

**University of Plymouth**

Faculty of Science and Engineering

**Programme Specification**

**BSc (Hons) Biological Sciences with Foundation Year  
6586**

September 2020

## **1.0 BSc (Hons) Biological Sciences with Foundation Year**

Final award title: the final award title is that of the programme to which the student progresses for Levels 4 to 6.

For students entering the BSc (Hons) Biological Sciences with Foundation Year, normally this will be one from:

BSc (Hons) Animal Welfare and Behaviour  
BSc (Hons) Conservation Biology  
BSc (Hons) Biological Sciences  
BSc (Hons) Zoology

UCAS code C102

JACS code C100

**2.0 Awarding Institution**      **University of Plymouth**

**Teaching Institutions**      **University of Plymouth**

## **3.0 Accrediting body**

None

## **4.0 Distinctive features of the Programme and the Student Experience**

This is a four-year BSc (Hons) degree programme starting at Year Zero. It is one of a suite of such programmes, designed for students who are not appropriately qualified, in subject knowledge, attainment or recent experience, for entry to Level 4 of undergraduate programmes in Science. On successful completion of Year Zero, students progress to Level 4 of an undergraduate degree in Science. Students completing the BSc (Hons) Biological Sciences with Foundation Year programme will normally progress to one of the BSc (Hons) programmes in the School of Biological and Marine Sciences shown at section 1.0.

Distinctive features of this programme are that it:

- is suitable for non-standard entrants, including mature returners to study, those without Science qualifications or with Science qualifications below the standard required for entry to Level 4;
- assumes no prior knowledge of science and welcomes applications from those who have studied other disciplines;
- is recognised nationally as excellent, allowing more than 2500 students to enter Higher Education in its 25 years of operation;

- provides a high proportion of experiential work in field or lab, and intensive and early assessment, with rapid feedback designed to support learning;
- provides personal support for learning through regular meetings with your personal tutor and input from specialist staff in Biological Sciences;
- provides English language support for overseas students in core modules;
- is underpinned by research activity of staff, in Biological Sciences and particularly in the pedagogy of science disciplines.

### **5.0 Relevant QAA Benchmark Groups**

The programme is devised with reference to the subject benchmarks of the discipline to which students will progress to complete their degree. For the BSc (Hons) Biological Sciences with Foundation Year the relevant benchmark is Biosciences.

### **6.0 Programme structure**

The programme structure is described diagrammatically below.

In Semester 1, students take the compulsory modules GEES001 *Study and mathematical skills for science*, and two science modules, one in Chemistry and one in Biology.

In Semester 2, students take the core modules BIO014 *Issues in Biology* and BIO013 *Biology 2*. Students will normally take MATH019 *Mathematics and Statistics* unless they can evidence a strong background in Mathematics or Statistics. Students able to evidence such experience may continue Chemistry into Semester 2; to do so they must have taken the corresponding module in Semester 1.

### Semester 1 (all modules are 20 credits)

Compulsory modules		
*GEES001 Study and mathematical skills for science	BIO012 Biology 1	CHM009 Chemistry 1

\*GEES001 is non-compensable in this programme

### Semester 2 (all modules are 20 credits)

Compulsory modules		Students select one module from those shown. Students select MATH019 unless they can evidence a strong background in mathematics or statistics	
BIO014 Issues in Biological Science	BIO013 Biology 2	MATH019 Mathematics and statistics for science	CHM010 Chemistry (Prerequisite CHM009)

## 7.0 Programme Aims

The aims shown below are those for the Level Zero element of this programme. They should be read in conjunction with the aims of the BSc (Hons) programmes available to you in the [School of Biological and Marine Sciences](#), to show the full scope of our ambitions for you.

