

## Course record information

<b>Name and level of final award</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bachelor of Science with Honours - Biological Sciences</li> <li>• Bachelor of Science with Honours - Biological Sciences with Professional Experience</li> <li>• Bachelor of Science with Honours - Biological Sciences with International Experience</li> </ul> <p>The award is Bologna FQ-EHEA first cycle degree or diploma compatible</p>
<b>Name and level of intermediate awards</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bachelor of Science (BSc) - Biological Sciences BSc</li> <li>• Diploma of Higher Education (Dip HE) - Biological Sciences</li> <li>• Certificate of Higher Education (CertHE) - Biological Sciences</li> </ul>
<b>Awarding body/institution</b>	University of Westminster
<b>Teaching institution</b>	University of Westminster
<b>Status of awarding body/institution</b>	Recognised Body
<b>Location of delivery</b>	Primary: Central London
<b>Language of delivery and assessment</b>	English
<b>QAA subject benchmarking group(s)</b>	Biosciences <a href="https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/subject-benchmark-statements/subject-benchmark-statement-biosciences.pdf?sfvrsn=21f2c881_4">https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/subject-benchmark-statements/subject-benchmark-statement-biosciences.pdf?sfvrsn=21f2c881_4</a>
<b>Professional statutory or regulatory body</b>	Accredited by the Royal Society of Biology (RSB) <a href="https://www.rsb.org.uk/">https://www.rsb.org.uk/</a> (Reaccreditation pending spring/ summer 2022)
<b>Westminster course title, mode of attendance and standard length</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BSc Biological Sciences FT, Full-time, September start - 3 years standard length with an optional year abroad or placement</li> </ul>
<b>Valid for cohorts</b>	From 2022/3

## Admissions requirements

There are standard minimum entry requirements for all undergraduate courses. Students are advised to check the standard requirements for the most up-to-date information. For most courses a decision will be made on the basis of your application form alone. However, for some courses the selection process may include an interview to demonstrate your strengths in addition to any formal entry requirements. More information can be found here: <https://www.westminster.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/how-to-apply>

## Recognition of Prior Learning

Applicants with prior certificated or experiential learning at the same level of the qualification for which they wish to apply are advised to visit the following page for further information:

<https://www.westminster.ac.uk/current-students/guides-and-policies/student-matters/recognition-of-prior-learning>

## Aims of the programme

The BSc (Hons) Biological Sciences course is designed for those with an interest in the wider field of biology and has a number of option modules that allow the student to tailor the programme towards their own particular interests. The course covers a number of different areas of the Biological Sciences, ranging from biology at a molecular level up to global challenges facing humanity and the planet and the biological solutions to help overcome those challenges. The varied content of the Biological Sciences course means that graduates find employment in a wide range of biology related areas and the key transferrable skills developed throughout the course mean that graduates are also in demand in wider fields of employment.

The BSc (Hons) Biological Sciences course has been designed to:

- Provide students with a comprehensive, current and relevant programme of study, delivered in a rich learning environment that is inclusive, supportive and equitable, enabling and encouraging all students to achieve their individual potential without impediment,
- Provide students with an excellent foundation in the biosciences through their core modules,
- Enable student to develop awareness of the global challenges facing humanity and the planet,
- Enable students to contextualise scientific knowledge and opinion within a historical, geographical and cultural framework, referencing current expected standards of equality, diversity and inclusivity,
- Develop students as creative problem solvers in the design of biological solutions to help overcome those challenges, and apply biotechnology to drive these solutions for sustainable development,
- Allow students to follow a molecular sciences, human biology or applied biosciences thread through their module choices or to construct their own thread to target their education towards their chosen career pathway,
- Enable students to succeed in both scientific and non-science careers,
- Include the flexibility to allow students to undertake a work placement or international study experience whilst studying for their degree and gain recognition of that experience through specific award titles.

## Employment and further study opportunities

University of Westminster graduates will be able to demonstrate the following five Graduate Attributes:

- Critical and creative thinkers
- Literate and effective communicator
- Entrepreneurial
- Global in outlook and engaged in communities
- Social, ethically and environmentally aware

University of Westminster courses capitalise on the benefits that London as a global city and as a major creative, intellectual and technology hub has to offer for the learning environment and experience of our students.

The development of these graduate attributes is oriented towards employability upon completion of the course and these five attributes are aligned to various Course Learning Outcomes as shown in the table later in this document.

