

Programme Title: BA Geography



## Programme Specification (UG)

|   |                                 |
|---|---------------------------------|
| Awarding body / institution:                | Queen Mary University of London |
| Teaching institution:                       | Queen Mary University of London |
| Name of final award and programme title:    | BA (Hons) Geography             |
| Name of interim award(s):                   |                                 |
| Duration of study / period of registration: | 3 Years Full Time               |
| QMUL programme code / UCAS code(s):         | L700                            |
| QAA Benchmark Group:                        |                                 |
| FHEQ Level of Award :                       | Level 6                         |
| Programme accredited by:                    | RGS                             |
| Date Programme Specification approved:      |                                 |
| Responsible School / Institute:             | School of Geography             |

Schools / Institutes which will also be involved in teaching part of the programme:

Collaborative institution(s) / organisation(s) involved in delivering the programme:

### Programme outline

Our BA Geography programme is a three year, full-time degree course. It is a lively and stimulating programme, taught by some of the world's leading geographers. It encompasses a wide range of contemporary geographical scholarship, with an emphasis on human geographical themes and with a particular focus on the research specialisms of academic staff. The study of cultural, economic, development, health, historical, political, social and urban geographies, together with engagement with some aspects of the scientific areas of the discipline of Geography will enable students to acquire a critical understanding of cutting edge geographical scholarship and debate in the 21st century.

The programme will develop intellectual and practical skills through training in human geography research techniques, including both qualitative and quantitative methodologies. The programme also develops key skills and attributes that will be valuable during the degree programme and in subsequent employment, such as data collection, analysis and interpretation, written and verbal communication, teamwork and ICT, and research design and management (via the dissertation).

Fieldwork is an important element of the degree, providing opportunities to engage first hand with geographical issues in East London, elsewhere in the United Kingdom and internationally in the Global North and South.

### Aims of the programme

The School of Geography, through its BA Geography programme aims to:

- 1) share its passion for geographical learning and scholarship with students;
- 2) introduce students to a range of geographical and environmental knowledge and understanding, shaped by staff research interests and by appropriate external frameworks such as the geography benchmarking document (which describes the nature of study and the academic standards expected of a geography graduate);
- 3) enable students to specialise within particular fields of geography (defined largely by staff research interests) ;
- 4) develop intellectual, discipline-specific and key skills, including field work skills and social science research skills;
- 5) encourage students to develop reflexive learning practices, equipping them with a sense of independence and the confidence to use their own initiative and imagination;
- 6) foster critical thinking skills about the world and a continuing sense of enquiry;
- 7) develop students' understanding of the value and relevance of a geographical education to their future careers and wider life experiences;
- 8) facilitate a range of personal attributes relevant to further achievement in the world beyond undergraduate and postgraduate education.

As a leading international centre of geographical research, the School of Geography's mission is to teach its students to the very highest academic standards, drawing on its research in creative and innovative ways.

### What will you be expected to achieve?

The programme provides opportunities for students to achieve and demonstrate the learning outcomes listed below. These use the QAA Benchmark Statement in Geography as a framework interpreted in ways which reflect the distinctive nature of our research and teaching in geography.

### Please note that the following information is only applicable to students who commenced their Level 4 studies in 2017/18, or 2018/19

In each year of undergraduate study, students are required to study modules to the value of at least 10 credits, which align to one or more of the following themes:

- networking
- multi- and inter-disciplinarity
- international perspectives
- enterprising perspectives.

These modules will be identified through the Module Directory, and / or by your School or Institute as your studies progress.

