



# FdSc Countryside Management

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|------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| UCAS code        | DN25                                                                               |
| Institution code | H12                                                                                |
| Duration         | Two years, full-time                                                               |
| Start date       | September 2027                                                                     |
| Accredited by    | <a href="#">Institute of Sustainability and Environmental Practitioners</a> (ISEP) |
| Location         | <a href="#">Harper Adams University campus</a>                                     |

**The World is facing a number of global crises – biodiversity loss, environmental degradation, climate change and threats to food and energy supplies.**

The FdSc Countryside Management provides the skills and knowledge necessary for graduates to work in the countryside sector. There is a focus on practical skills relevant to land management, wildlife conservation, and habitat management. The course also provides skills in visitor management on land with multiple uses such as in National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and on a smaller scale at countryside sites such as Country Parks and nature reserves. A key feature of the programme is the emphasis on applied and practical applications and opportunities which take advantage of the University's close links to the countryside management industry. In addition, practical learning is facilitated through the estate, university farm and the proximity to a wide range of natural resources in the surrounding countryside. The programme will suit you if you have a passion for practical working in an outdoor environment and wish to work with a diversity of countryside stakeholders including conservation bodies, farmers and landowners, and recreational visitors.

Expertise in areas including climate change adaptation and mitigation, water management, sustainable energy, land use and food security are integrated in this programme to train a new generation of professionals. A key focus will be practical approaches to the productive management of land whilst balancing the needs of society for a healthy environment. This will include thriving biodiversity, clean water and air, and safety from natural hazards (such as floods and extreme weather) wrought by climate change, agricultural intensification and the demands of a growing UK and global population. You will develop the skills to address sustainable development issues. This course will provide a combination of underpinning theory and practical application to demonstrate key concepts and allow you to develop your own specialist areas of interest. This programme is interdisciplinary in nature and you can expect to gain a wide variety of insights into land and countryside management. You will also gain transferable skills for use in employment or continuation of your studies to a top-up year and graduation of BSc (Hons) Environmental Management and Sustainability.

The first and final years of the Foundation degree programme both include fieldwork and a residential field course (the latter being in Europe). There is also a wide range of field trips to local sites to contextualise material introduced in lectures and seminars. The programme has a strong applied focus using standard industry techniques underpinned by science.

Industry best practice has been driven by technological advances in remote sensing, Unmanned Aerial Vehicles and GIS. The application of these technologies is embedded in the course to promote sustainable management of the countryside.

The Foundation degree has a strong emphasis on professional development and employability. On completion of the FdSc course, you will have the option of taking a top-up year to complete the BSc (Hons) Environmental Management and Sustainability. Alternatively, there is also the option of transferring to either BSc (Hons) Environmental Management and Sustainability or BSc (Hons) Wildlife Conservation and Ecology at the end of level 4, subject to transfer requirements being met.

The university is situated in a rural location with easy access to the countryside of Cheshire and Shropshire, including the Meres and Mosses and the Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The university also has its own estate of 400ha including a range of agricultural and semi-natural habitats. The estate and local sites are used in the course for site visits and practical exercises.

This is an established course with a long pedigree, taught by staff with a wide range of academic and professional expertise. The FdSc Countryside Management is pending accreditation by the Institute of Environmental Management reflecting its inclusion of the knowledge and skills that are critical to protecting our environment now and in the future. Accreditation ensures that the curriculum is aligned to best practice in the sector.

Graduates will find employment across a range of sectors, including as Countryside Rangers and Officers with bodies such as the National Trust. Graduates may also 'top up' their Foundation degree to BSc (Hons) Environmental Management and Sustainability.

A version of this course with a placement year is also available.

[View the placement year route](#)

[Find out more about placement years](#)

## A-level entry requirements

- **Entry requirements for 2027 entry are not currently available. Please contact Admissions for advice**

## Accreditation



ISEP (formerly IEMA) is the professional body for everyone working in environment and sustainability. As a result of the accreditation, students will be eligible for free student membership for the duration of the course and on successful completion will qualify for GradISEP. Graduate membership is a launchpad for future leaders within environment and sustainability and offers a range of benefits to support you throughout your career.

