

# **University of Plymouth**

Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Business

School of Humanities and Performing Arts

## **Programme Specification**

MA Environmental Humanities  
6923

Definitive Document Approved: 14.2.20

Implementation Date: September 2020

Amended by Minor Changes: 9/6/20 & 21/7/20

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## 1. MA Environmental Humanities

**Final award title** MA Environmental Humanities

**Level 7 Intermediate award title(s):** PG Cert  
**[Upon successful achievement of 60 level 7 credits]**

**Level 7 Intermediate award title(s):** PG Dip  
**[Upon successful achievement of 120 level 7 credits]**

**UCAS code:** N/A

**HECOS codes:** 100314 and 100437

**2. Awarding Institution:** University of Plymouth  
**Teaching institution(s):** University of Plymouth

**3. Accrediting body(ies)** None

## 4. Distinctive Features of the Programme and the Student Experience

The MA Environmental Humanities is an interdisciplinary programme which enables students to pursue interests in environmental issues through arts, humanities and social science perspectives. It draws on staff expertise across a number of disciplines to cover an array of topics, ranging from climate change, pollution, social and environmental justice and biodiversity to wider questions to do with changing relations between society, culture and the non-human world in an age of ecological crisis. The MA is designed to enable students to engage with different disciplinary and interdisciplinary approaches, and it cultivates key skills in communication, research and critical and creative thinking invaluable for building more environmentally responsible societies of the future through a range of careers in areas such as conservation, heritage, education, journalism, the creative industries and governmental and non-governmental organisations, or through further research at doctoral level.

This M.A. is distinctive in four key ways:

- 1) It offers a grounding in key debates and methodologies in the evolving field of the Environmental Humanities
- 2) It enables students to design their own interdisciplinary pathway by choosing from a range of modules in Literary Study, History, Anthropology, Sociology and Education
- 3) Plymouth is a University with a strong profile in environmental sciences, and this programme offers opportunities to get involved with distinctive University organisations such as the Sustainable Earth Institute, the Marine Institute and the Environmental Cultures research group, which connect the environmental sciences to the arts and humanities through a variety of collaborations and events
- 4) The programme also offers opportunities to benefit from University connections with a range of local and national organisations, such as the National Trust, Devon Wildlife Trust, the Marine Biological Association, National Marine Aquarium and The Box through placements, work experience and specific collaborative projects

## 5. Relevant QAA Subject Benchmark Group(s)

There is no relevant subject benchmark, but this programme aligns with the QAA Master's Degree Characteristics Statement.

## 6. Programme Structure

### FULL-TIME ROUTE

AUTUMN SEMESTER	<b>MAEH700</b> Research Methods & Debates in the Environmental Humanities <b>(30 credits)</b> <b>PLUS</b> Choose <b>ONE</b> 30-credit module from the list of available elective modules below
SPRING SEMESTER	Choose <b>TWO</b> 30-credit modules from the list of available elective modules below
SUMMER SEMESTER	<b>MAEH701</b> Dissertation

### PART-TIME ROUTE

#### YEAR 1

AUTUMN SEMESTER	<b>MAEH700</b> Research Methods & Debates in the Environmental Humanities <b>(30 credits)</b>
SPRING SEMESTER	Choose <b>ONE</b> 30-credit module from the list of available elective modules

SUMMER SEMESTER	You may use the summer semester to begin informally researching for your final year Dissertation project
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## YEAR 2

AUTUMN SEMESTER	<b>Choose ONE</b> 30-credit module from the list of available elective modules
SPRING SEMESTER	<b>Choose ONE</b> 30-credit module from the list of available elective modules
SUMMER SEMESTER	<b>MAEH701</b> Dissertation

**For Part-time students, the selection of available elective modules may change for Year 2, and the list below is for indicative purposes only.**

### CORE MODULES:

- **MAEH700** Research Methods & Debates in the Environmental Humanities (30 credits)
- **MAEH701** Dissertation (60 credits)

### ELECTIVE MODULES 2020-21

**All Elective modules are 30 credits**

#### AUTUMN SEMESTER

- **MAEL707 Ocean Modernity: Literature and the Sea 1850 – present**  
This module explores literary and cultural representations of the ocean from 1850 to the present. By engaging with a diverse array of literary and cultural texts, including fiction, poetry, non-fiction, theory and visual art, it will examine diverse and shifting cultural imaginaries of the sea. In so doing, it will also investigate wider relations between humanity and the non-human world in modernity.
- **MAHI726 Filth and the Victorians**  
The module examines nineteenth-century Britain and the British world through public debates, practices, objects and environments related to dirt and cleanliness. Topics explored include: the urban dirt of human and animal waste; air and water pollution; washing and deodorising the Victorian body; the ‘cleansing’ of language and culture; cultural history of soap; ideas of pollution in terms of the racial ‘other’. These are selected to reveal key aspects of the social, cultural and intellectual, political history of the period.
- **MASU754 Alternatives in Education and Society**  
This module aims to provide a systematic understanding of knowledge, and a critical awareness of the current issues, challenges, new insights and opportunities in the field of alternative education and innovation in pedagogy. It will critically and creatively evaluate the emergence of utopian visions of a more sustainable and equitable society.