#### Academic Content:

|    |  |
|----|--|
| A1 | Knowledge and understanding of the relationships between physical and human aspects of environment and landscapes, society and space                                   |
| A2 | Knowledge and understanding of the concept of spatial variation - through themes such as urban change, cultural dynamics, social justice, and economic transformations |

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| A 3  | Knowledge and understanding of the nature of spatial influences, particularly in shaping human societies through cultural interactions, and economic and political systems  |
| A 4  | Knowledge and understanding of the construction and constitution of the distinctiveness of particular places and their interdependence with other places at various spatial scales  |
| A 5  | Knowledge and understanding of the operation of physical systems and their interactions with human activities, including their implications for resource management, urban planning, and climate adaptation                           |
| A 6  | Knowledge and understanding of the key geographical processes that shape the physical world, with a focus on their impacts on human societies, such as environmental change and resource distribution                                 |
| A 7  | Knowledge and understanding of the significance of spatial and temporal scale, for example through examining historical, economic, political and cultural geographies, and their implications for societal development and well-being |
| A 8  | Knowledge and understanding of the role and significance of change as central process in human and physical worlds  |
| A 9  | Knowledge and understanding of the geographies of difference and inequality in the human world and the processes underpinning them  |
| A 10 | knowledge and understanding of the contested, dynamic and plural nature of the geography discipline   |
| A 11 | Knowledge and understanding of the diverse forms of representation of the human and physical worlds   |
| A 12 | Knowledge and understanding of the main methodological strategies used in the analysis and interpretation of geographical information   |
| A 13 | Knowledge and understanding of the relationships between earth and its people from an informed, concerned and critical perspective  |

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| <b>Disciplinary Skills - able to:</b> |  |
| B 1                                   | Plan, design, and execute a piece of rigorous research or enquiry, including the production of a piece of original research that addresses themes associated with human or environmental geography           |
| B 2                                   | Describe and comment critically upon particular aspects of current geographical research, with an emphasis on human geography themes such as social inequalities, urbanization, and cultural landscapes      |
| B 3                                   | Undertake effective field work (with due regard to safety and risk assessment)   |
| B 4                                   | Prepare effective maps and diagrams using appropriate technologies   |
| B 5                                   | Employ a variety of social survey, geospatial analysis, and field methods for the collection, analysis, and understanding of information from human worlds, including interviews, archival analysis, and GIS |
| B 6                                   | Employ a variety of technical methods for the collection and analysis of spatial and environmental information through the use of quantitative and qualitative approaches                                    |
| B 7                                   | Combine and interpret different types of geographical evidence, including qualitative data, geospatial information, and statistical analysis, to understand human-environment interactions                   |
| B 8                                   | Recognise the moral and ethical issues involved in geographical debate and enquiry and research practice   |

Attributes:

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| C 1 | Engage critically with knowledge (acquire and apply knowledge in a rigorous way; connect information and ideas within their field of study; use writing for learning and reflection; adapt their understanding to new and unfamiliar settings)  |
| C 2 | Develop a global perspective  |
| C 3 | Learn continuously in a changing world (acquire new learning in a range of ways, both individually and collaboratively; use quantitative data confidently and competently)  |
| C 4 | Rounded Intellectual Development (good judgement; curiosity and openness to change; initiative and resilience in meeting challenges; respect for the opinions of others and a readiness to act inclusively; the ability to reflect upon and assess their own progress; transferable key skills to help them with their career goals and their continuing education) |
| C 5 | Clarity of Communication (develop effective spoken and written English; explain and argue clearly and concisely; apply different forms of communication in various social, professional and cultural settings; use communication technologies competently)  |
| C 6 | Research Capacity (grasp the principles and practices of their field of study; produce analyses which are grounded in evidence; apply their analytical skills to investigate unfamiliar problems; work individually and in collaboration with others; develop a strong sense of intellectual integrity; acquire substantial bodies of new knowledge)                |
| C 7 | Information Expertise (identify information needs appropriate to different situations; use technologies to access and interpret information effectively; critically evaluate the reliability of different sources of information; use information for evidence-based decision-making and creative thinking)   |

### How will you learn?

The programme will be taught in accordance with the School of Geography's Teaching and Learning Strategy. The School of Geography is committed to developing, maintaining and supporting excellence in teaching and learning, to innovation in teaching practice, and to fostering independent learning and critical thinking in our students, whilst providing appropriate levels of support to students in their learning.

