The Royal Agricultural University

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION:

BSc/BA (Hons) Environment & Sustainability

BSc/BA (Hons) Environment & Sustainability with Foundation Year

BSc/BA (Hons) Environment & Sustainability with Placement Year

[2026-27]

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION [ACADEMIC YEAR 2026/27]

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	Agricultural Science and Practice (ASP)
Entry Award(s)	BSc/BA (Hons) Environment & Sustainability BSc/BA (Hons) Environment & Sustainability with Foundation Year BSc/BA (Hons) Environment & Sustainability with Placement Year
Final Award and exit route(s)	BSc/BA (Hons) Environment & Sustainability Diploma of Higher Education Environment & Sustainability Certificate of Higher Education Environment & Sustainability
Programme title	BSc/BA (Hons) Environment & Sustainability
Location(s) of study	The Royal Agricultural University, Cirencester
Delivery type	The Royal Agricultural University
Full time study	3 years 4 years (with Foundation or Placement Year)
Part-time study	N/A
Language of study	English
Programme start month	September
Period of validation	September 2026 to August 2031
Name of Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body	Not applicable
Type of Accreditation	Not applicable
Accreditation due for renewal	Not applicable
UCAS Code	L8N1 - BSc / BA (Hons) Environment & Sustainability L8N2 - BSc / BA (Hons) Environment & Sustainability (Professional Placement Year)
Quercus Code	ENSZ - BSc/BA (Hons) Environment and Sustainability with Foundation Year ENSP - BSc/BA (Hons) Environment and Sustainability with Professional Placement Year ENS - BSc/BA (Hons) Environment and Sustainability
HECos Code	
QAA Subject Benchmark Statement(s) and other reference points	Subject Benchmark Statement: Agriculture, Rural Environmental Sciences, Animal Studies, Consumer Science, Forestry, Food, Horticulture and Human Nutrition (2024) Earth Sciences, Environmental Sciences and Environmental Studies (2022) QAA Subject Benchmark Statements
Academic level on Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ)	Level 4, 5 or 6

Approval at AQSC	08 October 2025 When printed this programme specification becomes an uncontrolled document. Please visit the RAU's website for the most up to date version of the programme specification: https://www.rau.ac.uk/courses/undergraduate-
Version	19/05/2025 Updated 29/07/2025

Entry requirements for the BSc/BA (this should be the standard University entry requirements unless otherwise approved by the Academic Board, and include UCAS entry profile for UG programmes and IELTS)	**Required:** GCSE minimum five GCSEs at Grade C/4 including English Language and Mathematics (or Maths Numeracy for Welsh applicants) plus satisfactory level 3 qualifications: A-Level: (Example grades BCC) – minimum of 104 UCAS tariff points across three A-Levels or equivalent qualifications • C&G Advanced Technical/BTEC – Level 3 Extended Diploma (1080) at Distinction-Merit-Merit • C&G NPTC/C&G Advanced Technical/BTEC – Level 3 Diploma (720), Extended Certificate (360) and 90-Credit Diploma (540) acceptable when accompanied by other Level 3 qualifications • International Baccalaureate: 26 points • Access to Higher Education: 45 credits at level 3, of which 21 must be awarded at Distinction and 15 at Merit or higher. (Pass at Functional Skills level 2 are accepted in lieu of GCSE English & Mathematics) A period of relevant practical experience is also highly recommended

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.

The BSc/BA (Hons) Environment & Sustainability programme is normally three years duration of full-time study (approximately 30 weeks per year). Study is undertaken at three levels on the FHEQ; Levels four, five, and six (one for each year of study). However, it is possible to follow the programme on a part-time basis, over a longer period, by gaining credits for the modules taken and achieved year-by-year. The time limits appropriate to part-time study are indicated in the University Academic Regulations available on the RAU website.

The option with a Foundation Year is normally four years of taught full-time study and the option with a Professional Placement Year is normally three years of taught full-time study with one year based in industry. A credit system ensures a balanced workload across the programme, with each credit point requiring approximately 10 hours of student work. Thus a 20-credit module will require a notional input of 200 hours of work, and a complete academic year of 120 credits will require 1200 hours of work or approximately 40 hours per week. The programme is designed to allow students to choose, through elective choices at levels 5 and 6, to specialise within four pathways – sustainability management, climate solutions, conservation and biodiversity, and environmental policy and governance.

