

MRes Ecosystems and Environmental Change

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	Ecosystems and Environmental Change		
Award(s)	MRes		
Programme Code	C1G1 (1YFT)	C1G124 (2YPT)	
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 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	2021-22 entry		
Person responsible for the specification	Dr Cristina Banks-Leite		
Date of introduction of programme	October 2015		
Date of programme specification/revision	August 2021		

Programme Overview

The course will provide students with a cutting-edge interdisciplinary programme, providing high-level research training in the latest developments in the conservation of ecosystems and the environment, covering the physical, life and social sciences, as well as an understanding of how to ensure that research has implications for conservation and management. This will best prepare students for a career in Ecosystems and the Environment research and possible PhD studies.

This interdisciplinary programme is designed to develop the solid theoretical grounding, skills and real-world experience that employers are looking for. It also provides an understanding of how to communicate science and maximise research impact .

This MRes is offered as a 12-month full-time programme, or a two-year part time option, which may particularly appeal to those candidates already in employment in a relevant field.

Graduates of this course are ideally placed to work for NGOs, contribute to the work of international organisations such as the UN and World Bank, or advise government policy.

Many graduates may aspire to continuing within academia after graduation, and will find that this MRes will set them apart from other PhD candidates.

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

Knowledge and Understanding of:

- The human-environment linkage and the fundamental drivers of biodiversity loss, both human and biological.
- Techniques in environmental science; the main tools for addressing grand challenges in ecosystems and the environment, from data collection to statistical analysis and mathematical modelling, and conversion to policy advice.
- Key issues in ecosystems and global change science, covering the fundamental underlying science through to policy intervention.
- The role of science in national and international policy for the environment, and means by which policy action can be brought about.
- Research techniques, including information retrieval, experimental design and statistics, modelling, sampling, field safety, analysis and presentation of results.
- Transferable skills including problem definition, project design, preparation of grant proposals, teamwork, written and oral reports, scientific publications.

2. Skills and other Attributes

Intellectual Skills

- Analyse and solve problems in ecosystem and global change research using an integrated multidisciplinary approach.
- Integrate and evaluate information.

- Formulate hypotheses, collect appropriate data to test them, and analyse the data appropriately.
- Devise and use appropriate modelling and decision support tools in order to translate scientific understanding into appropriate policy action.
- Plan, conduct and write up a programme of original research.

Practical Skills

- Plan and safely execute field-based data collection.
- Use computational tools and packages.
- Analyse scientific results and determine their strength and validity.
- Prepare grant proposals.
- Give oral presentations to conference standard.
- Write concisely and effectively for a scientific and a lay audience.
- Use the scientific literature effectively.

Professional Skills Development

- Communicate effectively through oral presentations, written reports, posters and scientific publications.
- Apply statistical and modelling skills to understand and interpret quantitative analyses.
- Demonstrate management skills: decision making, problem definition, project design and evaluation, risk management, teamwork and coordination.
- Integrate and evaluate information from a variety of sources.
- Transfer techniques and solutions from one discipline to another.
- Use Information and Communications Technology.
- Manage resources and time.
- Learn independently with open-mindedness and critical enquiry.
- Learn effectively for the purpose of continuing professional development.

Entry Requirements

Academic Requirement	Normally a minimum 2.1 UK Bachelor's Degree with Honours in a science-based subject (or a comparable qualification recognised by the College).
Non-academic Requirements	Ideally, experience in environmental research or policy, and a strong interest in following a research career in this field.
English Language Requirement	<u>Standard requirement</u> IELTS score of 6.5 overall (minimum 6.0 in all elements)

The programme's competency standards document can be found at: <http://www.imperial.ac.uk/media/imperial-college/faculty-of-natural-sciences/department-of-life-sciences/public/postgraduate/masters/Life-Sciences-Competence-standards-PG.pdf>

Learning & Teaching Strategy	
Scheduled Learning & Teaching Methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lectures • Group discussions • Seminars • Practical classes and field work • Group work exercises • Formal and informal presentations
E-learning & Blended Learning Methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Computer-based work • Online lecture material
Project and Placement Learning Methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual research project and dissertation (9 months), which can include placements
Assessment Strategy	
Assessment Methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coursework • Presentations • Dissertation • Briefing paper • Viva
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. 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

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.

The College's Policy on Mitigating Circumstances is available at:

<https://www.imperial.ac.uk/about/governance/academic-governance/academic-policy/exams-and-assessment/>

Assessment Dates & Deadlines

Coursework Deadlines	Autumn, Summer
Project Deadline	Summer

Assessment Structure

Marking Scheme

Pass:

- Achieve a minimum aggregate mark of 50% across the coursework assessments in the Taught module;
- Achieve a minimum aggregate mark of 50% for the MRes Ecosystem and Environmental Change Research Project module.

Merit:

- Achieve a minimum aggregate mark of 60% across the coursework assessments in the Taught module; Achieve a minimum aggregate mark of 60% for the MRes Ecosystem and Environmental Change Research Project 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% across the coursework assessments in the Taught module; Achieve a minimum aggregate mark of 70% for the MRes Ecosystem and Environmental Change Research Project 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%.

Indicative Module List								
Code	Title	Core/ Elective	L&T Hours	Ind. Study Hours	Place- ment Hours	Total Hours	FHEQ Level	ECTS
	Taught Element	CORE	150	413	0	563	7	22.5
	Research Project	CORE	0	2025	0	2025	7	67.5

Supporting Information

The Programme Guidebook is available at: <http://www.imperial.ac.uk/life-sciences/postgraduate/masters-courses/mres-in-ecosystem-and-environmental-change/>

The Module Guidebook is available at: <http://www.imperial.ac.uk/life-sciences/postgraduate/masters-courses/mres-in-ecosystem-and-environmental-change/>

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: <http://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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