HARTPURY UNIVERSITY

# Programme Specification

| Part 1: Basic Data | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Primary Programme Title** | MSc Biodiversity Conservation | | |
| **Target Award Titles** | **Mode and Typical Duration of Study** | **Professional Accrediting Body Links** | **Study Abroad / Exchange / Credit Recognition** |
| **MSc Biodiversity Conservation** | Full time, 1 year<br>Part time, 2 years | **None** | **None** |
| **Interim Award Titles** | Postgraduate Diploma in Biodiversity Conservation<br>Postgraduate Diploma in Animal Studies<br>Postgraduate Certificate in Biodiversity Conservation<br>Postgraduate Certificate in Animal Studies<br>Postgraduate Award in Animal Studies | | |
| **Teaching Delivery Method** | On-site | | |
| **Awarding Institution** | Hartpury University | | |
| **Teaching Institution** | Hartpury University | | |
| **Delivery Location** | Hartpury | | |
| **Department Responsible for Programme** | Animal and Agriculture | | |
| **Unit-E Code** | **MSTABCXX** | | |
| **Entry Criteria Information** | Applicants will have achieved entry criteria appropriate for the stage of entry, which can be found through the Hartpury website (www.hartpury.ac.uk). | | |
| **Most Recent Validation Date** | 23 May 2024 | **Due for Re-validation By** | 01 September 2029 |
| **Amendment Approval Date** | V1.1 - 16 July 2024<br>V1.2 - 02 Feb 2026 | **Approved With Effect From** | V1.1 – 01 September 2024<br>V1.2 – 01 September 2026 |
| **Professional Accrediting Body Approval Date** | None | **Date For Re-accreditation** | N/A |
| **Version** | 1.2 | | |

| Part 2: Programme Overview |
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| Graduates from the MSc Biodiversity Conservation have an in-depth understanding of how to tackle real-world problems in relation to the accelerating loss of biodiversity, with well-developed desk-based research skills and field skills alongside intellectual skills. They can navigate the complex landscape of biodiversity loss and associated conservation strategies and apply this to industry. They have confidence in critical analysis, synthesis and evaluation, and can apply these skills to conducting research. Graduates have developed the ability to communicate effectively with a wide range of audiences, often in relation to sensitive topics, in a range of different media. Teamwork is an integral part of the course, in both the field and the classroom. Graduates have a well-rounded understanding of sustainability, allowing them to engage in debate and problem-solving to address current global issues. |

## Part 3: Programme Structure

This structure diagram demonstrates the student journey from enrolment through to graduation for a typical **full-time student on the primary programme**, including:

- level and credit requirements
- award requirements that are in addition to those described in the Hartpury University Academic Regulations
- module diet, including core and optional modules.

Please note:

*PAB these modules are subject to additional and variant regulations as part of an accreditation by a professional accrediting body

+ core modules marked + are not eligible for compensation

[1] these modules are accredited by a professional awarding body, but are not subject to variant regulations

[AV] these modules are subject to additional and variant regulations but are not accredited by a professional awarding body

| | Core Modules | Optional Modules | Target and Interim Awards |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Stage 1** | HANVT4-30-7 + Applied Principles of Conservation<br><br>HANVJS-15-7 Captive Exotics and Wildlife Policy and Law<br><br>HANVTG-15-7 Conservation in Agriculture<br><br>HANVL5-60-7 + Postgraduate Dissertation<br><br>HANVTU-30-7 + Practical Skills and Technology in Conservation<br><br>HANXKT-15-7 The Research Process<br><br>HANV6D-15-7 + Wildlife Conflict | None | Postgraduate Award in Animal Studies<br><br>PG Cert Animal Studies<br><br>PG Cert Biodiversity Conservation<br>Must include HANVTU-30-7 Practical Skills and Technology in Conservation<br><br>PG Dip Animal Studies<br><br>PG Dip Biodiversity Conservation<br>Must include HANVTU-30-7 Practical Skills and Technology in Conservation<br><br>MSc Biodiversity Conservation<br>Must include all core modules. |

