

## Nottingham Trent University Course Specification

### Basic Course Information

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|----|---|--|
| 1. | Awarding Institution:                         | Nottingham Trent University  |
| 2. | School/Campus:                                | School of Animal, Rural & Environmental Sciences / Brackenhurst Campus |
| 3. | Final Award, Course Title and Modes of Study: | FdSc Wildlife Conservation (Full Time and Sandwich)                    |
| 4. | Normal Duration:                              | Full Time = 2 years, Sandwich = 3 years                                |
| 5. | UCAS Code:                                    | D448; D450   |

### 6. Overview and general educational aims of the course

The Foundation degree in Wildlife Conservation has been developed in liaison with industry representatives as a response to the interest shown by the media, students and employers in wildlife and countryside conservation and will attract students who want to study a scientific course with a substantial element of practical application and industry-related experience.

The Foundation degree places an emphasis on vocational learning development using real practical experiences to underpin the curriculum. However, it is still academically demanding and challenging, with students having to apply their knowledge to various wildlife conservation situations. On completion of the course the rich blend of practical, technical and problem-solving skills should enable students to be effective at conserving wildlife and a firm basis on which to progress to either the BSc (Hons) Wildlife Conservation or the BSc (Hons) Ecology and Conservation.

The course combines the strands of conservation that deal with managing habitats for conservation of wildlife and the infrastructure for conservation activity in the UK, with the strands of animal science concerning the principles of animal biology and behaviour. Therefore, students will acquire the transferable skills needed to identify, monitor and manage wildlife and their habitats in the UK and further afield.

The Foundation degree is designed to provide students with industry-related experience in areas such as wildlife project management. The course has strong links to industry, strengthened through two advisory committees; with membership representing a broad range of countryside-related industries, statutory bodies, wildlife parks and zoos and the voluntary sector. The course includes an optional sandwich

placement of one year whereby the student can sample 'real life' wildlife conservation with a company, organisation or charity.

In summary, the FdSc Wildlife Conservation course aims to:

- develop the students' appreciation and understanding of the scientific principles underpinning the ecology of habitats within the countryside;
- provide the students with the practical skills necessary to carry out or supervise wildlife conservation practice and implement species or habitat management plans;
- engender the students' appreciation of the value of countryside activities and the threats to the habitats and wildlife;
- provide students with the technical knowledge and understanding as well as practical and managerial skills necessary to work within the wildlife conservation industry;
- foster critical awareness of the fundamental principles of biological sciences;
- develop flexibility and adaptability so that students can respond to the changing requirements of the industry;
- provide a basis for continuing career and educational development;
- develop students' understanding and personal transferable skills set;
- equip students with the skills and knowledge to make an effective contribution to their chosen career and to wider society.

#### 7. **Course outcomes**

Course outcomes describe what you should know and be able to do by the end of your course if you take advantage of the opportunities for learning that we provide.

#### **Knowledge and understanding**

By the end of the course you will be able to:

- Explain how and why wildlife and the wider countryside are affected by human and natural processes, and interpret the implications of these. (B)
- Explain the behaviour and ecology of important species and evaluate how the underlying principles can be used to promote effective conservation of wildlife and habitats. (B)
- Identify, survey, monitor and assess, plan and manage wildlife and habitats safely in order to facilitate effective conservation, and appraise each of these. (B)
- Recognise and analyse the implications of resource management or legislative constraints, social values and ethics, and the concept of sustainability in achieving wildlife and habitat conservation (B)

*(B) indicates those outcomes having specific reference to the QAA Subject benchmark statements: Agriculture, horticulture, forestry, food and consumer sciences (rural studies) (2016); and Earth and environmental sciences (2014).*

*(FD B) indicates those outcomes having specific reference to the QAA Foundation Degree Qualification benchmark statements.*

#### **Skills, qualities and attributes**

By the end of the course you will be able to:

- Demonstrate the ability to apply underlying concepts and principles outside the context in which they were first studied and the application of those principles in the work context. (FD B)
- Effectively communicate information, arguments and analysis, in a variety of forms, to specialist and non-specialist audiences in the field of conservation and in a work context. (B) (FD B)
- Demonstrate an enterprising and creative approach, independent critical thought and the ability to solve problems, in order to conserve wildlife and habitats. (B)
- Undertake further training, develop existing skills and acquire new competences that will enable you to assume responsibility within organisations and have qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment and progression to other qualifications requiring the exercise of personal responsibility and decision-making and the ability to utilise opportunities for lifelong learning. (FD B)
- Demonstrate considered awareness, recognition of and respect for the views and contributions of others, at a local and international scale, and exhibit constructive engagement and leadership in public discourse and responsibility. (B)

*(B) indicates those outcomes having specific reference to the QAA Subject benchmark statements: Agriculture, horticulture, forestry, food and consumer sciences (rural studies) (2016); Earth and environmental sciences (2014); and Foundation Degrees (2015)*