The aims of the Level Zero programme are to:

- 7.1 produce students who have a broad yet comprehensive understanding of the fundamentals of science that are necessary for successful progression to and in an honours degree programme in Biology;
- 7.2 develop in students the ability to apply scientific knowledge and skills appropriately and successfully in undergraduate studies;
- 7.3 equip students with the study skills necessary to successfully progress to and in an honours degree programme in Biology;
- 7.4 enable students to become confident, critically self-aware independent learners;
- 7.5 begin to develop in students a range of key and transferable skills of value in the world of employment, including skills in the areas of communication, problem-solving, team-working, information-handling and processing
- 7.6 prepare students for and initiate students into the culture of University-level study, both in terms of the academic standards and the study patterns required.

## **8. Intended programme learning outcomes (ILOs)**

The intended learning outcomes shown below are those for the Level Zero element of this programme. They should be read in conjunction with the Intended Learning Outcomes of the BSc (Hons) programmes available to you in the School of Biological and Marine Sciences, to show the full scope of our ambitions for you.

### **8.1 Knowledge and understanding**

On successful completion, graduates should be able to

- a demonstrate a broad understanding of the fundamental knowledge base and the terminology of at least two major STEM disciplines, including Biology;
- b demonstrate an awareness of current areas of debate and discovery in Biology and how scientific knowledge and methods can be applied to investigate them.

### **8.2 Cognitive and intellectual skills**

On successful completion, graduates should be able to

- a identify correctly the concepts and principles underlying theoretical frameworks in at least two STEM disciplines, including Biology, and begin to identify strengths and limitations of such models;
- b judge the reliability of data, results and information using well defined techniques and/or criteria;
- c operate in a range of varied but predictable contexts relevant to Biology, requiring the use and application of specified scientific techniques and information sources.

### **8.3 Key, transferable and employment-related skills**

On successful completion, graduates should be able to demonstrate

- a written and oral communication skills and be able to use these in a variety of contexts;
- b problem-solving skills, relating to qualitative and quantitative information;
- c numeracy and computational skills appropriate to the study of undergraduate science at university;
- d information-retrieval skills, in relation to primary and secondary information sources;
- e demonstrate an awareness of their own capabilities in key areas and engage in development activity through guided self-direction.

### **8.4 Practical skills**

On successful completion, graduates should be able to

- a demonstrate skills in the safe handling of materials in experimental settings, taking into account their chemical properties, including any specific hazards associated with their use;

- b demonstrate the skills required to conduct standard laboratory procedures in at least two STEM disciplines;
- c demonstrate skills in the monitoring, by observation and/or measurement, of a variety of chemical or biological properties, events or changes, of both a quantitative and qualitative nature, together with their systematic and reliable recording and documentation, in the laboratory or the field.

## 9.0 Admissions Criteria, including APCL, APEL and DAS requirements

	Qualifications Required	Level Required
<b>For all applicants</b>	GCSE Mathematics	C
	GCSE English	C
<b>International students</b>	IELTS	IELTS 6.0 overall with at least 5.5 in each element
<b>Applicants with formal qualifications in Science</b>	At least 140 UCAS points from Level 3 qualifications, such as those shown below, typically with passes in science subjects	
	A Levels	normally including at least one pass in a science subject
	AS Level	at least two passes in science subjects
	Baccalaureate	Passes, to include science
	Scottish and Irish Highers	Passes, to include science
	Post GCSE quals such as NVQ	Level 3 usually required
	GNVQ and AGNVQ	Passes in the science subjects
<b>Applicants without formal qualifications in Science</b>	Applications from students with non-standard qualifications, including those without Science qualifications at Level 3, are welcomed and are assessed on an individual basis. This programme is also suitable for those returning to study who can offer work or other related experience in place of formal qualifications and who have the equivalent of basic mathematical, English and science skills ( <i>i.e.</i> the equivalent of a Grade C at GCSE level).	

In accordance with the University's Academic Regulations, Accreditation for Prior Learning (APEL) may be applied where a student can demonstrate appropriate recent learning or experience which fully satisfies the learning outcomes of the module(s) concerned.

