

BSc (Hons) Garden Design

Programme Specification

Primary Purpose

Course management, monitoring and quality assurance.

Secondary Purpose

Detailed information for students, staff and employers. Current students should refer to the related Course Handbook for further detail.

Disclaimer

The University of Portsmouth has checked the information given in this Programme Specification and believes it to be correct. We will endeavour to deliver the course in keeping with this Programme Specification but reserve the right to change the content, timetabling and administration of the course whilst maintaining equivalent academic standards and quality.

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Programme Specification

1. Named Awards

BSc (Hons) Garden Design

2. Course Code (and UCAS Code if applicable)

R0297F, R0297P

UCAS Code K301

3. Awarding Body

University of Portsmouth

4. Teaching Institution

Sparsholt College Hampshire

5. Accrediting Body

None

6. QAA Benchmark Groups

Agriculture, Forestry, Agricultural Sciences, Food Sciences and Consumer Sciences (2009)

QAA Benchmark Statement for Earth sciences, environmental Sciences and environment studies (2007)

7. Document Control Information

31/3/2014

8. Effective Session

2014/2015

9. Author

Dr Harold M Mycock

10. Faculty

Science

11. Department

Biological Sciences

12. Educational Aims

The General aims of the Programme:

- To provide a challenging and stimulating study environment.
- To provide a framework allowing students to follow a flexible coherent programme of study.

- To develop and assess a range of transferable skills by means of opportunities provided in the study units.
- To provide a high level of work-based learning
- To develop technical and work specific skills underpinned by academic learning.
- To equip graduates with the necessary transferable skills for lifelong learning, employability and flexibility in the context of changing labour markets.
- To provide students with the skills and knowledge required to maximise career opportunities.

More specifically, the aims of the Higher Education provision for the land-based industries are to:

- provide, in consultation with the land-based industries, courses which will meet current and anticipated education and training needs;
- provide a systematic, coherent and balanced education through study within the courses on offer;
- create an environment within which each student may fully realise his or her academic potential and within which the student's achievements are recognised;
- develop, test and assess at appropriate level, each student's intellectual capabilities;
- provide courses that ensure equality of opportunity and encourage access and participation.
- equip students with the practical skills to function in their specific industries, both through institution based skills work and through work placement in relevant industries.

The Garden Design Programme aims to provide students with the opportunity to develop appropriate skills and knowledge to enable them to:

- Successfully enter employment within the field of Garden Design
- Interact effectively with prospective clients, consultants and Landscaping contracting companies in the pursuance and realisation of Garden Design commissions
- Effectively undertake specific research within the development of Garden Design commissions
- Have knowledge and understanding of the physical and natural systems and processes which shape the landscape
- Examine the role and importance of social, cultural and economic influences in past and present landscapes and in the creation of sustainable landscapes for the future
- Apply knowledge appropriately to planning, design and management decisions
- Promote a culture of sustainability through all activities associated with professional practice
- Promote a theme of modernity, innovation and contemporaneous thinking within all their design activities

13. Reference Points

- UK Quality Code for Higher Education
- University of Portsmouth Curriculum Framework Document
- The scholarship and research expertise of academic members of staff
- Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ)
- QAA Benchmark Statement for Agriculture, forestry, agricultural science, food sciences and consumer sciences (2009).
- QAA Benchmark Statement for Earth sciences, environmental Sciences and environment studies (2007)
- Sector Skills Councils' (Lantra) Strategic Policy

14. Learning Outcomes

Students will be able to demonstrate for this “top up” degree programme:

A. Knowledge and Understanding of:

1. The applications of design and planning theories and methodologies appropriate to a range of design contexts.
2. The relationships between design and the cultural, economic and social processes and contexts in which it exists.
3. The technical consequences of design decisions and the ability to employ landscape technologies in realistic designs.
4. Appreciation of the consequences of design decisions on natural systems and the interrelationships between them.
5. Natural systems which underlie both the natural and man-made landscape.
6. Policies and planning for the future landscape management and use of a variety of sites and landscape types.
7. The historical, political and cultural context in which particular landscapes have been developed.
8. The influence of historical practice on the design and implementation of contemporary sites
9. The application of technical and verbal communication skills to the presentation of design ideas
10. The technical and aesthetic nature of materials used in the implementation of design schemes
11. Research Design and Ethics

