

MSc Conservation Science

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	Conservation Science			
Award(s)	MSc			
Programme Code	C1U9			
Associateship	None			
Awarding Institution	Imperial College London			
Teaching Institution	Imperial College London			
Faculty	Faculty of Natural Sciences			
Department	Department of Life Sciences			
Mode and Period of Study	1 academic year, full-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	2016/17 entry			
Person responsible for the specification	Morena Mills, Course Director; Andrew Knight, Course Director; Marcus Rowcliffe, Course Director; Collin Clubbe, Course Director; Richard Young, Course Director			
Date of introduction of programme	October 2007			

Date of programme specification/revision	January 2017
Description of Programme Contents	
<p>This course is for students interested in a career in conservation science or practice, as well as those wishing to progress to a PhD in conservation science.</p> <p>This course is taught in partnership with three of the most high-profile conservation practitioners in the UK:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew • The Institute of Zoology, the research division of the Zoological Society of London • The Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust <p>You will be immersed in the ongoing conservation work of these organisations, and will be able to choose six-month research project topics linked to their conservation programmes, ensuring that your project contributes to real-world conservation.</p> <p>The course provides a strong quantitative basis for conservation work, including decision theory, conservation planning, statistical computing and modelling.</p> <p>Through learning to collect, analyse and use both socioeconomic and biological information, you will gain a truly interdisciplinary understanding of the theory and practice of conservation.</p> <p>By the end of the course you will not only have developed an ability to analyse conservation issues, but you will also know how to put this understanding into action, implementing successful conservation projects.</p>	
Learning Outcomes	
<p>The Imperial Graduate Attributes are a set of core competencies that 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</p>	
<p>1. Knowledge and Understanding</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. The human-environment linkage and the fundamental drivers of biodiversity loss, both human and biological. ii. Techniques in conservation science; the main tools for addressing conservation problems, from data collection to statistical analysis and mathematical modelling, and conversion to policy advice. iii. Key issues in conservation science, covering the fundamental underlying science through to conservation interventions. iv. The role of conservation in national and international policy, and means by which conservation action can be brought about. v. Research techniques, including information retrieval, experimental design and statistics, modelling, sampling, field safety, analysis and presentation of results. 	

- vi. Transferable skills including problem definition, project design, preparation of grant proposals, teamwork, written and oral reports, and scientific publications.

2. Skills and other Attributes

Intellectual Skills

- i. Analyse and solve conservation problems using an integrated interdisciplinary approach.
- ii. Integrate and evaluate information.
- iii. Formulate hypotheses, collect appropriate data to test them, and analyse the data appropriately.
- iv. Devise and use appropriate modelling and decision support tools in order to translate scientific understanding into appropriate conservation action.
- v. Plan, conduct and write up a programme of original research.

Practical Skills

- i. Design a study that will provide data to answer specific conservation questions.
- ii. Plan and safely execute field-based data collection.
- iii. Use and/or develop computational tools and packages.
- iv. Analyse scientific results and determine their strength and validity.
- v. Prepare proposals.
- vi. Give effective oral presentations
- vii. Write concisely and effectively for scientific and lay audiences.
- viii. Use the scientific literature effectively.

Transferable Skills

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

Entry Requirements	
Academic Requirement	2.1 Honours degree in any subject.
Non-academic Requirements	Applicants without the relevant level of qualification but substantial field experience may be considered.
English Language Requirement	Standard requirement
<p>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</p>	
Learning & Teaching Strategy	
Scheduled Learning & Teaching Methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lectures • Tutorials • Seminars • Practical classes and field work • Case studies • Group work exercises • Formal and informal presentations
E-learning & Blended Learning Methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Computer-based work • Online lecture materials
Project and Placement Learning Methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group projects with Zoological Society of London, Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust and Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew • Individual research project & dissertation (5 months), which can include placements
Assessment Strategy	
Assessment Methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research grant application • Essays • Exams • Dissertations • Presentations • Individual research project report • Viva
Academic Feedback Policy	
<p>Coursework is double-marked. 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 papers will then be returned to the students as soon as possible. Generic feedback on exam questions (explaining what contributed good answers, typical</p>	

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 a Course Director on progress to date, coursework marks achieved and expectations for their research project. Intermediate feedback is available on request from the Course Directors. Feedback at a course level is also provided through the Staff-Student Liaison Committee and SOLE questionnaires.

Staff-student meetings are held each term 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.

Dissertations are marked by a supervisor and one independent assessor, who provide feedback electronically that is returned automatically to students after the final examiners meeting.

