



UNIVERSITY OF
ABERDEEN

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GO BEYOND BOUNDARIES



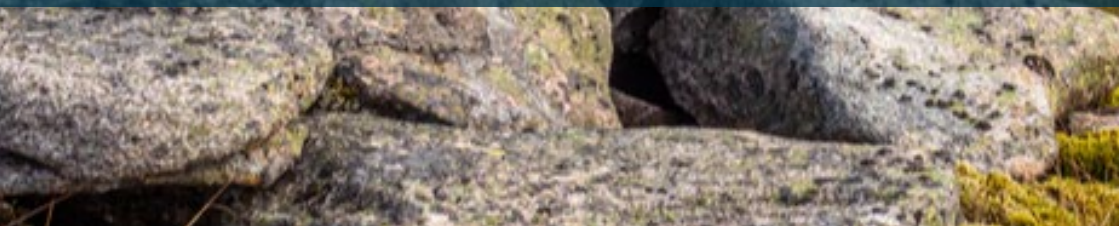
Geography

UNDERGRADUATE GUIDE



→ **1ST IN OVERALL
STUDENT SATISFACTION
FOR EARTH SCIENCES**

National Student Survey 2024



About Aberdeen

Going beyond boundaries, expectation, and tradition since 1495

For more than 525 years we have proudly offered our students life-changing opportunities by proving true to our Foundational Purpose: 'open to all and dedicated to the pursuit of truth in the service of others'.

Our rich heritage, world-leading research, and learning excellence has contributed to our association with five Nobel Prize winners and our ranking in the Top 15 UK Universities (Guardian University Guide 2025 and The Times and Sunday Times Good University Guide 2025).

Scotland's alternative city

Aberdeen is welcoming, adventurous, unafraid, and forever evolving – the perfect place to find your purpose and your people. Nestled in between the Cairngorms National Park and miles of golden coastline, Aberdeen has something exciting at every turn.



An ancient campus that has helped shape the modern world

Since 1495 our campus, and the world around it, have seen many changes. But the medieval core of King's College has remained constant. Over the centuries we've continued to add and innovate, growing our campus to the ideal blend of old and new you'll find today.

To keep breaking boundaries in education and research, we need to keep innovating. We are committed to investing in our campus to provide the very best learning resources for our students.

Our iconic Sir Duncan Rice Library is so much more than a study space. With social and collaborative spaces, a public lending library and museum, the Library embodies our foundational promise to be open to all in the service of others.

A community committed to inclusion and progress

At Aberdeen, you'll make friends and connections that will last a lifetime. Aberdeen has been voted one of the safest and most affordable cities (Complete University Guide 2022) and the University of Aberdeen voted 2nd for value for money (StudentCrowd University Awards 2023). When you come to Aberdeen you'll be well looked after, and part of a close-knit community known for its outstanding support.

Welcome to Geography

Geography is key to understanding and resolving many of the most pressing problems faced by society, including climate change, poverty, energy transitions and environmental conservation.

Our degree programmes reflect these modern-day challenges, with core and optional courses aimed at producing highly skilled graduates who can think critically and develop solutions to tackle these problems.



I gained a large skill set which has served me well, both gaining my current job, acquiring environmental skills, and writing skills including the dissemination of large bodies of information.

ROBERT HOBKIRK - BSC GEOGRAPHY
Head of Sustainability Compliance and Risk



Geography at Aberdeen

At Aberdeen we run a modular system, so you have the flexibility to follow a single honours degree with plenty of choice and diversity, or to study geography as part of a joint honours degree with another subject. To a large extent you can shape your own degree, to suit your particular interests and career plans.

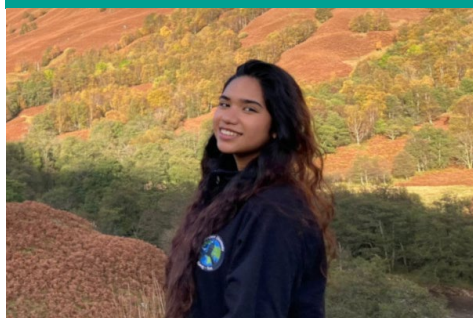
At Aberdeen you can choose between studying geography as either a Bachelor of Science (BSc) or Master of Arts (MA) degree programme. Both can be taken as four-year Honours degrees, or three-year designated degree programmes.

