



# **Programme Specification**

## **MSc Rural Estate Management**

P GUIDE – OCTOBER 2017



**ROYAL AGRICULTURAL UNIVERSITY, CIRENCESTER**

**PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION**

**MSc Rural Estate 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.*

**David Lewis - Programme Manager**

**© The Royal Agricultural University. September 2017**

<b>1. Awarding Institution</b>	Royal Agricultural University
<b>2. Teaching Institution</b>	Royal Agricultural University
<b>3. Final Award Title(s)</b>	MSc Rural Estate Management
<b>4. Academic level on Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ)</b>	Level 7
<b>5. UCAS Code(s)</b>	N231
<b>6. Relevant QAA Subject Benchmark Statement(s) and other reference points, e.g. FD qualification benchmark</b>	QAA FHEQ Subject Benchmark Statement: Construction, Property and Surveying  Also QAA Subject Benchmark: Agriculture, Horticulture, Forestry, Food and Consumer Sciences
<b>7. Details of accreditation by a professional/statutory body</b>	Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS)
<b>8. Mode of study</b>	Full-time or part-time
<b>9. Language of study</b>	English
<b>10. Date of production/revision</b>	Revalidation 2014

<b>11. Educational Aims of the Programme</b>
<p><b>Introduction</b></p> <p>This interesting, rewarding and highly regarded programme will provide you with an education in rural estate and property management and the disciplines that contribute to it, equipping you for a career in this field. Your programme of study will cover the management of rural land, property and business in the countryside within the context of the relevant legal, institutional and policy framework.</p> <p>This programme is designed to be studied on a full-time basis and offers graduates an intensive twelve month study programme. There is, however, the possibility of undertaking the programme on a part-time basis, though most students choose to study it on a full-time basis.</p> <p><b>Distinctive features of the MSc in Rural Estate Management</b></p> <p>The MSc in Rural Estate Management 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. As a graduate of the programme you will 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 professional training and experience. The programme has an enviable employment record, with most graduates taking up APC training positions when they leave the University.</p> <p>The programme benefits from close collaboration between the University, the Programme Management Group and firms of rural surveyors who sponsor</p>

prizes, provide case study sites and contribute to the teaching and assessment. Furthermore this is a bespoke programme – all of the modules have been designed and tailored to this programme.

This programme provides a route for entry to the land management profession to graduates with non-accredited first degrees. The emphasis of the programme is on the practical integration and development of the traditional core elements of a land economy programme; law, rural planning, rural valuation, agriculture, environmental and woodland management, rural policy and business management. The programme also develops the graduate's ability to undertake independent research through a programme of lectures on research methodology and the preparation of a research dissertation. The programme delivery moves from an emphasis on direct tuition in the core areas in the autumn term, through to more student-centred learning based on case study and coursework and the preparation of the dissertation in the summer.

This will be aided by frequent contact with rural chartered surveyors and other professionals, both on the academic staff and from outside the University and will allow you to gain an understanding of the diverse nature of professional work. This should help you decide on the type of work you would most enjoy in your future career.

There is a commitment to forming close and supportive staff/student relationships at all levels of the programme, including assisting you in preparation for the world of work.

The programme has been designed to provide you with:

- a master's degree meeting the professional requirements of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS); the programme is also recognised and supported by the Central Association of Agricultural Valuers (CAAV);
- educationally sound and relevant technical content, informed by current and ongoing developments in the land and property profession;
- approaches to teaching, learning and assessment which are varied but well-balanced and relevant to your studies (see section 17);
- transferable skills, which will be of benefit to you in your academic study but which will also assist you in your future career (see section 12).

### **Programme aims**

The programme aims to:

- provide you with a significant understanding of the nature, theory and practice of rural estate management;
- prepare you for a career in rural property management and meeting the professional requirements of the RICS;
- ensure you have a clear understanding of the application of professional and business ethics to land and property;
- provide you with opportunities to develop your academic knowledge and practical professional competence associated with the subjects within the MSc programme;
- develop your intellectual, professional, business and interpersonal skills;
- encourage originality and creative thinking.

## 12. Intended Learning Outcomes

Learning outcomes describe what you should know and be able to do if you make full use of the opportunities for learning that the programme provides. By studying rural estate management at the RAU, you will acquire knowledge and understanding of the context, core concepts and theories of the subject and develop key skills that you will be able to apply to both your academic studies and the wider world of work once you have graduated. The learning outcomes given below are informed by the QAA subject benchmarks for Construction, Property and Surveying and Agriculture and as well as the RICS APC Requirements and Competencies publication dated January 2014, particularly in terms of the 'competences' required for the 'Rural Pathway'. They also incorporate the principles of inclusive practice with regard to students with disabilities.

