

MRes Ecology, Evolution and Conservation Research

This document provides a definitive record of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student may reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if s/he takes full advantage of the learning opportunities provided. This programme specification is intended as a reference point for prospective students, current students, external examiners and academic and support staff involved in delivering the programme and enabling student development and achievement.

Programme Information

Programme Title	Ecology, Evolution and Conservation Research			
Award(s)	MRes			
Programme Code	C1Z9 (1YFT)	C1Z924 (2YPT)	C1Z936 (3YPT)	
Awarding Institution	Imperial College London			
Teaching Institution	Imperial College London			
Faculty	Faculty of Natural Sciences			
Department	Department of Life Sciences			
Main Location of Study	Silwood Park Campus			
Mode and Period of Study	1 academic year (12 months), full-time or 2 or 3 academic years (24 months), part-time			
Cohort Entry Points	Annually in October			
Relevant QAA Benchmark Statement(s) and/or other external reference points	Master's Degree Characteristics			
Total Credits	ECTS:	90	CATS:	180
FHEQ Level	Level 7			
EHEA Level	2 nd cycle			
External Accrator(s)	None			
Specification Details				
Student cohorts covered by specification	2017-18 entry			
Person responsible for the specification	Ms Amanda Ellis, Postgraduate Administrator			
Date of introduction of programme				
Date of programme specification/revision	March 2018			

Programme Overview

The Ecology, Evolution and Conservation programme provides a broad research training in ecology, evolution and conservation. It is taught by active researchers throughout the department, and these internationally recognised experts use their own research as model systems to illustrate the fundamental scientific principles that underpin the study topics. We concentrate on inter-disciplinary approaches and current research tools in these disciplines, and use external visitors from a range of conservation organisations to highlight the issues around applying science to practical conservation.

The course will equip you with the necessary skills to proceed to a PhD and an established career in academic, government or non-governmental organisations engaged in research into biodiversity and its protection or exploitation.

You complete eight weeks of taught modules as research training, and then conduct two five-month research projects on topics of your choice.

The course offers a wider range of instruction across a large set of research areas, allowing you to gain a clear insight into your own research interests from among current research topics. The MRes course hits the ground running: the greater focus on independent research allows you to specialise in your existing research interests.

Learning Outcomes

The Imperial Graduate Attributes are a set of core competencies which we expect students to achieve through completion of any Imperial College degree programme. The Graduate Attributes are available at: www.imperial.ac.uk/students/academic-support/graduate-attributes

1. Knowledge and Understanding of:

- a. Basic and applied ecology as it relates to population and community dynamics and ecosystem function;
- b. The use of models and their application to predict dynamic biological processes evolutionary
- c. Evolutionary theory as it relates to the origins and dynamics of diversity;
- d. Methods of evolutionary analysis, especially molecular approaches for population and community studies, and phylogenetics;
- e. Research techniques, including information retrieval, experimental design and statistics, modelling, sampling, molecular biology, laboratory and field safety;
- f. Detailed knowledge and understanding of the essential facts, concepts, principles and theories relevant to the student's chosen area of specialisation;
- g. Management and communication skills, including problem definition, project design, decision processes, teamwork, written and oral reports, scientific publications.

2. Skills and other Attributes

Intellectual Skills - able to:

- a. Analyse and solve research problems by using a multidisciplinary approach.
- b. Integrate and quantify biological knowledge to raise novel questions
- c. Formulate testable hypotheses, collect appropriate data to test them, and analyse the data appropriately with analytical methods, such as statistics.

- d. Plan, conduct and write up a programme of original research.
- e. Critically analyse the research literature and own findings

Practical Skills – able to:

- a. Plan and execute safely a series of experiments;
- b. Use laboratory and field-based methods to generate data;
- c. Devise theoretical models for given problem and implement them in computer simulations
- d. Analyse experimental results and determine their strength and validity;
- e. Prepare technical reports;
- f. Give technical presentations;
- g. Use the scientific literature effectively;
- h. Use computational tools and packages.
- i. Write concisely and effectively for a scientific and a lay audience.

