



DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY

# UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK

2019/2020

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Department of Geography...  
School of Life Sciences and the Environment  
Royal Holloway, University of London  
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#### Disclaimer

This document was published in September 2019 and was correct at that time. The department\* reserves the right to modify any statement if necessary, make variations to the content or methods of delivery of programmes of study, to discontinue programmes, or merge or combine programmes if such actions are reasonably considered to be necessary by the College. Every effort will be made to keep disruption to a minimum, and to give as much notice as possible.

\* Please note, the term 'department' is used to refer to 'departments', 'Centres and 'Schools'. Students on joint or combined degree programmes will receive two departmental handbooks.

# Welcome to the Department of Geography

**This handbook covers key points about the department, and study advice for your degree in the department.**

Degree Programmes covered:

BA Geography

BSc Geography

BA Human Geography

BSc Physical Geography

BSc Geography, Politics & International Relations\*

- Students registered for this joint degree should also consult the student handbook from their partner department.



All single honours Geography degree programmes have been accredited by the Royal Geographical Society (with IBG). Accredited degree programmes contain a solid academic foundation in geographical knowledge and skills, and prepare graduates to address the needs of the world beyond higher education. The accreditation criteria require evidence that graduates from accredited programmes meet defined sets of learning outcomes, including subject knowledge, technical ability and transferable skills.

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## APPENDICES

# 1 Introduction to your department

## 1.1 Welcome

Welcome to Royal Holloway. Royal Holloway, University of London (hereafter 'the College') is one of the UK's leading research-intensive universities, with six academic schools spanning the arts and humanities, social sciences and sciences.

Welcome to the Department of Geography at Royal Holloway. Geography is an important and dynamic discipline, which stretches from the concerns of the humanities and social sciences to the scientific study of the natural world. Recent developments, such as growing interest in environmental change and geopolitics, and those changes in the human world which have been described as 'globalisation', mean that the importance of a geographical education has never been greater. The Department provides an excellent teaching and learning environment for geographers keen to develop their knowledge and skills in these, and other, key areas of the discipline.

We hope that you find Royal Holloway an exciting, stimulating and friendly place to study Geography. We place great emphasis on the importance of the culture and social life of the Department. In part, because of the importance of fieldwork, the Geography Department is probably more closely-knit than other academic departments, and you are likely to get to know both staff and other students very well. Remember that this is a two-way process – a happy and successful Department depends on the active involvement of students and staff alike. To this end, there are some key 'basics' which we expect all students to follow:

1. Attend all timetabled classes and tutor meetings. By this, we mean more than 'turning up'. To get the most out of your studies here, you need to turn up having prepared by doing the relevant reading or background work. We aim for you to be active learners rather than passive receivers of information, so preparation is vital. You should make every effort to arrive before the start of the lecture and to take your seat before the start time. Late arrival at lectures impacts the learning environment and affects all those participating in it. Students arriving after the start of the lecture should enter only if they can do so without disrupting the lecture. Students must make every effort to enter the lecture theatre as discretely as possible to minimize disruption.
2. Meet all submission deadlines: whether summative or formative, deadlines need to be met. By doing this, we can get you feedback in time for you to improve your work before the next deadlines. All deadlines have been published on student noticeboards, so you will know when they are for the whole of the academic year.
3. Respect all staff and fellow students. Our approach to teaching relies on you being motivated. If you are set a presentation topic, it is meant not just to benefit you, but your co-students as well. Your tutor will have designed a session in the expectation that you will make your contribution to the learning process. This means focusing on what is being said, and not being distracted by your phones or using laptops for any purpose other than the learning process.

## 1.2 How to find us: the Department

The Geography department is mainly located in the Queen's Building (QB), additional staff and teaching space is located in the Munro Fox laboratory, EMU (postgraduate centre) and the geochronology laboratories (section 1.6). Staff offices can be found in the Queen's Building (section 1.6 for maps and individual staff offices).

## 1.3 Map of the Egham campus

Please note, student parking is very limited and is not available if you live in Halls or within 1.5 miles of campus. If you do live more than 1.5 miles away or have a particular reason why you need to come to campus by car, you must apply for a parking permit. If you have a motorbike or scooter you must also register the vehicle with College. Find more information about the Parking Permit portal [here](#).

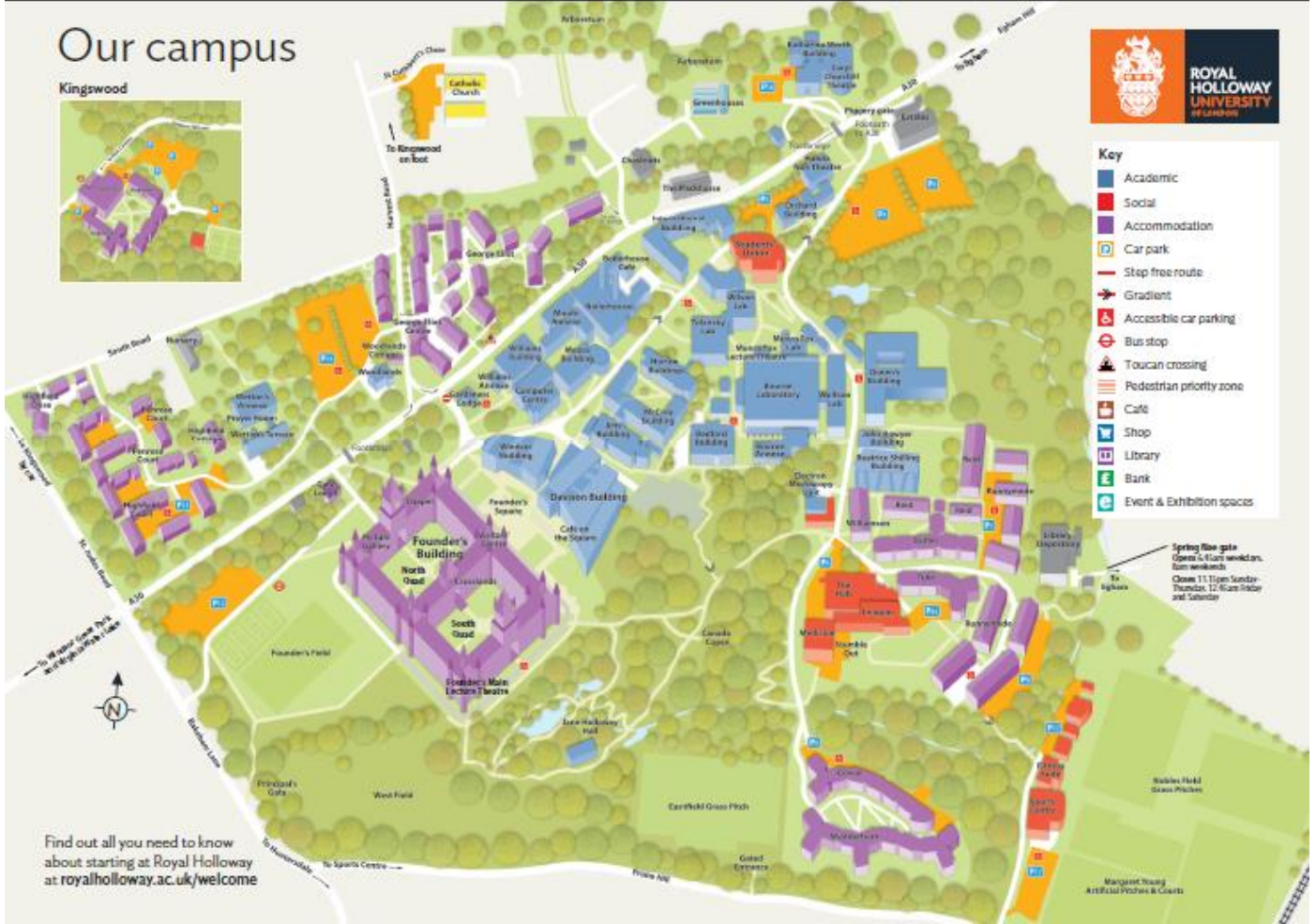
# Our campus

Kingswood



**Key**

- Academic
- Social
- Accommodation
- P Car park
- Stop free route
- Gradient
- ♿ Accessible car parking
- ⏸ Bus stop
- ⚓ Toucan crossing
- 🚶 Pedestrian priority zone
- ☕ Cafe
- 🛒 Shop
- 📖 Library
- 🏦 Bank
- 🎨 Event & Exhibition spaces



Find out all you need to know about starting at Royal Holloway at [royalholloway.ac.uk/welcome](http://royalholloway.ac.uk/welcome)



## 1.4 How to find us: the staff

<b>Head of School:</b>	Professor Tamar Pincus <a href="mailto:t.pincus@rhul.ac.uk">t.pincus@rhul.ac.uk</a>	44 3523	Wolfson 114
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<b>Examinations Team:</b>	Dr Ian Matthews <a href="mailto:i.p.matthews@rhul.ac.uk">i.p.matthews@rhul.ac.uk</a>	27 6530	QB124
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Raymond Aung (Computer Technician)	443613 <a href="mailto:Raymond.Aung@rhul.ac.uk">Raymond.Aung@rhul.ac.uk</a>	QB137
Katy Flowers (Laboratory Technician)	443566 <a href="mailto:Katy.Flowers@rhul.ac.uk">Katy.Flowers@rhul.ac.uk</a>	QB127
Dr Adrian Palmer (Senior Research Officer)	443507 <a href="mailto:a.palmer@rhul.ac.uk">a.palmer@rhul.ac.uk</a>	QB125
Dr Marta Perez (Laboratory Technician)	443566 <a href="mailto:m.perez-2@rhul.ac.uk">m.perez-2@rhul.ac.uk</a>	QB127
Malcolm Kelsey (Cartographic Technician)	443568 <a href="mailto:Malcolm.Kelsey@rhul.ac.uk">Malcolm.Kelsey@rhul.ac.uk</a>	QB137
Iñaki Valcarcel (Laboratory Technician)	414683 <a href="mailto:jose.valcarcel@rhul.ac.uk">jose.valcarcel@rhul.ac.uk</a>	MFox Lab

**School Manager:** Michelle Jux 44 3763  
Michelle.Jux@rhul.ac.uk Wolfson 118

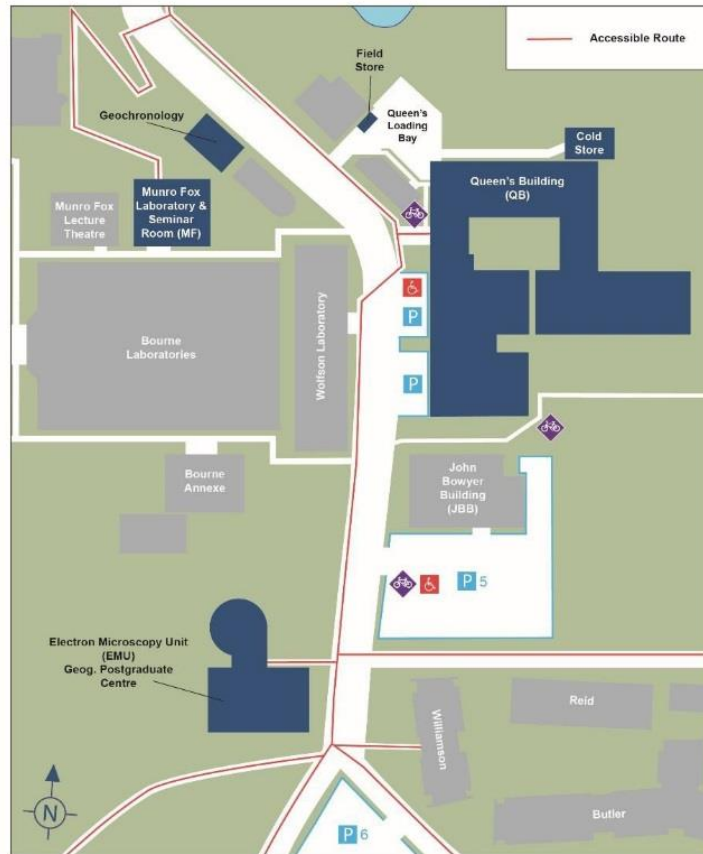
**Help desk:** Lucy Davidson 44 3776  
LSE-School@rhul.ac.uk Wolfson 118

### 1.5 How to find us: the School office

The Department occupies modern purpose-built accommodation on the ground floor of the Queen's Building. Here you will find a lecture theatre, teaching rooms, Geography staff offices, 'Library@Geography', and research and teaching laboratories. Additional teaching laboratories are located in the nearby Munro Fox Laboratories. The map below details the location of Geography department buildings, with page 12 giving details of staff offices. The Help Desk for student enquiries is in the School of Life Sciences, Wolfson building, ground floor Room 118.

## 1.6 The Department: practical information

The Department occupies modern purpose-built accommodation on the ground floor of the Queen's Building. Here you will find a lecture theatre, teaching rooms, Geography staff offices, 'Library@Geography', and research and teaching laboratories. Additional teaching laboratories are located in the nearby Munro Fox Laboratories. The map below details the location of Geography department buildings, with page 12 giving details of staff offices.



Extract from the main campus plan showing location of Geography Department buildings

## Department of Geography - Queen's Building (Level 1)

	Room		Room
Head of Department.....	161	Technical Operations Manager and	
Undergraduate Education Lead.....	181	Health & Safety Co-ordinator.....	130
Postgraduate Research Student Lead.....	180	IT and AV Support.....	137
Wellbeing Lead.....	152A	Cartography and Printing.....	137



## 1.7 Staff research interests

- Professor Peter Adey, BA Aberystwyth, MA Aberystwyth, PhD Aberystwyth  
*Borders and mobility; Space; Political Geography*
- Dr Simon Armitage, BA Oxford, PhD Wales  
*North African climate; OSL; late Quaternary evolution of SE African coast*
- Professor Simon Blockley, BSc Bradford, PhD Bradford  
*Palaeoenvironment & abrupt climate change; Paleolithic archaeology; geochronology*
- Dr Katherine Brickell, BA London, MSc Sussex, PhD London  
*Gender, violence and injustice; home and domestic life; South-east Asia*
- Professor Ian Candy, BSc London, MRes Reading, PhD Reading  
*Quaternary geomorphology & sedimentology; uranium series geochronology; palaeoclimatic reconstruction*
- Dr Daniele Colombaroli, BSc, MSc Milan, PhD Bern  
*Impact of disturbance on ecosystem structure and function; environmental proxies*
- Professor Phil Crang, BA Cambridge, PhD Cambridge  
*Cultural Globalisation; geographies of consumption; geographies of work*
- Dr Bethan Davies, BA Nottingham, MSc London, PhD Durham  
*Glacial geology & glaciology in Britain, Patagonia & Antarctica;*
- Professor Veronica della Dora, BA Ca'Foscari, Venice, PhD UCLA  
*Cultural and historical geography; history of cartography; landscape studies; sacred space*
- Dr Vandana Desai, BA Bombay, BSL Poona, MPA Liverpool, DPhil Oxford  
*NGO's & civil society; gender; ageing; water; community participation; slums; India & sub-Saharan Africa*
- Professor Klaus Dodds, BSc Bristol, PhD Bristol  
*Geopolitics and security; Antarctica and Arctic; geopolitics of contemporary cinema*
- Dr Mike Dolton, BA OU, MA Sussex, PhD London  
*Democratisation through local participatory networks; UK urban policy & regeneration*
- Professor Felix Driver, MA Cambridge, PhD Cambridge  
*Exploration & empire; museums; exhibitions & collections; popular geographical publishing; history of geographical film*
- Dr Gwilym Eades, BSc Victoria, MA Ottawa, PhD Montréal  
*Critical GIS; Memetics of place; Indigenous toponymy; Geoweb*
- Dr Sasha Englemann, BA Stanford, MPhil Oxford  
*Geographies of Art; Art-Science collaboration*
- Dr Lucy Flower, BSc Plymouth, MSc, PhD London  
*Quaternary Mammals, Carnivore behavior and adaptations, Palaeodiet reconstruction, Palaeoecology*
- Dr Peter French, BSc Kingston, PhD Reading  
*Coastal & estuarine management; public attitude to coastal risk*
- Professor David Gilbert, BA Cambridge, DPhil Oxford  
*Geographies of 20<sup>th</sup> century London; imperialism; tourism and the modern city*
- Professor Harriet Hawkins, BA Nottingham, PhD Nottingham  
*Geographies of contemporary art, histories of creative geographies, art/science collaboration*
- Dr Anna Jackman, BA Exeter, MRes Exeter, PhD, Exeter  
*Geographies of contemporary warfare*
- Dr Innes Keighren, BSc Edinburgh, MSc. Edinburgh, PhD. Edinburgh  
*Cultural and historical geography; historical geographies of science; history and geography of the book; history of travel and exploration*
- Dr Ian Matthews BSc London, PhD London  
*Geochronology; Environmental Archaeology; palaeoecology*
- Dr Alice Milner BSc Leeds, PhD Leeds  
*Mediterranean biogeography, peatland ecosystems, climate change*
- Professor Jay Mistry, BSc London, PhD London  
*Fire management in the tropics; Savanna management; Tropical ecology*
- Dr Oli Mould, BA Leicester, MSc Leicester, PhD Leicester  
*Urban studies; Creative industries; Urban sub-cultures*
- Dr Sofie Narbed, BA Nottingham, MA London  
*Geographies of dance; Latin America*

Dr Adrian Palmer, BSc, MSc, PhD London  
*Quaternary sedimentology; varve chronology; landscape response to rapid climate change*

Dr Alasdair Pinkerton, MA St Andrews, MA London, PhD London  
*Critical geopolitics; communications research; central & South Asia*

Professor Danielle Schreve, BSc London, PhD London  
*Quaternary mammals; palaeoenvironments; palaeolithic archaeology*

Dr Jenni Sherriff, BSc Birmingham, MSc London, PhD London  
*Quaternary sedimentology, Geochemistry, Palaeoecology*

Dr Ayesha Siddiqi, BSc Lahore, MA Sussex, PhD London  
*Climate disasters & political space; climate change adaptation, environment, politics & security*

Professor David Simon, BA Cape Town, BA Reading, DPhil Oxford  
*Development-environment theory, policy & practice; sustainability; urbanisation; cities and climate change; transport geography*

Dr Rachael Squire, BA London, MA London  
*Geopolitics of oceans and seas*

Mr. Don Thompson, BSc London  
*River and hill slope processes; water supply in the developing world*

Dr Varyl Thorndycraft, BSc Sheffield, MSc Liverpool, PhD Exeter  
*Late Quaternary palaeohydrology; floods & climate change; GIS and digital terrains*

Professor Katie Willis BA Oxford, MPhil Oxford, DPhil Oxford  
*Gender; households; migration & development; Latin America*

## 2 Support and advice

### 2.1 Student Charter

The College aims to bring all students into a close, harmonious relationship with each other and with the wider community. The [Student Charter](#) outlines how you can support the College in achieving these goals and also seeks to encourage you to act as an effective ambassador for the College, during your time as a student and later as part of the College's alumni.

This Charter is not intended to constitute a binding agreement but is offered as a framework of aspirations, designed to be of benefit primarily to you as a student and to underpin the College's aim of ensuring that you have a highly enjoyable and rewarding experience during the course of your degree.

### 2.2 UG Degree Regulations

The [Undergraduate Regulations](#) set out the various standards that shape the regulatory framework of your undergraduate degree with the College. These include a variety of essential information, ranging from admissions to academic progression and examination. Some frequently used elements of the regulations are covered in this handbook.

### 2.3 Support within your department

The School Helpdesk is there to help you with any questions or concerns you might have about your studies. It is situated in [the Wolfson building, room 118](#). Opening hours are 8:30am to 5:30pm in term time and 10:00am to 4:00pm during vacation. The Helpdesk is staffed throughout these opening hours. You can call in person during opening hours, ring 01784 443776 or email to [LSE-school@rhul.ac.uk](mailto:LSE-school@rhul.ac.uk). Depending on your query, the Helpdesk will answer your questions then and there, put you in touch with a colleague who can help, or find out the answer and get back to you. If you wish, you may also talk to them in private and they will make sure you receive the support you require.

If you have a problem or concern, approaching the right person in the first instance will allow the problem to be dealt with quickly and efficiently. For many issues, your personal tutor is the first point of contact, but for others, you should see the following:

- With a topic in an individual module: see the lecturer concerned
- With the administration or examination of an individual module: see the Module Convenor
- With examination arrangements more generally: see the Exams Officers, Dr Ian Matthews or Mr Don Thompson
- With module selection: see the Director of Undergraduate Programmes, Dr Peter French
- With general academic organisation: see the Director of Undergraduate Programmes, Dr Peter French
- With personal difficulties: see your Personal Advisor, Dr Mike Dolton (DESO) or the Counselling Service
- With general non-academic queries or fees: go to the Student Services Centre in the Emily Wilding Davison building
- With a problem worrying many students: ask your year rep to raise it at the Staff-Student Committee or, for urgent issues, See Dr Peter French
- With English as a second language: contact your Personal Tutor or the Centre for Development of Academic Skills (CeDAS)
- With writing skills in general: Contact CeDAS
- With issues relating to specific learning difficulties: see Dr Mike Dolton (DESO) or the Disability and Dyslexia Services Liaison officer

### 2.4 Students' Union Royal Holloway University of London (SURHUL)

The Students' Union Royal Holloway University of London (SURHUL) is a registered charity (Registered No: 1141998) and actively represents the students of Royal Holloway University of London. SURHUL promotes

your needs and interests by offering employment, participation, entertainment, support and advice, your clubs and societies, catering, transport, volunteering, campaigning and advocacy.

The SU **Advice and Support Centre**, situated on the first floor of the Students' Union, is a free service that offers you the opportunity to discuss any concerns you may have and receive impartial advice and information from the team of experienced and professional advisers. Open 9.30am - 5pm, Monday – Friday, it operates an open door policy exclusively for students during term time. However, during vacation periods students should call to book an appointment.

Phone: 01784 24 6700  
Email: [helpdesk@su.rhul.ac.uk](mailto:helpdesk@su.rhul.ac.uk)

[Find out more about the Students' Union](#)

## 2.5 Staff-Student committee

The Department runs an undergraduate Staff-Student Committee which meets three times each year (once in each term) and plays an important role in the Department as a forum for airing student views and discussing changes to teaching and learning provision. The core purpose of the academic representation system is to achieve positive change that improves the educational experience of students at Royal Holloway and engages students as partners in the development, assurance and enhancement of their learning.

The Staff-Student Committee has the following Terms of Reference:

- 1. To close the feedback loop within Departments**
  - 1.1. To review actions from previous meetings and escalating any outstanding actions as necessary.
  - 1.2. To track the development of actions in the Department's Annual Review
  
- 2. To facilitate effective communications**
  - 2.1. To receive a verbal update from the Department which reflects on previous weeks as well as looking ahead to forthcoming weeks. It may include updates on resources, assessment and feedback, learning and teaching methods, activity updates, opportunities, and any wider College information
  - 2.2. To receive a verbal update collated by the Department Rep. It may include positive feedback on what is working well, resource issues, assessment and feedback, learning and teaching methods;
  
- 3. To secure positive change**
  - 3.1. To provide an explicit opportunity for staff and students to make suggestions for improvement to Departmental life

Elections for Course Representatives and the Department Representative are held at the beginning of each academic year by the Student Union. Participation on the Staff-Student Committee is seen as an important service to the Department, and this can be reflected on CVs and in references. Even if you are not on the committee you should get to know who your representatives are. A full list is posted on the year notice boards.

The Department Representative is responsible for chairing the committee meetings for the year and a member of administrative staff supports the meetings and takes the minutes. Any student can submit items for discussion, and these should be submitted to the Secretary at least one week before the published date of meetings. You can use the Committee to raise any issues of concern that cannot be resolved through contacting the relevant staff members (e.g. course leader). Minutes of meetings are circulated to members of the Committee and all members of staff, and are formally tabled and minuted at the Department Teaching Committee and the Departmental Board meetings. Minutes are also posted in the Department on the Academic Representation notice board.

For more information about being a course rep, see:  
<https://www.su.rhul.ac.uk/voice/coursereps/#>



## 2.6 Student Services Centre

The Student Services Centre is located in the Davison Building and provides a single point of contact for all non-academic related queries including accommodation, fees, enrolment and graduation.

Phone: 01784 27 6641  
Email: [studentservices@royalholloway.ac.uk](mailto:studentservices@royalholloway.ac.uk)

[Find out more about the Student Services Centre](#)

## 2.7 Support Advisory & Wellbeing

The College offers a high level of student wellbeing support which includes triage and support through Student Wellbeing, a BACP accredited Counselling Service, dedicated disability & dyslexia support, financial and budgeting advice and support for international students. There is also access to an NHS run Health Centre on campus.

Phone: 01784 44 3394  
Email: [wellbeing@royalholloway.ac.uk](mailto:wellbeing@royalholloway.ac.uk)

[Find out more about Support Advisory & Wellbeing](#)

## 2.8 Student Wellbeing

Student Wellbeing provides advice and guidance to all students on personal and emotional wellbeing, to assist you in maintaining a healthy balanced lifestyle and to support you from transition to university and then in the continuation of your studies towards graduation. The Student Wellbeing team actively encourages all members of the campus community to alert them to concerns or signs of vulnerability to enable proactive engagement with intervention.

