



Programme Specification

BSc Honours Countryside Management

September 2016



ROYAL AGRICULTURAL UNIVERSITY, CIRENCESTER

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

BSc HONOURS COUNTRYSIDE MANAGEMENT

NB

The information contained in this document is intended only as a guide to the programme. It does not constitute a legally binding document or contract between the individual and the Royal Agricultural University.

The information contained herein is correct at the time of going to print, but the University reserves the right to make changes to the structure of the programme, assessment methods, etc. at any time without prior notification. Any changes made however will be made known as soon as possible.

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1. Awarding Institution	The Royal Agricultural University, Cirencester, Glos, GL7 6JS, UK
2. Teaching Institution	Royal Agricultural University
3. Final Award Title(s)	BSc Honours Countryside Management
4. Academic level on Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ)	Level 6
5. UCAS Code(s)	D444
6. Relevant QAA Subject Benchmark Statement(s) and other reference points, e.g. FdSc qualification benchmark	QAA Subject Benchmark Statement for Agriculture, Horticulture, Forestry, Food and Consumer Sciences (2009)
7. Mode of study	This programme is offered as both a full-time and part-time award, and is also suitable for those with existing and continuing positions of employment.
8. Language of Study	The programme is delivered and assessed in English
9. Date of Production/Revision	Date of re-validation: 24 October 2014 Date current document revised: 24 September 2016
10. Educational Aims of the Programme	

The University intends that the following capability statements will provide an overarching framework for all its graduates, and inform specific course aims and outcomes. Thus the University expects that all graduates will:

- (i) apply creative, critical and compassionate thinking processes to social and organisational issues
- (ii) develop communication abilities using people, ideas, texts, media and technology

- (iii) work with, manage and lead others in ways which value their diversity and equality and which facilitates their contribution to the organisation and the wider community
- (iv) acquire and apply appropriate management, technical and practical skills and knowledge
- (v) display an ability to reflect on and learn from one's own experiences
- (vi) recognise and accept continuing learning as being central to one's capacity to realise potential
- (vii) develop, express and be able to defend personal values, beliefs and ethics
- (viii) hold a perspective which acknowledges local, national and international issues
- (ix) value a citizenship role which is connected to and responsible for the social, environmental, political and economic systems in which we live

In relation to the above general capability statements, the BSc Honours in Countryside Management aims to:

- (a) Develop the learner's interest in and knowledge and understanding of the policies and drivers for change affecting the natural landscape and ecosystems, and influencing the businesses, organisations and agencies associated with the management, conservation and utilisation of natural resources
- (b) Provide the opportunity for the individual study of particular interest and for self-expression through the Honours dissertation or work-based equivalent
- (c) Further develop critical learning skills and transferable skills to prepare the learner for graduate employment
- (d) Enhance and develop the learner's interpersonal skills

11. Intended Learning Outcomes (see also Appendix 1)

This programme is designed to enhance the outcomes of previous studies and will result in the achievement of the following intended learning outcomes:

i. Knowledge and Understanding

- A1 The policies and pressures affecting the landscape
- A2 Appropriate solutions to environmental problems

- A3 Sustainability and conservation of environmental resources
- A4 The roles and responsibilities of regulatory and advisory bodies

Acquisition of knowledge is achieved mainly through lectures and directed student-centred learning. Where appropriate, understanding is reinforced through tutor and student-led tutorials and seminars.

ii. Intellectual Skills

- B1 An understanding of subject-specific theories, concepts and principles
- B2 Application of the skills necessary for academic study and enquiry
- B3 Critically assemble, evaluate and research a wide variety of types of information and evidence
- B4 Demonstrate the skills necessary to plan, conduct and report a programme of individual research
- B5 Development and utilisation of problem-solving skills

In addition to lectures, intellectual skills will be developed through tutor-led tutorials, student-led seminars, coursework assignments and the dissertation

iii. Practical / Professional Skills

- C1 Plan and execute an independent research enquiry
- C2 Conduct an environmental impact assessment
- C3 Develop personal information resources
- C4 Critically evaluate verbal and written communication to inform decision making

Practical skills are developed by means of tutorials and seminars, through coursework assignments and the honours dissertation

iv. Transferable Skills

- D1 Communicate clearly and effectively using a range of communication media
- D2 Source information and apply knowledge systematically and appropriately
- D3 Development and enhancement of reflective skills
- D4 Manage time and tasks, prioritise work and seek advice when appropriate

Transferable skills are generally incorporated within modules and relate to relevant assessments as appropriate.