Whilst graduate attributes are acquired through a number of different modules throughout your course, all courses in the School of Life Sciences also have an integrated framework of employability skills and options running from level 4 up to level 6. This framework is intended to enable students to develop key skills which will prepare them for employment and/or further study following graduation. The specific modules for implementing this framework are Professional Development in Science (Level 4), Research Methods (level 5) and the Life Sciences Final Year Project (level 6). Along with subject specific knowledge and skills however, other modules in the course also incorporate Key Transferable Skills, which complement the employability skills in this framework and are applicable to a wide range of future careers, further study and many other activities. The key employability related skills students will develop through the course include subject specific skill applicable to the many branches of the life sciences and skills that are transferrable to a variety of scenarios. These include: the ability to critically analyse scientific literature and to discuss and correctly cite those sources; gaining competence in laboratory and other practical/ investigative techniques relevant to your specialism; the ability to process, analyse, interpret and present a variety of data types including the appropriate statistical analysis of that data using a variety of software packages including Microsoft office and dedicated statistical analysis software such as SPSS; teamworking and leadership skills from group work in practical classes/ workshops and group presentation tasks; presentation skills in a variety of formats (e.g. posters, oral presentations, infographics). All students undertake a final year project will also allows the development of important skills such as experimental design based on available

resources (including budget), planning of day-to-day activities and keeping records. Skills such as these are important for a wide variety of jobs and activities both within the life sciences and in the wider context.

Also built into our courses is the flexibility to allow students to undertake a work placement or international study experience between levels 5 and 6 of their studies which will further enhance your employability prospects. Students who undertake a work-based placement benefit from real world experience in their chosen discipline and gain a clearer understanding of options open to them following completion of their degree. The completion of a work placement in a relevant area is often looked upon favourably by employers as an indication of practical experience in the 'real world' and indeed many students receive job offers post-graduation from either their placement provider or similar employment within the sector. Whilst not necessarily related to a specific area of employment, completion of an international study period is also often looked upon favourably by employers as an indication of an international/ global mindset and independence, both of which are desirable characteristics in a connected world.

Should you elect to undertake a placement or international study period between levels 5 and 6, we would therefore encourage you to follow a path most appropriate to your personal career goals. Many students also amass a diverse range of professional experience at all levels of their course and are encouraged to integrate all such opportunities into their studies. Again, our location in London is a distinct advantage when looking for additional work experience. Our aim is to foster a culture of gathering expertise, building professional networks, and expanding academic learning with the knowledge and skills gained in working environments.

The Biological Sciences course aims to create graduates who are:

- knowledgeable and enthusiastic in articulating science and research
- developed in lifelong learning skills
- confident and capable in any professional environment
- able to apply their biological sciences knowledge to the world around them
- passionate about the design and implementation of biological solutions to drive sustainable development
- competitive in the global careers market

The BSc Biological Sciences course has been designed to provide a thorough knowledge and understanding of biosciences and to equip you with vital transferable skills to succeed in both science and non-science careers. These include the planning and delivery of laboratory and desk based evidenced research, writing skills, presentation skills, critical thinking and problem solving and collaborative and team working skills. Our students have continued on to a diverse range of fields including synthetic biology, biotechnology, cancer biology, science communication, sustainability, teaching and Physician Associate roles.

## What will you be expected to achieve?

Learning outcomes are statements on what successful students have achieved as the result of learning. These are threshold statements of achievement the learning outcomes broadly fall into four categories:

- The overall knowledge and understanding you will gain from your course (KU)
- Graduate attributes are characteristics that you will have developed during the duration of your course (GA)
- Professional and personal practice learning outcomes are specific skills that you will be expected to have gained on successful completion of the course (PPP)
- Key transferable skills that you will be expected to have gained on successful completion of the course. (KTS)

**Level 4 course learning outcomes:** upon completion of Level 4 you will be able to:

- CLO4.1 Demonstrate an understanding of key knowledge base in the Biological Sciences, in addition to the skills required in maintaining the knowledge base for future success. ( KU GA KTS )
- CLO4.2 Identify core issues/questions in biological problems and the application of established concepts, approaches and/or simple experiments to resolve them, whilst understanding how these can contribute to UN Sustainable Development Goals now and in the future. ( KU GA KTS )
- CLO4.3 Appreciate the importance of multidisciplinary approaches, diverse perspectives from the past and present and professionalism in the workplace and be able to work in groups to complete tasks effectively. ( KU GA KTS )
- CLO4.4 Organise, source and communicate information linked to specific bioscience issues to a variety of audiences, including the general public, and be critically aware of the limitations of any resources used. ( GA PPP )