## Part time Route:

| | Core Modules | Optional Modules | Target and Interim Awards |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Stage 1.1** | HANVJS-15-7<br>Captive Exotics and Wildlife Policy and Law<br><br>HANVTG-15-7<br>Conservation in Agriculture<br><br>HANVTU-30-7 +<br>Practical Skills and Technology in Conservation<br><br>HANXKT-15-7<br>The Research Process<br><br>HANV6D-15-7 +<br>Wildlife Conflict | None | Postgraduate Award in Animal Studies<br><br>PG Cert Animal Studies<br><br>PG Cert Biodiversity Conservation<br>Must include HANVTU-30-7 Practical Skills and Technology in Conservation |
| **Stage 1.2** | HANVT4-30-7 +<br>Applied Principles of Conservation<br><br>HANVL5-60-7 +<br>Postgraduate Dissertation | None | PG Dip Animal Studies<br><br>PG Dip Biodiversity Conservation<br>Must include HANVTU-30-7 Practical Skills and Technology in Conservation<br><br>MSc Biodiversity Conservation<br>Must include all core modules. |

## Part 4: Programme Learning Outcomes

Modules in bold are core modules and modules not emboldened are optional modules.
A denotes a module that assesses a learning outcome and B denotes a module aligned with a learning outcome.

| Learning Outcomes: | **Applied Principles of Conservation** | **Captive Exotics and Wildlife Policy and Law** | **Conservation in Agriculture** | **Practical Skills and Technology in Conservation** | **The Research Process** | **Wildlife Conflict** | **Postgraduate Dissertation** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **A) Knowledge and Understanding of:** | | | | | | | |
| 1. How theories and concepts can be critically applied to problems associated with the field of biodiversity conservation. | A | | A | | | A | A |
| 2. The complexity of the UK legal system, how legislation is developed in relation to sustainability, and what this means in the context of biodiversity and conservation. | A | A | | | | A | |
| 3. The variety of methods used to survey biodiversity, with understanding of pathways to achieving industry-standard field survey skills. | | | | A | | | |
| 4. The significance of economic, social and political factors in addressing biodiversity-related challenges. | A | A | A | | | A | |
| 5. The structure and function of teams, with consideration of effective team working. | | | | B | | A | |
| 6. Theoretical and practical scientific methodology to enable the design and completion of research projects within the field of study. | B | | | A | A | | A |

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| **B) Intellectual Skills** | | | | | | | |
| 1. Synthesise complex concepts and research findings to address real-world problems in biodiversity conservation. | A | | A | A | | A | A |
| 2. Construct a coherent, evidence-based argument or debate. | A | A | | A | | A | A |
| 3. Critically analyse current research, and employ knowledge gained to solve and propose sustainable solutions to challenges within the field of biodiversity conservation. | A | A | A | A | | | A |
| 5. Critically evaluate the multidisciplinary approach needed to tackle topics within biodiversity conservation. | | | A | | | A | |
| 6. Critically evaluate research hypotheses, methodologies and evidence within the context of biodiversity conservation, and their individual field. | A | | | | A | | A |
| **C) Performance and Practice** | | | | | | | |
| 1. Identify practices that could detrimentally affect biodiversity conservation, challenge the rationale for such practices, and identify practical and sustainable evidence-based alternatives. | A | | A | | | A | |
| 2. Apply appropriate statistical techniques and interpret their findings. | | | | A | A | | A |
| 3. Identify key stakeholders, their viewpoints, objectives and ways of working, and devise sustainable evidence-based plans to combat barriers to change. | A | B | A | | | A | |
| 4. Apply key practical, industry-relevant skills in biodiversity assessment and sampling. | | | B | A | | | B |
| 5. Demonstrate skills using Geographical Information Systems (GIS) to undertake and present research. | | | B | A | | | |
| 6. Conduct Environmental Impact Assessments and identify funding opportunities to evaluate and support environmental and biodiversity enhancement. | A | | B | | | | |
| 7. Plan, conduct and disseminate the results of an independent research project to the wider field of biodiversity conservation. | | | | | B | | A |
| 8. Demonstrate project management skills by managing a substantial research project from conception to successful conclusion. | | | | | | | A |
| **D) Setting, Personal and Enabling Skills** | | | | | | | |
| 1. Utilise problem-solving skills in a variety of theoretical and practical situations. | A | B | A | | | A | A |
| 2. Manage change effectively and respond to changing demands. | | | | A | | | A |
| 3. Take responsibility for personal and professional learning and development. | | | | A | | A | A |
| 4. Manage time and prioritise workloads whilst considering personal wellbeing. | | | | A | | A | A |
| 5. Understand career opportunities and challenges ahead and begin to plan a career path. | | | | A | | | |
| 6. Develop information management skills, e.g. IT skills. | B | B | B | A | B | B | A |
| 7. Develop an ability to use a range of media types to communicate effectively with a diverse audience that consists of a variety of cultures within a global context. | A | A | A | A | | A | A |
| 8. Effectively engage in teamwork to support successful project completion. | | | | B | | A | |

