

**Programme Specification**

**Title of Course:** **M.Sc. Hazards and Disaster Management**

**Date Specification Produced: October 2012**

**Date Specification Last Revised: September 2018**

This Programme Specification is designed for prospective students, current students, academic staff and 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 Course Guide, on Canvas and in individual Module Descriptors.

**SECTION 1: GENERAL INFORMATION**

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| **Title:** | MSc Hazards and Disaster Management |
| **Awarding Institution:** | Kingston University |
| **Teaching Institution:** | Kingston University |
| **Location:** | Penrhyn Road campus |
| **Programme Accredited by:** | N/A |

**SECTION 2: THE PROGRAMME**

1. **Programme Introduction**

The course is designed to reflect the global interest in the management of both the so-called natural disasters and the more obviously human-induced technological disasters. This is an area which will be of increasing importance as global populations expand to occupy at-risk areas and as climate change appears to be increasing the number of extreme weather events. There is also considerable debate surrounding the best ways to reduce, plan for, manage and recover from disasters.

Hazards and the disasters they can produce will be covered in both a UK and an international context. Hazards examined include extreme weather (e.g. flooding, heat waves), atmospheric hazards (e.g. tropical cyclones, tornados), geological and geophysical hazards (e.g. volcanic eruptions, earthquakes), geomedical hazards (e.g. radon) in addition to human-induced hazards (e.g. terrorism, technological accidents). There will be consideration of a variety of approaches to the monitoring, mitigation and response to hazardous situations.

The course is designed to offer an interdisciplinary approach to hazard and disaster management, incorporating a breadth of expertise from staff in the School of Engineering and the Environment. This includes understanding the social factors that shape whether hazards become disasters; the physical science of hazard assessment, prediction and mitigation; approaches to disaster management and the interpretation and use of spatial data such as GIS. The course is taught by research staff in relevant fields and in addition, practitioners are invited to share their expertise and hands-on experience with students. This will help graduates of the course to engage knowledgeably with professional practitioners in all aspects of hazard and disaster management.

Fieldwork is strongly emphasised in the programme as a key learning environment, with a one-week residential field course to a multi-hazard field destination, as well a number of day trips to support learning. In the field, students will conduct mini-projects, involving problem solving and evaluation of disaster management strategies. A strong sense of active, problem-based learning underpins the teaching and learning strategy, with students taking part in a range of disaster scenarios, and completing assessments which often have a focus on real world problems and skills. This will produce highly employable graduates with well-developed analytical and independent learning skills and the ability to solve complex problems on varying spatial and temporal scales, attributes critical to a career in any aspect of hazard and disaster management.

The MSc programme is offered in full or part time mode to allow flexibility, where recent graduates can continue their studies and specialise in the field area or lifelong learners, already in established careers, can enhance their Continuing Professional Development by acquiring new or updated skills in the physical science and management of hazards and disasters.

To enhance employability and entrepreneurial skills for students, this course encompasses the key elements of numerical skills, statistics, computing technology, GIS software, scientific knowledge of environmental hazards, risk assessment and disaster management. Every student is assigned a Personal Tutor during Induction to assist with academic development and pastoral care. Tutors are the main contact within the academic discipline beyond Module Leaders and the Course Director and small group tutorials will be offer an opportunity to discuss a variety of issues. Tutors can assist students with queries in order to maximise their academic opportunities and direct them to other sources of academic guidance.

The programme also helps develop employment-ready students through an integrated industrial experience in the form of a work placement on the two year version of the programme.

This integrated placement provides students with an exciting opportunity to apply and develop their knowledge and skills in a real-world setting, which enables them to develop their self-confidence. Students undertaking such placement activities are in a stronger position to gain the skills and experience that employers’ desire today.

1. **Aims of the Field/Course**

* Provide students with an awareness of the differences between hazards and disasters and knowledge of how to prevent hazards becoming disasters.
* Provide students with advanced knowledge of the physical science relating to the occurrence, assessment and mitigation of major types of natural hazards.
* Equip students with a detailed knowledge and understanding of the social science approaches to understanding disasters and their management.
* Equip students with key underpinning theory and existing methodologies for effectively managing disasters, and the ability to evaluate approaches to disaster management in different contexts.
* Develop independent learners with a strong problem-solving ability who can work effectively in individual and team-based situations, making them highly employable.
* Enhance students’ research and data analysis skills and apply these to addressing a major research project.
* Develop students’ professional practice skills and thereby help them to advance their CPD.

