



# **MSc Managing Sustainable Rural Development**

# **MSc Managing Sustainable Mountain Development**

**STUDENT HANDBOOK**

**Academic Year 2011/2012**

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**FOREWORD****The Purpose of this Handbook**

The purpose of this handbook is to outline arrangements and regulations for the MSc Managing Sustainable Rural Development and the MSc Managing Sustainable Mountain Development.

The degree is managed by Perth College as the Responsible Partner within UHI.

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Moray College  
Orkney College  
Inverness College

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This handbook is produced for your guidance only. Nothing in the handbook forms a contract between an individual student and UHI or its Academic Partners.

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 The Target Group

The MSc in Managing Sustainable Rural/Mountain Development is generally a part-time post-graduate programme designed to support the development of individuals who are involved in the management of sustainable development in rural and/or mountain areas or who would like to work in this sector. The MSc is designed to meet the professional development needs of field staff and development officers employed by public sector, NGOs and voluntary organisations involved in the theory and practice of development in rural and/or mountain regions. Students with a relevant undergraduate degree in a broad range of subjects may also benefit from this postgraduate provision. The programme is open only to students who are resident in Europe.

### 1.2 Rationale for the Course

Sustainable development in rural and mountain areas is a relatively recent concept, and is a fast-changing multi-disciplinary subject with obvious implications for policy and practice in all societies. This modular course is designed to meet the needs of practitioners working in a wide range of development contexts, not just in the UK. Participants themselves become major providers of knowledge as they systematically and critically reflect on their own professional practice in relevant fields. As this is a vital ingredient of the course, tutors are both flexible and willing to adjust their input to the particular circumstances of the individuals and groups they work with.

The MSc in Managing Sustainable Rural/Mountain Development is designed to meet the needs of rural and mountain communities by bringing together economic, social, and environmental knowledge and professional skills to offer a qualification for practitioners and agency officials working in rural and mountain areas. Both degree courses are intended to offer career development opportunities both for recent graduates and mature students new to rural/mountain studies, as well as to provide new skills for existing practitioners. An important aspect of the programme is to encourage effective peer-to-peer learning and collaborative working, particularly through an online platform. Aspects of course work will be assessed for value of individual contributions to group working activities.

In keeping with the aims of the programme, two main issues inform the rationale of its structure. Firstly, both degrees are designed as interdisciplinary courses of study that combine a wide range of inter-related subjects, reflecting the complexity of modern policies and the management of sustainable development in rural and mountain areas. Secondly, the programme aims to provide a sound understanding of the underpinning theories of development processes in rural/mountain communities, and to link this with a pragmatic approach in the translation of these theories into practical applications for sustainable development.

In the context of sustainable development, the focus is on developing the student's knowledge of contemporary development issues, theories, policies and practices from the varying sectoral perspectives related to economic, social and community and environmental development.

This philosophy is reflected in the structure of the programme, which is based upon 4 core modules of study for the Post Graduate certificate award. These core modules, together with an additional 4 modules from a pool of options, are required for the award of Postgraduate Diploma, though the module on Research Methods and Techniques should generally be included as one of these options if the candidate intends to proceed to the Masters level. The Diploma level plus the Dissertation module must be successfully completed for the award of MSc. Students are required to state at the beginning of their studies whether they wish to focus on rural or mountain issues. All assessed work is directed to the specific context of the named degree.

An important aspect of this course is a firm emphasis on "sustainable development in action" through the analysis of rural/mountain development methods, theories, case studies, and policy

framework analysis. Case studies and other resources, including fieldwork, will be used to illustrate the concepts of development in their appropriate international contexts.

The scheme for assessing the capabilities of students, described in the main programme document, is a useful framework for assisting students to develop and evaluate a range of skills and abilities which they will need after their formal education in the course is complete. The nature of the component disciplines is such that new approaches are being developed and piloted continually, and students will benefit from being encouraged to be life-long learners throughout their professional careers. In recognition that a growing number of students are mature learners, we have made provision for Accreditation of Prior Learning /Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning. An integral part of the programme is the attention to the nurture of personal and professional development skills, with students being encouraged to extend their abilities in communications, information technology, problem solving, independent research, analysis, and the presentation of their views in various media.

The Course Team believe that, at graduate level, a holistic approach to sustainable rural/mountain development is essential, and the course has been designed with this as a priority. It is also intended, however, that students should acquire a firm grounding in the basic subject strands of the course. The adoption of the learning and teaching strategies designed to promote students' skills in managing integrated approaches will result in graduates who are able to propose solutions to meet the rapidly changing challenges facing contemporary rural and mountain communities.

### 1.3 The Educational Philosophy of the Course

It is important that teaching and learning strategies relate to those which participants are encouraged to use to ensure life-long learning. Introductions to appropriate theoretical and research-based literature are an important feature of the course. The main role of module tutors is to facilitate learning and to encourage participants to test their own ideas, experiences, and assumptions against current practice and thinking. Participants are encouraged to experiment, critically evaluate and, if appropriate, implement new approaches to research and the application of this knowledge to their own professional practice. This implies a close partnership between tutors and participants, where new ideas can be developed and where different solutions can be applied to old problems.

UHI is committed to a paradigm shift in teaching and learning. This involves a change in the balance between knowledge transmission and acquisition, and the facilitation of learning through transferable skills. To some extent, this shift has already begun to take place in the delivery of further education by the partner colleges, but the introduction of new higher education courses has highlighted the need to ensure this paradigm shift is similarly continued into the delivery of degree courses.

This means the creation of a learning environment for participants where they are encouraged to:

- Reflect systematically on their own practice;
- Critically analyse and challenge the assumptions underlying their professional practice;
- Contextualise their understanding by enquiring how the potential for change is constrained or enhanced by the context in which they work.
- Relate their ideas to the context of a wider systematic body of literature and knowledge.

To ensure this happens participants are expected to:

- Critically evaluate relevant concepts and theoretical frameworks
- Critically review relevant policy documents;
- 'Situate' their self-evaluation and action research activities within the broader academic, institutional and professional contexts;

- Engage in a reflective dialogue with tutors and other participants through tutorials, discussions and contributions to electronic conferences and bulletin boards.

The Course Team delivers this degree programme through a combination of distance learning and open learning strategies. To facilitate this, full use is made of a wide range of technologies and technology networks. New information and communication technologies place more responsibility for learning on the learner, and require teaching strategies that facilitate and support learning. E-mail, electronic conferencing, telephone conferencing and video-conferencing are used to facilitate links between the course team (who are located around the UHI network), between tutors and course participants, and between the course participants themselves. In enabling course participants to communicate and collaborate with each other and to set-up self-help groups, we are explicating and acknowledging the value of collaborative learning at this level. Participants are encouraged to access online libraries, library catalogues, electronic databases, and other internet facilitated educational resources.

UHI believes that new technologies are central to the functioning of a federal network of colleges and research institutes that are developing as a new Higher Education Institute with networked degrees. The learning and teaching strategies applied to this programme build particularly on experience gained in delivering the undergraduate BA in Rural Development Studies. This programme has developed modules for delivery online, and uses a blended learning approach that involves a variety of modes of delivery making effective use of ICT.

#### **1.4 Entry Requirements**

Normal entry requirement is an honours degree, postgraduate diploma or equivalent professional qualification. Entry may be open to holders of an Ordinary degree, HND or DipHE if applicants have at least three years of relevant professional experience in education and training. Applicants with formal qualifications below the level of HND who possess substantial experience in an appropriate field or are judged to have demonstrated exceptional abilities may also be admitted to the programme. This is subject to interview, appropriate academic references and evidence submitted of their personal, professional and educational experience.

The programme is available only to students resident in the UK and elsewhere in Europe. Attendance at the initial induction event in the UK (for all UK and European students) is mandatory for the first year of the programme. Attendance for continuing students at the induction event in subsequent years is optional but recommended.

