

DEPARTMENT OF EARTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE, POLICY AND MANAGEMENT (MESPOM) PROGRAMME HANDBOOK

2020 - 2021



Note:

All information relating to the programme in this handbook is correct at the time of publication and we will use all reasonable endeavours to deliver the programme accordingly. However, it may be necessary to make changes to the programme(s) in particular circumstances (as indicated in Section 5.1 of the [Student Terms & Conditions 2020-21](#)), including changes which may need to be implemented in response to the significant challenges presented by the pandemic. Please be assured that the University will act in the best interests of students and will take all reasonable and proportionate steps to mitigate the impact of the pandemic on teaching, learning and assessment.

Students will be notified of any material changes in a timely and effective manner and students are also encouraged to regularly check My Manchester and the Department/Discipline communications channels for up to date information relating to COVID-19 which may affect your studies.

It is essential that you familiarise yourself with the content of the Department General Handbook as this contains important information about University, School and Department regulations, policies and procedures. The fact that you have not read this document will not be accepted as a defence for contravening regulations or failing to follow processes and procedures.

The School of Natural Sciences delegates authority to all of its Departments for the implementation and management of all University policies and frameworks relating to Teaching, Learning and the Student Experience and its degree regulations.

The Department General Handbook is available on Blackboard in the SEES Virtual Common Room at:

[Handbooks 2020-2021](#)

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1 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

This is the handbook for students studying at the University of Manchester on Masters in Environmental Sciences, Policy and Management (MESPOM). The length of your study at Manchester is one semester. However, that may be extended to two semesters if you choose to undertake your research project in Manchester.

The handbook is primarily written for students registered on these programmes but also contains important information for their Supervisors and Academic Advisors and other personnel involved with the programmes.

The handbook contains contact information for members of staff associated with the course, details of the programme aims and objectives, the structure of the programmes details of the taught modules, and methods of assessment, project arrangements and information about assessment criteria and how your final degree classification is calculated.

We hope that this handbook, along with the Department General Handbook, contains all the information that you need about the course - if not, do not hesitate to let me know.

I hope that you will enjoy your time in Manchester and will always value this opportunity to learn more about environmental science.

Dr Stephen Boulton
Programme Director

2. DEPARTMENT WELCOME

Dear Student

We, in the Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences, are delighted to welcome you to the University of Manchester. You have made a fantastic choice to come and study Earth and Environmental sciences at a world-class department. We are privileged to work on the most fundamental challenges facing humanity and together we can make a difference by learning how to work with our planet.

I am proud to say that, without exception, staff in EES put our students at the very heart of everything we do. You will be treated as an individual and both challenged and supported through every stage of your programme in order to ensure that you attain the highest possible academic standards and ultimately realise your ambitions.

One of our main objectives is to provide you with transferable skills which you will apply throughout your life to make a success of whatever you choose to do. We work closely with employers to understand what makes graduates competitive (you will meet employers throughout your course) and these lessons will inform your curriculum. We find that the skills that employers desire are an ability to learn, independent and team-based problem solving, enthusiasm, great communication skills and engagement. You will develop these skills during your course, and they'll support you throughout your future careers.

Your time here will be busy and you'll need to pace yourself carefully and organise your time well. Having fun is important but be careful to keep your energy levels high with enough sleep and exercise. Taking care of yourself physically and mentally is the key to success at university, as this provides the platform upon which you can focus your efforts into your studies.

The academic and professional staff are here to help you. If you feel something isn't going well, or you're struggling, do speak with your Academic Advisor or the Student Support Office. Don't wait to get help if you need it.

We see students as our partners in teaching and research, and your thoughts and ideas on how we can do things better are always welcome. We'll always hear you and implement changes which can improve the student experience. We are continuously improving how we deliver our teaching, and you can help us in refining what we do even more.

I wish you every success in your studies with us. Enjoy your time, work hard and don't hesitate to reach out to us whenever you need help.