Teaching and Learning Strategies and Methods:

Core knowledge and understanding (A1-A10) will be delivered using a combination of lectures, visits,

seminars, exercises, case studies, field investigations and guided independent study. Students engage in independent and/or specific group projects in order to pursue more advanced knowledge and understanding. A11 is incorporated into taught sessions on experimental design and through dissertation tutorials.

Assessment:

Knowledge and understanding (A1-A10) will be assessed using a combination of seminar presentations, vocationally relevant case studies and written assignments. A11 is primarily assessed through the dissertation

B. Cognitive (Intellectual or Thinking) Skills, able to:

1. Evaluate a variety of information to implement design schemes
2. Demonstrate appropriate technical presentation skills to portray design schemes
3. Apply historical information to support the development of new design concepts
4. Critically evaluate different lines of argument and apply them in a balanced way in an argument.
5. Critically analyse information, synthesising and summarising outcomes.
6. Apply knowledge and understanding to address familiar and novel problems.
7. Demonstrate awareness of the provisional nature of the facts and principles associated with garden design.
8. Design an experiment, investigation, survey or other means to test a hypothesis or proposition.

Teaching and Learning Strategies and Methods:

Cognitive Skills (B1-B8) will be delivered using a combination of practical exercises, case studies and field investigations.

Assessment:

Cognitive skills (B1-B8) will be assessed using a combination of seminar presentations, vocationally relevant case studies and written assignments.

C. Practical, Professional or Subject Specific Skills, able to:

1. Produce presentation information using appropriate graphical techniques
2. Plan, conduct and report on investigations, including the use of secondary data.
3. Collect and record information or data in the library or field and summarise it using appropriate qualitative and/or quantitative techniques.
4. Devise, plan and undertake field investigations in a responsible and safe manner, paying due attention to risk assessment, rights of access, relevant health and safety regulations, legal requirements and sensitivity to the impact of investigations on the environment and stakeholders.
5. Appreciate and analyse financial and other management information and use it in decision

making.

6. Demonstrate environmental, social, cultural and economic awareness and responsibility.
7. Demonstrate a professional command of practical and technical design skills.

Teaching and Learning Strategies and Methods:

Practical Garden Design skills (C1-C7) will be delivered using a combination of practical exercises, case studies and field investigations

Assessment:

Practical Garden Design skills (C1-C7) will be assessed using a combination of seminar presentations, vocationally relevant case studies and written assignments.

D. Transferable (Graduate & Employability Skills), able to:

1. Collect and interpret numerical data using appropriate techniques to produce relevant information
2. Communicate information using a variety of verbal and non-verbal formats
3. Identify and use a range of appropriate information sources
4. Participate, contribute and evaluate group discussions
5. Employ appropriate ICT methods to collect and process data
6. Employ appropriate presentational techniques to communicate information
7. Organise, participate and evaluate group activities to meet collective goals
8. Develop and manage a flexible and adaptable approach to study and work
9. Develop the skills necessary for self-managed and lifelong learning

Teaching and Learning Strategies and Methods:

Transferable skills (D1-D9) will be delivered using a combination of lectures, practical exercises, case studies and field investigations

Assessment:

Transferable skills (D1-D9) will be assessed using a combination of seminar presentations, vocationally relevant case studies and written assignments.

15. Course Structure, Progression and Award Requirements

The BSc (Hons.) element of the Garden Design programme is offered as a 1-year full-time level 6 programme (120 credits) and may also be completed as a part-time course of 2 years duration.

Each student will prepare a Personal Development Plan (PDP) to underpin successful completion of their studies and transition into their future career.

