the social and natural sciences. Particular features of the programme include:

- modules introduced specifically for sustainable land and business management students;
- an introduction to the principles and practice of sustainable development, its relevance to a global economy and the importance of an interdisciplinary approach to tackling sustainability goals;
- a range of field visits and practical work related to the sustainable land and business management;
- the chance to meet and talk with experienced land management professionals;
- the opportunity to develop and practice skills in landscape character assessment and management planning;
- the opportunity to study agriculture and environmental science modules at all three stages;
- an introduction to sustainable business practices which can be applied in real-world enterprises;
- an introduction to land law at stage 2, with the opportunity to extend this to the study of environmental law at stage 3;
- opportunities to participate in work-related learning at stages 2 and 3;
- modules in quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis;
- the opportunity to study plant or animal ecology at all three stages;
- the opportunity to study sustainable land management;
- the opportunity to undertake an individual research project in a school active in countryside and rural research.
- For students taking the route with placement there is an opportunity to undertake a 9-12 month placement between stages 2 and 3.

If students study the appropriate optional modules at stage 1 they can transfer to BSc Agri-Business Management at stage 2.

Programme regulations (link to on-line version)

[D455_1455U](#)

13 Support for Student Learning

Generic information regarding University provision is available at the following link.

[Generic Information](#)

14 Methods for evaluating and improving the quality and standards of teaching and learning

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

Accreditation reports

Additional mechanisms

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 learning opportunities provided.