Phone: 01784 44 3395 / 44 3132 / 27 6757  
Email: [wellbeing@royalholloway.ac.uk](mailto:wellbeing@royalholloway.ac.uk)

[Find out more about Student Wellbeing](#)

## 2.9 Disability & Dyslexia Services (DDS)

If you have a disability, long standing medical condition or specific learning difficulty, it is important that you bring it to the College's attention as soon as possible.

The College Disability & Dyslexia Services support dyslexic and disabled students and those with mental health or chronic medical conditions to demonstrate their academic abilities by arranging support packages, dyslexia assessments and study skills sessions.

Phone: 01784 27 6473  
Email: [disability-dyslexia@royalholloway.ac.uk](mailto:disability-dyslexia@royalholloway.ac.uk)

[Find out more about Disability & Dyslexia Services](#)

Your first point of contact for advice and guidance is your Disability & Dyslexia Services Network Member in your department:

Name: Dr. Mike Dolton  
Phone: 01784 443575  
Email: [m.dolton@rhul.ac.uk](mailto:m.dolton@rhul.ac.uk)

## 2.10 International Student Support Office (ISSO)

The International Student Support Office offers advice to international students on visa issues, working in the UK, opening a bank account, processing federal loans and police registration.

Phone: 01784 27 6168  
Email: [internationaladvice@royalholloway.ac.uk](mailto:internationaladvice@royalholloway.ac.uk)

[Find out more about the International Student Support Office](#)

## 2.11 Academic Skills Support

The Centre for the Development of Academic Skills, **CeDAS**, offers a variety of courses, workshops, 1:1 tutorials, online resources that aim to ensure all students at Royal Holloway reach their full academic potential in a range of areas, including academic writing, oral communication skills and maths and statistics.

Whatever your needs, CeDAS is there to ensure that you can perform to the best of your ability, whether it be through a workshop that introduces you to a crucial academic skill, a session within your department that focuses on writing in the discipline, a course that develops your confidence and competence in academic English language, or a 1:1 tutorial with a specialist to help you master a maths technique or sharpen your essay skills.

The CeDAS Office can be found in the Beatrice Shilling building, second floor, room 217, and you can follow them on Twitter: [@cedasrhul](#).

## 2.12 IT Services Desk

The College IT Service Desk offers a range of support covering all aspects of IT services, such as email access, connecting to the College's wireless network, connecting devices such as iPads and making use of College printing facilities. The IT Service Desk will also be able to provide expert advice and guidance on a range of more specific IT issues, should you experience any problems. They also offer a range of free software, including Microsoft Office 365, Sofos Antivirus, NVivo and SPSS.

Phone: 01784 41 4321  
Email: [itservicedesk@royalholloway.ac.uk](mailto:itservicedesk@royalholloway.ac.uk)  
In person: Visit the IT support office in the Davison Library (ground floor)

[Find out more about IT Services](#)

## 2.13 The Geographical Society

The Geographical Society is run by students. It traditionally provides both a programme of visiting speakers and a range of social events, which in the past have included parties, trips out, annual reviews, quiz evenings, summer barbecues, Christmas dinners and sports fixtures. The GeogSoc organises a formal dinner normally held in the second term. A good GeogSoc can make a real difference to the culture of the Department, and for the individuals involved is a lasting achievement which can be reflected on CVs and in references. Elections for the committee take place towards the end of each academic year, with a further election in October to choose a first-year representative. All events are publicised on the GeogSoc notice board, adjacent to the student-year notice boards.

### 3 Communication

It is vitally important that you keep in touch with us and we keep in touch with you. Members of staff will often need to contact you to inform you of changes to teaching arrangements, special preparations you may have to make for a class, or meetings you might be required to attend. You will need to contact members of the Department if, for example, you are unable to attend a class, or you wish to arrange a meeting with your Personal Tutor.

#### 3.1 Email

The College provides an email address for all students free of charge and stores the address in a College email directory (the Global Address List). Your account is easily accessed, both on and off campus, via the campus-wide portal, [CampusNet](#) or direct via [Outlook.com](#).

We will routinely email you at your College address and you should **therefore check your College email regularly** (at least daily). We will not email you at a private or commercial address. Email may be used for urgent communication and by course tutors to give or confirm instructions or information related to teaching so it is important that you build into your routine that you **check your emails regularly**. Any communication concerning individual courses made via the Moodle system is also directed to your College email accounts. Email communications from staff and all the School Administrators should be treated as important and read carefully. Do not ignore emails from **us**. We will assume you have received an email within 48 hours, excluding Saturdays and Sundays.

If you send an email to a member of staff in the department during term time you should normally receive a reply within 3-4 working days of its receipt. Please remember that there are times when members of staff are away from College at conferences or undertaking research.

The College provides a number of PC Labs around Campus for student use, and you can also use your own laptop/smart phone etc, so the Department expects you to check your email regularly. It is also important that you regularly clear your College account of unwanted messages or your in-box may become full and unable to accept messages. **Just deleting messages is not sufficient; you must clear the 'Sent Items' and 'Deleted Items' folders regularly. It is your responsibility to make sure your College email account is kept in working order.** If you have any problems contact the **IT Service Desk**

Students who prefer to use commercial email services are responsible for making sure that their College email is diverted to the appropriate commercial address. Detailed instructions on how to forward mail can be found [here](#). This process is very easy, but you still have to maintain your College account. When you delete a forwarded message it will not be deleted from the RHUL account. **It is your responsibility** to log on to your College account occasionally and conduct some account maintenance or your account may become full and therefore will not forward messages. A full inbox is not a valid excuse for missing teaching-related activities communicated to you via email.

##### 3.1.1 Guidance for emailing staff

Whilst online means of communication—particularly social media and instant messaging—often encourage informality, it can sometimes be difficult to know what is expected when emailing a member of staff on Department business. The following tips will help you compose suitable emails:

**Include a formal salutation.** When emailing a member of staff, particularly when writing to them for the first time, it is preferable to remain formal in your salutation: “Dear Dr Smith” or “Dear Jane” will be greeted more favourably than “Hey there”. Whilst most staff are happy to be addressed on a first-name basis, it is always appreciated if you use their title and surname (which you can find in section 1.4) in the first instance. You will be able to gauge the formality which a member of staff expects from their reply to you.

**Introduce yourself and provide a context.** With more than 400 undergraduate students in the department, it is helpful if you can remind the member of staff of who you are and the context in which you are writing: “I am a second-year undergraduate student taking GG2001: Geographical Techniques II and have a query about one of today’s readings...” is better than “I have a query about one of today’s readings...”.

**Be succinct and provide a descriptive subject line.** To allow a member of staff (who may well receive more than 100 emails a day) to address your query as quickly and fully as possible, make sure that it is clearly phrased and succinct. Your email should also always be accompanied by a clear and intelligible subject line (e.g., "Query regarding GG2001 reading list" or "Absence due to illness").

**Include a formal ending.** In keeping with the polite and formal tone of your email, you should sign off in an appropriate way: "Yours sincerely", "With best wishes", or "I look forward to hearing from you" are preferred to "Cheers".

**Proofread before clicking "send".** You should always take a moment before sending your email to read through it to check for grammatical errors or spelling mistakes. As with all formal writing, you should avoid 'text speak' and other colloquialisms. Also, if you are including an attachment, make sure this is actually attached!

**Sit back, relax, and be patient.** Members of staff will always endeavour to answer emails in a timely fashion, but their teaching, administrative, and research commitments will occasionally mean that an instantaneous response is not possible. You should allow between 3 and 4 working days (i.e., Mondays to Fridays, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. only) for a reply. Responses may be somewhat slower outside of term, when members of staff are at conferences, on fieldwork, or engaged in research (in such cases, an out-of-office notification will let you know when you can expect a response to your email). Staff are not expected to deal with emails during the evenings or over the weekend.

### 3.2 Post

All post addressed to you at the Geography department is kept in the Undergraduate pigeonhole in the post room situated in the Queens Building. At the end of each term this is cleared of accumulated mail which is then destroyed. Important information from Academic Services is often sent by internal post and you are advised to check them regularly.

### 3.3 Your Contact Information

There can be occasions when the Department needs to contact you urgently by telephone or send you a letter by post. It is your responsibility to ensure that your telephone number (mobile and landline) and postal address (term-time and forwarding) are kept up to date. Further information about maintaining your contact information is available [here](#).

You can find out about how the College processes your personal data by reading the [Student Data Collection notice](#).

### 3.4 Notice boards

The official student notice boards are on the walls in foyer of the Queen's Building. Every effort is made to post notices relating to class times, etc., well in advance, but occasionally changes have to be made at short notice and in that case e-mail will be used. In the case of last minute cancelling due, for example, to staff illness, notices will be posted on the door of the relevant lecture room.

All general course notices and general student notices will be displayed on the year notice boards outside the main Queen's lecture theatre. General timetable and course detail information are posted on the boards outside QB171.

**It is your responsibility to make sure you are informed of the times and places of all classes, meetings and of any requirements (e.g. essay deadlines) relating to your courses;** so, if in doubt, please ask!

### 3.5 Personal Tutors

Your personal tutor is your first point of contact in the Department if you have any concerns or problems. You will normally remain with the same tutor for the duration of your studies, although at times staff are

awarded a period of sabbatical leave, in which case, another member of staff will act as temporary personal tutor for the duration of leave (normally one term). A list of Personal Tutors and their tutees is prepared before the beginning of the academic year and displayed on Year Notice boards

### 3.5.1 First-Year Students

Your Personal Tutor will be introduced to you during the first week at Royal Holloway. They have particular responsibility for your welfare and academic development during your degree course. You will have a couple of initial meetings with your Personal Tutor during your first week in the Department. He or she will help you complete your course registration. Thereafter you and his or her other personal tutees (usually a group of 7-8 students) meet frequently during the first term. In the first few weeks tutorials will concentrate on what we call 'study skills' – teaching you the basics of university life and ways of studying effectively. These sessions will follow up on material covered in the first-year 'techniques' lecture course. In addition, there will also be tutorial sessions on employability and career planning. For the rest of the first term, and the second, you will have tutorials to support the lecture courses GG1001 and GG1003 in term 1, and GG1002 and GG1004 in term 2. Some of these will be held by your Personal Tutor, depending on their subject area, whilst others will be held with another member staff (section 4.4.2).

You will also see your Personal Tutor at the start and end of each term, to discuss details of academic progress and preparation for examinations. A short report of this meeting will be entered on your Departmental record. At the end of May, your Personal Tutor will discuss your choice of courses for next year (preliminary registration), and they will discuss your overall performance and progress at the end of the academic year, following publication of your exam results. This is normally on the last day of term.

Your Personal Tutor will also be involved in monitoring and reviewing your personal and employability skills and also to help you think about how these can be developed through your course choices. You are strongly encouraged to keep a written record of your courses, activities and acquired skills during your degree course, to help you write a CV and focus on your career choices. This process is known as Personal Development Planning and allows you to plan for your personal education and career development. You are strongly advised to visit the careers centre website for further details of CV preparation and PDP.

### 3.5.2 Second Year Students

In the second year you will meet with your personal tutor at the beginning of the year to complete course registrations and receive feedback on first-year exams. Thereafter you will see your Personal Tutor at the start and end of each term to discuss academic progress, careers, and preparation for examinations. A short report of each meeting will be entered on your Departmental record. In January, you will meet with your personal tutor at the start of the dissertation process. At the end of May, your Personal Tutor will discuss your course choices for your third year (preliminary registration), and, at the end of the year, they will discuss your overall performance and progress. This is normally on the last day of term. You are encouraged to participate in career-oriented activities run in the Department (3.10), and to use the services and facilities of the Careers Service and other opportunities for skills development on campus (e.g. through the Computer Centre or Language Centre).

### 3.5.3 Third Year Students

At the beginning of the third year you see your Personal Tutor to complete course registrations and receive feedback from second year exams. Thereafter you will see your Personal Tutor at the start and end of each term, to discuss details of academic progress, career possibilities, activities outside of the Department and preparation for examinations. A short report of these meetings will be entered on your Departmental record. Your Personal Tutor is usually the best person to write you an academic reference, and you should keep them informed as your career develops.

**Reminder: It is a Departmental requirement that you see your Personal Tutor at the beginning and end of each term. Failure to attend these meetings may lead to formal warnings being issued to you. After being issued with two such warnings, the Department can request the termination of your registration at College. You should also keep your Tutor informed of any issues which may affect your progress during the year (section 9.10).**

If for any reason you wish to change your Personal Tutor, you should consult the Director of Undergraduate Programmes who will treat the matter in confidence should you wish.

### 3.6 Questionnaires

We take student feedback very seriously, and welcome your comments on the Department and all taught courses. In order to obtain your feedback on taught courses, you are asked to complete an anonymous questionnaire at the end of each course. The feedback you give us helps in making changes to courses and to increase the effectiveness of our teaching and teaching resources.

All questionnaires are seen by the Head of Department, director of Undergraduate Programmes and Director of Teaching, and are analysed as part of the College's Annual Monitoring process. Constructive criticism is always welcomed and plays an important role in course development. (Deserved praise is also very welcome and can make a tremendous contribution to the job satisfaction of your lecturers!)

You can also make comments throughout the year about the quality of your courses and degree programme through the Staff-Student Committee (section 2.5).

### 3.7 Space

The Department has its own study space supported by the library: 'Library@Geography' (QB174) containing work space and maps. Library@Geography offers a quiet place for students to work – consumption of food, drink and the use of mobile phones is not permitted.

There are times when Library@Geography is used for small group teaching and coursework feedback sessions, during which use by other students is not possible. These are kept to a minimum, with times posted on the door at the start of each week.

## 4 Teaching

Because of the diversity of the degree programme at Royal Holloway, and the nature of our discipline, you will find that you are taught in a variety of ways, including lectures, tutorials, seminars, practical classes and field classes (section 4.4). We would emphasise that success at degree level is also about the work that you do outside of the formal teaching programme. For all courses you must spend a substantial amount of time reading, and in preparation and writing of assignments (sections 4.5 & 4.6). In this respect the learning environment at a university is unlike that at school. As a rough "rule of thumb" we recommend that you spend at least the equivalent of a 35 hour working week on your studies. In a normal week you will usually have between 8 and 12 hours of formal teaching (contact hours). This means that you should be spending about 25 hours a week working independently.

University-style working is not something that comes easily to everyone - it is, for example, very different from school or working for a company. In the first few weeks in the Department, the Geographical techniques course, with additional support from your Personal Tutor, will take you carefully through the basics of what we call 'study skills'. You may feel you need more help after these initial sessions - your Personal Tutor should be your first port of call for advice, but it may be worth getting hold of any of the following, either from the bookshop or the library (finding books in the library is, of course, an essential study skill in itself!):

- P. Kneale (2011) Study Skills for Geography, Earth & Environmental Science Students, Hodder
- A. Northedge (2005) The Good Study Guide, Open University: Milton Keynes
- A. Northedge (1997) The Sciences Good Study Guide, Open University: Milton Keynes
- E. Chambers & A. Northedge (2008) The Arts Good Study Guide, Open University: Milton Keynes

### 4.1 Dates of terms

**Term dates** for the year are as follows.

**Autumn term:** Monday 23 September to Friday 13 December 2019

**Spring term:** Monday 13 January to Friday 27 March 2020

**Summer term:** Monday 27 April to Friday 12 June 2020

You are expected to be in the UK and engaging with your studies during term time. In the case of an emergency which requires you to leave the country and/ or miss lectures/ seminars/ practicals etc., you are expected to inform your department and fill in a Notification of Absence Form (explained further below). During the summer term, after the examination period, you are expected to attend all required academic activities organized by the department and to be available should you be required to meet with College staff for any reason.

#### 4.1.1 Key Dates which may affect you:

##### First-Year

- Spain Fieldtrip: Leaves on Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> and returns Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> January 2020

##### Second Year

- Fieldtrips take place in the week of 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2020. The exact dates for each trip will be confirmed to students at the start of the academic year. The Malawi trip may run into the first week of the Easter vacation.

##### Third Year

- Graduation ceremonies will take place in the week of 13<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup> July 2020.

## 4.2 Academic Timetable

Your individual student timetable will be available via the [Your Timetable](#) page on the Student Intranet. Log in with your College username and password and view your timetable via the system or download to a personal calendar. In September you will receive communications by email about exactly how to access and download your timetable, so keep an eye out for these. Timetables are subject to change during the course of the academic year, so you should check yours regularly, (as a minimum every two days) to ensure you are using the most up to date timetable. The college will endeavour to notify you via an e-mail to your RHUL account for late changes to your timetable that will affect teaching within the next two working days, so please also check your emails regularly. All classes start on the hour. They end ten minutes before the hour to allow you to move between classes.

## 4.3 Study weeks

The Geography Department does not have study weeks, however students studying for joint degrees, visiting students, European Studies students, or those taking electives in Geography, may find that other departments do have reading weeks. Such students should still attend all Geography lectures and seminars during any study weeks in other Departments.

## 4.4 Types of Teaching

There is a range of different teaching styles used by the Department. Each requires you to develop different learning approaches and skills, and adopt different forms of preparation. Teaching methods used will vary from module to module depending on the nature of the material being taught and the views of the lecturer on how best to teach it. Thus, some modules will have a heavy focus on lectures, some may have a greater reliance on small group work or class discussion based on directed reading, whilst others may involve a high proportion of laboratory, field or group work. Lecturers are always willing to help and advice on particular problems associated with their module – see them during their office hours or at other times by arrangement.

### 4.4.1 Lectures

The most common form of teaching in the Department is the lecture. The lecture is a good way of introducing you to a theme or topic, and of giving you an overview of the most significant themes and arguments. Lectures are not the best means of conveying large amounts of detail or factual material - most lectures are accompanied by handouts and suggested reading, and use the 'Moodle' system for giving additional information. It is, therefore, important that you treat lectures as the starting places for your study, not as the whole course. Such an approach in exams and essays will, inevitably, lead to poorer marks than if you fully engage in the topic with additional study and reading. The marking criteria in Appendix A detail the level of engagement needed to achieve higher marks in assessments. It can be difficult for lecturers to know whether a group of students has understood particular points - we encourage you to ask questions either during the lectures, at the end, or during a lecturer's dedicated office hours.

### 4.4.2 Tutorials & seminars

These are the main forms of support teaching, and typically consist of a lecturer or teaching assistant working with a small group of students. The emphasis here is very much that you should treat learning Geography like learning a language - you need to speak 'Geography' yourself as well as listen to it being spoken. A tutorial where the lecturer does all the talking isn't really working. Try to make sure that you make a contribution to the discussion (making sure you've done the preparatory work really helps!)

**First-Year:** Tutorials are an essential and compulsory part of your undergraduate programme. In the First-Year you spend the first few weeks of the first term working with your Personal Tutor, developing study skills. For the remainder of the first term, and the second, both your Personal Tutor and another named member of staff (Academic Tutor) will work on aspects of the courses that you are currently studying. In this way you get to know at least two members of staff well in the first-year. If your Personal Tutor has expertise in an aspect of human geography your Academic Tutor will be a physical geographer, and vice-versa. In each term



you'll be set two assignments to support each lecture course run in that term (GG1001 and GG1003 in term 1; GG1002 and GG1004 in term 2). **Completion of these assignments is a requirement of the lecture courses. Failure to complete assignments may result in you being given a formal warning. After two formal warnings, your termination from the college will be requested.**

**Second and Third Year:** In the second and third years, you see your Personal Tutor for general advice on academic development and welfare, but academic tutorials are given by the member of staff responsible for the course, or by another specialist in the subject area. These are organised to fit the shape of individual courses and details are provided by the course lecturer and posted on your year notice board. Courses vary in their teaching structures, but for courses taught mainly through lectures you will probably have 2 or 3 tutorials for a half unit course, and 4 – 6 for a whole course unit. Some of these classes may take the form of seminars, somewhat larger groups (10-20 students), where you may be asked to make a short presentation.

#### 4.4.3 Practicals

Geographical Techniques GG1011 in the first-year, GG2001/2, GG2013, GG2021, GG2041, GG2043 in the second year, and other individual courses in year three, will involve a series of practical exercises, either in the field, in the laboratories, or in the computer suites. In most practical classes the lecturer is supported by demonstrators, who are on hand to help you with the work and to discuss issues arising from it.

**For all practical work it is vital that you follow the Health and Safety guidelines set out in Section 12, and all additional safety instructions given by the course leaders.**

#### 4.4.4 Fieldwork

You'll find that fieldwork is a very important aspect of the degree programme at Royal Holloway. We feel that it is something that makes Geography a very distinctive undergraduate experience, and as such, it forms an important element of the compulsory research training strand of the degree programme. We believe that fieldwork provides you with a unique opportunity to learn new techniques and to apply those methods already learned. Fieldwork is also important in getting you to identify a problem or research question, and to develop approaches designed to solve or answer it. We see our fieldwork programme as vital training for your independent research work (Dissertation). We hope that fieldwork also opens your eyes to the wider world, developing your sense of place, awareness of difference, and tolerance for others. We have also found that many regard fieldwork as both one of the most enjoyable aspects of their degrees, and as a time when they acquired important skills and sensitivities which have been important to them in later life.

In the second term of the first-year, a week-long field course takes place in southern Spain (GG1032), where work in physical, environmental and human geography is undertaken. This is assessed on return to College by a formal field report and an individual poster. In the second year students choose from a series of destinations related to different interests and specialisms (GG2003 or GG2004 for Geography/PIR students). These courses run at the end of the second term, and run for between a week and ten days. In 2018-19 the courses go to: New York and London (urban, historical and cultural geography); Cyprus (political and social geography); Sicily (landscape evolution, biogeography and physical processes); London (physical geography); and Malawi (development & environmental geography). Whichever trip you choose, it is assessed by a written report.

Some third year courses also involve fieldwork elements, full details of which are indicated on the course outlines displayed on notice boards.

#### Fieldtrip Costs

The cost of attending the first-year Spanish fieldtrip will be met by the Department. Second year trips will be funded by individual students, although financial assistance may be available from College in special circumstances. The cost of attending the different second year fieldtrips varies from year to year depending on exchange rates, transportation costs, inflation etc. You will be

advised of the cost at the start of the academic year and given a deadline for the payment of a non-returnable deposit and another for the balance. The two London-based trips are free to students. Failure to meet payment deadlines without prior approval from the fieldtrip leader may result in the cancellation of your transport, accommodation and other arrangements. If you do not attend a fieldtrip, unless you have extenuating circumstances acceptable to the Department, you will be unable to complete the work for the associated coursework. In consequence, you will receive a mark of zero for the course, which will have a detrimental effect on your year average and may result in you having to repeat the year. Students with outstanding debt to College may be prevented from graduating and receiving official notification of their degree results. If you have genuine difficulties in paying the deposit, please advise the Department as soon as possible. Help may be available from the [The Student Finance and Funding Advisers](#) based in Support & Advisory Services.

### Fieldwork safety (See also section 12.4)

Safety on fieldwork is of paramount importance. Before every field trip that you participate in, you must sign to acknowledge the appropriate risk assessment and associated health and safety information. You should also be familiar with the 'Fitness for Field Studies' document. This also applies to the independent dissertation (GG3001/GG3005). These will be issued to you by the member of staff responsible for the field class. You must also make sure that your health form is updated to include any medical conditions, problems that may be relevant in the field.

#### 4.4.5 Use of Moodle

All class sessions are supported by virtual learning tools, in particular Royal Holloway's 'Moodle' platform. All courses have designated Moodle sites that are made accessible to the students registered on that course. Individual courses use Moodle in varying ways as most appropriate to the broader course learning ethos and curriculum. However, all courses use Moodle to support your learning in at least five ways:

- The *digital provision of core information* for courses such as handbooks, reading lists, session timetables, coursework guidance, links to past exam papers, and so on;
- The provision of information, materials and resources to be used by students in *preparation* for class sessions, including the uploading of lecture powerpoints ahead of class sessions;
- The *archiving* of materials from class sessions, such as powerpoint slides, class handouts, etc.;
- The supporting of students' *independent research after class* sessions, through guided reading, other activities, links to good quality media on relevant issues, etc.
- *Communication* with students via the Course Forum tools.

Some courses and lecturers use other online learning tools, as appropriate to their materials and activities. In such cases, the lecturer will introduce the tools, explain how and why they are being used, and support your engagement with them.

## 4.5 Independent Reading & Research

University study is not about learning a set package of facts that have been dictated to you in a lecture, and regurgitated in an exam. It should be a process for which you take responsibility. Success in your studies is ultimately dependent on independent reading and research. You cannot expect to do well in your degree without supplementing the formal teaching (lectures, tutorials etc.) by reading the recommended materials. By not undertaking extensive reading, and fully engaging in the topics you are studying, you are unlikely to gain more than a basic degree, and unlikely to do yourself justice in course assessment and examinations. This ultimately affects the final degree you obtain, and your future career prospects.