Foundation Year.

Students enrolled to study the programme with the Integrated Foundation Year will study the following modules in their first year of study:

Level 0

Module code	Module title	Level	Credit value	Core/ Elective	Semester
0IFY20	Land-Use and Management	0	20	Core	1+2
0IFY21	Countryside Evolution and Development	0	20	Core	1+2
0IFY22	Enterprise and Marketing	0	20	Core	1+2
0IFY23	Land-based Data Handling	0	20	Core	1+2
0IFY24	Food and Farming	0	20	Core	1+2
0IFY25	Developing your Skills	0	20	Core	1+2
	Total credits for Integrated Foundation Year		**120**		

BSc/BA (Hons) Environment & Sustainability

Students enrolled to study the BSc/BA (Hons) Environment & Sustainability with/without placement year will study the following modules:

Level 4

Module code	Module title	Level	Credit value	Core/ Elective	Semester
4M002	Professional, Practical and Study Skills	4	20	Core	1+2
4A004	Soil Science and Ecosystem Services	4	20	Core	1+2
4A005	Farming Systems and Sustainability	4	20	Core	1+2
4W003	Species identification & ecology	4	20	Core	1+2
4W002	People and Environmental Change	4	20	Core	1+2
4W001	Energy, Climate, & Waste Management	4	20	Core	1+2
	Total Credits: Certificate of Higher Education Environment & Sustainability		**120**		

Level 5

Module code	Module title	Level	Credit value	Core/ Elective	Semester
5M002	Research & Evidence	5	20	Core	1+2
5A007	Technology and Nature-Based Innovations	5	20	Core	1+2
5W007	Global Development and Environmental Sustainability	5	0	Core	1+2
5M001	Industry Engagement	5	20	Core	1+2
5W003	Landscape Recovery and GIS	5	20	Core	1+2
5W004	Environmental Access, Recreation, and Education	5	20	Core	1+2
5W005	Nature Restoration and Species Reintroductions	5	20	Core	1+2
	Total Credits: Diploma of Higher Education Environment & Sustainability		**120**		

Placement Year (Elective after Year 2 of the taught programme)

Module code	Module title	Level	Credit value	Core/ Elective	Semester
PPY	Professional placement year	5	120	Core	All year

Students choosing to study the <u>BSc (Hons) Environment & Sustainability</u> route will study the following modules:

Level 6

Module code	Module title	Level	Credit value	Core/ Elective	Semester
6W001	Countryside and Environmental Management	6	20	Core	1+2
6W004	Environmental & Ecological Consultancy	6	20	Core	1+2
6W005	Climate Change & Natural Resource Management	6	20	Core	1+2
6M001	Research Project	6	40	Core	1+2

Plus, one elective from the list below

Module code	Module title	Level	Credit value	Core/ Elective	Semester
6A002	Agri-Food Systems and Policies	6	20	Elective	1+2
6L003	Forestry and Natural Resources	6	20	Elective	1+2
	Total Credits: BSc (Hons) Environment & Sustainability		**120**		

Students choosing to study the <u>BA (Hons) Environment & Sustainability</u> route will study the following modules:

Level 6

Module code	Module title	Level	Credit value	Core/ Elective	Semester
6W002	Advocacy and Activism	6	20	Core	1+2
6W004	Environmental & Ecological Consultancy	6	20	Core	1+2
6W005	Climate Change & Natural Resource Management	6	20	Core	1+2
6M001	Research Project	6	40	Core	1+2

Plus, one elective from the list below

Module code	Module title	Level	Credit value	Core/ Elective	Semester
6A002	Agri-Food Systems and Policies	6	20	Elective	1+2
6L003	Forestry and Natural Resources	6	20	Elective	1+2
	Total Credits: BA (Hons) Environment & Sustainability		**120**		

Section 3 – Programme overview and Programme aims

The earth's systems are failing amid the climate (increases in temperature and shifts in precipitation patterns) and biodiversity emergencies (species local and global extinctions and habitat loss). Never has there been a more urgent need to address these interconnected crises. While the scale of environmental challenges may seem overwhelming, there are proven pathways forward that offer real solutions for planetary restoration.