KTS )

- CLO4.5 Demonstrate competence to conduct simple experiments using key equipment and techniques and understand the importance of designing research activities to effectively and critically test hypotheses. ( GA PPP KTS )
- CLO4.6 Appreciate the many career pathways available to a graduate of Biological Sciences alongside relevant approved professional organisations and learned societies, and be able to recognise the skills and learning necessary to succeed in these careers. ( KU GA PPP KTS )
- CLO4.7 Demonstrate key numeracy skills, through engagement with module assessments and activities and utilising additional resources as required. ( KU GA PPP KTS CS )
- CLO4.8 Understand that scientific theories are shaped by the historical and social context in which they are developed. ( KU GA PPP )
- CLO4.9 Understand the principles of scientific practice including the importance of professional standards and ethical conduct. ( KU GA PPP KTS )

**Level 5 course learning outcomes:** upon completion of Level 5 you will be able to:

- CLO5.1 Demonstrate an enhanced key knowledge base in the Biological Sciences, and the use of key skills in maintaining the knowledge base for future success. ( KU GA KTS )
- CLO5.2 Demonstrate the ability to highlight and explain core issues/questions in biological problems and the biological components of global issues alongside the associated UN Sustainable Development Goals, and understand the professional approach taken towards resolving them. ( KU GA KTS )
- CLO5.3 Apply a range of relevant interpersonal, team and networking skills to contribute to team performance within organised group work. ( KU GA KTS )
- CLO5.4 Demonstrate well-developed strategies to reliably source and communicate information linked to specific biological issues, and to be able to explain the limitations of any resources used. ( GA PPP KTS )
- CLO5.5 Plan an activity of work to address a specific research question, where necessary, with the explanation of, and confident use of key laboratory equipment, and to understand the process of experimental design to test a hypothesis ( KU GA PPP KTS )
- CLO5.6 Responsibly evaluate your own capabilities and development towards a chosen career pathway available to a graduate of Biological Sciences, and recognise the development of the skills necessary to succeed in these careers. ( GA PPP KTS )
- CLO5.7 Demonstrate an extension of numeracy skills with the application of appropriate mathematical and statistical tools, through engagement with module assessments and activities, utilising experimental data, biosciences databases and additional resources as required. ( KU GA PPP KTS )
- CLO5.8 Realise that progress in science requires questioning of assumptions, that this requires dialogue between different viewpoints, and therefore has often been a result of sharing of ideas between cultures. ( KU GA PPP )
- CLO5.9 Work within the norms of the scientific and other professional communities and be aware of the social and ethical responsibilities that this involves, whilst acting as a responsible and compassionate member of local and global communities. ( KU GA PPP KTS )

**Additional Year course learning outcomes:** upon completion of Additional Year you will be able to:

- IEO.1 Enable personal development by devising a programme of international study that complements the content of the home degree programme and/or develops other interests. ( GA PPP KTS )
- IEO.2 Appreciate the challenges and opportunities of studying/ working in an international context. ( GA PPP KTS )
- IEO.3 Demonstrate an understanding of, and respect for, the cultural norms and differences of the host country at a societal level as part of an inclusive, global outlook. ( GA PPP KTS )
- PEO.1 Reflect upon your greater knowledge of the career opportunities available to life sciences graduates in the job market and your personal aptitude for those opportunities. ( GA PPP KTS )
- PEO.2 Demonstrate the acquisition of a range of professional, practical and key-transferrable skills relevant to the fields of employment where life sciences graduates are valued. ( KU GA PPP KTS )
- PEO.3 Take personal responsibility for directing your own learning and future career making the best use of the opportunities, experiences and people that were available to you during your placement year. Draw upon the diverse approaches, perspectives, knowledge and experience of a diverse workforce, treating all individuals with respect and recognising their contribution to the host organisation. ( KU GA PPP KTS )

