



Module Definition Form (MDF)

Module code: MOD005468	Version: 13 Date Amended: 02/Jan/2024
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1. Module Title
Field Skills in Biology

2a. Module Leader
Joseph Bailey

2b. School
School of Life Sciences

2c. Faculty
Faculty of Science and Engineering

3a. Level
5

3b. Module Type
Standard (fine graded)

4a. Credits
15

4b. Study Hours
150

5. Restrictions			
Type	Module Code	Module Name	Condition
Pre-requisites:	None		
Co-requisites:	None		
Exclusions:	None		
Courses to which this module is restricted:	School of Life Sciences courses		

LEARNING, TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT INFORMATION

6a. Module Description

In this module you will have the opportunity to develop your skills in the various components of field biology, including the use of taxonomic keys to identify UK fauna and flora, species surveys and standardised survey protocols within terrestrial and aquatic habitats. You will put them into practice during local field trips, practical classes and a week-long residential field course. During the field course you will work in small groups, under the guidance of an academic supervisor, to complete a range of exercises.

The field skills you will develop through this module are highly relevant to those wanting to work within conservation programmes and ecological consultancies. You will also develop key transferable skills in self-management, problem-solving, teamwork, and scientific communication, all necessary for future employment in the ecological sector and in research roles more widely.

6b. Outline Content

- Identification of UK fauna and flora using keys and field guides
- Design and carry out terrestrial and aquatic species surveys to work towards gaining technical competency standards
- Implement and review standardised survey protocols for terrestrial and aquatic habitat classification and assessment (e.g. Phase 1 Habitat Classification, River Habitat Survey)
- Capture (e.g. via GPS or smartphones), map and interpret spatial data
- Field skills in animal behaviour
- Record keeping and presentation of results (field notebook)

6c. Key Texts/Literature

The reading list to support this module is available at: <https://readinglists.aru.ac.uk/>

6d. Specialist Learning Resources

Field course, relevant field equipment. University laboratory space and equipment.

7. Learning Outcomes (threshold standards)		
No.	Type	On successful completion of this module the student will be expected to be able to:
1	Knowledge and Understanding	Identify UK fauna and flora to various taxonomic levels using field guides and taxonomic keys.
2	Intellectual, practical, affective and transferrable skills	Evaluate the suitability of field techniques and standardised ecological survey methods for the implementation of field-based studies.
3	Intellectual, practical, affective and transferrable skills	Work within a group to carry out appropriate fieldwork techniques to follow a project brief.
4	Intellectual, practical, affective and transferrable skills	Individually evaluate, summarise and present the results of field-based studies.

8a. Module Occurrence to which this MDF Refers				
Year	Occurrence	Period	Location	Mode of Delivery
2025/6	ZZF	Template For Face To Face Learning Delivery		Face to Face

8b. Learning Activities for the above Module Occurrence			
Learning Activities	Hours	Learning Outcomes	Details of Duration, frequency and other comments
Lectures	8	2,4	4 x 1 hr + 2 x 2 hr lectures/active learning
Other teacher managed learning	54	1-4	3 x 3 hour and 1 x 2 hour practical sessions, 2 x half day field trips and a week-long residential field trip.
Student managed learning	88	1-4	Background reading, online activities, preparation for lectures and practicals, and completion of assessments
TOTAL:	150		

9. Assessment for the above Module Occurrence					
Assessment No.	Assessment Method	Learning Outcomes	Weighting (%)	Fine Grade or Pass/Fail	Qualifying Mark (%)
010	Coursework	1-2	50 (%)	Fine Grade	30 (%)
2 Components - In-class test (500 words equivalent) and sampling protocol (1000 words equivalent)					

Assessment components for Element 010				
Component No.	Assessment Title	Submission Method	Weighting (%)	Components needed for Mark Calculation?
010/1	In-class test	Scheduled Activity: Timetabled assessment task	30 (%)	All
010/2	Sampling protocol	Scheduled Activity: Timetabled assessment task	70 (%)	

Assessment No.	Assessment Method	Learning Outcomes	Weighting (%)	Fine Grade or Pass/Fail	Qualifying Mark (%)
011	Coursework	3-4	50 (%)	Fine Grade	30 (%)
2 Components - Group project and individual field work notes and presentation (1500 words equivalent)					

Assessment components for Element 011				
Component No.	Assessment Title	Submission Method	Weighting (%)	Components needed for Mark Calculation?
011/1	Group fieldwork	Canvas	30 (%)	All
011/2	Portfolio of field work notes and results	Canvas	70 (%)	

In order to pass this module, students are required to achieve an overall mark of 40% (for modules at levels 3, 4, 5 and 6) or 50% (for modules at level 7*).

In addition, students are required to:

(a) achieve the qualifying mark for each element of fine graded assessment as specified above

(b) pass any pass/fail elements

[* the pass mark of 50% applies for all module occurrences from the academic year 2024/25 – see Section 3a of this MDF to check the level of the module and Section 8a of this MDF to check the academic year]