

# Foundation Degree in Marine Ecology and Conservation (University Centre Sparsholt)

## *Programme Specification*

### **Primary Purpose**

Course management 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. We will endeavour to deliver the course in keeping with this Programme Specification; however, changes may sometimes be required arising from annual monitoring, student feedback, review and update of units and courses. Where this activity leads to significant changes to units and courses, there will be prior consultation of students and others, wherever possible, and the University will take all reasonable steps to minimize disruption to students. It is also possible that the University may not be able to offer a unit or course for reasons outside of its control, for example; the absence of a member of staff or low student registration numbers. Where this is the case, the University will endeavour to inform applicants and students as soon as possible. Where appropriate, the University will facilitate the transfer of affected students to another suitable course.

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## Course Details

### 1. Named Awards

FdSc Marine Ecology and Conservation

### 2. Course Code (and UCAS Code if applicable)

UCAS Code CF17 FdSc/MEcC

UoP Code R0343F/P

### 3. Awarding Body

University of Portsmouth

### 4. Teaching Institution

University Centre Sparsholt, Sparsholt College, Hampshire

### 5. Accrediting Body

N/A

### 6. QAA Benchmark Groups

Benchmark Statement for Agriculture, forestry, agricultural sciences, food sciences and consumer sciences (A), Biosciences (B) (2009). Earth sciences, environmental sciences and environmental studies (ES) and QAA Foundation Degree qualifications benchmark statement (2010)

### 7. Document Control Information

July 2018

### 8. Effective Session

2018-19

### 9. Author

Dr Josephine Pegg

### 10. Faculty

Science

### 11. Department

Biological Science

## Curriculum

### 12. Educational Aims

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

To inspire learners to recognise and achieve their full potential

The aims of the Higher Education provision for the land-based industries are:

- To provide, in consultation with the land-based industries, course programmes which will meet current and anticipated education and training needs;
- To provide a systematic, coherent and balanced education through study within the course programmes on offer;
- To create an environment within which each student may fully realise his or her academic potential and within which the student's achievements are recognised;
- To develop, test and assess at appropriate level each student's intellectual capabilities;
- To equip each student with the necessary transferable skills and applied knowledge to enable them to make an immediate contribution in employment or to progress to further study;
- To provide course programmes that ensure equality of opportunity and encourage access and participation.

The General aims of Higher Education:

- To provide a challenging and stimulating study environment.
- To provide a framework allowing students to follow a flexible coherent programme of study.
- To provide a high level of work-based and work-related 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.

The aims of the Foundation Degree in Marine Ecology and Conservation:

The overall aim of this course is to provide education to Foundation Degree level for students who wish to pursue a career connected with Marine Ecology and Conservation, underpinned by a firm science foundation.

In pursuit of this aim the curriculum will encompass biological sciences, biochemistry, nutrition and anatomy and physiology as well as a full range of marine and environmental management techniques which will allow students to progress either into the world of work in marine ecology, conservation or science related field or onto the final year of a BSc (Hons) programme at a marine related science (e.g. University of Portsmouth)

### 13. Reference Points

The programme and outcomes have been developed taking account of:

- UK Quality Code for Higher Education
- University of Portsmouth Curriculum Framework Document (2016)
- The scholarship and research expertise of academic members of staff
- Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ),
- QAA Foundation Degree qualifications benchmark statement (2010)
- 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 (2014)
- QAA Benchmark Statement for Biosciences (2015)
- University of Portsmouth Code of Practice for Work-based and Placement Learning (2015)
- Please note the benchmark statements have been used as a guide and are not necessarily quoted verbatim

## 14. General Learning Outcomes

### Level 4

Certificates of Higher Education are awarded to students who have demonstrated:

- knowledge of the underlying concepts and principles associated with their area(s) of study, and an ability to evaluate and interpret these within the context of that area of study
- an ability to present, evaluate and interpret qualitative and quantitative data, in order to develop lines of argument and make sound judgements in accordance with basic theories and concepts of their subject(s) of study

Typically, holders of the qualification will be able to:

- evaluate the appropriateness of different approaches to solving problems related to their area(s) of study and/or work
- communicate the results of their study/work accurately and reliably, and with structured and coherent arguments
- undertake further training and develop new skills within a structured and managed environment

And holders will have:

- the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of some personal responsibility

### Level 5

Foundation Degrees are awarded to students who have demonstrated:

- knowledge and critical understanding of the well-established principles of their area(s) of study, and of the way in which those principles have developed
- ability to apply underlying concepts and principles outside the context in which they were first studied, including, where appropriate, the application of those principles in an employment context
- knowledge of the main methods of enquiry in the subject(s) relevant to the named award, and ability to evaluate critically the appropriateness of different approaches to solving problems in the field of study
- an understanding of the limits of their knowledge, and how this influences analyses and interpretations based on that knowledge

Typically, holders of the qualification will be able to:

- use a range of established techniques to initiate and undertake critical analysis of information, and to propose solutions to problems arising from that analysis
- effectively communicate information, arguments and analysis in a variety of forms to specialist and non-specialist audiences, and deploy key techniques of the discipline effectively
- undertake further training, develop existing skills and acquire new competences that will enable them to assume significant responsibility within organisations

And holders will have:

- the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of personal responsibility and decision-making

## 15. Learning Outcomes

### **A. Knowledge and Understanding of:**

- A.1 Terminology, nomenclature and classification systems used in Marine Ecology and Conservation (B)
- A.2 Scientific principles of sustainable production systems and environmental conservation
- A.3 Biological factors limiting production of Marine systems; (A)
- A.4 The processes which shape the marine environment at different temporal and spatial scales and their influence on and by human activities (E)

- A.5 Methods of acquiring, interpreting and analysing information
- A.6 Practice and presentational methods relevant to the marine environment including data analysis and the use of statistics (B)
- A.7 Principles of habitat and marine ecology and conservation
- A.8 Changes and developments in marine ecology and conservation
- A.9 Economic theory and techniques (A)
- A.10 Regulatory and advisory bodies and their roles related to the marine environment (A)
- A.11 The need for ethical standards and professional codes of conduct in experimental design (B)

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

- B.1 Recognise and apply subject specific theories, paradigms, concepts or principles (B)
- B.2 Analyse, summarise and synthesize information from a variety of sources, considering issues from a number of perspectives to arrive at a considered judgement (A)
- B.3 Investigation or survey or other means to test a hypothesis or proposition. (A)
- B.4 Critically analysing information, synthesising and summarising the outcomes
- B.5 Demonstrating awareness of the provisional nature of the facts and principles associated with a field of study
- B.6 Decision making in complex and unpredictable contexts

**C. Practical (Professional or Subject) Skills, able to:**

- C.1 Plan, conduct and report on an investigation which may involve primary and secondary data. (A)
- C.2 Collect, record, collate and analyse information or data in the library, laboratory or field, using appropriate techniques. (B)
- C.3 Undertake field and laboratory investigations in a responsible and safe manner, paying due attention to risk assessment, rights of access, relevant health and safety regulations and legal requirements
- C.4 Appreciate financial and other management information and use it in decision making. (A)
- C.5 Collect and record diverse types of information generated by a wide range of methodologies and summarising it using appropriate qualitative and/or quantitative techniques
- C.6 Devising, planning and undertaking field, laboratory or other investigations in a responsible, sensitive and safe manner

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

- D.1 Appreciate issues of sample selection, accuracy, precision and uncertainty during collection, recording and analysis of data in the field and laboratory and the difficulties of incomplete information. (A)
- D.2 Receive and respond to a variety of sources of information: textual, numerical, verbal and graphical. (B)
- D.3 Prepare, process, interpret and present data and solve problems using appropriate qualitative and quantitative, computer based and non-computer based techniques and packages. (A)
- D.4 Cite and reference work in an appropriate manner. (B)
- D.5 Use the internet and other electronic sources critically as a means of communication and a source of information. (B)
- D.6 Identify and work towards targets for personal, academic, professional and career development (B)
- D.7 Evaluate performance as an individual and a team member. (A)
- D.8 Take responsibility for personal and professional learning and development. (A)
- D.9 Develop an appreciation of the interdisciplinary nature of science and the validity of different points of view. (B)

**16. Learning and Teaching Strategies and Methods**

The programme of learning will be managed through a combination of lectures, visits, industrial placements, practical fieldwork, visiting speakers and guided independent study (A1-A10). A11 is incorporated into taught sessions on experimental design and through tutorials.