The BSc/ BA (Hons) Environment & Sustainability is designed to equip students with the knowledge and understanding of the key issues and challenges, enabling them to recognise and better pin down the solutions, and more importantly, how these solutions might then be implemented. The complexity and scale of such a challenge is enormous, but harnessing the various factors linked to the environment, people and society and how they interact can make a big difference.

The RAU is very well placed to deliver land-based degrees, having a purpose of 'caring for the land', combined with a 180-year track record of teaching and research within this sector. Graduates of the BSc/BA (Hons) Environment & Sustainability will therefore gain the necessary skills and attributes that will enable them to make a difference when working in the environmental sector. The programme offers two distinct pathways that cater to different career aspirations and learning approaches, each emphasising specific skills and knowledge areas that align with diverse roles in the environmental field.

BSc Environment & Sustainability

The BSc programme focuses on understanding environmental systems through scientific analysis of natural processes and mechanisms. Students examine how ecological, climatic, and physical systems function, developing technical expertise to identify, measure, and implement solutions. This science-based approach emphasises quantitative methods, data analysis, and evidence-based research to address environmental challenges. Career

pathways include sustainability evaluations encompassing partner groups, further research opportunities, monitoring and surveying systems, and advisory/consultancy roles in environmental science and technical sustainability sectors. Below are the intended educational aims for this pathway:

- Develop expertise in climate change mitigation and adaptation, renewable energy systems, and sustainable resource management.
- Promote the acquisition of transferable skills including GIS analysis, environmental assessment, and policy evaluation to meet present and evolving employment needs.
- Foster understanding of global environmental challenges while developing practical solutions applicable at local, national, and international levels.
- Facilitate progression for students to pursue postgraduate study in environmental management, climate science, sustainability, or related fields.

BA Environment & Sustainability

The BA programme takes a holistic approach to environmental challenges, integrating human dimensions with ecological systems. Students explore the broader concept of 'environment' through the lens of land stewardship, examining sustainability from 'farm to fork' and understanding how people, food production, and environmental health interconnect. This socially-focused approach emphasises policy analysis, community engagement, and the human factors that drive environmental change. Career pathways include policy development, food retail, lobbying and campaigning, supply chain analyses, and advocacy and activism roles focused on environmental and social justice. Below are the intended educational aims for this pathway:

- Equip students with advocacy and communication skills essential for driving environmental change and engaging diverse stakeholders.
- Enable students to critically evaluate environmental policies and contribute to evidence-based decision-making processes.
- Prepare graduates to lead environmental initiatives across public, private, and third-sector organisations.

Part-time Study

The University is committed to increasing flexible access to learning and therefore the academic programme on offer can be studied on a part-time basis.
The modular programme structure means part-time students will study alongside full-time counterparts and can access the same student support, resources and facilities as full-time students.

Section 4 – Programme Sustainability

The BSC/BA Environment and Sustainability pathways are strategically aligned with the UN's 17 SDGs, mapped to each module. Each of the SDGs has been mapped against the programme modules. This alignment ensures students develop practical skills to address real-world challenges.

In a broader sense, students are asked to develop forward-thinking processes that evaluate how the concepts and practices they are studying sit within the economic, environmental and

social sustainability framework. The programme is also designed for long-term viability through strategic partnerships with environmental organisations, regular curriculum updates reflecting emerging sustainability challenges, and strong industry connections that ensure graduate employability. The interdisciplinary approach attracts students from diverse academic backgrounds while maintaining rigorous standards that prepare graduates for the expanding green economy.

Faculty expertise spans multiple environmental disciplines, with active research informing teaching content and keeping pace with rapidly evolving sustainability practices. Strong links with employers ensure the programme remains responsive to sector needs, while continuous monitoring of graduate outcomes validates its effectiveness in preparing environmental professionals capable of addressing global sustainability challenges.