# What will I study?

| Year 1                                                    |    | Year 2                                                          |                                                          |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|----|-----------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| Fundamentals of the Physical Environment (R4014HF)        | 20 | Research Methods and Geographical Information Systems (C5025HF) | 20                                                       |
| Ecological Principles (R4016HF)                           | 20 | Environmental Quality and Development (C5021HF)                 | 20                                                       |
| Professional Practice in Countryside Management (R4021HF) | 20 | Countryside Recreation and Visitor Management (C5020HF)         | 20                                                       |
| Environmental Survey and Field Skills (R4018HF)           | 20 | Practical Research Skills (C5023HF)                             | 20                                                       |
| Skills for the Natural Scientist (R4019HF)                | 10 | Final Year Research Project - FdSc (HF)                         | 20                                                       |
| Contemporary Issues in Sustainability (R4015HF)           | 20 | Optional Module (HF)                                            | 20                                                       |
| Communicating Science in a Digital World (R4020HF)        | 10 | <b>Options</b>                                                  |                                                          |
|                                                           |    |                                                                 | Brownfield Reclamation and Flood Protection (C5018HF) 20 |
|                                                           |    |                                                                 | Woodland Management (C5028HF) 20                         |

## Fundamentals of the Physical Environment

**Year of study** 1  
**Code** R4014HF  
**Credits** 20  
**Core/option** Core  
**Module contact** [Dr Samuel Eze](#)

Sustainable environmental management is based on a sound understanding of the key components of the physical environment, their properties, interactions, and functions. This module provides the base understanding of the main components and processes within the biosphere where human activities have both direct and indirect impacts. It lays the foundation for environmental scientists and land managers and serves as the base upon which other environmental management modules at higher levels will be built. The module focuses primarily on soils, water, and atmospheric processes. There will be emphasis on the interactions between these different components of the environment. This will introduce the students to a systems-thinking approach, which is an important skill for an environmental scientist.

## Ecological Principles

**Year of study** 1  
**Code** R4016HF  
**Credits** 20  
**Core/option** Core  
**Module contact** [Dr Andrew Cherrill](#)

Ecology is a science which seeks to understand the processes that determine the distribution and abundance of species, and the dynamic changes in populations, communities and ecosystems in relation to biotic interactions and spatio-temporal variation in the physical environment. This requires knowledge of

the essential processes that determine the survival, growth and reproduction of organisms, and the variety of complex biotic and abiotic interactions that take place. This module addresses these questions and is designed to provide students with an understanding of scientific methodology and the ecology of living systems. Key concepts and ecological theory are introduced to underpin learning in subsequent modules on ecology and wildlife conservation.

## **Professional Practice in Countryside Management**

**Year of study** 1  
**Code** R4021HF  
**Credits** 20  
**Core/option** Core  
**Module contact** [Paul O'Hagan](#)

In this module students will be encouraged to develop personal career development skills and gain an understanding of the opportunities available for employment within the countryside management sector. There is increasing policy interest being shown in the benefits to people's health and wellbeing from regular active outdoor countryside recreation. This module will explore the background to the pressures and conflicts that occur within UK countryside. It will show how government and other organisations use a range of methods and management strategies to ensure sustainable management of countryside recreation.

## **Environmental Survey and Field Skills**

**Year of study** 1  
**Code** R4018HF  
**Credits** 20  
**Core/option** Core  
**Module contact** [Dr Andrew Cherrill](#)

This module provides an essential understanding of the main components of designing, carrying out and interpreting results from a range of field survey and monitoring approaches suitable for habitats, animals, plant species and the wider environment. It provides practical field experience across a representative range of species, habitats, landscapes and environments including carrying out risk assessments, selecting the most appropriate methodology, and understanding the strengths and weaknesses of different methods. These skills provide an essential underpinning for practical work in other L4 modules and subsequent years, and also reinforce learning in the L4 Skills for the Natural Scientist and Communicating Science in a Digital World modules through the application of simple data manipulation, analysis and interpretation techniques using appropriate software (e.g. Excel). Statistical methodology introduced in the module will focus on techniques to ensure that sample sizes are adequate to provide reliable estimates of abiotic and biotic parameters, such as soil pH, species richness and species population sizes. The advantages and applications of innovative technology such as eDNA and UAV will also be explored. The module will include two residential field courses. The first will be a short experience of 2-3 days early in the first semester (Period 1), while the second will be up to a week's duration towards the end of semester 2 (Period 5). These residential experiences will provide important opportunities for group work, personal development, experiential learning, and for students to design and carry out their own small-scale research projects.