#### **1.5 The Structure of the Course**

The course is designed around a series of core and optional modules. The four core modules deal with aspects of practice common to a wide range of professionals and provide the intellectual tools, expertise and ways of thinking necessary to ensure continuing professional development. The optional modules reflect the diversity of needs which have been highlighted by market research

#### **1.6 Modes of Delivery**

UHI is committed to moving from knowledge transmission towards a greater emphasis on the facilitation of learning, and to the facilitation of critical reflection. This, in turn, challenges underlying assumptions about professional practice. The course is delivered through a combination of distance learning and open learning strategies, facilitated through a range of technologies.

The Course Team have opted for a 'blended learning' style of module delivery, in which a number of support mechanisms are offered to students, changing in emphasis with the needs of each student and the demands of each module. For each module, the Course Team will prepare a range of information and resources in a web-based format. This will be the main consistent

source of teaching materials, and will be accompanied by a recommended textbook that students are expected to purchase. The web-based materials include module guidance, learning activities, and further reading materials (library resources, online links, references to electronic journals, digitised files of certain specialised reading materials). The web-based resources also include an on-line discussion forum, as the chief means of peer-to-peer communication and general tutor support for each module. Additional student support is provided mainly by e-mail, but also using telephone (individual or group calls) and applications such as skype. Students will not generally have a requirement to use video conferencing, though this may be occasionally be considered appropriate for synchronous activities on certain course modules. Similarly, students who are able to meet in person with their tutor may select this option by arrangement. Some module resource materials are produced on CD ROM to allow more efficient access to large files and better access for students in regions where internet services are poor.

## 1.7 Assessment

Performance on each module on the course is graded as either satisfactory or unsatisfactory based on achievement of all of the stated learning outcomes for that module. You will receive detailed written feedback on your work. If your work does not satisfactorily meet the learning outcomes of the module, you will be given written feedback and an opportunity to re-submit. Only one re-submission is accepted. Students are penalised in accordance with UHI regulations for writing more than is specified as the upper limit in any set assessments. Students will be penalised in accordance with UHI regulations for late submissions of any set assessment that does not have an appropriate exemption that has been previously agreed by the module leader. A schedule of the timing of assessments for each module is in Appendix 1.

## 2. Aims and Objectives

### 2.1 Main Aims

The degrees within this Programme are intended as integrated courses, providing an advanced level of understanding and professional competence across the range of sustainable development skills required within rural and/or mountain communities. Students are offered an opportunity to specialise to a limited extent through selection of optional modules, and are required to demonstrate ability in each of the core areas of study, as detailed in the section on course structure. A strong focus will be on the analysis of the combination of academic theory and practical experience of rural and mountain sustainable development issues.

The overall aim is therefore to produce graduates who have a wide-ranging understanding of the integration between disciplines as well as a detailed knowledge of individual subject content, so that they have the advanced knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary for employment relating to rural and mountain areas.

### 2.2 Specific Learning Outcomes

On completion of the requisite modules for the award of an MSc, or either of the intermediate awards of Postgraduate Certificate or Postgraduate Diploma, participants will be able to:

- demonstrate awareness and critical understanding of economic, social, and environmental issues and their integration through theory and practice at micro and macro levels;
- critically analyse the concept of 'sustainable development' and reflect upon its relevance and its application to rural/mountain areas by applying relevant knowledge, understanding, and skills from diverse perspectives, international contexts, and academic disciplines;
- evaluate the effects of local, national and international rural/mountain development policies;
- evaluate and compare the effectiveness of different approaches to rural/mountain development and resource management;

- propose approaches which integrate theory and practice in a variety of contemporary rural/mountain sustainable development situations;
- design and conduct investigation and research both individually and as a member of a team working together in spite of being geographically dispersed.

This is a graded progression through the core modules, the chosen optional modules and the dissertation.

## 2.3 Progression

The learning outcomes are for the Programme as a whole. However, students who have completed the core modules for the Postgraduate Certificate (or have equivalent transferable credits) and choose to register for the Postgraduate Diploma are able to develop and extend the knowledge and skills they have acquired. Students who then choose to register for the dissertation have an opportunity to demonstrate how they have synthesised the knowledge and understanding gained from previous modules. Through carrying out an extended piece of original research, they will be able to show how they have applied the research and enquiry skills they have developed.

## 3. Course Structure and Content

### 3.1 Outline of the Course Structure

Managing Sustainable Rural Development	Managing Sustainable Mountain Development
<b>Core Modules</b>	
1a. People and Nature – 15 credits	1b. Environmental & Social Issues in Mountain Areas – 15 credits
2. Sustainable Development – 15 credits	
3. Policy Frameworks and Analysis – 15 credits	
4. Developing Communities – 15 credits	
<b>Optional Modules (both degrees)</b>	
1. Biodiversity Management – 15 credits	
2. Developing Potential through Placement – 15 credits	
3. Research Methods & Techniques – 15 credits	
4. Environmental Assessment – 15 credits	
5. Geographical Information Systems – 15 credits	
6. The Information Society and Rural Development – 15 credits *	
7. Sustainable Tourism – 15 credits	
8. Field Studies – 15 credits*	
9. Water Management – 15 credits*	
10. Local Economic Development – 15 credits *	
11. Sustainable Deer Management – 20 credits	
Students can also opt for 1a or 1b as an optional module if not taken as a core	
*These modules are not running in 2011/12	
Research Dissertation – 60 credits	

The programme has been designed with a progression built around a series of Core and Optional modules, described in more detail in section 3.3. The modular structure enables each student to progress at a pace that suits her/his own situation and specific needs and interests. It also allows those who wish to complete a particular module for Continuous Professional Development without engaging in a commitment to a Postgraduate Certificate or Diploma, or MSc, to do so.

When registering, each student will have to declare whether s/he wishes to focus on rural or mountain issues. Those registering for the MSc in Managing Sustainable Rural Development will take the core module 'People and Nature', and all of their assessed work will consider rural issues. Conversely, those registering for the MSc in Managing Sustainable Mountain Development will take the core module 'Environmental & Social Issues in Mountain Areas' and all of their assessed work will consider mountain issues. The core module of the 'rural' course is available to students as an option for 'mountain' students, and vice versa.

The core modules have been designed to provide a foundation in sustainable development in rural and mountain areas. It is recognised that, while there is some overlap between rural and mountain issues, they can be treated as distinct; and that there are different markets for the two degrees. Hence the two initial distinct core modules and the fact that, while the three remaining core modules have common taught content, assessed work is distinct, addressing either rural or mountain issues. Any student who successfully completes four core modules is eligible for the award of a Postgraduate Certificate.

Following completion of the core modules, both programmes are intended to be flexible, allowing students to construct their own programmes of study. They have a choice of options that provide them with opportunities to develop more in-depth knowledge and skills in specific areas. Any student who successfully completes four core modules and four options is eligible for the award of a Postgraduate Diploma or to continue to a dissertation.

The final progression in each programme is to undertake a research dissertation on a topic that is of interest to them and has been agreed with the appointed UHI internal supervisor. On successful completion and defence of the dissertation, the student will be eligible for the award of an MSc.

### 3.2 Course Development and Delivery Strategy

The course modules (core in bold) offered in Academic Year 2011/12 are:

Semester 1	Semester 2
<b>People and Nature</b>	<b>Sustainable Development</b>
<b>Environmental and Social Issues in Mountain Areas</b>	<b>Developing Communities</b>
<b>Policy Frameworks and Analysis</b>	Environmental Assessment
Developing Potential through Placement	Developing Potential through Placement
Geographical Information Systems	Biodiversity Management
Research Methods & Techniques	Sustainable Deer Management
Sustainable Tourism	
Research Dissertation	Research Dissertation

### 3.3 Summary of Modules

#### Core Modules

#### **People and Nature – 15 credits**

**Tutor** Frank Rennie

The aim of this module is to explore the interface between natural and human systems, and to provide an understanding of environmental and cultural perspectives in the pursuit of sustainable rural development. It is a key link between the physical science and social science aspects of the MSc. The module explores global applications of sustainable development to local and regional situations with a view towards the improvement of the management of rural development.