Regards

Professor Mike Burton
Head of Department
Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences
mike.burton@manchester.ac.uk

3. KEY PERSONNEL AND CONTACT INFORMATION

Title	Name	Email ✉
Head of Department	Professor Mike Burton	✉ mike.burton@manchester.ac.uk
Head of Education	Dr Bart van Dongen	✉ Bart.VanDongen@manchester.ac.uk
Programme Director	Dr Stephen Boulton	✉ S.boulton@manchester.ac.uk
Education Officer & Student Experience Lead	Mike Turner	✉ mike.turner-2@manchester.ac.uk
Programme Administrator	Carol Jeffery	✉ Carol.Jeffery@manchester.ac.uk
Programme Administrator	Laverne Condappa-Ward	✉ Laverne.condappa-ward@manchester.ac.uk
Student Support Administrative Assistant	Emily Haughton	✉ Emily.haughton@manchester.ac.uk
Curriculum and Student Support Officer	Daniel Roper	✉ Daniel.roper@manchester.ac.uk
Mitigating Circumstance Officer	Prof Steve Covey-Crump	✉ stephen.j.covey-crump@manchester.ac.uk
Disability Officer	Dr Margaret Hartley	✉ Margaret.hartley@manchester.ac.uk
Student Support Office Virtual Open Office available Monday, Wednesday and Friday		✉ Earth.support@manchester.ac.uk AT 10:00am on ZOOM 988 2726 0578

4. EXTERNAL EXAMINER

Professor Thomas Fisher, University of Liverpool (Appointed by CEU)

Please note - that it is inappropriate for students to make direct contact with External Examiners under any circumstances, in particular with regards to a student's individual performance in assessments. Other appropriate mechanisms are available for students, including the University's appeals or complaints procedures and the UMSU Advice Centre. In cases where a student *does* contact an External Examiner directly, External Examiners have been requested not to respond to direct queries. Instead, External Examiners should report the matter to their Department contact who will then contact the student to remind them of the other methods available for students. If students have any queries concerning this, they should contact their Programme Office.

5. KEY DATES 2020 - 2021

MESPOM Postgraduate taught students	
Department and programme induction activities	19 October 2020
Semester 3 teaching starts	26 October 2020
Christmas break starts	21 December 2020
Christmas break ends	4 January 2021
Semester 3 teaching continues	4–22 January 2021
Semester 3 exams	25 January–5 February 2021
Semester 3 ends	5 February 2021
Semester 4 starts (if staying for Research Project)	8 February 2021
Easter break starts	29 March 2021
Easter break ends	12 April 2021
Submission of thesis	June 2021
Semester 4 ends	June 2021

Please always check your emails for important announcements on examinations and teaching

6 OVERVIEW OF THE MSc ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES, POLICY AND MANAGEMENT (this relates to the full 4 semesters of which only semester 3 and possibly 4 are taught at UoM)

Governments, industry and society, in all countries, including developing and middle income states, are increasingly aware of the importance of securing sustainable development through cost-effective pollution controls and resource conservation. As a result, there is a growing need, internationally, for suitably qualified personnel in the environmental authorities of central and local government, industry and commerce, consultancy and research. Moreover, the resulting legal requirements on the part of governments and industry to conform to national and international agreements and regulations means that such demand will remain even during periods of economic austerity and retrenchment. There is therefore an increasing need for well-qualified personnel within the regulatory authorities of central and local government, in manufacturing industry, consultancy, and in teaching and research.

Employers are increasingly requiring environmental science graduates to have a strong grounding in the quantitative and qualitative skills required to address environmental questions in addition to subject-specific knowledge and understanding. Our programmes address these requirements through a series of core and optional modules with the emphasis on synthesis.

6.1 Programme Aims and Objectives

The **overall aim** of the programmes is to supply these well-qualified personnel by providing interdisciplinary training in natural science and its application to social science and engineering in relation to an understanding and solving of environmental problems.

