University of BRISTOL

Geography at Bristol

2020

Visit days

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University of BRISTOL

The School of Geographical Sciences

You will thrive here if:

- you enjoy being challenged and you want a degree that requires you to be independent and creative.
- you want in-depth training in a range of geographical thinking, methods and practices and opportunities to apply these.
- you enjoy challenging your beliefs and preconceptions.
- you are interested in quantitative and computer-based work, and conceptual and theoretical work.
- you want to grapple with the latest research in geography.

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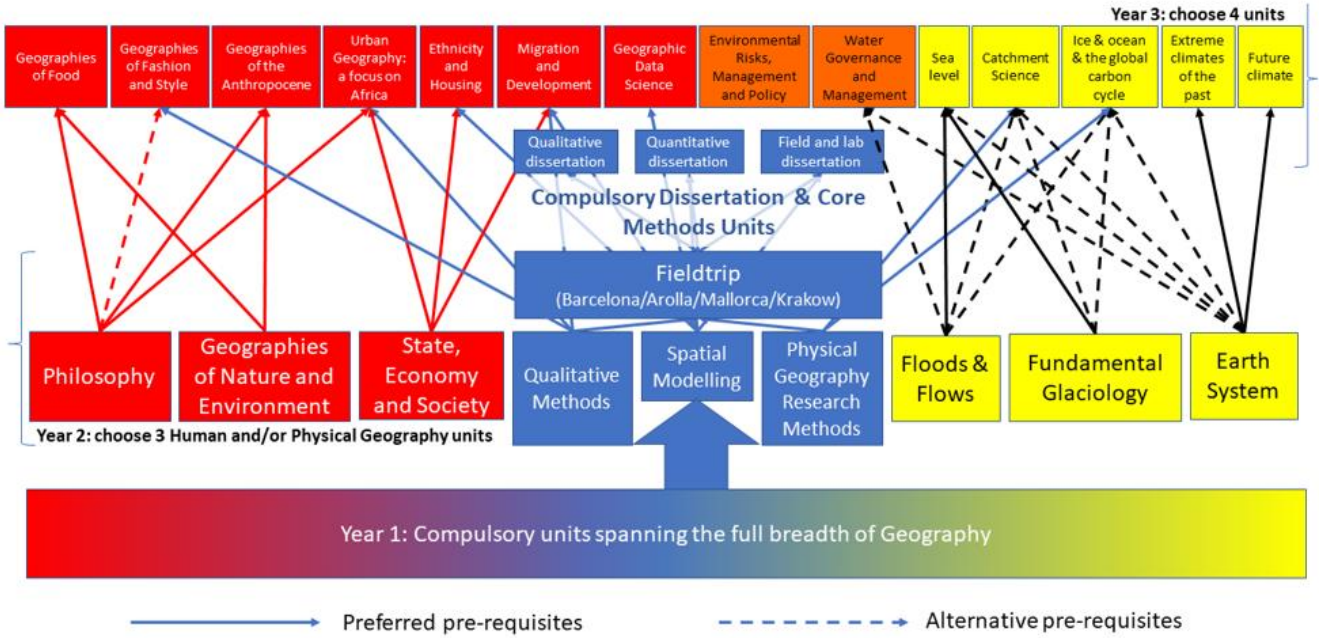
Our teaching goals

- Our geography degrees are designed to develop independent, creative, and critical thinkers.
- Courses are built around progressive development of inter-disciplinary geographical approaches to contemporary scientific, socio-economic, cultural, political and environmental concerns.
- Coherent and challenging curricula culminate in final year units at the leading edge of the discipline.

Pathways through the degree



Please note: unit choices are subject to change, please check online for latest options

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Research-led teaching

- Geographical Sciences at Bristol is a rich and diverse integrative discipline that brings together the physical and human dimensions of the world in which we live.

- Our research is characterised by the global significance of the questions we ask.

- Our teaching programmes provide students with leading-edge, innovative courses taught by world leaders in their respective fields.

Geography teaching at Bristol

- **Lectures**: explanation of core topics, integrated readings.
- Tutorials: discussion, writing and presentation usually with 8-16 students
- **Practicals**: training in research methods, including hands-on exercises, computing and lab-work
- **Seminars**: discussion of ideas explored in the lectures and readings.
- **Fieldwork**: opportunities to put research skills to use in the field, collecting original data.