12. Programme Structure and Requirements

The programme is offered as either a one-year full-time programme or part-time programme, normally to be completed over two academic years and designed to build on previous studies at HND/Foundation Degree. Hence the RAU Honours conversion programme should be considered as the

culmination of a period of academic progression, rather than as an independent stand-alone course.

One of the unique features of the programme is the inclusion of two work-based modules that provide an opportunity for those already in employment to complete 50% of the programme within their current working situation, thus significantly reducing the time required to attend campus-based activities.

The flexible design of the programme also enables graduates from a wide range of related fields to enter the programme, and provides the ability to tailor the modular programme, through the selection of suitable elective modules, to meet individual career aspirations.

The programme is of a modular format, with each module representing a value of 15 credits or multiples thereof. Each 15-credit module represents a minimum of 150 hours of student learning, effort and assessment. To achieve the award of BSc Honours in Countryside Management, a student must achieve a minimum of 120 credits at level 6.

Within this total time, students can expect to participate in formal timetabled activities; such as lectures, seminars, tutorials, practicals and visits; for approximately one third of the total time – usually around 2 hours per week for a 15-credit module studied over 25 weeks of the year. Thus the majority of module activities; such as reading around the subject, preparing for tutorials and seminars, preparing for, and completing, module assessments and revision for, and sitting, examinations; will take place outside of these scheduled activities, but are an essential part of a student's learning journey.

Students attempting to short-cut their learning activities may find themselves experiencing difficulties as each module progresses, and as the level of assumed understanding increases. Thus it is vitally important that new students establish an effective routine for their studies as soon as possible. Maintaining a balanced workload from the start of the programme will help to avoid intense periods of activity, and ensure knowledge and understanding gradually develop throughout the year in readiness for any end-of-module examinations.

Core Modules

Honours Research Project	
or	30 credits
Work-based Research Project #	
Countryside Management	15 credits

[further module details are given in Appendix 2]:

Elective Modules

Students should select a minimum of 75 credits, for which the necessary pre-requisite knowledge can be demonstrated, from the following modules as part of the University's level 6 provision, subject to agreement with the Programme Manager and module leader concerned, that is:

Elective Group 1 (4 choices)

International Wildlife Study Tour	15 credits
Farming and Integrated Environmental Local Delivery (FIELD)	15 credits
Farmland Ecology	15 credits
Forestry and Woodland Management	15 credits
Game and Deer Management	15 credits
Tourism and Development	15 credits
GIS & Remote Sensing	15 credits
Rural Business Diversification	15 credits
Heritage Property	15 credits

Elective Group 2 (1 choice)

Sustainable Management of Soil and Water	15 credits
Natural Resource Appraisal/ Management	15 credits
Environmental Management (TBC)	15 credits
Wine Industry	15 credits
Urban Design and Development	15 credits

Improving Personal Professional Practice#	30 credits
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Students should note that the Work-based Research Project and Improving Personal Professional Practice modules are **only** available to those with current and continuing positions of employment.

13. Student Support Services

The Programme Manager is Dr Ian Grange who will be available to discuss particular issues related to the programme, and to assist with selection of appropriate elective modules. In addition, all students will have access to a personal tutor who will be a member of academic staff with a direct input to the programme of study and who will be able to provide further advice and guidance on academic matters.

In addition to the above, and as part of the University's commitment to supporting student learning, all students will have access to the following:

- A formal induction programme when you first arrive at University that will introduce you to all aspects of student life, including support services available, and outline the study skills you will need to complete your programme successfully
- The RAU Student Handbook that provides details of all facilities available to students.

- The Programme Specification and individual module guides that provide clear details of the assessment regulations and outline the teaching and assessment programme for each module of study
- On-line module teaching resources available through the University's VLE (Gateway)
- Access to extensive Library and study skill packages, many of which are available on-line
- Student e-mail and internet facilities
- Personal access to all lecturing staff to enable you to discuss problems relating to specific modules or assessment activities
- Access to additional learning support services, such as dyslexia or disability support services
- Access to the Student Liaison Officer, the Student Welfare Officer and the University Health Centre
- Access to independent and confidential Cirencester Counselling services
- Careers advice through sessions with Careers Guidance personnel.