*(FD B) indicates those outcomes having specific reference to the QAA Foundation Degree Qualification benchmark statements.*

## **8. Teaching and Learning Methods**

The FdSc Wildlife Conservation course is delivered with a strong emphasis on a practical and applied approach to learning. The methods used to deliver the modules vary according to the outcomes expected. In some sessions you will be working on practical skills, in others you will develop subject knowledge through exercises and participation in lectures. The hands-on approach used for delivery means that you become involved in the subjects of the sessions; discussion is encouraged and group exercises are used to allow you to reflect upon what you have learnt. You are encouraged to undertake independent reading to supplement and consolidate what is being taught.

The attribute of 'real-world' awareness is developed through links with many external organisations in teaching sessions, through speaker visits and projects linked to outside agencies. The work carried out in many of the modules uses examples of real situations where you are required to provide survey results, produce reports and work to the standards expected in the industry on practical tasks.

The Conservation Work Experience module at level 5 aims to give you the skills needed to work in the industry. You will have an opportunity to undertake work in wildlife conservation in a field of your choice. The experience is tailored to your needs, so that

each student progresses whether they have already worked in the sector or have come new to the industry.

#### 9. **Assessment Methods**

The course uses a variety of assessment techniques to ensure that you can demonstrate the range of learning outcomes. Subject knowledge and understanding is mainly tested through assignments, reports, projects, construction of an eportfolio and seen/unseen examinations. These methods of assessment will allow you to demonstrate understanding, objective critical analysis skills and the ability to communicate findings in a scientific manner. At the same time, transferable skills will be assessed through written reports, formative presentations and innovation for problem-solving in assignments and case studies.

Real life problems are often used as case studies and projects to give you the opportunity to deal with actual problem-solving and this can also produce outside agencies such as the Wildlife Trusts with data that can be used to formulate their own management plans. Laboratory and field work are used to assess a range of practical skills and those outcomes associated with hypothesis testing and data capture and interpretation. Typical forms of assessment include field and project reports.

Students will also undertake some assessments such as practice reports, desktop studies and seminar presentations which help develop their study and communication skills without contributing to the module grades.

#### 10. **Course structure and curriculum**

The course is studied on either a full-time (2 years) or part-time basis, with the option of an industrial sandwich placement between years one and two. A part-time route is only available exceptionally and normally takes 3 years to complete.

The design of the course is to develop subject knowledge and skills to help you become more employable. To this end modules have been included to enhance and develop these attributes. Specific module content and utilising library services are designed to support your transition to this level of study and towards your future career. The work experience module in year 2 will give you an opportunity to experience working in the sector, tailored to each individual's interests and needs.

The following schedule of modules has been devised to enable you to achieve the course outcomes. A curriculum map is available on request to identify how each module contributes to the course outcomes.

**FdSc Wildlife Conservation**

#### **Level 4**

|           |   |              |
|-----------|---|--------------|
| CCMT10419 | Introduction of Animal Ecology                | (20 credits) |
| CCMT10061 | Principles of Ecology                         | (20 credits) |
| CCMT10083 | Biodiversity Conservation                     | (20 credits) |
| CCMT10418 | Countryside Organisations and Wildlife Issues | (20credits)  |
| CCMT10413 | Practical Conservation Skills                 | (20 credits) |
| CCMT10412 | Ecological Census Techniques                  | (20 credits) |

#### **Level 5**

|           |                                   |              |
|-----------|-----------------------------------|--------------|
| CCMT20121 | Applied Habitat Management        | (20 credits) |
| CCMT20521 | Conservation Work Experience      | (20 credits) |
| CCMT20201 | Experimental Design and Analysis  | (20 credits) |
| CCMT20523 | Wildlife Field Techniques and GIS | (20 credits) |
| CCMT2XXXX | Law and Policy                    | (20 credits) |
| CCMT20422 | Wildlife Population Biology       | (20 credits) |

#### **Sandwich Award**

Students have the opportunity of taking a placement for one year between years one and two with employers such as the Wildlife Trusts, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and environmental consultancies. The placements focus on developing employment skills and a deeper understanding of the chosen sector of industry. The students will acquire transferable skills through placement work, as well as the chance to achieve a professional development qualification.

Preparation for the placement will involve a short tutorial programme during the latter part of the first year of study to identify desired outcomes from the placement year.

Students who have returned from placements in the previous year will give short presentations on their experiences to other students during a showcase event. The placement will comprise on-the-job work-based learning supported by mentoring.

Students will be expected to take responsibility for their learning, under the supervision of a dedicated placement tutor. During the placement, there may be opportunities to undertake work-based training events and we would encourage students to take advantage of these.

