



**LIVERPOOL
JOHN MOORES
UNIVERSITY**

Programme Guide

2025/26

Sustainable Food and Natural Resources

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Welcome



Welcome to Liverpool John Moores University

We are an inclusive civic university transforming lives and futures, placing our students at the heart of everything we do.

Liverpool John Moores University is a distinctive institution, rooted in the Liverpool City Region but with a global presence.

Our values underpin our commitment to providing opportunities for people of all backgrounds and supporting them to flourish.

When you come to LJMU you join an inclusive community of staff and students. We believe in leading by example. Through our academic expertise and research, we are developing practical, real-world solutions to the challenges and opportunities we face on a local, national and global scale.

We cannot do this alone; together, with people like you, we transform lives and deliver real, impactful change to the people and world around us.

Welcome from Partner/Link Tutor

The Graduate School of the Environment (GSE) at the Centre for Alternative Technology (CAT) welcomes you to the programme. We hope that you find your studies here to be of the highest value.



Thank you for choosing to study with CAT.

The Centre's unique role in demonstrating and teaching practical solutions to environmental change has never been more important or urgent. At a time when the realities of climate change and biodiversity loss are being questioned, your programme of study will help you to understand the scope and magnitude of the problems we face and furnish you with the knowledge you need to address these challenges and argue for nature.

Research has shown that the technologies needed to mitigate and adapt to climate change, to feed the world, and to maintain healthy ecosystems already exist. We know most of the answers we need but there is a chasm between the declared targets of governments and the actions needed to achieve real, positive results.

As you progress through your studies, you will learn the essential contexts and science that will enable you to achieve a deep understanding of the problems and responses to environmental change. Over many years, we have developed holistic, practical and evidence-based solutions that will empower you to change society for the better. The Centre for Alternative Technology has a long tradition of teaching sustainability in an enriching, participative and solutions-focused way.

For over 50 years, people have gained experience and understanding at CAT and gone on to use this knowledge to change their workplaces, communities and personal lives. We want you to have a fulfilling and enriching time here at CAT. Your studies and experiences can equip you with the skills, knowledge and insights to play your own role in creating a sustainable society.

Introduction to the Centre for Alternative Technology



Centre for Alternative Technology
Canolfan y Dechnoleg Amgen

GRADUATE SCHOOL OF THE ENVIRONMENT

The Centre for Alternative Technology (CAT) is an environmental charity and visitor centre demonstrating practical solutions for sustainability. The Centre was set up in 1973 after a search for a suitable site by Gerard Morgan-Grenville, who had travelled Britain and America in search of answers to what was seen as a major, looming but barely-noticed environmental crisis. Important books such as *Silent Spring* (Carson, 1962), *Limits to Growth* (Meadows et al., 1972), *Small Is Beautiful* (Schumacher, 1973) and *Blueprint For Survival* (*The Ecologist*, 1972) had started to ask questions and change opinion about the long-term viability of our economic, energy, political and environmental future. In establishing CAT, Morgan-Grenville hoped to show the world that there were different ways to have a satisfying and healthy life that would not degrade the environment or the ability of society to survive into the future.

The Centre was an instant success, attracting academics and alternative thinkers from the start, and it was opened to the public in 1974 at least partly because visitors turned up anyway! Since then, CAT's activities have covered all aspects of green living: sustainable architecture and environmental building, eco-sanitation, woodland management, sustainable energy, transformative adaptation, green teaching and organic growing. From the earliest days, we have showcased to industry and government ideas for sustainability, such as our *Alternative Energy Strategy for the UK* published in 1978 and the *Zero Carbon Britain* report (<https://cat.org.uk/info-resources/zero-carbon-britain/research-reports/zero-carbon-britain-rising-to-the-climate-emergency/>).

Today, CAT leads the field of environmentally sustainable education by creating post-graduate level courses that empower our graduates to make tangible changes in society. Degrees at CAT continue to attract praise from academics, authorities and students alike.