Section 5 – Programme intended learning outcomes

On successful completion of the named award, students will be able to demonstrate the following Learning Outcomes (LOs):

Knowledge and Understanding

LO no.	On successful completion of the named award, students will be able to:	Module Code/s
1	Consider and assess the factors influencing conservation, ecology, climate change, land use, and environmental management in the context of food production and environmental considerations. **The role of advocacy and activism in affecting the above factors.** (SDGs 7,12,13,15,17)	4M002, 4A004, 4A005, 4W003, 4W004, 5W003, 5W004, 5W005, 5W006, 5W002, 6W001, 6W003, 6L003, 6W004, 6A007, 6W002, 6A002
2	Assess and evaluate global, national and local food systems in relation to sustainable food supply and consumption. Thinking outside the box, exploring alternative approaches. (SDGs 8,11,12,17)	4A004, 4A005, 4W002, 4W004, 5W003, 5W002, 6W001, 6L003, 6A007, 6W005, 6W002, 6A002
3	Evaluate and apply scientific and technological developments to improve current and future environmental management systems, making these more sustainable. **How people and organisations have a role in change.** (SDGs 1,2,3)	4M002, 4A004 4W002, 4W004, 5W003, 5W004, 5W006, 5W002, 6W001, 6W003, 6L003, 6W002, 6M001

4	Acquire an in-depth knowledge of different farming systems and approaches currently employed on a range of agricultural enterprises. (SDGs 9)	4M002, 4A005, 4W001, 4W004, 5M002, 5W003, 5W002, 6W001, 6L003, 6A002, 6A007

Intellectual, Professional, Key skills

LO no.	On successful completion of the named award, students will be able to:	Module Code/s
1	Evaluate problems, analyse alternatives and think creatively to develop solutions with reference to environmental, ethical, social and economic perspectives.	All
2	Effectively self-manage and become a lifelong learner (independent study, time management and organisation).	4M002, 4A002, 4A005, 4W002, 4W004, 5W003, 5W005, 5W006, PPY, 6M001, 6L003, 6W005
3	Organise themselves and groups of people, demonstrate teamwork skills by participating effectively in a team task.	4M002, 4W003, 5M002, 5W003, 5W005, PPY, 6W003, 6M001, 6A007, 6W005
4	Apply numerical and statistical techniques, be able to identify problems and find solutions in varying contexts, as well as demonstrate the application of IT, digital and technical skills in their work.	4M002, 4A005, 4W004, 5M002, 5W004, 6M001, 6W004, 5A007, 6W002, 6A002
5	Formulate and test concepts and hypotheses in context of environmental management, participatory inclusion and sustainable farming.	4A004, 4A005, 4W002, 4W004, 5M002, 5W005, 5W006, 6W001, 6L003, 6M001, 6A007, 6W005

Programme specific skills

LO no.	On successful completion of the named award, students will be able to:	Module Code/s
1	Design, conduct and interpret an investigative study, linked to the identification of key issues, themes and developments.	5M002, 5W004, 6W001, 6W003, 6M001
2	Critically analyse and evaluate scientific papers and investigative work.	All
3	Recognising and harnessing the role of people in progressing such outcomes.	All

4	Appraise the value and application of new technologies and science relating to the environment and its sustainable management.	All

Section 6 – Approach to Learning and Teaching delivery

The BSc/BA (Hons) Environment & Sustainability programme is normally of three years duration of full-time study (two semesters). Study is undertaken at three levels on the FHEQ; Level four, five, and six. The option with a Foundation Year is normally four years. This includes two years of taught full-time study, followed by a Professional Placement Year, and then a final year of study.

Learning approach

The Environment & Sustainability programme is designed to meet the diverse needs of students, recognising the varied skills, knowledge, and prior experiences they bring to the course. The first-year programme supports students at all levels through a blended and active learning approach that ensures an inclusive and enriching experience. All modules emphasize interactive, student-centred, and student-led learning, encouraging critical engagement with sustainability concepts and practices.

Teaching methods include lectures, seminars, tutorials, site visits, fieldwork, practical sessions and guided independent reading. Group learning activities foster teamwork, effective decision-making, and the ability to evaluate and synthesize information. These skills are further reinforced through guided tasks, individual work and student-led discussions, where fundamental concepts are critically evaluated and applied in real-world sustainability contexts.