Transferable Skills – able to:

- a. Communicate effectively through oral presentations, written reports and scientific publications;
- b. Apply statistical and modelling skills;
- c. Management skills: decision making, problem definition, project design and evaluation, risk management, teamwork and coordination
- d. Integrate and evaluate information from a variety of sources;
- e. Transfer techniques and solutions from one discipline to another;
- f. Use Information and Communications Technology;
- g. Manage resources and time;
- h. Learn independently with open-mindedness and critical enquiry;
- i. Learn effectively for the purpose of continuing professional development.
- j. By the end of the course you should be able to show high initiative

Entry Requirements

Academic Requirement	Normally a 2:1 UK Bachelor's Degree with Honours in a science-based subject (or a comparable qualification recognised by the College).
English Language Requirement	Standard requirement IELTS score of 6.5 overall (minimum 6.0 in all elements)

Learning & Teaching Strategy

Scheduled Learning & Teaching Methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research seminars
Project and Placement Learning Methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independent Research Projects

Assessment Strategy

Assessment Methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual research project reports • Laboratory performance
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oral presentations • Vivas
Academic Feedback Policy	
<p>Coursework is double-marked and comments by the markers annotated directly on the papers (electronically for submissions on blackboard). A summary of the feedback (with tickboxes indicating relative attainment on key dimensions) will be completed, and an indicative grade will be given (actual marks will not be communicated to the students). These will then be returned to the students as soon as possible and within two weeks of submission. Generic feedback on exam questions (explaining what contributed good answers, typical features leading to lower marks for each question across the whole class) and indicative grades will be returned following exams. A meeting will be held after the end of the taught component, at which each student will have a one-to-one discussion with the Course Director on progress to date, coursework marks achieved and expectations for the project.</p> <p>Staff-student meetings are held termly to communicate general feedback between student representatives and the course directors. Additional meetings are held to provide general feedback and guidance e.g. on exam performance and project selection.</p> <p>Dissertations are marked by supervisor and 2 independent assessors, who provide feedback electronically that is returned automatically to students after the final examiners meeting.</p>	
Re-sit Policy	
<p>In line with College policy, students who are unsuccessful in any of their examinations may usually be allowed an opportunity to re-sit at the discretion of the Board of Examiners.</p> <p>Specific information regarding re-sits for Taught Master's degrees can be found in the relevant Academic Regulations available at: https://www.imperial.ac.uk/about/governance/academic-governance/regulations/</p>	
Mitigating Circumstances Policy	
<p>Students may be eligible to apply for mitigation if they have suffered from serious and unforeseen circumstances during the course of their studies that have adversely affected their ability to complete an assessment task and/or their performance in a piece of assessment.</p> <p>The College's Policy on Mitigating Circumstances is available at: https://www.imperial.ac.uk/about/governance/academic-governance/academic-policy/exams-and-assessment/</p>	
Assessment Dates & Deadlines	
Coursework Assessments	Continuous
Project Deadlines	March and September
Practical Assessments	Continuous
Assessment Structure	
Marking Scheme	

Pass:

- Achieve a minimum aggregate mark of 50% or more (less than 60%) overall, and on each module.

Merit:

- Achieve a minimum aggregate mark of 60% or more (less than 70%) overall, and on each Module.
- To achieve a Merit, in addition to getting 60% overall, the project module must have at least 60% (each project, if there are multiple projects), the parts of the taught module (e.g., exam and coursework) should have an average of at least 60%, and no part should be less than 50%.

Distinction:

- Achieve a minimum aggregate mark of 70% or more overall, and on each Module.
- Additional requirements will also have to be met to obtain a Distinction. Specifically, to achieve a Distinction, in addition to getting 70% overall, the project module must have at least 70% (each project, if there are multiple projects), and the parts of the taught module (e.g., exam and coursework) should have an average of at least 70%, and no part should be less than 60%.

Module Weightings		
Element (% Weighting)	Module	% Module Weighting
Research (100%)	Winter Research Project	50%
	Summer Research Project	50%

Indicative Module List											
Code	Title	Core/ Elective	L&T Hours	Ind. Study Hours	Place- ment Hours	Total Hours	% Written Exam	% Course- work	% Practical	FHEQ Level	ECTS
	Winter Research Project	Core	0	1125	0	1125	0%	100%	0%	7	45
	Summer Research Project	Core	0	1125	0	1125	0%	100%	0%	7	45

Supporting Information

The Programme Handbook is available at: <http://www.imperial.ac.uk/life-sciences/postgraduate/masters-courses/masters-in-ecology-evolution--conservation-msc-and-mres/>

The Module Handbook is available at: <http://www.imperial.ac.uk/life-sciences/postgraduate/masters-courses/masters-in-ecology-evolution--conservation-msc-and-mres/>

The College's entry requirements for postgraduate programmes can be found at: www.imperial.ac.uk/study/pg/apply/requirements

The College's Quality & Enhancement Framework is available at: www.imperial.ac.uk/registry/proceduresandregulations/qualityassurance

The College's Academic and Examination Regulations can be found at: <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/about/governance/academic-governance/regulations>

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<http://www.imperial.ac.uk/admin-services/secretariat/college-governance/charters/charter-and-statutes/>

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