University of Birmingham

BSc (Hons) Geology and Physical Geography (FF68)

How does human interference in our environment compare with natural changes? How is the movement of continental plates reflected in the landscape around us? If these are questions that you might ask, then this could be the course for you.

100% Overall student satisfaction with our course 2014 National Student Survey

This degree course in Geology and Physical Geography mainly attracts students who are interested in the physical side of geography.It emphasises and explores the common ground between physical geography and Earth sciences, drawing on a variety of approaches to explain the way in which the surface of the Earth is shaped. This course will suit an inquisitive student, who is keen to travel and work outdoors. You will study across across both subjects, giving you an excellent grounding for a wide range of careers in a growing sector.

The Geological Society
accredited degree programme

Follow Earth Sciences at Birmingham on Twitter

(https://twitter.com/geology_bham)

Study here and find out why the University of Birmingham was awarded The Times and The Sunday Times University of the Year 2013-14 (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/news/latest/2013/09/20-sep-Birmingham-announced-as-University-of-the-Year.aspx)

Course fact file

UCAS code: FF68

Duration: 3 years

Places Available: 109 (across all Earth Sciences and Environmental Sciences courses)

Applications in 2014: 491

Typical Offer: ABB (**More detailed entry requirements and the international qualifications accepted can be found in the course details (?OpenSection=EntryRequirements)**)

Start date: September

Related courses

BSc (Hons) Geology (F600) (/undergraduate/courses/gees/geology.aspx)

MSci (Hons) Geology (7F83) (/undergraduate/courses/gees/geology-msci.aspx)

MSci (Hons) Geology with an International Year (/undergraduate/courses/gees/geology-international.aspx)

Geography BSc (Hons) (/undergraduate/courses/gees/geography-bsc.aspx)

Contact

General admissions enquires:
Student Recruitment Team
Tel: +44 (0)121 414 6162
Email: **uggeologyadmissions@contacts.bham.ac.uk (mailto:uggeologyadmissions@contacts.bham.ac.uk)**

School of Geography, Earth and Environmental Sciences (/schools/gees/index.aspx)

Details

First year

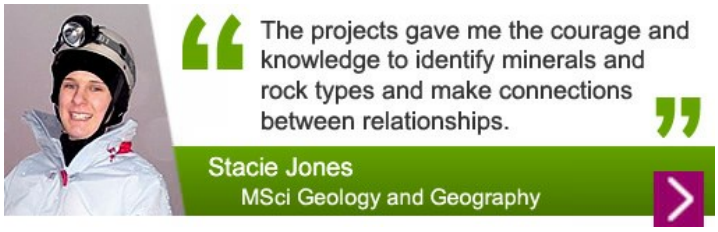
Modules in the first year introduce you to basic Earth Sciences (Earth History, and Internal and Surface Processes), and on the geography side of the course you will explore Global Environmental Processes and **Pembrokeshire (see fieldwork video) (/schools/gees/courses/undergraduate/fieldwork.aspx)** . You will also be trained in data handling techniques and computing, and fieldwork takes place in South Wales.

Second year

The second year allows you to study more advanced modules including Fossil Environments, Hydrogeology and Environmental Geology. The geography programme covers environmental change, ecology and hydroclimatology, past, present and future. You undertake fieldwork in the UK and a field or field/laboratory-based project, that can have either a geology or geography emphasis, or may lie at the interface of the two disciplines. **There is a transfer option to the MSci available after year 2.**

Third year

The third year consolidates the learning of the first two, with core modules as well as a range of optional ones in either Geology or Geography. There is more fieldwork, this time in Spain, and you will write up a dissertation around your own project.



(/schools/gees/our-students/undergraduate/stacie-jones.aspx)

Why study this course

Earth Sciences at Birmingham combines a proud history with an exciting future. Founded in 1881 by Professor Charles Lapworth, one of the pioneers of geological science, we immediately established a reputation for teaching and research excellence.

At Birmingham you are taught by academics who are world-leading experts in their fields. The School undertakes research of international significance in a broad range of topics from Palaeoclimate modelling through Magma Emplacement Mechanisms to Hydrogeology and Palaeobiology. In these fields and others Birmingham academics are making a major contribution to our understanding of the planet's environment, both past and present. This research influences the teaching that takes place and means that the content of our courses reflect the very latest advances and are at the cutting edge of Earth Science.