It is up to you to do this additional work to flesh out the basic material you will be given in lectures. Formal teaching occupies about 10 – 12 hours per week, which represents between a quarter to a third of a working week (we assume you will be working between 35 and 40 hours a week). You will also need to work for module assessments, but there will still be a considerable amount of time available for private study. During this time you should plan to cover the basic reading for all your modules, follow up ideas or issues which interest you in more depth (your lecturers can advise on further reading if you need help), read more widely than just material which covers your own modules (if you find a book or scientific paper of interest that is not

on a reading list, there is no reason why you shouldn't read it anyway), and plan and write essays and coursework. Ultimately, though, it is important to think about what you have been reading, do not just try to cover masses of ground without checking whether you are taking it in and understanding it and how it applies to your modules. Importantly, make sure you understand what you read. In addition, one of the skills to develop is to read widely and to take in the material which you are learning. Inevitably, you will read material which presents differing viewpoints, and may even present a different message. In such cases, you need to consider which you favour by thinking carefully and critically about the arguments presented. If you are unsure, discuss the issue with your lecturer.

You are unlikely ever again to have such flexibility and time available to plan your own work schedule, and to pursue your own interests as you have over the three years of a degree, and we hope you will make the most of this opportunity. This also raises the issue of time management, which is covered below. The degree you put together is yours; it may sound clichéd to say that you get out what you put in, but it is very true in this case. Our job in that context is to help you do it. To help you achieve this, you'll be given practical training in searching for information in the library, via the Web and other bibliographic software. If you need to refresh these skills in the second or third year, or you need further advice on searching for information (perhaps to support your dissertation) contact the Bedford Library, where there is a subject librarian for Geography, or CeDAS who can provide support in effective writing, statistics or presentation.

## 4.6 Time Management

One key skill that you should learn early in your career is time management, and how to plan your work load effectively to enable you to attend your modules fully prepared; to allow you to complete adequate follow-up reading; and to allow you to prepare for effective production of assessments. This can be difficult to develop as one of the overriding principles is to identify the times to work and to make sure that at these times, you work effectively.

A basic starting point is to identify when your formal teaching sessions are, and to find out what is involved in each. For example, for each hour lecture, you should identify around 2 hours of reading time. This shouldn't be too long after the lecture. There may also be preparatory reading before the lecture too, for morning lectures, this may be best done the day before. Other key questions relevant to time management include: when are your tutorials/practicals? Are they likely to result in reports/essays? When will you do the reading for these? What are the deadlines? All deadlines are published at the start of the academic year (section 8.8).

Don't be daunted, set yourself targets for each study session, e.g. to read a number of pages, complete a number of exercises, draft an essay etc. Make sure you have enough slots to cover all of your courses; you may find it easier to put the most difficult module first, do some basic work for this and come back to it later.

## 4.7 Meetings

You are likely to be 'invited' to meet with a member of academic staff in the department if you fail to attend all learning activities in two consecutive weeks without providing an explanation, or where your pattern of absence is:

- considered to be having an effect your work or causing concern for your well being
- pointing to a possible disability/problem that you may not have disclosed
- where your attendance is approaching the minimum attendance level

You should take any meeting 'invitation' seriously. If you should have problems you are being offered an opportunity to seek advice and assistance. At the meeting the Department's expectation of you will be made clear and the formal disciplinary process will be outlined to you.

## 4.8 Conduct during teaching sessions

Teaching sessions include all lectures, seminars, tutorials, practicals and fieldwork. As such, these sessions should be carried out in such a manner as to encourage learning and study. To enable this to happen, the following should be observed:

- Eating and drinking (except water) in class is not permitted by the College, in compliance with current Health and Safety legislation. Not even water may be drunk in laboratories.
- Students must not engage in conversation with one another during a lecture or class unless it is part of an organised class activity.
- When wishing to ask a question or contribute a comment students should draw the lecturer's attention by putting their hand up.
- Mobile phones and other electronic devices must be switched off at the beginning of the lecture unless these devices are directly related to the lecture; for instance, laptops for note-taking or authorised recording devices for students registered with the Dyslexia and Disability Services and will not cause disruption to the class.
- Personal electronic recording of lectures is discouraged and should only be requested for good reason (e.g. specific learning difficulty). Permission to record lectures should be sought in advance from the lecturer in charge.
- Students are welcome to use laptop computers in class for the purpose of note-taking. Web browsing should only be done as part of an organised class activity. Gaming and social networking in class is prohibited.
- Students should sign any paper register with their original signature (the one given as sample signature in registration documents). Late arrivals should locate and sign the register in the break or at the end of the lecture. Fraudulent recording of attendance will be investigated as a disciplinary offence.

Abuse of these rules, particularly in respect of the use of phones/laptops/tablets, could lead to them being banned from the room.

Students are expected to treat the learning environment with respect and to adhere to the points detailed above. Lecturing staff will remind individuals of their responsibilities to others as class members when breaches to this code of conduct are identified. In exceptional circumstances, persistent individuals may be asked to leave. Where students are concerned about the behaviour of others, in that it is disturbing their ability to concentrate, and this is not noticed by the lecturer, this should be brought to the attention of the lecturer in charge during a break or at the end of a lecture. Lecturing staff will be proactive in reminding individuals to be respectful of the needs of other members of the class.

If lecturing staff themselves fail to adhere to these principles, or if students have other concerns relating to staff teaching or conduct, students can contact the Director of Undergraduate programmes with details of the incident. The Director of Undergraduate programmes will raise the matter with the lecturer in charge or Head of Department as appropriate.

## 5 Attending classes and engaging with your studies

The College has a responsibility to ensure that all students are attending classes regularly and progressing with their studies. We also have legal obligations placed on us under the Equality Act (2010), UK Visa and Immigration (UKVI) and Student Finance to ensure we monitor your attendance and engagement with studies.

Your regular attendance in class and consistent engagement with your studies are essential to your learning experience with the College. If you encounter difficulties with this, do please tell your Personal Tutor, Department Education Support Officer (Dr. Mike Dolton), or Undergraduate Teaching Lead (Dr. Peter French); or visit the [Student Welfare and Wellbeing Service](#) or [Students' Union](#) before your problems get out of control. There are many people who can provide support but remember - they cannot help if you do not ask. Failure to attend and/or absence without permission can result in serious consequences and may lead to disciplinary action, including the termination of your registration.

### 5.1 Attendance requirements

Your classes are the learning activities deemed essential to your programme of study. These could include a variety of different activities, including lectures, seminars, tutorials, workshops, field work, laboratory work, and meetings with your Personal Tutor. You are expected to fully engage in your classes, undertaking any reading, research or further preparation identified between these sessions alongside punctual attendance. It is essential that you make suitable arrangements for travel to your classes and plan to arrive in good time.

While you are expected to attend all the classes related to your programme of study, the College understands that emergencies may occur at any time throughout the year. In light of this, the attendance threshold is set at 80% of monitored activities as set by College. You should be aware that you may also study courses that have different and specific course attendance requirements, particularly if you are taking courses in another department, so it is essential that you check all programme and course handbooks to ensure you are fully aware of the requirements.

It is vital that you manage your time effectively, so that any paid employment, voluntary work, extracurricular activities or social commitments do not interfere with periods where you are required to attend classes. The [Undergraduate Regulations](#) stipulate that the amount of paid work undertaken by a student enrolled with the College on a full-time basis must not exceed 20 hours per week during term time. You may not undertake paid work which may conflict with your responsibilities as a student of the College. International students must ensure that any working restrictions, as stated on their visa, are also adhered to.

### 5.2 Adjustments to attendance requirements

If you believe that you will not be able to comply with the attendance requirements, you may request an adjustment in your case. This would only be permitted if you have good reason to ask for it and if adjustment would not compromise competence standards or your ability to reach the learning outcomes of your programme. Requests to consider an adjustment to attendance requirements will be treated case by case and discussed by the department with the Disability and Dyslexia Services (D&DS) and Academic Quality and Policy Office (AQPO).

### 5.3 Monitoring attendance

It is your responsibility to make sure that your attendance has been recorded. It is also essential that you arrive at your classes in good time, as you will be marked absent if you turn up late without good reason.

You will be contacted in the event that:

- i. you display a **pattern of absence** that the department feel is affecting or is likely to affect your work, i.e. failure to attend for two weeks without providing a valid reason or your attendance percentage drops close to or below the threshold
- ii. you display a pattern of absence that causes **concern over your wellbeing or which may point to an undisclosed disability**

## 5.4 Formal Warnings

Should it become apparent that there are no acceptable reasons for your non-attendance and/or general lack of engagement with your studies, you may be issued with a formal warning which can escalate to the termination of your registration at the College. You are strongly advised to read the guidance on the formal warning process and the consequences of receiving such a warning in section 24 of the [Undergraduate regulations](#).

In situations where you are experiencing documented severe difficulties the Department and College will make every effort to support you and counsel you as to the best course of action. However, there may be cases where, although non-attendance is explained by an acceptable reason, your level of attendance falls to a level which compromises educational standards and/or your ability to reach the learning outcomes of the course. In such cases it will be necessary to implement disciplinary procedures as detailed above or discuss the possibility of interrupting your studies.

## 5.5 Withdrawal of visa

If you are sponsored by Royal Holloway on a Tier-4 (General) Student visa, should your registration at the College be terminated for non-attendance, general lack of engagement with your studies or any other disciplinary matter you will be reported to the UK Visa and Immigration (UKVI) and your Tier 4 (General) Student visa will be withdrawn. Alternatively, in line with the College's legal obligations to UKVI, if you fail to meet the requirement of your Tier 4 (General) Student visa, including attendance and completion of assessments, the College may terminate your student registration without following the disciplinary procedures outlined in the Academic Regulations. This decision would not be open to appeal as it is part of the College's obligations to the UKVI. Please see our [Undergraduate Regulations](#).

## 5.6 Missing classes

If you face difficulty in attending any classes or undertaking an assessment it is very important that you inform Student Administration as early as possible, giving the reasons for your non-attendance. Student Administration will decide whether or not to authorise your absence. If you are experiencing such difficulties on an ongoing basis, please contact your Personal Tutor. In addition, an extensive range of additional support, guidance and advice is available from the College's Student [Advisory & Wellbeing teams](#). As explained in section 2 above, the Students' Union also operate an [Advice and Support Centre](#).

If you are unable to attend classes for whatever reason you must tell the department in which you are taking the course(s) in question and follow the [Notification of Absence Procedure](#) to notify Student Administration. You must submit a Notification of Absence Form together with any supporting documentation either before your absence begins or within five working days of the end of the period of absence. The exact form to submit depends on the reason for your absence, as explained in the [on line guidance](#).

If you are absent for a prolonged period it is essential that you keep in touch with the Department (e.g. regular emails with your Personal Tutor). The Department will monitor the frequency of self-certified absences and Department may request a doctor's medical certificate from you in the event of multiple and/or sustained instances of self-certified illness. It is at the discretion of the Department as to whether any absence is deemed acceptable or unacceptable. Details of what constitutes 'acceptable' and 'unacceptable' circumstances relating to absence can be found [here](#). If you are sponsored by Royal Holloway on a Tier-4 (General) Student visa please be aware that if you do not follow the process to submit a notification of absence or have an acceptable reason for absence you are putting your Tier 4 visa at risk of withdrawal. Therefore, it is very important that you continue to communicate with the College through your Department and the Advisory & Wellbeing teams if you are struggling to attend.

## 5.7 Missing an examination

If you are unable to attend an exam (e.g. through reasons of sudden illness) then there are two steps to follow.

### Step 1

You must notify the Student Services Centre at the earliest possibility. Wherever possible, please e-mail

them at [studentservices@royalholloway.ac.uk](mailto:studentservices@royalholloway.ac.uk) before the scheduled start of the exam with your name, student ID and confirmation of the exam that you are unable to attend. Please include a brief explanation within the email why you cannot attend the exam. The Student Services Centre will then forward this information to your department so that we are aware of your non-attendance.

**Step 2**

Read the Extenuating Circumstances Guidance and, if your circumstances meet the criteria outlined in the guidance, complete and submit the Extenuating Circumstances application form with your supporting evidence. Section 9 below provides further details about Extenuating Circumstances.

## 6 Degree Structure

Geography degree schemes at Royal Holloway give a sound and extensive introduction to the study of Geography, they provide the possibility for specialisation in a wide range of topics and are characterised by progression and flexibility. This has also been recognised for all of the single honours programmes by the Royal Geographical Society (with IBG). Full details about your programme of study, including, amongst others, the aims, learning outcomes to be achieved on completion, courses which make up the programme and any programme-specific regulations are set out in the programme specification available through the [Programme Specification Repository](#).

### 6.1 Department Specific information about degree structure

We offer Geography as a Single Honours Geography degree (BA or BSc); BA Human Geography and BSc Physical Geography; or as part of Joint Honours BSc Geography with Politics & International Relations.

Our degree courses aim to:

- Give a sound and extensive basis for the study of Geography, meeting the requirements of the national subject benchmarking statement in the development of knowledge, understanding, and intellectual, discipline-specific and key skills.
- Provide a flexible and progressive structure in which students are able to gain knowledge, understanding and appropriate skills relating to distinctive research specialisms.
- Produce graduates with a range of personal attributes relevant to the world beyond Higher Education, who are able to engage in lifelong learning, to consider ethics and values, and to contribute to the wider community.

The Department offers a range of degree programmes. All undergraduates are registered for one programme and should follow the requirements for this. These are detailed in the programme specification documents, although the key points relating to course modules, etc can be found in this section.

#### 6.1.1 Single Honours Geography (BA Geography, BSc Geography, BA Human Geography, BSc Physical Geography)

The structure of the Single Honours Degree Programmes is set out in the following tables. Each year of the degree is quite distinctive.

**First-Year:** There are four main lecture courses which are designed to give a firm grounding in major aspects of the discipline, two of which are taught in each term. During the first term you will take GG1001 Physical Geography I: Atmosphere, Oceans & Geosphere and GG1003 Human Geography I: Cultures, Economies, History. In the second term you take GG1002 Physical Geography II: Biogeography, Ecology & Scales of Change, and GG1004 Human Geography II: Politics, Society, Development & Environment. These courses are supported by work you do in your tutorial groups in the form of 'formative' coursework, completion of which is a requirement of completing these courses. You also take a broad-ranging core course in Geographical Techniques (GG1011), which provides training in methods and skills used in geographical analysis, such as field methods, statistical analysis, and physical, cultural and social research methods. Students also take an introductory course in GIS and remote sensing (GG1015), and also attend a field course in January in southern Spain (GG1032).

**Second Year:** In the second year you have a great deal of flexibility to take different combinations of courses to reflect your interests. All Single Honours students have to take 2 x 15 credit core courses; GG2001 Geographical Techniques II, and GG2003 Geographical Field Training which requires students to attend one of six field courses to be held in late March. GG2001 also provides preparation for the third year dissertation. You must then take three of the other 30 credit courses on offer in the degree programme (or two plus 30 credits of study outside the Department - see the note on electives in section 6.2.4). The second year courses are integrated courses on substantial parts of the discipline. They take you beyond the introductions provided in the first-year and provide a basis for the specialist options in the third year.

**Third Year:** The third year of the programme is also extremely flexible. All Single Honours students have to take either GG3001 or GG3005. This is a substantial independent dissertation on a research topic of



your choice. In many ways this is seen as the culmination of what you have learnt about research design, research techniques, analysis, and the presentation of your work. You must then take six of the other 15 credit courses on offer in the degree programme (or up to 30 credits outside the Department - see the note on electives in [section 6.4](#)). Our third year courses are specialist options based closely on the expertise and research of individual members of staff.

### First-Year

#### BSc Geography, BA Geography, BSc Physical Geography, BA Human Geography

Course	Mandatory Courses
GG1001 (15)	Physical Geography I: Atmosphere, Oceans & The Geosphere
GG1002 (15)	Physical Geography II: Biogeography, Ecology & Scales of Change
GG1003 (15)	Human Geography I: Cultures, Economies, History
GG1004 (15)	Human Geography II: Politics, Society, Development & Environment
GG1011 (30)	Geographical Techniques
GG1015 (15)	Digit Geographies: Introduction to Remote Sensing & GIS
GG1032 (15)	Geographical Research & Field Training

### Second Year

BSc Geography BA Geography	BSc Physical Geography	BA Human Geography	Mandatory Courses
GG2001 (15) GG2003 (15)	GG2001 (15) GG2003 (15)	GG2001 (15) GG2003 (15)	Geographical Techniques II Geographical Field Training II
<b>3 from:</b> GG2013 (30) GG2021 (30) GG2041 (30) GG2043 (30) GG2052 (30) GG2053 (30) GG2061 (30) GG2071 (30)  or 2 courses from the above list and 30 credits from another department	<b>2 from:</b> GG2013 (30) GG2021 (30) GG2041 (30) GG2043 (30)  + 1 other geography course* or 30 credits from another department	<b>2 from:</b>  GG2052 (30) GG2053 (30) GG2061 (30) GG2071 (30)  + 1 other geography course* or 30 credits from another department	<b>Elective Courses</b> Environmental Systems Earth Surface Processes & Hazards Environmental Change Biogeography Political Geography Cities: Economies & Ecologies Cultural Geographies Development Geography  * Choice of other geography options is from the full second year geography list

**BA Geography or BSc Geography:** The overall structure of the Single Honours degree programme is the same for BA Geography and BSc Geography. The BA or BSc prefix largely reflects the balance of options

taken and the wishes of the individual student. It is possible to change the degree programme during the year if you wish (section 6.5).

The **BA Human Geography and BSc Physical Geography** programmes provide designated human and physical geography streams through the existing programme structure. Each has a core first year which is the same as the BA/BSc Geography programme. Thereafter you follow a pathway of either human or physical geography options as described in the Programme Specifications, and in the tables above. Your options are explained to you at pre-registration by the Director of Teaching, and your Personal Tutor is always available to give further advice. Students taking the BA/BSc Geography programmes may change to a Human or Physical Geography degree providing they have the right combination of courses (see section 6.5).

### Third Year

BSc Geography BA Geography	BSc Physical Geography	BA Human Geography	Mandatory Courses
GG3001 (30) or GG3005 (30)	GG3001 (30) or GG3005 (30)	GG3001 (30) or GG3005 (30)	GG3001 Independent Dissertation or GG3005 Placement Led Dissertation
6 x 15 credit geography options (see elective courses) or 4 or 5 x 15 credit geography options + 15 or 30 credits of options from another department	<b>4 from:</b> GG3013 (15) GG3016 (15) GG3018 (15) GG3021 (15) GG3026 (15) GG3028 (15) GG3046 (15) GG3047 (15) GG3111 (15)  + 2 other geography options* or 1 unit from another department	<b>4 from:</b> GG3053 (15) GG3060 (15) GG3061 (15) GG3062 (15) GG3064 (15) GG3065 (15) GG3068 (15) GG3076 (15) GG3083 (15) GG3084 (15) GG3090 (15) GG3162 (15)  + 2 other geography options* or 1 unit from another department	<b>Elective Courses</b> GG3013 Coastal & Estuarine Management GG3016 Mediterranean Landscapes & environmental Change GG3018 Global Warming GG3021 Managing River Environments GG3026 Glacial Environments GG3028 Digital Landscapes GG3046 Mammals In A Changing World GG3047 Volcanoes GG3053 Regeneration & Urban Policy GG3060 Post Capitalist Cities GG3061 Geopolitics of Media and Communications GG3062 Images of Earth: From Homes to Google GG3064 Exploration, Science & The Making of Geography GG3065 Geography, Museums & Collections GG3068 Creative Geographies: Economics, Space, Practices GG3076 Gender and Development GG3083 Cities & Development in the Global south GG3090 Critical GIS & the Geoweb GG3111 Biodiversity of the Past & Present GG3162 Remote Control: Geographies of Contemporary Warfare
* Choice of other geography options is from the full third year geography list			

## 6.1.2 Joint Honours Geography

### (BSc Geography, Politics & International Relations)

Dr Anna Jackman acts as the designated degree programme coordinator in Geography, and any issues should be directed to her in the first instance. Dr Nicholas Allen has the corresponding role in the PIR Department.

**Third Year:** The final year represents a great diversity of options which allow you to specialise further in a particular area. Your dissertation may be based in either Geography or PIR, depending on the topic and approach you choose. The discussion about selection of topics will be overseen by the course directors. The choice of department in which you take your dissertation in no way affects the balance of options which you subsequently choose. As well as the dissertation, you need to select a further 60 credits of courses. These may be from the full range of human geography and PIR courses, with the only proviso being that no more than 60 credits can be taken in any one department. Preliminary selection of courses will be made in discussion with the course directors in May of the second year.

## 6.2 Course registrations

You can only register for 120 credits' worth of courses in each academic year (this excludes courses which are being re-sat). You will have the option of changing courses up to the end of the second week after the start of teaching (excluding Welcome week). Any courses that you wish to take on an extracurricular basis (that is, not counting towards your degree) must be identified at the start of the academic year. Details of all courses can be found on Moodle and are provided to you at preliminary registration in May.

At the beginning of each academic year, you should attend the introductory meeting given by the Director of Undergraduate Programmes, who will confirm details of the modules on offer and the registration process. (Note, second and third year students should have completed pre-registration last May). You will then be asked to register formally for your modules, by completing your registration form in consultation with your Personal Tutor. Courses outside the Department (joint degree students or electives, [section 6.2.4](#)) need to have a counter-signature from the host Department. This should be obtained from the relevant Departmental Administrator or Director of Teaching. **Registration forms must be signed and returned to your personal tutor by 1600 on 4<sup>th</sup> October 2019.**

### 6.2.1 Changing Course Registration

If you wish to change courses after you have registered for them, you should first discuss the matter with your Personal Tutor. You should then get a change of course unit registration form from either the Departmental Office or Department website. Please complete the form, stating the course you wish to leave, and the one you wish to change into, before bringing it to the Director of Teaching for signing. **The deadline for changing a first term course (third years), or a full unit course (second years) is 11<sup>th</sup> October 2019. Third years may change second term courses up to 24<sup>th</sup> January 2020 (although this cannot be for a course already completed in the first term). First-Year registration is compulsory, therefore, no changes can be made.** If you are unsure about your course choices we recommend that you attend the introductory classes for a range of courses.

### 6.2.2 Course Registration & Examination Entry

A statement of the examinations that you are entered for will appear on the College portal towards the end of the first term. **You must check this carefully.** Examination entries are finalised by the end of January (allowing third year students to change second term courses if they wish). College Regulations do not allow withdrawal from modules after this date, as this may seriously affect your final mark and degree classification. Exceptional medical or personal circumstances which might be partially resolved by withdrawing from a course should always be discussed with the Director of Undergraduate Programmes.

## Course requirements for BSc Geography, Politics & International Relations

BSc Geography, politics & International relations	Key to Courses
GG3001 (30) or PR3000 (30)	(For Geography courses, except for those below - see tables for BA/BSc Geography above)
<b>At least 2, but no more than 4 from:</b> GG3053 (15) GG3061 (15) GG3062 (15) GG3064 (15) GG3065 (15) GG3068 (15) GG3076 (15) GG3085 (15) GG3090 (15) GG3111 (15) GG3161 (15) GG3162 (15) GG3163 (15) GG3164 (15)	For other PIR courses, see PIR department
+ at least 2, but no more than 4 from the PIR department list	

### 6.2.3 Preliminary Registration

After the exams in May, first and second years will be asked to give a provisional indication of the courses that they may wish to take in the following year. The Director of Undergraduate Programmes gives an introduction to the courses available, and you then complete a preliminary registration form with your Personal Tutor which, on completion, must be returned by your tutor to the Departmental Office. **If you are interested in elective modules you are advised to contact the host Department at this point.**

### 6.2.4 Electives

Electives are non-geography modules which may be selected from other College departments, which you may opt to do as part of your own degree course. (NOTE: joint degree students are not allowed to take electives). Any electives have to be approved by both Geography (through your personal tutor) and by the Department in which the course is taken. Taking electives will not alter the title of your degree.

To ensure that all our students have a firm grounding in degree level Geography, we do not allow you to take courses outside the Department in your first-year. Because of the diverse nature of Geography and the importance of developing career-related skills, we are happy to sanction relevant options in the second and third years, subject to the agreement of the host Department. Courses are weighted according to the year in which you take them (e.g. any external courses you take in the second year are given second year weighting, irrespective of what year they are designed for in their host department). However, in order to maintain standards, we do not permit third year students to enrol for first-year courses in other departments. For this

reason you should think carefully about your choice of any electives and their place in your final degree profile. In years two and three, you may take up to 30 credits in each year outside the Department.

### 6.3 Change of programme

You may transfer to another programme subject to the following conditions being met before the point of transfer:

- (a) you must satisfy the normal conditions for admission to the new programme;
- (b) you must satisfy the requirements in respect of mandatory courses and progression specified for each stage of the new programme up to the proposed point of entry;
- (c) the transfer must be approved by both the department(s) responsible for teaching the new programme and that for which you are currently registered.
- (d) if you are a student with Tier 4 sponsorship a transfer may not be permitted by Tier 4 Immigration rules.
- (e) you may not attend a new programme of study until their transfer request has been approved.

Further information about changing programmes is available in Section 8 of the [Undergraduate Regulations](#). If you hold a Tier 4 (General) student visa, there may be further restrictions in line with UKVI regulations.

### 6.4 Progression and Pathways

We have designed our degree courses to be as flexible as possible after the first-year to allow you to develop your own interests through your studies. However in your course choices you should recognise that courses follow on from each other, creating different pathways through the degree.

With one or two exceptions Geography does not operate a system of rigid prerequisites, but it is normally expected that you will have taken appropriate preceding modules. You should discuss your options with your Personal Tutor at preliminary registration.

