

Nottingham Trent University Course Specification

Basic Course Information	
1. Awarding Institution:	Nottingham Trent University
2. School/Campus:	School of Animal, Rural and Environmental Sciences / Brackenhurst Campus
3. Final Award, Course Title and Modes of Study:	BSc (Hons) Geography Full-time, sandwich
4. Normal Duration:	Full time (3 years); Sandwich (4 years)
5. UCAS Code:	F800; F801

6. Overview and general educational aims of the course

BSc (Honours) Geography offers you an integrated approach to studying the relationship between human societies and the physical environment. Concepts of place, space and time are used to explore cultures, political systems, landscapes and environments across the world and the links between them. The course emphasizes the need for sustainable development, an understanding of environmental change and its impacts and the exciting opportunities provided by the rapid development of geospatial technologies. A range of optional modules offer the opportunity to specialise in areas of the subject that interest you.

The course aims to produce well-rounded geographers with a lifelong passion for the subject and to equip you with the knowledge and skills to make a contribution to both society and to further your career by:

- Fostering an interest in the nature of geography as a discipline and the role played by geographers in informing and making vital decisions about some of the most pressing issues of our time
- Exposing you to a diverse range of approaches and techniques that can be used to explore geography and beyond
- Offering the opportunity to experience human and physical environments in the UK and overseas by providing fieldwork opportunities throughout the course
- Encouraging you to have an innovative, creative and enterprising approach to solving problems
- Developing your ability and confidence in presenting yourself in a variety of different styles to different audiences
- Developing the broad range of skills and attributes that employers value in geography graduates – numeracy, teamwork, analytical and laboratory skills, flexibility, technical ‘savviness’, cultural sensitivity and a world view

The course has a common first year with BSc Geography (Physical) which provides a broad grounding in the subject and allows for transfer between the two courses; ensuring that you are on the course that is right for you. There is also the opportunity to transfer onto our MGeog (Integrated Masters) course at the end of your second year if you meet the requisite level of academic performance, meaning you could graduate with a postgraduate qualification after an additional year of study.

There is the opportunity to study abroad for half a year during your second year, with exchange opportunities available with universities in Canada, Australia, Sweden and across the European Union.

There are well-established links with industry and staff are involved in external activities that underpin the curriculum. Work experience opportunities are an intrinsic part of our offer to students and form an important feature of the course. Students can choose from a Certificate in Professional Practice which is a short 6 week+ placement carried out at the end of their second year or the Diploma in Professional Practice which is a sandwich year course-relevant, work-based placement following successful completion of the second year (Level 5) of the course.

You will benefit from being taught by experienced and well-qualified staff who are active in research and/or are practitioners in their field. The Brackenhurst campus offers an attractive environment ideal for studying geography, with the opportunity to live on site or have the city life in nearby Nottingham - the best of both worlds.

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 should be able to:

1. Demonstrate insight into the reciprocal relationships between, and the nature of change in, physical and human environments **(B)**
2. Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the diversity and interdependence of places at various spatial scales and assess the significance of spatial and temporal relationships as influences upon physical and human environments **(B)**
3. Evaluate the diversity of approaches to the generation of knowledge and understanding in geography and demonstrate a critical understanding of the subject **(B)**
4. Demonstrate informed concern about the Earth and its people and awareness of the relevance of geographical concepts and techniques to problem solving, wealth creation, poverty reduction and improving the quality of life and well-being **(B)**

B = QAA benchmark driven

Skills, qualities and attributes

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

5. Evaluate and employ diverse techniques and approaches to generate, collect and record primary geographical data (emphasizing the essential context of field-based enquiry) and make effective use of appropriate secondary data sources **(B)**
6. Evaluate quantitative and qualitative approaches for the analysis of geographical information and data, demonstrating competence in the application of a range of these **(B)**
7. Plan, design, execute and report the findings of a piece of rigorous research with appropriate supervision, both independently and as part of a team **(B)**