1. **Intended Learning Outcomes**

The programme outcomes are referenced to the QAA subject benchmarks for Earth Sciences, Environmental Sciences and Environmental Studies, October 2014 and the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (2008), and relate to the typical student. The course provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding specific to the subject, key skills and graduate attributes in the following areas:

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| **Programme Learning Outcomes** | | | | | |
|  | **Knowledge and Understanding**  On completion of the course students will be able to: |  | **Intellectual Skills**  On completion of the course students will be able to |  | **Subject Practical Skills**  On completion of the course students will be able to |
| A1 | Identify, and explain the occurrence and spatial distribution of, major natural and human-induced hazards | B1 | Critically analyse and appraise information from both primary and secondary sources | C1 | Collect, analyse and interpret data relating to scientific and human aspects of disaster mitigation and management. |
| A2 | Discuss the scientific aspects of natural hazard monitoring and evaluate the role of science and technology in modern disaster management | B2 | Conceptualise, design and implement an independent research project | C2 | Carry out subject-related practical and fieldwork safely and with due regard to good laboratory and fieldwork practice and, where appropriate, ethics |
| A3 | Critically evaluate the synergetic relationship between hazards, disasters and human society | B3 | Make informed judgements on complex, sensitive issues related to disaster scenarios, often in the absence of complete data | C3 | Understand and articulate problems from multiple stakeholder perspectives and be able to appreciate the communication needs of different groups. |
| A4 | Assess the impacts of natural hazards on climate, tourism, human health, development and global politics | B4 | Function as independent, reflective learners | C4 | Practice self-reflective learning, and aid peer reflection, in the context of continuing professional development |
| A5 | Describe, discuss and critically evaluate modern disaster management methodologies relating to all phases of disaster management | A5 | Construct reasoned arguments using appropriate supporting evidence |  |  |

In addition to the programme learning outcomes identified overleaf, the programme of study defined in this programme specification will allow students to develop a range of Key Skills as follows:

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| **Key Skills** | | | | | | |
| **Self-Awareness Skills** | **Communication Skills** | **Interpersonal Skills** | **Research and information Literacy Skills** | **Numeracy Skills** | **Management & Leadership Skills** | **Creativity and Problem Solving Skills** |
| Take responsibility for own learning and plan for and record own personal development | Express ideas clearly and unambiguously in writing and the spoken work | Work well with others in a group or team | Search for and select relevant sources of information | Collect data from primary and secondary sources and use appropriate methods to manipulate and analyse this data | Determine the scope of a task (or project) | Apply scientific and other knowledge to analyse and evaluate information and data and to find solutions to problems |
| Recognise own academic strengths and weaknesses, reflect on performance and progress and respond to feedback | Present, challenge and defend ideas and results effectively orally and in writing | Work flexibly and respond to change | Critically evaluate information and use it appropriately | Present and record data in appropriate formats | Identify resources needed to undertake the task (or project) and to schedule and manage the resources | Work with complex ideas and justify judgements made through effective use of evidence |
| Organise self effectively, agreeing and setting realistic targets, accessing support where appropriate and managing time to achieve targets | Actively listen and respond appropriately to ideas of others | Discuss and debate with others and make concession to reach agreement | Apply the ethical and legal requirements in both the access and use of information | Interpret and evaluate data to inform and justify arguments | Evidence ability to successfully complete and evaluate a task (or project), revising the plan where necessary |  |
| Work effectively with limited supervision in unfamiliar contexts |  | Give, accept and respond to constructive feedback | Accurately cite and reference information sources | Be aware of issues of selection, accuracy and uncertainty in the collection and analysis of data | Motivate and direct others to enable an effective contribution from all participants |  |
|  |  | Show sensitivity and respect for diverse values and beliefs | Use software and IT technology as appropriate |  |  |  |

1. **Entry Requirements**

The minimum entry qualifications for the programme are:

Successful applicants will normally have a good honours degree (minimum lower second class) or equivalent in a relevant discipline such as Geography, Geology, Earth Sciences, Environmental Sciences, GIS or Natural Hazards.

