

Conservation Biology

UCAS Code: Combined Honours only (please see website for details)

Duration: 3 years | Full-time | Hope Park | 2026/2027

Placement year opportunities available



Course Overview

Conservation Biology focuses on the protection and management of nature and the Earth's biodiversity. This Conservation Biology degree examines human and environmental factors affecting all living organisms, aiming to conserve species, habitats, and ecosystems. The Conservation Biology course draws on natural sciences to develop approaches for sustaining plant and animal biodiversity in the UK and internationally.

The Conservation Biology course primarily emphasises terrestrial conservation, covering key areas such as ecology principles, habitat management, nature conservation, and the functioning of natural systems. Students explore scientific, ethical, and philosophical perspectives, applying their knowledge through field courses in the UK and abroad to gain hands-on experience across diverse ecosystems.

A Placement Year option is available in this Conservation Biology degree, providing the opportunity to gain practical work experience alongside academic study, preparing you for a career in conservation and related fields.

Entry Requirements

This course follows the standard University entry requirements. Please see the website for further information.

Fees and Additional Costs

The tuition fees for 2026/2027 are £9,790 for full-time undergraduate courses.

On top of your tuition fees, you also need to consider the cost of key books which we estimate to cost around £200. Additional costs may include compulsory/optional residential and other fieldwork – approximately £400, Lab coat – approximately £20, and personal fieldwork equipment (e.g. waterproof coat and boots) – approximately £100.

You will also need to consider the cost of your accommodation whilst you study at university. Visit our accommodation webpages for further details about our Halls of Residence: www.hope.ac.uk/halls

Applicants will need access to a computer if course delivery is switched to online. The University has a laptop lending service if remote study is necessary.



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Conservation Biology Curriculum

Year One

Earth and Ecological Systems

This interdisciplinary module provides a framework for exploring the natural systems and processes that shape a complex and dynamic Earth. It emphasises the interconnectedness of the major Earth spheres—lithosphere, hydrosphere, atmosphere, and biosphere—through flows of mass and energy, illustrated by examples such as the rock cycle and ecological systems.

Academic and Professional Skills

This module is designed to equip students with the skills needed to succeed at university and beyond. It builds confidence in academic reading, writing, and research, while providing practical tools such as data analysis and mapping, and guidance on the responsible use of AI.

Laboratory and field-based ecological investigations

Fieldwork (Residential and /or non-residential).

Year Two

Principles of Ecology

You will develop your understanding of the underlying theories and principles of ecology including topics such as sustainability, biosphere cycles, natural resources, evolution and distribution of organisms (including abiotic/biotic dimensions).

Habitat Management

You will explore habitat management practices that aim to conserve, protect and restore natural and semi-natural habitats. You will develop

your knowledge and understanding of Species Action Plans (SAPs).

Biodiversity Conservation

You will develop an in-depth and critical understanding of the value, importance and urgency of protecting species and their habitats from key threats, including extinction.

Fieldwork (residential and/or non-residential)

Year Three

Applied Ecology

Advanced studies of ecology through investigations of specific examples of applied ecological practice.

Current Research and Practice in Ecology and Conservation

An exploration of the current knowledge, research and practice in ecology and/or conservation.

Fieldwork (residential and/or non-residential)

Honours Project (research project or integrated dissertation with your other subject)

COURSE

STRUCTURE

Teaching on this course is structured into lectures, where all students are taught together, seminars of smaller groups of around 20-25 students and tutorials which typically have no more than 10 students. There is also the opportunity to have a one-to-one meeting with your tutor each week.

Fieldwork and practical laboratory sessions are a significant part of this course. Fieldwork destinations include local and regional sites of national and international conservation importance, along with international fieldwork.

In your first year, there are approximately 12 teaching hours each week. During the second and third years this changes to approximately 10 teaching hours each week, as students grow in competence to conduct independent but supported study. In addition to these teaching hours, students are also expected to spend time studying independently each week as well as engaging in group study to prepare for some group assessments.

ASSESSMENT AND FEEDBACK

Throughout your three years of study you will have several forms of assessment. This normally includes written exams at the end of each year, with reports, essays and portfolios throughout the year. In your final year, you will also complete an honours project which will either be a research project on conservation biology or an integrated dissertation with your other subject. You will be given written feedback on your assessments. You will have opportunities to discuss this feedback with your tutor in more detail.



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