**Level 6 course learning outcomes:** upon completion of Level 6 you will be able to:

- CLO6.1 Demonstrate an in depth and analytical understanding of the key knowledge base in the Biological Sciences, and to maintaining the knowledge base for future success. ( KU GA KTS )
- CLO6.2 Apply an in-depth awareness of the biological component of global issues, and advances in the biosciences used to resolving them, considering the ethical and social implications, and proposing novel sustainable solutions where possible whilst considering the associated UN Sustainable Development Goals. ( KU GA KTS )
- CLO6.3 Apply selected interpersonal, team and networking skills and engagement with relevant professional communities and enterprises for successful completion of complex group projects. ( GA PPP KTS )
- CLO6.4 Demonstrate well-developed strategies for the identification, critical evaluation and synthesis of multiple sources of information to enhance knowledge and understanding of the biosciences and to communicate this confidently and professionally to peers and non-scientists. ( KU GA PPP KTS )
- CLO6.5 Design and execute an independent programme of work, selecting and utilising appropriate resources and techniques to investigate a problem and to test hypotheses, and thereby expand upon current knowledge. ( KU GA PPP KTS )
- CLO6.6 Critically and responsibly evaluate your own capabilities and development towards a chosen career pathway demonstrating that this pathway may change throughout life, and recognise the need to continually update the skills necessary to succeed in a career. ( GA PPP KTS )
- CLO6.7 Apply relevant advanced numerical skills to analyse, interpret and clearly present biological data to support reasoned conclusions as part of research, and other activities as part of the course. ( KU GA PPP KTS )
- CLO6.8 Recognise and reflect upon the ethical and social implications of current and historical scientific research and knowledge. In turn, appreciate the value of drawing upon diverse approaches and perspectives in achieving goals. ( KU GA PPP )
- CLO6.9 Treat all individuals and cultures with respect and acknowledge the harm that results and has resulted from not doing so, and act as a responsible and compassionate member of local and global communities. ( KU GA PPP KTS )

## How will you learn?

### Learning methods

In this degree you will gain a sound foundation in biological sciences and a sound preparation in laboratory techniques and research tools. The first year of the Biological Sciences course provides you with a solid understanding of the subject of biology, and introduces the development of transferable skills to support the discipline, for example scientific writing, writing for a lay audience and numeracy skills alongside professional skills for scientists to support employability. In the second year of the course, you will continue to enhance your understanding of biochemistry and molecular biology in core modules, and enhance your research skills by learning to critically review biological evidence to understand global problems and apply statistical analysis by learning to use tools such as SPSS to analyse data sets and test hypotheses. In the final year you will learn about nature inspired design through workshops and apply your biology knowledge to designing solutions to real-world sustainability problems, and the application of biotechnology for sustainable development with hands on experience of a pilot plant study in the fermentation suite. In addition, a core component of your final year is a project, which you will undertake under staff guidance in one of the diverse areas of biological sciences at Westminster.

Online resources will be provided to help support you in your learning and the Academic Liaison and Learning Development Team deliver workshops on a range of academic skills including researching, referencing, essay, report and reflective writing, dissertations, literature reviews, critical thinking, time management and presentations. You will also be tasked with finding alternative resources for your own development (after appropriate preparation) and you will be supported in working independently to consolidate and enhance your understanding of the topics being taught.

Biological science is a pivotal degree discipline in the modern world and is intrinsically multidisciplinary and central to research and technological advances in many areas including the pharmaceutical industry, medical research, environmental technologies and food security. This is reflected in a range of option modules that allow you to develop your own specific interests and to acquire skills appropriate for your intended career.

The School of Life Sciences is committed to the University of Westminster Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) policy with a local implementation based on three central elements:

- **Our commitment** is to ensure an inclusive, safe and supportive learning, working and social environment which enables scientific research and teaching to flourish and encourages our future scientists to grow and realise their true potential.
- **Our goal** is to empower all students and staff to critically reflect on their understanding and positionality, with respect to the wide-ranging global scientific perspectives (past and present); encouraging the open debate of differing points of view.
- **Our pledge** is to respect and value our diverse Life Sciences community (within and beyond the University of Westminster) and foster an equitable culture as we move forward in the field.

These three elements inform and direct all of our learning, teaching and research activities and have been central to our course design process as can be seen in the learning outcomes at module and course level. All staff and students in the school of Life Sciences are expected to embrace and respect these values.

### Teaching methods

The BSc Biological Sciences course will be delivered through a blend of online teaching, face to face teaching, independent work, laboratory work and training and online support activities. The face to face element will consist predominantly of, seminars, tutorials, practicals and enquiry (problem) based learning, with large and small group lectures, some of which will be online, and some “flipped learning” sessions in which you use online material to prepare for tutorials in which academics guide you in the application of what you have learned.