All our Single Honours degree programmes including Geology and Physical Geography are accredited by the Geological Society of London, (with the exception of Palaeobiology and Palaeoenvironments) and include extensive fieldwork in the UK and abroad.

The Geological Society
accredited degree programme

Modules

Year 1

Core modules (Geology)

- **Earth Systems and Sedimentary Rocks** (/schools/gees/courses/undergraduate/modules/earth-sciences/earth-systems-and-sedimentary-rocks.aspx)
- **Earth History** (/schools/gees/courses/undergraduate/modules/earth-sciences/earth-history.aspx)
- **Introduction to Palaeontology** (/schools/gees/courses/undergraduate/modules/earth-sciences/introduction-to-palaeontology.aspx)
- **Geological Structures and Tectonics** (/schools/gees/courses/undergraduate/modules/earth-sciences/geological-structures-and-tectonics.aspx)
- **Field Skills I** (/schools/gees/courses/undergraduate/modules/earth-sciences/field-skills-i.aspx)
- **Topics in Geology** (/schools/gees/courses/undergraduate/modules/earth-sciences/topics-in-geology.aspx)
- **Ecology and Data Analysis** (/schools/gees/courses/undergraduate/modules/earth-sciences/ecology-and-data-analysis.aspx)
- **Earth Materials and Internal Processes** (/schools/gees/courses/undergraduate/modules/earth-sciences/earth-materials-and-internal-processes.aspx)

Core modules (Geography)

- **Global Environmental Issues** (/schools/gees/courses/undergraduate/modules/environmental-science/global-environmental-issues.aspx)

Year 2

Compulsory modules

- **Field Skills II for Geology and Physical Geography** (/schools/gees/courses/undergraduate/modules/earth-sciences/field-skills-ii-for-geology-and-physical-geography-palaeobiology-and-palaeoenvironments.aspx)
- **Sedimentology** (/schools/gees/courses/undergraduate/modules/earth-sciences/sedimentology.aspx)
- **Project Planning for Geological Mapping Projects** (/schools/gees/courses/undergraduate/modules/earth-sciences/project-planning-for-geological-mapping-projects.aspx)
- **Reconstructing Quaternary Environments** (/schools/gees/courses/undergraduate/modules/environmental-science/reconstructing-quaternary-environments.aspx)

Optional modules

- **Igneous and Metamorphic Petrology** (/schools/gees/courses/undergraduate/modules/earth-sciences/igneous-and-metamorphic-petrology.aspx)
- **Applied Geophysics** (/schools/gees/courses/undergraduate/modules/earth-sciences/applied-geophysics.aspx)
- **Continental Deformation** (/schools/gees/courses/undergraduate/modules/earth-sciences/continental-deformation.aspx)
- **Environmental and Evolutionary Palaeobiology** (/schools/gees/courses/undergraduate/modules/earth-sciences/environmental-and-evolutionary-palaeobiology.aspx)
- **Hydrogeology** (/schools/gees/courses/undergraduate/modules/earth-sciences/hydrogeology.aspx)
- **Resources of the Earth** (/schools/gees/courses/undergraduate/modules/earth-sciences/resources-of-the-earth.aspx)
- **Resources of the Earth for Geography/Geology** (/schools/gees/courses/undergraduate/modules/earth-sciences/resources-of-the-earth-for-geography-geology.aspx)
- **Environmental Assessment and Management** (/schools/gees/courses/undergraduate/modules/environmental-science/environmental-assessment-and-management.aspx)
- **Hydroclimatology** (/schools/gees/courses/undergraduate/modules/environmental-science/hydroclimatology.aspx)
- **Environmental Transfer Processes** (/schools/gees/courses/undergraduate/modules/environmental-science/environmental-transfer-processes.aspx)
- **Geomorphological Processes** (/schools/gees/courses/undergraduate/modules/environmental-science/geomorphological-processes.aspx)
- **Ecological Systems** (/schools/gees/courses/undergraduate/modules/environmental-science/ecological-systems.aspx)

Year 3

Compulsory modules

- **Geology and Geography Major Project** (/schools/gees/courses/undergraduate/modules/earth-sciences/geology-and-geography-major-project.aspx)
- **Basin Evolution and Neotectonics** (/schools/gees/courses/undergraduate/modules/earth-sciences/basin-evolution-and-neotectonics.aspx)
- **Climates of the Past** (/schools/gees/courses/undergraduate/modules/earth-sciences/climates-of-the-past.aspx)