Independent learning

Independent study is an essential learning method within the programme. This involves reading to explore the breadth and depth of the syllabus, preparing tutorial/seminar work, coursework/assignments, case studies, and major projects. Effective use of the RAU's e-library is vital for productive independent study.

Interactive learning environment

This programme delivers a dynamic learning experience through diverse teaching methods. Each module provides at least two hours of weekly contact time, enhanced seminars and lectures. Additionally, it included hands-on fieldwork, laboratory sessions, and site visits to sustainability projects and environmental initiatives. This balanced approach develops both theoretical understanding and practical application of sustainability principles.

Digital resources and technology integration

All module materials, reading lists, assignment briefs, and supplementary resources are accessible through our **Virtual Learning Environment** (Gateway). This centralised platform is an essential hub where students can access lecture materials, submit assignments, participate in discussion forums, and track their academic progress. Our teaching incorporates industry-standard digital tools that graduates will encounter in professional settings, including:

- Geographical Information Systems for spatial analysis and mapping (QGIS).
- Data visualisation and analysis software.
- Interactive polling and feedback platforms e.g., Vevox and Mentimeter.
- Collaborative mind-mapping and project management tools.
- Environmental modelling and assessment applications

Purpose of face-to-face sessions

Our in-person teaching sessions are strategically designed to:

- Foster critical thinking through structured debates on environmental challenges.
- Develop professional communication skills through regular presentations on assigned topics i.e., these can be individually or in groups.
- Create collaborative problem-solving opportunities through case study analysis.
- Facilitate peer learning through small group projects and workshops.
- Build networks through engagement with visiting sustainability professionals.
- Provide personalised feedback on progress and skill development.
- Integrate theory with practice through applied sustainability exercises.

This blended approach prepares graduates with both the knowledge foundation and practical skills needed for careers addressing environmental challenges in various sectors.

Section 7 – Approach to Assessment

The programme follows a structured approach with six 20-credit modules per academic year. Each module incorporates a progressive assessment strategy where strategically scheduled interim assessments build systematically toward final submissions, enabling students to develop understanding incrementally through continuous feedback. This scaffolded approach consolidates learning at each stage before advancing to more complex concepts and applications.

Assessment briefs are provided at module commencement to facilitate effective planning, with multiple assessment points including mid-module and end-of-module assessments. Active participation in all formative assessments is essential, as these provide valuable learning opportunities that prepare students for summative assessments and help identify areas for improvement. Students are responsible for meeting all deadlines, as late submissions, non-submissions, or non-attendance result in zero marks with formal notation on assessment and module records.

The credit system ensures equitable workload distribution throughout the programme. Each credit point represents approximately 10 hours of student engagement, meaning a standard 20-credit module requires around 200 hours of dedicated work. This translates to approximately 1200 hours for a complete academic year (120 credits), averaging 40 hours weekly for full-time students and proportionally adjusted for part-time learners.

While traditional examinations and focused in-class assessments are included where appropriate, our assessment strategy emphasises authentic, profession-oriented methods

that reflect real-world environmental and sustainability practice. This approach develops both technical knowledge and transferable professional skills essential for creating meaningful impact in sustainability careers.

Our diverse assessment methods include:

- Academic research reports
- Professional reports
- Employers reporting on work-based experience
- Case studies
- Essays
- Environmental management plans
- Digital in-class tests
- Oral presentations
- Portfolios/appraisals
- Production of educational/ interpretative/ information materials

Students will also be expected to undertake independent study as a core learning method, involving reading to explore syllabus breadth and depth, tutorial preparation, coursework development, case study analysis, and major project preparation. Effective use of the RAU's e-library is essential for maximising independent study outcomes.

Overall, the programme is assessed through*:

Learning Teaching

Year	Scheduled	Independent	Placement	Exam	Practical	Coursework
Year 1	**30.00%**	70.00%	0.00%	8.33%	86.67%	5.00%
Year 2	**30.42%**	69.58%	0.00%	5.00%	90.00%	5.00%
Year 3	**23.33%**	76.67%	0.00%	8.33%	86.67%	5.00%

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

Grade title	**Equivalent Mark**
First Class Honours	70% and above
Second Class Honours upper division	60% - 69%
Second Class Honours lower division	50% - 59%
Third Class Honours	40% - 49%
Fail	0% - 39%

The final assessment will comprise an average score of the results of level 4 weighted at 30% plus the results of level 5 weighted at 70%.