## Part 5: Learning, Teaching and Assessment

**Learning, Teaching and Assessment Journey:**

The contact time on this programme encompasses a mixture of face-to-face lectures and seminars, field-based practical sessions, off-site trips to a range of key sites of scientific interest, and online learning. A notable feature of the programme will be a residential trip to a well-established rewilding site, to support knowledge, understanding, and group cohesion. Students will be expected to attend campus regularly throughout the academic year, with onsite teaching to support engagement with industry and wider student experience. A mix of scheduled and independent learning will be expected, with a distinct emphasis on supporting the development of autonomous learning in students. There will be an expectation for a significant amount of independent study and group work throughout the programme. A combination of individual and group activities will be typical, with a strong focus on the development of field techniques and the opportunity for industry-relevant certificates (for example chain-saw use), both on the Hartpury campus and further afield.

Students will be supported to develop an understanding of industry-standard survey techniques, and to explore survey methods for Protected Species Licences. Increasing independence will be expected in practical tasks, to ensure students are industry-ready upon graduation. Guest speakers will be incorporated throughout the programme to support specialist knowledge development and give real-world insight. During learning activities students will be required to assimilate complex theories and concepts to solve real-world problems and advance current scientific thinking. Engagement with staff research currently undertaken within the institution will further these skills, with a focus on potential publication in peer-reviewed literature and conference attendance.

Students will receive a detailed induction and tutorial support plan to ensure they develop appropriate skills and depth of knowledge and can confidently progress through study at Level 7. Students will be allocated subject-specialist tutors for modules as appropriate, for example to support the research project.

**Independent learning** includes hours engaged with essential reading, case study preparation, assignment preparation and completion.

**Virtual Learning Environment (VLE)** This programme is supported by a VLE where students will be able to find programme and module information. Direct links to information will also be provided from within the VLE. The VLE will be used to provide a range of online materials including video resources and links to external information, and this will be supported by online delivered sessions.

Students will be able to experience many of our on-campus land and animal facilities, particularly the 360-hectare estate which is home to a wide range of British wildlife species, on mixed commercial farmland. This site, along with others in the local vicinity, will support students to develop a wide range of practical survey and ID skills. These facilities can be accessed by students during their dissertation study if desired.

Assessment throughout the programme has been designed to assess the student's ability to apply theoretical principles and philosophies to practice making an impact on real-world issues within the field of biodiversity conservation. This will be achieved via a wide variety of assessment methods and a thesis for the independent research project. Students will be supported to develop a wide range of communication media for different stakeholders. This will be facilitated through formative and summative group

| Part 5: Learning, Teaching and Assessment |
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| tasks, activities in taught sessions, and engagement with academic and industry professionals within the subject field.<br><br>Development of research skills and independence in learning will be crucial for the successful graduate from this programme. Students will be expected to research topics thoroughly, write grant applications and research proposals and produce robust novel research. On completion of the programme, students will be expected to be autonomous learners, able to enter doctorate-level study or appropriate employment. The assessment strategy has been designed to promote effective learning and engagement and to ensure that student knowledge, understanding, abilities and skills required for the conservation industry can be comprehensively evaluated. |
| This programme will be assessed according to the approved Academic Regulations.<br><br>Students registered on this programme will have access to the Hartpury University support services.<br><br>The distinctive module used by the Programme Examination Board to inform recommending differential awards for students when considering borderline performance profiles will be:<br>Practical Skills and Technology in Conservation |
| Professional Accrediting Body documents to which this programme is mapped and or aligned:<br>N/A |

## Assessment Map

| | | Type of Assessment* | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Coursework | Report | Portfolio | Written Examination | Written Test | Practical Skills Examination | Practical Skills Assessment | Oral Assessment |
| **Core Modules Stage 1** | Applied Principles of Conservation | | | | | | | B (60) Practical Skills Artefact | A (40) Oral Presentation with Questions |
| | Captive Exotics and Wildlife Policy and Law | B (40) Coursework | A (60) Case Study Report | | | | | | |
| | Conservation in Agriculture | | A (100) Case Study Report | | | | | | |
| | Postgraduate Dissertation | | A1 (75) Project Report | | | | | | A2 (15) Poster Defence A3 (10) Oral Presentation |
| | Practical Skills and Technology in Conservation | | B (70) Poster Report | | | | A (30) Practical Examination | | |
| | The Research Process | A (90) Coursework | | B (10) Coursework Portfolio | | | | | |
| | Wildlife Conflict | | | A1(100) Reflective Portfolio | | | | | |

*Indicative assessment types for new students enrolling on this programme after the date this specification takes effect (Part 1) are shown in terms of either Coursework, Written Examination, or Practical Examination as indicated by the colour coding above.

