



COURSE SPECIFICATION

BSc (Hons) Biology

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Please refer to the [Course Specification Guidance Notes](#) for guidance on completing this document.

Course Title	<i>BSc (Hons)</i>
Final Award	<i>CertHE, DipHE</i>
Exit Awards	<i>U0203PYC, C0203F, C0203S / C100</i>
Course Code / UCAS code (if applicable)	<i>Full time</i>
Mode of study	<i>Campus</i>
Mode of delivery	<i>3 years, 4 years with placement</i>
Normal length of course	<i>From September 2024 intake onwards</i>
Cohort(s) to which this course specification applies	<i>University of Portsmouth</i>
Awarding Body	<i>University of Portsmouth</i>
Teaching Institution	<i>Faculty of Science & Health</i>
Faculty	<i>School of the Environment and Life Sciences</i>
School/Department/Subject Group	School of the Environment and Life Sciences University of Portsmouth
School/Department/Subject Group webpage	https://www.port.ac.uk/study/courses/undergraduate/bsc-hons-biology
Course webpage including entry criteria	<i>Royal Society of Biology</i>
Professional and/or Statutory Regulatory Body accreditations	<i>Level 4, Level 5, Level 6</i>
Quality Assurance Agency Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) Level	<i>BSc (Hons)</i>

This course specification provides a summary of the main features of the course, identifies the aims and learning outcomes of the course, the teaching, learning and assessment methods used by teaching staff, and the reference points used to inform the curriculum.

This information is therefore useful to potential students to help them choose the right course of study, to current students on the course and to staff teaching and administering the course.

Further detailed information on the individual modules within the course may be found in the relevant module descriptors and the Course Handbook provided to students on enrolment.

Please refer to the [Course and Module Catalogue](#) for further information on the course structure and modules.

Educational aims of the course

- To develop a broad understanding of the biological sciences
- To enable students to select a focus for their studies in the light of insights gained during their broadly based first year of study
- To develop and refine students' intellectual, critical and practical skills in the acquisition, analysis, interpretation, understanding, evaluation and presentation of biological information
- To enable students to form scientific judgements, make decisions and demonstrate competence in key transferable skills
- To foster an active and self-reflective learning approach to enable students to engage in life-long learning
- To provide a firm foundation for further training or employment in a range of contexts in which the combination of biological knowledge and/or analytical and critical enquiry skills are required
- To produce graduates with skills and a knowledge base suitable for the employment market and with an appreciation of the value to society of an education in science, particularly in biology

Course Learning Outcomes and Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategies

The [Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education \(QAA\)](#) sets out a national framework of qualification levels, and the associated standards of achievement are found in their [Framework for Higher Education Qualifications](#) document.

The Course Learning Outcomes for this course are outlined in the tables below.

A. Knowledge and understanding of:			
LO number	Learning outcome	Learning and Teaching methods	Assessment methods
A1	The fundamental concepts, principles and theories of biology; the means of identifying organisms, biological classification and evolutionary processes; the distribution of organisms in space and time; the molecular basis of cellular structure and function; cellular systems and their integration into tissues and multicellular systems; genetics at the molecular, organism and population level	Lectures, workshops, laboratory work, field work, tutorials, guided independent study	Essays, MCQs, examinations
A2	Current topics in different areas in biology, including those of genetics, molecular biology, cell biology, microbiology, organismal biology and ecology	Lectures, workshops, laboratory work, field work, tutorials, guided independent study	Essays, MCQs, examinations
A3	Appropriate investigative and analytical methods in biology and evaluation of the acquired data	Laboratory work, field work	Lab reports, data handling questions, project report
A4	Paper and electronic resources for biological information and of how to use the results to synthesise novel ideas	Workshops, tutorials, guided independent study	Essays, lab reports, data handling questions, project report
A5	The applications of biology in medical, environmental and industrial situations	Lectures, workshops, tutorials, guided independent study	Essays, examinations, project report

B. Cognitive (Intellectual or Thinking) skills, able to:			
LO number	Learning outcome	Learning and Teaching methods	Assessment methods
B1	Communicate effectively both orally and in writing	Tutorials, workshops, project supervision	Essays, lab reports, project report, posters, presentations
B2	Apply conceptual and practical skills to define, analyse and solve problems	Lectures, workshops, tutorials	Essays, lab reports, project report
B3	Formulate realistic hypotheses and design experiments to test these	Workshops, tutorials, project supervision	Lab reports, project report, data handling questions
B4	Manage experimental data and apply numerical skills necessary to process, analyse and interpret experimental findings	Laboratory work, field work, workshops, project supervision	Lab reports, project report, data handling questions
B5	Integrate and evaluate experimental information from a variety of approaches	Lectures, workshops, laboratory work, field work, project supervision	Essays, examinations, project report
B6	Assess the merits of competing theories, explanations or methodologies	Lectures, workshops, project supervision	Essays, examinations, project report
B7	Summarise and synthesise information	Workshops, tutorials, project supervision	Essays, examinations, lab reports, project report
B8	Search, review and evaluate research literature effectively	Tutorials, project supervision	Essays, project report