### i. Knowledge and Understanding

- A1 The complex and dynamic legal, economic, financial, governmental, business, management, technological and environmental principles and practices governing rural land and property markets;
- A2 Discipline specific principles relating to the work of the surveyor;
- A3 The roles performed by rural surveyors and related surveying disciplines;
- A4 Research methodology and its application in practice.

Knowledge and understanding outcomes are achieved mainly through workshops, seminars, tutorials and reading. Students are given directed learning tasks, and are encouraged to increase their depth of their knowledge and understanding through private study and completion of coursework.

### ii. Intellectual Skills

- B1 Apply the skills needed for academic study and enquiry, and be able to adapt and apply these skills to a continually changing professional rural property environment;
- B2 Research and critically evaluate information relating to a variety of rural property scenarios;
- B3 Synthesise information from a number of sources in order to gain a coherent understanding of theory and practice;
- B4 Demonstrate the skills necessary to plan and conduct some original research and write up as a dissertation;
- B5 Utilise problem-solving skills.

Intellectual skills are developed by a variety of means including lectures, tutorials, seminars, directed learning and problem based and experiential case studies

### iii. Practical/Professional Skills

- C1 Offer advice, make decisions and implement them 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.

- C2 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.
- C3 Be able to visually survey, analyse and report on the financial, constructional, natural and aesthetic aspects of land and buildings.
- C4 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the needs, perspectives and character of individuals and organisations that currently occupy rural land and property and be able to assist in identifying and articulating their future requirements.

Practice and professional skills are developed by a variety of means including site visits, lectures from key personnel in industry and case study project work, based on actual projects.

#### **iv. Transferable Skills**

##### **D1 Communication skills**

The ability to express the ideas you have obtained verbally as well as through written and visual work in a form which is appropriate to the intended audience.

##### **D2 Interpersonal skills**

The ability to work effectively as a member of a team or on your own, including the ability to motivate yourself and others, to show and take initiative and to demonstrate negotiation skills.

##### **D3 Organisational skills**

The capacity for independent and self-managed learning, including the ability to analyse and reflect on your own personal strengths/ weaknesses and formulate strategies for improvement.

##### **D4 Numerical skills**

The ability to apply basic statistical and numerical skills to rural land management information.

##### **D5 IT skills**

The ability to use Information Technology e.g. email and internet, databases, spreadsheets and word processing.

Transferable skills are incorporated within the case studies and related to relevant assessments as appropriate. Strategies for this include tutorials, seminars, directed learning, group projects and case studies.

### 13. Programme Structure and requirements

The MSc in Rural Estate Management consists of a one-year full-time programme which comprises eight taught modules and a research dissertation which is equivalent to four modules.

Each module is equivalent to about 150 hours of study and is worth 15 credit points towards your degree. For the award of a master's degree you must accumulate 180 credits, comprising 120 credits from the eight taught modules of the programme and the dissertation (worth 60 credits).

The taught part of the programme (i.e. the eight modules) is completed by the end of May. The final part of the programme takes the form of a research based dissertation. This is devoted to personal research for a dissertation on a subject of your choosing, under the guidance of a member of academic staff with expertise in this specialist area. The requirement for each student to formulate an initial proposal for their chosen dissertation topic and the subsequent allocation of supervisors at the start of the second term will allow individual feedback and discussion (and refinement where necessary), prior to commencing the dissertation.

The dissertation will be submitted by the 15<sup>th</sup> September (or nearest working day) of the same year. An extension to the dissertation submission date of one year may be granted (subject to an additional cost) by agreement with the supervisor and the dissertation module manager. If a student wishes to request such an extension using these provisions, the request must be submitted by 31<sup>st</sup> August of the year in which the dissertation should originally have been submitted. (Requests for extensions in a situation where there may be mitigation are covered by the normal University regulations regarding mitigating circumstances).

The assessment regulations are in accordance with the University regulations, and are provided in the Student Handbook.

#### Student workload

All full-time academic programmes at the RAU are constructed using a selection of modules, each of which requires engagement with a variety of learning activities. As mentioned above, a 15-credit module will require a notional input of 150 hours of work, so an academic year of 180 credits will require 1,800 hours of work, or approximately 40 hours per week.

Within this total time, students can expect to participate in formal timetabled activities, such as lectures, seminars, tutorials, practicals and visits. These sessions amount to approximately 30 to 40 hours per module, ie around one quarter of the total study time for each module. 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.