### 6.5 Exchange Programmes

The College offers students the opportunity to study abroad for a year through the International Exchange programme and the Erasmus programme. Students are able to apply to study abroad in Europe or at one of 28 International institutions in the USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Hong Kong, Korea, Japan and Singapore. In practice, this involves spending a year abroad between your second and third years. Work taken during this year will count in your overall degree profile and will modify your degree title by the addition of ‘...with international year’ to your final degree title.

Further details on participating in such programmes and restrictions placed on students in different departments are available [here](#). Students may also wish to contact the Department’s study abroad liaison officer, Dr Daniele Colombaroli, for further details.

## 7 Facilities

### 7.1 Facilities and resources within your department

#### 'Library@Geography'

The Department has its own study space supported by the library: 'Library@Geography' (QB174) containing work space and maps. Library@Geography offers a quiet place for students to work – consumption of food, drink and the use of mobile phones is not permitted.

There are times when Library@Geography is used for small group teaching and coursework feedback sessions, during which use by other students is not possible. These are kept to a minimum, with times posted on the door at the start of each week.

### 7.2 The Library

One of the most important resources for you as a student at Royal Holloway is the Library Service. The Library is housed in the **Emily Wilding Davison Building**, located on the east side of Founders Square. Details, including Library Search, dedicated subject guides and opening times can be found online from the [Library home page](#).

The Ground Floor of the Library contains a High Use Collection which includes many of the books assigned for undergraduate courses. . The rest of the Library collections are on the upper floors. There are plenty of study areas and bookable rooms to carry out group work, as well as many areas to work on your own. The Library contains a large number of PCs and has laptops to borrow on the ground floor to use in other study areas.

The Information Consultant for Geography is Dr. Mike Dolton.

#### 7.2.1 Books

Library books tend to be heavily in demand at certain times (notably at essay deadlines and in the run-up to examinations) and to be under-used at others. Careful timing in your use of them (e.g. during the Summer and Christmas Vacations, or early in each term) will pay dividends. The Library has multiple copies of many of the most frequently-used works as well as a large collection of eBooks.

Books heavily in demand may be on short loan. Please consult the course tutor in good time if there are particular works which you would like to see on short loan.

The library is always happy to consider students' suggestions for more books. If you think that the Library does not have a book useful for a course you are following, or for a dissertation you are writing, or if you feel more copies of a book are required, please contact the library's Information Consultant for your subject (and let your course tutor know). Be aware, however, that not all requests can be satisfied and that there is sometimes a delay between ordering and receipt depending on our supplier's stock.

#### 7.2.2 Online Resources

The Library provides access to an extensive online collection of journal titles in electronic, full-text format (eJournals), eBooks, online databases and an online library of multi-media material (texts, images, audio, films and mixed-media). All of these 'eResources' are available via an extensive suite of student PCs in the libraries and around the campus (all connected to printers), laptops & most mobile devices (via the CampusNet wi-fi), as well as from off-campus (see below).

You will need to get used to consulting the key eResources (such as the collections of primary sources, research material & online databases), eBooks, online reference material and electronic journal collections relevant to your subject area. These can be accessed on-line using the E-resources A-Z lists & the 'LibrarySearch' service via links on the [Library's home page](#) or via the dedicated [Library Subject Guides](#).

In order to access the Library's extensive and growing collection of eResources off campus (e.g. from home) you will need to use the College's CampusAnywhere (VPN) service (in some cases you may need to

login direct to the e-resource). Details of how to use these services can be found on the Library Subject Guides or the Library's 'Help & Support' webpages.

Ask the Library's Information Consultant for your subject for details of how to use these eResources (there is also plenty of help information on the Library Subject Guides). For Geography, this is Emma Burnett ([Emma.Burnett@rhul.ac.uk](mailto:Emma.Burnett@rhul.ac.uk)).

Past exam papers can be useful as a guide to focusing your study as well as being an essential part of revision for your exams. The library provides online versions and you can search using LibrarySearch, from the Exam Papers service on the Library home page, or from individual course pages on Moodle.

### 7.2.3 Study Space

There are large silent study areas, group study areas & bookable group study rooms available in the Library (some group study rooms are equipped with projectors, smart boards, white boards and/or flip charts). If you wish to book space for group study (such as to practice a presentation), this can be done through the library web site.

### 7.2.4 Training

All First-Year Undergraduates receive an induction session about Library Services during Welcome Week, but you will also have a training session scheduled in Autumn Term covering how to find and use the Library's online resources for your subject area and also how to quickly and easily create effective searches that will help you find the information you need for your essays, projects & dissertations. You will also receive training on referencing and creating bibliographies using online tools & software.

It is essential that you attend these timetabled sessions as they will help you navigate through the wide array of resources available to you and be able to use the right ones for your study & research. In Geography, these are arranged as part of module B in the first-year techniques course (GG1011/3).

### 7.2.5 Using other Libraries

**Senate House Library** (University of London), Senate House, Malet Street, London, WC1E 7HU (020 7862 8462) <https://www.senatehouselibrary.ac.uk/>

As a student of the University of London, you have access to the University of London Library (Senate House Library), which is situated in Central London. This central Library has large reference collections and facilities for borrowing and is an important resource for print and online material for the Arts & Humanities and Social Sciences (with limited Science coverage). In order to obtain a Senate House Library card you must present your College ID card at the Senate House Library and complete a short application form. You also have access to SHL's online resources and these can be accessed via the Library Subject Guides.

**The British Library**, 96 Euston Road, London, NW1 2DB (020 7412 7000) <http://www.bl.uk>.

Please check the BL's web pages for registration and access regulations, or contact the Royal Holloway Library for advice.

#### Other libraries

You may also be able to register as a reader at the libraries of other Colleges if you can demonstrate that you need to use their collections. Please check the respective College Library's web pages before visiting. More information about using other libraries can be found [here](#).

You are strongly advised to familiarise yourself with the Library and its resources as early as possible in your degree.

## 7.3 Photocopying and Printing

The departmental printers and photocopier are reserved for staff use. Copier-printers (MFDs) for students are located in the Library, the Computer Centre and many PC labs, which will allow you to make copies in either black and white or colour. Further information is available [here](#):

If you require copying to be done for a seminar presentation, you need to give these materials to your tutor to copy on your behalf. Please make sure that you plan ahead and give the materials to your tutor in plenty

of time. Many of the PC labs are open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Alternatively, there are computers available for your use in the Library, and Computer Centre.

Occasionally, students are expected to produce posters, or other printed material beyond the A4 size typical of open access printers. Such printing can be arranged through the Cartographic Technician, Malcolm Kelsey (QB137), for a charge (charge depends on page size). Department facilities allow for standard printing to A0, or special sizes on request.

## 7.4 Computing

There are ten open access PC Labs available on campus which you can use, including three in the Computer Centre. For security reasons access to these PC Labs is restricted at night and at weekends by a door entry system operated via your College card. At College registration you will be given details of induction procedures, user accounts and password procedures. All Geographers are expected to have basic information technology skills by the end of the first term of the first-year (operation of Windows, word-processing, spreadsheet use and basic web skills). We expect you to have at least the basic competence in information technology as provided by some of the IT Training sessions run by the Computer Centre.

### How to find an available PC

There are a range of self-study packs designed to enhance your current IT skills, these can be found by visiting the [Skills Hub](#). The Department recommends that you give consideration to courses relating to the use of Microsoft Office. Of particular use are courses relating to Word, Excel spreadsheets and PowerPoint. Other courses are available for later years, including data presentation, managing large documents, referencing and advanced Word for dissertations. Further advice will be given during the Geographical Techniques module.

The Department also has postgraduate computing facilities in the Geospatial and Visual Methods Laboratory (GVML)(QB146) which, in special circumstances may be made available for undergraduate use if either: a) software is required as part of a taught course; or b) if specialist software is required for project/dissertation work that is not available elsewhere on campus. Ray Aung (QB137) is the Computer Technician responsible for day-to-day running of the Departmental computing facilities.



## 8 Coursework Assessment and Dissertation

Coursework is a key part of the assessment of the modules you take. The weighting given to coursework and examinations may vary between modules due to the nature of the material being studied, and how this work is assessed (section 8.1). Regulations concerning all assessed coursework whether summative or formative are detailed in [section 9](#).

### 8.1 Weighting of coursework and exams

All coursework is designed to test students against a series of skills and learning outcomes. To achieve this, emphasis is put on the most appropriate form of assessment which allows students to demonstrate their full potential. The table below details how each course is assessed and how this is split between coursework and examination.

Course	Credits	Weighting %	
		Cwk.	Exam
GG1001 Physical Geography I: Atmosphere, Oceans & the Geosphere	15	0	100
GG1002 Physical geography II: Biogeography, Ecology & Scales of Change	15	0	100
GG1003 Human Geography I: Cultures, Economies, Histories	15	0	100
GG1004 Human Geography II: Politics, Society, Development & Environment	15	0	100
GG1011/3 Geographical Techniques	30	100	0
GG1015 Digital Geographies: Introduction to Remote Sensing & GIS	15	100	0
GG1032/4 Geographical Research & Field Methods I	15	100	0

Course	Credits	Weighting %	
		Cwk.	Exam
GG2001 Geographical Techniques II	15	100	0
GG2003 Geographical Field Training	15	100	0
GG2013 Environmental Systems: Processes & Sustainability	30	100	0
GG2021 Earth Surface Processes & Hazards	30	50	50
GG2041 Environmental Change	30	100	0
GG2043 Biogeography	30	50	50
GG2052 Political Geography	30	50	50
GG2053 Cities: Economies & Ecologies	30	100	0
GG2061 Cultural Geographies of the Modern World	30	50	50
GG2071 Perspectives on Development	30	50	50

Course	Credits	Weighting %	
		Cwk.	Exam
GG3001 Independent Dissertation	30	100	0
GG3005 Placement linked Dissertation	30	100	0
GG3013 Coast and Estuarine Management	15	50	50
GG3016 Mediterranean Landscapes & environmental Change	15	50	50
GG3018 Global Warming	15	50	50
GG3021 Managing River Environments	15	50	50
GG3026 Glacial Environments	15	50	50
GG3028 Digital Landscapes	15	50	50
GG3046 Mammals in a Changing World	15	50	50
GG3047 Volcanoes	15	100	0
GG3053 Regeneration and urban policy	15	50	50
GG3060 Post Capitalist Cities	15	50	50
GG3061 Geopolitics of Media & Communication	15	50	50
GG3062 Images of Earth: from Homer to Google	15	50	50
GG3064 Exploration, science & making of Geography	15	50	50
GG3065 Geography of museums and collections	15	50	50
GG3068 Creative Geographies; Economies, Space, Practices	15	50	50
GG3076 Gender & Development	15	50	50
GG3083 Cities & Development in the global south	15	50	50
GG3090 Critical GIS	15	100	0
GG3111 Biodiversity of the Past & Present	15	50	50
GG3162 Remote Control: Geographies of contemporary warfare	15	50	50

Table showing relative weighting of coursework and exams in module assessment

## 8.2 Coursework Essays

One of the commonest forms of assessment is the essay. Essay writing is an important skill which you develop during your studies, starting with tutorial support in the first-year, into the second and third through practice and feedback. Such a skill is important to develop because it allows you to consolidate your understanding of, and to thoroughly analyse, a topic through interrogation of the relevant literature. Through this process, you will ultimately argue a strong enough case to persuade your reader that the point of view you have developed is well supported by the ideas and information you present.

When writing essays, it is vital that you understand what you are being asked to write about. One of the most frequent mistakes made by students is not fully understanding the task set. You can present an excellent essay but if it doesn't address the key points of what is being asked, then much of your effort will be wasted. Think about the title carefully and look for the key words. If you are unsure, ask the person who set the title for clarification.

A good essay should demonstrate a series of points. Firstly, it must answer the question through presenting the key points and a balanced range of arguments. Secondly, it must demonstrate a good knowledge base, achieved through wide reading and thorough preparation. Finally, it must be well structured, well-argued and logical in its ordering of content. In order to achieve this, there are typically three main parts or stages to consider. Firstly, an initial statement of the point of view that you have developed in response to the topic. This part of the essay is typically referred to as the introduction. Secondly, you need to present the argument or arguments which you have discovered to support this point of view. This part is the body of the essay. This information comes from detailed reading of the literature (section 4.5). Finally, you need to bring together

your arguments and restate the overall point of view that has been developed. This part of the essay is the conclusion. Finally, you should compile all of your cited literature into a reference list (section 8.9).

This writing process is often preceded by a clear planning stage which can involve a series of steps:

- 1) Choosing a question if you have a choice (not always the case).
- 2) Analysing the question and determining what you are being asked to do, e.g. 'compare', 'contrast', 'examine', etc.
- 3) Making an initial plan of your ideas and what information you need. This helps to clarify your arguments and to identify more accurately the kind of information and resources you will need.
- 4) Locating resources through literature searches. Try the module reading list as a starter. If an author has written relevant material on your topic, try typing their name into a search engine and find out if they have written anything else of relevance. Try also searching by the key words in the title. Also look through the reference list of all useful articles you find to widen your resources.
- 5) Read relevant literature, make notes and think about how the information may fit into your essay. Don't forget the importance of diagrams and photographs (plates) in your essay. Importantly, when making notes from the literature, don't forget to attribute these notes to the source from whence they have come. You will need this information for referencing when you write your essay.
- 6) Return to your plan - does it still 'work' given the reading you have done? Decide on where your resources fit, and how they may be ordered effectively. It may be easier if you divide your resources into general background, used for informing the reader about the general principles of the topic, and case studies, used to illustrate these general issues in more detail.
- 7) Writing the first draft by referring to your plan. It is often useful to leave the introduction for now and go straight to the main body of the essay. Use each main idea that you want to communicate as a paragraph in your essay, and use the first sentence of each paragraph to state clearly the main point you want to make. Other sentences in the paragraph then expand on this topic sentence by giving evidence to support it, explaining it more fully and/or giving examples. When you have done this, the introduction is often easier to write. It contains background to the topic and an outline of the main issues that you are writing about, it should also provide a context for the essay and an outline of what you are going to do. Finally, the conclusion should summarise the arguments made (not repeat them) and demonstrate how they relate to the question. It should also indicate any implications of this view.
- 8) Revising and redrafting should consider both the essay structure and presentation. Ask some important questions. Have you answered the question, do the main sections 'work' in the context of the essay. Do you need to use sub headings to divide the text? Finally, is all the material you obtained from your reading properly cited and referenced (section 8.13 - plagiarism), have you spell/grammar checked your work and, importantly, have you proof read it. Spell checking is not enough, as it only checks the words you have used for correct spelling, not whether you have used the right words in the first place!
- 9) References. All the information you cite must be recorded in a reference list/ bibliography (section 8.9). This includes references for all figures, tables and plates.

All of this takes time and underlies the importance of planning your writing over a suitable time period.

### 8.3 Field & Laboratory Reports

A report is a more highly structured document than an essay that presents information about an investigation that you have undertaken into events, organisations, situations, issues and processes. Typically, this form of assessment is used following field work or laboratory investigations (e.g. GG1011, GG1032, GG2001/2, GG2003/4, as well as some other option modules). Importantly, the structure and convention in written reports stresses the process by which the information was gathered as much as the information itself. Hence, you need to discuss the methods used and the processes involved in gathering the information you are going to use as the basis of the report. There are typically five stages in the writing of a report. These should be observed in sequence:

- 1) Clarifying the purpose of the report. You should consider the potential reader(s) and the requirements of the course in question; this should include a clear indication of the scope, breadth and depth of the report. You will need to present details of how you carried out the research/data gathering, how you processed and analysed your data, what is already known about the topic (literature review, section 8.5), and how your data fits with this, and your recommendations.

- 2) Carrying out all necessary research. What are your research questions? What are you investigating? In some cases, these are presented to you as part of the original practical or field work, but in others, notably the dissertation (section 8.4), you will need to develop your own research questions and hypotheses. Your research may include your primary investigation via fieldwork, or the analysis of data gathered by another person (secondary data). Whichever is the case, you need to consider your data in the context of existing knowledge, and for this you need to consider the literature, using similar approaches to the data gathering you employ for essays.
- 3) Planning the structure and content of the report. This is a crucial stage in the writing process as it is at this stage that you plan and organise your existing information, your remaining research and the required structure within the report will be written.
- 4) Drafting the report. In general the process of writing reports is the same as for essays (section 8.2), although given the nature of reports, their structure is typically more closely defined. When writing reports, the following is a general structure to adopt. You will be given further guidance as to structure for each report you need to write:-
  - a) Title Page: The report title, and sub title if necessary. Your candidate number should also be included, along with module number/name and the date.
  - b) Acknowledgements: Acknowledge help given. This could be in the field (field assistants), suppliers of secondary information, laboratory support, or advisors.
  - c) Contents: A list of all main sections, in sequence, with page numbers. Figures (diagrams, graphs), tables, and plates should be shown in separate lists, titled, 'List of figures', 'List of tables', 'List of plates'.
  - d) Abstract: A short paragraph summarising the main parts of the report – what was done, how and where, main conclusions reached. You should be able to read an abstract and learn what the report is about, without reading the whole report. This is often better written last
  - e) Introduction: Provides the context and scope of the report, including terms of reference (research questions). You should outline your objectives, and give a general background to the topic (literature review).
  - f) Methodology: Details how you carried out the research, and how you collected your data. For example, 'river transects were taken every 10m using a total station.' or 'Questionnaires were sent to 100 individuals, randomly selected from ...' This section should also include any laboratory, analytical and data handling techniques. Critically, the methods section should provide enough detail for the reader to be able to replicate your procedures.
  - g) Results: A simple presentation of your data. Graphs are ideal for this. You don't need large tables of raw (unprocessed) data (see k) Appendices), but include processed data only.
  - h) Discussion: An analysis of what the data mean and how they link to existing information. For this, you need to refer to the information you discussed in the literature review. Critically, do your findings reinforce or contradict the ideas of others?
  - i) Conclusions: Draw together the main issues. This section should summarise the key findings and emphasise your research questions and how they have been met. No new information is introduced in this section.
  - j) References: As for essays, all references cited must be presented in the reference list (section 8.9).
  - k) Appendices: These contain additional, related information which doesn't form an essential part of the report, but are necessary to include. Such things include large data tables, copies of questionnaires, etc.
- 5) Reviewing, revising and completing the report. After you have produced a complete draft of your report, leave it for a day or so then read it through, reviewing and revising it accordingly. Take particular notice of structure, content and style.

## 8.4 The Dissertation

In many ways the dissertation is the culmination of your learning experience on the degree programme. The dissertation is an opportunity to study, in depth, a topic or problem that appeals to you. It is also an opportunity to demonstrate what you've learnt about posing research questions, formulating problems, designing and executing research and analysing or interpreting your data. Perhaps most importantly, a successful dissertation shows that you can put together a substantial and sustained literate report with appropriate graphical, numerical and bibliographic materials. Many potential employers see the

dissertation as a very important piece of evidence about your abilities, and a successful dissertation makes it easier for us to write a strongly supportive reference for you.

It is important that you start thinking about your dissertation as early as possible, particularly if it involves extensive field research or work overseas. Ideally, this thought process should begin at the start of your second year. Guidance will be given during GG2001, but you are encouraged to discuss ideas with relevant staff at any time.

### 8.4.1 Dissertation Basics

Full details of the dissertation, its structure, the planning process, and timetable for production and submission, are provided in a supplementary booklet referred to as the '*Dissertation Handbook*'. This booklet introduces you to GG3001 (Independent Dissertation) and GG3005 (Independent placement-linked dissertation), and will be issued to you in the dissertation module within GG2001 lectures.

To summarise the key points:-

- 1) Students are required to undertake a geographical dissertation of an original and independent kind. This should be based on original fieldwork or some other independent research, such as the analysis of primary published data, original laboratory research, archival research, or independent computer-based research. This will usually involve analysis of some kind of qualitative or quantitative data. Extended essays based largely on secondary material and without original independent analysis do not satisfy the requirements of a dissertation. You may also opt to carry out this work as part of a placement with an external organisation (GG3005).
- 2) Students receive training in the design of a dissertation research proposal in the course GG2001/2. Further details concerning how the dissertation process is run and the allocation of tutors, together with a dissertation handbook, will also be given as part of the GG2001 lecture course.
- 3) Students intending to undertake laboratory work as part of their dissertations must discuss their intentions not only with advisers, but also with the laboratory staff concerned, before the end of the third term of their second year. Such lab work may be undertaken in the final few weeks of the summer vacation, on arrangement with relevant technical staff.
- 4) Field equipment, as available, may be borrowed from the Department to support fieldwork. A deposit will be charged. All such equipment must be returned in the first week of the first term of the third year, or when otherwise arranged with technical staff, or the deposit will be forfeit.
- 5) Before the end of the second year, all students are required to complete a risk assessment, and to submit all required documentation detailed in the Dissertation Handbook. Failure to do so may lead to a mark of zero for the dissertation, a mark which cannot fail to have serious implications for your overall degree classification.

Full details about supervision, contact with your advisor and proof reading of draft material can be found in the Dissertation Handbook.

## 8.5 Literature Reviews

In some of your assessment, notably laboratory and field reports, and dissertation, you will be asked to produce a literature review. This is a critical and evaluative account of the literature available on a particular topic, in effect, discussing and assessing the ideas of others on a particular topic, without adding anything new yourself.

It is important to avoid just producing a list of sources and descriptions, but rather to produce a piece of work organised around a series of ideas which relate to the topic in question. Producing a literature review involves a series of stages:-

- 1) **Models:** Looking at other literature reviews will help you to determine how best to establish your own. A good starting place for this would be to look at past dissertations, available in the [undergraduate dissertation archive](#), using your usual RHUL login to access. Journals also publish such reviews from time to time, and these can be found by using search engines, often by including 'literature review' or 'review' in the search criteria.

- 2) **Formulating the problem:** Construct a statement that forms the basis of the review. This will help narrow your search field. There are thousands of possible sources out there, so it is important to do this. Given that you tend to write these as part of research reports, the statement will inevitably be a derivation of your working title.
- 3) **Literature searching:** We have discussed this already in the context of essays. However, with essays you have a title to focus your reading on. Here, you have a topic. As you read, consider what themes or issues connect your sources together. Do they present one or more solutions? Is there an aspect of the field that is missing? How well do they present the material and do they portray it according to an appropriate theory? Do they reveal a trend in the field? A raging debate? You could select one of these themes to basis for the organisation of your review. Once you start to find relevant material, look at other materials by these authors, and the reference lists they produce.
- 4) **Evaluating your findings:** By reading extensively on the same topic, you start to gain detailed knowledge of the topic, and can start to arrange the literature review. It may be necessary to read articles several times to fully understand them.
- 5) **Analyse the findings:** By identifying the major themes, you can start to see how different authors might have different opinions and ideas. These now form parts of the discussion in your review. Don't ignore conflicts in the literature, these can be important and often highlight a key area in which further research is necessary, imagine, for example, writing a literature review on the current debates on the role of humans in climate change.

## 8.6 Policy Briefs

A slightly different form of assessment involves the preparation of a policy brief. A policy brief is a concise summary of a particular issue, the policy options to deal with it, and some recommendations on the best option. It is aimed at government policymakers and other individual or organisations who are interested in formulating or influencing policy. The readers are unlikely to be specialists in your area and you need to think carefully about how you communicate the key message and detail in the briefing. Policy briefs can take different formats. A typical format is a short document that is easy and quick to read, looks attractive and appears interesting (for example, with a catchy title, engaging summary or highlights). Policy briefs often have one or more photographs or figures.

## 8.7 Assessment Presentation Deadlines

The Department offers a range of different assessment techniques and so guidelines for preparation vary between courses. You should consult your course documentation before you start to ensure that you are using the correct format.

There are, however, several aspects common for most forms of assessment:

- All coursework should be word-processed, unless a prior agreement has been made with the course lecturer.
- Work should be submitted double sided. Computer centre printers default to double sided printing.
- Pages should be **stapled** together. All forms of paper clips, etc. should be avoided as pages can come loose and be lost.

## 8.8 Deadlines

All coursework should be submitted to Turnitin by the specified deadline. Work that is submitted after the deadline will be penalised according to the penalties outlined in [section 9.7](#). Details of deadlines for assessed work will be published at the beginning of the academic year and posted on year notice boards. The turnitin submission will also be assessed plagiarism ([section 9.13](#)). For some coursework a hard copy may also be needed. This will be advised to you by course leaders. In such cases, both hard and electronic copies must be submitted by the deadline. All coursework must be submitted in order for students to complete the course, regardless of whether it is classed as summative or formative. Non submission may result in you being given a formal warning. This also applies to first-year tutorial work which serves as formative assessment for the first-year lecture courses.

## 8.9 Referencing & Bibliographies (Reference lists)

A reference is the way in which you tell the reader where you have got the information from which you have used in your work. It also tells the reader that the information you are using was produced by someone else. For this reason, acknowledging all such sources of information is critical, not least because failure to do so can lead to accusations that you are trying to use someone else's information as your own (Plagiarism, section 9.13).

All assessed coursework, therefore, should be properly referenced and have a full bibliography at the end, including all of the sources you have cited in your work. In some cases, you may not have been able to find the original source. For example, you may have read a paper in which the author cites another, for example a paper by Smith (2009) may include a statement that 'Hunt (2006) showed that there was a correlation between variable A and B'. If you want to quote Hunt's results, you should, ideally, go to Hunt's paper and check that Smith has cited correctly. If this is not possible, you should acknowledge the secondary reference by acknowledging this correlation as 'Hunt, (2006), quoted in Smith, (2009)'. In formal 'unseen' examinations you are expected to provide references in your answers, and show that you know the sources of the facts and arguments that you are presenting, but you are not expected to produce a bibliography.

