Module Descriptor

Title	Food and Environmental Microbiology		
Session	2026/27	**Status**	Published
Code	BIOL10025	**SCQF Level**	10
Credit Points	20	**ECTS (European Credit Transfer Scheme)**	10
School	**Health and Life Sciences**		
Module Co-ordinator	Steven Kelly		

Summary of Module

In this module the student will be introduced through lectures, tutorials and problem based learning (PBL) to the underlying principles of microbiology in relation to Food and the Environment.

Students will explore the epidemiology of food borne disease, the problems associated with food spoilage and the novel preservation measures which can be taken to prevent spoilage. The module will deal with the significance of specific microbial genera in environmental niches and environmental technologies. This will include utilisation of microorganisms in processes such as bioremediation, wastewater treatment and “clean industries”. The exploitation of diverse microbial capabilities will be discussed with an emphasis on novel and developing environmental technologies such as metal bioaccumulation in the treatment of e-wastes.

Through the use of tutorials and PBL students will be introduced to such areas as the analysis of contaminated sites and the design and implementation of bioremediation protocols, the challenges facing the development of biofuels as a viable alternative to fossil fuels and the potential applications of genetically modified microorganisms across both food and environmental sectors.

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, Effective communicator, Collaborative, Research-minded and Driven.

Module Delivery Method	On-Campus[1] ☒	Hybrid[2] ☐	Online[3] ☐	Work -Based Learning[4] ☐
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	Have a clear understanding of the organisms associated with food and environmental samples.
L2	Understand the role of specific microbial metabolic processes in food and the environment and how such processes may be optimised and/or prevented.
L3	Demonstrate knowledge of emergent technologies in food and environmental microbiology.
L4	Indicate the methods and requirements of the microbiological analysis of food and environmental samples.
L5	Understand the impacts of food and environmental microbiology (beneficial and detrimental) on society.

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 10** Combining knowledge, theories and principles of food and environmental microbiology in novel ways in the analysis of complex and substantial problems and situations, objectively analysing these from a range of different viewpoints and theoretical standpoints to achieve successful outcomes.
Practice: Applied Knowledge and Understanding	**SCQF 10**

[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

	Having an extended ability to collect primary data and develop a growing awareness of the importance of the choice and application of suitable methods for this. The application of microbiological knowledge, including learned theory and principles, to novel situations, for example during food hygiene and food safety inspections or during development of environmental clean-up protocols, to identify and achieve a range of innovative and valid solutions to complex problems. The synthesis of theory and professional/vocational practice and standards, and critical evaluation of theory, process, solutions and outcomes.
Generic Cognitive skills	**SCQF 10** The application of underpinning microbiological knowledge to critically analyse, evaluate and generate effective information, ideas and concepts related to food and environmental applications. The derivation of solutions to specific problems of food and environmental microbiology from general principles and standards, subsequently reflecting on the validity and appropriateness of these approaches and using the fruit of this reflection to modify future responses to these and related issues and the transfer of knowledge/solutions into new contexts.
Communication, ICT and Numeracy Skills	**SCQF 10** Communicating clearly and concisely, orally and in writing, in an appropriate manner including, to non-practitioners without expertise in the area of food or environmental microbiology and in formal style in relation to major pieces of academic work. Using IT effectively to organise and present information in an accessible and understandable form. It is understood that candidates will have demonstrated an appropriate level of numeracy in order to pass previous academic modules in this Degree course.
Autonomy, Accountability and Working with Others	**SCQF 10** Working autonomously over significant and critical academic and practical tasks, accepting ownership and accountability for both the process and outcomes. Also, working and interacting, as part of a team, with individuals and groups from a variety of professional and vocational settings, developing the confidence and self-awareness to influence and, where appropriate lead, such groups. Identify new perspectives in and modifications to existing knowledge and practice, new areas for investigation and problems for solution. Developing the confidence required to carry out analyses such as food hygiene and food safety inspections or bioremediation feasibility studies in relation to the microbiological aspects against recognized standards and inform those inspected of the conclusions arrived at. Recognise the importance of Continuous Professional Development to extend knowledge and competence.

Prerequisites	**Module Code** BIOL08004	**Module Title** Introductory Microbiology
	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.

The module will be delivered using a blended approach with lectures, tutorials and collaborative workshops. Students will be required to access lecture content, links to reference sources and other support materials on the VLE. This will provide students with core material which forms the basis of the syllabus and extensive supplementary material to broaden their reading within the subject.

Lecture content will deliver fundamental information which will assist students in understanding key concepts relevant to contemporary food and environmental microbiology research.

Central to this module will be student-led discussions of current research papers on selected topics. These sessions may follow a range of formats from informal scientific discussions to structured presentations by the students. Case study assignments will allow students to demonstrate an ability to discuss and critically analyse current knowledge and research on a variety of food and environmental microbiology topics. Problem based learning approaches will also be used to allow students to evaluate and suggest microbiological solutions to specific challenges.

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	12
Tutorial / Synchronous Support Activity	24
Independent Study	164
n/a	
n/a	
n/a	
TOTAL	200

Indicative Resources

The following materials form essential underpinning for the module content and ultimately for the learning outcomes:

Applied and Environmental Microbiology (journal)

Evans, M. G. and Furlong, J. C (2011) Environmental Biotechnology. Theory and Application(2nd edition). Wiley-Blackwell

Food Standards Agency web site: www.food.gov.uk

Pepper, Ian L. et al, (2015) Environmental Microbiology; 3rd Edition. Academic Press

Mortimore, S. and Wallace, C. (2013) HACCP A Practical Approach (3rd edition). Springer

Ray, B. and Bhunia A. (2014) Fundamental Food Microbiology (5th edition). CRC Press

https://uws-uk.leganto.exlibrisgroup.com/leganto/nui/lists/11438146340003931

(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 at synchronous sessions (lectures, workshops, practical, and tutorials), completion of asynchronous activities, and submission of assessments to meet the learning outcomes of the module.

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	Gail McGarvie
External Examiner	S Haliti
Accreditation Details	RSB/ REHIS
Module Appears in CPD catalogue	☐ **Yes** ☒ **No**
Changes / Version Number	3

Assessment (also refer to Assessment Outcomes Grids below)
Assessment 1
Two case study assignments each worth 50% of the final mark.
Assessment 2
Assessment 3
(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**
Portfolio of written work	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	100	2

Component 2							
Assessment Type	**LO1**	**LO2**	**LO3**	**LO4**	**LO5**	**Weighting of Assessment Element (%)**	**Timetabled Contact Hours**
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		

Component 3							
Assessment Type	**LO1**	**LO2**	**LO3**	**LO4**	**LO5**	**Weighting of Assessment Element (%)**	**Timetabled Contact Hours**
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
Combined total for all components						100%	2 hours

Change Control

What	**When**	**Who**
Indicative Resources	Jan 2026	S KELLY