In cases where applicants have a first degree outside one of the above subjects, each application will be assessed on its merit, taking full account of the applicant’s previous academic background. Where applicants have relevant work experience and/or professional qualifications in the field of hazards and disaster management, these may be presented for evaluation against Kingston University’s mechanisms and processes for Accreditation of Prior Certificated Learning (APCL) and Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL).

International students for whom English is not the first language are required to have achieved an English language qualification prevailing currently at time of application or approved equivalent. Kingston University postgraduate English requirements can be found at

<http://www.kingston.ac.uk/international/studying-at-kingston/language-requirements/>

1. **Course Structure**

This programme is offered in full-time and part-time mode, and leads to the award of MSc. Entry is normally at Level 7 (See section D). The full time mode of the MSc normally takes a full calendar year (12 months) study and the part time mode takes a minimum 24 months to complete.

**E1. Professional and Statutory Regulatory Bodies**

Not applicable

**E2. Work-based learning, including sandwich courses**

The 2-year version of the programme is designed to include work-based learning through assessments and the reflective report. Many of the students on the programme are already working and they can use that experience to relate to theoretical concepts and to evaluate the relationship between theory and practice.

While it is the responsibility of individual students to secure such placements, the Careers and Employability Service support offers each student support at all stages of the application process, including writing CVs, completing application forms, participating in mock interviews, assessment centre activities and psychometric tests. The process of applying for a placement gives students the opportunity to experience a real-life, competitive job application process.

The business experience period enables students to apply their learning in the real-world work environment, to reflect upon their own personal experience of working in an applied setting, to focus on aspects of this experience that they can clearly relate to theoretical concepts and to evaluate the relationship between theory and practice.

Students will be assessed during and at the end of this period, normally through a portfolio. This will be marked as pass/fail.

Students who undertake work-based placements often benefit greatly from the experience, gaining real experience and work achievements.

**E3. Outline Programme Structure**

The programme is made up of four modules each worth 30 credits and a research project module worth 60 credits. To achieve an MSc, students must complete 120 credits in the taught programme and complete the research dissertation. All students will be provided with the University regulations. Full details of each module will be provided in module descriptors and student module guides.

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| **Compulsory modules** | **Module code** | **Credit**  **Value** | **Level** | **Teaching Block** |
| The social construction of disaster | GG7025 | 30 | 7 | 1 & 2 | |
| Natural Hazards: Scientific Principles and Processes | GG7035 | 30 | 7 | 1 & 2 | |
| Managing Disaster | GG7130 | 30 | 7 | 1 & 2 | |
| Research Methods & Techniques | GG7050 | 30 | 7 | 1 & 2 | |
| MSc Research Project | GG7900 | 60 | 7 | 1 & 2 | |

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Optional modules** | **Module code** | **Credit**  **Value** | **Level** | **Teaching Block** |
| Professional Placement | CI7900 |  |  | See above | |

Students exiting the programme with 60 credits are eligible for the award of PgCert in Hazards and Disaster Management.

Students exiting the programme with 120 credits are eligible for the award of PgDip in Hazards and Disaster Management.

1. **Principles of Teaching, Learning and Assessment**

This course has been designed to take account of the Kingston University Curriculum Design Principles. The course utilises a wide range of teaching and learning methods that enable students to learn actively with all elements of the course and embed the skills and knowledge within their own career aspirations. Teaching and learning methods are specifically designed to suit the content and the learning outcomes of each module.

Typically, lectures are used to introduce key theoretical concepts and methodologies; practical sessions and field-based investigations introduce specific methods and exemplify theoretical concepts; independent learning space (e.g. guided by tutorials and seminar reflection) allows in-depth development and reading to support key concepts. Group work may be used to expose students to team working and working on larger projects.

A range of assessment methods enable students to demonstrate the acquisition of knowledge and skills. Methods include essay writing, report writing, oral presentations, poster presentations, examinations, and research reports. The assessment regime for each module has been designed to provide formative opportunities that allow students to improve their performance ahead of summative assessment. Further details are listed in the individual module descriptors.

Upon completion of the taught element of the programme (120 credits), all students are required to complete an independent research project that allows them to demonstrate and apply the knowledge and skills that they have acquired throughout the programme. The topic is initially developed in the Research Methods and Techniques module and then continued through to completion through independent study, under the supervision of a supervisor.