When you cite (identify) references in the text of your assignment, you should include the author's surname (or name of editor or organisation responsible), the year of publication (or, in the case of an Internet site, when it was last updated), and actual page numbers if appropriate (such as when citing quotes), and where available. There are two approaches to citing references. The first gives prominence to the information, with all the required referencing details in brackets:

*'It has been suggested that the relative seriousness of the two kinds of errors differs from situation to situation (Black 2009).'*

The second approach gives prominence to the author by using the author's name as part of your sentence, with the date and page number in round brackets:

*'Black (2009) has suggested that the relative seriousness of the two kinds of errors differs from situation to situation.'*

Page numbers are necessary when you directly quote a passage, or when you copy tables or figures:

*'A recent study has shown a series of possible causes that "result from changes in environmental factors"' (Jones and Chan, 2002: p2).'*

Having written your assignment and included a range of citations, it is important to list all of these, in alphabetical order, by authors' surname, in a bibliography at the end of your work. This bibliography is typically titled 'References' or 'Reference List'. This should be comprehensive and detailed enough to allow the reader to trace all items you have used. There are a range of referencing and bibliographic conventions, examples of which may be seen in current academic geography journals. There are also often different conventions adopted for human and physical geography subjects, and you will come across both in your time here. Which you use will depend on the work being assessed, but the most important rule is to be consistent. Particular lecturers or your dissertation advisor may suggest you use certain conventions because of the particular materials you are working with.

The following is suggested as an appropriate standard format, based on the so-called 'Harvard' or author-date referencing system. The following guidance is based on the book *Cite them right: the essential referencing guide* (2010), multiple copies of which can be found in the Bedford Library:-

- 1) References in the text should give the surname of the author and the year of publication in brackets, for example, Collins (1970) or (Smith and Jones, 2001). When there are two or more references to work by one author for the same year, the year is followed by the letter a, b, c, etc. - e.g. (Harris, 1996c). Text references to multi-authored work should include the first author's name, followed by 'et al.' then the year of publication e.g. Collings et al. (2012). The reference list must contain all of

the authors of the paper.

- 2) Page numbers should be given for quotes, for example, (Collins, 1970 p42).
- 3) Examples of references for different types of publication are given in Appendix B. Please note that the bibliography **should not be divided** according to these categories (i.e. with sub-sections for journal articles, books, chapters etc). Many more examples, including guidance on how to cite audio, visual, and digital material, can be found in *Cite them right: the essential referencing guide* (2010).

A summary of this reference and a guide to correct referencing style, can be found [here](#). Examples of referencing & bibliographies can be found in [Appendix B](#).

## 8.10 Illustrations

The use of illustrations in your work is important, as these can convey a lot of information and replace text. These should be scanned and cut and pasted into the essay, avoid cutting out photocopies and sticking them onto the relevant page with glue. Colour is fine. It is important, however, to obey a few rules:-

- All illustrations should be numbered consecutively, and referred to in the text. This can be sequentially, e.g. Figure 1, Figure 2, etc; or by sections, Figure 1.1, Figure 1.2, Figure 2.1, etc.
- Refer to graphs and diagrams as 'Figures'; tables as 'Tables, and Photographs as 'Plates'
- All should have a title and a source (reference from where they are obtained). If you use a web site, such as Google image, then you should acknowledge this.
- Make sure that after scanning, the quality of the image is still readable at the size you reproduce it.

## 8.11 Length of Assessments (Word count)

All pieces of course work have maximum word lengths, and you will be informed of these when assessment information is given to you. You should be aware that the Department, in line with College policy, penalises over length work ([section 9.8](#))

## 8.12 Grade Descriptors & Marking Criteria

See [Appendix A](#) for the assessment criteria that are used by examiners in marking work within the Department, and show the general criteria that are used to calculate grades and marks. They are general models of the characteristics that are expected of work being awarded particular grades.

When looking at these tables you should keep the following points in mind:-

- Many pieces of work will have characteristics that fall between two or more classes. Your examiners retain the ultimate decision (academic judgement) as to the mark given to a particular piece of work, and your mark may be amended following consultation with second markers or visiting examiners.
- Look at the full range of assessment criteria, rather than just those that correspond to your own judgement of your abilities. When marking your work, examiners look at a range of different aspects of your work. For example, the form for comments on coursework essays shows the most important aspects of essay writing as a series of tick- boxes. Think about how you could improve each of these aspects of your work.
- These criteria give general models of assessment criteria. Your course leaders will also discuss the specific assessments for their courses, particularly where these are not standard essays.

## 8.13 Feedback

Feedback is an important part of your learning process as it allows us to communicate with you regarding the quality of work you are producing and to suggest ways in which you can improve your work in future. It should not be regarded purely as a means of communicating your mark. You should be aware that



feedback occurs in many different ways throughout the duration of a course, and your time in the Department in general.

The most obvious form of feedback is the returned coursework comment sheet. This contains important detail of the areas in which your work has succeeded in its aims, and also comments on how you could improve for the next assessment. You will be able to see your annotated coursework at dedicated feedback sessions. Marked work is not returned to you as it is needed for examination purposes in the summer.

It is important that you understand this form of feedback and take it on board. If there is any aspect that you don't understand, then please contact the marker for clarification. Returned feedback sheets will be available from the document holders outside the course leader's office by the return date published alongside the submission date. You will also be sent an email when work is ready for collection.

The comments on the feedback are based on the marking criteria in Appendix A. Different sets of marking criteria apply to different forms of work, but in general, there are a set of common criteria which the marker is looking for. These are detailed on each of the relevant tables. You are advised to study the marking criteria before completing assignments, in order to understand the differences between the different marks.

Marks below 40% are regarded as fails. The significance of failing a course are detailed in the [College regulations](#).

Marks between 30-39% may allow a candidate to resit the failed elements of that course or be granted a condoned fail (depending on UG regulations).

The return of coursework feedback sheets represent only one form of feedback. There are also other forms of feedback which you should also consider. This may take different forms, and may be 'informal' in nature, but is still important to you as a way of finding out how your work can be improved. Such feedback includes:

- 1) Comments and discussion with staff and demonstrators in lab and field classes.
- 2) Discussion in first-year tutorial classes.
- 3) Discussion with course leaders in office hours
- 4) Critique of dissertation draft material by your allocated advisor.
- 5) Discussion in seminars.
- 6) Start and end of term Tutor meetings.
- 7) Generic, group feedback to a whole class.
- 8) Moodle self or group assessment.
- 9) Start of year meetings dealing with exam feedback
- 10) Feedback sessions, where you may view your original essay containing marker's comments

## 9 Assessment Information

You'll find that your work in the Geography Department is assessed in a variety of ways throughout the degree. This reflects the different kinds of knowledge, skills and abilities that you are developing through the degree programme. We are also keen to give students with different strengths a chance to demonstrate their full potential. Although there may be some small variations, because of option courses in the third year, by the end of your degree, the contribution made to your final mark by your performance in end-of-year formal examinations will be about the same as that made by other forms of assessment, such as coursework, dissertation and fieldwork. This may vary for joint degrees.

Because the degree structure is progressive (that is to say, you are building each year on the knowledge and skills that you acquired in previous years), the weighting of each year is also progressive. The first-year is not weighted as part of your final degree, as it is designed to introduce important skills, and to bring all students to a common standard. The second year will count for one third of your final mark, and the third year for two-thirds. The progressive structure and weighting is standard across the college, and so is the same for all students, irrespective of their degree programme.

In the first-year much of the work that you submit to your tutors is for what we call formative assessment - that's to say, this work does not count towards your end of year marks, and hence, towards progression into year 2; but is marked intensively to help you improve the ways in which you work. Do not be tempted to regard this work as non-essential - getting the most out of these assessments, and the feedback provided to you, is vital for your development as a geographer. **Non-submission of tutorial work may lead to the issuing of an informal or formal warning. After 2 formal warnings, we may request the termination of your College registration.** Later in the degree the balance shifts towards summative assessment - pieces of work which we use to give you grades and contribute towards your final degree classification.

### 9.1 Anonymous marking and cover sheets

In order to maintain fairness across all students, all coursework and examinations are submitted for marking with only your candidate number for identification. These numbers are issued by the College early in the first term. Examiners do not have access to any means by which they can match up names to numbers, this is not done until after the final sub board in June of the academic year. Second and third years should note that the candidate numbers used last year are no longer valid, and the new numbers should be used.

### 9.2 Submission of work

Submission of all coursework (formative and summative) should be through Turnitin, via each course's Moodle page, unless advised otherwise. Marking, wherever possible, will be done electronically. The nature of some assessments make electronic marking impractical, and so for these pieces of work, a hard copy submission will be made via the School Helpdesk (Wolfson 118). Turnitin submission may still be required for plagiarism detection purposes. Please assume that all work should be submitted for plagiarism checking unless advised otherwise.

### 9.3 Stepped Marking

Work submitted for assessment will be graded by using a set of marks with the pattern X2, X5 or X8. This means that an upper second class piece of work would be awarded 62%, 65% or 68%. This approach, which is called stepped marking, has been found to help in better aligning grades with marking criteria and for providing greater clarity to students about the standard of their work and how close they are to lower and upper grade boundaries. For example, a 62% represents a low 2:1, while a 68% indicates a high 2:1. The first class category is also split into low, mid and high firsts, but in line with College practice, a low first can be graded as 72/75/78, a mid-first as 82/85/88 and a high first as 92/95/98. A mark of 100% is also possible for a piece of work which is considered 'perfect' for the level of study

Assessed work which is quantitative (e.g. numerical or multiple-choice tests), where there are 'right or wrong' answers, e.g. language tests/ exercises and/ or where there is a detailed mark scheme under which each question is allocated a specific number of marks will be exempt from stepped marking.

## 9.4 Policy on the return of marked student work and feedback

The full policy on the return of marked student work and feedback is available [here](#).

### Return of marked student work and feedback

All assessed work (other than formal examinations) should be returned with feedback within 20 working days of the submission deadline, except in cases where it is not appropriate to do so for exceptional and/ or pedagogic reasons. These may include the assessment of dissertations, final year projects, taped case studies, audio visual submissions, where the marking has been delayed due to staff illness and/ or where an extension to the submission deadline has been granted. The deadline for the return of the marked work with feedback will be made clear to students when they receive their assignments. In the event that the intended deadline cannot be met for reasons such as those listed, the revised deadline will be communicated to students as soon as possible.

## 9.5 Progression and award requirements

The Regulations governing progression and award requirements are set out in your Programme Specification [Programme Specification Repository](#) (and also more generally in the [Undergraduate Regulations](#)).

## 9.6 Examination results

Please see the [Examinations & Assessments](#) website for details of how you will be issued with your [results](#).

The Examinations & Assessments website is the place where you can access the “[Instructions to Candidates](#)” and details of the examinations [appeals](#) procedures.

## 9.7 Penalties for late submission of work

Work submitted after the published deadline will be penalised in line with Section 13, paragraph (4) of the College’s [Undergraduate Regulations](#).

### Section 13 (4)

*'In the absence of acceptable extenuating cause, late submission of work will be penalised as follows:*

- *for work submitted up to 24 hours late, the mark will be reduced by ten percentage marks;\**
- *for work submitted more than 24 hours late, the mark will be zero.'*

\*eg. an awarded mark of 65% would be reduced to 55% and a mark of 42% would be reduced to 32%.

If you believe that you will be unable to submit coursework on time because of illness or other acceptable causes then you should apply for an extension to allow you to submit the work late without suffering a penalty. If you did not request an extension but then miss a deadline due to factors which have affected your ability to submit work on time, then you may submit a request for extenuating circumstances to be considered. Please note however that if you do so, you will have to provide convincing reasons why you had been unable to request an extension.

## 9.8 Penalties for over-length work

Work which is longer than the stipulated length in the assessment brief will be penalised in line with Section 13, paragraph (5) of the College’s [Undergraduate Regulations](#):

### Section 13 (5)

*Any work (written, oral presentation, film, performance) which exceeds the upper limit set will be penalised as follows*

- (a) *for work which exceeds the upper limit by up to and including 10%, the mark will be reduced by ten percent of the mark initially awarded;*
- (b) *for work which exceeds the upper limit by more than 10% and up to and including 20%, the mark will be reduced by twenty percent of the mark initially awarded;*
- (c) *for work which exceeds the upper limit by more than 20%, the mark will be reduced by thirty percent of the mark initially awarded.*

*The upper limit may be a word limit in the case of written work or a time limit in the case of assessments such as oral work, presentations or films.*

For each piece of coursework you do, a word limit will apply, and this will be made clear to you by the course leader. In addition to the text, the word count should include quotations and footnotes. Please note that the following are excluded from the word count: candidate number, coursework title, course title, lists of contents/figures/tables/plates (if relevant), bibliography, figures, tables, figure/table/plate captions\* and appendices.

The word limit represents a maximum word allowance; there is **NO** penalty for work short of this limit.

\* Figure/plate/table captions should be of a reasonable length and should only provide a title and source. You should avoid explanatory detail in these captions (narrative captions).

## 9.9 What to do if things go wrong – Extensions to deadlines

You are expected to manage your time appropriately and hand in your coursework assessments on time. However, occasionally unforeseeable or unpreventable circumstances arise which prevent you from submitting your work on time. If this is the case you may be able to apply for an extension to your submission deadline without suffering a penalty. Coursework extensions are handled centrally by the College so you should refer to the College guidance.

**Please note that computing problems are not an acceptable reason for late submission of any piece of assessed coursework, including the dissertation.** Reasons for deferrals which are likely to be recurring, or affect more than one course, should be notified to the department (Dr Mike Dolton), in accordance with [section 9.11](#))

You can read the policy and guidance on extensions on the College's webpage about [Applying for an Extension](#).

Please refer to the Extensions Policy and guidance on the College's webpage about [Applying for an Extension](#).

## 9.10 What to do if things go wrong – the "Extenuating Circumstances" process.

If you are unable to submit coursework because of unforeseeable or unpreventable circumstances, and an extension is not available (see section 9.9), you may be able to apply for extenuating circumstances.

The policy is explained in full in the [Extenuating circumstances – Guidance for students](#).

### What is an Extenuating Circumstance?

Extenuating circumstances are defined as unforeseen *circumstances which are **outside a student's control** and which may **temporarily** prevent a student from undertaking an assessment or have a **marked/ significant detrimental/adverse impact** on their ability to undertake assessment by coursework or examination to the standard normally expected.* You can read more about them [here](#).

This means that such circumstances rarely occur. They are outside your control if they are:

- Unforeseeable - you would not have prior knowledge of the event (e.g. you cannot foresee whether you will be involved in a car accident);
- Unpreventable – you could not reasonably do anything in your power to prevent such an event (e.g. you cannot reasonably prevent a burst appendix.)

It is these short-term (temporary) circumstances that the College normally regards as extenuating circumstances. The policy is explained in full in the [Extenuating circumstances – Guidance for students](#).

### **Absence from an examination**

[Section 5](#) above explains what to do on the day you miss an examination if it was due to extenuating circumstances.

### **Applying for extenuating circumstances**

Before going ahead, you should check that your circumstances meet the criteria. These are explained in full in the [Extenuating circumstances – Guidance for students](#). You should also read the section **Illness & absences from an examination and departmental assessments and extenuating circumstances** in the [Instructions to Candidates](#) issued by Student Administration.

If you apply for extenuating circumstances, you will need to supply a full explanation of your situation together with any supporting documentation.

### **Deadlines for submission of extenuating circumstances**

Extenuating circumstances applications should be submitted as close to the affected piece of assessment/exam as possible.

The deadlines for submitting extenuating circumstances are listed in the Instructions to Candidates and the College webpages for [Exams, Assessments and Results](#)

### **Ongoing circumstances**

If you have ongoing circumstances that you believe are adversely affecting your performance during the year, these should be raised with your department and with the College's Student Advisory & Wellbeing teams as soon as possible. This will allow us to consider strategies that will help you manage the situation. Examples might be that you have an illness that does not constitute a disability, a close family member is ill and needs your support, or you have suffered an adverse life event.

It may be that the circumstances are severely affecting your ability to study by causing you to repeatedly miss scheduled teaching and/ or affecting your ability to complete assessments. If this is the case and there is no reasonable way to help you to manage the situation, then you may need to consider, in consultation with your department and Student Advisory & Wellbeing, if it would be in your best interests to interrupt until the issues have been resolved and you are able to fully commit to and benefit from your academic studies.

Ongoing adverse circumstances do not normally constitute extenuating circumstances as they are not unforeseen and in some cases may be preventable. As such, it is unlikely that the Extenuating Circumstances Committee will be able to take action to mitigate such circumstances. For further information, please read the [Extenuating circumstances – Guidance for students](#).

## **9.11 Support and exam access arrangements for students requiring support**

Some students at the College may have a physical or mental impairment, chronic medical condition or a Specific Learning Difficulty (SpLD) which would count as a disability as defined by the Equality Act (2010) that is, "a physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and substantial effect on your ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities". It is for such conditions and SpLDs that [Disability and Dyslexia](#)

**Services** (DDS) can put in place adjustments, support and exam access arrangements. Please note that a “long-term” impairment is one that has lasted or is likely to last for 12 months or more.

If you have a disability or SpLD you must register with the **Disability and Dyslexia Services Office** for an assessment of your needs before adjustments, support and exam access arrangements (‘) can be put in place. There is a process to apply for special arrangements for your examinations – these are not automatically put in place. Disability and Dyslexia Services can discuss this process with you when you register with them. Please see section 2 above for further guidance about registering with the Disability and Dyslexia Services Office.

Please note that if reasonable adjustments, including exam access arrangements, have been put in place for you during the academic year, the Sub-board will not make further allowance in relation to your disability or SpLD.

### **9.12 What to do if you have difficulty writing legibly**

It is College policy not to mark scripts which are illegible. If you anticipate that you may have difficulty in writing by hand which would lead to your scripts being illegible you should contact **Disability and Dyslexia Services**. Please note the deadline for making an application for Examination Access Arrangements is in January each year. Therefore it is in your interest to contact DDS as soon as you are able in the Autumn Term in order that you have time to get any necessary evidence required for the application.

### **9.13 Academic Misconduct**

The College regulations on academic misconduct (also known as assessment offences) can be found on the **Attendance and Academic Regulations page** of the student intranet.

Academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to plagiarism (see below), commissioning, duplication of work, (that is, submitting work for assessment which has already been submitted for assessment for the same or another course), falsification, impersonation, deception, collusion, (for example, group working would constitute collusion where the discipline or the method of assessment emphasises independent study and collective ideas are presented as uniquely those of the individual submitting the work), failure to comply with the rules governing assessment, including those set out in the ‘Instructions to candidates’.

The Regulations set out some of the types of academic misconduct in more detail, the procedures for investigation into allegations of such offences and the penalties. Students are strongly encouraged to read these Regulations and to speak with their Personal Tutors or other members of staff in their department should they have any queries about what constitutes academic misconduct. The College treats academic misconduct very seriously and misunderstanding about what constitutes academic misconduct will not be accepted as an excuse. Similarly, extenuating circumstances cannot excuse academic misconduct.

#### **What is Plagiarism?**

‘Plagiarism’ means the presentation of another person’s work in any quantity without adequately identifying it and citing its source in a way which is consistent with good scholarly practice in the discipline and commensurate with the level of professional conduct expected from the student. The source which is plagiarised may take any form (including words, graphs and images, musical texts, data, source code, ideas or judgements) and may exist in any published or unpublished medium, including the internet. Plagiarism may occur in any piece of work presented by a student, including examination scripts, although standards for citation of sources may vary dependent on the method of assessment.

Identifying plagiarism is a matter of expert academic judgement, based on a comparison across the student’s work and on knowledge of sources, practices and expectations for professional conduct in the discipline. Therefore it is possible to determine that an offence has occurred from an assessment of the student’s work alone, without reference to further evidence.

#### **Avoiding Plagiarism**

The following guidelines, based on those of the Academic Registrar of the University of London, outline how plagiarism can be avoided:

All work submitted as part of the requirements for any examination of the University of London must be expressed in your own words and incorporate your own ideas and judgments. Plagiarism must be avoided, with particular care being necessary in coursework and essays and reports written in your own time. Direct quotations from the published or unpublished work of others must always be clearly identified as such by being placed inside quotation marks, and a full reference to their source must be provided in the proper form (section 8.9). Remember that a series of short quotations from several different sources, if not clearly identified as such, constitutes plagiarism just as much as does a single unacknowledged long quotation from a single source. Equally, if you summarise another person's ideas or judgments, you must refer to that person in your text, and include the work referred to in your bibliography. Failure to observe these rules may result in an allegation of cheating. You should therefore consult your Tutor if you are in any doubt about what is permissible.

Examples of what constitutes plagiarism include:

- Lengthy word-for-word phrases or sentences taken from a piece of work without placing inside quotation marks and without acknowledgement of the source (section 8.9, Referencing)
- summary of text in your own words which follows the structure of the original but fails to acknowledge the source (section 8.9, Referencing)
- use of web sites to obtain material that are not acknowledged (section 8.9, Referencing)
- downloading of 'ready-made' essays from the web. Don't be fooled by companies who claim to check essays against 'Turnitin'. To do this they have to check them through the system, thus they become a part of it. When you submit the essay, it will return a high percentage match.
- use of 'good' essays which may be circulating within the student body from previous years. Note, these would have already been submitted to 'Turnitin', and therefore will come up as a close match when checked. The same applies to essays submitted at other Universities
- collusion in group project work or techniques exercises - this may range from group use of diagrams produced by one student, to the circulation of texts between members of the group which are either (in crude examples) copied verbatim or reworded by individual members of the group
- in statistical or quantitative exercises, one student carrying out the exercise and circulating copies of computer output to others.

### Duplication of Work (Self Plagiarism)

In addition to the above, submitting the same, or essentially the same, piece of work on more than one occasion, whether for different courses or when repeating a course, is classed as **duplication** or 'recycling'. This is also regarded as an examination offence, as serious as any other form of plagiarism, and thus governed by the same rules as the above. If you are repeating the whole or part of a year and have any concerns about this, you should speak to the Acting Chair of the Department Assessment Board (Mr Don Thompson).

There are stringent penalties for cases of plagiarism, set out in the College's "Regulations Governing Examination and Assessment Offences", which also contains details of the procedures to be followed should a case of plagiarism be suspected. Where a case is identified, all of your assessed work (including the Dissertation) would be examined for possible plagiarism. Furthermore, if writing a reference, a member of staff is required to inform prospective employers that an examination offence was committed.

Please note that the plagiarism issue should not be a negative one from your point of view - the ability to express your own ideas in your own words, to synthesise and evaluate information from a range of sources, to acknowledge the work of others correctly and put your own work in relation to it, and to cooperate in a group without simply copying each other's work, are valuable skills for your degree and for the world of work beyond. Employers, for example, value the ability to make constructive contributions to a group project, so it will help to demonstrate that you have done this during your degree programme. Coursework is not just for picking-up marks to get through the course, it is for acquiring marketable skills in researching, summarising and presenting material from a variety of sources.

## 9.14 The Role of the Geography Exams Team & the Sub-Board of Examiners

This section outlines the principal procedures for collating marks and the processes by which candidates' final degree classifications are confirmed and our assessment procedures are monitored. Please note that this is a summary, intended for your information and to assure you that we have a rigorous, robust and fair system in place. Not all the details of our procedures are covered.

### 9.14.1 Exams and Coursework Marks

Below is a summary of key steps taken for compiling marks:

- All assessment marks are derived from single marking with moderation. This means that every piece of assessment is marked by an Internal Examiner (usually the Course Leader), then a sample of work, including scripts from across the full range of marks, including grade boundaries and all Fail marks, is then additionally marked by a second Internal Examiner to confirm standards.
- The independent and placement linked dissertations (GG3001/5) are double marked. This means that two Internal Examiners mark the dissertation and agree a mark.
- All final course outcomes are moderated by Visiting Examiners, (a human and physical geographer from other universities depending on whether it is a human or physical course) with particular reference to borderline outcomes, Fail outcomes and the distribution of marks across the cohort. Exceptionally, Visiting Examiners may be asked to mark a piece of student work where internal examiners are unable to agree.
- The course leader, through the electronic marking process, submits marks to be uploaded to the centralised exam system.
- During the exams period, the Exams team checks the marks spreadsheet against the marks written on the exam scripts and coursework feedback forms by the internal examiners to ensure that all the correct marks appear on the final course spreadsheet. In addition, there is a check to make sure any mark penalties (e.g. late submission or over length work) are subtracted.

### 9.14.2 Pre Sub-board Committee Meeting (Extenuating Circumstances)

Prior to the meeting of the Sub-board of Examiners, extenuating circumstances, submitted in line with the procedures set out in the Instructions to Candidates, and detailed elsewhere in this handbook, are considered by the College extenuating circumstances committee.

The key role of this meeting is to assess the extent to which a student's performance is deemed to have been affected by the extenuating circumstances presented, taking into account their severity, duration and the perceived impact on academic performance. It is for the academic judgment of this committee to determine an appropriate course of action in line with College regulations, as a result of the extenuating circumstances presented, which in many cases will be to take no action. The Committee will make a recommendation to the Sub-board, whilst maintaining anonymity and confidentiality.