First-year students learning to survey the flood plane on the Tewkesbury fieldtrip

Contact hours

Typical contact hours per week in year one:

- 7-9 hours of Lectures
- 2 hours of Tutorials
- 2-4 hours of Practicals

May also have:

- Seminars
- Workshops

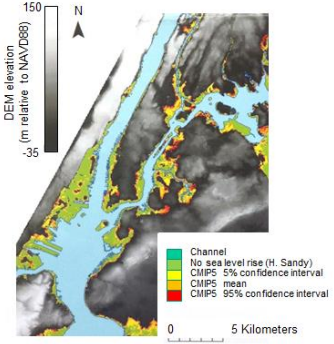
Example timetable for year one, week two

	9.00-10.00	10.00-11.00	11.00-12.00	12.00-1.00	1.00-2.00	2.00-3.00	3.00-4.00	4.00-5.00	5.00-6.00
Monday		Key Concepts (physical) lecture			Pastoral Tutorial	Key concepts (human) lecture	Quantitative Geography lecture	Open Unit lecture	
Tuesday		Quantitative Geography practical		World in Crisis lecture		Key concepts (human) lecture			
Wednesday		Open Unit seminar	Geographical History, Thought and Practice lecture		No timetabled sessions on Wednesday afternoons - free for sport				
Thursday	Geographical History, Thought and Practice lecture				Key Concepts practical			Skills training tutorial - Reading for a degree	
Friday	World in Crisis lecture		Key Concepts (physical) lecture				Key Concepts workshop		

Final year example dissertation topics

Building a DEM-based model of the vulnerability of New York to inundation

Predicting the likely extent of inundation if Hurricane Sandy were to occur in 2100



Example of national prize-winning dissertation:
2019 History & Philosophy of Geography Research Group Dissertation Prize: Expanding the empirical repertoire of non-representational theory: a methodological reflection on creating a documentary film (Mitchell Wilson)

External Examiners' Reports on our degrees

- "I have been highly impressed…by the high standards of work exhibited by the students – particularly some of the dissertations – and I suspect I have seen the work of some leading academic geographers of the future."
  Prof. Chris Brunsdon (Nat. Uni. of Ireland)

- "I've gained a clear impression of excellent degree programmes, with coherent pathways taking students to very advanced research-led teaching, student work of very high standards…The best student work is outstanding including some dissertations that could form the basis of publications, and were a pleasure to read."
  Prof. Mike Bentley (Durham)

Transferable skills – developed throughout your degree

- Independent, creative & critical thought
- Reading!
- High level writing and communication skills

- Quantitative & qualitative data analysis
- Interdisciplinary individual & group work
- Project design & execution

Degrees awarded

A high proportion of students obtain a ‘good’ degree
(data for BSc Geography)

Year	First Class	2:1	Total students
2016 / 17	20%	75%	137
2017 / 18	28%	57%	138
2018 / 19	32%	56%	147

Royal Geographical Society accreditation

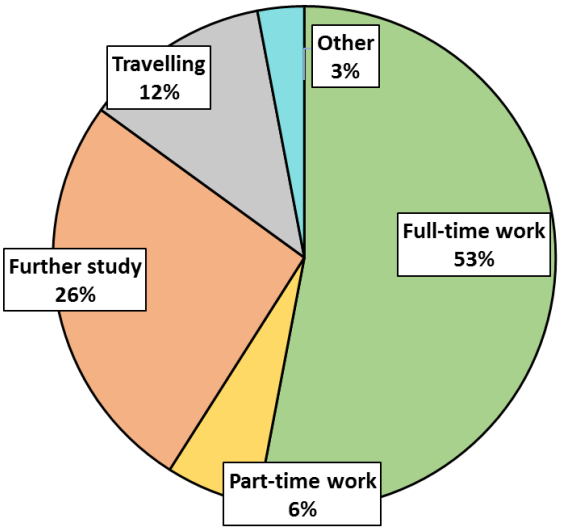
Bristol was in the first group of departments to be officially accredited by our professional body the Royal Geographical Society.

"… academically rigorous, research-led programme with a broad spectrum of geography and a variety of delivery and assessment methods. High standards are being maintained."

Graduate employment

In 2016/17, 96% of our graduates were in work or further study (M.Sc. & Ph.D.) six months after graduating (95% in 2015/16). Of those in working, 80% were in professional/managerial roles.