The CAT site remains a unique and valuable practical demonstration centre showing a range of sustainable solutions in theory and practice, such as the innovative and award-winning WISE Building that uses sustainable materials and techniques in design, construction and use (e.g. of rammed-earth walls, and hemp & binder as a building material). CAT has extensive organic gardens, several different habitat types on the site including woodlands, field and ponds, and technologies such as installed renewables systems including photovoltaic and thermal solar, a micro-grid and a community heat main, several hydro-electric systems, heat pumps, biomass heaters and boilers, and several small to medium sized wind turbines. We are self-sufficient in water, and treat our water to potable standards, clean it after use using natural technologies in constructed wetlands, feature low flush and waterless (composting) systems.

As well as the Graduate School, day-to-day activities include:

- A free information service, answering enquiries on aspects of sustainable living;

Residential and one-day courses for the general public, as well as more specialised courses for builders, engineers, electricians and plumbers;

Provision of curriculum-based education to visiting schools, colleges and universities, including residential education trips for schools and colleges in the unique Eco-Cabins, and educational outreach work, including teacher training and school visits;

Having a growing network of supporting members who receive CAT's quarterly magazine *Clean Slate* and an invitation to an annual conference, as well as running a successful volunteer programme for those that want to gain hands-on experience.

This Master's programme is owned and managed by CAT, and the programme content and academic standards are monitored and controlled by Liverpool John Moores University (LJMU). Graduates of the MSc and other awards will receive a degree certificate that will include the names of both Liverpool John Moores University and The Centre for Alternative Technology

Introduction to your programme

I am very pleased you have enrolled on the MSc Sustainable Food and Natural Resources (MSc SFNR) and look forward to welcoming you for your first module. At CAT, you will benefit from our exceptional capabilities in the various fields of sustainability. As well as our own expert teaching staff, we attract external lecturers and practitioners at the top of their fields to teach on our degrees.

At CAT you will be immersed in sustainability technologies and engaged in day-to-day sustainability practice hand-in-hand with academic learning. It is an immersive and fertile experience to meet and talk with many people from different backgrounds and life experiences all addressing the same concerns in a convivial atmosphere.

The CAT experience will enable you to engage with learning as well as take part in extra-curricular CAT activities including writing blogs and articles for the web pages and our magazine Clean Slate, representing CAT at external events, feeding into the development of new programmes, sharing your sustainability learning and real-world experiences as part of peer-learning, and even working on the CAT site.

As a CAT graduate, you will have command of the knowledge, understanding and experience needed to go out and change the world to bring about sustainability, be it through work in your community, political and economic change, or management of natural resources, and you will have access to existing and past students through the large network that makes up the CAT family.

Dr Rebecca Kent, BSc, MSc, PhD, FHEA.

What you need to know about your programme

Programme content

The programme takes a holistic approach to sustainability in diets, food production and supply, health, and natural resource management. Modules take a systemic view of sustainability and adaptation that integrates food culture and production into sustainability in society, policy, technology, economics and the use of natural materials and resources. Health, diets, food networks, food production techniques, and management of soils and water are central to the programme.

The course will cover probable future challenges in health and food security, the structuring, supporting and provisioning roles of ecosystems, sustainable agricultural production and land use, amongst other topics. It will reflect the extreme importance of not just shoring up but redesigning our food and natural resource support systems, and the culture of food, to make them sustainable, secure and future proof.

Related programmes

The Sustainable Food and Natural Resources programme sits within a suite of other Master's level programmes examining aspects of Sustainability and Adaptation and thus shares some common modules. We will be seeking students willing to act as student representatives from across all of the programmes, and those representatives will act as a conduit of student views on official academic panels (see 'Student feedback and getting involved').