In accordance with the University's policies, Level Zero programmes welcome applications from disabled students who are appropriately qualified, academically, for the programme. Information interviews are conducted with applicants to determine the nature of adjustments required.

### **10.0 Progression routes for final and intermediate awards**

The University guarantees progression to one of the science-based BSc programmes identified in Section 1, providing a student has achieved:

- 120 credits in the programme described in this specification and
- at least 50% in every module of the programme
- for progression to Zoology the requirements are 60% overall and at least 50% in every module of the programme.

Please note, however, that the University does not guarantee progression of an individual student to an individual programme.

The University does not guarantee progression to programmes outside those shown in Section 1. Students intending to progress to other programmes at Plymouth University should contact the admissions teams of the programme to which they wish to progress. You should be aware that some programmes may ask you to apply through UCAS so please make these enquiries in good time.

### **11.0 Exceptions to Regulations**

None

### **12.0 Transitional arrangements**

Module taken in 2018-19 or earlier	Corresponding module to be taken in 2019-20 onwards
PHY009	Either BIO012 or CHM009
PHY010	Either BIO013, CHM010 or MATH019

The transitional arrangements described above are indicative; the availability of new modules at Level Zero and new pathways for progression, means that students affected by the transitional arrangements will be counselled individually, so that their programme best supports both completion of the Level Zero programme and successful progression to Level 4.

## 13. Mapping

### 13.1 Indicative Learning Outcomes (ILOs) against modules

	<b>Knowledge and understanding</b> On successful completion, students should be able to:	
a	Demonstrate a broad understanding of the fundamental knowledge base and the terminology of at least two major STEM disciplines, including Biology	BIO012, BIO013, optional modules
b	Demonstrate an awareness of current areas of debate and discovery in Biology and how scientific knowledge and methods can be applied to investigate them.	BIO012, BIO013, BIO014, optional modules

	<b>Cognitive and intellectual skills</b> On successful completion, students should be able to:	
a	Identify correctly the concepts and principles underlying theoretical frameworks in at least two STEM disciplines, including Biology, and begin to identify strengths and limitations of such models.	BIO012, BIO013, optional modules
b	Judge the reliability of data, results and information using well defined techniques and/or criteria	BIO012, BIO013, optional modules
c	Operate in a range of varied but predictable contexts relevant to Biology, requiring the use and application of specified scientific techniques and information sources.	BIO012, BIO013, BIO014, optional modules

	<b>Practical Skills</b> On successful completion, graduates should be able to:	
a	Demonstrate skills in the safe handling of materials in experimental settings, taking into account their chemical properties, including any specific hazards associated with their use.	BIO012, BIO013, optional modules except MATH019
b	Demonstrate the skills required to conduct standard laboratory procedures in at least two STEM disciplines	BIO012, BIO013, optional modules except MATH019

c	Demonstrate skills in the monitoring, by observation and/or measurement, of a variety of chemical or biological properties, events or changes, of both a quantitative and qualitative nature, together with their systematic and reliable recording and documentation, in the laboratory or the field.	BIO012, BIO013, optional modules
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	<b>Key, transferable and employment-related skills</b>	
	On successful completion, graduates should be able to demonstrate	
a	Written and oral communication skills and be able to use these in a variety of contexts	GEES001, BIO014, optional modules
b	problem-solving skills, relating to qualitative and quantitative information	BIO014, GEES001, optional modules
c	numeracy and computational skills appropriate to the study of undergraduate science at university	GEES001, BIO014, MATH019 if selected
d	Information-retrieval skills, in relation to primary and secondary information sources, to include information retrieval through on-line computer searches.	GEES001, BIO014

### 13.2 Assessment in modules

	Module	% Coursework	% Test	% Examination	% Practical
<b>Core modules</b>	GEES001	50		50	
	BIO012	60		40	
	BIO013	60		40	
	BIO014	50			50
<b>Optional modules</b>	CHM009	50	50		
	CHM010	70		30	
	MATH019	50	50		