

Programme Title: BSc Geography with Year Abroad



## Programme Specification (UG)

Awarding body / institution:	Queen Mary University of London
Teaching institution:	Queen Mary University of London
Name of final award and programme title:	BSc (Hons) Geography with Year Abroad
Name of interim award(s):	
Duration of study / period of registration:	4 Years Full Time
QMUL programme code / UCAS code(s):	F801
QAA Benchmark Group:	
FHEQ Level of Award :	Level 6
Programme accredited by:	RGS
Date Programme Specification approved:	
Responsible School / Institute:	School of Geography

Schools / Institutes which will also be involved in teaching part of the programme:

Collaborative institution(s) / organisation(s) involved in delivering the programme:

### Programme outline

Our BSc Geography with Year Abroad programme is a four year, full-time degree course. It is a lively and stimulating programme, taught by some of the world's leading geographers. It encompasses a wide range of contemporary geographical scholarship, with an emphasis on physical geographical and environmental science themes with a particular focus on the research specialisms of academic teaching staff.

The programme explores the nature and functioning of the Earth system and the spatial and temporal scales over which its component processes and cycles operate. The role of humans within the system and links with topics in human geography are also developed and will enable students to develop a critical understanding of science-orientated issues in physical geography in the 21st century. The programme will develop intellectual and practical skills through training in physical geography research techniques, including field and laboratory research methods. The programme also develops key skills and attributes that will be valuable during the degree programme and in subsequent employment, such as data collection, analysis and interpretation, written and verbal communication, teamwork and ICT, and research design and management (via the dissertation). Fieldwork is an important element of the degree, providing opportunities to engage first hand with geographical issues in East London, elsewhere in the United Kingdom and internationally.

## Aims of the programme

The School of Geography, through its BSc Geography with Year Abroad programme aims to:

- 1) share its enthusiasm for geographical learning and scholarship with students;
- 2) introduce students to a range of geographical and environmental knowledge and understanding, shaped by staff research interests and by appropriate external frameworks such as the geography benchmarking document;
- 3) enable students to specialise within particular fields of geography (defined largely by staff research interests) ;
- 4) develop intellectual, discipline-specific and key skills, including field work skills and qualitative and quantitative research skills;
- 5) encourage self-reflective awareness of the acquisition of these skills;
- 6) foster critical thinking skills about the world and a continuing sense of enquiry;
- 7) develop students' understanding of the value and relevance of a geographical education to their future careers and wider life experiences;
- 8) facilitate a range of personal attributes relevant to further achievement in the world beyond undergraduate and postgraduate education.

As a leading international centre of geographical research, the School of Geography's mission is to teach its students to the very highest academic standards, drawing on its research in creative and innovative ways.

## What will you be expected to achieve?

The programme provides opportunities for students to achieve and demonstrate the learning outcomes listed in the following sections. These use the QAA Benchmark Statement in Geography as a framework interpreted in ways which reflect the distinctive nature of our research and teaching in geography. It is expected that the inclusion of a year spent studying abroad at another institution will broaden students' horizons and provide opportunities to develop and expand their capabilities as well as gain new perspectives.

## Please note that the following information is only applicable to students who commenced their Level 4 studies in 2017/18, or 2018/19

In each year of undergraduate study, students are required to study modules to the value of at least 10 credits, which align to one or more of the following themes:

- networking
- multi- and inter-disciplinarity
- international perspectives
- enterprising perspectives.

These modules will be identified through the Module Directory, and / or by your School or Institute as your studies progress.

### Academic Content:

A1	Knowledge and understanding of the relationships between physical and human aspects of environment and landscapes
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A 2	Knowledge and understanding of the concept of spatial variation
A 3	Knowledge and understanding of the nature of spatial influences
A 4	Knowledge and understanding of the construction and constitution of the distinctiveness of particular places and their interdependence with other places at various spatial scales
A 5	Knowledge and understanding of the operation of physical systems
A 6	Knowledge and understanding of the key geographical processes that shape social and economic world
A 7	Knowledge and understanding of the significance of spatial and temporal scale
A 8	Knowledge and understanding of the role and significance of change as central process in human and physical worlds
A 9	Knowledge and understanding of the geographies of difference and inequality in the human world and the processes underpinning them
A 10	Knowledge and understanding of the contested, dynamic and plural nature of the geography discipline
A 11	Knowledge and understanding of the diverse forms of representation of the human and physical worlds
A 12	Knowledge and understanding of the main methodological strategies used in the analysis and interpretation of geographical information
A 13	Knowledge and understanding of the relationships between earth and its people from an informed, concerned and critical perspective

