Module Descriptor

Title	Diversity of Life		
Session	2026/27	**Status**	Published
Code	BIOL07020	**SCQF Level**	7
Credit Points	40	**ECTS (European Credit Transfer Scheme)**	20
School	**Health and Life Sciences**		
Module Co-ordinator	Richard Thacker		

Summary of Module

This module begins with a consideration of the diversity of life that exists on our planet. An introduction to the taxonomy and classification of life on earth is provided along with an examination of the processes by which life evolves. The module starts with a consideration of prokaryotic species before moving on through the eukaryotic kingdoms. A systems approach to the study of biodiversity is taken and students on the module will study the following: support and movement in plants and animals, nutrition in plants and animals, gas exchange in plants and animals, circulation in animals and animal nervous systems. The impact of human activities on biodiversity is also evaluated. The module concludes with a consideration of biological processes at the population and community level, including an introduction to animal behaviour, along with a description of the major terrestrial and aquatic environments that exist on earth. The module is taught using a blend of lectures, tutorials and practical studies.

This module will work to develop a number of the key "I am UWS" Graduate Attributes to make those who complete the module (e.g.) Universal Work Ready Successful. these will include students who complete the module being; Analytical, Inquiring, Digitally literate, Autonomous, Problem-solver, Research-minded, effective communicator, Collaborative, Resilient and Driven.

Module Delivery Method	**On-Campus[1]**	**Hybrid[2]**	**Online[3]**	**Work -Based Learning[4]**
	☒	☐	☐	☐

[1] Where contact hours are synchronous/ live and take place fully on campus. Campus-based learning is focused on providing an interactive learning experience supported by a range of digitally-enabled asynchronous learning opportunities including learning materials, resources, and opportunities provided via the virtual learning environment. On-campus contact hours will be clearly articulated to students.

[2] The module includes a combination of synchronous/ live on-campus and online learning events. These will be supported by a range of digitally-enabled asynchronous learning opportunities including learning materials, resources, and opportunities provided via the virtual learning environment. On-campus and online contact hours will be clearly articulated to students.

[3] Where all learning is solely delivered by web-based or internet-based technologies and the participants can engage in all learning activities through these means. All required contact hours will be clearly articulated to students.

[4] Learning activities where the main location for the learning experience is in the workplace. All required contact hours, whether online or on campus, will be clearly articulated to students

Campuses for Module Delivery	☐ Ayr ☐ Dumfries		☒ Lanarkshire ☐ London ☐ Paisley		☐ Online / Distance Learning ☐ Other (specify)	
Terms for Module Delivery	Term 1	☐	Term 2	☒	Term 3	☐
Long-thin Delivery over more than one Term	Term 1 – Term 2	☐	Term 2 – Term 3	☐	Term 3 – Term 1	☐

Learning Outcomes	
L1	Describe the diversity of life that exists on earth, the processes by which life has evolved and the scientific systems used to classify living organisms.
L2	Describe the major life processes (feeding, movement, respiration, communication) that exist in plants.
L3	Describe the major life processes (feeding, movement, respiration, communication) that exist in animals.
L4	Outline threats to biodiversity and ecological resources from anthropogenic factors such as habitat destruction and fragmentation, pollution, over-harvesting, alien introductions.
L5	Demonstrate competency in a range of technical laboratory skills.

Employability Skills and Personal Development Planning (PDP) Skills	
SCQF Headings	**During completion of this module, there will be an opportunity to achieve core skills in:**
Knowledge and Understanding (K and U)	**SCQF 7** A broad knowledge of the biodiversity that exists on earth. Understanding of interrelationships that exist within and between species.
Practice: Applied Knowledge and Understanding	**SCQF 7** Use of basic practical techniques in the biosciences as they relate to biodiversity. Identification of biodiversity.
Generic Cognitive skills	**SCQF 7** Evaluate and interpret evidence-based information in the biosciences. Collate and use information on biodiversity from a variety of sources.
Communication, ICT and Numeracy Skills	**SCQF 7** Communicating information on biodiversity particularly on relation to the production of practical reports. Use basic numerical and graphical skills to convey biological information. Use of computers for basic statistical analysis of data.
Autonomy, Accountability	**SCQF 7**

and Working with Others	Working effectively in groups particularly in practical work in the biosciences. Development of initiative and independence in relation to studies in the biosciences.