In addition to assigning a percentage mark to the work, the tutor adds comments; usually about the strengths and weaknesses of the piece as well as advice about improving the work. All assessment decisions are subject to internal moderation and external scrutiny by the programme's External Examiner(s).

Section 9 – Industrial Engagement (5M001) and Professional Placement Year (PPY)

All RAU degrees, including those with a 52-week Professional Placement Year, feature a 12-week industry placement. Employers have consistently expressed their desire to employ graduates who are able to evidence successful periods of prolonged work experience in relevant positions in agricultural businesses and related allied industries and the ability to reflect on individual skills, their own performance and the decision making and performance of the business.

The ability to reflect on personal and business performance is a key graduate skill required within industry. Many practitioners within the agricultural industry demonstrate their ability to reflect daily on a range of management decisions and business performance but seldom take the time to also reflect on personal performance and career aspirations.

The module enables students to reflect on the skills and experiences they have gained during the time spent in the industry and in higher education.

The 12-week module is assessed through a reflective portfolio of evidence. This module aims to support students to become reflective practitioners in their selected subject area. It builds on the development of knowledge and understanding gained across modules within the applied programme of study to enable the application of theory into practice and reflection of their own and an organisations practices in the workplace.

Students will be required to produce an industry experience portfolio recording progress on their individual role and responsibilities covering 444 hours of work-based engagement. Reflection on personal development should be included within the portfolio and students should draw on knowledge and skills attained throughout their course of study to help them complete their portfolio. The period of work-based learning will also provide the opportunity for students to critically reflect upon the practical application of knowledge and research gained on their programme of study into a real-world context to enable evaluation of working practices.

The Professional Placement Year is assessed through a reflective portfolio which includes a case study and a professional skill assessment which is undertaken by a nominated supervisor at the placement host organisation.

Approval process

It is the University's responsibility to ensure that learning opportunities during a placement are appropriate. However, it is at the same time desirable that students secure a self-placement (or in an organisation) which is suitable for their needs as well as amenable to them. For this reason, as well as for others, the **responsibility** for developing and securing a placement rests with the individual student. However, to ensure that the University's responsibilities are carried out, all placements are subject to **approval** by the University, **in advance** of the placement commencing.

This means that no placement can be considered to be in place and accepted until such time that appropriate checks have been made, and the placement has been approved for this purpose, by the placement coordinator. Students must submit relevant details of their desired placement on the appropriate form (including dates, name of organisation, outline job description, and so on) well in advance of the placement commencing, and at least by the date laid down, to ensure that checks can be carried out, and in case subsequent difficulties emerge.

Criteria for approval will include:

- The nature and function of the placement organisation, in relation to the student's learning programme (considering the student's pathway, for example).
- The placement organisation's ability to provide appropriate learning opportunities, (which must include the likely nature of the tasks and responsibilities that students may be expected to undertake during the work-based placement)
- Whether and how the University is able to support students on placements, and;
- The extent to which the placement organisation can fulfil its responsibilities under Health & Safety legislation.

It is in the interests of students, as well as the RAU, in this approval process, if students are able to gain an outline job description indicating the likely content of the job role during the placement, and submit this for approval.

The University must be in a position to assess whether placement providers know what their responsibilities are during the period of placement learning, both in terms of the provision of learning opportunities, and in relation to their role on the assessment of students, and thus have the organisation and prospective job role approved, before any placement commences.

The Industry Engagement module and its role in Year 2]

The industry engagement module is a very important element of the Year 2 programme. It has a large and important educational value, in terms of the ability to provide a bridge or link for the learning aims of many individual programme modules, between the formal 'academic' activities, in-university, and the specific practical work-based experience and organisational reality to which they often ultimately relate. It is especially important in the whole programme as it represents an opportunity for students to locate their final year dissertation topic (with the agreement of the employing organisation) in a real-world organisation, and thus focus the research study on an area where empirical data-gathering is feasible. Students are strongly encouraged to consider this aspect in advance, and discuss this with their link tutor.