<b>Disciplinary Skills - able to:</b>	
B 1	Plan, design and execute a piece of rigorous research or enquiry, including the production of a piece of original research
B 2	Describe and comment critically upon particular aspects of current geographical research
B 3	Undertake effective field work (with due regard to safety and risk assessment)
B 4	Prepare effective maps and diagrams using appropriate technologies
B 5	Employ a variety of social survey and interpretative methods for the collection, analysis and understanding of information from the human world
B 6	Employ a variety of technical methods for the collection and analysis of spatial and environmental information
B 7	Combine and interpret different types of geographical evidence
B 8	Recognise the moral and ethical issues involved in geographical debate and enquiry and research practice

Attributes:	
C 1	Engage critically with knowledge (acquire and apply knowledge in a rigorous way; connect information and ideas within their field of study; use writing for learning and reflection; adapt their understanding to new and unfamiliar settings)
C 2	Have a global perspective (engage with the professional world)
C 3	Learn continuously in a changing world (acquire new learning in a range of ways, both individually and collaboratively; use quantitative data confidently and competently)
C 4	Rounded Intellectual Development (good judgement; curiosity and openness to change; initiative and resilience in meeting challenges; respect for the opinions of others and a readiness to act inclusively; the ability to reflect upon and assess their own progress; transferable key skills to help them with their career goals and their continuing education)
C 5	Clarity of Communication (develop effective spoken and written English; explain and argue clearly and concisely; apply different forms of communication in various social, professional and cultural settings; use communication technologies competently)
C 6	Research Capacity (grasp the principles and practices of their field of study; produce analyses which are grounded in evidence; apply their analytical skills to investigate unfamiliar problems; work individually and in collaboration with others; develop a strong sense of intellectual integrity; acquire substantial bodies of new knowledge)
C 7	Information Expertise (identify information needs appropriate to different situations; use technologies to access and interpret information effectively; critically evaluate the reliability of different sources of information; use information for evidence-based decision-making and creative thinking)

### How will you learn?

The programme will be taught in accordance with the School of Geography's Teaching and Learning Strategy. The School of Geography is committed to developing, maintaining and supporting excellence in teaching and learning, to innovation in teaching practice, and to fostering independent learning and critical thinking in our students, whilst providing appropriate levels of support to students in their learning.

The delivery of teaching will take a number of forms:

- lectures both online and on campus
- small group tutorials
- seminars and webinars
- workshops
- computing practical classes
- guest speakers
- individual supervision of projects, dissertations and internships
- fieldwork

Learning will be supported by:

- coherently designed and effectively delivered modules
- detailed module handbooks for each module
- the provision of key materials in libraries and through electronic resources such as online reading lists
- individual feedback on written work
- appropriate formative and /or summative assessments
- provision of supporting materials (e.g. Powerpoint slides, recorded lectures, handouts, reading lists) via QMplus (QM's dedicated and interactive on-line learning environment)
- encouraging active participation by students in problem solving and small group discussions
- research methods training
- guided independent study resources

### How will you be assessed?

Assessment is varied and will take a number of forms within the programme. The nature of the assessment is closely connected

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to the desired learning outcomes and the mode of teaching within each module. Forms of assessment include:

- seen and unseen examinations
- . in-class tests
- coursework essays
- research projects and dissertations
- project synopses
- oral presentations and role play exercises
- group projects and presentations
- . writing exercises/written assessments that adopt different formats and styles and are aimed at a range of audiences, for example writing journals and newspaper articles
- literature reviews
- . writing policy briefs, field work journals, reading exercises
- . Audio-visual productions (podcasting on fieldtrips)

### How is the programme structured?

Please specify the structure of the programme diets for all variants of the programme (e.g. full-time, part-time - if applicable). The description should be sufficiently detailed to fully define the structure of the diet.

The programme is structured around a set of compulsory modules and a range of elective modules, as identified in the table below.

Students take modules up to the value of 120 credits in each of their 4 Developmental Years. Students in Developmental Year 1 are required to take level 4 modules. Students in Developmental Year 2 will select level 5 modules and in Developmental Year 3 will take a study abroad/Level 5 module. Students in Developmental Year 4 will normally select level 6 modules. Further information on College rules governing progression and award of degrees can be found at [www.arcs.qmul.ac.uk](http://www.arcs.qmul.ac.uk).

