



Your Programme

MSc Sustainable Rural Development

The University of Aberdeen's Master of Science programme in Sustainable Rural Development is nationally and internationally respected as one of the leading inter-disciplinary postgraduate qualifications in rural development, management and public policy. The programme has been running for over 40 years and provides training in environmental management, rural policy-making and rural and international development. It aims to reflect the changes in the international context of environmental governance, which consists, for example, of the post-Copenhagen negotiation on climate change, the institutional reforms of water services, the global agricultural market under the Doha Round and issues related to the growing international mobility.

The Sustainable Rural Development Programme is delivered in Geography and Environment, part of the School of Geosciences, an academic discipline which has an excellent record of applied environmental and rural socio-economic research. The programme also benefits from the staff expertise found within other disciplines and research groups across the institution, many of which have strong links with Geography and Environment (for example, the Aberdeen Centre for Environmental Sustainability (ACES), the Centre for Sustainable International Development (CSID), the Centre for Transport Research and the Rural Digital Economy Hub - dot.rural).

Programme Aims

- To develop a critical appreciation of the theory and practice of environmental management and rural policy-making, connecting the UK and European context with wider global relations.
- To develop knowledge and understanding of environmental management institutions, economic approaches and political debates, with an emphasis upon inter-sector and cross-country interactions.
- To evaluate the contested basis of sustainable development in and for rural communities and the challenges that attend the theories and practices of environmental management, policy-making and international development.

Careers

Graduates of the Sustainable Rural Development programme have an excellent track record in securing employment in a wide range of positions in public and private sector organisations in the UK and overseas. Recent graduates have secured positions in local government, regional development agencies, government agencies, and environmental and planning consultancies. A number of former students have taken up research positions in Universities or other research organisations and some have undertaken doctoral research.

Entry Requirements

Candidates will normally have at least a lower second class (2:2) honours level degree in a social science or natural science discipline (including for example, Geography, Sociology, Law, Economics, Environmental Science). Candidates with other equivalent qualifications or practical experience will be considered on an individual basis. Students from the UK, Europe and overseas are encouraged to apply. Given the intensive format of the degree, motivation will be an important factor in selection. The Programme Director will pay particular attention to academic references. Applicants are encouraged to visit the School where possible.

Programme Structure and Content

Course materials are drawn from global, European, UK and Scottish sources with a strong emphasis on examples drawn from staff research interests. Individual and group project work, which are sometimes conducted in conjunction with public authorities, are important elements of this programme. Excellent academic and social facilities are available to students at the University. Students have a 'home room' within Geography and Environment and the library holdings include an extensive collection of materials relevant to the Sustainable Rural Development programme. The programme has strong links with other research institutions, notably the Macaulay Land Use Research Institute and staff have contacts in national and local government and non-governmental agencies that are exploited in a number of courses delivered on the degree programme. In addition, we plan to develop teaching activities in collaboration with the City University of New York, through an academic partnership with its Graduate Centre.

Students study the following courses:

First Half Session	Second Half Session
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Environmental Policy-Making• Theories and Practices of International Development• Land and Environmental Economics• Elective Course I	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Contemporary Environmental Issues• International Perspectives on Environmental Management and Regional Development• Research Methods• Elective Course II

An English Land Law course is also available for students wishing to work in England/Wales. The course "International Perspectives on Environmental Management and Regional Development" involves a residential fieldtrip. Recent destinations include the Republic of Ireland, northern Portugal and South Africa. Elective Courses I and II are drawn from other MSc programmes delivered within the School of Geosciences and in other areas of the University. Approved electives include:

First Half Session	Second Half Session
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rural Governance and Policy• Rural Land Use and Valuation• Planning, Land and Environmental Law• Theories and Concepts in International Relations• Theories of Globalization• Fundamentals of Geographical Information Systems and Spatial Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rural Business Management• Ecology and Society• Climate Change• Biological Conservation in the Tropics• Current Issues and Applications of the Geospatial Technologies• Comparative International Planning

Teaching and Assessment

All courses employ a mix of teaching modes and assessment types including, for example, lectures, tutorials, student-led seminars and project work. The first semester focuses on the theoretical concepts related to environmental management, rural policy-making, land and environmental economics and international relations, which are assessed by a mixture of written examinations and continuous assessments. In the second semester the focus is more on emerging environmental and development issues, as well as developing skills and expertise through project work and other in-course assignments. There is a week-long residential field project during the Easter vacation. Following successful completion of the taught courses, students are continue to the final, dissertation stage of the programme and will complete a research project on an approved topic. Students who do not meet the criteria for advancement to the dissertation stage may be eligible for the award of a Postgraduate Diploma (PgDip) or a Postgraduate Certificate (PgCert).

Further Information

Graduate School Admission Unit
College of Physical Sciences
University of Aberdeen
Fraser Noble Building
Kings College
Aberdeen AB24 3UE

Tel: +44 (0)1224 272655

Fax: +44 (0)1224 272818

Email: cpsgrad@abdn.ac.uk

Web: www.abdn.ac.uk/cops/graduate/taught

How to Apply

Please visit www.abdn.ac.uk/sras/postgraduate/apply for details on how to apply.