Prerequisites	**Module Code**	**Module Title**
	Other	
Co-requisites	**Module Code**	**Module Title**

Learning and Teaching	
In line with current learning and teaching principles, a 20-credit module includes 200 learning hours, normally including a minimum of 36 contact hours and maximum of 48 contact hours. During completion of this module, the learning activities undertaken to achieve the module learning outcomeswill include formal lectures, structured tutorials, laboratory classes and independent study. VLE-based supportmaterials will be available through the textbook.	
Learning Activities During completion of this module, the learning activities undertaken to achieve the module learning outcomes are stated below:	**Student Learning Hours** (Note: Learning hours include both contact hours and hours spent on other learning activities)
Lecture / Core Content Delivery	24
Tutorial / Synchronous Support Activity	32
Laboratory / Practical Demonstration / Workshop	40
Independent Study	304
n/a	
n/a	
TOTAL	400

Indicative Resources
The following materials form essential underpinning for the module content and ultimately for the learning outcomes: TBiology (Openstax - Free online textbook) (https://openstax.org/details/books/biology).
(N.B. Although reading lists should include current publications, students are advised (particularly for material marked with an asterisk*) to wait until the start of session for confirmation of the most up-to-date material)

Attendance and Engagement Requirements
In line with the Student Attendance and Engagement Procedure, Students are academically engaged if they are attending and participating in all timetabled programme activities including on-campus and online teaching sessions, asynchronous online learning activities, placement, work-based elements, course-related learning resources, and complete assessments and submit these on time.

For the purposes of this module, academic engagement equates to the following:
Attendance on-campus at all classes.

Equality and Diversity
The University's Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Procedure can be accessed at the following link: UWS Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Code. In line with current legislation (Equality Act, 2010) and the UWS Equality, Diversity, and Human Rights Code, our modules are accessible and inclusive, with reasonable adjustment for different needs where appropriate. Module materials comply with University guidance on inclusive learning and teaching, and specialist assistive equipment, support provision and adjustment to assessment practice will be made in accordance with UWS policy and regulations. Where modules require practical and/or laboratory based learning or assessment required to meet accrediting body requirements the University will make reasonable adjustment such as adjustable height benches or assistance of a 'buddy' or helper.
(N.B. Every effort will be made by the University to accommodate any equality and diversity issues brought to the attention of the School)

Supplemental Information

Divisional Programme Board	**Biological Sciences Health**
Overall Assessment Results	☐ **Pass / Fail** ☒ **Graded**
Module Eligible for Compensation	☒ **Yes** ☐ **No** **If this module is eligible for compensation, there may be cases where compensation is not permitted due to programme accreditation requirements. Please check the associated programme specification for details.**
School Assessment Board	Biology
Moderator	Gary Boyd
External Examiner	J Spicer
Accreditation Details	
Module Appears in CPD catalogue	☐ **Yes** ☒ **No**
Changes / Version Number	2

Assessment (also refer to Assessment Outcomes Grids below)
Assessment 1
Lab Book Submission and Quizzes
Assessment 2
Essay & Presentation
Assessment 3
Observation of practical skills. This is a Pass/Fail component which must be passed
(N.B. (i) Assessment Outcomes Grids for the module (one for each component) can be found below which clearly demonstrate how the learning outcomes of the module will be assessed.

(ii) An indicative schedule listing approximate times within the academic calendar when assessment is likely to feature will be provided within the Student Module Handbook.)

Component 1							
Assessment Type	**LO1**	**LO2**	**LO3**	**LO4**	**LO5**	**Weighting of Assessment Element (%)**	**Timetabled Contact Hours**
Laboratory/ Clinical/ Field notebook	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	35	3

Component 2							
Assessment Type	**LO1**	**LO2**	**LO3**	**LO4**	**LO5**	**Weighting of Assessment Element (%)**	**Timetabled Contact Hours**
Portfolio of practical work	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	65	5

Component 3							
Assessment Type	**LO1**	**LO2**	**LO3**	**LO4**	**LO5**	**Weighting of Assessment Element (%)**	**Timetabled Contact Hours**
Workbook/ Laboratory notebook/ Diary/ Training log/ Learning log	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒	0	1
					Combined total for all components	100%	9 hours

Change Control

What	**When**	**Who**
Updated Indicative Resource List	July 2025	F Menzies