During Developmental Year 1, students take 120 credits of compulsory modules. The modules are designed to provide a firm grounding in key issues and debates in human and physical geography and in appropriate research methodologies, approaches to study (including field work) and generic skills training.

During Developmental Year 2, students take 30 credits of compulsory modules and 90 credits of elective modules. The compulsory modules are designed to provide students with an introduction to research design in both the lab and the field, research proposal writing, to further develop generic skills (including, inter alia, presentation and group-working skills) and to begin research activity connecting to the compulsory Dissertation module in Developmental Year 3. Students select additional 15 credit elective modules which focus on subdisciplinary areas of geography (and may include opportunities to undertake overseas fieldwork) or on more specialist techniques. These provide a platform for further specialisation in Developmental Year 3.

In Developmental Year 3, students will choose Year Abroad modules equating to 120 credits from their overseas institution in dialogue with their academic advisor, to best suit their degree and ensure they maximize their academic trajectory. They will study the majority of modules in their core subject, developing their skills while witnessing how the discipline is taught in another context, but they may take modules outside their discipline, expanding their horizons and providing for future development. Students must pass the assessments set by the partner institution in order to progress to year 4 of the programme. If they fail to do so, they will be transferred onto the three-year version of the programme.

During Developmental Year 4, students take a 30 credit compulsory Dissertation module and 90 credits of elective modules. This module is seen as the culmination of students' training in research design, methods, analysis and presentation and demonstrates their ability to deploy accurately techniques of analysis and enquiry using primary or secondary sources. The remaining 90 credits are selected from a range of specialist modules, which reflect the distinctive research expertise of staff teaching on the programme and may include opportunities to undertake overseas fieldwork.

Note that not all of the elective modules listed in the following table will be offered every year. Some level 5 and level 6 modules can only be taken if certain pre-requisite level 4 or level 5 modules have already been completed; these requirements are detailed in handbooks and module descriptions on-line.

#### MODULE SELECTION RULES:

At Level 5:

\*Students may take up to 15 credits of additional modules from outside the programme diet

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\* Students cannot take more than 30 credits of Human Geography modules.

At Level 6:

\* Students may take up to 15 credits of additional modules from outside the programme diet

\* Students cannot take more than 15 credits of Level 5 modules

\* Students cannot take more than 30 credits of human geography modules.

**Academic Year of Study** FT - Year 1

Module Title	Module Code	Credits	Level	Module Selection Status	Academic Year of Study	Semester
Academic Study Skills	GEG4012	15	4	Compulsory	1	Semester 1
Critical Geography: Environment and Society	GEG4014	15	4	Compulsory	1	Semester 1
Introduction to Research Methods	GEG4011	30	4	Compulsory	1	Semesters 1 & 2
Exploring Physical Environments	GEG4211	15	4	Compulsory	1	Semester 2
Global Worlds	GEG4112	15	4	Compulsory	1	Semester 2
Earth Surface Science	GEG4209	15	4	Compulsory	1	Semester 1
Planetary Emergencies	GEG4013	15	4	Compulsory	1	Semester 2

**Academic Year of Study** FT - Year 2

Module Title	Module Code	Credits	Level	Module Selection Status	Academic Year of Study	Semester
Environmental Research in the Field	GEG5216	15	5	Compulsory	2	Semester 1
Cultural Geographies	GEG5126	15	5	Elective	2	Semester 1
Society and Space	GEG5127	15	5	Elective	2	Semester 1
Development Geographies: From International to Global Perspectives	GEG5155	15	5	Elective	2	Semester 1

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Module Title	Module Code	Credits	Level	Module Selection Status	Academic Year of Study	Semester
Economic Geographies	GEG5129	15	5	Elective	2	Semester 1
Health, Space and Justice	GEG5135	15	5	Elective	2	Semester 1
Environmental Research in the Laboratory	GEG5217	15	5	Compulsory	2	Semester 2
Geospatial Science	GEG5223	15	5	Elective	2	Semester 1 or 2
Ecosystem Science	GEG5224	15	5	Elective	2	Semester 1 or 2
The Past Environmental Change	GEG5229	15	5	Elective	2	Semester 1 or 2
Geomorphology	GEG5225	15	5	Elective	2	Semesters 1-3
Fragile Environments	GEG5231	15	5	Elective	2	Semester 2
Climate Change In Practice	GEG5230	15	5	Elective	2	Semester 1 or 2
Future Coasts	GEG5228	15	5	Elective	2	Semester 2
Science, Ethics and Environmental Policy	GEG5157	15	5	Elective	2	Semester 1 or 2
Colonial Lives and Afterlives	GEG5142	15	5	Elective	2	Semester 1 or 2