It will consider their role alongside alternative education for developing new knowledge and the leadership of change, as well as providing critical ways of understanding the importance of envisioning probable and preferable futures.

- **MAEH702 Coastal Cultures: Environmental and Maritime Anthropology**

This module examines current issues in maritime anthropology focusing on the interaction between coastal cultures and the environment. It approaches the natural and maritime landscape from a social, economic and political perspective. Students will study the ways anthropologists have sought to study the relationship between humans and their environment, starting with classical ecological and environmental deterministic studies, to current concerns about the Anthropocene, climate change, pollution and social degradation.

## **SPRING SEMESTER**

- **MAEL706 The Utopian Novel and Modernity**

This module will explore the intersection of utopian thinking, theory and the novel over a period spanning the late nineteenth century to the present. It will explore how this intersection relates to relevant political and cultural issues and contexts such as globalism, politics, gender and the environment. The module will engage with prominent theorists of utopia such as Ernst Bloch and Fredric Jameson. It will also focus on the work of a range of authors, such as William Morris, Ursula Le Guin, Doris Lessing and Kim Stanley Robinson.

- **MASU753 The Experience of Outdoor Learning**

This module discusses key concepts within outdoor learning as well as its connection with experiential learning and its value and potential from early years to adulthood. Consideration is given to the value that the natural environment has in education as well as to personal development and wellbeing. Participants are encouraged to deepen their own experience and critical thinking in relation to the subject as well as to the means by which they would like to develop their own practice

- **MASU755 Learning for Sustainability and Global Citizenship**

This innovative module uses an applied community engaged approach to look critically and creatively at notions of sustainability and global citizenship competencies, and the learning contexts and systems in which individuals, institutions and communities gain these competencies. This entails applying the UN Sustainable Development Goals to real world projects that seek to address sustainability priorities in and around the city of Plymouth, enabling students to explore ideas of interdisciplinarity and interconnectedness, with a dynamic and experiential link between theory and practice. This inclusion of a service learning pedagogical approach enables consideration of the potential contribution of formal and non-formal education, whilst emphasising *the links* between our lives and those of people throughout the world. In so doing, it allows students to consider ways to actively contribute to a *world* in which power and resources for change leadership are more equitably shared.

- **MSR73 Media, Culture & the Environment**

Social science approaches play a critical role in understanding how some of the most pressing issues of our time such as climate change are communicated and addressed. This module examines how different social research methods can be utilised to

examine how environmental issues are represented in the media and perceived by the public. This includes quantitative content analysis, sentiment analysis, discourse analysis and semiotics.

This module critically examines the ways in which the media communicate about the environment. It provides students with an in-depth critical appreciation of key concepts and debates in relation to both traditional legacy media and digital/social media. Students will learn to employ a range of research methods (quantitative and qualitative) in analysing media discourse. The module will also introduce students to multidisciplinary theories and research on the psychology and effectiveness of environmental messaging in order to understand how various media technologies affect individual and collective thinking and action.

**The selection of available elective modules may change from year to year, as we regularly rotate, refresh and add to our portfolio of modules.**

## **7. Programme Aims**

- 1) To enable a deep understanding of relationships between society, culture and the environment
- 2) To facilitate an interdisciplinary approach to addressing today's complex ecological challenges and their cultural implications
- 3) To bring the arts, humanities and social sciences perspectives into dialogue with the discourses of the natural sciences
- 4) To offer critical awareness of evolving debates and methods in the Environmental Humanities
- 5) To enable students to confidently negotiate different discourses and encounter new materials, ideas and methodological challenges
- 6) To aid students in developing relevant project management and research skills, the exercise of critical judgment, and time management, as well as the production of high- quality work

## **8. Programme Intended Learning Outcomes**

### **8.1. Knowledge and understanding**

On successful completion graduates should have developed:

- 1) A deep understanding of relations between environment, society and culture

- 2) Critical awareness of key debates and concepts in the Environmental Humanities which engage with environmental-cultural relations
- 3) A systematic understanding of a range of interdisciplinary and/or multidisciplinary methods to approach complex social-environmental questions
- 4) A high level of awareness about underlying values, ideologies and patterns of thought and behavior inherent in a range of environmental discourses, forms of rhetoric and practices

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

On successful completion graduates should have developed:

- 1) An enhanced capacity to critically evaluate and creatively respond to relevant discourses in a range of different disciplines
- 2) A capacity to conduct self-directed research using appropriate methods
- 3) An ability to effectively communicate complex ideas
- 4) An ability to engage critically and creatively with a range of environmental discourses and forms of rhetoric in order to develop new conceptual, rhetorical and practical strategies

### **8.3. Key and transferable skills**

On successful completion graduates should have developed the ability to:

- 1) Engage complex issues and debates with critical rigour, creativity and intellectual independence
- 2) Work independently, demonstrating initiative, sound judgement and personal and ethical responsibility
- 3) Communicate knowledge and ideas clearly and compellingly to a range of specialist and non-specialist audiences

### **8.4. Employment related skills**

On successful completion graduates should have developed:

- 1) An ability to exercise initiative and personal responsibility
- 2) Effective communication skills
- 3) Skills in self-directed research and independent learning

### **8.5. Practical skills**

On successful completion graduates should have developed:

- 1) The ability to apply technical expertise to facilitate independent research using a range of academic tools, including digital tools.

- 2) The capacity to present in front of an audience
- 3) A high level of competence in written forms of communication and other forms of media where appropriate.

**9. Admissions Criteria, including APCL, APEL and Disability Service arrangements**

All applicants must have GCSE (or equivalent) Maths and English at Grade 4 or above (equivalent to a Grade C as per the GSCE grading system until 2017).

<b>Entry Requirements for MA Environmental Humanities</b>	
Degree	A good degree (normally a 2.1 or above) in any discipline is desirable. Outstanding candidates without this level of qualification but with relevant professional qualifications or experience are also welcome to apply.  International applicants meet also the University's language requirements. The minimum IELTS score for acceptable English proficiency for entry is normally 7.
Accreditation of Prior Learning	Accreditation of Prior Learning will be considered, where appropriate, on a case-by-case basis and in line with the university's <a href="#">Academic Regulations</a> .

**10. Progression criteria for Final and Intermediate Awards**

N/A

**11. Non Standard Regulations**

N/A

**12. Transitional Arrangements**

N/A

**Appendices**

**Programme Specification Mapping (PGT)**



**Appendix 1: Programme Specification Mapping (PGT): module contribution to the meeting of Award Learning Outcomes**

**Tick those Award Learning Outcomes the module contributes to through its assessed learning outcomes.**

Module	Credits	C core E elective	Award Learning Outcomes contributed to (for more information see Section 8)																Compensation Y/N	Assessment element(s) and weightings [use KIS definition] E1 - exam E2 - clinical exam T1 - test C1 - coursework A1 - generic assessment P1 - practical				
			Knowledge & understanding				Cognitive & intellectual skills				Key & transferable skills				Employment related skills						Practical skills			
			1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3		1	2	3				1	2	3	
MAEH700 Research Methods	30	C		X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	-	N	C1 100%
MAEL707 Ocean Modernity	30	E	X		X		X	X	X		X	X	X	-	X	X	X	-	X		X	-	Y	C1 100%
MAHI726 Filth	30	E	X	X	X		X	X	X		X	X	X	-	X	X	X	-	X		X	-	Y	C1 100%
MASU754 Alternatives	30	E	X		X		X		X		X			-		X		-			X	-	Y	C1 100%
<b>Learning Outcomes 60 credits</b>																								
MAEH702 Coastal Cultures	30	E	X		X	X	X		X	X	X		X	-		X	X	-		X	X	-	Y	C1 100%
MAEL706 Utopian Novel	30	E	X		X		X	X	X		X		X	-		X	X	-			X	-	Y	C1 100%
MASU753 Outdoor Learning	30	E			X		X						X	-		X		-	X			-	Y	C1 100%
MASU755 Learning for Sustainability	30	E	X		X		X		X	X			X	-		X		-	X			-	Y	C1 100%

MSR7233 Media, Culture & the Environment	30	E	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	X		X	X	X	-	Y	
<b>Learning Outcomes 120 credits</b>																								
MAEH701 Dissertation	60	C	X	X				X	X		X	X	X	-	X	X	X	-	X		X		N	C1 100%
<b>Learning Outcomes 180 credits</b>																								
<b>Confirmed Award LOs</b>			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	-		