Occupational Areas: Development Officer, Teacher, Lawyer, Researcher, Energy Analyst, Science Communicator, Medicine, Filmmaker, Risk Analyst, Policy Analyst, Environmental Auditor, Benefits Assistant, Marketing Trainee, Assurance Associate, Swine Flu Vaccination Co-ordinator, Graduate Planning Consultant, Graduate Trainee in Housing, Response Team Member, Claims Manager, Graduate Transport Planner, Business Development Consultant, Military, etc…



BSc Geography

Year 1

- An introduction to university-level physical and human geography for all students
- Open Units (choose one from several options)

- Tutorial System
- Group working and presentations
- Further skills development and feedback
- Pastoral care and student support – Academic assigned to each student throughout their degree.

Week one – Fieldtrip

- Three days immediately at the start of term
- Geography and social activities

Year one key concepts: Physical geography

The issues that will shape the future of our changing planet:

- How might ice sheets respond to a warming climate?
- Will we see more extreme events like flooding or droughts?
- How are life on Earth and the oceans contributing?

6 themes: Atmosphere, Freshwater, Ocean, Cryosphere, Biosphere, Geosphere

Year one key concepts: Human geography

Broad foundation in the key themes of Human Geography

- How can we understand current trends in migration?
- How have some countries gotten rich while others remain poor?
- How does culture shape everyday life?

4 themes: Historical, Cultural, Economical & Urban Geography

Year one: Introduction to quantitative methods

Numerical methods in Geography

- to introduce students to the distinctive nature of geographical data
- to introduce techniques, for the collation, analysis and display of geographical data
- to develop IT skills and to introduce IT facilities available in the School.
- weekly lectures and practical sessions.

Year one: Intro to geographical history, thought and practice

General Introduction to the History, Nature and Practice of Geography.

- Why Does Geography Do the Things it Does?
- What are the key ideas geographers use?
- What does it mean to do geography?

Two components:

- Word and World: A History of Geography, how it has been defined and practised, from Columbus to the Present.
- Devon Field course.

Year one: Fieldtrip to Devon

River flow gauging

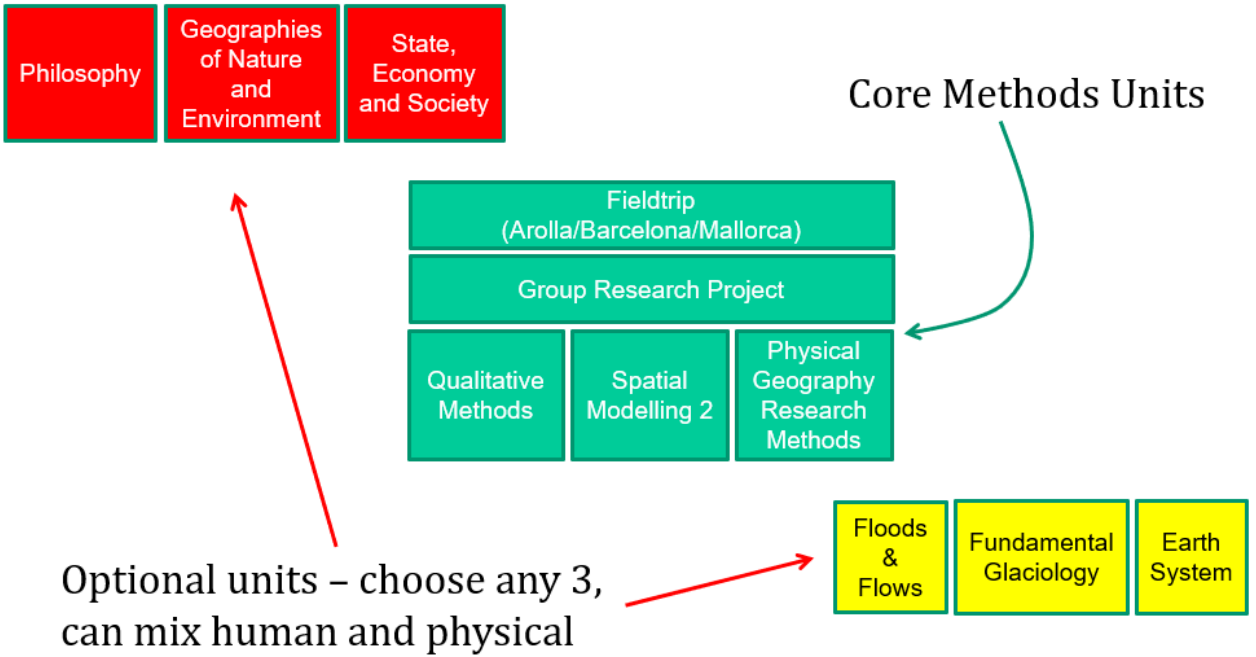
Micro-Meteorology

Water quality an ecology

Year one: Skills programme

- Fortnightly skills sessions throughout Year one, including: reading and writing for a degree, graphics, study skills, exam preparation and scientific method.
- Delivered by special team of current Postgraduate Research Students and the Centre for English Language and Foundation Studies
- Taught in groups of approx 8-16
- Provides skills support for Geography assessments

