



Ecology

BSc (Honours): C180 and C182



Lancaster University is a national leader in both the science of the environment and its application in conservation, landscape management and environmental policy. Its unique location on the doorstep of the Yorkshire Dales and Lake District National Parks, The Forest of Bowland and Silverdale Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the North Lancashire coast, makes Lancaster an ideal place to study Ecology.

Our Ecology degree emphasises practical ecology based on a thorough understanding of the underlying scientific principles, and is aimed at students with a broad interest in how organisms and ecosystems interact with their environment and with human activities. The degree begins with an integrated first year, which combines subject-specific modules with broader courses introducing key environmental issues. In the 2nd and 3rd years, the course covers subjects such as evolution, community ecology and animal behaviour, with a range of further optional modules available in ecology, conservation biology, environmental science and geography, which enables you to tailor your training to match your needs and interests.

The course is taught by staff in the Lancaster Environment Centre as well as external lecturers from organisations such as the Environment Agency, Natural England, the RSPB and the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology. Lectures, practicals and workshops take place in our state-of-the-art teaching facilities, and are complemented by field excursions and residential field courses in the UK and Spain.

Course Options. Students may choose to go to North America or Australasia for the second year of this course (see separate Study Abroad leaflet for details).

Entry requirements. Typically ABB at A-level for entry from sixth form (AAB for the Study Abroad Scheme) with at least two science subjects from Biol/Chem/Comp/EnvSci/Geog/Maths/Phys, or equivalent 2 A- plus 2 AS-levels. Applicants with other types of qualification should enquire for details.

Specialist facilities. Ecology is at the heart of Lancaster University's research and teaching priorities. The Lancaster Environment Centre brings over 160 environmental researchers together on the Lancaster campus. Research interests in Ecology include biodiversity and ecosystem function, global change biology, behavioural ecology, soil ecology and community ecology. Our high level of European and UK research funding and activity in this area provides our Ecology students with access to the most up-to-date facilities, and in their third year research project they have the opportunity to participate in cutting edge research in the field or in our laboratories. In addition, our Enterprise & Business Partnerships team provide excellent opportunities for work experience.

Careers information. Lancaster Ecology graduates have a very good employment record. A survey of the long-term employment of recent graduates shows that two thirds are working in jobs related to their degree. These include employment with nature conservation organisations, government agencies, industries such as water or power, and environmental consultancies, as well as a significant proportion working in ecological research. Other graduates become teachers employed in schools and field study centres.

Chris Nesbit

"Lancaster's reputation for excellence is well earned! Studying Ecology at Lancaster gave me a greater appreciation of general ecological principles before allowing me to expand my interests in Behavioural Ecology and Ecosystem Functioning. The staff are friendly, supportive and enthusiastic which made the field trips a lot of fun and doing my dissertation a rewarding experience. The college system allowed me to meet loads of new people - there's always a social or a party to go to. I enjoyed my undergrad' years at Lancaster so much I'm staying on to do a PhD!"



For further information contact:

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The Lancaster
Environment Centre

First Year

In the first year, students take Part I of their degree, which consists of a total of 15 modules. Ten modules come from two compulsory themes, but the remaining five can be selected from additional modules offered in the LEC or from other Departments across the University. Assessment is through course work, end of module tests and summer examinations.

Unit 1: Environmental Biology

- Evolutionary Biology
- Variety of Life
- Aquatic Ecology
- Life in a Changing Environment
- Biodiversity & Conservation

Unit 2: Science of the Environment

- Environmental Issues for the 21st Century
- Interdisciplinary Skills
- Environmental Processes
- Geosphere-Biosphere
- Spanish Field Course

Unit 3: Flexible Choice

Choice of 5 modules from Biology and Chemistry

Second Year

Students take two specialist subject modules in each of the Michaelmas and Lent terms, along with courses in data analysis and research skills. Modules are assessed through course work, end of module tests and examinations. Exams take place at the start of the summer term. In the final term of the second year, students begin a dissertation module, which involves an original piece of research, either in the LEC or via a work placement.

Compulsory Modules

- Populations to Ecosystems
- Data Collection & Analysis
- Research Design & Delivery
- Environmental Biology Dissertation

Three modules from:

- Principles of Biodiversity Conservation
- Evolution
- Environmental Physiology
- Genetics
- Enterprise for the Environment
- Interacting Landscapes: Biogeography & Geomorphology

Year Abroad Option

For students on the Study Abroad scheme (C182), the second year is spent at the overseas University

Third Year

Students take a total of eight specialist subject modules in the Michaelmas and Lent terms. There are two compulsory modules, with the remaining six chosen from a wide variety available across the LEC including modules in biology, environmental science and geography. Research project dissertations are also completed during the first term of third year.

Compulsory modules

- Frontiers in Ecology and Evolution
- Animal Behaviour

Six additional modules from:

- Ecology Field Course
- Issues in Conservation Biology
- Conservation in Practice
- Environmental Plant Biology
- Ecophysiology of Host-Pest Interactions
- Sustainable Agriculture
- Global Change Biology
- Environment, Politics and Society in Amazonia
- Holocene Environmental Change
- Environmental Remote Sensing & Image processing
- Geographies of Agriculture: Global Development and Ecosystem Change
- The Making of the British Countryside
- Climate and Society