All of our teaching is research-led, and delivered by staff who are actively investigating some of the most important problems facing the world today – problems with social and environmental dimensions, which geographical knowledge can help us understand and resolve. This ensures that our courses are current, exciting and reflect the cutting edge of geographical research.



As a Geography student at Aberdeen, I was able to engage in interdisciplinary approaches and develop skills in geographical research. The staff members created a supportive environment that continues to be a great source of inspiration to me.

NURAH NIAZY - MA GEOGRAPHY AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS
Sustainability Research Associate



Degree Programmes

Single Honours Programmes:

- BSc Geography
- MA Geography
- BSc Geoscience

Joint Honours Options with Geography:

- MA Anthropology and Geography
- MA Business Management and Geography
- MA Economics and Geography
- MA French and Geography
- MA Gaelic Studies and Geography
- MA Geography and German
- MA Geography and German (5 years)
- MA Geography and International Relations
- MA Geography and Sociology
- MA Geography and Spanish & Latin American Studies
- MA Geography and Spanish & Latin American Studies (5 years)

You can view the structure and content for each degree programme at

www.abdn.ac.uk/ug/geography

Accredited Degrees

Our BSc and MA programmes are accredited by the Royal Geographical Society (with IBG). Accredited programmes give students a solid academic foundation in geographical knowledge and skills while also preparing graduates with the professional and transferable skills needed to address the needs of the world outside of education.



Geography, BSc/MA

Programme Overview

Geography is key to understanding and resolving many of the most pressing problems faced by society today, including climate change, poverty, energy transitions, and environmental conservation.

At Aberdeen, geography is available to study at undergraduate level as a four-year Bachelor of Science (BSc) or Master of Arts (MA) degree programme. Both can be taken as four-year Honours degrees, or three-year Designated degree programmes.

MA Geography

Choosing the MA Geography allows you to specialise in human geography and combine your geography courses with other humanities or social-science courses during your degree.

BSc Geography

Choosing the BSc Geography allows you to specialise in physical geography and complement your geography courses with other physical or natural science courses.

Please refer to www.abdn.ac.uk/ug/geography for the latest course information.

First Year

The choice of geography first year courses is the same for both BSc and MA students. In the first year of your geography degree, you will study two courses that provide an introduction to geography in all its diversity. Both courses incorporate a field course and workgroup programme alongside a lecture series covering aspects of human and physical geography.

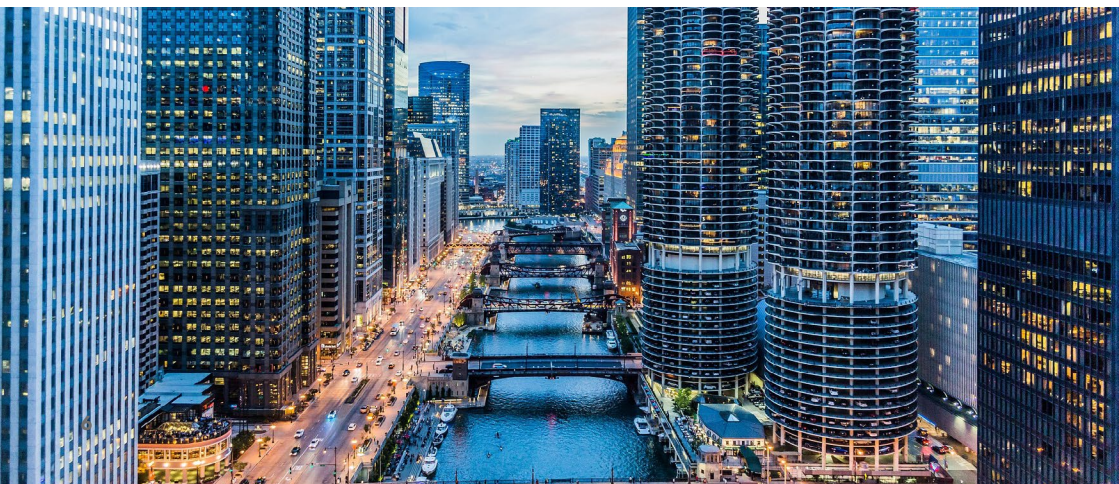
Creating the Anthropocene

This course reflects upon the role humans have played in creating the Anthropocene (the epoch we are now living in), a time period during which human actions have become more significant than natural processes in shaping the world we currently live in.