Teaching and skills

- Students will be able to develop skills in project planning, social discourse, technical knowledge and data analysis, group work, research and presentation skills, extending to a specialism according to student choice. Teaching activities are characterised by a good proportion of small group teaching, practical activities and interactive sessions such as seminars.
- The focus on practical skills to support theory enables a deep understanding and is especially relevant from April onwards in the Ecosystem Services module, the Sustainable Materials in the Built Environment Module, and the Sustainable Food Production module.
- The MSc programme culminates in the dissertation module, which students can begin after attending all of the taught modules. The dissertation enables students to be independent, self-led learners, who can develop and carry out their own original research.
- Programme Specification and Module Specifications can be found on the [Current Student Webpage](#) under their relevant drop-down headings.
- Throughout the course you will have the opportunity to gain transferable work-related skills, such as giving presentations or posters, analysing quantitative and qualitative data and report writing. In addition, the Applied Research Design module develops work and research skills around real-world scenarios. Students can also opt to take the Work-based Project which focuses on learning within a work-place relevant to the subject sustainability and behaviour change.

Distance and Blended learning

The programme can be studied at distance or on-site at CAT. We offer 'blended learning', which means that each module is offered both on site and at distance, and all students, regardless of whether they choose to attend onsite or learn from distance, are supported through the virtual learning environment, Canvas, which is the key online resource.

Staff

- You will be allocated a Personal Tutor and this person will be the first point of contact for academic queries. During the introductory (double) module in September and November, your Personal Tutor will also encourage you to submit drafts of your work for formative feedback prior to submission. Your Personal Tutor will also arrange tutorials during the year, including one-to-one personal development planning tutorials twice a year.
- In addition, you will have access to the Student Support Officers (SSOs), who can assist you in arranging module choices, submitting work and other non-academic queries.

- The programme will be taught by the members of staff listed in Table 1, which summarises each person's areas of research focus alongside the modules these specialisms are used as part of the curriculum.

Table 1. Academic staff, area of expertise, and modules on which they use that expertise.

Academic staff member	Area of expertise and research interests	Modules in which expertise is most used
Dr Cathy Cole	Ocean and climate science; marine ecosystems; geochemistry; biomineralisation; water quality; Blue Carbon and nature-based solutions to climate change; sustainable food systems; science communication; citizen science and community engagement; behaviour change; environmental and climate science policy; social media.	7522CATSCI, 7506CATSCI, 7593CATSCI.
Tim Coleridge	Architecture, energy flows in buildings, building performance evaluation and assessment (including post-occupancy evaluation), environmental impacts of buildings and construction, design for deconstruction (DFD), low-impact and bio-based building materials, retrofit, vernacular and listed buildings.	7522CATSCI, 7504CATSCI, 7507CATSCI.
Dr Ivor Davies	Wood science and technology, green building, performance-based design, building envelopes, product development and testing, building failure investigation, sustainable forestry, science communication and art-science communication	7522CATSCI, 7507CATSCI, 7520CATSCI, 7521CATSCI
Dr Jane Fisher	Environmental science, geography, ecology, encompassing water quality, soils, vegetation, weather and climate. Specialist knowledge of freshwater ecology. Expert in Higher Education pedagogy.	7522CATSCI, 7591CATSCI, 7506CATSCI, 7590CATSCI, 7594CATSCI, 7520CATSCI, 7521CATSCI
Bryce Gilroy-Scott	Sustainable architecture design and construction; Dynamic building simulation; Natural building materials; Renewable energy technologies engineering and policy; Sustainable community master planning; Ecological footprinting.	7522CATSCI, 7504CATSCI, 7507CATSCI.
Dr Alexandra Hamer	Ecosystem processes, management and restoration of ecosystems, remote sensing, spatial data analysis (GIS).	7522CATSCI, 7506CATSCI, 7594CATSCI, 7014CATSCI
Dr Rebecca Kent	Sustainable agriculture, food security, natural resource management, environmental change and rural livelihoods.	7522CATSCI, 7591CATSCI, 7590CATSCI.
Dr Alan Owen	A chartered mechanical engineer. Hydrodynamics of subsea structures, renewable energy engineering (all technologies) and appropriate technology for sustainable development in remote communities.	7522CATSCI, 7504CATSCI.
Dr Anna Poston	Environmental Architecture, Sustainable design, sustainable construction materials, sustainability engagement and education, conservation in architecture. Specialist knowledge of Building Performance Evaluation, and sustainability assessment methodologies.	7522CATSCI, 7507CATSCI.
Dr Sam Saville	Nature-culture relations; discourses of climate change and the environment; Value, values and valuation; Behaviour change and its politics. Rural and remote area geographies; Globalisation and processes of change; Natural building materials and upcycling.	7522CATSCI, 7502CATSCI, 7504CATSCI
Dr Rebecca Upton	Pedagogic research, non-formal learning, sustainability, education for sustainability, transformational learning and transformational change, systems thinking and systems	7522CATSCI, 7593CATSCI.

