Royal
Agricultural
University

The Royal Agricultural University

Programme Specification:

MSc Rural Estate Management

2025-26

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION [ACADEMIC YEAR 2025/26]

This Programme Specification is designed for prospective students, current students, academic staff and potential employers. It provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the intended learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if they take full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information on the teaching, learning and assessment methods, learning outcomes and content of each module can be found in the Module Specifications.

Section 1 – Material Programme Information

Criteria	Detail
Validating body	The Royal Agricultural University
Teaching Institution	The Royal Agricultural University
Subject Area	Land and Property Management (LPM)
Entry Award(s)	Postgraduate Certificate in Rural Estate Management Postgraduate Diploma in Rural Estate Management MSc Rural Estate Management
Final Award and exit route(s)	Postgraduate Certificate in Rural Estate Management Postgraduate Diploma in Rural Estate Management MSc Rural Estate Management
Programme title	MSc Rural Estate Management
Location(s) of study	Royal Agricultural University, Cirencester
Full time study	1 year
Part-time study	2 years
Language of study	English
Programme start month	September
Period of validation	September 2021 to August 2028
Name of Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body	Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) [Current accreditation period: 2017 – 2023; extended to 2025] Please note, only the full MSc programme (180 credits) is RICS accredited and not the Postgraduate Certificate or Postgraduate Diploma qualifications.
Type of Accreditation	Recognition of programme relevant to a career in surveying and that supports routes to professional qualification
Accreditation due for renewal	Spring 2025
Entry requirements (this should be the standard University entry requirements unless otherwise approved by the Academic Board)	An Undergraduate Honours Degree (2:2 or above) from a UK university or overseas equivalent, or a professional qualification and/or experience considered to be equivalent to the above. For information on international qualifications, please, see our country specific pages. For countries not listed please contact admissions@rau.ac.uk
Non-standard application	We welcome applications from applicants with non-standard qualifications who are able to demonstrate knowledge, experience and skills developed in the workplace or elsewhere and which are relevant to the programme of study. Applicants will need to use their personal statement to provide further details supported by a CV. All non-standard applications will be considered by the Programme Leader on a case-by-case basis and applicants can expect that an interview may be required as part of the admissions process.
English language	If English is not your first language, you will need to reach the requirements outlined in our English language requirements for the level of study. For postgraduate taught programmes this is IELTS Academic min. overall 6.5 with no element below 5.5(or equivalent). English language tests usually have a validity of 2 years from the date the test is taken.

Interviews	Interviews are usually required for non-standard applications.
UCAS Code	Not applicable
Quercus Code	P1F, P1P, PC, PD
HECoS Code	100977 - Rural Estate Management 100517 - Agriculture
QAA Subject Benchmark Statement(s) and other reference points	QAA Subject Benchmark Statements: Master's Degree (February 2020) Land, Construction, Real Estate & Surveying (April 2024) Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors: Requirements and Competencies Guide (August 2018) Rural Pathway Guide (August 2018) Land and Resources Pathway Guide (August 2018)
Academic level on Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ)	Level 7
Approval at AQSC	30 July 2021 (Academic Board)
Version	V2 – Aug 2022: replace 4002 with 4038A V3 – May 2023: replace 4016 with 4742 V4 – All module codes replaced with FHEQ level 7 codes

Section 2 - Programme Structure

The structure of all University awards complies with the University's Academic Regulations for Taught Programmes which includes information about the:

- Rules for progression between the stages of a programme;
- Consequences of failure for referrals, compensation and exist awards;
- Calculation and classification of awards

MSc Rural Estate Management (180 credits) – full time

The accumulation of 180 credits through the assessment of programme elements as detailed below:

Level 7

Module code	Module title	Level	Credit value	Core/ Elective	Semester
7A014	Integrated Agricultural Systems	7	15	Core	1
7L013	Land & Estate Management Strategy and Professional Practice	7	15	Core	1
7L008	Planning and Development	7	15	Core	1
7L011	Rural Land and Property in Society	7	15	Core	1
7M001A	Research Skills	7	15	Core	2
7B001	Farm Business and Enterprise Management	7	15	Core	2
7L001	Rural Property Law	7	15	Core	2

7L010	Management of Woodlands and the Natural Environment	7	15	Core	2
7L012	Rural Valuation Practice	7	15	Core	2
7M002	Dissertation	7	45	Core	1+2
	Total credits: MSc Real Estate		**180**		

Postgraduate Diploma in Rural Estate Management (120 credits)

The accumulation of 120 credits (or more) at level 7 through the assessment of programme elements as detailed below:

Please note, the Postgraduate Diploma is not RICS accredited.

Level 7

Module code	Module title	Level	Credit value	Core/ Elective	Semester
7A014	Integrated Agricultural Systems	7	15	Core	1
7L013	Land & Estate Management Strategy and Professional Practice	7	15	Core	1
7L008	Planning and Development	7	15	Core	1
7L011	Rural Land and Property in Society	7	15	Core	1
7B001	Farm Business and Enterprise Management	7	15	Core	2
7L001	Rural Property Law	7	15	Core	2
7L010	Management of Woodlands and the Natural Environment	7	15	Core	2
7L012	Rural Valuation Practice	7	15	Core	2
	Total Credits: PG Diploma in Rural Estate Management		**120**		

Postgraduate Certificate in Rural Estate Management (60 credits)

The accumulation of 60 credits (or more) at level 7 through the assessment of any combination of four programme elements as detailed below:

Please note, the Postgraduate Certificate is not RICS accredited.

Level 7

Module code	Module title	Level	Credit value	Core/ Elective	Semester
7A014	Integrated Agricultural Systems	7	15	Core	1
7L013	Land & Estate Management Strategy and Professional Practice	7	15	Core	1
7L008	Planning and Development	7	15	Core	1
7L011	Rural Land and Property in Society	7	15	Core	1
7B001	Farm Business and Enterprise Management	7	15	Core	2
7L001	Rural Property Law	7	15	Core	2
7L010	Management of Woodlands and the Natural Environment	7	15	Core	2

7L012	Rural Valuation Practice	7	15	Core	2
	Total Credits: PG Certificate in Rural Estate Management		**60**		

MSc Rural Estate Management (180 credits) – Part time

The accumulation of 180 credits through the assessment of programme elements as detailed below:

Year 1

Module code	Module title	Level	Credit value	Core/ Elective	Semester
7A014	Integrated Agricultural Systems	7	15	Core	1
7L008	Planning and Development	7	15	Core	1
7L001	Rural Property Law	7	15	Core	2
7B001	Farm Business and Enterprise Management	7	15	Core	2

Year 2

Module code	Module title	Level	Credit value	Core/ Elective	Semester
7L011	Rural Land and Property in Society	7	15	Core	1
7L013	Land & Estate Management Strategy and Professional Practice	7	15	Core	1
7M001A	Research Skills	7	15	Core	1
7L010	Management of Woodlands and the Natural Environment	7	15	Core	2
7L012	Rural Valuation Practice	7	15	Core	2
7M002	Dissertation	7	45	Core	2
	Total credits: MSc Real Estate		**180**		

Section 3 – Programme overview and Programme Aims

This programme is aimed at those people who want to qualify as a Chartered Surveyor specialising in the management of rural land and property. As well as agricultural land and woodland, farms and rural estates will often include other types of property; for example, residential dwellings and non-agricultural buildings let to other businesses in addition to, perhaps, areas of woodland, water or wilderness. They often, therefore, support a diverse range of rural businesses and enterprises including farming, food production, tourism and energy generation. In addition, the way in which rural land and property is managed also plays a vital role in the health of the natural environment in rural areas, and also in the life of the communities within it. Land and rural property managers are therefore required to provide a wide range of advice to not only estate owners, but also farmers, tenants and rural business owners. This diversity is reflected in the programme and makes for a varied and interesting study experience as well as subsequent career.