Initial assessment during induction is used to produce a profile of each student for the personal tutor, and a group profile for the course team. Where appropriate, students are referred to the Learning Support Advisors for diagnostic testing and support. Each student and tutor set aims and objectives as part of an individual Personal Development Plan (PDP), which is developed and monitored through the individual tutorial system during the course. Study skills are incorporated into the curriculum of the units through to the completion of the Dissertation. Other study skills, personal development topics, careers guidance are developed through the individual and group tutorial system.

16. Employability Statement

Sparsholt College benefits from a high profile locally, regionally and nationally in the land-based industries. Throughout their time on the course, the students gain contact with the Garden Design Industry through visits to gardens, both historic and contemporary; from visiting garden design lecturers; from optional study tours and through the teaching team, the majority of whom also work as professional garden designers and horticulturists.

Employability skills are developed across the curriculum and specifically through the Major Design Project unit. Personal Development Planning is also embedded in the programme and explored in personal and group tutorials. The Major Design Project unit develops student's personal design development portfolios in a realistic 'live' design project away from the campus and allows for interaction with future prospective clients.

Part time and full time students are likely to be gaining employability skills through these units and all students directly benefit from the on-site physical resources at the College. On site facilities such as the design studio and the campus gardens and grounds provide real-work environments where students can begin to develop their applied knowledge and understanding of design and project implementation skills.

Specialist units make use of realistic simulations and case studies associated with the real-work environments provided by the facilities at the College. Students will be aware of the importance of voluntary work and of extra-curricular activities to develop the skills needed by employers and the

industry. Employers will be involved in specialist units as guest speakers and visits will relate directly to the requirements of employers and industry.

It is expected that some students will already be working in the industry (or an associated industry) on a part-time basis and other prospective students will be encouraged to gain experience of the industry through voluntary work or part time employment.

All students are fully encouraged to become student members of the Society of Garden Designers, the professional body representing garden designers nationwide, and many students regularly attend the Society's conferences, seminars, regional workshops and local cluster group meetings. The Society holds courses and meetings at the College approximately 8 times a year.

Lantra (2009 Strategic Plan 2009-2013) has identified a shortage of skills within Horticulture over the next decade to 2020 though not specifically with Garden Designers. Nonetheless with the reduction in Horticulture and Garden Design courses offered in the UK in the last 5 years there is a limiting in the flow of students at Level 6. The RHS is leading a horticulture industry-wide campaign through 2013-2014 aimed attracting more skilled people into the industry and this should lead to more courses being offered.

Most students on completing the course become self-employed Garden Designers. Work is often combined with other Horticultural work. Only a few students become employed as Garden Designers, these with employers are such as larger Garden Centres or Landscaping companies. There are relatively few Garden Design practices beyond Self-employed or two person partnerships, but where there are small practices where some students start off working for as a junior.

17. Support for Student Learning

- The Course is managed by a Course Tutor
- Collaborative programmes are managed on a day-to-day basis by the Partner Contact who may or may not be the Course Tutor
- Extensive induction programme introduces the student to the University of Portsmouth, Sparsholt College and their course
- Each student has a personal tutor, responsible for pastoral support and guidance
- College support services include careers, financial advice, housing, counselling etc
- Learning Support and Disability Advisors provide DSA assessments and required learning support.
- Excellent library facilities at both U of Portsmouth and Sparsholt College

- A well-equipped teaching block, the Sainsbury Building, with a lecture theatre, laboratories and other teaching facilities is available. The Studio consists of two rooms devoted to the Garden Design degrees. This is fully equipped with drawing boards, materials and facilities for computer based design. Students have access to these facilities 13 hours a day. The HE Lounge has 24 hour access and has two drawing boards and computers loaded with specialist Garden Design software. One room S1A is equipped with 20 computers loaded with specialist software.
- Students are encouraged to download Vectorworks, the industry standard software, free of charge whilst they are a student. (circa £1400 package otherwise).
- The College has considerable horticultural facilities that students are encouraged to use during the course of their studies.
- Students are encouraged to enter competitions and entry into shows such as the Chelsea and Hampton Court Flower shows provide considerable opportunities for teaching and learning.
- Student, course and unit handbooks provide information about the course structure and University/College regulations etc.
- Feedback is provided for all assessments, both summative and formative
- Personal Development Planning (PDP) for all awards