8. Communicate geographical ideas, principles, theories and differing views effectively, fluently and with confidence by written, oral and visual means appropriate to the intended audience, using a variety of styles and media **(B)**
9. Recognise and understand the increasing importance of geolocated data and geospatial technologies in a digital world and apply skills in GIS, remote sensing and related technology **(B)**
10. Take responsibility for and reflect upon your learning whilst demonstrating motivation, intellectual curiosity, critical thinking, problem-solving and self-confidence
11. Demonstrate the skills and confidence to make an effective contribution to your chosen career by planning work, managing your time and working effectively as a leader or member of a team to achieve objectives

8. Teaching and learning methods

The teaching and learning methods adopted in this degree include:
 Lectures, seminars, group work, field investigation, laboratory practical classes, self-directed learning, computer-aided learning, library research and others where appropriate.

To develop knowledge and understanding of subjects, a variety of techniques are used which engage students in the learning process through experiences such as participation in field courses and discussion seminars at Level 4, progressing to the use of case studies to deliver principles at Level 5 and eventually there is an emphasis on project-based learning, developing reflective, autonomous problem-solving by Level 6.

Research skills and safe working practice are fostered through the three years by students taking part in fieldwork and writing risk assessments for their research studies.

The attribute of 'real-world' awareness is developed through links with many external organisations in teaching sessions, guest speakers and projects linked to outside agencies. You will also be involved in field work which will improve "soft skills" commonly referred to as team working, communication and problem solving and broaden your practical experience.

9. Assessment methods

A range of assessment methods has been selected to allow you to demonstrate your level of attainment. Methods include: a range of examination types (unseen, seen and open book); dissertation; individual and group projects; practical work in the field; essays; scientific reports; maps; statistical analysis and presentation of numerical and graphical information.

Knowledge acquisition at Levels 4 and 5 is assessed partly through examinations and class tests, but at each Level there is independent project work to encourage critical thought.

At Level 6 assessments involve a greater emphasis on independent research and critical evaluation in order to develop research proposals and management recommendations. These are used to develop skills and to differentiate between the levels of attainment of individual students.

10. Course structure and curriculum

This course has the format of a typical honours degree course. It takes three years to complete (if taken full-time) and leads to a Bachelor of Science degree with Honours. A part-time route is available which normally takes 5 years to complete. A sandwich course is also available allowing you the option to spend one year working in industry, taken between levels 5 and 6.

The following collection of modules has been devised to enable students to achieve the course outcomes. The curriculum map identifies how each module contributes to the course outcomes.

Level 4

Earth Surface Processes and Landforms	(20 credits)
Geographical Fieldwork	(20 credits)
Skills for Geographers	(20 credits)
Geographies of Global Change	(20 credits)
Introduction to Global Environmental Issues	(20 credits)
Landscapes and Land Use	(20 credits)

Level 5 core modules

Principles and Practice in Geography	(20 credits)
Geographical Information Systems and Spatial Analysis	(20 credits)

Optional modules to total 80 credit points

Sustainability	(20 credits)
Environmental Hazards and Disasters	(20 credits)
Fluvial Geomorphology and River Management	(20 credits)
Cities and Development in the 21st century	(20 credits)
Living with Climate Change	(20 credits)
Law and Policy	(20 credits)

Industrial Placement Option

36 weeks placement leading to *Placement Diploma in Professional Practice* taken between Level 5 and Level 6.

Level 6 core modules

Geography Dissertation	(40 credits)
Geographical Politics, Issues and Ethics	(20 credits)

Optional modules to total 60 credit points

Applications of Remote Sensing	(20 credits)
Applied Hydrology and Water Resources	(20 credits)
Natural Resource Management	(20 credits)
Drylands	(20 credits)
Global Agriculture and Food Security	(20 credits)
Urban Environmental Transformations	(20 credits)

Sandwich Award

You have the opportunity of taking a placement for one year between levels 5 and 6 with relevant employers such as the Environment Agency and environmental consultancies. The placements focus on developing personal skills, professional competencies and technical skills and a deeper understanding of the world of work. Preparation for the placement will involve a short tutorial programme during the second 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 of

on-the-job work-based learning supported by mentoring. Students will be expected to take responsibility for your 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 Practice 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 Practice.

The award of Diploma in Professional Practice 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.