This programme covers a diverse range of subject areas including rural property law, farm and rural estate business management, and the management of the natural environment.

Furthermore, this course, has been developed in partnership with the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) and most of the graduates from it will go on to complete the RICS 'Assessment of Professional Competence' to qualify as a Chartered Surveyor.

The MSc Programme is taught in Cirencester and can be studied full-time or part-time. If studied full-time, the programme is studied over 12 months, from September to September, with the dissertation handed in at the end of the 12 months. If studied part-time, it is typically completed in 24 months, but there is the option to study it over 4 years.

Professional accreditation

This Programme is one of a suite of programmes provided by the RAU that are within a partnership agreement with the RICS, which recognises the University as one of the accredited providers of surveying education in the UK.

Consequently, the programme has been designed to follow the RICS Requirements and Competencies Guide linked to the RICS Pathway Guides for both "Rural and Land and Resources". As graduates of the programme, students will then be able to register for the Assessment of Professional Competence (APC), which culminates in the award of MRICS, following a minimum of two years of relevant professional experience. In addition, the Programme is also recognised and supported by the Central Association of Agricultural Valuers (CAAV) and many of the graduates from this Programme also become qualified members of the CAAV.

The Programme aims to:

- provide graduates with a significant understanding of the nature, theory and practice of rural land and property management;

- prepare graduates for a career in rural land and property management and to meet the professional requirements of the RICS;

- ensure graduates have a clear understanding of the application of professional and business ethics to land and property;

- provide graduates with opportunities to develop their academic knowledge and practical professional competence associated with the subjects within the MSc programme;

- develop graduates' intellectual, professional, business and interpersonal skills;

- encourage originality and creative thinking.

Section 4 – Programme Sustainability

The MSc Rural Estate management programme is designed to align with the global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including:

Affordable and Clean Energy (SDG 7), involving renewable energy sources such as solar panels, wind turbines, and energy-efficient designs supporting the transition towards clean energy and reducing carbon emissions.

Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure (SDG 9), including sustainable infrastructure that enhances accessibility, connectivity, and resilience while minimising environmental impacts

and promoting green building practices, utilising eco-friendly materials, and implementing smart technologies to improve efficiency and reduce resource consumption.

Responsible Consumption and Production (SDG 12), by adopting green building standards, implementing waste reduction and recycling initiatives, and encouraging the use of environmentally-friendly materials and technologies in construction and property management.

Climate Action (SDG 13), including climate mitigation and adaptation efforts with buildings that are energy-efficient, resilient to climate change impacts, and promote sustainable land use practices.

Life on Land (SDG 15) including sustainable land use planning and management practices that preserve biodiversity, protect ecosystems, and promote responsible land stewardship.

Section 5 – Programme intended learning outcomes and learning, teaching and assessment methods

This MSc Programme uses a wide range of teaching and learning methods to enable students to apply theory, professional knowledge and appropriate skills and techniques. Assessments are diverse and blend theory with practice.

In particular, the MSc Programme develops:

- the professional knowledge needed for employment in rural land management including for those graduates who want to train and qualify as a member of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS);
- industry-focused technical skills to operate in the land and rural property sector;
- critical thinking and research capabilities to challenge assumptions and undertake systematic and impartial investigations;

personal and inter-personal transferrable skills such as the ability to work independently considering ethical considerations and the need for personal responsibility.