14. Criteria for Admissions

The BSc Honours in Countryside Management is an Honours conversion programme designed to build on previous study and work experience.

Students will be expected to have already achieved an acceptable Foundation Degree or HND qualification prior to entry, the exact requirements of which will be set out following interview.

Students progressing from approved cognate FdSc programmes will be eligible for direct entry onto the BSc Honours Programme with no additional requirements to complete bridging studies.

Students from Foundation Degree and HND feeder programmes that do not articulate directly may be required to complete additional work in order to gain entry onto the BSc Honours programme. The nature of such additional work will be determined following interview with the Programme Manager and will relate to identified gaps in prior learning. This may involve the completion of coursework, or the sitting of an examination. (In exceptional cases, students may be required to complete additional level 2 modules prior to enrolment onto the BSc Honours Programme).

Students will also have the opportunity to register for an Ordinary BSc degree award, in which case they will not undertake the Dissertation/Work-Based Research module. They may, however, have the opportunity to return and register for their Honours award in a subsequent year and at additional cost.

Further guidance can be obtained from the Programme Manager or the Admissions Office at the Royal Agricultural University.

15. Teaching, Learning and Assessment

This programme is inclusive of disabled people (e.g. hearing impaired, vision impaired, speech impaired, dyslexic and mobility impaired) with particular regard to teaching, learning and assessment, in accordance with Part 10: Inclusive Practice of the University's Teaching Quality Handbook and the [Equality Act 2010](#). Students are encouraged to disclose any impairment to the Disability Officer so that the appropriate support can be provided. Students have the right to request that the nature of their impairment be treated as confidential.

The programme will be taught using a mixture of lectures, seminars, tutorials and practical instruction. It is helpful to make clear distinctions between these methods of teaching and to consider the role and purpose of each.

Lectures

Lectures are not intended to be seen as the founts of all knowledge. Higher education is a partnership between students and tutors. The purpose of lectures is to interest students in a particular subject matter in order that they can research it further.

Lectures are normally presented to a large group of students (often all the students on the same year of a course or module). Usually students listen to the lecturer for most of the session, as the organisation of these sessions, combined with the numbers attending, does not lend itself to generalised debate. There may be question times offered at various intervals.

Lectures can be helpful to study by:-

- Stimulating interest in the subject matter
- Giving information
- Offering different perspectives on a subject
- Explaining difficult concepts and theories
- Showing students how to deepen their knowledge
- Providing an opportunity to listen to specialist guest lecturers

Seminars & Tutorials

Seminars and tutorials are primarily interactive and will only work if students put in some effort. They provide an opportunity for students to interact with each other in an academic context. They are an occasion for the exchange of ideas and information under the guidance of a lecturer/tutor.

Seminars and tutorials can be helpful to study by:-

- Offering the chance for students to express their views
- Allowing academic interaction
- Giving students valuable practice in making presentations

- Facilitating discussions
- Encouraging structured research
- Sharing and diversification of information and experience
- Introducing group work

Practicals

Student practicals, visits and demonstrations will take a variety of forms on farms, agricultural businesses and laboratories. They form an important part of overall course provision and help to reinforce and apply the subject principles received in the lecture room.

Honours Research Project/Work-based Research Project

Both the Honours Research project and the Work-based Research Project require the completion and submission of a formal, structured document, usually based on some form of original research activity. Students are expected to develop and demonstrate their research skills and critical ability through the medium of this piece of work. The main purpose of this research is to demonstrate the application of knowledge gained in the taught element of the course and to show that a research activity can be handled with the right level of academic competence.

The project may take a variety of forms, depending on the interests and abilities of the individual student and the particular requirements of the study agreed with their supervisor - for students in work and completing the Work-based Project, this may involve discussion and agreement with both their University supervisor and employer on a suitable research topic.

Both the Honours Research Project and the Work-based Research Project will be used as a vehicle for encouraging individual student efforts and expression. Whilst there is no minimum length requirement, students are advised to aim for a final report length of around 10,000 words.

Directed and Private Study

Students are expected to undertake private study as an important learning method within the course. This will normally involve reading to explore the breadth and depth of the syllabus, preparation of tutorial/seminar work, preparation of coursework, case study submissions and preparation of major projects. The use of the University Library is very important for the effective use of private study time.