## Programme structure

<b>Module</b>	<b>Credits</b>
Rural Property Law	15
Rural Valuation	15
Rural Planning and Buildings	15
Agriculture	15
Farm Business and Enterprise Management	15
Environmental and Woodland Management	15
Rural Policy and Implementation	15
Rural Asset Management	15
Taught element	120
Dissertation	60
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>180</b>

### 14. Student support services

Students are supported academically by a programme management group of David Lewis and Katharine Foot and all of the leaders of the modules making up the programme. In addition they can use the following people, resources and activities to support them during their time at the RAU

- an induction programme when you join University which will introduce your programme of study and the study skills you need to complete it successfully;
- the RAU *Student Handbook* and virtual learning environment (Gateway)
- module handbooks, describing in detail the teaching programme for each module you study;
- extensive library and other learning resources, including study skills packages;
- a personal tutor, whose role is to assist you with the progress of your academic studies as well as advise on pastoral care issues;
- student email and open and personal access to academic staff, including the Programme Manager;



- access to a Student Liaison Officer, Student Welfare Officer (who can provide counselling on personal problems) and the University health centre;
- access to a Disability Officer, who provides assistance and guidance on teaching and learning support for students with dyslexia (or other forms of specific learning difficulties) and other disabilities, including a dyslexia specialist to help you develop your learning skills.

## 15. Criteria for admissions

You will need to satisfy the general admissions requirements of the Royal Agricultural University:

The standard entry requirement is the minimum of a BSc (Honours) degree at a 2:1 classification or equivalent. Students with lower academic achievements with relevant experience (such as farming, property or countryside management) may be considered for admission.

### Overseas students

The English requirement would usually be a minimum IELTS level 7 or equivalent. Students must provide written evidence of this level prior to an offer being made, together with verification of previous qualifications and experience gained. Students will also be interviewed where possible.

### Pre-University work experience

Although not a pre-condition for entry, you are encouraged to undertake some practical farming and professional experience before embarking on your programme of study, perhaps during a gap year. The Programme Manager would be happy to provide further guidance to you about the type of work experience that would be particularly suitable for your individual circumstances.

## 16. Teaching, learning and assessment

The curriculum is designed to enable you to acquire and develop knowledge and understanding of the subject, intellectual/thinking, practical/professional and key transferable skills which correspond to those developed by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) for the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications. As you progress through the programme you will be encouraged to expand your understanding and critical appreciation of key rural estate management topics and issues.

This programme is inclusive of disabled people 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](#). However, due to the particular requirements of this programme (i.e. a core feature is that it requires students to visually appraise buildings, woodlands and sites) students who are severely visually impaired are advised to contact the University's Disability Officer so that appropriate support may be provided. Students have the right to request that the nature of their impairment be treated as confidential.

## Teaching and learning

A carefully planned and diverse programme of teaching and learning, guided by the explicit aims and identified learning outcomes of the programme, will be used in rural estate management. Your workload will be challenging but manageable.

You will:

- attend lectures, participate in seminars and tutorials, undertake case studies and carry out practical work both in class and out in the field, for example on site visits;
- be given directed learning tasks both in class and for private study time to help increase your knowledge and understanding of topics and issues covered in class;
- be encouraged to engage in and take responsibility for your own learning enabling you to work as an independent self-directed learner;
- have the opportunity to participate in group work, for example in case studies, to develop your ability to work co-operatively with others as a member of a team.

### Site visits

A wide variety of study/site visits are undertaken to local farms, properties and rural estates where owners, occupiers and their professional advisors/managers provide invaluable insights into contemporary issues arising in the profession of rural land management.

In addition, you will visit the University's own arable and livestock farms which will provide opportunities to supplement your academic studies with practical demonstrations of a range of farm enterprises, both conventional and organic, together with conservation principles and other property management issues.

### Guest speakers

Leading professional practices offer support to your programme through the provision of experts who regularly visit the University to provide a contemporary practical framework against which you can reflect your theoretical studies.

### Case studies

Your coursework will often be based on case studies which will, again, help you to see practical application of the subjects you are studying.

### Assessment methods

A variety of student-focused and appropriate assessment methods which are consistent with the learning outcomes (see section 12) are used in the programme, all of which will enable you to demonstrate your achievements and understanding of issues to the highest level, along with your ability to use specialist study as well as other key skills acquired during your academic studies. You will experience a good balance between formal assessment activities, for example, essays, examinations, oral presentations, group or individual reports, alongside non-assessed tasks and experiences which together contribute to your overall development. Assessment criteria are designed to be clear and specific for both you and the teaching staff (see Section 19, for marking guidelines).

Assessment is addressed as an integral part of the programme design, is reviewed regularly by the Programme Management Group and is subject to confirmation by the University's Academic Quality and Standards Committee and ratification by Academic Board.