This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the 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 learning outcomes, content and teaching, learning and assessment methods of individual modules can be found through Hartpury's website (www.hartpury.ac.uk).

## Approved Programme Amendment Log

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|---|---|
| **Primary Programme Title:** | MSc Biodiversity Conservation |
| **Programme Code:** | MSTABCXX |
| **Initial Approval Date:** | 23 May 2024 |

**Changes:** *Most recent at the top of the page*

**Current version number: 1.1**

**Outline Change Details**:
Part 3: HANVT4-30-7 removed as a required module for the PG Cert interim award.
Modules not eligible for compensation updated to include Postgraduate Dissertation, Wildlife Conflict, and Applied Principles of Conservation.
Part 4: Programme Learning Outcomes - module mapping amended for Conservation in Agriculture, Captive Exotics, Wildlife Conflict, and Practical Skills and Technology in Conservation. Learning outcomes reorganised to follow the order in PG Cert and PG Dip.
Part 5: wording added to reflect that additional certificates will be available to all students but not compulsory.

**Do the changes presented alter the mapping against the Hartpury University Curriculum Framework (delete as appropriate)? No**

**If yes, please provide the details of the changes:**

**Material Alteration: No**

**Rationale:**
The PG Dip and PG Cert options are being made available as entry points rather than just interim awards to reflect feedback from industry and other institutions that this is a desired route for some applicants. To improve affordability for students, the additional qualifications that had been embedded (and resulted in a higher tuition fee) have been changed to being optional rather than required.

**Change requested by: Lucy Garrett**

I can confirm that student representatives have been consulted about this change

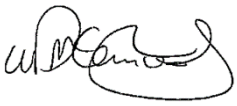
I can confirm that colleagues impacted by this change have been consulted

I have retained evidence of these consultations, which will be summarized within the Programme Enhancement Report

**Signature**:  **Date**: 08/01/2026

**Name of Head of Department: Wanda McCormick**

I confirm that this change does not require additional resources beyond the scope of those already present or planned for by the department

**Signature**:  **Date**: 08/01/2026

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|---|---|
| **Approval Committee and Date:** | CVC Chair's action (RSW) 2026 02 02 (from CVC 2026 01 27) |
| **Change approved with effect from:** | 01 September 2026 |
| **Resulting new version number:** | 1.2 |

**Current version number: 1.0**

**Outline Change Details**:

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| Part 5: Assessment Map – assessment for core module The Research Process changed from Oral Presentation with Questions and Coursework to Coursework and Coursework Portfolio, in line with module amendment.<br>Part 4: Programme Learning Outcomes mapping against The Research Process modified. |
| **Do the changes presented alter the mapping against the Hartpury University Curriculum Framework (delete as appropriate)? No** |
| **Material Alteration: Yes and is accompanied by the relevant course information document.** |
| **Rationale:**<br>Requirement to write a research proposal has been removed from The Research Process since this duplicates the work students will be undertaking in the Applied Research Practice and dissertation module. Instead students will be better scaffolded, via two summative assessments, in their critical analysis of research methodologies. |
| **Change requested by: Ben Brilot**<br>I can confirm that student representatives have been consulted about this change<br>I can confirm that colleagues impacted by this change have been consulted<br>I have retained evidence of these consultations, which will be summarized within the Programme Enhancement Report<br>**Signature**: B Brilot **Date**: 25/07/24 |
| **Name of Head of Department: Wanda McCormick**<br>I confirm that this change does not require additional resources beyond the scope of those already present or planned for by the department<br>  <br>**Signature**: **Date**: 05/07/2024 |

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| **Approval Committee and Date:** | CVC 2024 07 16 |
| **Change approved with effect from:** | 01 September 2024 |
| **Resulting new version number:** | 1.1 |

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| **Outline Change Details**: New programme. | |
| **Approval Committee and Date:** | CVC Chair's action (SD) 2024 05 23 |
| **Change approved with effect from:** | 01 September 2024 |
| **Resulting new version number:** | 1.0 |