## **Skills for the Natural Scientist**

**Year of study** 1  
**Code** R4019HF  
**Credits** 10  
**Core/option** Core

This module will give students the key generic skills that will underpin success in their programme and in subsequent careers. Themes include effective writing of reports and other documents, searching for and

evaluating sources of information, manipulation, analysis and presentation of data, online communication, and giving oral presentations. The efficient use of business application software is central to these skills. This module provides a foundation for presenting information in word-processed documents; creating and deriving new information from spreadsheets; and integrating information for presentation using a relevant package. The module also builds an awareness of online etiquette with the production of documents and the use of online networking sites to promote the individual e.g. a curriculum vitae. The learning from this module is embedded across all other modules to demonstrate relevance and application.

## Contemporary Issues in Sustainability

**Year of study** 1  
**Code** R4015HF  
**Credits** 20  
**Core/option** Core  
**Module contact** [Dr Jonathan Cooper](#)

This module is designed to provide students with a wide understanding of the sustainability issues we face today. The main focus for this module will be the United Kingdom; however, there will be appropriate international comparison and contextualisation. This module will introduce students to the fundamentals of environmental, social and economic sustainability and will provide a broad introduction to the way in which the environment is managed by considering organisational interactions, land designations and policy making. This module will introduce students to a broad range of contemporary issues in order to give them a comprehensive understanding of sustainability today. By its nature, this module is designed to be flexible and responsive to ongoing developments in the field and it is intended that other 'contemporary issues' would be considered from time to time as new challenges arise. This module is mostly common to all course groups but with some variation between programmes to allow for course-specific interests to be developed.

## Communicating Science in a Digital World

**Year of study** 1  
**Code** R4020HF  
**Credits** 10  
**Core/option** Core  
**Module contact** [Dr Lucy Crockford](#)

Continuing Professional Development is an important element of versatile and vocational-focused higher education. The core of this module: the ability to communicate science to diverse audiences through various media. Students will explore this key part of the professional working world, accessing a wide range of digital skills that build on the previous skills module and identifying personal goals for reaching individual career employability. Students will also make a strong link between activities in this module and others and the expectations of an accrediting body's practical competencies. This will provide the student with a strong foundation for continuing to record and explore their professional development throughout their degree.

## Research Methods and Geographical Information Systems

**Year of study** 2  
**Code** C5025HF  
**Credits** 20  
**Core/option** Core  
**Module contact** [Dr Andrew Cherrill](#)

This module develops the knowledge and skills necessary to successfully complete the major project in the final year. Enhanced research confidence will also be an employability skill for the placement period and careers on graduation. A consideration of the ethics related to research will also ensure that appropriate

and sustainable methods are selected. The module will cover the key elements of the research process, set in the context of the student's own course discipline. Students will examine the academic role of research and how it informs professional and managerial practice. They will enhance their ability to locate, select and critically evaluate information associated with a particular problem, using a range of sources and particularly peer-reviewed empirical studies. By carrying out spatial and non-spatial statistical analysis, using appropriate software, the students will develop their IT skills and further their understanding of the role of statistics in the research process. Analysis of spatial data will build upon skills in Geographical Information Systems (GIS) developed at Level 4. This module will enhance students' specialist IT skills and will focus specifically on the application of statistics for research purposes and the use of GIS for spatial analysis.

## **Environmental Quality and Development**

**Year of study** 2  
**Code** C5021HF  
**Credits** 20  
**Core/option** Core  
**Module contact** [Dr Lucy Crockford](#)

Environmental management requires a varied but thorough understanding of numerous processes that contribute to environmental quality. As an environmental manager, a graduate must be able to competently assess that quality, articulate their findings and be able to place those findings in wider strategic settings such as planning and development which can ultimately feed into Environmental Impact Assessment. This module serves to provide that grounding with interrogation of the science underpinning limitations and policies surrounding land management and development such as catchment management, sustainable drainage systems, land use and change, landscape alteration and the planning process.