Re-sit Policy

The College's Policy on Re-sits is available at: www.imperial.ac.uk/registry/exams/resit

Mitigating Circumstances Policy

The College's Policy on Mitigating Circumstances is available at: www.imperial.ac.uk/registry/exams

Programme Structure

Full-time	Pre-session	Autumn Term	Spring Term	Summer Term	Summer Vacation
Core Modules	0	9	10	0	0
Elective Modules	0	0	0	0	0
Projects	0	0	0	1	0

Assessment Dates & Deadlines

Written Examinations	Winter and Spring
Coursework Assessments	Autumn, Winter and Spring
Project Deadlines	Autumn
Practical Assessments	None

Assessment Structure

Marking Scheme

Pass

- The Pass Mark for all postgraduate taught course modules is 50%.

Merit

- In order to be awarded a result of merit, a candidate must obtain an aggregate mark of 60% or greater.
- Where appropriate, a Board of Examiners may award a result of merit where a candidate has achieved an aggregate mark of 60% or greater across the programme as a whole AND has obtained a mark of 60% or greater in each element with the exception of one element AND has obtained a mark of 50% or greater in this latter element.

Distinction

- In order to be awarded a result of distinction, a candidate must obtain an aggregate mark of 70% or greater.
- Where appropriate, a Board of Examiners may award a result of distinction where a candidate has achieved an aggregate mark of 70% or greater across the programme as a whole AND has obtained a mark of 70% or greater in each element with the exception of one element AND has obtained a mark of 60% or greater in this latter element.

Module Weightings

Element (% Weighting)	Module	% Module Weighting
Taught (50%)	Background to conservation	5.26%
	Systems: Social theory	5.26%
	Systems: Ecological theory	5.26%
	Spatial Analyses & GIS	5.26%
	Decision-making and critical thinking	5.26%
	Building partnerships and programs	5.26%
	Monitoring and evaluation	5.26%
	Species declines and zoos	5.26%
	Species management for recovery	5.26%
	Social research methods	5.26%
	Ecological research methods	5.26%
	Case studies	5.26%
	Protected Areas	5.26%
	Economics in Conservation	5.26%
	Urban conservation and Environmental Impact Assessment	5.26%
Kew Gardens and Plant Conservation	5.26%	

	Natural Resource Exploitation	5.26%
	Invasive species and other threats	5.26%
	Statistical techniques, software and GIS	5.26%
Research (50%)	Research Project	100%

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
	Background to conservation	CORE	27	32.4	0	59.4	50	50	0	7	2.376
	Systems: Social theory	CORE	27	32.2	0	59.2	50	50	0	7	2.368
	Systems: Ecological theory	CORE	27	32.2	0	59.2	50	50	0	7	2.368
	Spatial Analyses & GIS	CORE	27	32.2	0	59.2	50	50	0	7	2.368
	Decision-making and critical thinking	CORE	27	32.2	0	59.2	50	50	0	7	2.368
	Building partnerships and programs	CORE	27	32.2	0	59.2	50	50	0	7	2.368
	Monitoring and evaluation	CORE	27	32.2	0	59.2	50	50	0	7	2.368
	Species declines and zoos	CORE	27	32.2	0	59.2	50	50	0	7	2.368
	Species management for recovery	CORE	27	32.2	0	59.2	50	50	0	7	2.368
	Social research methods	CORE	27	32.2	0	59.2	50	50	0	7	2.368
	Ecological research methods	CORE	27	32.2	0	59.2	50	50	0	7	2.368
	Case studies	CORE	27	32.2	0	59.2	50	50	0	7	2.368
	Protected Areas	CORE	27	32.2	0	59.2	50	50	0	7	2.368
	Economics in Conservation	CORE	27	32.2	0	59.2	50	50	0	7	2.368

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
	Urban conservation and Environmental Impact Assessment	CORE	27	32.2	0	59.2	50	50	0	7	2.368
	Kew Gardens and Plant Conservation	CORE	27	32.2	0	59.2	50	50	0	7	2.368
	Natural Resource Exploitation	CORE	27	32.2	0	59.2	50	50	0	7	2.368
	Invasive species and other threats	CORE	27	32.2	0	59.2	50	50	0	7	2.368
	Statistical techniques, software and GIS	CORE	27	32.2	0	59.2	50	50	0	7	2.368
	Research	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/msc-in-conservation-science/>

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

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://www3.imperial.ac.uk/registry/proceduresandregulations/regulations>

Imperial College is an independent corporation whose legal status derives from a Royal Charter granted under Letters Patent in 1907. In 2007 a Supplemental Charter and Statutes was granted by HM Queen Elizabeth II. This Supplemental Charter, which came into force on the date of the College's Centenary, 8th July 2007, established the College as a University with the name and style of "The Imperial College of Science, Technology and Medicine".

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

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