Students who undertake the sandwich placement will be eligible for a Placement Diploma in Professional Skills award if they:

- a) satisfactorily complete at least 36 weeks of supervised work experience;
- b) receive satisfactory reports from the placement tutor and/or workplace supervisor in respect of the competencies or learning outcomes or experience gained;
- c) submit all required tasks for the award

Students who satisfactorily complete between 6 and 35 weeks of supervised work experience and who satisfy points b) and c) above will be eligible for a Placement Certificate in Professional Skills.

The award of the Placement Diploma is Pass/Fail. Students must complete all three parts to be eligible for the award. These arrangements are consistent with the University's guidelines on the certification of placement activity.

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#### **Interim Awards**

At the end of level 4 students completing all modules successfully but not progressing further are eligible for the Higher Certificate in Wildlife Conservation.

### **11. Admission to the course**

#### **Entry requirements**

For current information regarding all entry requirements for this course, please see the course information web page.

### **12. Support for Learning**

Student support is provided in the first instance through an induction course during Welcome Week providing all of the essential information about the course and the support we provide for your learning. During the year, further support is provided through the tutorial process for pastoral and academic support.

You will be given the opportunity to take up additional support as you need it. The School has well established links with Student Support Services who have a centre based in the Brackenhurst Campus. Additional learning support is provided for students with specific learning needs such as dyslexia.

You will be encouraged to enhance your skills for employment by the use of personal development planning. This process will allow you to develop your study and communication skills through a structured process. Support will be given to enable you to access the online tools for this.

### **13. Graduate destinations / employability**

Students are encouraged to develop skills for work through the work-related activities in sessions, through Practical Conservation Skills and Conservation Work Experience. Students are also encouraged to work in the industry during holidays and at weekends, either paid or voluntarily.

This course aims to produce flexible graduates with a range of transferable skills such as written and oral communication skills, IT skills and organisational skills, who can work in the diverse field of wildlife conservation. The FdSc qualification is intended as a pathway to employment in technical, supervisory and project assistant roles.

Typical employment areas include project leading for voluntary groups, conservation organisations and country parks, ranger or warden work for local authorities, positions within environmental consultancies and work in wildlife rescue centres. In addition, the particular interest of the students may allow them to explore specialist positions such as species management and to work in organisations such as the RSPB and the Wildlife Trusts.

Finally, students may progress from the Foundation degree to either Level 6 of:

- BSc (Hons) Wildlife Conservation
- BSc (Hons) Ecology and Conservation

All of this will be facilitated by the development of an individual learning plan approach, devised in consultation with the course leader and the course team.

#### **14. Course standards and quality**

The quality of this course is monitored through induction questionnaires, mid-year reviews, end-of-year reviews, module feedback questionnaires, School end-of-year questionnaires, statistical data and external examiners. Student representatives are involved in review meetings.

Students also complete satisfaction questionnaires and contribute to the maintenance of quality of the course. In addition, student feedback is obtained during tutorials which help to address concerns as they arise.

A proportion of all student work submitted is double marked by an academic member of staff and read by the external examiner. The external examiner also oversees all aspects of the course, including curriculum design and assessment of student work, culminating in an annual report on the standards and quality of the course.

The outcomes of the above inform quality management committees through the annual reporting process and inform action plans for the following year, leading to curriculum modifications and development. An action plan produced as a result of monitoring provides a focus for the course teams and the School. This is monitored through the course committees to ensure that the actions are completed and there are no outstanding issues.

As part of the University's quality management and enhancement processes all Schools undergo a Periodic School Review. The School of ARES was reviewed in June 2015 with very successful outcomes.

**15. Assessment regulations**

This course is subject to the University's Common Assessment Regulations (located in Section 16 of the Quality Handbook). Any course specific assessment features are described below:

The award classification will be calculated using 20% of the aggregate mark for level 4 and 80% of the aggregate grade at level 5.

The final degree classification is determined by **either** the weighted arithmetic mean of the contributing grade points, or by the majority grade, whichever results in the higher outcome.

The majority grade is determined by establishing the highest degree classification at which more than half the qualifying credits have been achieved.

In this course level 4 credits contribute to the final degree classification, the overall level 4 arithmetic mean is used to represent the equivalent of 20 level 4 credit points in a total of 140 credits. Therefore, for example, a student's majority grade to be at Distinction, they need to have been awarded first class grades in more than 70 credits (from a total of 120 credits from level 5 and 20 credits from level 4).

**16. Additional Information**

Collaborative partner(s):

Course referenced to national QAA Benchmark Statements: Agriculture, horticulture, forestry, food and consumer sciences (rural studies); Environmental Studies; and Foundation Degrees

Course recognised by:

Date this course specification approved: May 2019

Any additional information:

Students will have the opportunity to interact with others on related courses and exchange ideas, thus broadening their experiences through attending modules undertaken by other students on environmental conservation and environmental science courses.