Academic Year of Study FT - Year 3

Module Title	Module Code	Credits	Level	Module Selection Status	Academic Year of Study	Semester
Year overseas at a partner university, taking modules of at least 60 ECTS (120 QM credits)	GEG5302	120	5	Elective	3	Semesters 1 & 2

Academic Year of Study FT - Year 4

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Module Title	Module Code	Credits	Level	Module Selection Status	Academic Year of Study	Semester
Global Historical Geographies	GEG6105	15	6	Elective	4	Semester 1 or 2
Geography, Technology and Society	GEG6134	15	6	Elective	4	Semester 1 or 2
Nature-based Climate Solutions	GEG6232	15	6	Elective	4	Semester 1 or 2
Climate Change and Climate Policy	GEG6233	15	6	Elective	4	Semester 1 or 2
Flood Risk Management	GEG6314	15	6	Elective	4	Semester 1 or 2
Advanced Geospatial Science	GEG6230	15	6	Elective	4	Semester 1 or 2
Historical Geographies of Medicine	GEG6145	15	6	Elective	4	Semester 1 or 2
Kinship: Geographical Perspectives	GEG6146	15	6	Elective	4	Semester 1 or 2
Dissertation	GEG6099	30	6	Compulsory	4	Semester 1 or 2
Environmental Pollution	GEG6226	15	6	Elective	4	Semester 1 or 2
Volcanoes, Climate Change and Society	GEG6229	15	6	Elective	4	Semester 1 or 2
Urban African Economies	GEG6151	15	6	Elective	4	Semester 1 or 2
Geographies of Forced Migration	GEG6147	15	6	Elective	4	Semester 1 or 2
Latin American Geographies	GEG6155	15	6	Elective	4	Semester 1 or 2
Fragile Environments	GEG6231	15	6	Elective	4	Semester 2
Urban Water In and Beyond the Pipes	GEG6153	15	6	Elective	4	Semester 1 or 2
Epidemic Cities	GEG6157	15	6	Elective	4	Semester 1 or 2
Future Coasts	GEG6228	15	6	Elective	4	Semester 2



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Module Title	Module Code	Credits	Level	Module Selection Status	Academic Year of Study	Semester
Race and Environment	GEG6155	15	6	Elective	4	Semester 1 or 2
Regional Economics and Policy	GEG6156	15	6	Elective	4	Semester 2

### What are the entry requirements?

The School considers each candidate individually and conducts admissions interviews. Entry requirements are as follows:

#### A-levels

Tariff/Grades requirement: ABB to BBB. Typical offer: ABB. Though Geography at A-level is preferred, it is not required. We usually ask for a grade B in Geography or another appropriate subject. If you do not perform well in one subject and do better in others, that is acceptable providing you gain the minimum grades required for the degree programme. Excluded subjects: General Studies.

#### Vocational or applied A-levels

The following Applied A-levels and Double Awards only are acceptable: Art and Design; Business; Information and Communication Technology; Leisure and Recreation; Media; Performing Arts; Science; Travel and Tourism.

#### BTEC National Diploma (18 units)

Acceptability: Acceptable on its own and combined with other qualifications. Subjects and grades required: Overall DDM.

#### International Baccalaureate

Acceptability: Acceptable on its own and combined with other qualifications. Subjects and grades required: 30-32 points overall with 6,5,5 to 5,5,5 in HL subjects one of which should be Geography.

All students must meet Queen Mary's English language requirements. Students from outside the United Kingdom must give evidence of their English language ability by producing an English language test score. Requirements are as follows: IELTS 7.0 (writing 6.5).

### How will the quality of the programme be managed and enhanced? How do we listen to and act on your feedback?

The School of Geography operates an Education Committee which convenes to discuss all matters relating to the delivery of taught programmes at school level including monitoring the application of relevant QM policies and reviewing all proposals for module and programme approval and amendment before submission to Taught Programmes Board. Student views are incorporated in the committee's work through the reporting of minutes from the Staff-Student Liaison Committee and via the consideration of module evaluations and student surveys.

Like all schools/institutes at Queen Mary, the School of Geography operates an Annual Programme Review (APR) of its taught undergraduate and postgraduate provision. APR is a continuous process of reflection and action planning which is owned by those responsible for programme delivery. Students' views are considered in this process through analysis of the NSS and module evaluations and through the comments of Staff-Student Liaison Committee.