The specific aims of the programme are:

- To attract and nurture high calibre students and prepare them for continuing pure and applied research in industry, the regulatory sector or academia by providing them with broad-ranging field and/or laboratory experience, a comprehensive set of practical qualitative and quantitative research skills and professional, transferable skills that will be vital for their future professional development.
- To meet the needs of universities, industrial and regulatory sector employers by supplying high calibre graduates with a proven commitment to research in the area of environmental science, coupled with a broad base of practical research skills, general transferable skills and field and/or laboratory experience. To instil in students the advantages of a multi-disciplinary and collaborative approach to addressing key scientific questions, and to encourage them to take a “holistic” approach to their research.
- To train students in the importance of science in the commercial and regulatory sectors plus the wider community, including the importance of presenting and communicating their science and the importance of addressing ethical issues raised by their science.
- To enable students to make an informed decision about their personal suitability and motivation for a research career

The objectives of the programme:

The programmes aim to prepare students from a range of scientific backgrounds for careers in environmental management, control and research. The objectives of the programme are fulfilled because on graduation you will:

- Demonstrate knowledge of a comprehensive set of practical research skills in their chosen areas of interest, including the ability to identify and analyse problems, design a series of experiments to test hypotheses, and to analyse, predict and present results and conclusions.
- Acquire the ability to plan, organize and execute, interpret and communicate an in-depth piece of individual research.
- Demonstrate an awareness of ethical issues surrounding scientific research in the public and private sectors
- Obtain detailed specialist knowledge in the areas of pollutant transport, damage and control within selected pathways - terrestrial, aquatic, and atmospheric environments.

These abilities are clearly related to the requirements of the commercial and regulatory sectors. However, they are also a prerequisite for pure and applied environmental research as such work typically involves planning organizing, executing, interpreting and communicating an in-depth piece of individual research.

6.2 Programme Structure

The structure of the programme is outlined below.

Semesters 1 & 2 taught at Central European University

Semester 3 which may be taught at University of Manchester – a taught element comprised of 60 UK credit modules extending from September until January

Semester 4 which may be taught at University of Manchester - a research project to be completed by May/June (date to be confirmed).

A student who gains the following UK credits:

Taught element CEU – 120 credits

Taught element Manchester – 60 credits

Research Project – 60 credits

Will be awarded MSc Environmental Science Policy and Management.

A student who gains the following credits:

Taught element CEU – 120 credits

Taught element Manchester – < 60 credits

Research Project – 60 Credits

Will be awarded by CEU their MSc Environmental Science and Policy Management (1 year programme)

A student who gains the following credits:

Taught element CEU – 120 credits
 Taught element Manchester/Lund – 60 credits
 Research Project – < 60 Credits

Can be awarded by University of Manchester the Postgraduate Certificate.

6.3 Programme Course Units

Core Compulsory Units		
PART 1: Taught Component		
Code	Title	Credits
EART60061	Measuring and Predicting 1	15
EART60071	Measuring and Predicting 2	15
EART62061	Tutorials	15
EART60272	Research Project (Semester 4)	60
	Total Core Credits	105
Options - Semester 3, choose 15 credits		
EART66001	Pollution Management in Practice	15
EART60311	Organic Geochemistry	15
EART60511	Geomicrobiology	15
EART62051	*Human Impacts on the Biosphere	15
PLAN60441	Concepts in Environment Law	15
PLAN60411	Environmental Impact Assessment	15

**Recommended*

Other relevant optional units may be taken subject to approval of the Programme Co-ordinator.

Mandatory Online Units

In addition to the above taught course units for your programme, you are also required to complete successfully the following mandatory online course units which are accessed via the SEES Virtual Common Room – in the ‘My Communities’ section of Blackboard.

- Academic Malpractice Awareness
- Health and Safety Online Course

We will run sessions during welcome week that will introduce you to the University's Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), Blackboard and you will have the opportunity to complete these courses during one of these sessions. Please note that you must complete both of these courses by no later than **7th November 2020**. Failure to complete the courses by the above date may result in you being prevented from progressing to the next semester of your studies.

7. COURSE UNIT SELECTION AND YOUR PERSONAL TIMETABLE

You will automatically be enrolled on to all compulsory course units associated with your year of study for your particular programme. In the case of optional course units you may use the Student System Self-Service for Course Unit Selection function available through 'My Manchester' to make your choices (where applicable). A step-by-step guide detailing how to do this is available on Blackboard.

Alternatively, you may email earth.support@manchester.ac.uk with your choice of optional unit and staff there will enrol you on to your chosen unit. Please remember to include your student ID in your email.