The Library staff provide advice and assistance on both finding and using relevant material. Guidance in private study is also given by the academic staff.

Please note:

- (a) The complete BSc Honours award will require, on average, a total of 1200 hours of student effort for a one-year programme, comprising of timetabled activities, private study and assessments. Students in employment and completing the work-based learning modules, should

be aware of the total effort required, and of the need to undertake this in addition to that required by their employer.

- (b) This programme is inclusive of disabled people (e.g. hearing impaired, vision impaired, speech impaired, dyslexic and mobility impaired) with particular regard to teaching, learning and assessment, in accordance with Part 10: Inclusive Practice of the University's Teaching Quality Handbook and the [Equality Act 2010](#). Students are encouraged to disclose any impairment to the Disability Officer so that the appropriate support can be provided. Students have the right to request that the nature of their impairment be treated as confidential.

16. Work-based Learning

Students registering for the BSc Honours in Countryside Management will have the option of completing either a full-time campus-based programme of study or a split programme whereby up to 50% of the credits may be achieved through activities undertaken within their existing working environment. Whilst the former will be more suited to those progressing from more traditional HND and FdSc awards, the latter will appeal to those in relevant employment who have the support of their employer/line manager in raising their academic qualifications.

The work-based learning activities comprise two 30-credit modules. A Work-based Research project which may be completed in place of the more usual BSc Honours dissertation and a professional development module, Improving Personal Professional Practice, which will require students to reflect on their current position and to develop and acquire new or enhanced skills in order to further progress their career path.

Students should discuss their proposed pathway and study approach with the Programme Manager when initially applying for the programme. Those opting for the work-based route will be required to ensure the University is provided with sufficient assurances from their employer or line manager that the planned activities can and will be supported within the workplace throughout the period of registration.

17. Quality Assurance Procedures

The procedures in place at the University are described in the Student Handbook, sent to students in advance of commencing their programme of study. Students are urged to read the handbook carefully and to be aware of its contents.

All assessment marks may be subject to independent internal moderation and review by the External Examiner for the programme. Students are advised to

make copies of all coursework assignment available should an External Examiner request a more formal review of marking standards.

The Programme Manager will convene at least two Programme Committee Meetings during each academic year. The student cohort for the programme will elect up to two representatives to sit on this committee to reflect the views of the cohort as a whole. Minutes of these meetings, together with results of annual module and University evaluation questionnaires completed by the students and a report from the External Examiner for the programme will be incorporated into an annual report compiled by the Programme Manager.

18. Marking Guides and Assessment Regulations

The marking guide for student assignments and for examinations, and the University regulations for assessment and progression are available from the University website.

19. Ownership of Programme Specification

The Programme Management Group (PMG), as a member of the School of Agriculture, will be responsible for the management of the programme and maintenance of programme documentation.

20. Curriculum Map

The curriculum map, detailing how the programme outcomes relate to the core modules is shown in Appendix 1.

21. Career Prospects

As a leading educator serving the agricultural and rural business sectors, the RAU is well placed to provide networking opportunities for graduates interested in careers in the agricultural and rural industries. This programme is specifically designed to equip graduates with the additional knowledge of agriculture and rural policy (over and above their FdSc or HND knowledge of countryside management) to be employable within the conservation or countryside management sector, such as statutory bodies like Natural England, NGOs like the Wildlife Trusts or the National Trust, or large farms / estates.

Graduates will also possess qualifications sufficient to support applications for further study at Masters or PhD level on completion of this BSc Honours award.

22. Further Information

Further information about the University can be found on the RAU website, and more detailed information about the BSc Honours in Countryside Management programme can be obtained from the RAU intranet site, accessible to all registered students.

Please also check the 'Student One Stop Shop' found on the Intranet: <https://gateway.rau.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=416> . This contains information on the following:

- The Student Handbook
- General academic assessment rules
- Blank mitigating circumstances forms and the new rules
- Blank extension forms
- Dissertation guidance forms
- Past exam papers.

The Student Handbook includes details of the University's Equal Opportunities and Disabilities statements and the details of the learning resources available to students.

Prospective students are advised to contact the Programme Manager for further details and/or attend for interview prior to registration.