The Staff-Student Liaison Committee provides a formal means of communication and discussion between the School of Geography and its students. The committee is co-chaired by a student and the Director of Student Engagement, and consists of student representatives from each year group together with appropriate representation from staff within the School. It is designed to respond to the needs of students, as well as act as a forum for discussing programme and module developments. Staff-Student Liaison Committees meet regularly throughout the year.

All modules provide end-of-module online evaluation questionnaires to be completed by students, the results of which are considered annually by module convenors and teaching teams and may lead to modifications of module content and/or delivery in future years.

## What academic support is available?

The School of Geography is a welcoming and friendly department and all academic and professional support staff play a role in ensuring that students are supported through their studies.

Programme Induction is provided for all incoming students during Welcome Week. This is used as an opportunity to acquaint new students with the format of the programme and expectations of them. Students also receive a library induction. All students meet with a designated Academic Advisor during this week to talk about the year ahead. Students with special educational needs have the opportunity to talk to their adviser about how the College can best support them, and to agree with the students how to communicate those needs to appropriate members of staff.

All first year students are allocated an Academic Advisor with whom they will meet for an hour weekly or fortnightly during Semesters A and B. Second year students will meet with their their Advisors on a regular basis. In the final year, students will continue with the same Advisor and will also be allocated a Dissertation Supervisor and will attend 1-2-1 meetings with both. All staff have weekly office hours when they are available to see students on a one-to-one basis.

The Director of Education in the School of Geography is responsible for overseeing the delivery of undergraduate programmes, including monitoring attendance and engagement, and can be consulted about problems and academic issues. The Director of Student Support and Engagement has overall responsibility for matters concerning student support and welfare within the School of Geography and can be consulted in relation to more serious issues and problems.

Finally, the School of Geography participates in Queen Mary's PASS scheme - a peer-mentoring system where new students can seek advice and support for students at later stages in their degree programme.

## How inclusive is the programme for all students, including those with disabilities?

Queen Mary has a central Disability and Dyslexia Service (DDS) that offers support for all students with disabilities, specific learning difficulties and mental health issues. The DDS supports all Queen Mary students: full-time, part-time, undergraduate, postgraduate, UK and international at all campuses and all sites.

Students can access advice, guidance and support in the following areas:

- Finding out if you have a specific learning difficulty like dyslexia
- Applying for funding through the Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA)
- Arranging DSA assessments of need
- Special arrangements in examinations
- Accessing loaned equipment (e.g. digital recorders)
- Specialist one-to-one study skills tuition
- Ensuring access to course materials in alternative formats (e.g. Braille)
- Providing educational support workers (e.g. note-takers, readers, library assistants)
- Access to specialist mentoring support for students with mental health issues and Autistic Spectrum Disorders.

## Programme-specific rules and facts

## Links with employers, placement opportunities and transferable skills

We would expect a successful graduate from the BSc Geography with Year Abroad programme to have:

- good knowledge and understanding of key the processes that shape the social and economic world and the physical environment

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- the ability to employ a variety of social survey and interpretative methods for the collection, analysis and understanding of information from the human world
- the ability to employ a variety of technical methods for the collection and analysis of spatial and environmental information
- good written and verbal communication skills
- good numeracy and analytical skills
- confidence in using Information Technology
- competence in information handling and retrieval
- good interpersonal working skills
- the ability to work autonomously, showing initiative and demonstrating self-awareness and self-management
- flexibility, adaptability and creativity

Throughout their period of study, students are encouraged to reflect upon the acquisition of skills and their future employability. Tutorials in all three years deal with issues such as CV planning, skills development and applying for internships and graduate positions. Working with Queen Mary's Careers Service, the School also hosts employability forums (or similar) with recent graduates who offer insights and advice and encourage students to apply for internships and other activities that provide relevant work experience. Some modules include visiting speakers from industry and/or visits to commercial companies and environmental research organisations.

Graduates from the BSc Geography with Year Abroad programme may go on to a wide range of careers including: conservation and environmental analysis, quantity surveying; business and finance; marketing and promotion; human resources; media and communication; planning and regeneration; housing and welfare; community development; teaching and lecturing; research. The degree provides a strong platform for further study at masters level and beyond, especially in physical geography and environmental sciences.

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## Programme Specification Approval

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**Person completing Programme Specification:**

Emma Shapcott

**Person responsible for management of programme:**

Heather Ford

**Date Programme Specification produced / amended by School / Institute Learning and Teaching Committee:**

11 Dec 2023

**Date Programme Specification approved by Taught Programmes Board:**