**Assessment:**

One essay and one academic critique (2000 words each) (40% each)  
Contribution to the module discussion board (20%)

**Environmental & Social Issues in Mountain Areas – 15 credits****Tutor Calum Macleod**

The aim of this module is to develop an understanding of the environmental and societal systems of mountain areas, and to explore the links between these systems, their co-evolution, and drivers of change in different European mountain regions. It is a foundation for all aspects of the MSc, designed to ensure broad understanding of the various elements of the environmental and societal systems of mountain areas, especially in Europe. The integrated understanding of these elements and their interactions is an essential basis for all aspects of sustainable mountain development, which relates to not only mountain areas, but also regions downstream.

**Assessment:**

2 essays (2000 words each) (Assessment 1: 40%, Assessment 2: 45%)  
Contribution to discussion board (15%)

**Sustainable Development – 15 credits****Tutor Jim Chalmers**

The aim of this module is to provide a bridge between the theory and practice of sustainable rural development at scales from the local community to the region. It considers the concept of sustainable development and global and national policy frameworks for its promotion, and relates these to appropriate management tasks at regional and local planning levels. There is a focus on tools and indicators designed to enable community involvement in management for sustainable development at the local to regional level.

**Assessment:**

2 pieces of courses (200 words each) (45% each)  
Contribution to discussion board (10%)

**Policy Frameworks and Analysis – 15 credits****Tutor Michael Smith**

The aim of this module is to explore the complex process of developing and implementing public policy, particularly in rural and remote areas. It provides an introduction to policy analysis, from identifying problems and generating and evaluating alternative policies, to implementing policies and evaluating their impacts, as part of the policy cycle. The differing values and goals of different groups, and links between social, economic and environmental policies, will be explored.

**Assessment:**

Policy summary paper (1500 words) (35%)  
Analysis of an issue, leading to a policy recommendation (2500 words) (50%)  
Contribution to discussion board (15%)

**Developing Communities – 15 credits****Tutor Roddy Murray**

The aim of the module is to explore concepts and mechanisms that encourage the processes of community development, and to provide an understanding of social, cultural, political and economic perspectives in the pursuit of sustainable development of rural communities. It is an important component in bridging the conceptual and practical approaches to the facilitation of community participation in the development of rural communities. The module explores different models in the search for sustainable development in local and regional situations, with a view towards strengthening social capital for rural development.

**Assessment:**

Collaborative Project 1500 words (45%)

Case Studies Analysis 2000 words (45%)  
Contribution to discussion board (10%)

### **Optional modules**

#### **Biodiversity Management – 15 credits**

**Tutor**      **Melanie Smith**

The aim of the module is to enable students to understand the practice and principles of biodiversity conservation and to recognise its potential role in achieving sustainable development. Significant proportions of rural and, particularly, mountain areas are designated as sites for biodiversity conservation. However, land primarily managed with this objective is inevitably adjacent to land managed for other purposes; and much land of importance for biodiversity conservation is also managed for other objectives. Biodiversity conservation also provides both direct employment and indirect employment, e.g., through tourism. This module will explore the links between biodiversity conservation and sustainable development, the methods by which biodiversity conservation can be achieved, and the theories that underpin these methods.

Assessment:

Essay (2000 words) (40%)  
Critical Report (3000 words) (50%)  
Contribution to discussion board (10%)

#### **Developing Potential through Placement – 15 credits**

**Tutor**      **Issy Grieve**

This module provides an opportunity for you to critically explore an aspect of professional practice within your department or institution, by carrying out a systematic comparison with another organisation. This will be facilitated by a short-term placement in that organisation.

Assessment:

A formal proposal setting out the plans and rationale for the placement – 1000 words (20%)

A reflective review of the placement experience as a vehicle for professional development, with identification and analysis of critical incidents – 2000 words. (Use of a reflective log would help students to achieve 1 and 2 above, and will be encouraged but not assessed.) (60%)

A report for the participant's own organisation, which identifies and details proposals for change, based on the module experience and contains as an appendix a digest for the host organisation – 1000 words (20%)

#### **Research Methods & Techniques – 15 credits**

**Tutor**      **Rob McMorran**

The module is designed to develop students' awareness, knowledge and skills in how to formulate research questions, develop effective research design, select and implement appropriate research methods. It covers both quantitative and qualitative approaches relevant to science and social research areas. Emphasis is placed on developing students' ability to apply the most appropriate method to address research questions and understand how to analyse, interpret and present results. Research case studies are used throughout the module as methodology demonstration tools.

Assessment:

2 reports: Assessment 1 (40%) (1500 words) and Assessment 2 (50%) (1500 words quantitative or 2000 words qualitative)  
Contribution to discussion board (10%)

**Environmental Assessment – 15 credits****Tutor Rob McMorran**

The module considers various aspects of Environmental Assessment focussing primarily on Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) but also considering project based Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). The relationship between these forms of environmental assessment is investigated along with their legislative backgrounds, their operation and structure and their role in delivering sustainable development. Case studies are used to assess their effectiveness.

Assessment:

Essay, 2000 words (40%)

Report based on a simulation (role-play) of part of an SEA 2000 words (45%)

Contribution to discussion board (15%)

**Geographical Information Systems – 15 credits****Tutor Donna Clark**

The aim of this module is to convey an understanding of the essential elements of Geographical Information Systems (GIS) and to illustrate how the appropriate use of GIS can help solve problems with a spatial dimension. It provides an introduction to the capabilities of GIS and outline the requirements for their successful design and implementation. It provides an understanding of the nature and use of GIS rather than seek to develop technical expertise in any specific GIS platform, and encourages students to consider how GIS might be used to address issues raised in other parts of their course or professional life.

Assessment:

Report based on practical exercises (500 words and 30%)

Design a basic GIS to solve a management problem (3000 words and 60%)

Contribution to Blackboard discussion board (10%)

**The Information Society and Rural Development – 15 credits (not running in 2011/12)****Tutor Michael Smith**

The aim of this module is to provide students with a clear insight into the application of ICT in rural areas to create social and economic development. A secondary aim is to analyse current global trends and the related infrastructure that enables new ICT opportunities in rural areas. The module focuses on one of the fastest growing sources of job creation in rural Europe and analyses the focus of developing European Policy to enable the development of the Information Society in Rural Europe.

Assessment:

Website Review (2000 Words) (45%)

PowerPoint Presentation (45%)

Contribution to Blackboard discussion board (10%)

**Local Economic Development – 15 credits (not running in 2011/12)****Tutor Rebecca Smith**

The aim of this module is to provide students with an understanding of both theoretical and practical issues relating to local economic development throughout the UK and Europe. It recognises the importance of contextualising the historical context of economic development within the UK and other European regions. Consideration will be given to key concepts such as participation, empowerment, capacity building, sustainability and dealing with climate change and their role in facilitating and stimulating local economic development.

Assessment:

Short Essay (1500 words) – 60%

Discussion Board (1000 words) – 40%

**Sustainable Tourism – 15 credits****Tutor Duncan Bryden**

The aim of this module is to explore the contribution of sustainable tourism, interpretive planning and practice as important components of managing sustainable rural and mountain development. It recognises the central importance of tourism activities for many rural and mountain areas and places this in a development perspective. The module explores in a global context the importance of good interpretive planning and practice as essential to the development and management of a sustainable tourism product.

Assessment:

Essay (2500 words) 50%.