Optional modules

- **Global Tectonics** (/schools/gees/courses/undergraduate/modules/earth-sciences/global-tectonics.aspx)
- **Petroleum Geoscience** (/schools/gees/courses/undergraduate/modules/earth-sciences/petroleum-geoscience.aspx)
- **Magmatic Processes** (/schools/gees/courses/undergraduate/modules/earth-sciences/magmatic-processes.aspx)
- **Sedimentary Basin Analysis** (/schools/gees/courses/undergraduate/modules/earth-sciences/sedimentary-basin-analysis.aspx)
- **Evolution of Vertebrates** (/schools/gees/courses/undergraduate/modules/earth-sciences/evolution-of-vertebrates.aspx)

- **Micropalaeontology (/schools/gees/courses/undergraduate/modules/earth-sciences/micropalaeontology.aspx)**
- **Applied Geology: Engineering geology and pollution hydrogeology (/schools/gees/courses/undergraduate/modules/earth-sciences/applied-geology-engineering-geology-and-pollution-hydrogeology.aspx)**
- **Managing Geological Hazards and Anthropogenic Impacts (/schools/gees/courses/undergraduate/modules/earth-sciences/managing-geological-hazards-and-anthropogenic-impacts.aspx)**
- **Environment and Landscape Change (/schools/gees/courses/undergraduate/modules/environmental-science/environment-and-landscape-change.aspx)**
- **Weather Climate and Society (/schools/gees/courses/undergraduate/modules/environmental-science/weather-climate-and-society.aspx)**
- **Landscape and Urban Ecology (/schools/gees/courses/undergraduate/modules/environmental-science/landscape-and-urban-ecology.aspx)**
- **Applied Micrometeorology (/schools/gees/courses/undergraduate/modules/environmental-science/applied-micrometeorology.aspx)**
- **Environmental Protection (/schools/gees/courses/undergraduate/modules/environmental-science/environmental-protection.aspx)**
- **Remote Sensing of the Cryosphere (/schools/gees/courses/undergraduate/modules/earth-sciences/remote-sensing-of-the-cryosphere.aspx)**
- **River Processes, Deposits and Environments (/schools/gees/courses/undergraduate/modules/environmental-science/river-processes-deposits-and-environments.aspx)**

Please note that modules and programme structures may be subject to variation

Fees and funding

Standard fees (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/ug/courses/fees/standard) apply
Learn more about **fees and funding (/undergraduate/fees/loans.aspx)**

Scholarships
Learn more about our **scholarships and awards (/undergraduate/fees/funding/index.aspx)**

Entry requirements

Number of A levels required: 3

Typical offer: ABB

Required subjects and grades: A Level Geography. Grade C in each of GCSE English and Maths.

General Studies: We do not accept Citizenship Studies, Communication and Culture, Critical Studies, Critical Thinking, General Studies, Global Perspectives, Science in Society and World Development.

Additional information:

Unconditional offers will be made to high-quality applicants who are predicted AAA or above at A level. For details see the **Unconditional Offer Scheme 2015 (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/undergraduate/courses/unconditional-offer-scheme-2015.aspx)** .

Unconditional offers are based on:

- A Level predictions of AAA +
- AS results of at least ABB
- 5 GCSEs at grade A including English, Maths and a Science
- 2 GCSEs at grade B
- Academic reference
- Personal statement

Other qualifications are considered – see **entry requirements (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/ug/requirements)** for full details.

International students:

International Baccalaureate Diploma: 34 points with 6, 5, 5 including Geography at HL. 5 points in each of SL English and Maths if not offered at GCSE or equivalent.

Learn more about **international entry requirements (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/ug/requirements/international)**

Depending on your chosen course of study, you may also be interested in the Birmingham Foundation Academy, a specially structured programme for international students whose qualifications are not accepted for direct entry to UK universities. Further details can be found on the **foundation academy web pages (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/foundation-academy/Pathways/index.aspx)** .

How to apply

Apply through UCAS at **www.ucas.com (http://www.ucas.com/)**
Learn more about **applying (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/ug/courses/apply)**

Key Information Set (KIS)

Key Information Sets (KIS) are comparable sets of information about full- or part-time undergraduate courses and are designed to meet the information needs of prospective students.

All KIS information has been published on the Unistats website and can also be accessed via the small advert, or 'widget', below. On the **Unistats website (http://unistats.direct.gov.uk)** you are able to compare all the KIS data for each course with data for other courses.