The UN Sustainable Development Goals

How can we address the contemporary global challenges that we are facing today? This course builds on the challenges that have arisen during the Anthropocene and introduces the UN's Sustainable Development Goals as a global call for action.

In addition to your core courses, at Aberdeen you will have a wide range of courses to pick from for your "free choice".





Second Year

Our Second Year allows you to begin specialising in the areas of geography in which you are most interested. Key geography courses cover core skills in geography, and you have the ability to begin specialising in human or physical geography - or to keep going with both!

To progress into geography honours you will complete a total of eight courses in second year, at least four of which are drawn from the courses below:

- Physical Environments
- Space, Economy and Society
- Mapping and Monitoring
- Environment and Society
- Skills and Techniques in Geosciences
- Human or Physical Geography Field Trip

Your other three or four courses, as in first year, will be drawn from the wider curriculum offered across the university. For students studying for a Bachelor of Science (BSc) degree, two of these courses will be in an area of science.

Fieldwork forms an important part of the curriculum, with all students participating in springtime field trips.

Third Year

In the third year of your geography degree, you will receive core skills training in two core courses:

- Approaches to Geography
- Research Design

You also have numerous options to receive training in the geographical skills that will best suit your anticipated fourth year courses and employment beyond university. options on offer include:

- Physical Geography Fieldcourse
- Human Geography Fieldcourse
- Globalisation
- Concepts in Human Geography
- Land and Marine Conservation
- Techniques in Physical Geography
- Remote Sensing & GIS
- Data Analysis

Fourth Year

Your fourth year offers you the opportunity to specialise in areas of geography of your choice, and also to pursue an individual piece of geographical research in your dissertation project.

Many of our students cite their dissertation as the most rewarding experience of their geography degree - not only is it enjoyable to pursue individual research in your favourite area of geography, but a successful dissertation is often one of the most important platforms to a job beyond your degree!

All of the courses that we offer in fourth year reflect the truly cutting-edge research strengths of the Department of Geography and Environment in Aberdeen and will exploit the training that you have received during the previous three years of your Geography degree.

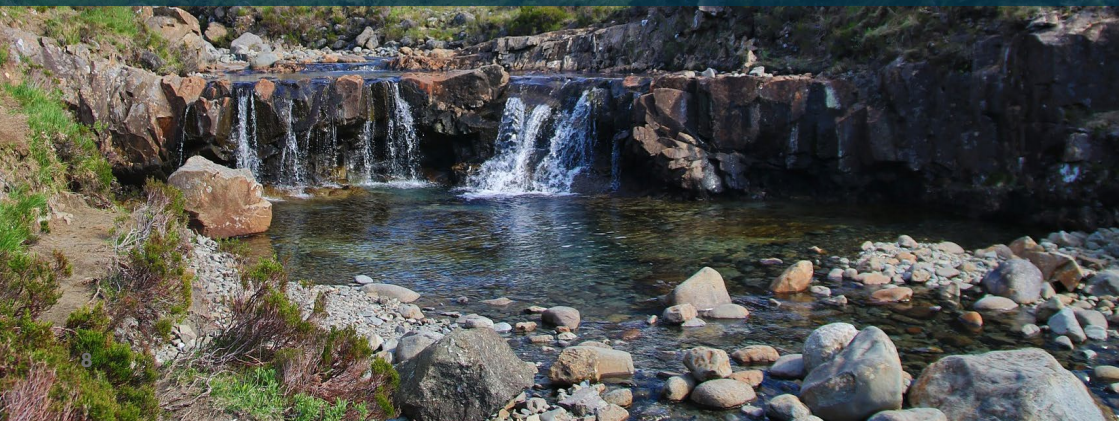
- Geography Dissertation
- Geographical Issues
- Rural Geographies
- Dead Cities?
- Glaciology
- Environmental change
- Environmental Hydrology
- Hydrography

Why Aberdeen?