Your personal timetable is available for you to view online through My Manchester. You can choose to view your timetable for the current week, a single semester, or for the whole year. Although your classes are **usually** held at the same time and the same place each week, there may be variations some weeks, including timings or the location of classes. It is important therefore that you **check your timetable regularly** to ensure that you know the timings and locations for your classes each week. Occasionally, due to unforeseen, or circumstances beyond the Department's control, it may be necessary to change the day/time or location of a class. In such circumstances we will give you as much notice as possible by amending your timetable and emailing you on your University email address. Therefore, it is essential that you check your University email regularly for any updates.

All your 'EART' units will show on your personal timetable. However, we cannot guarantee that all units that you choose from other schools will show on your personal timetable. In some cases the timing of units from other schools may be available on Blackboard or by some other method. It is your responsibility to ensure that you know the timing and location of all your course units. If you have any queries, please contact the Student Support Office, earth.support@manchester.ac.uk

8. ASSESSMENT

8.1 Submission of Coursework and Penalty for Late Submission

During your course you will be given assignments to do in your own time. You will be given a deadline for submitting this work and it is essential that you keep to the stated deadlines. **Late submissions will be penalised according to the University Policy on Submission of Work for Summative Assessment on Taught Programmes.** For further information, please refer to the **Department General Handbook**.

Please note that in the case of units that you take from outside of this Department, different penalties may apply. This information will normally be communicated to you in the assessment brief or the course unit specification. If you are unsure you should always check with the course unit tutor.

If you choose to undertake your research project at Manchester, please note that the MESPOM-wide rule relating to late submission of the thesis will apply.

Up to 5 penalty percentage points will be deducted from thesis grade per each day of late submission for up to maximum 4 days. Beyond a 4 day delay the thesis will be awarded a fail (F). Theses failed on the account of late submission or as a result of examination can be re-submitted by the deadline specified by the Examination Board. Examination of such theses would normally not be possible before the following academic year.

In cases where, through no fault of your own, ie, unforeseen or unavoidable circumstances prevent you from submitting your work to the deadline stated, you should submit a mitigating circumstances request. Details of the mitigating circumstances procedures and deadlines can be found in the Department General Handbook and also on Blackboard in the SEES Virtual Common Room.

8.2 Assessment Criteria

Any marking criteria specific to your programme will be on Blackboard or will be provided by your Programme Director.

8.3 Progression at Manchester

Participation in the research project can only be undertaken once you have successfully completed all of the taught course units, and your results have been approved at the first examiners' meeting (in practice students will have started the research project by the date of this meeting). The progression rules are as follows:

- Achieve an average of 50% in the taught units.
- Satisfactorily attend and complete any other compulsory element.

A student who fails the research project report may be permitted to resubmit the project on one further occasion subject to approval by the Board of Examiners. The maximum mark to be awarded for a resubmitted project will be 40% unless the original mark was within the compensation zone, in which case the first mark will stand. However, students achieving a mark of less than 30% for their initial dissertation or project submission are not permitted to resubmit and may be given an exit award

If a student fails to achieve a pass mark in their resubmitted project, they will normally be considered for an exit award of Postgraduate Diploma or Postgraduate Certificate depending on the number of credits achieved. If achievements do not meet the minimum criteria the student will normally be excluded from the programme.

8.4 Calculating Your Degree Classification

How is my degree classification calculated?

To achieve a Pass at MSc level, students are required to obtain an overall average of $\geq 50\%$ in 180 M-level credits.

To achieve a Merit at MSc level, students are required to obtain an overall average of $\geq 60\%$ in 180 M-level credits.

To achieve a Distinction in the MSc, a student must achieve an overall mark of $\geq 70\%$ for the combined taught and research components of the programme. If you have undertaken any referred assessment or been compensated in any units you will not be eligible for a Distinction.

To pass at Postgraduate Diploma level students are required to obtain an average of $\geq 40\%$ in 120 M-level CAT credits.

To pass at Postgraduate Certificate level students are required to obtain an average of $\geq 40\%$ in 60 M-level CAT credits.

What happens if I fail some units at Manchester

First of all don't panic, but the first thing to do is sit down with your Academic Advisor or Programme Director who will take you through your options. The regulations allow you further attempts of up to half the taught credits, for a standard Masters programme as defined by your programme specification, so you can still get back on track. In addition, you may also resubmit your Dissertation/Project Reports on one further occasion, subject to Examination Board approval.