Assignment: Case Study – Report (2500 words) 50%

**Water Management (not running in 2011/12)****Tutor Lindsay MacMillan**

The aim of this module is to develop an understanding of water resource systems and integrated catchment management approaches which are crucial for sustainable mountain and rural development.

Assessment:

One position paper which involves topic research, preparation of slide presentation and accompanying explanatory text together with online group question and answer session (35% of overall mark),

One project report involving data interpretation, development of a catchment action plan and preparation of a summary report (55% of overall mark),

Discussion board participation (10% of overall mark)

**Sustainable Deer Management****Tutor Rob McMorran**

This module explores the role and position of deer in the Scottish Highlands and further afield from sustainable rural development and integrated land management perspectives. Deer are a keystone species in shaping the ecology of mountain environments. They are also a national resource. 'Sustainable deer management' is essential to optimise the multiple public and private benefits associated with deer, whilst minimising negative impacts. Sustainable deer management means managing wild deer by taking account of the full range of environmental, social and economic factors. This module explores the montane ecosystem context for deer management planning and deer ecology and behaviour. The module also explores deer population modelling and cull target setting as well as maximising the economic benefits of deer through paid stalking, eco-tourism and venison marketing. Practical elements of the course will explore monitoring, culling, extraction and venison processing.

Assessment:

Essay: 2000 words, 40%

Report (formulating a deer management plan) 50%

Ongoing assessment (discussion forums), 10%

**Research Dissertation****Tutors Frank Rennie and Calum Macleod**

This module aims to provide students with an opportunity to undertake a sustained, rigorous and independent investigation of some aspect of professional practice in relation to their own work, their organisation, their discipline or field of study or their profession as a whole.

The dissertation must consist of original work. It should be informed by the theoretical and practical knowledge and expertise that the participant has developed through other modules and/or in previously accredited learning related to professional development. It should focus on a theme, topic or problem that is relevant to the professional concerns of the participant; the

participant's own organisation and/or profession. The resulting dissertation should not only present and interpret the research findings but also critically evaluate the research design and methodology employed, and identify the outcomes of the research in terms of actual or planned developments and changes.

In addition, it is also intended that the experience of carrying out the research and writing up the results will provide participants with opportunities:

- to demonstrate their capability for analysis and reflection on practice;
- to develop the skills and knowledge necessary for lifelong professional development;
- to acquire the confidence and capability to progress to a M.Phil. or Ph.D. in their academic discipline or field of study on completion of the Masters programme.

Assessment:

A research proposal of 500 words and linked presentation (worth 20% of the overall mark) and a 15,000 word dissertation (worth 80% of the overall mark).

## 4. Admissions

### 4.1 Entry Requirements

The procedures set out in this section comply with the Post Graduate regulations set out in UHI's Academic Standards and Quality Regulations (available on UHI website: [www.uhi.ac.uk](http://www.uhi.ac.uk)). Final decisions on course admissions will be made by the course leaders.

#### 4.1.1 Master's Programmes

The normal entry requirement for a Master's programme is an Honours degree of a recognised UK degree-awarding body, or postgraduate diploma, or a professional qualification recognised as being equivalent to an Honours degree. Other qualifications or experience that demonstrates a candidate possesses appropriate knowledge and skills at Honours degree standard may be acceptable. Any student enrolling for a module will be required to meet the admissions criteria for the programme.

#### 4.1.2. Non-Standard Entry

Entry to the Managing Sustainable Rural/Mountain Development Programme may be open to holders of an Ordinary Degree, HND or DipHE award, or other professional qualification which is accepted as being of equivalent status, in an appropriate discipline or professional area. Such candidates will, in addition, normally have at least three years of relevant professional experience.

This could include, for example:

- Candidates with Ordinary Degrees who have been delivering degree level and HNC/HND programmes;
- Candidates who have an HND (or equivalent SCOTCAT Level 4 qualification) in relevant or related subject areas;
- Candidates with formal qualifications below the level of HND who possess substantial experience in an appropriate field, and/or who may be judged to have demonstrated exceptional abilities, may also be admitted to a postgraduate programme. It is anticipated that, some potential candidates are likely to apply for entry to the Sustainable Rural/Mountain Development Masters Programme who have HNCs or other vocational qualifications in relevant areas. These may include technical assistants, planners, and development officers, who have extended their skills and seek academic credits for Continuous Professional Development. It is also possible that a small number of candidates will be eligible for the programme who do not have HNC or equivalent professional and vocational qualifications but have extended their skills experientially in a relevant area of sustainable development.

In all of these cases a key pre-requisite for admission to the course will be that they continue their professional involvement in the management of sustainable rural/mountain development for the duration of the module, or set of modules for which a candidate enrolls. This is because each module involves some element of enquiry, evaluation or action research that would necessitate the candidate being currently engaged in an appropriate professional activity related to sustainable rural/mountain development.

Admission to the programme will also be on the understanding that applicants have a reasonable expectation that they can fulfil the objectives of the programme and achieve the standard required for the award. Applicants will need to provide evidence of personal, professional and educational experience that indicates ability to meet the demands of the programme. This normally includes a written statement by the candidate indicating how their professional experience has prepared them for postgraduate study, two academic references and an interview by two members of the course team. A pro forma setting out the key interview areas is attached at the end of this section. Candidates wishing to register for individual modules for the purposes of Continuous Professional Development may do so at the discretion of the Course Leader. Candidates who wish to transfer their registration from the individual modules to the PG Certificate or PG Diploma courses but who do not meet the normal entry requirements above may do so at the discretion of the Course Leader and the successful completion of two or more individual course modules.

## 4.2 Admission Procedures

Potential applicants may make contact through any one of the UHI Academic Partners, or through the UHI website. An initial interview may be required with a course Tutor or staff member agreed by the Course Committee. This may be conducted via videoconference or telephone.

### 4.2.1 Pre-Entry Guidance

Pre-entry guidance is an integral part of the admissions procedure of each partner college. Participating colleges manage the admission to the Managing Sustainable Rural/Mountain Development Masters degree programme. Programme Leaders in each college are responsible for providing pre-entry guidance.

This covers:

- Pre-entry guidance on course content and how the course may affect career aspirations;
- Financial information on fees;
- Programme support information, e.g., induction arrangements, residential attendance where appropriate;
- Relevant college facilities.

## 4.3 Entry with APL/APEL Standing and Credit Transfer

Appropriate learning, wherever acquired, provided that it can be assessed, may be accepted for the purpose of gaining academic credit by an applicant towards the Managing Sustainable Rural/Mountain Development Masters degree award. Two forms of prior learning will be accredited; Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL); and Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL).

In both cases, specific credit may be granted against module learning outcomes within the validated learning programme up to a maximum of 15 credits in total for the postgraduate certificate and 30 credits in total for the postgraduate diploma or MSc.

Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL) is a process by which credit is awarded for formal certificated learning carried out prior to application to a course. This learning must have been carried out in an academic environment and must have been formally certificated, e.g., Higher National Certificates (HNC's), Higher National Diplomas (HND's), Open University (OU) courses, other degree courses, postgraduate qualifications, and certain professional qualifications, and may also be given for parts of academic qualifications completed successfully.

APEL is defined as learning which has its source in experience for example through work or in the community. The mechanisms for dealing with APL/APEL are those outlined in the UHI Academic Standards and Quality Regulations. The process is overseen by the course leader/course director or a nominated tutor. A tutor involved in assisting in the preparation of a claim must not be involved in the assessment of that claim.

#### 4.3.1 Evidence

It is the responsibility of the claimant to provide UHI with relevant documentation which may be accepted as evidence in support of the claim. Responsibility for making the claim and for supporting it with appropriate evidence rests with the applicant. A distinction is drawn between evidence provided for module-specific credit and evidence for more general credit for the MSc.

The identification of prior experiential learning is made through a systematic reflection of the experience, through a clear statement of what has actually been learned by the applicant, and the collection and collation of evidence to support the statement.