The delivery of teaching will take a number of forms:

- lectures both online and on campus
- small group tutorials
- seminars and webinars
- workshops
- computing practical classes
- guest speakers
- individual supervision of projects, dissertations and internships
- fieldwork

Learning will be supported by:

- coherently designed and effectively delivered modules
- detailed module handbooks for each module
- the provision of key materials in libraries and through electronic resources such as online reading lists, databases and journal portals
- individual summative and formative feedback on written work
- appropriate formative and /or summative assessments
- provision of supporting materials (e.g. Powerpoint slides, recorded lectures, handouts, reading lists) via QMplus (QM's dedicated and interactive on-line learning environment)
- encouraging active participation in seminars and debates engaging students in problem solving and collaborative group work
- research methods training
- guided independent study resources

### How will you be assessed?

Assessment is varied and will take a number of forms within the programme. The nature of the assessment is closely connected to the desired learning outcomes and the mode of teaching within each module. Forms of assessment include:

- seen and unseen examinations

- . in-class tests
- coursework essays
- research projects and dissertations
- project synopses
- oral presentations and role play exercises
- group projects and presentations
- . writing exercises/written assessments that adopt different formats and styles and are aimed at a range of audiences, for example writing journals and newspaper articles
- literature reviews
- . writing policy briefs, field work journals, reading exercises
- . Audio-visual productions (podcasting on fieldtrips)

### **How is the programme structured?**

Please specify the structure of the programme diets for all variants of the programme (e.g. full-time, part-time - if applicable). The description should be sufficiently detailed to fully define the structure of the diet.

The programme is structured around a set of compulsory modules and a range of elective modules, as identified in the table below.

Students take modules up to the value of 120 credits in each of their 3 Developmental Years. Students in Developmental Year 1 are required to take level 4 modules. Students in Developmental Year 2 will select level 5 modules. Students in Developmental Year 3 will normally select level 6 modules. Further information on College rules governing progression and award of degrees can be found at [www.arcs.qmul.ac.uk](http://www.arcs.qmul.ac.uk)

During Developmental Year 1, students take 120 credits of compulsory modules. The modules are designed to provide a firm grounding in key issues and debates in human and physical geography and in appropriate research methodologies, approaches to study (including field work) and generic skills training.

During Developmental Year 2, students take a 30 credit compulsory module (GEG5156) and 90 credits of elective modules. The compulsory module is designed to deepen students' understanding of social science research methods, further develop their generic skills (including, inter alia, presentation and group-working skills) and to begin research activity connecting to the compulsory Dissertation module in Developmental Year 3. Students select additional 15 credit elective modules which focus on subdisciplinary areas of geography (and may include opportunities to undertake overseas fieldwork) or on more specialist techniques. These provide a platform for further specialisation in Developmental Year 3.

During Developmental Year 3, students take a 30 credit compulsory module (GEG6099) and 90 credits of elective modules. The compulsory module is the Dissertation which is based on undertaking original research. The dissertation module is seen as the culmination of students' training in research design, methods, analysis and presentation and demonstrates their ability to deploy accurately techniques of analysis and enquiry using primary and secondary sources. The remaining 90 credits are selected from a range of specialist modules, which reflect the distinctive research expertise of academic staff on the programme and may include opportunities to undertake overseas fieldwork and provide basic research assistance to staff.

Some level 5 and level 6 modules can only be taken if certain pre-requisite level 4 or level 5 modules have already been completed; these requirements are detailed in handbooks and module descriptions on-line.

#### **MODULE SELECTION RULES:**

At Level 5 and 6 students may select a maximum of 15 credits of modules from outside the programme diet.

At Level 6, students may not take more than 15 credits of Level 5 modules. This will be decided in discussion with their academic advisor.