18. Admissions Criteria

A. Academic Admissions Criteria

Entry requirements are:

- academic judgement that the student will benefit from the programme and successfully complete the course

This will be evidenced by:

- Foundation Degree in Garden Design, or a related subject
- Higher National Diploma (HND) in Garden Design, or a related subject
- Higher National Certificate (HNC) in Garden Design together with additional, post-qualification, vocational experience
- equivalent/professional qualifications
- APEL portfolio - If appropriate, prior learning may be assessed and accredited through the [University of Portsmouth Accreditation of Prior Experience and Learning \(AP\(E\)L\) process.](#)

B. Disability

The University makes no distinction in its admissions policy with regard to disability and will endeavour to make all reasonable adjustments in order to make it possible for students to study at Portsmouth on a course of their choice.

19. Evaluation and Enhancement of Standards and Quality in Learning and Teaching

A. Mechanisms for Review and Evaluation

- Course Tutor's Annual Standards and Quality Evaluative Review
- Boards of Study
- Curriculum Area Annual Self Assessment report
- Unit and Course Level feedback considered at Exam Boards
- Unit Assessment Board (UAB) consideration of student performance for each programme
- Annual Standards and Quality Evaluative Review for Collaborative Programmes including consideration of Subject and Award External Examiner Reports
- Periodic Programme and Partnership Review
- Student Representatives, HE Student Council/ Cross-college Learner Voice
- Staff Appraisals and Performance and Development Review
- Peer Review, including Teaching and Learning observations
- Ethics and Research Standards Group's Annual Report

B. Responsibilities for Monitoring and Evaluation

- Unit co-ordinators for unit content and delivery
- Course tutor for day-to-day running of course
- Partner Institution Academic Contact (HE Development and Quality Manager)
- Board of Studies
- Learning Manager, Horticulture and Garden Design
- Ethics and Research Standards Group
- Head of Department
- University Contact
- Associate Dean (Academic)
- Associate Dean (Students)
- Quality Assurance Committee
- Board of Examiners

C. Mechanisms for Gaining Student Feedback

- Student Representation on the Governing Board
- Boards of Study
- HE Student Council and Learner voice meetings
- Unit and Course level student feedback questionnaires

- Sparsholt Learner Surveys
- Student forums on course VLE (Moodle) and the HE student Moodle space (HE4U)

D. Staff Development Priorities

- Academic staff undertake activities related to research, scholarship, teaching and learning and student support, guidance and professional certification
- Annual Teaching observations inform CPD requirements
- Annual staff appraisal reviews match development needs
- Managers undertake a variety of management development programmes
- New academic staff required to undertake PTTLS, or equivalent, initially (Staff teaching in both FE and HE are required to undertake PGCE-PCET equivalent)
- All academic staff are required to seek Higher Education Academy Fellowship and/or participate in the University of Portsmouth APEX programme
- Academic staff new to teaching required to undertake New Teaching Staff Induction
- Support Staff are encouraged to attend short courses in a variety of areas including specific IT packages

20. Assessment Strategy

Assessment will be both formative and summative throughout the programme. Formative assessments throughout the duration of studies will allow for skill development and the potential for learners to develop both research and study skills as well as technical and subject specific knowledge.

Level 6

The progressive assessment strategy for all the units at Level 6 is to build upon the student's achievements and the experience gained through previous studies. The PDP provides the roadmap for further development of the student's ability to organise their own work and study regime through the development of greater self-reliance in terms of study, research and assignment completion. Assessment methodology at this level is therefore directed more towards: extended seminar presentations such as in Historic Gardens: Innovations in History, Restoration and Conservation, longer essays as in Organic and Sustainable Garden Design; a greater number of examinations than in the FdSc, with three of the five Units including 2 hour examinations each; a dissertation defended by *viva voce* and a major design project.