Laboratory skills are critical for a biological scientist and the Biological Sciences course at Westminster includes a programme of laboratory sessions which will take place in the teaching laboratories at the New Cavendish Street site. Likewise computer based techniques are increasingly important to biochemistry and molecular biology and related fields and you will receive hands on training in bioinformatics. Your final year project will be supported through focused sessions with your supervisor and access to the facilities necessary to complete that project.

Scheduled / supervised time represents only a proportion of study for each module. The remaining time is self-managed by you, so offering scope for you to develop your own knowledge and understanding, exploration and the emergence of the autonomy required of you in professional life.

## Assessment methods

Assessment is an important tool for guiding your studies and helping you to improve your skills, knowledge and understanding. Your modules all use a mixture of “summative” assessments (in which the marks contribute to your overall module mark and can contribute to your degree classification) and “formative” assessments (which do not contribute to your mark but provide a vehicle for feedback to guide you in furthering your studies and assist you in optimising your performance in the summative assessments). You will also receive informal feedback in discussions with academic staff in tutorials and other sessions. This will include immediate guidance on how to improve your technical skills and laboratory practice during practicals and small group sessions discussing your final year project with your project supervisor.

Biological Sciences graduates are expected to display a range of skills and personal qualities as well as a wide knowledge of biochemistry, molecular biology and related disciplines. This will be reflected in the use of diverse assessment types during your degree with a focus on the use of authentic assessments designed to use your skill in problem solving, analysing and interpreting data, and transferring knowledge and skills gained in the classroom to simulate and/or use real-world situations. These will require you to use the same competencies, or combination of knowledge, skills and attitude to the criterion situation in professional life. In some modules your knowledge and understanding of topic areas will be evaluated using multiple choice questions within in-class tests.

Laboratory skills are a fundamental aspect of professional practice for a biological scientist and both formative and summative practical based assessments will test your ability to work accurately, effectively and safely while using a number of key techniques. Your accounts of your work allow you to demonstrate that you can interpret data and report research clearly, concisely and honestly. This will sometimes be as a conventional scientific report but in some modules you will be asked to use other formats such as posters, presentations or passages in an online laboratory notebook. Other types of assessment used to evaluate various graduate skills and aspects of scientific understanding, communication and practice may include essays, reflective journals, blogs and data analysis and interpretation exercises. Working in groups or teams is essential in most careers, whether in science or in other areas, and you will work with other students to complete some assessments to help you develop these skills.

In your final year project, you will plan and carry out a short research programme investigating an appropriate subject. You will learn about key aspects involved in planning and designing projects; from ethical implications and risk management to having in place contingency plans to show ability to be flexible and adaptable. From here you will design and conduct the project, selecting and applying appropriate methods for analysis of data, with interpretation, and the formation of reasoned conclusions based upon the results in the context of previous work in the area. The main project output can take various forms and will be negotiated between student and supervisor and approved by the School and therefore brings together multiple aspects of your degree and provides direct evidence of your ability to work independently as a scientific professional.

Graduate Attribute	Evident in Course Outcomes
Critical and creative thinker	CLO4.1, CLO4.5, CLO4.7, CLO5.1, CLO5.2, CLO5.4, CLO5.5, CLO5.6, CLO5.8, CLO6.1, CLO6.2, CLO6.4, CLO6.5, CLO6.6, CLO6.7, IEO.1, PEO.2
Literate and effective communicator	CLO4.3, CLO4.4, CLO5.2, CLO5.3, CLO5.4, CLO5.7, CLO6.4, CLO6.5, CLO6.7, IEO.3, PEO.2, PEO.3
Entrepreneurial	CLO4.6, CLO4.9, CLO5.2, CLO5.3, CLO5.6, CLO5.9, CLO6.2, CLO6.3, CLO6.6
Global in outlook and engaged in communities	CLO4.4, CLO4.8, CLO5.2, CLO5.8, CLO5.9, CLO6.2, CLO6.3, CLO6.8, CLO6.9, IEO.2, IEO.3, PEO.1, PEO.2, PEO.3
Socially, ethically and environmentally aware	CLO4.1, CLO4.2, CLO4.3, CLO4.8, CLO4.9, CLO5.2, CLO5.8, CLO5.9, CLO6.2, CLO6.4, CLO6.8, CLO6.9, IEO.2, IEO.3, PEO.2, PEO.3

## Course Structure

This section shows the core and option modules available as part of the course and their credit value. Full-time Undergraduate students study 120 credits per year. Course structures can be subject to change each academic year following feedback from a variety of sources.