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| Module Title                                | Module Code | Credits | Level | Module Selection Status | Academic Year of Study | Semester        |
|---|-------------|---------|-------|-------------------------|------------------------|-----------------|
| Sustainable Transitions                     | GEG4015     | 15      | 4     | Compulsory              | 1                      | Semester 1      |
| Critical Geography: Environment and Society | GEG4014     | 15      | 4     | Compulsory              | 1                      | Semester 1 or 2 |
| Introduction to Research Methods            | GEG4011     | 30      | 4     | Compulsory              | 1                      | Semesters 1 & 2 |
| Reinventing Britain                         | GEG4106     | 15      | 4     | Compulsory              | 1                      | Semester 1 or 2 |
| Global Worlds                               | GEG4112     | 15      | 4     | Compulsory              | 1                      | Semester 1 or 2 |
| Earth Surface Science                       | GEG4209     | 15      | 4     | Compulsory              | 1                      | Semester 1 or 2 |
| Planetary Emergencies                       | GEG4013     | 15      | 4     | Compulsory              | 1                      | Semester 1 or 2 |

Academic Year of Study FT - Year 2

| Module Title   | Module Code | Credits | Level | Module Selection Status | Academic Year of Study | Semester        |
|--|-------------|---------|-------|-------------------------|------------------------|-----------------|
| Advanced Research Methods  | GEG5156     | 30      | 5     | Compulsory              | 2                      | Semesters 1 & 2 |
| Cultural Geographies   | GEG5126     | 15      | 5     | Elective                | 2                      | Semester 1 or 2 |
| Society and Space  | GEG5127     | 15      | 5     | Elective                | 2                      | Semester 1 or 2 |
| Development Geographies: From International to Global Perspectives | GEG5155     | 15      | 5     | Elective                | 2                      | Semester 1 or 2 |
| Economic Geographies   | GEG5129     | 15      | 5     | Elective                | 2                      | Semester 1 or 2 |
| Health, Space and Justice  | GEG5135     | 15      | 5     | Elective                | 2                      | Semester 1 or 2 |
| Geomorphology  | GEG5225     | 15      | 5     | Elective                | 2                      | Semester 1 or 2 |
| Past Environmental Change  | GEG5229     | 15      | 5     | Elective                | 2                      | Semester 1 or 2 |

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| Module Title   | Module Code | Credits | Level | Module Selection Status | Academic Year of Study | Semester        |
|--|-------------|---------|-------|-------------------------|------------------------|-----------------|
| Boston Reworked: The Making of a North American City   | GEG5149     | 15      | 5     | Elective                | 2                      | Semester 2      |
| Ecosystem Science                                      | GEG5224     | 15      | 5     | Elective                | 2                      | Semester 1 or 2 |
| Belfast: Political Geography in the Post Conflict City | GEG5152     | 15      | 5     | Elective                | 2                      | Semester 2      |
| Climate Change in Practice                             | GEG5230     | 15      | 5     | Elective                | 2                      | Semester 1 or 2 |
| Science, Ethics and Environmental Policy               | GEG5157     | 15      | 5     | Elective                | 2                      | Semester 1 or 2 |
| Geospatial Science                                     | GEG5223     | 15      | 5     | Elective                | 2                      | Semester 1 or 2 |
| Colonial Lives and Afterlives                          | GEG5142     | 15      | 5     | Elective                | 2                      | Semester 1 or 2 |