Cognitive skills are developed through a combination of lectures, seminars, practical fieldwork, case study workshops, tutorials and group work. (B1 – B6).

Subject specific practical skills are developed through a portfolio of evidence based on coursework including laboratory investigations, reports, assignments, presentations and seminars. (C1-C6).

Transferable and key skills are developed through computer based and non-computer based workshops, field and laboratory practicals, group work, independent guided learning and individual tutorial support. At Level 5 students analyse data collected for projects (D1 –D9).

## 17. Assessment Strategy

Level 4 and 5 work is assessed primarily through a portfolio of evidence based on coursework including reports, assignments, presentations and seminars. There will be examinations in under half of the units. (A1-A10). A11 is primarily assessed through Applied Industrial Research.

Level 4 and 5 work is assessed primarily through a portfolio of evidence based on coursework including laboratory investigations, reports, assignments, presentations and seminars. There will be examinations in under half of the units (B1 – B6).

Practical skills at Levels 4 and 5 are assessed primarily through coursework including assignments, laboratory reports, presentations and seminars (C1-C6).

Assessment of transferable and key skills is evidenced through coursework, presentations and group, laboratory and field investigations, as well as the level 5 project (D1 –D9).

## 18. Course Structure, Progression and Award Requirements

See [Unit Web Search](#)<sup>1</sup> for full details on the course structure and units

Standard University rules apply. The regulations must be consulted for a full description of exit awards.

FdSc Marine Ecology and Conservation is offered as a 2 year full time course or as 3 year part-time route. (The part time route has been suspended since 2013/14 due to low recruitment.)

Total unit value: 240 credits

Mode of study: Full and Part Time (2 to 3 years)

Grade Reporting: At the end of the programme using individual Student Report Forms

One credit is equivalent to 10 hours of learning. Each level comprises of a minimum of 120 credits for a course total of 240 credits. Units are offered as 10 or 20 credits.

Students will follow a set programme of study at Levels 4 and 5. Initial assessment during induction includes an array of tests including an on-entry skills assessment and learning styles test (for example, VARK). The results of these are 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 and a portfolio developed through Work Practice units. Study skills, employability skills and career management skills are developed throughout the curricula, especially through the Work Practice units and through individual and group tutorials as well as an academic skills unit.

The college recognises formative assessment as an integral and required element of the learning process. University Centre Sparsholt operates a 'flying start' programme for students to ensure developmental formative assessment, with feedback, occurs within the first two weeks of the academic year. Penalties for non-completion of formative assessment may range from grade penalties on summative assessments to withdrawal of services. See Sparsholt Policy on Higher Education Student Performance and Conduct.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.port.ac.uk/unitwebsearch](http://www.port.ac.uk/unitwebsearch)

Links with employers occur through the work placements and through a range of structured industrial visits. Specialist guest lecturers also provide students with insight into areas of work and employability. The department staff regularly meet with employers to discuss the usefulness and validity of the provision.

Careers guidance is formally included as a timetabled event, through group and individual tutorial support throughout Levels 4 and 5. Guest speakers also provide useful careers guidance.

Identified progression routes from FdSc Marine Ecology and Conservation are to level 6 of BSc (Hons) Marine Biology and BSc (Hons) Marine Environmental Science (University of Portsmouth) and BSc (Hons) Aquaculture & Fishery Management at University Centre Sparsholt (in collaboration with University of Portsmouth).