C. Practical (Professional or Subject) skills, able to:			
LO number	Learning outcome	Learning and Teaching methods	Assessment methods
C1	Demonstrate basic competencies in a range of practical biological techniques in both lab and field	Laboratory work, field work, project supervision	Lab reports, project performance, practical tests
C2	Plan and execute experiments using materials and equipment safely in the laboratory	Laboratory work, field work, project supervision	Lab reports, practical tests, project performance, data handling questions
C3	Make and record accurate and relevant observations in the field and the laboratory	Lectures, tutorials	Lab reports, project report
C4	Analyse experimental results with the use, if necessary, of appropriate statistical tests	Lectures, tutorials, workshops, project supervision	Lab reports, project report
C5	Make effective use of software for data presentation, data analysis, and presentation of written reports and posters	Laboratory work, field work, tutorials, workshops	Posters, presentations, lab reports, project report
C6	Prepare accurately written scientific reports	Laboratory work, field work, tutorials, project supervision	Lab reports, project report

D. Transferrable (Graduate and Employability) skills, able to:			
LO number	Learning outcome	Learning and Teaching methods	Assessment methods
D1	Communicate effectively orally, through the written word or by visual presentation, in a form appropriate for the target audience	Tutorials	Essays, posters, presentations, project report
D2	Learn independently and effectively	Tutorials, guided independent study, project	Essays, project report
D3	Demonstrate problem solving and critical enquiry skills	Tutorials, workshops, project supervision	Essays, data handling questions, examinations
D4	Apply basic statistical tests and numerical skills to the analysis of biological data	Lectures, workshops, project supervision	Lab reports, data handling questions, project report, examinations
D5	Use information and communication technology effectively	Lectures, workshops	Data handling questions, project report
D6	Work effectively both independently and as part of a team	Tutorials, group work, workshops, project	Essays, presentations, project performance
D7	Manage time effectively and be able to prioritise workloads	Tutorials, project	PDP, project performance

Academic Regulations

The current University of Portsmouth [Academic Regulations: Examination & Assessment Regulations](#) will apply to this course. In order to meet the Royal Society of Biology accreditation the project unit cannot be compensated.

Support for Student Learning

The University of Portsmouth provides a comprehensive range of support services for students throughout their course, details of which are available at the [MyPort](#) student portal.

In addition to these University support services this course also provided an extensive induction programme that introduces the students to the University and the course. The Course is managed as part of the Biological Sciences BSc programme by a team comprising the Head of School, Associate Heads) and the Course leader. All modules are supported by their own Moodle sites.

Additional support is provided by the personal tutor and the project supervisor. Support for study skills is provided by the Faculty of Science Learning Support Tutors.

Evaluation and Enhancement of Standards and Quality in Learning and Teaching

The University of Portsmouth undertakes comprehensive monitoring, review and evaluation of courses within clearly assigned staff responsibilities. Student feedback is a key feature in these evaluations, as represented in our [Policy for Listening to and Responding to the Student Voice](#) where you can also find further information.

Reference Points

The course and outcomes have been developed taking account of:

- [University of Portsmouth Curriculum Framework Specification](#)
- [University of Portsmouth Education Vision 2030 and Strategy 2025](#)
- [University of Portsmouth Code of Practice for Work-based and Placement Learning](#)
- [Quality Assurance Agency Subject Benchmark Statement](#) for Biosciences, October 2019
- Requirements of the Royal Society of Biology
- Vocational and professional experience, scholarship and research expertise of the University of Portsmouth's academic members of staff
- National Occupational Standards

Changes to your course/modules

The University of Portsmouth has checked the information provided in this Course Specification and will endeavour to deliver this course in keeping with this Course Specification. However, changes to the course may sometimes be required arising from annual monitoring, student feedback, and the review and update of modules and courses.

Where this activity leads to significant changes to modules and courses there will be prior consultation with students and others, wherever possible, and the University of Portsmouth will take all reasonable steps to minimise disruption to students.

It is also possible that the University of Portsmouth may not be able to offer a module or course for reasons outside of its control, for example, due to the absence of a member of staff or low student registration numbers. Where this is the case, the University of Portsmouth will endeavour to inform applicants and students as soon as possible, and where appropriate, will facilitate the transfer of affected students to another suitable course.

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