The development of Key Information Sets (KIS) formed part of HEFCE's work to enhance the information that is available about higher education. They give you access to reliable and comparable information in order to help you make informed decisions about what and where to study.

The KIS contains information which prospective students have identified as useful, such as student satisfaction, graduate outcomes, learning and teaching activities, assessment methods, tuition fees and student finance, accommodation and professional accreditation.

Learning and teaching

Your learning will take place in a range of different settings, and in addition to lectures this course involves extensive fieldwork, practical work and tutorials.

100% of our students think that our staff are good at explaining things 2014 National Student Survey

You will have access to a comprehensive support system throughout your time here that will assist and encourage you, including personal tutors and welfare tutors who can help with both academic and welfare issues.

The most recent assessment by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE), who rate the standard of teaching in university departments, scored us here in Earth Sciences as 'excellent' – the highest possible grade, something which are proud of and continue to focus on each year.

We also offer excellent facilities for undergraduate study, with state-of-the-art equipment and specialist computer facilities. In 2013 our Earth Imaging Lab was fitted out with a new suite of PCs all with industry standard software, worth £0.5m a year. You will also have access to the renowned Lapworth Museum of Geology.

Take virtual tours of some of our facilities (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/schools/gees/facili

As a Birmingham student you are part of an academic elite and will learn from world-leading experts. At Birmingham we advocate an enquiry based learning approach, from the outset you will be encouraged to become an independent and self-motivated learner, qualities that are highly sought after by employers. We want you to be challenged and will encourage you to think for yourself.

To begin with you may find this way of working challenging, but rest assured that we'll enable you to make this transition. You will have access to a comprehensive support system that will assist and encourage you, including personal tutors and welfare tutors who can help with both academic and welfare issues, and a formal transition review during your first year to check on your progress and offer you help for any particular areas where you need support.

Our Academic Skills Centre also offers you support with your learning. The centre is a place where you can develop your mathematical, academic writing and general academic skills. It is the centre's aim to help you to become a more effective and independent learner through the use of a range of high-quality and appropriate learning support services. These range from drop-in sessions with support with mathematics and statistics based problems provided by experienced mathematicians, to workshops on a range of topics including note talking, reading, writing and presentation skills.

Personal Tutor

From the outset, you will be assigned your own Personal Tutor who will get to know you as you progress through your studies, providing academic and welfare advice, encouraging you and offering assistance in any areas you may feel you need extra support to make the most of your potential and your time here at Birmingham.

Fieldwork

Fieldwork is an essential element of our degree programmes, and Earth Sciences at Birmingham has an outstanding reputation for providing its students with high quality field training.

Video transcript here (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/accessibility/transcripts/les/fieldwork-gees.aspx)

As a single honours student, you will spend approximately 80 days in the field during your degree. On the Geology and Physical Geography or Palaeobiology and Palaeoenvironments programmes you will spend approximately 40 days in the field.

Because it is such an important part of our programmes, fieldwork is arranged with the majority undertaken during term time. In each of the first two terms, a full week is dedicated to field studies and associated work. Many fieldtrips are residential, visiting a variety of locations such as Pembrokeshire, the Scottish Highlands and southern Spain.

During these courses you will receive rigorous training in field techniques, including both group and individual work, and your confidence, ability and experience in the subject will grow with each successive piece of fieldwork.

Field training at Birmingham culminates in a project which involves up to six weeks field work in an area of your choice. You will work in areas adjacent to those of your classmates and share accommodation, usually in the UK, but may also find yourself working abroad. In recent years, our students have undertaken projects in countries as diverse as Ireland, France, Spain, Italy, Austria, Switzerland, Norway, Romania and the USA. Part of this work takes place in term-time at the end of your second year. The data and resulting report form a significant part of your final degree.

Our students find fieldwork particularly enjoyable. In addition to the obvious geological benefits, it provides you with an opportunity to get to know your fellow students and staff and so feel at home in our friendly department.

Find out more about **fieldwork costs and funding (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/schools/gees/courses/undergraduate/fieldwork.aspx)** .

Assessment methods

Studying at degree-level is likely to be very different from your previous experience of learning and teaching at school or college. You will be expected to think, discuss and engage critically with your subject and find things out for yourself. We will support you in making this transition to a new style of learning, and the way that you are assessed during your studies will help you develop the essential skills you need to make a success of your time at Birmingham.