Modules are described as:

- **Core** modules are compulsory and must be undertaken by all students on the course.
- **Option** modules give you a choice of modules and are normally related to your subject area.
- **Electives**: are modules from across the either the whole University or your College. Such modules allow you to

broaden your academic experience. For example, where electives are indicated you may choose to commence the study of a foreign language alongside your course modules (and take this through to the final year), thereby adding further value to your degree.

- Additional information may also be included above each level for example where you must choose one of two specific modules.

## Modules

### Level 4

Module Code	Module Title	Status	UK credit	ECTS
4BIOL001W	Applications of Biological Sciences	Core	20	10
4BICH001W	Biochemistry	Core	20	10
4BIOL002W	Cell Biology	Core	20	10
4PHYM001W	Human Physiology	Core	20	10
4BIOM006W	Professional Development in Science (PRoDS)	Core	20	10
4BICH002W	Biological Chemistry	Option	20	10
4PHYM002W	Fundamentals of Pharmacology	Option	20	10
4BICH003W	Science: History Philosophy and Practice	Option	20	10
		Elective	20	10

### Level 5

Module Code	Module Title	Status	UK credit	ECTS
5EVB1001W	Contemporary Global Challenges in Biology	Core	20	10
5BICH001W	Metabolic Biochemistry	Core	20	10
5BICH003W	Molecular Biology and Genetics	Core	20	10
5BIOM010W	Research Methods	Core	20	10
5BICH002W	Bioinformatics	Option	20	10
5BIOL001W	Exploring the Microbial World	Option	20	10
5BIOM009W	Human Parasitology	Option	20	10
5PHYM001W	Medical Physiology	Option	20	10
5BIOM003W	Molecular and Cellular Therapeutics	Option	20	10
5PHYM007W	Neuroscience	Option	20	10
		Elective	20	10

### Additional Year

Module Code	Module Title	Status	UK credit	ECTS
6BIOL005W	Life Sciences International Study Module (year-long)	Option	120	60
6BIOM009W	Life Sciences Work Experience Placement Module (year-long)	Option	120	60

### Level 6



Module Code	Module Title	Status	UK credit	ECTS
6BIOL003W	Applied Biotechnology	Core	20	10
6BIOL001W	Designing a Sustainable World	Core	20	10
6BICH003W	Final Year Project in Life Sciences	Core	40	20
6BIOM006W	Applied Medical Sciences	Option	20	10
6BIOM007W	Cancer Biology	Option	20	10
6BICH004W	Gene Editing and Genomics	Option	20	10
6EVBI001W	Global Ethics	Option	20	10
6BIOL002W	Life: Origins and Evolution	Option	20	10
6BIOM005W	Medical Microbiology in the Genomics Era	Option	20	10
		Elective	20	10

Please note: Not all option modules will necessarily be offered in any one year. In addition, timetabling and limited spaces may mean you cannot register for your first choice of option modules.

## Professional body accreditation or other external references

BSc (Hons) Biological Sciences is accredited by the Royal Society of Biology (RSB). RSB accreditation recognises degree programmes that fully prepare bioscience graduates to address the needs of employers and is an indication that the programme delivers up-to-date knowledge in the right learning, support and teaching environments. Graduates from this programme are entitled to one year of free membership of the RSB as an Associate Member of the Royal Society of Biology (AMRSB).

## Course management

Your course is one of a number of programmes in the School of Life Sciences, part of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences within the University of Westminster, and is managed by a designated course leader. In addition to the course specific role of the course leader, the Head of School, other senior school staff and the Associate Heads of College, also provide support and management at their respective levels. We also have a school employability director and global engagement coordinators who oversee work placement and international study arrangements respectively. The course leader is also collectively supported in the management and running of the course by the course teaching team through their responsibilities for individual modules and contributions to planning. You will meet your course leader, teaching team and members of the school senior management during arrivals week, a programme of events designed to help you with enrolment, registration, and orientation to the university, its processes and the culture of higher education.