Knowledge and Understanding

LO no.	On successful completion of the named award, students will be able to:	Module Code/s
1.	Articulate critical awareness of the range of factors influencing land and rural property, including the purchase, sale, letting, management, investment, planning and development of rural property;	7L012, 7L013
2.	Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of industry professional standards, responsibilities and ethics and their impact on professional practice;	7L012, 7L013
3.	Apply knowledge of property and land management institutional frameworks, mechanisms and constraints;	7L012, 7L013 7L011, 7L001
4.	Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the needs and perspectives of individuals and organisations that currently occupy rural land and property and be able to assist in identifying and articulating future requirements;	7A014, 7L010, 7B001, 7L013 7L011, 7L008 7L012

5.	Articulate critical awareness of the key concepts, principles and practice influencing activities in land and rural property management.	7B001, 7L013, 7L011, 7L008

Intellectual, Professional, Key skills

LO no.	On successful completion of the named award, students will be able to:	Module Code/s
1.	Critically evaluate data, analysis or research;	7L013, 7L012 7M002
2.	Design research, collect data and apply appropriate techniques in the context of land and rural property management;	7M002
3.	Evaluate and synthesize multidisciplinary considerations to make sound judgements or solve new or unfamiliar problems in diverse and evolving contexts;	7A014, 7L010, 7B001, 7L013 7L011, 7L008 7L012, 7M002
4.	Effectively use electronic information handling and data processing and analysis software and applications to inform decision making.	7L011, 7L001 7M002
5.	Reason critically to evaluate and synthesise relevant, reliable and timely date.	7L013, 7L011 7L012, 7M002
6.	Communicate effectively and consider, appreciate, evaluate and respect the views of others;	All modules
7.	Demonstrate initiative and the ability to work effectively both individually and as part of a team;	7A014, 7L010, 7B001, 7L013 7L011, 7L001 7L012
8.	Reflect on learning to continuously develop new skills;	7A014, 7L010, 7B001, 7L013 7L011, 7L001 7M002
9.	Recognise the importance of acting with regard to equality and inclusion, ethics, integrity, trust and professional standards.	All modules

Programme specific skills

LO no.	On successful completion of the named award, students will be able to:	Module Code/s
1.	Offer advice in relation to the purchase, sale, letting, management, investment, planning and development of rural property at strategic, operational and tactical levels, and in doing so, be able to visually and critically appraise and value rural property for operational, investment, development and statutory purposes;	7L013, 7L008 7L012
2.	Interpret and analyse complex and dynamic rural property markets and be able to understand the physical, legal, business and socio-economic context in which the rural property markets exist;	7L013, 7L011 7L012

3.	Visually survey, analyse and report on the constructional, natural and aesthetic, and financial aspects of land and buildings;	7A014, 7L010, 7B001, 7L013 7L011, 7L008 7L012
4.	Articulate and interpret the implications of sustainability for the rural land management sector, including in relation to agriculture, forestry, planning and the development of rural property;	7A014, 7L010, 7B001, 7L013 7L011, 7L008 7L012
5.	Apply problem solving and decision-making techniques, including establishing criteria, identifying, formulating and solving land and rural property problems, identifying and evaluating options and implementing and judging the effectiveness of solutions;	All modules
6.	Interpret and analyse financial and other management information and use it in decision making.	7B001, 7L013 7L012

Section 6 – Approach to Learning and Teaching delivery

The teaching is delivered in 3-hour blocks per week per 15 credit module including directed learning. Students also expected to undertake 114 hours of independent study across each module.

This delivery pattern allows for a more problem based, explorative and discursive approach that combines more formal lecture content, seminars, in-class group activity and self-directed reading and research that is supported by the university's VLE, Gateway.

Learning styles are very individual and accordingly the course has been refined to appeal to multiple intelligences (Gardiner) and the traditional learning styles (Honey & Mumford).

The teaching team include members of the RICS and links with industry are strong and the programme utilises these links to provide insights from guest speakers, real life case study material for use in assessment and site visits and question and answer sessions with local practitioners.

The programme delivery has been designed to accommodate both full time and part time 'day release' modes of study. The preference for 'day release' by real estate employers necessitates that the modules are delivered in two full days, something which adds a certain flexibility to our course marketing as it allows for commuter students as well as campus-based students. In addition, having 3 full weekdays free of class contact allows students to take up work experience and to organize their learning and personal responsibilities as they wish, rather than having a fragmented and 'bitty' timetable.