Discretion for progressing students:

In all cases the Sparsholt Programme Tutor or University of Portsmouth School of Biological Sciences / School of Earth and Environmental Sciences Admissions Tutor, in consultation with Sparsholt's Higher Education Development and Quality Manager shall have discretion to depart from the criteria. Additional evidence provided by the student through interview which supports direct entry to Level 6 will be considered. If the Programme Tutor / Admissions Tutor and Higher Education Manager are not satisfied that direct entry to Level 6 is in the student's best interests, direct entry to Level 5 may be offered.

## **19. Employability Statement**

University Centre Sparsholt benefits from a high profile locally, regionally and nationally in the land based industries.

The college maintains close links with lead industry bodies, including numerous fisheries and aquacultural facilities as well as local and national Wildlife Trusts, Inshore Fisheries Conservation Authorities and the Environment Agency, which ensures the course incorporates the skills and understanding required by employers. A key strength of the provision at University Centre Sparsholt is the link to employers in developing higher level vocational curriculum. Whilst at University Centre Sparsholt the students will benefit from insights into various marine ecological and conservation related industries through visits, guest speakers and their work placements. Employability skills will be developed across the curriculum and specifically through the work placement units.

The work placement units will develop student's personal development portfolios and career management skills along with the professional development and learning contract unit. This may, for example, be through seminars and tutorials to develop career decision making strategies and strategies for self-presentation at application stages and at interview. Employability skills linked to communication, numeracy and information technology will be embedded across the curriculum through the identification of transferrable and graduate skills opportunities.

The students will gain employability skills through work-place learning opportunities and all students will directly benefit from the on-site physical resources at the College. On site facilities provide real work environments that students can begin to develop their applied knowledge and understanding of marine ecology and conservation.

Specialist units will 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 extra curricula activities to develop the skills need by employers and the industry. Employers will be involved in specialist units as guest speakers and visits will relate directly to the employers/ the industry. Students will potentially feed into a range of industries including marine consultancies, such as APBmer and EMU, as well as IFCA's, Marine Biological Association, universities, public aquaria and local Wildlife Trusts.

## Course Management

### 20. Support for Student Learning

- The Course is managed by a Course Leader
- Collaborative programmes are managed on a day-to-day basis by the University Contact who may or may not be the Course Leader
- The Combined Honours Degree is managed by a Course Leader from one subject area and a Deputy Course Leader from the other
- Extensive induction programme introduces the student to the University and their course
- Each student has a personal tutor, responsible for pastoral support and guidance
- University support services include careers, financial advice, housing and counselling
- The Academic Skills Unit (ASK)
- The Additional Support and Disability Advice Centre (ASDAC)
- Excellent library facilities
- Student course and unit handbooks provide information about the course structure and University regulations
- Feedback is provided for all assessments
- Personal Development Planning (PDP) for all awards

### 21. 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 may be evidenced by:

	A Level	BTEC Extended Diploma	City & Guilds Ext. Diploma	BTEC Diploma	City & Guilds Diploma	Access to HE	International Baccalaureate
<b>All courses</b>	GCSE math & English at Grade C or above or L2 Functional skills in maths and English						
<b>FdSc</b>	2 A level passes, including 1 at Grade C or above. The A level Grade C should be in a Science.	MMP	P + 6 units at Merit or above	MM	M	A satisfactory pass in a relevant Access course with 45 credits at level 3	Appropriate IB Certificates considered

Pre-college experience in an appropriate work area or as a volunteer strongly recommended.

We welcome applications from mature students (over 21 years) with experience or interest in all aspects of land based industries and we consider each application on an individual basis. If appropriate, prior learning may be assessed and accredited through the University of Portsmouth Recognition of Prior Experience and Learning (RP(E)L) process.

Applicants wishing to start the course in the autumn after leaving school are expected to have completed 14 years of schooling and normally be aged 18 or over.

International students will be expected to demonstrate an IELTS score of 6.0 in proficiency in English language.