23. Module Reference Sheets

The Module Reference Sheets are available on the University website: <http://www.rau.ac.uk/study/undergraduate-study/module-details/level-6>

Appendix 1: Curriculum Map

<p>The following map shows how the core modules of the BSc Honours in Countryside Management programme combine to develop the programme intended learning outcomes outlined in section 10 above. Learning Outcomes</p>	Countryside Management	Farmland Ecology	Farming and Integrated Environmental Local Delivery (FIELD)	Forestry & Woodland Management	Rural Business Diversification	GIS Modelling of the Environment	Game and Deer Management	Honours Research Project	Work-based Research Project	IPPP
Knowledge and Understanding										
A1. The policies and pressures affecting the landscape	✓									✓
A2. Appropriate solutions to environmental problems		✓				✓				✓
A3. Sustainability and conservation of environmental resources	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓				✓
A4. The roles and responsibilities of regulatory and advisory bodies	✓	✓					✓			✓

Intellectual Skills										
B1. understand subject-specific theories, concepts and principles	✓		✓				✓			
B2. Apply the skills necessary for academic study and enquiry	✓				✓	✓		✓		
B3. Critically assemble, evaluate and research a wide variety of types of information and evidence	✓	✓				✓		✓	✓	✓
B4. Demonstrate the skills necessary to plan, conduct and report a programme of individual research		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
B5. Utilise problem-solving skills		✓				✓		✓	✓	✓
Practical Skills										
C1. Plan and execute a research enquiry		✓				✓		✓	✓	✓
C2. Conduct an environmental impact assessment	✓									
C3. Develop personal information resources	✓	✓				✓		✓	✓	✓

C4. Critically evaluate verbal and written communication to inform decision making	✓	✓					✓	✓		
Transferable skills										
D1. Communicate clearly and effectively using a range of communication media	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
D2. Source information and apply knowledge systematically and appropriately	✓	✓				✓		✓	✓	✓
D3. develop reflective skills to examine personal practice		✓						✓	✓	✓
D4. Manage time and tasks, prioritise work and seek advice when appropriate		✓			✓	✓		✓	✓	✓

Appendix 2: Countryside Management module choices 2016-17 (Please be aware that some adjustments are still likely with the schedules described).

Code	Module	Module leader	Core/ Elective	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3
3092	Countryside Management	Ian Grange	Core			
	Elective group 1 (4 choices)					
3093	Farmland Ecology	Jenny Phelps	Elective			
3207	Farming and Integrated Environmental Local Delivery (FIELD)	Jenny Phelps	Elective			
3090	Forestry & Woodland Management	David Lewis	Elective			
3230	Ecology Field Tour	Kelly Swallow	Elective			
3011	Rural Business Diversification	Steve Thomas	Elective			
3010	Game and Deer Management	Andrew Davis	Elective			
3229	GIS and Remote Sensing	Patrick Dreyer	Elective			
3204	Tourism and Development	Richard Baines	Elective			
3080	Heritage Property	Andrew Davis	Elective			
	Elective group 2 (1 choice)					
3013	Sustainable Management of Soil and Water	John Conway	Elective			
3202	Natural Resource Appraisal	John Conway	Elective			
3203	Natural Resource Management	John Conway	Elective			
3096	Wine Industry	Vasil Rachkov	Elective			
3076	Urban Design and Development	Iain Butler	Elective			
	Other					
3015	Honours Research Project	Hugh Martin	Core		Individual dissertation research	
3101	Work Based Research Project	Ian Grange	Core –work based			
3102	Improving Personal Professional Practice	Ian Grange	Elective –work based			

Appendix 3

ROYAL AGRICULTURAL UNIVERSITY UNDERGRADUATE (LEVELS 4-6) COURSEWORK MARKING CRITERIA

The generic marking guidelines below outline the quality of work expected for the award of a mark within the percentage band ranges. **In determining marks, tutors will need to interpret these generic criteria in the context of the learning outcomes for the module and the specific marking criteria for the piece of work as specified in the assessment brief. The descriptors are not seen as the minimum criteria, which must be met in all respects in order to gain a particular mark, but rather as being indicative of the general standard of work provided.** These guidelines must not be used for dissertations since each School has its own set of dissertation marking criteria.

The overall threshold pass mark is 40%.