21. Assessment Regulations

Rules apply as stated in the Collaborative Examination and Assessment Regulations for Sparsholt College.

22. Role of Externals

Subject External Examiners who will:

- oversee unit assessment and usually attend Unit Assessment Boards (UAB);
- approve unit assessment strategy;
- sample assessment artefacts;
- present report to UAB.

Award External Examiners (usually also a Subject External Examiner) who will:

- oversee and attend Award/Progression (Examination) Boards;
- scrutinise and endorse the outcomes of assessment;
- ensure that the standard of the award is maintained at a level comparable with that of similar awards elsewhere in the United Kingdom.

23. Indicators of Standards and Quality

A. Professional Accreditation/Recognition

On completion of the BSc (Hons) students may become Pre- Registered Members of the Society of Garden Designers.

B. Periodic Programme Review (or equivalent)

This course specification will be reviewed and re-issued annually.

The most recent Collaborative Programme and Partnership Review took place in January 2014.

The most recent Periodic Programme Review for BSc/FdSc Garden Design took place at the same event in 2014. The outcomes from Review confirmed fitness of purpose of curriculum, it also found the annual monitoring and review processes effective.

The key strengths of provision were as follows;

- The college is clearly responsive to feedback received from the external examiners, students and the University.
- Clear evidence of critical and evaluative reviews of the provision to enhance the student experience.
- Wide breadth of curriculum to reflect the complex and diverse sector areas.
- Having practitioners on the teaching team is clearly advantageous to students.

- Extensive, effective and proactive student engagement in enhancing quality.

C. Quality Assurance Agency

The College underwent QAA Higher Education Review in March 2014. The indicative letter was received on March 26th and states:

The draft report will confirm that:

- The maintenance of the threshold academic standards of the awards offered on behalf of the degree-awarding bodies **meets UK expectations**
- The quality of student learning opportunities **meets UK expectations**
- The quality of the provider's information about learning opportunities **meets UK expectations**
- The enhancement of student learning opportunities **meets UK expectations**

The full report will be available in June 2014

D. Others

n/a

24. Other Sources of Information

Other sources of information may be found in:

- Course Approval Document
- Student, Course and Unit handbooks
- University of Portsmouth Curriculum Framework Document
- University of Portsmouth Undergraduate Prospectus
- Assessment Regulations
- **University of Portsmouth** (www.port.ac.uk) and **Sparsholt College** (www.sparsholt.ac.uk) websites

Unit Assessment Map

| UNITS | | | | | | COURSEWORK | | | | EXAMINATION | | |
|----------------|--|--------|--------|----------|---------------|------------|--|---|------------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|
| Level | Name | Code | Credit | Delivery | Core / option | Total % | Type of Artefact | Duration/ Length | Weighting % | Total % | Open/ Closed | Weighting % |
| Level 6 | Contemporary Garden and Planting Design | U23660 | 20 | Sep-Jun | C | 50 | Essay Case Study | 1250 words 1250 words | 20 30 | 50% | Closed | 1.5hrs |
| | Historic Gardens: Innovations in History, Restoration and Conservation | U23659 | 20 | Sep-Jun | C | 50 | Presentation Essay | 30 minutes 1000 words | 25 25 | 50% | Closed | 1.5hrs |
| | Organic and Sustainable Garden Design | U23735 | 20 | Sep-Jun | C | 50 | Report Oral assessment and presentation | Scaled plan and 1000 word report Sketchbook and 20 minute presentation | 25 25 | 50% | Closed | 1.5hrs |
| | Major Design Project | U22818 | 30 | Sep-Jun | C | 100 | Seminar Design scheme and material | 30 minute Graphic material and 2500 words | 30% 70% | | | |
| | Dissertation | U22623 | 30 | Sep-Jun | C | 100 | Poster Dissertation Viva | A1 6000 words 20 minutes | 5% 75% 20% | | | |