In addition to lectures, our degrees in Geology involve extensive fieldwork, practical work and tutorials. You'll be assessed in a variety of ways, and these may be different with each module that you take. You can expect to take examinations, make oral presentations, as well as carry out regular project work, practical and field-based exercises.

During your first year you will undergo a formal transition review to see how you are getting on and if there are particular areas where you may need support. Your personal tutor who is based in the School can help with any academic issues you encounter.

At the beginning of each module, you'll be given information on how and when you'll be assessed for that particular programme of study. You'll receive feedback on each assessment within four weeks, so that you can learn from and build on what you have done.

Related research

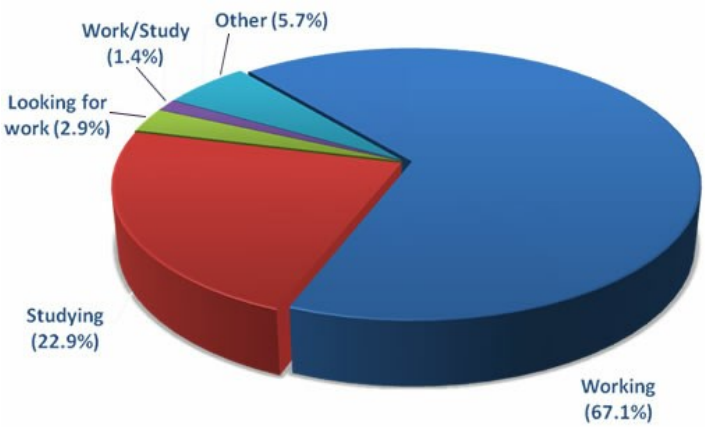
- **Geosystems research - School of Geography, Earth and Environmental Sciences (/research/activity/geosystems/index.aspx)**

Employability

The education you will receive by studying our programme, with an emphasis on rigorous observation, data collection and interpretation, means that job prospects for you as an Earth Sciences graduate are excellent.

91.6% employability rate
2012/13 Destination of Leavers from Higher Education survey (DLHE) - The DLHE survey is conducted 6 months after graduation

Surveys of recent graduates have shown that significantly more of our graduates gain employment in geology and geology-related areas than those of other UK universities. Geology careers are extremely diverse, with students going into a wide range of professions. Increasing numbers of our graduates are employed in environmental planning, land remediation hydrogeology and pollution control. Opportunities in some fields, notably the oil and minerals industries, vary from year to year. Other employers include the British Geological Survey (BGS), local authorities, museums, government organisations and engineering and construction companies. Other graduates decide on a career in teaching either from primary right through to further education. Many students go on to careers around the world in locations including Australia, New Zealand and Canada - many also choose to stay in the UK of course!



Earth and Environmental Sciences - undergraduate destinations 2012/13

Find out more about career opportunities in Earth and Environmental Sciences

Recent graduates have found employment in a wide range of fields. Our most recent student survey showed that many students from Earth Sciences were engaged in work or study directly related to their first degree, with the remainder choosing career paths in areas outside of the subject where the transferable skills gained on the programme prove invaluable.

Increasingly, a successful career in geology is helped by having a higher qualification. Nearly half of our graduates go on to further study before taking a job, either by completing a one-year MSc course or researching for a PhD.

Preparation for your career should be one of the first things you think about as you start university. Whether you have a clear idea of where your future aspirations lie or want to consider the broad range of opportunities available once you have a Birmingham degree, our **Careers Network (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/careers/careers-network.aspx)** can help you achieve your goal.

Our unique careers guidance service is tailored to your academic subject area. Our team source exclusive **work experience opportunities (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/careers/work-experience.aspx)** to help you stand out amongst the competition, with **mentoring (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/generic/internships/mentoring/index.aspx)**, **global internships (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/generic/internships/index.aspx)** and placements available to you. Once you have a career in your sights, one-to-one support with CV's and job applications will help give you the edge. In addition, our employer-endorsed award-winning **Personal Skills Award (PSA) (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/careers/psa.aspx)** recognises your extra-curricular activities, and provides an accredited employability programme designed to improve your career prospects.

Hear from our students - find out what other students have gone on to do. (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/schools/gees/our-students/undergraduate/index.aspx)

Professional accreditation

This degree course is accredited by the Geological Society of London, leading to Chartered Geologist status and Fellowship of the Society.

100% Students agreed staff are good at explaining things
BSc (Hons) Geology and Geography
Full time
To see more details and compare with other courses
Visit UNISTATS
Official data collected by HEFCE

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