## **Countryside Recreation and Visitor Management**

**Year of study** 2  
**Code** C5020HF  
**Credits** 20  
**Core/option** Core  
**Module contact** [Simon Irvin](#)

This module builds on the Level 4 module Professional Practice in Countryside Management and assesses the role of countryside recreation and tourism in the countryside. It investigates the needs of the visitor/recreationist and the countryside manager/entrepreneur as well as other interested parties such as local communities and farmers. The topic is seen within the context of increasing countryside recreational activities in the countryside and diversification of land use and emphasis is placed on the need to manage conflicts in accordance with the principles of Sustainable Development.

## **Practical Research Skills**

**Year of study** 2  
**Code** C5023HF  
**Credits** 20  
**Core/option** Core  
**Module contact** [Dr Lucy Crockford](#)

Continuing professional development is supported by activities in this module. Following on from the grounding of field skills at level 4, this module furthers students' experiences in industry-relevant training to support wider modules studied at level 5. Students will take part in frequent contact sessions which will support activities to be completed on an international residential field course in Europe. The field course will allow a group project to be completed to further student collaborative working and team experience.

## **Final Year Research Project - FdSc**

**Year of study** 2  
**Code** HF  
**Credits** 20  
**Core/option** Core

The module is designed to enable you to plan and undertake research that is of interest and relevance to your future career. You will be supported by an academic supervisor who will provide guidance around the agreed project title which must address a practical problem in your field of study. The project will require you to produce a literature review and research protocol (to be submitted at the end of the first term). A practical element (such as a case study, business analysis or survey) will be conducted, with results being written up, statistically analysed (where appropriate) and discussed (to be submitted at the end of the second term). You will then conduct an oral presentation and respond to questions to further explain the project and justify the conclusions

## Optional Module

**Year of study** 2  
**Code** HF  
**Credits** 20  
**Core/option** Core

Choose one optional module

## Brownfield Reclamation and Flood Protection

**Year of study** 2  
**Code** C5018HF  
**Credits** 20  
**Core/option** Option  
**Module contact** [Dr Jonathan Cooper](#)

Contamination of land as a result of human activity is not a new phenomenon, but it is now widely recognised that the remediation and reclamation of contaminated land is an essential element of sustainable development. The aim of the module is to consider the requirements and methods for identifying and remediating contaminated land and to interpret the effects of anthropogenic pollution on ecosystems. Students will evaluate, monitor and quantify the ecological impact of environmental pollution and the scientific and methodological problems associated with contaminated land reclamation. Furthermore, students will investigate patterns of environmental contamination, accumulation and chronic toxicity caused by toxic metals and other hazardous wastes and the response of plants and animals to pollution, the evolution of pollution tolerance and the effectiveness of bioremediation treatments. As well as pollution, flooding caused by the increasing intensity of rainfall events and by sea-level rise associated with climate change is one of the key challenges we face. There are effects both for the environment and for the human populations who live in it. This module aims to consider the array of management strategies employed for the purposes of flood protection and the developing strategies for flood resilience.

## Woodland Management

**Year of study** 2  
**Code** C5028HF  
**Credits** 20  
**Core/option** Option  
**Module contact** [Mr Nick Covarr](#)

Forests and woodlands represent a significant use of land in the UK, second only in physical land use extent to agriculture. They can be managed effectively to provide important economic, environmental and social benefits to owners and the wider population. Resilient, well-managed forests offer a range of services to their owners and to wider society, many of which are relevant to timber and wood production but also to more diverse potential benefits in terms of carbon sequestration, biodiversity, soils and water, landscape,

recreation, social and sporting uses.

Woodland Management is an applied module focussing on the practicalities of how we create and manage woodlands and forests in the UK. Planting trees and better managing those we have is a key part of the government's Net Zero Strategy, Environment Plan and Energy Strategy. Careers in woodland management and woodland creation are flourishing as a result. This module will introduce students to the wide range of UK forest industries whilst providing the skills and insights needed to consider woodland management and forestry placement opportunities.