Programme Specification

This specification provides a summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if they take full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided.

The content of our courses is reviewed annually to make sure it's up-to-date and relevant. Individual modules are occasionally updated or withdrawn. This is in response to discoveries through our world-leading research; funding changes; professional accreditation requirements; student or employer feedback; outcomes of reviews; and variations in staff or student numbers. In the event of any change we will inform students and take reasonable steps to minimise disruption.

Programme Details

1. Programme title	Biodiversity and Conservation		
2. Award type	Master of Science		
3. Programme details	**FHEQ Level:** 7	**Mode of Study:** Full time	**Duration:** 1 year
4. Faculty	Faculty of Science		
5. School	**Owning:** School of Biosciences		
6. Accrediting Professional or Statutory Body	None		
7. HECoS code *Select between one and three codes from the HECoS vocabulary.*	**Code:** 101318 **Percentage:** 50	**Code:** 100864 **Percentage:** 50	**Code:** **Percentage:**
Programme code (internal use)	BIST03		

9. Programme aims

The programme aims to:	
A1	Provide an in-depth coverage of current theory, main methods, and key issues in biodiversity and conservation science.
A2	Equip students with the skills to critically analyse current topics in biodiversity, conservation, and global change.
A3	Provide training in the key skills required to plan and manage a scientific project, and develop students' abilities to independently research a topic in depth.
A4	Show students how they can apply their academic knowledge to effect positive societal and economic change.

10. Programme learning outcomes

Knowledge and understanding (K) On successful completion of the programme, students will be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:	
K1	Major conservation issues affecting a range of global ecosystems and their human and environmental drivers.
K2	Major ecosystem types and broad patterns of biodiversity in space and time.
K3	The principles of robust scientific enquiry.
K4	How to apply subject-specific knowledge to new settings, context and challenges to make a positive difference in the world.
Skills and other attributes (S) *When considering the skills and attributes developed in this programme, please refer to the Sheffield Graduate attributes (SGAs). SGAs can be found here* On successful completion of the programme, students will be able to:	
S1	Summarise and classify key topics in biodiversity and conservation biology.
S2	Critically interrogate contentious ideas in biodiversity and conservation biology.
S3	Demonstrate creative and strategic approaches to problem solving both independently and through effective group work.
S4	Apply critical and analytical skills, in particular design of experiments, data analysis and the use of statistics.
S5	Communicate complex or contentious ideas effectively, in both writing and orally, to peers, other specialist audiences, and the general public.
S6	Identify questions or knowledge gaps in the field, and design, plan, conduct and report on a rigorous investigation to address these.

11. Learning and teaching methods *(this should include a summary of methods used throughout the programme, including any unique features and should be written with a student focus as this information will display to current students and applicants i.e. prospectus)*

Learning objectives will be delivered through a range of teaching methods including lectures, seminars, tutorials and discussion groups, practical and field classes, and individual research. K1 and K2 are delivered primarily through lectures and discussions delivered mainly by School of Biosciences academic staff supplemented by external guest speakers. K3 and K4 are delivered primarily through seminars, tutorials and practical classes. Skills will be developed through hands-on practical classes and master-classes, group and individual projects. Delivery will build on the School of Biosciences' reputation for research-led teaching, and will be provided by a range of academic and teaching staff. Skills sessions in semester 1 will focus on key skills required for students to become self-directed learners, including for example sessions on critical reading of scientific literature and literature research skills. Links to key resources will be provided on the dedicated programme Blackboard area and within module-level Blackboard sites.

12. Assessment and feedback methods *(this should include the range of types of methods used and should be written with a student focus as this information will display to current students and applicants i.e. prospectus)*

Assessment is primarily via a variety of coursework, with specific exercises designed to develop and test different skills. Coursework includes various written exercises (essays, extended project reports, policy briefing notes, statistics exercises), as well as oral presentations, with an emphasis on effective communication to a range of specific audiences. Feedback will be available to students prior to final assessment. Depending on the module, this may involve individual or small group discussions, or annotation of written work.

Formative feedback is built into the constituent modules of this programme, and includes verbal feedback in group sessions, as well as structured and open-door dedicated feedback sessions in advance of coursework deadlines, providing students the opportunity to act on feedback prior to final submission of work. In addition, there are opportunities to get detailed feedback on sections of major pieces of written work, in the form of verbal comments or written annotations. Workshops will provide the opportunity for generic feedback to be offered, as well as allowing students to raise questions and request feedback in a small-group setting. Feedback will be provided on all assessed work, primarily in the form of annotations and comments on written work. Electronic marking will be used as standard with feedback accessible via Blackboard. Links to relevant skills sessions provided either within the School of Biosciences or via other routes (e.g. 301) will be provided as appropriate in support of specific feedback comments.

Version Number:	**Purpose / Change:**	**Cohort affected: (academic year and level)**	**Date change approved:**
1			December 2022
2	Resumption	26/27	October 2025

END OF DOCUMENT