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

The academic year begins with a pre-teaching "Welcome Week", which includes induction to the course at the start of the first year. This gives an overview of the way your course runs and includes introductions to IT and library resources and to the range of student support services. When fully enrolled you will have electronic access to the University's Virtual Learning Environment (NOW), which gives you access to comprehensive current information on both module support and University regulations. During the second half of Levels 4 and 5 there will be information on the module options available to you in the forthcoming year.

Students are able to access industry standard GIS software including ArcGIS Desktop for home use during their time at NTU at no additional cost.

You can seek academic support from your tutors both through electronic communication and during posted office hours, which allow one to one contact between you and your tutor. Study skills are fully integrated into the tutorials at each level, but in addition ARES operates a Study Skills Support process for all students. The University Student Support Services offer extensive advice and guidance on a range of issues, e.g. financial problems, dyslexia and disability and personal problems.

Student support is provided through the tutorial process for pastoral and academic support. The School has well established links with Student Support Services who have a centre based on the Brackenhurst campus. Additional learning support is provided for students with specific learning needs such as dyslexia. Effective links have also been

established with the Widening Participation Scheme, particularly Study Skills Support for Level 4 students.

More information is provided at: http://www.ntu.ac.uk/student_services/

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

A focus group of potential employers was used to establish the attributes of employees in the industry and this was used to formulate content. Industry representatives are consulted to ensure continued relevance of the course.

You will be encouraged to develop skills for work through the work-related activities in sessions and through the placement opportunities between Levels 5 and 6. You are also encouraged to work in the industry during holidays and at weekends, either paid or voluntarily.

It is envisaged that career opportunities will be available with organisations such as geospatial companies, local authorities, government agencies (e.g. Environment Agency and English Nature), utility companies, teaching, environmental consultancies, Wildlife Trusts and other environmental charities. Alternatively graduates could progress to postgraduate study in geography or related fields.

Graduate unemployment amongst geography graduates is amongst the lowest rate of any subject (see HECSU *What do graduates do?*) with geography cited in the media as being one of the "top ten recession-proof degrees". Recent DELHE surveys have shown that 96% of NTU geography students are in employment or further study 6 months after graduating.

14. Course standards and quality

Course standards are monitored in a variety of ways:

- A Course Committee which includes membership from undergraduate students at all levels of study, monitors student feedback about the course and individual modules.
- Student evaluation of modules is sought through EvaSys module feedback questionnaires.
- You will be provided with feedback for all assessed work.
- The course has an External Examiner from another UK HE institution who submits annual reports on standards and quality of the course.
- The Subject Benchmarks of the Quality Assurance Agency have been incorporated into the Course Learning Outcomes.
- The University is subjected to institutional audits by the Quality Assurance Agency.

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 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 the Level 5 credits contribute to the final degree classification, the overall Level 5 arithmetic mean will be used to represent the equivalent of 20 Level 5 credit points in a total of 140 credits (this is what we mean by 'qualifying credits'). Therefore, for example, for a student's majority grade to be first class, they need to have been awarded first class grades in over 70 credits (from a total of 120 credits from Level 6 and 20 credits from Level 5).

Students with a high aggregate grade at the end of Level 5 (Low 2.1 and above), or exceptionally at the end of Level 6, will be counselled as to the possibility of transferring to the MGeog (Integrated Masters) degree.

16. Additional Information

Collaborative partner(s):	The course participates in the University's study abroad programme and you will be encouraged to participate.
Course referenced to national QAA Benchmark Statements:	Geography
Course recognised by:	Royal Geographical Society (with IBG)
Date this course specification approved:	May 2019
Any additional information:	

Fieldwork

Residential fieldwork is an important part of studying Geography and has been reemphasised in the latest QAA benchmark statement for Geography. Residential fieldwork is part of core modules at Levels 4 and 6 and is optional at Level 5. These are vital as they underpin some of the key outcomes of studying geography, notably an understanding of a sense of place, awareness of different environments, awareness of others and how they live and work. The University provides a substantial level of financial subsidy for fieldwork, but students are still required to make a small financial contribution towards the costs of these field courses. Residential fieldwork is often a memorable highlight of a student's university experience.