This is known as 'referred assessment' and these reassessments will normally take place in the same academic year as the original assessment. The reassessment will be designed to assess achievement of the same intended learning outcomes, but need not be the same form as that originally used. Please note that if an Examination Board has documented evidence that (a) a student's work, attendance or engagement has been unsatisfactory, and (b) the student has been formally warned of the unsatisfactory, attendance or engagement, but has not shown significant improvement acceptable to the Board, then the Board has the right to refuse the student reassessment/referred assessment See Regulation XX – Monitoring Attendance and Wellbeing of students and the Policy on Recording and Monitoring Attendance. The Examination Board will then make decisions on your progress and advise you accordingly of the decisions and next steps. Referred assessment at Masters level will be capped at 40% and this is the mark that will be shown on a transcript of results as a 40R. (the capped mark is applied to the unit level mark, not just the failed element). It is this mark that will be used to calculate your final degree classification.

If you pass most of your units and only 'just' fail some of them, there may be a possibility of the examination board compensating this failed credit. This means if your mark was between 40-49% at Masters level the examination board is able to compensate up to a maximum of 40 credits. Your transcript of results will show the actual mark achieved (e.g. 47C).

If you are on a postgraduate diploma or certificate programme then the overall pass mark will normally be 40%. The same logic for managing reassessment will be applied on these programmes but the mark will be capped at 30R and compensation can be applied for marks between 30-39%. You can be referred in up to half the taught credits on a postgraduate diploma or certificate programme and compensated in up to 40 credits on a postgraduate diploma programme and 20 credits on the postgraduate certificate programme.

What happens if I fail my referrals?

Upon taking the referred assessment, if you fail again the Examination Board will make a decision with regards to your progress. The possible options available may, in exceptional circumstances, include repeating the unit or being awarded an exit award once you've exhausted all the opportunities to make good failed assessment.

Referrals may also be compensated; so if you manage to achieve a mark at referral of between

40-49% at Masters Level this may be compensated providing you haven't already used your quota of compensatable credits. Compensated referrals will be capped at 40, unless the original mark is higher, and this is the mark (40C) that will show on your transcript of results and be used to calculate your final degree classification.

Again if you are on a postgraduate diploma or certificate programme then the pass mark and compensation mark range will be adjusted according to the lower pass rate.

What happens if I fail my dissertation/project report?

If you fail your dissertation/project report at the first attempt you will be given the opportunity to resubmit a revised version of the dissertation provided that your original submission mark was at least 30%. You will be provided with feedback from your examiners and guidance on the revisions required to bring the work to the appropriate standard for the Masters award. Referred dissertation will be awarded a mark of 40R. The maximum amount of time that you will be allowed to resubmit your dissertation to Manchester is 6 months.

What is a "Boundary Zone"?

After allowances have been made for mitigating circumstances, if your total mark at first assessment is within a boundary zone specified below, you may be awarded the higher degree classification as long as the following are satisfied:

- For the award of distinction, all course units must have been passed at the first attempt without any compensation.
- 120 out of 180 credits are equal to/ or higher than the final award.

The boundary zones are as follows:

Classification	Classification thresholds: average mark	Boundary zone average	Boundary Zone H35 (separating the average for taught and research elements)
Distinction	70.0	68.0 to 69.9	Either taught or research is 70.0 or above, while the other is between 68.0 to 69.9
Merit	60.0	58.0 to 59.9	NA
Pass	59.9 or less providing the students has 180 credits	NA	NA

This information is fully explained in the Postgraduate Taught Degree Regulations at

<http://www.studentnet.manchester.ac.uk/crucial-guide/regulations/degree-regs/>

What do I do if I disagree with the Examination Board's decision?

The University has clear and fair procedures which set out the course of action should you wish to appeal against an Examination Board decision or make a complaint. There are a number of grounds on which an appeal may be made, however an appeal which questions the academic or professional judgement of those charged with assessing your academic performance or professional competence will not be permitted. The relevant regulations and forms can be found at:

<http://www.regulations.manchester.ac.uk/regulation-xix-academic-appeals-procedure/>

9. PRIZES

Department prize for best overall performance

Department prize for best research project/dissertation