1. **Support for Students and their Learning**

Students are supported by:

* A Module Leader for each module to provide logistical and academic support
* A Course Director to guide students through the programme structure and progression
* The Course Team to provide high quality teaching and advice
* Personal Tutors to provide academic and personal support
* Technical support to advise students on IT and the use of software
* Dedicated programme administration office for all non-academic queries
* An induction week at the beginning of the programme
* Staff Student Consultative Committee
* Canvas – an on-line learning environment for *every* module
* A Learning Resource Centre and designated staff
* Study Skills Centre that provides academic skills support
* KU Student Support facilities that provide advice on financial, regulatory, legal, international student and accommodation issues;
* A Faculty-based Student Support team that provides advice and guidance on disability issues, student complaints and mitigating circumstances;
* International Office that provides support for those with English as a Second Language
* The Union of Kingston Students
* Careers and Employability Service

1. **Ensuring and Enhancing the Quality of the Course**

The University has several methods for evaluating and improving the quality and standards of its provision. These include:

* External examiners
* Boards of study with student representation
* Annual Monitoring and Enhancement
* Periodic review undertaken at subject level
* Student evaluation including MEQs, level surveys and the NSS
* Moderation policies
* Feedback from employers

1. **Employability Statement**

Graduates of the programme will be well-qualified to enter a wide range of careers that utilised the intellectual and key skills developed during the study of the field in a wide variety of commercial, industrial and public sector organisations. Recent Graduates of the programme found jobs in many areas including: emergency planning units in local governments, national and international non-governmental organisations/agencies, environment and emergency consultancies, insurance companies (e.g. Munich Re, Swiss Re) and further studies (e.g. studying PhD).

1. **Approved Variants from the Postgraduate Regulations**

N/A

1. **Other sources of information that you may wish to consult**

**Development of Field/Course Learning Outcomes in Modules**

This map identifies where the field/course learning outcomes are **summatively** assessed across the modules for this field/course. It provides an aid to academic staff in understanding how individual modules contribute to the field/course aims, a means to help students monitor their own learning, personal and professional development as the field/course progresses and a checklist for quality assurance purposes.

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| **Module code** | | **Level 7** | | | | |
| **GG7025** | **GG7035** | **GG7130** | **GG7050** | **GG7900** |
| **Knowledge & Understanding** | A1 | S | S |  |  | S |
| A2 |  | S |  |  | S |
| A3 | S |  | S |  | S |
| A4 | S |  | S |  | S |
| A5 | S |  | S | S | S |
| **Intellectual Skills** | B1 | S | S |  |  |  |
| B2 |  |  |  | S | S |
| B3 | S | S |  |  |  |
| B4 | S | S |  |  |  |
| B5 | S | S |  |  |  |
| **Practical Skills** | C1 | S | S | S | S | S |
| C2 | S | S |  |  | S |
| C3 | S | S | S |  |  |
| C4 | S | S | S | S | S |

**Students will be provided with formative assessment opportunities throughout the course to practise and develop their proficiency in the range of assessment methods utilised.**

**Technical Annex**

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| **Final Award(s) and Title(s):** | MSc Hazards and Disaster Management |
| **Intermediate Award(s):** | PgCert, PgDip |
| **Minimum period of registration:** | Full-time: 1 year Part-time: 2 years |
| **Maximum period of registration:** | Full-time: 2 years Part-time: 4 years |
| **FHEQ Level for the Final Award:** | Masters award level 7 |
| **QAA Subject Benchmark:** | *All subject benchmark statements can be found* [*here*](http://www.qaa.ac.uk)*. For PG provision where there is no QAA subject benchmark make reference to the QAA Master’s Degree Characteristics.* |
| **Degree Apprenticeship standard:** |  |
| **Modes of Delivery:** | Full time, Part time |
| **Language of Delivery:** | English |
| **Faculty:** | SEC |
| **School:** | School of Engineering and the Environment |
| **Department:** | Department of Geography, Geology and the Environment |
| **JACS Code:** | F750 |
| **Course/Route Code:** | Hazards and Disaster Management (full time) PFHDM1HDM01  Hazards and Disaster Management (part time) PPHDM1HDM01  Hazards and Disaster Management with Professional Placement (full time) PFHDM1HDM99 |
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