Students should note that there is no College regulation allowing marks to be awarded for extenuating circumstances. For an overview of the mechanisms available to the Pre-Sub-board Committee please consult the Extenuating Circumstances section (section 14) of the [Undergraduate Regulations](#).

### 9.14.3 Sub-Board of Examiners

Course outcomes are confirmed at the Department Assessment Board meeting, which usually convenes during the last week of summer term. This board comprises the following members: Chair (Exams Officer), all academic staff who have taught and marked courses during the academic year (Internal Examiners), and the two Visiting Examiners mentioned in 9.14.1. Throughout the meeting students are discussed by candidate number to maintain confidentiality. Recommendations are then passed to the School Progression and Awards Board for ratification and the award of final degree classifications.

In these tasks the role of the Visiting Examiner is fundamental. They provide an independent opinion on our procedures which includes checking that our standards are commensurate with other Geography degrees in the UK; that we are being fair to all students; and that our marking processes are robust and comparable across the range of courses within the department.



#### **9.14.4 Viva Voce Examinations (Vivas)**

“Viva voce” literally means “living voice” and is the term given to oral examinations. In the Geography Department, Vivas may only be used at the discretion of the Visiting Examiners in exceptional circumstances where it is not possible to make a fair assessment of the final degree classification based on the student work already completed or other means of alternative assessment.

## 10 Careers information

Geography graduates have a wide range of career opportunities. Some are directly a result of having a Geography degree, such as in environmental management, work with NGOs, and teaching. However, the wide range of transferable skills acquired through a Geography degree, such as communication and team working skills is now widely recognised by an increasing number of employers. As a result, a large number of our graduates go into careers not obviously related to Geography. These include international banking, accountancy, Law, advertising, marketing, local & national government, and journalism. Geography's diversity and skills building base is its strength in both academic and career terms. For more information look at our website on [future careers](#).

Graduates from the Department have been extremely successful in finding employment. It is a good idea to think about your career as soon as possible, and it is advisable to discuss your ideas and curriculum vitae (CV) with your Personal Tutor as early as the first year. We recommend that all students have an interview with the Careers Centre during the second year, or at the start of the third year. In addition, you will be emailed about, and should look on the employability notice board in the department for, special sessions run periodically in the department on skills such as networking and using social media, finding an internship, and how to write a CV (amongst a host of others). A diverse selection of career paths of our former students are posted on our [website](#). This site is well worth a visit to give ideas and possibilities. Alumni profiles are added and updated regularly.

The Department endeavours to help students to recognise their own strengths, skills and abilities so that they can make strong applications for their chosen job or training course. In each year we help you progress your thinking about future careers: -

- First year - "Getting Started"
- Second year – "Exploring Career Aspirations"
- Third year – "Making it Happen"

In the Department we offer undergraduates a range of career services:-

- Career action planning through the group tutorial system
- 'In house surgeries' where students can have individual meetings with the careers service in the department
- Annual Careers Evening, usually in the spring term, at which a selection of our alumni speak about their respective career trajectories and the value of their RHUL degree(s) to them, as well as providing advice to current students interested in their particular fields. It is an excellent opportunity for students to network and even explore opportunities for future development
- Sessions in the Department run by the Careers Service provide information as well as training in the design of an appealing curriculum vitae (CV), how to succeed in job interviews, and so on
- Links, through our Schools Liaison Group, for the provision of school placements, for those interested in a career in teaching

The College's [Careers & Employability Service](#) is based in the Davison Building. The careers service run a number of industry themed weeks and a range of standalone events during the academic year including a careers fair in October. Our events are open to all students. One to one appointments are available all through the year where you can talk over your career ideas or get your CV, cover letter or application checked. You can also book a practice, in person or video interview.

Our website and Careers Moodle has a wide range of help and information including interview skills, writing CVs and applications, assessment centres & psychometric tests. For more information about all Careers events and appointments visit their website or come along and speak to their friendly and helpful staff.

## 11 Complaints and academic appeals procedure

If you have a complaint relating to any aspect of the Department or its staff or to any academic or College matter, you should first discuss it informally with your Personal Tutor or with another member of staff in the Department. We would hope that the majority of issues of this kind can be resolved by informal discussion. There are, however, procedures that can be invoked in serious cases. These are set out in the [College Complaints Procedures](#) for students. You should raise your complaint **as soon as possible**.

If the complaint concerns an academic decision, there is an academic appeals process. Please note that an academic appeal can only be submitted once you have received your results via the College portal. Details of the appeals procedure and permitted grounds for appeal can be found on the Academic Appeals [webpage](#).

## 12 Health and Safety Information

The [Health and Safety webpage](#) provides general information about our health and safety policies.

The Departmental Health & Safety coordinator oversees health and safety procedures in the Department, in order to ensure that all persons working in the Department do so in a healthy and safe environment. There are rules and regulations that are specific to particular Departmental activities, and every person who is working in or visiting these areas must make sure that they are acquainted with these regulations. Ignoring such provisions means not only putting yourself at risk, but those around you also.

All students and staff involved in fieldwork must comply with the Science Faculty Fieldwork Policy, which is available from the Departmental Health & Safety Coordinator. For those involved in laboratory work, there are Safety Notes and procedures specific to each laboratory; these must be read and understood during the laboratory induction which will take place with the supervising technician before commencement of work. The same applies to the COSHH Regulations, which must be read, and a declaration form signed prior to commencement of work. This includes lab work as part of undergraduate courses. Your course leader will organise this for you.

The Department is committed to providing a healthy and safe environment for staff and students to work in. Risk assessment is an ongoing part of Departmental activity, to ensure that all procedures, courses (including the dissertation) and field trips are implemented with the minimum risk to all concerned. Students will not be allowed to attend fieldtrips or carry out their dissertation unless all health and safety paperwork has been completed. Whilst the Department will do all that is reasonably practicable to reduce any risk to health and safety in the Department, it is also the responsibility of individuals to ensure that their working environment, procedures and actions are safe. **Safety is everyone's responsibility**. Any health and safety concerns should be brought to the attention of Claire Mayers or the college Health and Safety office.

Health and safety suggestions should be submitted to the Departmental Health & Safety Coordinator. If you think there is a risk to safety, please report it immediately to the Department Health and Safety Coordinator.

The Department is located in five different areas within the 3 sites listed in [section 1.5](#). Persons with specific responsibilities for each site are:-

<b>Dr. Claire Mayers - QB130 - ext. 3808</b> Queen's Building EMU – Geography Postgraduate Suite	<b>Mr. Iñaki Valcarcel – MF001 – ext.4683</b> Munro-Fox Lab Geochronology Lab
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### 12.1 General Safety in the Department

**Working hours.** Teaching laboratories are open from 0900-1300 and 1400-1650 each weekday. Special arrangements must be made with the Tutor or Supervisor and Safety Coordinator for access outside these hours. There is no guarantee that work outside normal hours will be permitted. Unsupervised work by undergraduates in the laboratories is not permitted.

**Conduct.** Always behave in a responsible manner when in the Department. Never run in the corridors or on the stairs, you could cause an injury or spillage. Mobile phones should be switched off in all study areas and should only be used in the foyer.

**Belongings.** Do not leave your belongings unattended:

- In corridors or stairwells
- Near exits, particularly fire exits
- Near to emergency equipment, such as fire extinguishers
- Near to electrical equipment or sources of heat
- Munro Fox Laboratory - personal possessions must be stored away as directed during each practical or lecture
- Unattended bags will be removed by Security

**Safety Provisions.** Be aware of the fire exit routes, fire extinguishers, fire alarms and first aid kits in the Department.

**Medical Conditions.** Students suffering from conditions which in some circumstances could render them unconscious should report the fact on the Department's health and safety form, (which includes a medical questionnaire), which all students complete on joining the Department, stating medication, so that field trip and other course leaders can be advised accordingly. Ethical considerations forbid the Health Centre from passing on relevant health information regarding individual students to the Department.

### 12.1.1 Emergencies

**First Aid.** The main first aid kit is situated in the Departmental Office, (QB162). If you suffer an injury, or find someone injured, call a qualified First Aider. A list of First Aiders is posted:

- On the door of each laboratory leading to a corridor
- On the door of each lecture room leading to a corridor
- In the Departmental Office
- At key notice boards around the building

**Fire Alarm.** If the fire bell rings continuously:

- Leave the building immediately, by the nearest safe route. Do not stop to collect belongings. Note: This may not be the door you used to enter the building.
- Report to Assembly Point 15 on the south side of the building straight away; do not wander off without reporting to a Fire Marshall
- Do not enter the building again until authorised to do so

Fire alarms are routinely tested. The test days/times are posted in the Department foyer. You should familiarize yourselves of the arrangements for all buildings in which you have classes.

**Dealing with fires.** If you discover a fire:

- Activate the nearest fire alarm immediately - this is your main priority
- Leave the building by the nearest safe route
- Report to Assembly Point 15, between Queen's Building and Reid Hall
- Fire Marshalls are appointed in each corridor; their instructions must be followed without question
- Do not fight fires unless trained to do so - the incorrect choice or use of a fire extinguisher could put your life at risk and/or make the fire worse.

## 12.2 Code of practice on harassment for students

The College is committed to upholding the dignity of the individual and recognises that harassment can be a source of great stress to an individual. Personal harassment can seriously harm working, learning and social conditions and will be regarded and treated seriously. This could include grounds for disciplinary action, and possibly the termination of registration as a student.

The College's [Code of Practice on personal harassment for students](#) should be read in conjunction with the [Student Disciplinary regulations](#) and the [Complaints procedure](#).

### 12.3 Lone working policy and procedures

The College has a 'Lone Working Policy and Procedure' that can be found [here](#).

Lone working is defined as working during either normal working hours at an isolated location within the normal workplace or when working outside of normal hours. The Geography department runs a range of different rooms, from general teaching, reading and computer facilities, to technical laboratories and analysis suites. Access to the Department is available from 08h00 to 18h00.

The risk associated with using Departmental facilities varies, and thus there are different rules in force for different rooms. These are detailed below:

- Lone working is only permitted in teaching rooms and 'library@Geography' during normal working hours. **Students may not work alone in any Laboratory area at any time.** Use of these facilities for individual project work, such as dissertations, should be arranged with the relevant member of technical staff.
- Inspections/risk assessments of work areas are carried out by the Departmental Health and Safety Coordinator to ensure that hazards have been identified, risks controlled and provisions for emergencies are in place (e.g. escape routes open, firefighting equipment, first aid).
- In the field, students should work in groups when possible, such as when on fieldtrips. Staff will brief all students undertaking these activities on relevant health and safety issues. For dissertations, we advise you to have a second person with you wherever possible in the field, or if this is not possible, to obey basic rules of leaving contact details and details of return times, etc. Matters regarding health and safety for dissertation fieldwork will be dealt with on an individual basis with your dissertation advisor.

Any health and safety concerns should be brought to the attention of the Departmental Health and Safety Coordinator or the College Health and Safety Office.

It is likely that most activities will take place on College premises. However, the principles contained in the above section will apply to students undertaking duties off campus.

### 12.4 Field trips

These notes complement the College's Science Faculty Fieldwork Code of practice which you should also consult. A copy of these guidelines may be obtained from Claire Mayers. You should also read the 'Fitness for field studies' Guide which outlines your responsibilities in relation to your ability to carry out fieldwork.

Whilst every effort is made to ensure that fieldwork provided by the College is safe, it has, by its nature some inherent risks, for example on coasts, exposed uplands or quarries. Severe weather conditions may be encountered in all seasons, especially near coasts or in upland areas. In accordance with the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974, course leaders have a responsibility to ensure that correct precautions are taken and have a duty to inform you of all health & safety issues relating to the work they are supervising. In law, **YOU** have a duty of care to yourself and others whilst engaged in any activity related to your studies at Royal Holloway (see 'Fitness for field studies'). It is **imperative that students cooperate fully and behave responsibly** whilst on any fieldtrip or when doing fieldwork for personal study requirements (e.g. dissertations). **Potential dangers make it imperative that students cooperate by behaving responsibly in order to minimise the risk of accidents. Each individual is responsible for their own safety.**

A course leader's, or in the case of the dissertation, advisor's, safety instructions will be clear and precise as to the fieldwork involved and should be observed by all members of the group at all times. Anyone not conforming to the standards required may be disciplined and dismissed from the course. Such action could jeopardize continuation on the relevant course(s). If a member of your group should act in an unsafe manner, endangering themselves or others, you have a duty to report this to the field leader – you could save the person, or others, from serious injury. Relevant inoculations, including anti-tetanus, are advised – anyone who does not have the relevant vaccinations attend fieldtrips at their own risk. Other safety equipment, such as hard hats and high visibility wear, will be provided by the Department.

A medical questionnaire must be completed by all students as required. These forms will be issued when you join the department and you will be given the opportunity to update these prior to field trip. However, do not wait until such times to change your form if your personal circumstances change. Advise the Department Health and Safety officer immediately. Students will also be required to sign an appropriate Risk Assessment prior to all fieldwork.

College insurance does **NOT** include personal accident cover for students on fieldwork. However, basic overseas insurance can be provided by the College for overseas fieldwork for a small charge. For European fieldwork (e.g. Spain (first year)) all students should obtain a European Health Insurance Card, the application form being obtainable from main post offices (allow 3-4 weeks). This provides basic medical cover in EU countries, although provisions vary greatly from one country to another. For other trips, such as Malawi, Sicily and New York (second year), students are advised to take out suitable insurance cover, including repatriation.

### **The Following Guidelines Should Be Observed During All Field Trips:**

**Observe all safety instructions** given by party leaders. Anyone not conforming to the standards of behaviour required may be excluded from the field trip. Stay with the party, except by clear arrangements with the leader(s). Assemble where requested in order to receive specific guidance on likely hazards. Observe instructions for reporting after completion of the visit.

**Report any injury or illness immediately, regardless of how trivial it may appear.** All trips will have trained first aiders on hand.

**Wear adequate clothing and footwear** for the terrain and weather to be encountered. For rural areas, the following will generally be required:

- Waterproof jacket and over-trousers.
- Stout footwear (trainers are not appropriate for most field trips), Wellington boots in some situations.
- Warm sweater, hat and gloves for upland or winter trips.

Leaders may refuse to allow ill-equipped students to participate in field trips.

**Wear a safety helmet** when advised to do so by the field trip leader. It is obligatory to wear a helmet and high visibility vest when visiting building sites, working quarries and mines.

**Wear safety goggles** (or impact resistant safety glasses) when hammering rocks or using a hammer and/or chisel.

**Never use one geological hammer as a chisel to be hit with another hammer**, because dangerous splinters can fly off. Avoid hammering near or towards other persons. Always wear appropriate safety goggles when hammering rocks. Always look the other way when other people hammer near you. Hammer downwards not sideways if other people are around.

**Cliffs and quarries** require particular care, especially in gusting or strong winds. Ensure that rocks above are secure before venturing below, particularly during a thaw, after heavy rain, or in unstable places such as blasted quarry faces. Avoid unstable overhangs. Avoid loosening rocks on steep slopes, and beware of rock falls. Never work or walk directly above or below another person on a steep slope. Beware of mudflows occurring on clay cliffs and in clay pits.

**Avoid touching machinery or equipment** on building sites or in quarries or mines.

**Do not climb cliffs, rock faces or crags** unless approved as an essential part of the work and properly supervised. Take great care when walking or climbing over wet and slippery rocks.

**Beware of traffic.**

**Do not enter old mine workings or cave systems** unless authorised as an essential part of your work, then only do so with proper lighting, headgear and route-tracing equipment, in the company of an experienced person. Ensure that someone at the surface knows your location and expected time of

return. Be sure to report to them on returning to the surface.

#### 12.4.1 Independent Fieldwork (Dissertation)

All the provisions in [Section 12.4](#) also apply to independent fieldwork. The nature of the training, however, involves an important element of self-reliance, and students undertaking independent fieldwork (e.g. as part of their Dissertation) are necessarily responsible for their own safety in the field. The following guidelines **MUST** be followed where applicable. Further information on safety, including the College Safety in Fieldwork Guidance Notes, is available from the Departmental Safety Co-ordinator.

**Discuss likely safety problems and risks**, and the equipment required, with your supervisor beforehand and complete a Risk Assessment Form. **You are not permitted to carry out any independent fieldwork until this is complete. Failure to complete this paperwork can lead to the failure of your dissertation.** Plan your work carefully, bearing in mind your experience and training, the nature of the terrain, and the weather. Be careful not to over-estimate what can be achieved in a given time period.

**Leave information about your route** each day with a colleague or a local person. Never break arrangements to report your return. If camping, it is desirable to do so near habitation.

**Check weather forecasts.** Keep a constant look-out for weather changes and make contingency plans should a change to the planned timetable become necessary. Do not hesitate to turn back if the weather deteriorates.

**Carry at all times** an HSE approved first aid kit and the following items, where appropriate:

- Adequate clothing and waterproofs
- Emergency food (chocolate, mint cake, glucose tablets, etc.)
- A survival (bivouac) bag or emergency blanket
- Map, compass and watch
- Torch and whistle

**Avoid getting trapped by the tide** on intertidal banks or below sea cliffs. Obtain local information about tides and currents. Carefully observe the high-tide mark when working along the shore.

**Always wear footwear** when wading in rivers, lagoons, or on the shore. Removing socks first will prevent the discomfort of wet feet for the rest of the day.

**Always obtain permission** before entering private property. Follow recognised procedures for visits to building sites, quarries, mines, etc. Be careful to report on leaving the site.

**Rock climbing or caving** should only be undertaken in the company of an experienced companion AND with prior knowledge of your supervisor.

**Working off-shore requires special precautions.** Small boats should only be used in the company of an experienced boatman or colleague. **Always wear a life jacket** (Mae West type). Aqualung equipment should only be used by experienced trained divers. Any activity requiring these activities must be fully discussed with your advisors well before the fieldwork is due to start, as they require additional risk assessment activities at College Level.

**Make sure that you are conversant** with health and safety requirements in environments with which you are unfamiliar, such as underground, or abroad in tropical, desert or arctic conditions.

**Know the International Distress Signal**; six whistle blasts, shouts, or flashes of a torch; pause for one minute; repeat six whistle blasts, shouts or torch flashes. Continue until answered by three whistle blasts, shouts or flashes, followed by three more after an interval of one minutes; the answering signal is repeated several times. When in distress, do not exhaust yourself by shouting or blowing a whistle for too long a period - take a break and then start again.

**When working on mountains** or other exposed areas, familiarise yourself with the mountain safety code. Be aware of the effects of exposure and hypothermia. Know, in advance, what to do in the case

of an emergency. The safety code can be found on many web sites, the following [link](#) being typical.

**Do not carry out fieldwork in countries** or regions if the British Government, or other bodies, have advised against travel to, holiday or work in, that country or region. Information can be obtained from the Foreign Office [web site](#).

## 12.5 Placements

The department offers students the chance to work with a placement organisation as part of the Dissertation stream if they so choose. This specialist stream (GG3005 Independent placement linked dissertation) involves students carrying out their dissertation in collaboration with a partner organisation, under the supervision of an academic member of staff. Students opting for this course will be allocated an advisor who organised the placement, and with whom they will then meet to develop their proposals with respect to research aims, methods, progress, risk assessment and presentation. The placements will take place in the summer break between a student's second and third year, in line with the Memorandum of Understanding agreed between the placement organisation, the student, and the academic staff advisor. More details on this course will be provided by Don Thompson in the first term of the second year, when you will be first introduced to the dissertation process.

## 12.6 Practicals

There are six laboratory suites in the Geography Department, not all of them are located in the Queen's Building: Munro Fox, Geochronology, Microscope, Computer, Paleoecology, and Sediment Analysis. Users of all laboratories must read the Health and Safety information pertaining to that particular laboratory. You will also be given a laboratory induction prior to practical sessions or independent research work (dissertations). **You should not commence work until you have signed the necessary paperwork with the supervising technician.**

**A laboratory is a potentially dangerous area** as it contains many risk materials, e.g. acids, alkalis, gases, inflammables, electrical and many other hazards. Great care must be taken by all who use these facilities and the rules must be complied with: Anyone failing to comply with the rules will be asked to leave the laboratory to prevent them causing harm to themselves and others.

- Always wash your hands before leaving the laboratory, for any reason.
- Never try to repair broken equipment yourself - ask a member of staff. If you attempt to carry out a repair you could do more damage and/or hurt yourself.
- Do not sit on laboratory benches - you never know what you may be sitting on.
- Make sure to clean and tidy your work area before leaving the laboratory.
- Put all rubbish in the bins, as labelled.
- Food and drink must not be consumed in, or even brought into, any laboratory.

### 12.6.1 General Laboratory Guideline

**Supervision.** A student may use laboratory facilities in the Department ONLY under the direct supervision of one of the members of staff, who should be present in person. In no circumstances is anyone to work alone in laboratories.

**Coursework** involving the use of chemical facilities must be confined to the hours timetabled for the course concerned (although the course organiser may authorise special arrangements).

**Independent Project Work** must be approved beforehand by the member of academic staff responsible for the appropriate course.

**Accidents.** Relevant emergency action is displayed in each laboratory. Before starting work, you should make sure you know the precise location of:

- Fire extinguishers and blankets
- First aid kit and eye-wash (normally a cold tap with rubber hose connected)
- Spill kit



- Emergency instructions

### Chemical laboratories

- Laboratory coats must be worn at all times. These will be provided.
- Safety glasses must be worn when instructed to do so. Gloves must be worn when instructed to do so.
- CoSHH forms must be read and signed before starting any work.
- No-one must work in a laboratory unless within shouting distance of another person.
- Undergraduate students are not allowed to work in a laboratory without supervision.
- No shorts or open-toed shoes are permitted in laboratory spaces.

**Non-Chemical Laboratories.** These laboratories contain very expensive equipment:

- While the general rules apply, do not move the equipment for any reason whatsoever. If this needs to be done, ask a member of staff.
- Do not attempt to repair, modify, or carry out maintenance on any piece of equipment.
- Make sure that any equipment that you have used is switched off (using the correct shutting-down procedure) before leaving the laboratory (unless it is marked that it should be left on). Always switch equipment off at the machine first, then the electrical supply.

### 12.6.2 Analytical Laboratories

**Protective clothing.** Laboratory coats must be worn at all times. Safety glasses and gloves must be worn when indicated, and long hair tied back to avoid chemicals, equipment, etc. Contact lenses should not be worn in the laboratory as chemicals splashed in the eye will lodge behind them; glasses should be worn instead. An appropriate design of safety goggle should be worn over the glasses when necessary. These will be supplied by the Department.

**Concentrated acids.** The student **MUST** wear eye protection and disposable gloves. Never add water to concentrated acid; always dilute concentrated acid by adding acid to water, slowly, with the receptacle in a sink.

**Hydrofluoric (HF) and Perchloric (HClO<sub>4</sub>) acids** must not be used by students at any time. All operations involving these acids will be carried out by a supervising staff member.

**Other hazards.** Many other dangerous chemicals are used in chemical laboratories. Laboratory apparatus can also be dangerous if used improperly. Do not tamper with anything unless specifically authorised, and instructed in operating procedures.

**Overnight use.** Some types of equipment are designed to run unattended overnight. Such use must be authorised by a staff member beforehand, and appropriately labelled with name and contact number.

**Breakages and spills.** Major spills should be reported immediately to supervising staff. Switch off all electrical equipment - at the equipment first - in the affected area. Do not attempt to switch off at the mains if overheating or smoking is taking place. If acids or solvents are involved, evacuate the laboratory.

Minor acid spills and leaks can be neutralised with calcium carbonate (CaCO<sub>3</sub>) and mopped up with plenty of water, but should be reported to supervising staff. Please report all breakages and defective or leaking containers to supervising staff immediately.

**Samples.** All samples should be labelled with your name, your supervisors/advisor's name, site location and what they are. Similarly, any chemical solutions made up as part of a set of analyses should be labelled with what they are, their concentration, and date of mixing. Any unlabelled samples or solutions are a hazard as it will not be clear to anybody else what these are.

### 12.6.3 Radiation Laboratories

**Geochronology Laboratory.** Students needing to use the Geochronology Laboratory must receive

training and authorisation from the supervising staff member for that Laboratory (Dr. Simon Armitage), and must register with the College for work with ionising radiation and wear a TLD badge (radiation exposure monitor).

## 13 Equal Opportunities Statement and College Codes of Practice

### 13.1 Equal opportunities statement

The University of London was established to provide education on the basis of merit above and without regard to race, creed or political belief and was the first university in the United Kingdom to admit women to its degrees.

Royal Holloway, University of London (hereafter 'the College') is proud to continue this tradition, and to commit itself to equality of opportunity in employment, admissions and in its teaching, learning and research activities.

The College is committed to ensure that:

- all staff, students, applicants for employment or study, visitors and other persons in contact with the College are treated fairly, have equality of opportunity and do not suffer disadvantage on the basis of race, nationality, ethnic origin, gender, age, marital or parental status, dependants, disability, sexual orientation, religion, political belief or social origins
- both existing staff and students, as well as, applicants for employment or admission are treated fairly and individuals are judged solely on merit and by reference to their skills, abilities qualifications, aptitude and potential
- it puts in place appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination and to promote equality of opportunity
- teaching, learning and research are free from all forms of discrimination and continually provide equality of opportunity
- all staff, students and visitors are aware of the Equal Opportunities Statement through College publicity material
- it creates a positive, inclusive atmosphere, based on respect for diversity within the College
- it conforms to all provisions as laid out in legislation promoting equality of opportunity.