90-100%	An exceptional answer which is excellent in every respect, showing full knowledge and understanding of the subject, and related theories and concepts. An outstanding ability to analyse, synthesise and evaluate in the context of the brief. Demonstrates insight, originality and independent critical thinking. Compelling arguments developed. Very extensive range of sources used and applied in an insightful way. Excellent presentation and fluently and stylishly written.
80-89%	An outstanding answer which is excellent in almost all respects and clearly focused on the brief. Demonstrates extensive knowledge and understanding of the subject and related theories and concepts. Clear evidence of excellent analysis, synthesis and evaluation. Demonstrates insight, critical thinking and some originality. Clear and thoughtful arguments developed. Evidence of extensive reading and study beyond the course content and thorough discussion of sources. Very well written, logically structured and excellently presented.
70-79%	An excellent answer in most respects, showing evidence of extensive knowledge and understanding of the subject and related theories and concepts in the context of the brief. Very good analysis, synthesis and evaluation. Demonstrates insight, critical thinking and, possibly, originality. Well-constructed arguments. Evidence of substantial reading and study beyond the course content. Very well written, logically structured and well presented.
65-69%	A very good answer showing evidence of wide knowledge and understanding of the subject and related theories and concepts in the context of the brief. Clear evidence of outside reading and study. Good evidence of analysis, synthesis and evaluation. Logical arguments developed, but lacks some of the qualities of a first-class answer. May lack insight or originality. Well written, logically structured and well presented for the most part. Correctly referenced.
60-64%	A good answer showing broad knowledge and understanding of the subject and related theories and concepts in the context of the brief. Based predominantly on the course content but with clear evidence of outside reading and study. Sound evidence of analysis and evaluation, but may display weaknesses in ability to synthesise. Balanced arguments developed covering the majority of salient points, but not in sufficient depth. Mostly accurate but may contain occasional errors. Well written, logically structured and well-presented but may contain minor flaws. Correctly referenced.

55-59%	A competent answer showing sound knowledge and understanding of the subject and some related theories and concepts. Mainly relevant to the brief. Some evidence of outside reading but mainly reliant on key texts, with some minor errors in referencing. Insufficient analysis and evaluation. Arguments present but not fully developed. May contain errors and omissions. Adequately written, structured and presented.
50-54%	An adequate answer showing a reasonable knowledge of the subject, but lacking depth of understanding. Insufficient focus on the brief. Limited evidence of outside reading and heavy reliance on key texts, with some errors in referencing. Mainly descriptive and lacking in analysis. Superficial arguments. May contain errors and omissions. Satisfactorily written but may have some weaknesses in organisation and presentation.
45-49%	An acceptable answer showing some knowledge and understanding of the subject, but bearing limited relevance to the brief in places. No evidence of outside reading and study beyond the core material. Significant errors in referencing of key texts. Purely a descriptive account containing no analysis. Incomplete and unbalanced arguments; some important points are missed. Contains some errors and omissions. May be poorly expressed, loosely structured, short or incomplete.
40-44%	A bare pass showing superficial knowledge and understanding of the subject. Mentions some relevant points, but lacks focus on the brief. No evidence of outside reading or study beyond the core material. Incorrect referencing of key texts. Heavy reliance on limited knowledge at the expense of development of argument, analysis or discussion. Contains errors and omissions. Weak presentation and structure, poorly written and not always clear or easy to follow.
35-39%	A near fail which demonstrates little knowledge and understanding of the subject and marginal relevance to the brief. Covers the basic material, with some attempt to construct an argument, but with substantial omissions and errors. Poorly presented and clumsily expressed.
25-34%	A poor fail lacking substance and understanding, but with some grasp of the subject. Lacks relevance to the brief, with extensive errors and omissions. Limited attempt to construct an argument, but significantly flawed. Inadequate presentation and disjointed structure.
15-24%	A very poor fail which misinterprets the brief. Little evidence of thought or effort and minimal knowledge displayed. Contains fundamental errors and misunderstandings. Very poor standard of presentation, lacking coherence, confused and rambling.
10-14%	An exceptionally poor fail which is either limited to a paragraph or two, with only a hint of subject knowledge, or virtually no relevance to the brief. Not a serious attempt.
1-9%	A few lines of barely relevant material.
0%	Zero is reserved for no relevant material.

ROYAL AGRICULTURAL UNIVERSITY UNDERGRADUATE (LEVELS 4-6) EXAMINATIONS MARKING CRITERIA

The generic marking guidelines below outline the quality of work expected for the award of a mark within the percentage band ranges. **In determining marks, tutors will need to interpret these generic criteria in the context of the learning outcomes for the module and the requirements of the examination question. The descriptors are not seen as the minimum criteria, which must be met in all respects in order to gain a particular mark, but rather as being indicative of the general standard of work provided.**

The overall threshold pass mark is 40%.