The following criteria will be used in assessing APL and APEL evidence:

- Is it authentic (is it the claimant's own work)?
- Does it meet the standard appropriate for Masters level?
- Is there a balance evident between theoretical knowledge and practical application?
- Is the evidence relevant to the subject areas of Managing Sustainable Rural/Mountain Development?
- Is it current; has the learning been kept up to date by the claimant?

In addition the Course Team will wish to know:

- what evidence can the candidate provide, based on their previous experience, of their capacity to study at Masters Level?
- what evidence do they have to support their understanding of what is entailed in undertaking a distance-learning, modular course which involves a high level of independent learning?
- what evidence can they provide to show their motivation and capacity for sustained study over an extended period?
- what evidence can they provide to demonstrate an awareness of current thinking on professional practice in the candidate's own area of work?
- what evidence can they provide of critical reflection on their own work, and of accepting and acting on critical comment directed to self?

A copy of the criteria will be sent to candidate's referees in order that they are aware of the basis on which APL and APEL claims will be accredited.

## 5. Postgraduate Regulations

UHI's Postgraduate Regulations are available within the Academic standards and quality regulations (Section 14) on UHI website: <http://www.uhi.ac.uk/en/about-uhi/governance/policies-and-regulations/regulations/academic-standards-and-quality-regulations#tab1>

### 5.1 Attendance and Participation

All the modules for both the MSc degrees, including any pre-arranged interactive chat rooms and discussion boards, form an integral part of the respective programme. Therefore, if you cannot attend, you should notify your module tutor as soon as possible. If you are ill for more than 7 days, or if illness prevents the submission of an assignment, a medical certificate is required.

The guidance provided by module tutors in discussion boards, emails, and seminars is important. Please let your module tutor know if unusual circumstances occur so that you can agree how to proceed. If you do not attend regularly a deferred decision is likely and you may be required to retake the module.

## 5.2 Examination Board

The Tier One examination board is held in June. The course team provide recommendations to the examination board. The external examiners are decided in accordance with current UHI regulations..

## 5.3 Period of Study

The normal period of study for both of the MSc degrees is between two and six years.

## 6. Course Team

### 6.1 Course Team

Frank Rennie	Lews Castle College
Michael Smith	Lews Castle College
Roddy Murray	Lews Castle College
Rebecca Smith	Lews Castle College
Eilidh MacPhail	Lews Castle College
Martin Price	Perth College
Rob McMorran	Perth College
Calum Macleod	Perth College
Lindsay MacMillan	Perth College
Duncan Bryden	Perth College
Donna Clark	Moray College
Melanie Smith	Inverness College
Jim Chalmers	Orkney College
Issy Grieve	Orkney College

### 6.2 The Role of the Programme Leader

The Programme Leader's role is to:

- maintain responsibility for the overall co-ordination of the degree programme;
- chair meetings of the Course Committee;
- ensure that UHI Quality Assurance guidelines are adhered to;
- arrange a programme of staff development opportunities for staff involved in the delivery and assessment of the programme;
- ensure continuity in the delivery and assessment of the programme;
- liaise with external examiners.

The Programme Leader is:

Dr Calum Macleod  
Deputy Director  
Centre for Mountain Studies  
Perth College UHI  
Crieff Road  
Perth PH1 2NX

Phone: 01738-877267  
Fax: 01738-877018  
Email: calum.macleod @perth.uhi.ac.uk

### 6.3 The Role of the Module Tutor

For each module there is one module lead tutor whose remit is to:

- arrange and help to staff the induction to the module for individuals and (where possible) groups starting at the same time;
- be readily accessible to deal with module-specific enquiries from participants who have difficulties with the learning materials or learning tasks;
- negotiate learning and assessment tasks appropriate to the participant's context;
- guidance on appropriate learning resources;
- co-ordinate the delivery of the module and arrange the staffing of any seminars or workshops, face-to-face or by video-conference, during the module studies;
- provide feedback to students on their work;
- assess submitted work and examinations;
- liaise with the 2nd (and possibly 3rd) marker and make arrangements for cross-marking.

### 6.4 Module Tutors

Module	Module Tutor
<b>Core Modules</b>	
1a. People and Nature	Frank Rennie
1b. Environmental & Social Issues in Mountain Areas	Calum Macleod
2. Sustainable Development	Jim Chalmers
3. Policy Frameworks and Analysis	Michael Smith
4. Developing Communities	Roddy Murray
<b>Optional Modules</b>	
1. Biodiversity Management	Melanie Smith
2. Developing Potential through Placement	Issy Grieve
4. Environmental Assessment	Rob McMorran
5. Geographical Information Systems	Donna Clark
6. Research Methods & Techniques	Rob McMorran
7. Information Society and Rural Development*	Michael Smith
8. Sustainable Tourism	Duncan Bryden
9. Water Management*	Lindsay MacMillan
10. Local Economic Development*	Rebecca Smith
Dissertation	Frank Rennie Calum Macleod

\*Module not running in 2011/12

## 6.5 Academic Partners

Contact	Academic Partner	E-mail
Donna Clark	Moray College	donna.clark@moray.uhi.ac.uk
Jim Chalmers	Orkney College	jim.chalmers@orkney.uhi.ac.uk
Calum Macleod	Perth College	calum.macleod@perth.uhi.ac.uk
Melanie Smith	Inverness College	melanie.smith@inverness.uhi.ac.uk
Frank Rennie	Lews Castle College	frank.rennie@lews.uhi.ac.uk

## 7. Support from UHI

### 7.1 Tutor Support

Each participant on the course has a module tutor, based in one of the UHI partner colleges. Some of the modules have two tutors who work as a team to support you.

Their role is to:

- support participants to understand the requirements of the programme;
- provide you with personal, professional and academic guidance as and when appropriate;
- maintain regular contact to encourage participants to make progress on schedule and to use fellow students and the course team in the event of difficulties;
- provide ongoing advice and facilitation in respect of study task demands and the development of the abilities central to the programme;
- assist with access to learning and professional resources.

### 7.2 The Library and Learning Resources

The UHI Library Service is a networked service, available to all students and staff, which aims to support users with the effective provision of the resources required for study. A web-based online public access catalogue provides access to the combined resources of UHI colleges via the Internet, and the facility to request material and view user records.

The following core services are available at all UHI library/learning resource centres:

- access to a wide range of books for loan and reference, journals and periodicals which support the courses offered by the UHI partner colleges
- access to PCs and other ICT facilities such as video conferencing
- access to the Internet
- access to electronic data such as online journals and CD ROM.

Students are encouraged to ask library staff for advice on accessing resources.

#### 7.2.1 Borrowing from the Library

Postgraduate students and staff can borrow up to 12 items at any one time, and extended loans may be arranged.

If the material you want is not available at your local library, it may be borrowed for you, either from another UHI site, or externally through the national inter-library loan scheme.

### 7.3 Email

As a student on the programme, you will be allocated a UHI username and password (if you do not already have one) for you to access UHI's email system. If you experience problems you should contact the UHI Helpdesk (telephone 01463 270150, email: 150@uhi.ac.uk)

### 7.4 Web Site

The website for the Rural course is at:

<http://www.lews.uhi.ac.uk/courses/sections/humanities/contents/rural/postgradmsrd>

The website for the Mountain course is at:

<http://www.perth.ac.uk/SPECIALISTCENTRES/CMS/Pages/default.aspx>

Most of the module materials are accessed via the UHI Virtual Learning Environment (VLE); each student is given an access code at enrolment.

### 7.5 Student Information and Guidance Services

If you have a non-academic issue which you would like to discuss, each UHI college has a Guidance Service. This provides a safe and confidential environment where you can talk through your concerns with someone in a non-judgmental manner. For students on the rural degree programme, the Guidance staff at Lews Castle College (telephone 01851-770282) will be pleased to help you directly, or put you in touch with Guidance colleagues in a college closer to you. For students on the mountain degree programme, please contact Student Support Services on 01738-877379.