Here at the RAU, we are always looking for ways to better support our students. We recognise that a number of our students may be working or have caring responsibilities alongside studying which can sometimes make it difficult to attend every teaching session in person. As such we have the ability for you to join lectures and seminars through an alternative digital format in prior discussion with your programme leader. Please note that for international students on a student visa, you are expected to attend your classes in person. Remote delivery is not a UKVI-authorised mode of attendance for the taught element of your course and therefore non-attendance would affect your student visa.

Section 7 – Approach to Assessment

The Assessments are designed to appraise individual capabilities fairly and consistently. We use clear, descriptive assessment guidelines (made available to students) to grade coursework and examinations and to aid classification. Lecturers communicate their expectations clearly to students and use explicit marking schemes to facilitate consistency of marking within and between modules and to ensure good feedback on individual performance. All examinations and coursework assessments that contribute to degree classifications are subject to scrutiny by the External Examiners.

Assessments are designed to test analytical and other cognitive capabilities in relation to particular module aims and content. Coursework assignments such as individual essays, reports, a literature review, case study analyses, individual and group-based reports and presentations are used to test a wide range of skills.

For those students who elect to undertake the Dissertation, students are required to conceive, justify, design in detail and execute a substantial piece of academic research. For the most able postgraduate students, the Dissertation can generate work of a standard appropriate for submission to practitioner and academic journals in business and management.

In every module we place high value on students being able to demonstrate effective communication in its various forms. This priority is reflected not only in how assignments are specified, but also in how they are marked.

RICS Accreditation

This MSc programme is also accredited by the RICS, a requirement for all those aiming to become Chartered Surveyors. Without an accredited degree, or significant employment-based experience, a would-be surveyor cannot register for and undertake the RICS Assessment of Professional Competence (APC), the successful completion of which confers Member status upon the candidate and the right to use the letters MRICS after one's name. This Assessment requires the keeping of a diary of professional experience, the adoption of professional reflective practice and the ability to demonstrate technical knowledge, understanding and skill (i.e. the ability to advise on complex issues). There are various subject routes to qualification and the RICS publish 'Pathways' with detailed descriptions of the Mandatory, Core and Optional "Competencies" a Chartered Surveyor must demonstrate for qualification. The programme syllabus, module content and means of assessment reflect these competencies whilst not losing sight of the need for academic rigour, a good research capability and a willingness to challenge current and emerging theory.

This Programme has been mapped to the RICS competencies for the Rural, and Land and Resources, pathways.

	Learning and Teaching			Assessment		
	Directed	Independent	Placement	Exam	Practical	Coursework
Year 1	19.33%	80.67%	0.00%	2.50%	2.50%	95.00%

Section 8 – Course work grading and feedback

Assessment is an integral part of the learning experience of students. All University programmes are assessed by a range of assessment activities, each developed to provide the most appropriate means of demonstrating the student'sachievement of a specified learning outcome. An assessment may assess more than one learning outcome.

The University operates standard pass criteria which can be found in the RAU Academic Regulations; (paragraphs 116 – 129).

The normal basis for awards will be the overall average score in the final assessment, graded as follows:

Distinction weighted average of	70% and above
Merit weighted average of	60% - 69%
Pass weighted average of	40% - 59%
Fail average	0% - 39%

In addition to assigning a percentage mark to the work, tutors provide written feedback for all assessments which normally includes the strengths and weaknesses of the piece as well as advice about improving the work. Individual feedback is provided within 20-working days of the deadline for submission. All assessment decisions are subject to internal moderation and external scrutiny by the programme's External Examiners. Students must ensure they retain all coursework in case the External Examiner(s) wishes to see it.

Section 9 – RAU Graduate Framework

At the RAU we have chosen five values to underpin our learning community. These are the values which we will all work by and for which we want the RAU to be known for. We aim for our graduates to be:

Collaborative

We believe in the power of working together. We are stronger as a community of practice - inspiring each other, identifying shared goals, and providing reciprocal support leads to greater success.