### 13.2 Additional codes of practice

Throughout this handbook, reference has been made to various College codes of practice. You should familiarize yourselves with these as necessary. All can be found on the College web site. If you are unsure, please ask.

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## APPENDIX A

### GRADE DESCRIPTORS & MARKING CRITERIA

Class	Grade Descriptors for Coursework Essays	Grade	%	Marking criteria	
1st	Deep understanding; near-comprehensive knowledge; significant originality in interpretation or analysis; coherent structure (may show significant innovation in its organisational form); intensive, detailed and critical use of literature with independent reading beyond reading lists; deep awareness of key debates in the literature; Approaching professional standards of presentation	High 1st	100	An exemplary piece of work	
			98 95 92	Outstanding performance in most criteria 1-7	
		Mid 1st	88 85 82	Evidence of excellence in most criteria 1-7	
2:1	Sufficient evidence for deep understanding; Clear awareness of some key debates in the literature; detailed knowledge; may show some originality in interpretation or analysis; in-depth reading (with <i>either</i> independent reading beyond reading lists <i>or</i> intensive, detailed and critical reading of suggested material); incisive and fluent style, excellent spelling and grammar; high levels of ability in the analysis of quantitative or qualitative information (where appropriate).	Low 1st	78 75 72	Sufficient evidence of excellence in criteria, 1-4	
			High 2.1	68	A good performance in most criteria 1-7
			Mid 2.1	65	A good performance in some criteria, particularly 1-3
2:2	Clear understanding; wide-ranging knowledge; direct focus on question; evidence of critical thought in the analysis of literature; in-depth reading; clear awareness of some key debates in the literature; detailed referencing; properly formatted bibliography; coherent structure; well-presented; figures/tables (if presented) are relevant to the topic and may strengthen the arguments made in the essay; fluent style; good spelling and grammar; generally effective analysis of quantitative or qualitative information (where appropriate).	Low 2.1	62	Does sufficiently well in criteria 1-4 to show evidence of clear understanding	
			High 2.2	58	A good attempt but insufficient critical analysis (criteria 2-4) for a 2:1.
			Mid 2.2	55	Usually an adequate performance in most criteria
2:2	Demonstrates a general understanding and knowledge, with a focus on the question, but is mainly descriptive with insufficient critical insight or depth for a 2:1, likely to draw heavily on lectures or other direct teaching; may be some further reading and referencing but its use is descriptive rather than critical and likely to be focused on case study descriptions with limited awareness of wider debates; adequate structure and presentation; If figures/tables are presented they may not be the most relevant short bibliography for the level; straightforward style; some errors in spelling and grammar; familiarity with correct strategies for analysis of quantitative or qualitative information, but possibly with errors in the process of analysis (where appropriate).	Low 2.2	52	May be weaknesses but sufficient evidence in criteria 1-4 for a 2.2	

3 <sup>rd</sup>	Some understanding and knowledge of the topic but likely to lack detail and a clear focus on the question; simple structure, usually drawing heavily on lectures or other direct teaching; may show misunderstanding of lecture material. No/very limited further reading; little or no/poor referencing/bibliography; significant weaknesses in presentation; Irrelevant figures/tables used; simple style; numerous errors in spelling or grammar; familiarity with correct strategies for analysis of quantitative or qualitative information, but with significant errors in the process of analysis (where appropriate).	High 3 <sup>rd</sup>	48	Likely to be a lack of focus on the question (criteria 1) with insufficient evidence in criteria 2-4 to merit a 2:2.
		Mid 3 <sup>rd</sup>	45	Weak performance in some criteria, in particular 1-4
3 <sup>rd</sup> or Pass	Weak understanding; a lack of focus on the question; sketchy coverage, with some significant errors in factual details; sketchy structure, drawing exclusively on lectures or other direct teaching, but with significant weaknesses; no further reading; poorly presented; little or no referencing; inadequate or absent bibliography; sketchy style; numerous errors in spelling or grammar; bare familiarity with correct strategies for analysis of quantitative or qualitative information, but with substantial errors in the process of analysis (where appropriate).	Low 3 <sup>rd</sup>	42	Likely to be weak in all criteria but there is sufficient material for the work to merit a pass.
Fail	V limited understanding of the question with limited or no focus, possibly containing sections with no relevance; likely to be no referencing or referencing/evidence of further reading. Brief signs of understanding and some basic knowledge but containing serious errors; weak in detail. Limited sense of logical argument; significant errors in spelling/grammar.	Condonable Fail		
			38 35 32	Criteria 1-4 not addressed to a satisfactory level. Some elements of criteria 5-7 may be ok.
	As condonable fail but the lack of focus and poor engagement with course materials indicate that the candidate would benefit from redoing the piece of work. Student may have completely misunderstood the question.	Non-Condonable fail		
			28 25 22	Poor performance in most criteria.
	Work is unacceptable for the level. May be some vague knowledge of subject but likely to be irrelevant or confused. The examiner will have to search for material that is relevant to the question. Work may be unacceptably short. Usually poorly written and badly presented.		18 15 12	V poor performance in most criteria. May have inadequate structure; or work is too short
			8 5 2	May be largely irrelevant to the question, show minimal effort or be an incomplete piece of work
		0	No work submitted within 24 hours of the deadline	

### Marking criteria for Coursework Essays

1. Focus on the question/assignment
2. Level of critical understanding
3. Extent to which arguments are supported by further reading
4. Evidence of independent thought in argument or analysis
5. Appropriate bibliography and referencing style
6. Effective communication
7. Presentation of work

Class	Grade Descriptors for Dissertations	Grade	%	Marking criteria	
1st	Deep understanding of subject area; significant originality in the construction of its main research aims and questions; substantial original fieldwork or other independent research; excellent use of appropriate data-gathering and analytical techniques ; incisive critical analysis of results and excellent, logical development of argument; clear and concise conclusions presented; critical commentary on research design and methodology; coherent structure; in-depth reading; professionally presented, with referencing and bibliography of exemplary standard; incisive and fluent style. <b>A high first class dissertation should approach professional standards of research.</b>	High 1st	100	An exemplary piece of independent research; may be publishable as a journal paper with further editing and revision	
			98 95 92	Outstanding performance in all criteria 1-7, approaching professional standards of research	
		Mid 1st	88 85 82	Evidence of excellence in most criteria 1-7	
2:1	Sufficient evidence for deep understanding of subject area; well-constructed research aims and questions; likely to have carried out substantial original fieldwork or other independent research; well considered use of appropriate data-gathering and analytical techniques; critical analysis of results; critical commentary on research design and methodology; logical development of argument; clear and concise conclusions presented; coherent structure; in-depth reading; excellently presented, with referencing and bibliography of exemplary standard; incisive and fluent style;	Low 1st	78 75 72	Sufficient evidence of excellence in criteria 1-4	
			High 2.1	68	A good performance in most criteria 1-7
			Mid 2.1	65	A good performance in some criteria, in particular 1-4
2:2	Clear understanding of subject area; clear statement of research aims and questions; significant original fieldwork/other independent research; good use of appropriate data-gathering and analytical techniques; commentary on research design and methodology; effective analysis of results; logical arguments developed; appropriate conclusions clearly stated; coherent structure; in-depth reading; well-presented, with referencing & properly formatted bibliography; good spelling & grammar and written style	Low 2.1	62	Shows sufficient quality in criteria 1-4 to merit a 2:1	
			High 2.2	58	A good attempt but insufficient critical analysis (criteria 3-4) for a 2:1.
			Mid 2.2	55	Usually an adequate performance in most criteria
3rd	Demonstrates a general understanding of subject area. Dissertation is mainly descriptive, with insufficient critical analysis of the results, wider literature and/or research methods to merit a 2:1. Simple statement of research aims and questions; adequate original fieldwork/other independent research. Greater logical development of argument needed; familiarity with appropriate techniques (but some errors in application); basic account of methods; appropriate conclusions stated though may miss some aspects of the wider context; adequate structure, but may be weaknesses in linking aims, methodology and analysis; some evidence of reading; adequately presented; usually some referencing & short bibliography; straightforward style; some errors in spelling or grammar.	Low 2.2	52	Despite weaknesses, shows sufficient evidence for a 2:2 standard within criteria 1-4.	
			High 3rd	48	Generally a weak dissertation but may show glimpses of something better within criteria 1-4.

	techniques (significant errors in application); basic analysis of results; simple account of methods; methods unlikely to achieve stated aims; poor development of arguments; inappropriate conclusions and/or poorly expressed conclusions; limited further reading; significant weaknesses in presentation; little or no referencing and an inadequate or absent bibliography; simple style; numerous errors in spelling and grammar.	Mid 3 <sup>rd</sup>	45	Weak performance in some criteria, in particular 1-4
3 <sup>rd</sup> or Pass	Limited understanding of subject area; confused or vague research aims or questions; very limited original fieldwork or other independent research but deemed to be sufficient for a pass; bare familiarity with appropriate techniques (substantial errors in application); vague or confused discussion of methods; limited analysis of results; limited development of argument; weak conclusions; sketchy structure; very little further reading; poorly presented; little or no referencing and an inadequate or absent bibliography; sketchy style; numerous errors in spelling or grammar.	Low 3 <sup>rd</sup>	42	Likely to be weak in all criteria but there is sufficient material for the work to merit a pass.
Fail	Very limited understanding of the subject area; research aims unclear; findings may be insignificant for the level of an undergraduate dissertation; insufficient evidence of original fieldwork or other independent research to merit a pass; serious confusion over techniques and/or analysis of results; limited sense of logical argument; inadequate discussion of methods; likely to be insufficient use of the wider literature; confused conclusions; very poor referencing; weak structure; poor or inadequate presentation; significant errors in spelling or grammar;	Condonable Fail		
			38 35 32	Criteria 2-3 not addressed to a satisfactory level for an undergraduate dissertation
		Non-Condonable Fail		
			28 25 22	Criteria 1-4 not addressed to a satisfactory level for an undergraduate dissertation
		F-	Work is extremely poor for an undergraduate dissertation. May be some vague knowledge of subject but likely to be irrelevant or confused. No evidence of original fieldwork or other independent research; no appropriate analysis; work may be unacceptably short; likely to be poorly written and badly presented, with an inappropriate structure for a dissertation; examiner has to search for relevant material.	
	8 5 2			Likely to be an incomplete piece of work.
	0			Dissertation submitted more than 24 hours late

### Marking criteria for Dissertations

1. Research design: clear aims and appropriateness of methodology
2. Amount of original fieldwork or other independent research
3. Critical analysis of results
4. Analysis and engagement with the wider literature on the topic
5. Structure and presentation of work
6. Appropriate bibliography and referencing style
7. Effective communication



Class	Grade Descriptors for Fieldwork and Laboratory Reports	Grade	%	Marking criteria
1st	Clear, well-structured and achievable aims; near comprehensive awareness of relevant research agenda; well detailed field context, wide literature base and contextualisation of the study within the wider themes and debates identified in literature; excellent research design (where appropriate), combined with critical approach to methodological issues; sufficient data to allow detailed analysis and achievement of aims; thorough discussion with results properly contextualised in the light of literature; limitations and suggestions for improvement of methodology or research questions; excellent structure, incisive and fluent style, clear, informative graphics which clearly enhance the interpretation of research questions and achievement of project aims.	High 1 <sup>st</sup>	100	Approaching professional standards of research reports.
			98 95 92	Outstanding performance in all criteria 1-7
		Mid 1 <sup>st</sup>	88 85 82	Evidence of excellence in most criteria 1-7
2:1	Clear, well-structured and achievable aims; awareness of relevant research agenda; clear field context, wide literature base and contextualisation of the study within the wider themes and debates identified in literature; excellent research design (where appropriate), combined with critical approach to methodological issues; sufficient data to allow detailed analysis and achievement of aims; detailed discussion with results properly contextualised in the light of literature; limitations and suggestions for improvement of methodology or research questions; logical structure, incisive and fluent style, clear, informative graphics which enhance the interpretation of research questions and achievement of project aims.	Low 1st	78 75 72	Sufficient evidence of excellence in some criteria, 1-4
			B+	68
		B	65	A good performance in some criteria, in particular 1-4
		B-	62	Does sufficiently well in criteria 1-4 to show evidence of clear understanding

2:2	Clear aims with reasonable scope, but could be better structured; reasonable awareness of literature on the topic and clear field context; may lack clarity on relevant debate in the literature; adequate research design/choice of topic (where appropriate); adequate methodology for the aims of the project, but limited or inappropriate sampling strategy; data quantity allows descriptive approach but sample sufficient only for limited inference; data/materials have reasonable descriptive and interpretative value; clear attempt to describe, order and classify materials using a limited number of methods; clear descriptive content relating back to research questions to some extent; limited critical appraisal of project results and methodologies; reasonable progression of ideas and logical organisation; appropriate conclusions but may not sufficiently link to wider debates some errors in spelling, grammar or written style; relevant illustrations, maps and diagrams (where appropriate) cover essentials but could be clearer.	C+	58	A good attempt but insufficient critical analysis (criteria 2-4) for a 2:1.
		C	55	Usually an adequate performance in most criteria
		C-	52	May be weaknesses but sufficient evidence in criteria 1-4 for a 2.2
3rd	Aims unclear and/or address a trivial research question; limited field context for study and limited literature review with relevant debates not discussed; poor research design/choice of topic (where appropriate), methodology allows only partial achievement of project aims; limited data quantity, allowing description only; data/materials have limited descriptive and/or analytical value; limited use of relevant methods, but some attempt to order/classify data; some useful descriptive material, but little attempt to interpret results; some attempt to summarise main findings but limited critical appraisal; weak conclusions with no consideration of wider debates; numerous errors in spelling, grammar or written style; illustrations are basic but aid understanding of the results/findings	D+	48	Generally a weak report but may show glimpses of something better within criteria 1-4.
		D	45	Weak performance in some criteria, in particular 1-4
3 <sup>rd</sup> or Pass	Some attempt to order/classify data; some useful descriptive material, but little attempt to interpret results; some attempt to summarise main findings but limited critical appraisal; weak conclusions with no consideration of wider debates; numerous errors in spelling, grammar or written style; illustrations are basic but aid understanding of the results/findings	D-	42	Likely to be weak in all criteria there is sufficient material for the work to merit a pass
Fail	No statement of aims or they are unachievable; poor justification of aims and no literature base; no clear methodology or sampling scheme; inadequate sample size to allow achievement of project aims; data/materials inadequate for reasonable analysis/interpretation in terms of research question; basic description only, with no analytical content; no attempt to interpret data and evaluate against research questions; no conclusions, or perfunctory; some attempt to summarise the project but no critical content; poor structure and organisation, significant errors in spelling, grammar or written style; few or no illustrations, maps or diagrams (where appropriate), uninformative or irrelevant, poor captions	Condonable Fail		
			38 35 32	Criteria 2-3 not addressed to a satisfactory level for an undergraduate field or lab report
		Non-Condonable Fail		
			28 25 22	Criteria 1-4 not addressed to a satisfactory level for an undergraduate field or lab report
			18 15 12	V poor performance in all criteria. Likely to be no data presented
	8 5 2	Likely to be an incomplete piece of work.		
	0	Report submitted more than 24 hours late		
	Work is unacceptable for an undergraduate field or laboratory report. May demonstrate some vague knowledge of subject but likely to be irrelevant, confused, or simplistic. No appropriate data analysis; work may be unacceptably short; likely to be poorly written and badly presented, with an inappropriate structure for a field or laboratory report.			

#### Marking criteria for fieldwork and laboratory reports

1. Clarity of aims and research questions
2. Clarity and appropriateness of methodology
3. Quantity and quality of data
4. Analysis and engagement with the wider literature on the topic
5. Structure and presentation of work
6. Appropriate bibliography and referencing style
7. Effective communication

Class	Grade Descriptors for Oral Presentations	Grade	%	Marking criteria
1st	Original and thought-provoking presentation, identifying subtleties in details of the assignment; clear and original structure of content and conclusions; ideas linked coherently and conducted with confidence; evidence of comprehensive research and original thought in evaluations; deep awareness of key debates in the literature; pitch of voice and audio-visual aids used to near-professional standard; appropriately paced and on time; eye contact and body language used to full effect; gauged the needs of the audience and encouraged appropriate involvement and questioning, answering with authority and/or originality	High 1 <sup>st</sup>	100	Approaching professional standards of presentation
			98 95 92	Outstanding performance in most criteria 1-7
			Mid 1st	88 85 82
Low 1st	78 75 72	Sufficient evidence of excellence in criteria 1-5		
	2:1	Explicitly addressed set topic; structure evident, but could be more focused; evidence of coherent links between ideas, commenced and concluded appropriately; included relevant analysis; evidence of a wide range of relevant sources, and evidence of some evaluation; awareness of some key debates in the literature; clearly audible and audio-visual aids used to increase effectiveness; almost entirely appropriately paced and ran closely to time; eye contact and body language used for most of the presentation; obvious attempt to gauge audience needs; encouraged appropriate involvement and questioning, demonstrating knowledge and understanding in answers	High 2.1	68
Mid 2.1			65	A good performance in some criteria 1-5
Low 2.1			62	Does sufficiently well in criteria 1-5 to demonstrate a 2:1 level
2:2	Addressed the set topic; structure evident, though could be improved; evidence of coherent links between most ideas but largely descriptive with lack of critical insight; limited awareness of wider debates in the literature; commencement and conclusion could have been more appropriate; evidence that some relevant sources consulted, and could have been evaluated more effectively; audible for all the presentation, and audio-visual aids were used, although some lack of planning; pace not always appropriate and ran over/under time; more use of eye contact and body language could have been made; audience needs not well gauged, and limited encouragement to participate/question, answering with basic understanding	High 2.2	58	A good attempt but insufficient critical analysis (criteria 2-4) for a 2:1.
		Mid 2.2	55	Usually an adequate performance in most criteria
		Low 2.2	52	May be weaknesses but sufficient evidence in criteria 1-5 for a 2.2

3 <sup>rd</sup>	Partially addressed the set topic; some evidence of an appropriate structure, but presentation partially rambling or unfocused; ideas could have been linked more coherently; commenced and concluded with some hesitation or confusion; included little or no analysis; few relevant sources consulted and little evaluation made; presenter slightly inaudible, and audio-visual aids not very effective; presentation ran over/under time; presentation paced too fast or too slow to be completely effective; little use of eye contact and body language; audience needs not taken into account in design of the presentation; no attempt made to encourage appropriate audience involvement and questioning, and some weaknesses in basic understanding indicated in answers	High 3 <sup>rd</sup>	48	Generally a weak presentation; may show glimpses of something better but insufficient for a 2:2
		Mid 3 <sup>rd</sup>	45	Weak performance in some criteria, in particular 1-4
		Low 3 <sup>rd</sup>	42	Likely to be weak in all criteria but there is sufficient material for the work to merit a pass
3 <sup>rd</sup> or Pass	Largely failed to address the set topic; rambling or unfocused; commenced and concluded with hesitation or confusion; included little or no analysis; few relevant resources consulted, and little valuation made of them; partially inaudible; equipment used ineffectively; presentation ran severely over/under time; presentation paced too fast or too slow to be completely effective; did not make engaging use of eye contact or body language; no attempt to gauge audience needs in design of the presentation; no attempt to encourage audience participation and questioning, and answers largely erroneous or had little or no relevance to the topic	Condonable Fail		
			38 35 32	Criteria 1-4 not addressed to a satisfactory level to pass. Some elements of criteria 5-7 may be ok.
		Non-Condonable Fail		
Fail	Presentation failed to address topic; very rambling and unfocused; commenced and concluded with hesitation or confusion; included no analysis; no resources consulted; presenter was fully or partially inaudible; equipment and/or audio-visual aids were not used, presentation severely over/under time; insufficient content for an oral presentation at this level; paced too fast or too slow to be completely effective; presenter did not engage eye contact or body language; audience needs not taken into account in designing presentation; no attempt made to encourage appropriate audience involvement and questioning, and unable or unwilling to answer question		28 25 22	Poor performance in all criteria.
			18 15 12	V poor performance in all criteria; shows minimal effort
			8 5 2	May completely fail to address the topic and/or is an incomplete presentation
		0	Did not present	

### Marking criteria for oral presentations

1. Focus on the topic/assignment
2. Level of critical understanding
3. Level of detailed knowledge
4. Evidence of wider reading
5. Use of illustrative materials
6. General body language & engagement with the audience
7. Pacing and timing of the presentation

Class	Grade Descriptors for Poster Presentations	Grade	%	Marking criteria	
1st	Aim of poster very apparent from immediate impressions; excellent summary of main ideas demonstrating deep awareness of key debates; significant evidence of further reading, with well synthesised supporting information; text excellently presented, quantity and font size extremely effective; clear, relevant illustrations that enhance purpose and interest of poster; fluent style; innovative poster design, allows rapid communication of message; very neat and presentable; good source of further information and excellently presented bibliography.	High 1 <sup>st</sup>	100	Approaching professional standards for a poster presentation.	
			98 95 92	Outstanding performance in most criteria 1-7	
		Mid 1 <sup>st</sup>	88 85 82	Evidence of excellence in most criteria 1-7	
2:1	Aim of poster clearly apparent; clear summary of main ideas demonstrating detailed awareness of key debates; evidence of further reading, with well synthesised supporting information; text excellently presented, quantity and font size extremely effective; clear, relevant illustrations that enhance purpose and interest of poster; fluent style; excellent poster design, allows clear communication of message; very neat and presentable; good source of further information and excellently presented bibliography.	Low 1 <sup>st</sup>	78 75 72	Sufficient evidence of excellence in criteria 1-4	
			High 2.1	68	A good performance in most criteria 1-7
			Mid 2.1	65	A good performance in some criteria 1-7, in particular criteria 1-2
2:2	Aim of poster clear, main ideas appropriate to topic, and presented correctly; some evidence of further reading but likely to be focused on case study descriptions with limited awareness of wider debates, with general supporting information given; text adequately presented, quantity and font size appropriate; some illustrations that add to purpose of poster; some errors in spelling and grammar; simple style; good poster design, allows communication of message; neat and presentable; some further information and adequate bibliography	Low 2.1	62	Does sufficiently well in criteria 1-3 to demonstrate a 2:1 level	
			High 2.2	58	A good attempt but insufficient critical analysis (criteria 2-3) for a 2:1.
			Mid 2.2	55	Usually an adequate performance in most criteria
3 <sup>rd</sup> or Pass	Title given, but unclear what the poster is about; main ideas appropriate to topic; little evidence of further reading, little supporting information given; text reasonably presented, quantity and font size adequate; few illustrations, some appropriate; numerous errors in spelling, grammar or written style; reasonable poster design, allows communication of message; basically presentable; little further information and inadequate bibliography	Low 2.2	52	May be weaknesses but sufficient evidence in criteria 1-4 for a 2.2	
			High 3 <sup>rd</sup>	48	Generally a weak poster; may show glimpses of something better but insufficient for a 2:2
			Mid 3 <sup>rd</sup>	45	Weak performance in some criteria, in particular 1-4
		Low 3 <sup>rd</sup>	42	Likely to be weak in all criteria but there is sufficient material for the work to merit a pass	

Fail	Main ideas inappropriate to topic with evidence of error and confusion; no evidence of further reading, little supporting information given; text may be ineffective, too small, unclear; few or no illustrations, uninformative or irrelevant; significant errors in spelling or grammar; sketchy style; poor poster design, hinders communication of message; untidy, messy; no bibliography or further information included	Condonable Fail	
		38 35 32	Criteria 1-3 not addressed to a satisfactory level to pass
		Non-Condonable Fail	
	May lack title; main ideas inappropriate to topic; error and confusion throughout; no supporting information given; text ineffective, too small, unclear; few or no illustrations, uninformative or irrelevant; significant errors in spelling, grammar or written style; poor poster design, hinders communication of message; untidy, messy; no bibliography or further information included	28 25 22	Poor performance in most criteria.
		18 15 12	V poor performance in most criteria; or insufficient work shown for this level; shows minimal effort
		8 5 2	May completely fail to address the topic, and/or is clearly an incomplete poster
0		Submitted 24 hours after deadline	

### Marking criteria for poster presentations

1. Focus on the assignment
2. Level of critical understanding
3. Evidence of wider reading
4. Aim of poster clear from first impressions
5. Design and layout of poster
6. Use of illustrative material enhances poster
7. Clarity and succinctness of text