Prior to placement

Before placements commence, it is important that students familiarise themselves with the guidance available in the module handbook. In particular, they must be aware of your responsibilities and rights

Responsibilities include those:

- As representatives of the University as a Higher Education Institution (as the placement provider might well be asked to offer equivalent opportunities to other students in future years)
- Towards the placement provider; their customers or clients; and to their other employees. In effect students are acting as employed persons within the organisation, subject to the normal employer/ employee mutual obligations, to fulfil the contract of employment.
- For managing their learning and professional relationships
- For recording progress and achievements (very important in terms of the final reporting process, as documented in the module handbook and assessment brief)
- For alerting both the placement provider and the Royal Agricultural University to any problems experienced during the placement. In the latter case, the expectation is that students maintain an ongoing communication with the University, in most cases through the designated tutor.

Students should be aware of their rights;

- To a safe working environment, with all that this entails
- To be treated in accord with the law, for example in relation to discipline and grievance issues, redundancy, and equal opportunities.

During placements

It is important that students keep in touch with the university throughout their placement period, and for this purpose all students are allocated a tutor who will provide for liaison, and a point of contact during the placement. This tutor will normally visit the student on at least one occasion during the period of the placement, normally before the end of July. For the PPY contact will be scheduled as; X3: 1-1 tutorial in person/online with academic teaching team 3 x 30 mins and 3 x 15 mins online interactions by the placement team. The purpose of the visit is to ensure that all is satisfactory from the viewpoint of both the student and placement provider, to counsel all parties if difficulties emerge, and to remind students of the requirements of the reporting process required of students to fulfil the module criteria. In some rare instances, no visit will be possible, in which case alternative arrangements will be made to fulfil this function of monitoring.

Students are encouraged to keep in touch with their link tutor throughout the placement period, by email or telephone as appropriate, both before and after the visit. If all is going well a weekly email may well be sufficient. Thus, it is crucial that all student email addresses, mobile telephone numbers, etc., that are relevant to the placement period, are recorded by University and maintained as up-to-date as possible. However, if problems

occur during placements, as sometimes happens, please ensure you make contact as soon as possible, if necessary with the Programme Leader, or the Placement Coordinator, if the link tutor is not available at the time. Students must not wait for a visit if the problem is an urgent one.

Section 10 – 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 11 – Employability

Employability of RAU graduates is excellent and there are many diverse career opportunities available to the students across the environmental and sustainability sector. The applied nature of the programme, research-led teaching methods and close links with industry provides students with the academic, technical and professional employment skills, which are highly valued by employers.

Our graduates have gone on to pursue careers with nationally recognised organisations and in roles such as:

- Environmental Consultant.
- Sustainability Manager.
- Climate Change Advisor.
- Renewable Energy Specialist.
- Policy Analyst.
- Conservation Officer.
- Environmental Education Officer.
- Carbon Management Specialist

The programme has developed strong links with a wide number and range of environmental and sustainability organisations including environmental consultancies, renewable energy companies, government agencies, local authorities, NGOs such as WWF and Greenpeace, climate change organisations, waste management companies, and sustainable development charities. Students have multiple opportunities to meet with representatives from the sector during field visits, guest lecture presentations, industry placements, and networking events.

The interdisciplinary approach through modules such as Energy, Climate & Waste Management, Global Development & Environmental Sustainability, Landscape Recovery and

GIS, Advocacy and Activism, and Climate Change and Natural Resources ensures graduates possess the technical expertise, analytical skills, and communication abilities essential for success in the rapidly expanding green economy.

The programme also provides a step towards higher-degree study and research levels such as MSc Sustainable Agriculture, MSc Environmental Management, MSc Climate Change and Sustainability, MSc Renewable Energy, PhD research programmes, and other opportunities in academia focusing on environmental science, policy, and sustainable development.

Section 12 – 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 13 – Enhancing the Quality of Learning and Teaching

The programme is subject to the University's rigorous quality assurance procedures which involve subject specialists 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
- Annual Programme Monitoring
- Student Voice data captured through:
    - National Student Satisfaction surveys
    - Programme Committees
    - Academic Student Experience Steering Group
    - Internal surveys – Programme Evaluations, Mid-Module Evaluations and End-Module Evaluations.