## 8. Assessment Strategies

### 8.1 Introduction

The assessment strategy of this programme has been designed to recognise the learning of professional and mature participants. It provides transparent guidance to both tutors and participants on the standards that will be applied to assessment, and on the procedures adopted to ensure, through careful monitoring, that assessment is seen to be both fair and reliable.

The assessment strategy and the process by which the course team will ensure consistency and quality of assessment in the early stages of this degree programme are based on the UHI Postgraduate Academic Regulations. The course team recognise that experience of assessing at Masters level needs to be a collaborative process, shared by all team members.

Two external examiners will be appointed to the programme, one of whom will be a senior examiner, in accordance with UHI regulations. These will be members of the Examination Board.

Modules will be subject to two kinds of assessment criteria:

- Specific criteria that are indicated in the module descriptors;
- General criteria, which will apply to all work submitted.

In order to pass a module, participants will be required to demonstrate that the work submitted has met all the stated learning outcomes of the module. Outstanding performance in meeting one outcome will not compensate for a failure to meet other stated learning outcomes. The work must also meet the general criteria set out below. All assessment criteria are listed in the Student Handbook.

## 8.2 Specific Criteria for Assessment

All modules which are considered by the MSc Exam Board require that students achieve a pass mark for each individual component of module assessment in order to pass the module overall.

## 8.3 General Criteria for Assessment

All assessed work will be required to demonstrate that the standard achieved is at Masters level. To achieve a satisfactory standard, work must display:

- An ability to integrate theoretical understanding with practical experience when reflecting on professional practice;
- Reflection on, and application of ethical standards appropriate to the professional context;
- A critical grasp of the concepts and principles related to the module through appropriate use of language, analysis of situations, response to problems and, where appropriate, choice of research methodology;
- An ability to find, comprehend and critically analyse relevant information from published literature;
- An ability to locate, interpret and critically evaluate data.

In addition, the following criteria must be met:

- Material for assessment must be presented in a clear, structured and coherent form;
- Sources of evidence must be cited in a form which facilitates easy access by others of original sources (normally by using the Harvard referencing system);
- Clarity and accuracy in the use of language.

## 8.4 The Dissertation

Due to the importance of the dissertation as the single core component that distinguishes the Masters award from the award of the Postgraduate Diploma, the following regulations and guidelines are given to improve clarity. However, as this is a part-time on-line course, timings given are indicative.

### 8.4.1 Timetable

During the first 4 weeks at the start of semester following completion of the requirements for award of the Postgraduate Diploma, preliminary ideas should be discussed with the student's personal tutor in order to work out the practicality, feasibility, and probable intellectual viability of the proposed dissertation topic.

A firm proposal of approximately 500 words should be submitted to the dissertation module leader by the Monday of week 5 of the module delivery. It should include:

- The title of the research project;
- The research question which will be answered;
- An indication of the methodology which will be used to collect data;
- An indication of the student's familiarity with the main relevant academic literature;
- An indication of how the research data will be analysed;
- An indication of the proposed timetable for completion and submission of the dissertation.

The verbal presentation should last approximately 15 minutes and should provide a succinct explanation of the above aspects of the proposal. It will be followed by a 15

minute question and answer session with the examiner in which the student will defend their proposal.

Once the topic is agreed, a Supervisor will be appointed.

Candidates must submit their completed bound dissertation (3 copies) by 2pm on Friday 18 May 2012 to the Supervisor.

Late submissions are considered a serious breach of regulations. In the event of a late submission, the candidate must make application for consideration via the Course Leader to the Network Course Committee.

#### 8.4.2 Presentational Details

The Dissertation, exclusive of bibliography, maps, tables, and statistical appendices must not be more than 15,000 words. This word count includes footnotes and abstract but not the bibliography.

If the 15,000 word count is exceeded the candidate will be penalised.

The dissertation must be single-sided, typed in 11- or 12-pitch font, double-spaced on A4 paper, and bound simply or filed securely. Pages should be numbered, and an exact word-count should be included on the front cover.

An abstract should be included in the dissertation.

The dissertation should include a disclaimer signed by the candidate to the effect that "Except when otherwise stated and acknowledged I certify that this dissertation is my sole and unaided work".

Where relevant, maps, diagrams, and photographs should be included in the body of the work. Each should be clearly titled or annotated, be strictly relevant to their purpose, and some form of reference should be made to each in the text. Tables should be typed, given self-contained headings and referred to in the text. Footnotes should be kept to an absolute minimum.

References – A complete list of references limited to those works referred to in the text should be indicated at the end of the dissertation. Do not divide the reference list into sections e.g. books, papers, etc. The form of references should be in the Harvard style and further details are available at <http://www.uhi.ac.uk/home/libraries/how-to/cite-references>

References to web pages should be in the same format as books etc but should include the full URL and date accessed.

References in the text, whether for a book, chapter, or article, the name and date should be inserted as the appropriate place in the text e.g. (Rennie, 2002), (Price, 2003).

References to the work or opinions of another writer (or discussions with other persons who are prime sources of information) must always be acknowledged.

#### 8.4.3 The Assessment of the Dissertation

In general the Examiners will be expecting a balanced and appropriately referenced piece of work, with a proper sequence of chapters, which develop the argument, engage in its analysis, and come to a conclusion, all presented in an acceptable academic fashion.

It is expected that appropriate use will be made of relevant techniques in the interpretation, analysis, and presentation of data, in an acceptable academic fashion. This applies to graphical, cartographical, and statistical techniques, computer programmes, or field methods. (If it is necessary to include a brief statement outlining the techniques these can be presented as an appendix).

It is expected that the best dissertations will be worthy of publication, and all should show originality and/or competent and creative scholarship. All dissertations will be judged on the degree to which they represent logical, thorough, and intelligible report on a piece of work, of a standard expected of a Masters student.

Examiners will assess the dissertation using a marking strategy containing the following criteria and weightings:

<b>Dissertation Marking Strategy</b>	<b>Mark</b>
<b>The Dissertation as a Whole</b>	<b>10</b>
Clarity with which the rationale for the project is explained	
Clarity of aims and objectives	
Coherence and flow regarding structure and analytical linkages	
Commentary on the limitations of the research process	
Identification of possible future work	
<b>Literature Review</b>	<b>25</b>
Breadth and depth of literature review	
Relevance of the literature review	
Critical engagement with literature	
Detail, relevance and currency of the bibliography	
<b>Methodology</b>	<b>25</b>
Suitability and coherence of research design	
Critical evaluation of selected methodology and methods	
Integration of ethical considerations	
Application of selected research methods	
<b>Analysis and Interpretation of Data and Results</b>	<b>30</b>
Competence with which data are analysed and interpreted	
Clarity with which findings are reported	
Integration of results with extant literature	
Sustainability of discussion and conclusions	
<b>Presentation</b>	<b>10</b>
Clarity and appropriateness of writing style	
Comprehensive and appropriate referencing system	
Spelling and grammar	
Layout and format	
<b>Total</b>	
<b>Grade</b>	

#### 8.4.4 Selecting a Topic

There is no set pattern for a dissertation and variety is encouraged. To that extent, the following notes are for guidance only.

The topic can be in any field relating to the management of sustainable rural development or the management of sustainable mountain development, depending on the chosen award path of the student. It is difficult to prescribe areal and subject limits but limited rather than large areas, and highly focussed rather than diffuse global topics are more likely to allow for adequate depth of study.

Field experiments, analysis of specific data sources, laboratory analysis, and/or interviews, are to be encouraged as evidence of first hand investigation and engaging with "primary" data and its interpretation, but they cannot be the exclusive content of the thesis.