Open-minded

We are receptive to new ideas and we value the diversity of experiences and skills. We are committed to listening to everyone across the RAU community.

Resourceful

We adopt creative approaches to achieve our goals while setting higher standards, promoting professionalism and sustainability.

Responsible

Individually and collectively we take accountability for our actions working with integrity to achieve the highest ethical standards.

Inclusive

We acknowledge the fundamental value and dignity of all individuals and are committed to maintaining an environment that seeks to eliminate all forms of discrimination and respects diverse traditions, heritages, and experiences.

Section 10 – Progression

Graduates of the Programme are equipped to undertake the wide range of work that characterises the rural land management profession.

The University has an excellent employment record supported by its enviable contacts with the land and rural property management profession. In recent years the vast majority of those seeking graduate employment in the profession have been successful. Students will have the opportunity to attend regular employer presentations and careers events at University during their period of study. Graduates from the Programme secure a diverse range of employment roles in the land and rural property sector, such as with national, regional and local firms of chartered surveyors, auctioneering firms, private estates and other large landowners such as the National Trust most of which are suitable for registration for the APC.

If graduates from the Programme choose not to follow a career in land and rural property management, they have many other career options open to them, for example, in real estate or the agri-business sector, as well as the normal graduate opportunities in industry and business; options which are again supported by the University's excellent networks in related employment fields.

Section 11 – Student support, wellbeing and counselling

The University is offering a wide range of support to all RAU students, including practical advice and guidance as well as emotional support.

Disability and Neurodivergent support

We support disabled & neurodivergent students and students with long-term health conditions. These disabilities include dyslexia, mental health diagnoses, ADHD, autism, mobility challenges, sensory impairments and many more. Students are encouraged to make contact with Student Services as early as possible by emailing: studentservices@rau.ac.uk . When you tell us about a disability, you will be offered support based on your specific needs, which can include:

- **Alternative exam arrangements** such as extra time, rest breaks, or a smaller room.

- **Access to support workers** such as study skills tutors, specialist mentors, readers and scribes.

- Access to assistive technology (AT), which helps remove barriers to learning, communication and participation. The AT can help students who face difficulties with taking notes, organisation and time management.

Mental Health Support

Student Services has a dedicated team who are here to support you with the emotional challenges that can crop up during university life. They take a wide-ranging approach to mental health support, and the team ensure they are available for informal chats as well as providing in-depth support for students with emerging or existing mental health conditions.

The team also offer mental health support in the form of daily drop-in sessions, weekly group Time to Talk sessions, mental health workshops, awareness and campaign days and 1:1 confidential meetings for when students face challenges to their wellbeing.

Student Services can also refer students for counselling sessions with an external agency if they are required. They can also signpost you to our Student Assistance Programme, providing 24/7 care, support and advice.

Academic Support Tutor Programme

All students have access to the Academic Support Tutor (AST) programme, which provides high-quality academic support for students. ATS provide timetabled group tutorials and individual support for students who are most at risk. Group tutorials focus on providing high-quality academic support at the appropriate academic level; advice and guidance in relation to the course; and advice about making study choices on the course (in line with the AST Handbook). Individual support focuses on continuation and may be in person or online.

Section 12 – Enhancing the Quality of Learning and Teaching

The programme is subject to the University's rigorous quality assurance procedures which involve subject specialist and internal peer review of the course at periodic intervals, normally of 6 years. This process ensures that the programme engages with the applicable national Subject Benchmarks and references the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications.

All programmes are monitored on an annual basis where consideration is given to:

- External Examiner Reports
- Key statistics including data on retention and achievement
- Results of the Student Satisfaction Surveys
- Feedback from Student Delegates from programme committees
- Feedback from Student-Staff Liaison committees
- Annual Programme Monitoring