## **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.

## **22. 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 (ASQER)
- University Academic Contact's Annual Standards and Quality Report
- Annual Standards and Quality Evaluative Review for Collaborative Programmes including consideration of Subject and Award External Examiner Reports
- Unit and Course Level student feedback considered at Unit Assessment Boards, Boards of Study and Exam Boards
- Unit Assessment Board (UAB) consideration of student performance for each unit
- Periodic Collaborative Programme Review
- Periodic Collaborative Partner Review
- Student Representatives/ Learner Voice/ HE Student Council
- 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 tutors for unit content and delivery
- Course Tutor for day-to-day running of course
- Partner Institution Academic Contact
- University Contact
- Board of Studies
- Head of Faculty
- Assistant Principal of Higher Education, University Centre Sparsholt
- Associate Dean (Academic)
- Associate Dean (Students)
- Unit Assessment Boards, Award and Progression Board of Examiners
- Ethics and Research Standards Group for ethical review and project approval

### **C. Mechanisms for Gaining Student Feedback**

- Student Representation on Governing Board
- Boards of Study
- Unit, Course and College level student feedback questionnaires
- Learner Voice and HE student Council
- Student forum on VLE (Moodle) HE4U
- University participates in external student surveys, e.g., National Student Survey (NSS), Destination of Leavers from Higher Education (DHLE) Survey

### **D. Staff Development Priorities**

- Academic staff undertake activities related to research, scholarship, teaching and learning and student support and guidance

- Annual staff performance and development reviews match development to 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 areas such as specific IT packages

### 23. Assessment Regulations

The current University of Portsmouth academic regulations for Collaborative Partners will apply to this programme (see [Regulations and Handbooks<sup>2</sup>](#)).

### 24. Role of Externals

Subject External Examiners who will:

- Oversee unit assessment and usually attend Unit Assessment Boards
- Review unit assessment strategy
- Sample assessment artefacts
- Present report to Unit Assessment Boards

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

- Oversee and attend Award/Progression 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

### 25. Indicators of Standards and Quality

#### A. Professional Accreditation/Recognition

N/A

#### B. Periodic Programme Review (or equivalent)

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

The outcomes from the periodic review in January 2014 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.

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<sup>2</sup>  
[www.port.ac.uk/departments/services/academicregistry/qualitymanagementdivision/CollaborativePartnerships/documentat ion/RegulationsandHandbooks/filetodownload,188676,en.pdf](http://www.port.ac.uk/departments/services/academicregistry/qualitymanagementdivision/CollaborativePartnerships/documentat ion/RegulationsandHandbooks/filetodownload,188676,en.pdf)

### **C. Quality Assurance Agency**

QAA Higher Education Review, March 2015, judgements about standards and quality meet UK expectations (*for full report see [Higher Education Review of the University of Portsmouth, March 2015](#)*<sup>3</sup>).

### **D. Teaching Excellence Framework**

The Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) is the UK Government's first assessment of teaching excellence in higher education. University Centre Sparsholt has been awarded a 'Gold' TEF rating.

### **26. Further Information**

Further information may be found in:

- Student Handbook
- University of Portsmouth Curriculum Framework Document
- University of Portsmouth Prospectus
- Course Approval Document
- Student, Course and Unit Handbooks
- University of Portsmouth Curriculum Framework Document
- University Centre Sparsholt Higher Education Prospectus
- Assessment Regulations
- [University of Portsmouth](#)<sup>4</sup>, [School of Biological Sciences](#)<sup>5</sup> and [Sparsholt College](#)<sup>6</sup> websites

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<sup>3</sup> [www.qaa.ac.uk/en/ReviewsAndReports/Documents/University%20of%20Portsmouth/University-of-Portsmouth-HER-15.pdf](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/ReviewsAndReports/Documents/University%20of%20Portsmouth/University-of-Portsmouth-HER-15.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> [www.port.ac.uk/](http://www.port.ac.uk/)

<sup>5</sup> [www.port.ac.uk/school-of-biological-sciences/](http://www.port.ac.uk/school-of-biological-sciences/)

<sup>6</sup> [www.sparsholt.ac.uk/](http://www.sparsholt.ac.uk/)