Class	Grade Descriptors for Examination Essays	Grade	%	Marking criteria
1st	Deep understanding; near-comprehensive knowledge of relevant debates; significant originality and independent thought in interpretation or analysis; coherent structure (may show significant innovation in its organisational form); intensive, detailed and critical use of literature with independent reading beyond reading lists;; referencing of exemplary standard; incisive and fluent style, with no or very minor errors of spelling, punctuation or grammar; high levels of ability in analysis of information (where appropriate).	High 1 <sup>st</sup>	100	As good as could be expected under examination conditions
			98 95 92	Outstanding performance in most criteria 1-6
		Mid 1 <sup>st</sup>	88 85 82	Evidence of excellence in most criteria 1-6
	Sufficient evidence for deep understanding; detailed knowledge of relevant debates; evidence of originality and independent thought in interpretation or analysis; coherent structure; in-depth reading (with <i>either</i> independent reading beyond reading lists <i>or</i> intensive, detailed and critical reading of suggested material); referencing of a high standard; incisive and fluent style, high levels of ability in the analysis of quantitative or qualitative information (where appropriate).	Low 1 <sup>st</sup>	78 75 72	Sufficient evidence of excellence in criteria 1-4
2:1	Clear understanding; wide-ranging knowledge of relevant debates; direct focus on question; sufficient evidence of independent and critical thought; coherent structure; in-depth reading; detailed referencing; fluent style; good spelling and grammar; generally effective analysis of quantitative or qualitative information (where appropriate).	High 2.1	68	A good performance in most criteria 1-6
		Mid 2.1	65	A good performance in some criteria, particularly 1-3
		Low 2.1	62	Does sufficiently well in criteria 1-4 to show evidence of clear understanding
2:2	Demonstrates a general understanding and knowledge, with a focus on the question, but is mainly descriptive with insufficient critical insight for a 2:1; may draw heavily on lectures or other direct teaching; may be some further reading and referencing but its use is descriptive rather than critical and is likely to be focused on case study descriptions with limited awareness of wider debates; adequate structure; straightforward style; some errors in spelling, grammar or written style; familiarity with correct strategies for analysis of quantitative or qualitative information, but possibly with errors in the process of analysis (where appropriate).	High 2.2	58	A good attempt but insufficient critical analysis (criteria 2-4) for a 2:1
		Mid 2.2	55	Usually an adequate performance in most criteria
		Low 2.2	52	May be weaknesses but sufficient evidence in criteria 1-4 for a 2.2
3rd	Some understanding and knowledge of the topic but likely to lack detail and a clear focus on the question; simple structure, usually drawing exclusively on lectures or other direct teaching; may show some misunderstanding of lecture material; no or very limited evidence of further reading; little or no referencing; simple style; numerous errors in spelling or grammar; familiarity with correct strategies for analysis of quantitative or qualitative information, but with significant errors in the process of analysis (where appropriate).	High 3 <sup>rd</sup>	48	Likely to be a lack of focus on the question (criteria 1) with insufficient evidence in criteria 2-4 to merit a 2:2
		Mid 3 <sup>rd</sup>	45	Weak performance in some criteria, in particular 1-4

3 <sup>rd</sup> or Pass	Limited understanding; a lack of focus on the question; sketchy coverage, with some significant errors in factual details; sketchy structure, drawing exclusively on lectures or other direct teaching, but with significant weaknesses; no evidence of further reading; little or no referencing; sketchy style; numerous errors in spelling, grammar; bare familiarity with correct strategies for analysis of quantitative or qualitative information, but with substantial errors in the process of analysis (where appropriate).	Low 3rd	42	Likely to be weak in all criteria but there is sufficient material for the work to merit a pass
Fail	V limited understanding of the question for the level; limited or no focus on the question (there may be sections with no relevance to the question); likely to be no referencing (there could be referencing and evidence of further reading but the student has completely misunderstood the question); there may be brief signs of understanding and some basic knowledge but likely to contain errors; weak in detail. Limited sense of logical argument. Significant errors in spelling, grammar or written style	Condonable Fail		
			38 35 32	Criteria 1-4 not addressed to a satisfactory level
		Non-Condonable Fail		
			28 25 22	Poor performance in most criteria
			18 15 12	V poor performance in most criteria.
			8 5 2	Answer may be largely irrelevant, show minimal effort or be incomplete
	Work is unacceptable for the level. May be some vague knowledge of subject but likely to be irrelevant or confused. May have inadequate structure; or work is too short for this level The examiner will have to search for material that is relevant to the question. Work may be unacceptably short. Usually poorly written and badly presented.		0	Exam not sat

#### Marking criteria

1. Focus on the question
2. Level of critical understanding
3. Extent to which arguments are supported by further reading
4. Evidence of independent thought in argument or analysis
5. Effective communication
6. Referencing



Class	Grade Descriptors for Dissertation Proposals	Grade	%	Marking criteria
1st	<p>Deep understanding of proposed subject area; significant originality in the construction of its main research aims and questions; detailed justification of fieldwork or other independent research; excellent justification of appropriate data-gathering and analytical techniques; in-depth preparatory reading; exemplary use of figures, tables and maps (where appropriate) professionally presented, with referencing and bibliography of exemplary standard; incisive and fluent style;</p> <p><b>A high first class dissertation proposal should approach professional standards of research.</b></p>	High 1st	100	An exemplary piece of research planning; close to professional grant application standards
			98 95 92	Outstanding performance in all criteria 1-7, approaching professional standards of research
		Mid 1st	88 85 82	Evidence of excellence in most criteria 1-7
	Sufficient evidence for deep understanding of proposed subject area with detailed research aims/ questions; sufficiently detailed justification of original fieldwork or other independent research with thoughtful use of appropriate data-gathering and analytical techniques; in-depth reading; excellently presented, with referencing and bibliography of a high standard; figures, tables and maps (where appropriate) clearly set the context for the research proposal; incisive and fluent style;	Low First	78 75 72	Sufficient evidence of excellence in criteria 1-4
2:1	<p>Clear understanding of proposed subject area; clear statement of research aims and questions; clear justification of fieldwork or other independent research; good use of appropriate data-gathering and analytical techniques; in-depth reading; figures, tables and maps (where appropriate) add to the proposal; well-presented, with referencing in acceptable style &amp; properly formatted bibliography; good spelling &amp; grammar and written style</p>	High 2.1	68	A good performance in most criteria 1-7
		Mid 2.1	65	A good performance in some criteria, in particular 1-4
		Low 2.1	62	Shows sufficient quality in criteria 1-4 to merit a 2:1
2:2	<p>Demonstrates a general understanding of proposed subject area but is mainly descriptive, with insufficient critical analysis. Simple statement of research aims and questions; adequate justification of original fieldwork or other independent research; some evidence of reading; adequate figures, tables and maps (where appropriate) chosen; adequately presented; usually some referencing &amp; short bibliography; straightforward style; some errors in spelling or grammar.</p>	High 2.2	58	A good attempt but insufficient critical analysis (criteria 3-4) for a 2:1.
		Mid 2.2	55	Usually an adequate performance in most criteria
		Low 2.2	52	Despite weaknesses, shows sufficient evidence for a 2:2 standard within criteria 1-4.
3rd	<p>Some understanding of proposed subject area; confused or vague research aims or questions; limited justification of fieldwork or other independent research; limited further reading; significant weaknesses in presentation; little or no referencing and an inadequate or absent bibliography; limited use of figures, tables and maps (where appropriate); simple style; numerous errors in spelling and grammar.</p>	High 3rd	48	Generally a weak dissertation but may show glimpses of something better within criteria 1-4.
		Mid 3rd	45	Weak performance in some criteria, in particular 1-4

3 <sup>rd</sup> or Pass	Limited understanding of proposed subject area; confused or vague research aims or questions; very limited justification of fieldwork or other independent research but deemed to be sufficient for a pass; very little further reading; poorly presented; little or no referencing and an inadequate or absent bibliography; sketchy style; numerous errors in spelling or grammar. Unlikely to lead to a good dissertation.	Mid 3 <sup>rd</sup>	42	Likely to be weak in all criteria but there is sufficient material for the work to merit a pass.
Fail	Very limited understanding of proposed subject area; research aims or questions unclear; likely to be insufficient use of the wider literature; very poor referencing; weak structure; poor or inadequate presentation; significant errors in spelling or grammar; Unlikely to lead to a successful dissertation	Condonable Fail		
			38 35 32	Criteria 2-3 not addressed to a satisfactory level for an undergraduate dissertation
	As condonable fail but quality considered too poor to allow a student to potentially pass the piece of work. Needs to be redone to aid dissertation production.	Non-Condonable Fail		
			28 25 22	Criteria 1-4 not addressed to a satisfactory level for an undergraduate dissertation
			18 15 12	V poor performance in all criteria.
Work is extremely poor for an undergraduate dissertation. May be some vague knowledge of subject but likely to be irrelevant or confused. No evidence of appropriate justification for fieldwork or other independent research; likely to be poorly written and badly presented, with an inappropriate structure for a dissertation proposal; examiner has to search for relevant material. Will not lead to a successful dissertation		8 5 2	Likely to be an incomplete piece of work.	
		0	No work submitted within 24 hours of the deadline	

### Marking criteria for dissertation proposals

1. Clear research design: clear research aims; appropriate methodology
2. Justification original fieldwork or other independent research
3. Use of appropriate analytical methods
4. Analysis and engagement with the wider literature on the topic
5. Structure and presentation of work
6. Appropriate bibliography and referencing style
7. Effective communication

Class	Grade Descriptors for Policy Briefings	Grade	%	Marking criteria	
1st	Deep understanding; near-comprehensive knowledge; significant originality in interpretation or analysis. Intensive, detailed and critical use of literature and data with independent reading beyond reading lists. Deep awareness of all key debates in the literature and policy context. High levels of ability in effective communication with excellent use of language, structure and design; incisive and fluent style. Excellently presented (may show significant innovation in presentation); excellent choice of figures/tables that clearly strengthen the communication of the briefing. Referencing and bibliography usually of exemplary standard.	High 1 <sup>st</sup>	100	An exemplary piece of work	
			98 95 92	Outstanding performance in most criteria 1-7	
			88 85 82	Evidence of excellence in most criteria 1-7	
2:1	Deep understanding; detailed knowledge. In-depth reading (with <i>either</i> independent reading beyond reading lists <i>or</i> intensive, detailed and critical reading of suggested material). Clear awareness of most key debates in the topic and policy context. High levels of ability in effective communication with good use of language, structure and design; incisive and fluent style. Excellently presented (may show some innovation in presentation); good choice of figures/tables that strengthen the communication of the briefing. Referencing and bibliography of near-exemplary standard.	Low 1 <sup>st</sup>	78 75 72	Sufficient evidence of excellence in criteria 1-5	
			High 2.1	68	A good performance in most criteria 1-7
			Mid 2.1	65	A good performance in some criteria, particularly 1-4
2:2	Clear understanding; wide-ranging knowledge; direct focus on assignment. In-depth reading; evidence of critical thought in the analysis of literature and data. Clear awareness of some key debates in the literature and policy context. Generally effective communication with effective use of language, structure and design; fluent style. Well-presented; figures/tables are relevant to the topic and strengthen the communication of the briefing; good spelling and grammar. Detailed referencing; properly formatted bibliography.	Low 2.1	62	Does sufficiently well in criteria 1-5 to show evidence of clear understanding	
			High 2.2	58	A good attempt but insufficient performance in criteria 2-5 for a 2:1.
			Mid 2.2	55	Usually an adequate performance in most criteria
2:2	Demonstrates a general understanding and knowledge, with a focus on the assignment, but is mainly descriptive with insufficient critical insight or depth for a 2:1. May be some further reading and referencing but likely to draw heavily on lectures or other direct teaching. Limited awareness of wider debates and policy context. Familiarity with correct strategies for effective communication but possibly with errors in the use of language, structure and design; straightforward style. Adequate presentation; figures/tables are not the most relevant; some errors in spelling and grammar. Short bibliography for the level.	Low 2.2	52	May be weaknesses but sufficient evidence in criteria 1-5 for a 2.2	

3 <sup>rd</sup>	Some understanding and knowledge of the topic but likely to lack detail and clear focus on the assignment; may show misunderstanding of lecture material. No or very limited further reading, usually drawing exclusively on lectures or other direct teaching. Limited awareness of wider debates and policy context. Familiarity with correct strategies for effective communication but poorly executed with significant errors in the use of language, structure and design of briefing; simple style. Significant weaknesses in presentation; irrelevant figures/tables used; numerous errors in spelling or grammar. Little or no referencing; inadequate or absent bibliography.	High 3 <sup>rd</sup>	48	Likely to be a lack of focus on the question (criterion 1) with insufficient evidence in criteria 2-5 to merit a 2:2.
		Mid 3 <sup>rd</sup>	45	Weak performance in some criteria, in particular 1-4
3 <sup>rd</sup> or Pass	Weak understanding; lack of focus on the assignment; sketchy coverage, with some significant errors in factual details. No further reading, drawing exclusively on lectures or other direct teaching, but with significant weaknesses. Lack of awareness of wider debates and policy context. Bare familiarity with correct strategies for effective communication, with substantial errors in use of language, structure and design of briefing; sketchy style. Poorly presented; numerous errors in spelling or grammar. Little or no referencing; inadequate or absent bibliography.	Low 3 <sup>rd</sup>	42	Likely to be weak in all criteria but there is sufficient material for the work to merit a pass.
Fail	V limited understanding of the topic; limited or no focus on the assignment (may be sections with no relevance). Brief signs of understanding and some basic knowledge but likely to contain serious errors and lack of awareness of wider policy context. There could be referencing and evidence of further reading but the student has completely misunderstood the assignment. Ineffective communication, inappropriate use of language, structure or design of briefing. Poorly presented; significant errors in spelling or grammar.	Condonable Fail		
			38 35 32	Criteria 1-4 not addressed to a satisfactory level. Elements of criteria 5-7 may be ok
		Non-Condonable Fail		
			28 25 22	Poor performance in most criteria.
			18 15 12	V poor performance in most criteria. May have inadequate structure; or work is too short
			8 5 2	May be largely irrelevant to the question, show minimal effort or be an incomplete piece of work
	0	No work submitted within 24 hours of the deadline		
	Work is unacceptable for the level. May be some vague knowledge of subject and policy context but likely to be irrelevant or confused. The examiner will have to search for material that is relevant to the assignment. Work may be unacceptably short. Usually poorly written and badly presented.			

### Marking criteria for policy briefs

1. Focus on the assignment
2. Level of critical understanding of the topic
3. Effective communication including clarity, succinctness & appropriateness of language
4. Extent to which information is supported by understanding of the illustrative data
5. Awareness of wider debates and the policy context
6. Effective presentation and design of briefing
7. Appropriate referencing and bibliography style.

Class	Grade Descriptors for Blog Assessment	Grade	%	Marking criteria	
1st	Deep understanding of the task and topic; near-comprehensive knowledge; significant originality in interpretation or analysis; intensive, detailed and critical use of literature and/or appropriate sources with independent reading beyond reading lists; excellent use of language, structure and design; written with an incisive and fluent style; visual presentation of a professional standard; excellent and inventive use of limited space to communicate complex ideas; sophisticated understanding of audience and purpose; excellent choice of images/videos/figures that enhance communication, referencing and bibliography appropriate to the task (e.g. use of hyperlinks in text) and of an exemplary standard.	High 1 <sup>st</sup>	100	An exemplary piece of work	
			98 95 92	Outstanding performance in most criteria 1-7	
		Mid 1 <sup>st</sup>	88 85 82	Evidence of excellence in most criteria 1-7	
2:1	Deep understanding of the task and topic; comprehensive knowledge; originality in interpretation or analysis; detailed and critical use of literature and/or appropriate sources with independent reading beyond reading lists; excellent use of language, structure and design; written with an incisive and fluent style; visual presentation of a near professional standard; excellent use of limited space to communicate complex ideas; thorough understanding of audience and purpose; excellent choice of images/videos/figures that enhance communication, referencing and bibliography appropriate to the task (e.g. use of hyperlinks in text) and of an near exemplary standard.	Low 1 <sup>st</sup>	78 75 72	Sufficient evidence of excellence in criteria 1-5	
			High 2.1	68	A good performance in most criteria 1-7
			Mid 2.1	65	A good performance in some criteria, particularly 1-4
2:2	Clear knowledge and understanding of the task and topic; in depth-reading with evidence of critical analysis of literature and/or appropriate sources; language, structure and design of a high standard; written with a fluent style; visual presentation is effective; clear understanding of how to use limited space and words to communicate complex ideas; good understanding of audience and purpose; good choice of images/videos/figures that enhance the communication, referencing and bibliography appropriate to the task (e.g. use of hyperlinks in text) and of high standard.	High 2.2	58	A good attempt but insufficient performance in criteria 2-5 for a 2:1.	
				Mid 2.2	55
		Low 2.1	62	Does sufficiently well in criteria 1-5 to show evidence of clear understanding	

	and words to communicate complex ideas; some understanding of audience and purpose but may not be clear; some thought to images but may not aid communication of post, some errors in spelling and grammar, bibliography and referencing for the level.	Low 2.2	52	May be weaknesses but sufficient evidence in criteria 1-5 for a 2.2
3rd	Some understanding and knowledge but lacks a clear focus and understanding of the task; may show misunderstanding of lecture and/or source material; limited wider reading and awareness of key debates; may rely heavily on lecture material; may show awareness of conventions of a blog but errors in language, structure, and design; limited thought paid to visual presentation, very little understanding of how to use limited space and words to communicate complex ideas, limited understanding of audience and purpose; errors in spelling and grammar; little or no referencing, inadequate or absent bibliography.	High 3 <sup>rd</sup>	48	Likely to be a lack of focus on the question (criterion 1) with insufficient evidence in criteria 2-5 to merit a 2:2.
		Mid 3 <sup>rd</sup>	45	Weak performance in some criteria, in particular 1-4
	Weak knowledge and understanding of the topic and task; errors in detail; relies solely on lecture material or other direct teaching; lack of awareness of wider debates; very little engagement with appropriate language, structure, and design, errors throughout; poorly presented; limited thought paid to visual presentation, very little understanding of how to use limited space and words to communicate complex ideas, very limited understanding of audience and purpose; little/no thought to use of visuals to aid communication; significant errors in spelling and grammar; little or no referencing, inadequate or absent bibliography.	Low 3rd	42	Likely to be weak in all criteria but there is sufficient material for the work to merit a pass.
Fail	V limited understanding of the topic and task with a lack of focus; there may be brief signs of knowledge but likely to contain significant errors; no engagement with further reading or some evidence but sources misunderstood; poor use of language, poorly structured and presented; Little –no understanding of how to use limited space and words, little-no understanding of audience and purpose; significant errors in spelling and grammar; little or no referencing, inadequate or absent bibliography.	Condonable Fail		
			38 35 32	Criteria 1-4 not addressed to a satisfactory level. Elements of criteria 5-7 may be ok
		Non-Condonable Fail		
			28 25 22	Poor performance in most criteria.
			18 15 12	V poor performance in most criteria. May have inadequate structure; or work is too short
			8 5 2	May be largely irrelevant to the question, show minimal effort or be an incomplete piece of work
		0	No work submitted within 24 hours of the deadline	

#### Marking criteria for Blogs

1. Focus on the assignment
2. Level of critical understanding of the topics discussed
3. Effective communication including clarity, succinctness, and appropriate language
4. Extent to which the posts are supported by wider academic literature and/or appropriate sources
5. Awareness of wider debates and contexts (both in academic scholarship and beyond)
6. Effective presentation and design of blog and posts
7. Appropriate referencing and bibliography style

## APPENDIX B

### Referencing & Bibliographies Examples

#### Example of a Journal Article (Single Author)

Trudgill, S. (2012) 'Do theories tell us what to see? The 19th-century observations of Darwin, Ramsay and Bonney on glacial features', *Progress in Physical Geography*, 36(4), pp. 558–566.

#### Example of a Journal Article (Multiple Authors)

Fedman, D. and Karacas, C. (2012) 'A cartographic fade to black: mapping the destruction of urban Japan during World War II', *Journal of Historical Geography*, 38(3), pp. 306–328.

#### Example of a Book (Single Author)

Cottrell, S. (2008) *The study skills handbook*. 3rd edn. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

#### Example of a Book (Edited)

Driver, F. and Gilbert, D. (eds) (1999) *Imperial cities: landscape, display and identity*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

#### Example of a Chapter in Edited Book

Willis, K. (2010) 'Gender, poverty and social capital: the case of Oaxaca City, Mexico', in Chant, S. (ed.) *The international handbook of gender and poverty*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing, pp. 385–390.

#### Example of a Research Report

Brisley, R., Welstead, J., Hindle, R., and Paavola, J. (2012) *Socially just adaptation to climate change* [Online]. Available at [http://www.jrf.org.uk/sites/files/jrf/climate-change-adaptation-full\\_o.pdf](http://www.jrf.org.uk/sites/files/jrf/climate-change-adaptation-full_o.pdf) (Accessed: 6 August 2012).

Or, without an author cited:

European Commission (2010) *Europe's ecological backbone: recognising the true value of our mountains*. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities.

#### Example of an Article in an Online-Only Journal (NOTE: This is different from a printed journal which is available electronically, which should follow the conventions of a journal article)

Davidson M. (2012) 'Sustainable city as fantasy', *Human Geography*, 5(2) [Online]. Available at: [http://www.hugeog.com/index.php?option=com\\_sectionex&view=category&id=5&Itemid=64#catid47](http://www.hugeog.com/index.php?option=com_sectionex&view=category&id=5&Itemid=64#catid47) (Accessed: 6 August 2012).

#### Example of an Unpublished Thesis

Whittall, D.J. (2012) *Creolising London: black West Indian activism and the politics of race and empire in Britain, 1931–1948*. Unpublished PhD thesis. Royal Holloway, University of London.

#### Example of an Official Publication

Department of Energy and Climate Change (2011) *National policy statement for renewable energy infrastructure*. London: The Stationery Office.

#### Example of an Unpublished Conference Paper

Brickell, K. (2012) "'Plates in a basket will rattle": gendered experiences of abandonment, separation and divorce in Cambodia', RGS-IBG Annual Conference. University of Edinburgh, 3–5 July.

#### Example of a Published Conference Paper

Sharp, J.I. and Kiyan, J.R. (2007) 'Geographic variation of truth claims: reporting on Iraq', *Papers of the Applied Geography Conferences*. Indianapolis, Indiana, 17–20 October. Binghampton: Applied Geography Conferences Inc., pp. 215–225.

### Example of a Newspaper Article

McCracken, K. (2011) 'Danger in the demographics', Otago Daily Times, 26 May, p. 17.

Or, without an author cited:

The Times (2008) 'Bank accounts', 14 June, p. 7.

Or, from an online edition:

Neville, S. (2012) 'Prize fund for carbon capture projects shrinks by £800m', The Guardian, 5 August [Online].

Available at: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2012/aug/05/value-carbon-capture-fund-declines> (Accessed: 6 August 2012).

**Example of a WWW page with obvious author and clear date of last update** Haszeldine, S. (2011) Diagenesis at Edinburgh. Available at: <http://www.geos.ed.ac.uk/research/subsurface/diagenesis/> (Accessed 6 August 2012) [Reference in text as (Haszeldine, 2011) where the date is the date of last update.]

### Example of a WWW page from an organization

Department of Geography, Royal Holloway, University of London (2012) Arctic geopolitics researcher to join Department of Geography. Available at:

<http://www.rhul.ac.uk/geography/research/researchgroups/pds/news/newsarticles/professorphilsteinberg,arcticgeopoliticsresearcherjoinsroyalholloway.aspx> (Accessed: 6 August 2012)

### Example of a WWW page from an organisation, no clear date of last update

Department of Geography, Royal Holloway, University of London. PDS research themes. Available at:

<http://www.rhul.ac.uk/geography/research/researchgroups/pds/themes.aspx> (no date) (Accessed: 6 August 2012)

### Example of an episode of a TV series

'The Arctic' (2008) Wilderness Explored. BBC Four, 28 October.



## APPENDIX C

The screenshot shows a Moodle interface for a Turnitin submission. At the top left is the Royal Holloway University of London logo. At the top right, the user's name 'Carol Woodland' is displayed next to a profile picture. Below the header is a navigation bar with links for 'Moodle home', 'My courses', 'All courses', 'Training & Support', '16/17 courses', and 'Service Status'. A search bar is on the right. The main content area shows the breadcrumb 'Home > GG1011/12/13-2017/18 > General > TURNITIN SUBMISSIONS'. On the left is a navigation menu with options like 'Home', 'My home', 'My profile', 'Current course', 'Participants', 'General', 'TURNITIN SUBMISSIONS', and 'My courses'. The main content area has tabs for 'Submission Inbox', 'Turnitin Tutors', and 'Turnitin Students'. Below these are tabs for 'MODULE A PHYSICAL - Quantitative Methods', 'MODULE C - HUMAN - Qualitative Methods', 'MODULE D - Statistical Methods', and 'MODULE E (GeogPIR) -GIS Map & Commentary'. A table lists submission details:

Title	Start Date	Due Date	Post Date	Marks Available	Export
TURNITIN SUBMISSIONS/MODULE A PHYSICAL - Quantitative Methods	3 Nov 2017 - 12:22	21 Nov 2017 - 12:15	31 Oct 2018 - 12:15	100	-- [Export icons]

Below the table is a 'Summary:' section with the text: 'Please remember to submit the hard copy to the office ahead of the 12:15pm deadline, as well as submitting it to Turnitin. Please also print out your Turnitin receipt and write the paper ID on your work, along with your candidate number.'



## Digital Receipt

This receipt acknowledges that Turnitin received your paper. Below you will find the receipt information regarding your submission.

Submission Author	Your Name
Turnitin Paper ID (Ref. ID)	Turnitin No.
Submission Title	Title or Candidate No.
Assignment Title	TURNITIN SUBMISSION - REPORT
Submission Date	Date & Time