

Programme Specification

Award and title: MSc Environmental Management and Sustainability

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| <i>School:</i> | School of Humanities |
| <i>Subject area:</i> | Geography |
| <i>Entry from academic year:</i> | 2025/26 |
| <i>in the month(s) of</i> | September |
| <i>Awarding institution:</i> | York St John University |
| <i>Teaching institution:</i> | York St John University |
| <i>Delivery location:</i> | Lord Mayor's Walk |
| <i>Programme/s accredited by:</i> | |
| <i>Exit awards:</i> | Postgraduate Certificate Environmental Management and Sustainability Postgraduate Diploma Environmental Management and Sustainability |
| <i>UCAS code / GTTR / other:</i> | Not applicable |
| <i>Joint Honours combinations:</i> | Not applicable |
| <i>QAA subject benchmark statement(s):</i> | Subject Benchmark Statement for Earth Sciences, Environmental Sciences and Environmental Studies (March 2022) Subject Benchmark Statement for Geography (March 2022) Characteristics Statement: Masters Degree (February 2020) |
| <i>Mode/s of study:</i> | Postgraduate periods of study ¹ for full time / part time |
| <i>Language of study:</i> | English |
| <i>Paired with Foundation Year</i> | No |
| <i>Study abroad opportunities:</i> | No |
| <i>Opt-in YSJU Placement Year opportunity:</i> | No |
| <i>Excluding a year-long placement/professional experience, are there placement/field trip/work experience(s) totalling 20 days or more?</i> | No |

Introduction and special features

The MSc Environmental Management and Sustainability combines theory and practice to equip you with skills needed to address issues of global environmental change.

Combining technical scientific environmental knowledge with practical and policy-oriented knowledge and research skills, you will develop the skills and capacities to assess, understand and respond to changes to the environment. The programme thus aligns with the global green skills agenda and the need for environmental professionals.

Through taught modules you will: engage with the latest research to understand the processes underpinning ecosystem service provisioning, with emphasis on soil and water; build confidence in your analysis of quantitative data, including using industry standard software for geospatial analysis; and learn fundamental concepts and professional skills in Environmental Impact Assessment and Strategic

Environmental Appraisal. Alongside these you will be supported to develop a proposal for a substantial independent research project, advancing your academic research skills and critical understanding of the place of science in tackling issues of sustainability. The programme culminates in the completion of your research project, with supervision. Rather than a traditional Master's dissertation, the aim of your independent project is to produce a report in the format of a recognised journal in the field, along with a poster presentation. This may lead to subsequent opportunity for collaborative publication with staff. Throughout the programme you will be supported to reflect on, and take ownership of, your own professional development.

Students on the MSc Environmental Management and Sustainability will contribute to York St John University's ambition to be a sector leader in environmental sustainability, taking a whole-university approach. This provides opportunities to hear from, and work with, professionals addressing environmental management and sustainability both within and beyond the University.

In addition to providing you with an advanced level qualification, the MSc Environmental Management and Sustainability develops transferable skills of data collection and analysis, research design, decision-making, critical thinking, independent and collaborative learning, and communication skills.

Special features include:

- Emphasis on active learning, building your competencies and confidence for the environmental management and sustainability sectors.
- Develops technical skills with industry standard software for geospatial analysis and environmental assessment.
- Scope to tailor your work to your own interests.
- Structured support to increase ownership and responsibility in your own professional development.

Admissions criteria

You must meet the University's general entry criteria for postgraduate study. In addition, you must have:

- An honours degree in a subject with substantial science component, with a classification of 2.2 or above, or an equivalent qualification.

If your first language is not English, you need to take an IELTS test or an equivalent qualification accepted by the University (see <https://www.yorks.ac.uk/international/how-to-apply/english-language-requirements/>).

If you do not have traditional qualifications, you may be eligible for entry on the basis of [Recognition of prior learning \(RPL\)](#). We also consider applications for entry with advanced standing.

Programme aim(s)

1. Develop core knowledge of global environmental trends and their implications for sustainability.
2. Build your technical knowledge of environmental principles and the tools, techniques and practices for sustainable environmental management.
3. Advance your skills in research, data collection and analysis and effective communication to support positive change and improve sustainability.

Programme learning outcomes

Upon successful completion of the programme students will be able to:

Level 7

- 7.1 Critically apply knowledge of environmental processes and systems in the complex context of managing natural environments and ecosystem services.

- 7.2 Analyse and evaluate environmental problems and propose management solutions.
- 7.3 Analyse quantitative data with accuracy and precision, and communicate findings in a manner appropriate to audience.
- 7.4 Critically apply judgment, reflection and original thinking to problem-solving in a variety of contexts.
- 7.5 Plan, design and execute a piece of independent research to develop knowledge and propose sustainable solutions to environmental problems.

Programme structure

| Code | Level | Semester | Title | Credits | Module status | |
|----------|-------|----------|---------------------------------------|---------|--------------------------------|---|
| | | | | | Compulsory (C) or optional (O) | non-compensatable (NC) or compensatable (X) |
| GEO7008M | 7 | 1 | Sustainable Ecosystem Management | 30 | C | X |
| GEO7009M | 7 | 1 | Environmental Data Analysis | 30 | C | X |
| GEO7010M | 7 | 2 | Environmental Assessment | 30 | C | X |
| GEO7011M | 7 | 2 | Research Design and Practice | 30 | C | X |
| GEO7012M | 7 | 3 | Environmental Management Dissertation | 60 | C | NC |

Any modules that must be passed for progression or award are indicated in the table above as non-compensatable. A non-compensatable module is one that must be passed at the relevant level (with a mark of 50) in order to progress.

Learning, teaching and assessment

Throughout the programme you are expected to take an active role in your learning, critically engaging with taught input and using the structure provided by modules and assessments to develop your own specialist knowledge.

Teaching and assessment methods are designed for active learning, in which you practice skills and knowledge application for yourself to build your capabilities and confidence. The 30-credit modules will incorporate any combination of lectures, workshops, laboratory and field practicals, computer-based analysis, discussions and student-led activities. Collaborating with other students will develop your skills in teamwork, critical thinking and self-reflection. You are expected to engage in independent study alongside the timetabled sessions to further your understanding and tailor your learning to the issues that particularly interest you. Individual tutorial support helps you identify your individual study needs and supports your personal academic development. Formative activities embedded within the modules develop your understanding of the assessment requirements, supporting you to work towards the summative assessments and achieve the marks you are capable of. A variety of coursework assessments ensure you are developing skills relevant to employment in environmental management and sustainability. The 60-credit dissertation is an independent project, for which you will have one-to-one support from a designated tutor. This project is an opportunity to develop your own specialist expertise, and may lead to opportunities for publication in collaboration with staff.

Alongside the formal content of the programme are a series of timetabled sessions that encourage you to take ownership of your personal and professional academic and career development. These may include group and/or individual tutorials. Students are also encouraged to draw on the range of support available within the University, from academic writing and research skills to advancing software skills.

Progression and graduation requirements

The University's [regulations](#) for taught postgraduate awards apply to this programme.

Any modules that must be passed for progression or award are indicated in the Programme Structure section as non-compensatable.

Internal and external reference points

This programme specification was formulated with reference to:

- [University Mission, Culture and Values](#)
- [University 2026 Strategy](#)
- [QAA subject benchmark statements](#)
- [Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications](#)

Date written / revised: 24 February 2025

Programme originally approved: 18 June 2025