- Our degree programmes focus upon the key environmental, economic, societal and technological challenges we currently face in the world
 - Field classes are a fun and integral part of the learning experience with opportunities for local, national and international field trips for all of our degree programmes
 - Our degree programmes will equip you with a variety of skills including the ability to utilise quantitative and qualitative data and use GIS and remote sensing techniques
 - You will also acquire transferable skills such as presentation and report writing, which are important to both vocational and non-vocational careers
 - We have a number of international exchange partnerships with universities in Europe, Australia and the USA
 - Our degrees are accredited by the Royal Geographical Society (with IBG), which is valued by employers
 - Our graduates are highly sought after and employed across the public and private sectors ranging from local authorities to environmental consultancies and hydrographic surveyor
- Find out more at www.abdn.ac.uk/geography

→ **1ST IN THE UK
FOR HUMAN GEOGRAPHY
& 1ST IN SCOTLAND FOR
PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHICAL
SCIENCES**

National Student Survey 2024



Fieldwork

Fieldwork is integral to geography, and at the same time provides some of the most memorable experiences of your degree. Our fieldwork options also provide core skills for your future career, giving you vital transferable skills and experience of working in teams and independently in some of the world's most dynamic environments.

The University is located close to some of the most environmentally important and geographically varied landscapes in the whole of the UK, which provide amazing field sites for our teaching.



I absolutely loved my time with all the professors, the lecturers, and also the student assistants. They allowed us to really connect with a lot of the people that were on our course through field trips and the actual content of those courses, which is really applicable for real life work.

KATHERINE ANDREWS - BSC GEOGRAPHY

Climate Adaptation Project Manager at British Red Cross



Geoscience Society

The Geoscience Society is our student-led society run for all those with an interest in geography and geology. The Geoscience Society is great for meeting like-minded people and for enjoying the company of course mates. It can also serve as a useful forum for students of all year groups, helping to foster interest in geography beyond the lecture theatre.

Find out more at www.facebook.com/geoscienceabdn



Studying Geography at Aberdeen was my best decision ever. It offered a great sense of community and friendships across different years, an interesting range of courses that includes fieldwork, as well as dedicated members of staff with a diverse set of specialisms within the discipline.

SIMONE ARVID - MA GEOGRAPHY

Environmental and Quality Data Analyst at Seaway 7



Careers

72% of Aberdeen geography graduates find employment within 6 months, while a further 22% go on to further study. An Honours degree in geography can also lead on to a higher degree, and a significant proportion of our graduates study for a Masters and PhD degree.

Recent graduates work in a variety of fields, for example, in conservation, transport planning, various government agencies, business and commerce, and some go on to undertake research involving technical skills such as GIS and remote sensing.

Some examples of employers for our graduates include the James Hutton Institute, Scottish Environment Protection Agency, Grampian Soil Survey, Scientific Drilling, Aberdeenshire Council, and AECOM.

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Previous graduates have gone into roles with organisations such as the James Hutton Institute, Scottish Environment Protection Agency, Grampian Soil Survey, Scientific Drilling, Aberdeenshire Council, and AECOM.

How to Apply

Applications to this degree programme are made through the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS). You can apply online at www.ucas.com



The geography staff are great and really take the time to get to know you, the department offers a diverse range of interesting courses, and best of all there are plenty opportunities to study abroad!

JOANNE MCDONALD - MA GEOGRAPHY AND BUSINESS MANAGEMENT
PGDE Student



I particularly enjoyed discovering and researching elements within the subject which I did not initially think were geographic.

MATTHEW COOK - MA GEOGRAPHY
Graduate Planner at ARUP



University of Aberdeen

The University of Aberdeen is the fifth oldest University in the UK, dating back to 1495. For more than 525 years, we have proudly offered our students life-changing opportunities by proving true to our Foundational Purpose: 'open to all and dedicated to the pursuit of truth in the service of others'.

Our vast experience in teaching – along with our modern, 21st century outlook – enables us to offer the same great opportunity to you today.

Our rich heritage, world-leading research and learning excellence has contributed to our association with five Nobel Prize winners and our ranking in the Top 15 UK Universities.*

We now warmly invite you to join our Aberdeen family and become part of the next chapter in our history.

www.abdn.ac.uk/study

*Guardian University Guide 2025 and The Times and Sunday Times Good University Guide 2025.



Listen to our Podcast!

→ TOP 15 UK UNIVERSITY

Guardian University Guide 2025 and The Times
and Sunday Times Good University Guide 2025



abdn.ac.uk/geography

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