Academic Year of Study FT - Year 3

| Module Title                                   | Module Code | Credits | Level | Module Selection Status | Academic Year of Study | Semester        |
|--|-------------|---------|-------|-------------------------|------------------------|-----------------|
| Geography, Technology and Society              | GEG6134     | 15      | 6     | Elective                | 3                      | Semester 1 or 2 |
| Flood Risk Management and Modelling            | GEG6314     | 15      | 6     | Elective                | 3                      | Semester 1 or 2 |
| Advanced Geospatial Science                    | GEG6230     | 15      | 6     | Elective                | 3                      | Semester 2      |
| Medicine, Politics and Global Health Histories | GEG6158     | 15      | 6     | Elective                | 3                      | Semester 1 or 2 |
| Kinship: Geographical Perspectives             | GEG6146     | 15      | 6     | Elective                | 3                      | Semester 1 or 2 |
| Dissertation                                   | GEG6099     | 30      | 6     | Compulsory              | 3                      | Semesters 1 & 2 |
| Volcanoes, Climate Change and Society          | GEG6229     | 15      | 6     | Elective                | 3                      | Semester 1 or 2 |
| Urban African Economies                        | GEG6151     | 15      | 6     | Elective                | 3                      | Semester 1 or 2 |



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| Module Title   | Module Code | Credits | Level | Module Selection Status | Academic Year of Study | Semester        |
|--|-------------|---------|-------|-------------------------|------------------------|-----------------|
| Belfast: Political Geography in the Post Conflict City | GEG6152     | 15      | 6     | Elective                | 3                      | Semester 2      |
| Epidemic Cities  | GEG6157     | 15      | 6     | Elective                | 3                      | Semester 2      |
| Climate Change and Climate Policy                      | GEG6233     | 15      | 6     | Elective                | 3                      | Semester 1 or 2 |
| Critical Environmental Studies                         | GEG6155     | 15      | 6     | Elective                | 3                      | Semester 1 or 2 |
| Regional Economics and Policy                          | GEG6156     | 15      | 6     | Elective                | 3                      | Semester 1 or 2 |

### What are the entry requirements?

The School considers each candidate individually and conducts admissions interviews. Entry requirements are as follows:

#### A-levels

Tariff/Grades requirement: ABB to BBB. Typical offer: ABB. Though Geography at A-level is preferred, it is not required. We usually ask for a grade B in Geography or another appropriate subject. If you do not perform well in one subject and do better in others, that is acceptable providing you gain the minimum grades required for the degree programme. Excluded subjects: General Studies.

#### Vocational or applied A-levels

The following Applied A-levels and Double Awards only are acceptable: Art and Design; Business; Information and Communication Technology; Leisure and Recreation; Media; Performing Arts; Science; Travel and Tourism.

#### BTEC National Diploma (18 units)

Acceptability: Acceptable on its own and combined with other qualifications. Subjects and grades required: Overall DDM.

#### International Baccalaureate

Acceptability: Acceptable on its own and combined with other qualifications. Subjects and grades required: 30-32 points overall with 6,5,5 to 5,5,5 in HL subjects one of which should be Geography.

All students must meet Queen Mary's English language requirements. Students from outside the United Kingdom must give evidence of their English language ability by producing an English language test score. Requirements are as follows:

IELTS 7.0 (writing 6.5).

### How will the quality of the programme be managed and enhanced? How do we listen to and act on your feedback?

The School of Geography operates an Education Committee which advises the Director of Education on all matters relating to the delivery of taught programmes at school level including monitoring the application of relevant QM policies and reviewing all proposals for module and programme approval and amendment before submission to Taught Programmes Board. Student views are incorporated in the committee's work through the reporting of minutes from the Student Voice Committee and via the consideration of module evaluations and student surveys.

Like all schools/institutes at Queen Mary, the School of Geography operates an Annual Programme Review (APR) of its taught undergraduate and postgraduate provision. APR is a continuous process of reflection and action planning which is owned by those responsible for programme delivery. Students' views are considered in this process through analysis of the NSS and module evaluations and through the comments of the Student Voice Committee.



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The Student Voice Committee provides a formal means of communication and discussion between the School of Geography and its students. The committee is co-chaired by a student and the Director of Student Experience and consists of student representatives from each year group together with appropriate representation from staff within the School. It is designed to respond to the needs of students, as well as act as a forum for discussing programme and module developments. The Student Voice Committee meets regularly throughout the year.

All modules provide end-of-module online experience surveys to be completed by students, the results of which are considered annually by module convenors and teaching teams and may lead to modifications of module content and/or delivery in future years.