The course is monitored each year by the course leader and senior members of the School and College to ensure that it is running effectively and that issues that might affect the student experience have been appropriately addressed. Each course will have Course Representative meetings throughout the year and staff will consider the outcomes from these meetings, evidence of student progression and achievement and the external examiner's reports to evaluate the effectiveness of the course. All courses are reviewed annually as part of the School, College and University Annual Monitoring processes, reporting finally to the Academic Council of the University which has overall responsibility for the maintenance of quality and standards in the University.

## Academic regulations

The current Handbook of Academic Regulations is available at [westminster.ac.uk/academic-regulations](http://westminster.ac.uk/academic-regulations).

Course specific regulations apply to some courses.

## Academic Support

Upon arrival, an induction programme will introduce you to the staff responsible for the course, the campus on which you will be studying, the Library and IT facilities, additional support available and to your Campus Registry. You will be provided with the Course Handbook, which provides detailed information about the course. Each course has a course leader or Director of Studies. All students enrolled on a full-time course and part time students registered for more than 60 credits a year have a personal tutor, who provides advice and guidance on academic matters. The University uses a Virtual Learning Environment called Blackboard where students access their course materials, and can communicate

and collaborate with staff and other students. Further information on Blackboard can be found at <https://www.westminster.ac.uk/current-students/studies/your-student-journey/when-you-arrive/blackboard>

The Academic Learning Development Centre supports students in developing the skills required for higher education. As well as online resources in Blackboard, students have the opportunity to attend Study Skills workshops and one to one appointments. Further information on the Academic Learning Development Centre can be found at [westminster.ac.uk/academic-learning-development](https://www.westminster.ac.uk/academic-learning-development).

Learning support includes four libraries, each holding a collection of resources related to the subjects taught at that site. Students can search the entire library collection online through the Library Search service to find and reserve printed books, and access electronic resources (databases, e-journals, e-books). Students can choose to study in the libraries, which have areas for silent and group study, desktop computers, laptops for loan, photocopying and printing services. They can also choose from several computer rooms at each campus where desktop computers are available with the general and specialist software that supports the courses taught in their College. Students can also securely connect their own laptops and mobile devices to the University wireless network.

## Support Services

The University of Westminster Student and Academic Services department provide advice and guidance on accommodation, financial and legal matters, personal counselling, health and disability issues, careers, specialist advice for international students and the chaplaincy providing multi-faith guidance. Further information on the advice available to students can be found at <https://www.westminster.ac.uk/student-advice>

The University of Westminster Students' Union also provides a range of facilities to support students during their time at the University. Further information on UWSU can be found at <https://www.westminster.ac.uk/students-union>

## How do we ensure the quality of our courses and continuous improvement?

The course was initially approved by a University Validation Panel. University Panels normally include internal peers from the University, academic(s) from another university, a representative from industry and a Student Advisor.

The course is also monitored each year by the College to ensure it is running effectively and that issues which might affect the student experience have been appropriately addressed. Staff will consider evidence about the course, including the evidence of student surveys, student progression and achievement and reports from external examiners, in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the course and make changes where necessary.

A Course revalidation takes place periodically to ensure that the curriculum is up-to-date and that the skills gained on the course continue to be relevant to employers. Students meet with revalidation panels to provide feedback on their experiences. Student feedback from previous years is also part of the evidence used to assess how the course has been running.

## How do we act on student feedback?

Student feedback is important to the University and student views are taken seriously. Student feedback is gathered in a variety of ways.

- Through student engagement activities at Course/Module level, students have the opportunity to express their voice in the running of their course. Course representatives are elected to expressly represent the views of their peers. The University and the Students' Union work together to provide a full induction to the role of the course representatives.
- There are also School Representatives appointed jointly by the University and the Students' Union who meet with senior School staff to discuss wider issues affecting student experience across the School. Student representatives are also represented on key College and University committees.;
- All students are invited to complete a questionnaire before the end of each module. The feedback from this will inform the module leader on the effectiveness of the module and highlight areas that could be enhanced.
- Final year Undergraduate students will be asked to complete the National Student Survey which helps to inform the national university league tables.

This programme specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the course and the learning outcomes that a student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate, if they take full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. This specification is supplemented by the Course Handbook, Module proforma and Module Handbooks provided to students. Copyright in this document belongs to the University of Westminster. All rights are reserved. This document is for personal use only and may not be reproduced or used for any other purpose, either in whole or in part, without the prior written consent of the University of Westminster. All copies of this document must

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Published date: 28 March 2022