Year two: Core methods and optional units



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Year two: Floods, flows and erosion in river basins

Composed of:

1. Flood Hazards
2. Hillslope Processes

Taught by:

Lectures

Reading groups

Numerical modelling practicals

Lab experimental practical

Specialist tutorials

Main themes:

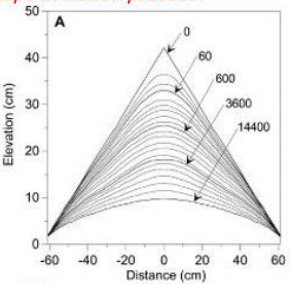
Flood inundation

Flood risk and hazards

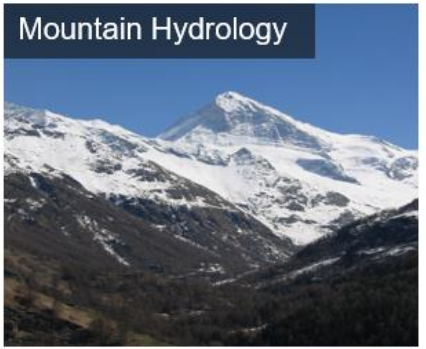
Hillslope flow pathway generation

Hillslope topographic evolution

Students making measurements during the hillslope evolution practical



Year two: Fieldtrip to Arolla, Switzerland/Mallorca



Year two: Fieldtrips to Barcelona/Krakow

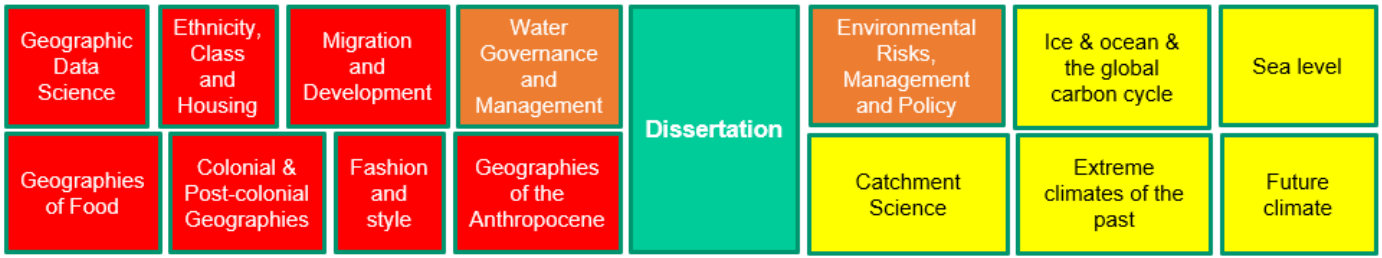
Architecture and Place

Urban Agro-ecology

Island Geomorphology

Key themes you will have the option to study in year three

- How do food and energy production impact on air, soil, and water quality?
- How can we reduce human impacts on biodiversity and the services that ecosystems provide to society?
- What role do glacial systems play in the Earth system, how do they work, and how might they change?
- What causes drought, flooding and sea level change? How can we better predict future risk?
- How are cities formed and who do they work for?
- What impact does neighbourhood have on house prices?
- What role does food play in our understanding of the globalised world
- Migration flows are increasingly evident between nations and regions. What really drives the movement of people?



Example year three optional unit

Ethnicity, Class, Housing and the City

- Interrogate the modern urban environment by understanding contemporary debates and historical developments
- Find out why segregation isn't necessarily a bad thing
- How where you live effects who you are
- Why we misuse and misunderstand many of the environments we consume daily
- How to link your quantitative skills to empirical arguments
- Taught through a combination of lectures, active seminars and films.

Why choose Bristol for geography:

- Choice of physical, human or mixed at end year one
- Open units in year one
- Role/scale of dissertation
- Study Abroad and GSCE courses
- Research-led teaching
- Quantitative training throughout all three years
- Broad range of Geographical approaches in both Human and Physical Geography
- Core fieldtrip costs covered by fees (no hidden costs)
- We welcome students with post-school experience (deferred entry)

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"[Bristol] Geography consolidated its position as the leader in its subject"
Times & Sunday Times Good University Guide 2018

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