### What academic support is available?

The School of Geography is a welcoming and friendly department and all academic and professional support staff play a role in ensuring that students are supported through their studies.

Programme Induction is provided for all incoming students during Welcome Week. This is used as an opportunity to acquaint new students with the format of the programme and expectations of them. Students also receive a library induction. All students meet with a designated Academic Advisor during this week to talk about the year ahead. Students with special educational needs have the opportunity to talk to their adviser about how the school can best support them, and to agree with the students how to communicate those needs to appropriate members of staff.

All first year students are allocated an Academic Advisor with whom they will meet regularly during Semesters A and B. In the final year, the students will have an Advisor as well as a Dissertation supervisor and regular one-to-one meetings take place. All staff have weekly office hours when they are available to see students on a one-to-one basis.

The Director of Education and Programme Directors are responsible for overseeing the delivery of undergraduate programmes, including monitoring attendance and engagement, and can be consulted about problems and academic issues. The Director of Student Support and Engagement has overall responsibility for matters concerning student support and welfare within the School of Geography and can be consulted in relation to more serious issues and problems.

Finally, the School of Geography participates in Queen Mary's PASS scheme - a peer-mentoring system where new students can seek advice and support for students at later stages in their degree programme.

### How inclusive is the programme for all students, including those with disabilities?

Queen Mary has a central Disability and Dyslexia Service (DDS) that offers support for all students with disabilities, specific learning difficulties and mental health issues. The DDS supports all Queen Mary students: full-time, part-time, undergraduate, postgraduate, UK and international at all campuses and all sites.

Students can access advice, guidance and support in the following areas:

- Finding out if you have a specific learning difficulty like dyslexia
- Applying for funding through the Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA)
- Arranging DSA assessments of need
- Special arrangements in examinations
- Accessing loaned equipment (e.g. digital recorders)
- Specialist one-to-one study skills tuition
- Ensuring access to course materials in alternative formats (e.g. Braille)
- Providing educational support workers (e.g. note-takers, readers, library assistants)
- Access to specialist mentoring support for students with mental health issues and Autistic Spectrum Disorders.

### Programme-specific rules and facts

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### Links with employers, placement opportunities and transferable skills

We would expect a successful graduate from the BA Geography programme to have:

- good knowledge and understanding of key the processes that shape the social and economic world and the physical environment
- the ability to employ a variety of social survey and interpretative methods for the collection, analysis and understanding of information from the human world
- the ability to employ a variety of technical methods for the collection and analysis of spatial and environmental information
- good written and verbal communication skills
- good numeracy and analytical skills
- confidence in using ICTs
- competence in information management, storage and translation
- good interpersonal working skills
- the ability to work autonomously, showing initiative and demonstrating self-awareness and self-management
- flexibility, adaptability and creativity

Throughout their period of study, students are encouraged to reflect upon the acquisition of skills and their future employability. Tutorials in all three years provide support in CV planning, skills development and applying for internships and graduate positions. Working with Queen Mary's Careers Service, the School also hosts employability forums (or similar) with recent graduates who offer insights and advice and encourage students to apply for internships and other activities that provide relevant work experience. Some modules include visiting speakers from industry and/or visits to commercial companies and external cultural, political and environmental institutions and research organisations.

Graduates from the BA Geography programme have progressed into a wide range of careers including: conservation and environmental analysis, quantity surveying; business and finance; marketing and promotion; human resources; media and communication; planning and regeneration; housing and welfare; community development; teaching and lecturing; and research.

## Programme Specification Approval

|   |               |
|---|---------------|
| <b>Person completing Programme Specification:</b>   | Emma Shapcott |
| <b>Person responsible for management of programme:</b>  | James Esson   |
| <b>Date Programme Specification produced / amended by School / Institute Learning and Teaching Committee:</b> | 21 Nov 2024   |
| <b>Date Programme Specification approved by Taught Programmes Board:</b>                                      |               |