Thorough and critical reviews of a considerable literature on a clearly defined topic are also acceptable.

Other possibilities are:

- The testing of theories, concepts, and techniques, and their application to a discrete problem in the subject area.
- An evaluative report based on a placement with the management of a commercial organisation, a voluntary agency, or a relevant public agency.

#### 8.4.5 Dissertation Supervision

Advice to students and supervisors:

Supervisors are usually appointed in the first 5 or 6 weeks of starting the module, after a period of discussion between student, personal tutors, and the Course Leader.

Supervisors are appointed to provide up to eight hours of tutorial-type supervision between the start of the module and the deadline for submission.

It is vital that the supervisor and the student are clear about when the supervisor is available during that period, and to establish early on the preferred methods of maintaining contact.

Students should realise that supervisors are busy, and appointments need to be made in good time.

Supervisors must inform the Course Leader if students are experiencing significant difficulties or are contemplating late-stage changes of direction in their dissertation.

Students should realise that they are responsible for their dissertation. Supervisors are there to offer advice and direction.

### **8.5 Submission of Work**

A schedule of assessments and submission deadlines for each module is agreed by the course committee at the start of each academic session and published in the Student Handbook. You can also find this information in the module documentation on Blackboard.

Examination boards to approve the award of credit will be held after the end of semester two to allow time for work to be double marked and seen by external examiners.

Tutors will give assignment instructions to students in good time and completed assignments should be submitted to appropriate Tutors in an appropriate electronic format as specified by the module tutor.

## 8.6 Marking of Work

Work submitted is assessed by the module tutor for that module, and all assessed work is double marked.

All Dissertation studies will be double marked and one of the assessors will have an academic background appropriate to the specialist content.

Where participants' work does not satisfactorily meet the learning outcomes of the module, or does not meet the general criteria, participants will be given written feedback and given the opportunity to resubmit the work at a date agreed with the module tutor. Only one re-submission will be accepted.

## 8.7 General Assessment Provisions

Students are advised to keep a copy of all assignments for future reference. All assessments will be marked through a process of double marking. Students are required to put their full name and registration number on completed work, and to sign a statement of authorship in the context of their dissertation. The first marker provides feedback to students as quickly as possible with an indication as to whether the work is a 'pass', 'fail' or 'borderline pass'. The second marker acts as a guide to the first marker. The final grade is agreed between the two of them, and at this point the student will be given the agreed grade. The 2nd marker cannot impose a grade but can advise, the final grade being agreed by both markers. In the event of disagreement the Course Leader will be asked for a third opinion and agreement will be sought by negotiation. Ultimately the external examiners will decide should it prove difficult to reach a consensus.

The staff will attempt to give feedback in about three weeks. It should only exceptionally take more than three weeks.

## 8.8 Module Results

Each module may have a number of components of assessment in which each component represents a percentage contribution of the overall module grade. To pass a module you need to get at least 50% in each individual component of assessment. The overall mark must be at least 50% to pass the module. This applies only to the following modules which are considered by the MSc Managing Sustainable Mountain/Rural Development Exam Board: Environmental and Social Issues in Mountain Areas, People and Nature, Policy Frameworks and Analysis, Sustainable Development, Developing Communities, Geographical Information Systems, Environmental Assessment, Biodiversity Management, Sustainable Deer Management, Water Management, Information Society and Rural Development, Local Economic Development, and the Mountain and Rural Research Dissertations.

For modules which are considered by other Exam Boards, the standard UHI pass marks apply. This applies to the following modules: Sustainable Tourism, Research Methods & Techniques and Developing Potential through Placement. For further details, please see the UHI postgraduate regulations:

<http://www.uhi.ac.uk/en/about-uhi/governance/policies-and-regulations/regulations/Section%2014%20-%20Taught%20Postgraduate%20Regulations%20-15%20CREDITS.pdf/view>

Module results are notified to the external examiners. At one formal meeting each year, following the second semester, the Board of Examiners makes the final decision on module results, progression from one level to the next, and on student awards. Grades and formal results are only notified after the Board of Examiners have met.

## 8.9 Late Submissions

From time to time, students may experience difficulties which they realise mean that they will be unable to submit a particular piece of work on time. Where these circumstances are likely to affect more than one module, or are protracted in duration, the student should make an application for mitigating circumstances to be taken into account. Where the circumstances apply to only one piece of assessment, and are likely to be limited in impact and duration, the module leader may grant an extension of up to three working days. If the work is submitted within this extended period, it will be treated as a timeous submission.

Students who are seeking an extension to a deadline must obtain the module leader's agreement prior to that deadline's expiry.

Where the module leader agrees to an extension, they should inform the programme leader of this decision. This is to allow programme leaders to identify students who repeatedly request extensions, so that help and support can be offered to them.

Penalties for late submission of assessments:

- assessments submitted after the agreed deadline but within ten working days of the deadline will be marked at a maximum of 40% for undergraduate modules (50% for taught post-graduate)
- assessments submitted more than ten working days after the agreed deadline will be given 0% (although formative feedback may be offered to the student where requested).
- Cases of persistent late submission shall be brought to the attention of the board of examiners, which shall exercise its discretion to determine the student's final results.

## 8.10 Marking Schemes

Marks are awarded on the basis of the following criteria:

Description	%	Grade
Distinction (DI)	70+	A
Good Pass (GP)	60-69	B
Pass (P)	50-59	C
Marginal Failure (MF)	40-49	D
Fail (F)	0-39	F

**Excellent Performance:** Most of the relevant information/skills accurately deployed. Outstanding grasp of theoretical/ conceptual/ practical elements. Good integration of theory/practice/information and/or exceptional level of personal creative development demonstrated in pursuit of the assessed work's objectives.

**Above Average Performance:** Most of the relevant information/skills accurately deployed. Good grasp of theoretical/conceptual/practical elements. Good integration of theory/practice/information and/or a high level of personal creative development demonstrated in pursuit of the assessed work's objectives.

**Average Performance:** Much of the relevant information/skills mostly accurately deployed. Adequate grasp of theoretical/ conceptual/ practical elements. Fair integration of theory/practice/information and/or a high level of personal creative development demonstrated in pursuit of the assessed work's objectives.

Satisfactory Performance: No major omissions or inaccuracies in the deployment of information/skills. Some grasp of theoretical/conceptual/practical elements. Integration of theory/practice /information and/or a satisfactory level of personal creative development demonstrated intermittently in pursuit of the assessed work's objectives.

Unsatisfactory Performance: Major deficiencies or omissions in the information/skills/ theoretical/ conceptual/practice elements. Little integration or creative ability demonstrated in pursuit of the assessed work's objectives.

Module teams will apply these in the context of their own subject matter.

## 8.11 Mitigating Circumstances

In the event of failing a module the Board of Examiners may take into account serious factors such as illness that have affected student performance.

If students want the Exam Board to consider such circumstances they must provide written evidence to their student adviser who can then take the matter to the Chair of the Exam Board.

Further details are available at:

<http://www.uhi.ac.uk/en/about-uhi/governance/policies-and-regulations/regulations/academic-standards-and-quality-regulations#tab2>

Appendix K

## 9. Presentation and Submission of Assignments

### 9.1 Citations and References

Citations and references are integral and essential parts of academic essays at university level. In presenting a statement in academic work, it is necessary to cite the source of your information or facts, and to give the academic backing for your statement. These sources are then referenced - identified in greater detail and in a particular format, at the end of your essay, in a bibliography - an alphabetical listing of all your sources.

Poor referencing is penalised by examiners, so it is vital to know how to do it properly. There are a number of reasons for the importance of citations and references:

- in acknowledging the work of others, you avoid being accused of plagiarism (i.e., passing off other people's work as your own);
- it allows your reader to identify the currency of your information as s/he reads your text;
- it enables your reader to find the source of your information;
- it shows the academic backing for your arguments.