90-100%	An exceptional answer which is excellent in every respect, showing full knowledge and understanding of the subject, and related theories and concepts. An outstanding ability to analyse, synthesise and evaluate in the context of the question. Demonstrates insight, originality and independent critical thinking. Compelling arguments developed. Very extensive range of sources used and applied in an insightful way. Excellent presentation and fluently and stylishly written.
80-89%	An outstanding answer which is excellent in almost all respects and clearly focused on the question. Demonstrates extensive knowledge and understanding of the subject and related theories and concepts. Clear evidence of excellent analysis, synthesis and evaluation. Demonstrates insight, critical thinking and some originality. Clear and thoughtful arguments developed. Evidence of extensive reading and study beyond the course content and thorough discussion of sources. Very well written, logically structured and excellently presented.
70-79%	An excellent answer in most respects, showing evidence of extensive knowledge and understanding of the subject and related theories and concepts in the context of the question. Very good analysis, synthesis and evaluation. Demonstrates insight, critical thinking and, possibly, originality. Well-constructed arguments. Evidence of substantial reading and study beyond the course content. Very well written, logically structured and well presented.
65-69%	A very good answer showing evidence of wide knowledge and understanding of the subject and related theories and concepts in the context of the question. Clear evidence of outside reading and study. Good evidence of analysis, synthesis and evaluation. Logical arguments developed, but lacks some of the qualities of a first-class answer. May lack insight or originality. Well written, logically structured and well presented for the most part.
60-64%	A good answer showing broad knowledge and understanding of the subject and related theories and concepts in the context of the question. Based predominantly on the course content but with clear evidence of outside reading and study. Sound evidence of analysis and evaluation, but may display weaknesses in ability to synthesise. Balanced arguments developed covering the majority of salient points, but not in sufficient depth. Mostly accurate but may contain occasional errors. Well written, logically structured and well-presented but may contain minor flaws.
55-59%	A competent answer showing sound knowledge and understanding of the subject and some related theories and concepts. Mainly relevant to the question. Some evidence of outside reading but mainly reliant on key texts. Insufficient analysis and evaluation. Arguments present but not fully developed. May contain errors and omissions. Adequately written, structured and presented.
50-54%	An adequate answer showing a reasonable knowledge of the subject, but lacking depth of understanding. Insufficient focus on the question. Limited evidence of outside reading and heavy reliance on key texts. Mainly descriptive and lacking in analysis. Superficial arguments. May contain errors and omissions. Satisfactorily written but may have some weaknesses in organisation and presentation.

45-49%	An acceptable answer showing some knowledge and understanding of the subject, but bearing limited relevance to the question in places. No evidence of outside reading and study beyond the core material. Purely a descriptive account containing no analysis. Incomplete and unbalanced arguments; some important points are missed. Contains some errors and omissions. May be poorly expressed, loosely structured, short or incomplete.
40-44%	A bare pass showing superficial knowledge and understanding of the subject. Mentions some relevant points, but lacks focus on the question. No evidence of outside reading or study beyond the core material. Heavy reliance on limited knowledge at the expense of development of argument, analysis or discussion. Contains errors and omissions. Weak presentation and structure, poorly written and not always clear or easy to follow.
35-39%	A near fail which demonstrates little knowledge and understanding of the subject and marginal relevance to the question. Covers the basic material, with some attempt to construct an argument, but with substantial omissions and errors. Poorly presented and clumsily expressed.
25-34%	A poor fail lacking substance and understanding, but with some grasp of the subject. Lacks relevance to the question, with extensive errors and omissions. Limited attempt to construct an argument, but significantly flawed. Inadequate presentation and disjointed structure.
15-24%	A very poor fail which misinterprets the question. Little evidence of thought or effort and minimal knowledge displayed. Contains fundamental errors and misunderstandings. Very poor standard of presentation, lacking coherence, confused and rambling.
10-14%	An exceptionally poor fail which is either limited to a paragraph or two, with only a hint of subject knowledge, or virtually no relevance to the question. Not a serious attempt.
1-9%	A few lines of barely relevant material.
0%	Zero is reserved for no relevant material.