### **17. Work-based learning**

Not applicable to this programme.

### **18. Quality Assurance Procedures**

The framework of policies and structures of the University, which form the basis for the assurance and continued development of quality standards for academic programmes, are set out in the Teaching Quality Handbook.

The function of the Programme Management Group is to ensure that the programme provision aligns with the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) and recognises and adheres to the expectations of the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) Quality Code in terms of academic quality and standards.

#### **Methods for evaluating and improving the quality and standards of teaching and learning**

The Programme Management Group undertake a range of activities to ensure the quality and standards relating to the teaching, learning, assessment, and outcome standards are continually reviewed and improved. Mechanisms for review and evaluation of the programme include:

- Preparation of annual module reviews by module leaders to identify areas of good practice and consider further development of each module in the programme.
- Regular Programme Management Group meetings.
- Submission of annual reports by External Examiners, commenting on the quality and standards of the programme.
- Preparation of an annual programme report by the Programme Manager, which is approved by the Dean of the School of RELM and considered by the University Academic Quality and Standards Committee.
- Periodic review and revalidation of the programme on a five year cycle, involving external panel members.
- Regular partnership meetings with the RICS.

**Committees with responsibility for monitoring and evaluating quality and standards:**

- Programme Committee (including student representation).
- University Academic Quality and Standards Committee (AQSC).
- University Examination Boards (to consider marks, progression and awards).

**Mechanisms for gaining student feedback on the quality of teaching and their learning experience:**

- Student representation at the Programme Committee.
- Student feedback on modules and programme.

**Staff development priorities include:**

- Institutional staff development courses.
- Attainment by all staff of formal teaching qualification.

Monthly RELM School staff development activities

**Stakeholder feedback**

Feedback from existing and past students, employers, External Examiners and the School of RELM Advisory Board is regularly received and considered in the annual and periodic review process.

**19. Marking Guides and Assessment Regulations**

The marking criteria for coursework and examinations and the regulations for assessment and progression are those currently in force at the Royal Agricultural University and are available on the University's VLE, Gateway via the Student One Stop Shop.

**20. Ownership of programme specification**

The Programme Management Group, under the auspices of the School of Real Estate and Land Management has responsibility for the programme.

**21. Curriculum Map**

The map provided at Appendix 1 shows how the programme outcomes relate to module outcomes.

## 22. Career prospects

Your studies will equip you to undertake the wide range of work that characterises the surveying profession.

The University has an excellent employment record supported by its enviable contacts with the rural surveying profession. In recent years the vast majority of those seeking graduate employment in the profession have been successful. As a student, you will have the opportunity to attend regular employer presentations and careers events at University in your final year of study. Recent job opportunities have included APC training posts with national, regional and local firms of chartered surveyors, auctioneering firms, private estates and other large landowners such as the National Trust.

If you choose not to follow a career in surveying, you will have many other career options open to you, for example, in law or accountancy, 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.

## 23. Further information

Further information is available to current students on the programme's *Gateway* homepage at <https://gateway.rau.ac.uk/login/index.php>

## 24. Module Reference Sheets

This list below shows the status of all modules in the programme. Further details can be found in the module reference sheets for the programme. The module reference sheet summarises the subject content for a specific module, the learning outcomes for that module, and how that module is to be assessed, whether coursework only, or a blend of coursework and examination. The module reference sheets for the programme modules, as seen in the table below, may be accessed on-line at:

<http://www.rau.ac.uk/study/postgraduate-study/module-details>

Module Number	Module Name
4002	Agriculture
4007	Dissertation
4015	Farm Business and Enterprise Management
4016	Rural Planning & Buildings
4019	Rural Property Law
4029	Environmental & Woodland Management
4031	Rural Policy & Implementation
4033	Rural Valuation
4043	Rural Asset Management

**Appendix 1: Curriculum Map (for specific detail of outcomes and where assessed.**

Programme outcomes	Agriculture	Rural Policy & Implementation	Environmental & Woodland Management	Farm Business and Enterprise Management	Rural Planning & Buildings	Rural Asset Management	Rural Valuation	Rural Property Law	Dissertation
<b>Knowledge and understanding of:</b>									
A1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
A2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
A3		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
A4		✓							✓
<b>Intellectual skills:</b>									
B1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
B2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
B3	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
B4		✓							✓
B5	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Professional Skills</b>									
C1		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
C2		✓				✓	✓	✓	
C3	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
C4			✓	✓	✓	✓			
<b>Transferable skills:</b>									
D1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
D2			✓			✓			✓
D3	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
D4			✓	✓		✓	✓		
D5				✓	✓		✓		✓