For these reasons it is very important that you record the information you need as you use material, e.g. build up a sheet of references as you prepare your essay so you are creating a bibliography as you go. If you don't do this as you use a book or web page, you might not be able to find them at a later date.

It is important, in ensuring that everyone reading your work can understand your citations and references, that you are consistent and that you follow a standard procedure that is generally recognised.

#### 9.1.1 Harvard Referencing

There are a number of methods of referencing accepted by the British Standards Institution for academic work in the UK. One of those, and the one of the most widely used, is the Harvard style of referencing. It was developed in Harvard University for use in the Social Sciences, but has become a general international standard over the years.

Harvard is flexible and can be used for a range of media - books, conference papers, journals, videos, etc., and is easy to use and understand.

There is not as yet an accepted standard for electronic material, but it is recommended that you follow Harvard protocol for this too. Much of the material you will use from the web, particularly if it is of academic quality, will have an author; failing this, use the title to allow your reader to identify it. A URL - web address - must also be given, but it is not acceptable as the citation or, on its own, as the reference. There is a presumption that your source is print if not otherwise stated to be online, Internet, CD-Rom etc.

### 9.1.2 Examples of Harvard

Traynor (1992) suggests that America's isolationist stance stems from its immense shock at the number of casualties suffered in its short involvement in the Great War.

It is essential in a successful team to have a range of skills and capabilities, with members achieving a balance of strengths and weaknesses (Belbin, 1981).

John Moore's argument that poverty no longer existed in the Britain of the 1990s was discredited by the fact that "the rich were plainly getting richer while homelessness round the country was rising..." (Timmins, 1995, p.451).

There is concern about the effectiveness of sun protection creams, and questions are now raised about the level of research carried out by manufacturers (Diffey, 2000).

These citations would appear in the bibliography as:

#### Bibliography

Belbin, R. M. (1981) Management teams: why they succeed or fail. Oxford, Butterworth Heinemann.

Diffey, B. (2000) Has the sun protection factor had its day? British Medical Journal, 320, pp. 176 - 177. [online]. Available from <http://www.bmj.com/cgi/content/full/320/7228/176>> Accessed 25 May, 2000.

Timmins, N. (1995) The five giants. London, Fontana.

Traynor, J. (1992) Europe 1890 - 1990. Challenging history. Surrey, Nelson.

The citation in your text shows your reader the author and the date of your information. If you use a direct quotation, you must give the page on which it is found.

Note the journal was consulted online, and you must also state when you accessed an online source.

### 9.1.3 Guide to Harvard Style Citations and Referencing

A comprehensive guide to Harvard style citations and referencing can be found on the UHI website at: <http://www.uhi.ac.uk/home/libraries/how-to/cite-references>

## 9.2 Plagiarism

Plagiarism is not permissible under any circumstances. Any student found guilty of plagiarism will be subject to disciplinary procedures, which may lead to non-award of a grade for the assignment involved, and or to a non-award for the module.

### **9.3 Use of Research Material in More than One Module**

If you are engaged in more than one module at any one time, it is not acceptable practice to insert identical passages in different module assignments. Examiners will understand if you wish to make use of research material in more than one module but the manner in which your research is presented must be specific to that module and not replicated in other modules. Failure to adhere to this instruction will lead to you being penalised by examiners.

### **9.4 Design and Presentation of Assignments**

At Masters level you are expected to be able to write fluently, spell correctly and present your work in a professional manner. Examiners pay particular attention to spelling, grammar, sentence construction and layout. If you are uncertain about any of this, make sure you submit an early draft to your tutor. Do not wait until the final submission to discover your problems!

If you wish to submit an assignment on paper, you should use A4 paper and all work must be word-processed with at least 1" margins and double line spacing. The font size should be no smaller than font 11 Times New Roman.

### **9.5 Electronic Submission of Assignments**

You will generally submit your assignments as an email attachment. You should check on each module's blackboard site and with the module tutor as to the format for submitting individual components of assessment. It is your responsibility to keep a copy of your assignment and to ensure that the email file attachment has arrived safely. UHI and its Academic Partner colleges cannot be held responsible for any misdirection or loss of material in the post or through email.

### **9.6 Meeting Deadlines and Arranging Extensions**

Please refer to para 8.5 in Section 8 Assessment. Deadlines for the submission of module assignments will be set out by module tutors at the beginning of each semester. If, for any reason, you think you will not meet that deadline you must inform your module tutor in writing.

### **9.7 Marking and Return of Assignments**

A sample of all assignments - for some modules, all assignments - are double marked and all are moderated by External Examiners.

The staff will attempt to give feedback in about three weeks. It should only exceptionally take more than three weeks.

## **10. Evaluation and Monitoring of the Programme**

UHI and its Academic Partners are committed to making available to you the most appropriate channels for your comments about the course. Should you wish to use it the procedure for academic complaints and appeals is set out in UHI's Academic Standards and Quality Regulations, copies of which are available in each of the Academic Partner colleges.

### **10.1 Course Evaluation**

A course evaluation questionnaire is distributed by the course administrator to students at the end of each module. Please take time to complete these and return them as directed.

## 10.2 Staff and Student Course Committee

A course committee is held once each semester and comprises:

- Course Leader (Chair);
- the named contact from each of the 4 UHI partner colleges, who will be responsible for co-ordinating internal college issues relevant to the effective operation of the MSc programme. This contact person will be a module tutor. The tutors are listed in para 6.5 of section 6;
- all staff teaching on the programme that academic year;
- at least one student representative;

## 10.3 Functions of the College Named Contact

The named college contact person is responsible for:

- the successful management of the dual MSc in their respective colleges;
- ensuring students have adequate access to appropriate resources;
- ensuring effective communication between module tutors and mentors in the college;

## 10.4 The Course Committee

- ensures that all aspects of the course meet with the requirements agreed at validation/approval;
- considers regular monitoring reports from module teams;
- considers the reports of external examiners and ensures that any recommendations are implemented;
- considers forward planning in terms of vocational, industrial and academic requirements;
- advises on the promotion and marketing of the course;
- identifies resource needs and considers feedback from participants;
- makes recommendations on participant progression to the Board of Examiners;
- considers any professional development issues that may be appropriate;
- conducts a periodic review of the course as required;
- recommends any significant modifications to the course to the to the UHI Academic Council.

**APPENDIX 1****SCHEDULE OF ASSESSMENTS AND SUBMISSION DEADLINES  
FOR THE PROGRAMME****ACADEMIC YEAR 2011/12**

<b>Module</b>	<b>Semester</b>	<b>Tutor</b>	<b>TMA1</b>	<b>TMA2</b>
People and Nature	1	Frank Rennie	To be confirmed	To be confirmed
Environmental and Social Issues in Mountain Areas	1	Calum Macleod	21/10/11	9/12/110
Policy Frameworks and Analysis	1	Michael Smith	4/11/12	16/12/11
Geographical Information Systems	1	Donna Clark	To be confirmed	To be confirmed
Developing Potential through Placement	1 or 2	Issy Grieve	N/A	N/A
Research Methods & Techniques	1	Rob McMorran and Calum Macleod	14/11/11	12/12/11
Sustainable Tourism	1	Duncan Bryden	31/10/11	5/12/11
Biodiversity Management	2	Melanie Smith	To be confirmed	To be confirmed
Sustainable Development	2	Jim Chalmers	To be confirmed	To be confirmed
Developing Communities	2	Roddy Murray	To be confirmed	To be confirmed
Environmental Assessment	2	Rob McMorran	To be confirmed	To be confirmed
Sustainable Deer Management	2	Rob McMorran	To be confirmed	To be confirmed
Mountain Research Dissertation	1 & 2	Calum Macleod	18/5/11	
Rural Research Dissertation	1 & 2	Frank Rennie	18/5/11	