	change, behaviour change, environmental psychology, connection to nature, pro-environmental behaviours, business analytics, interpreting narratives and stories	
Dr Emily Westwell	Environmentalism and processes of social change, sustainable community alternatives and environmental social movements. Food sovereignty and prefigurative politics.	7522CATSCI, 7523CATSCI, 7502CATSCI, 7591CATSCI

Programme structure

- All students start the programme by undertaking the same two 15-credit core modules in sustainability (September and October-November). Thereafter full-time MSc and PG Diploma students are expected to complete a further six taught modules within a year. Part-time MSc and PG Diploma students would normally be expected to complete a further two modules in their first academic year and the remaining four modules from the core or optional modules available in their second academic year (see Table 2 for a list of modules available). In both scenarios, the Dissertation Module will follow the taught modules for students aiming for the full Masters degree.
- The PGCert (60 credits) Sustainable Food and Natural Resources exit award is achieved via completion of the core sustainability modules 7522CATSCI and 7523CATSCI and the two 15-credit modules, Food System and Sustainability (7591CATSCI) and Sustainable Food Production: Techniques and Practices (7590CATSCI).
- Students may change from full-time to part-time mode as long as they give two months' notice to the Student Support Officers. This is consistent with our Fees Terms and Conditions which can be found on the [Fees and Funding page of the CAT website](#), which stipulates a module by module fee, with a minimum of one months' notice for any change to module choices. Exceptions to this rule are provided for via a 'Sudden and Severe Change in Circumstances' (SSCC) policy whereby students may apply to change mode or modules suddenly when things go wrong in their lives. The SSCC application form can be found in the [GSE Forms Hub \(click here\)](#)

Programme delivery

- Modules are delivered each month and last for 8 weeks. The starting month for each module is indicated in Table 2. Each eight-week module is divided into activities (Table 3), beginning with a one-week residential block for those able to study onsite, and a week where distance learners can either join any live lectures from the site or listen to the lecture recordings later, and use any additional time for reading of preparatory material for the distance learners. Distance learning students then join online seminars in the weeks following the on-site teaching.

Table 2. SNFR Programme structure showing modules, credits and whether core or optional. All codes end with 'CATSCI'.

Module	Module code (CATSCI)	Level	Approximate Timing of the onsite/intensive module week	Credits	Core/option
Introduction to Sustainability and Adaption	7522	7	September	15	Core
Sustainability and Adaption: concepts in practice	7523	7	November	15	Core

Cities and Communities	7504	7	December	15	Option
Food Systems and Sustainability	7591	7	December	15	Core
Theories of social and system change	7593	7	January	15	Option
Introduction to Politics and Economics of the Environment	7502	7	February	15	Option
Ecosystems and Ecosystem Services	7506	7	March	15	Core
Restoration Ecology	7594	7	April	15	Option
Applied Research Design	7521	7	Year-long with intensive teaching week in May	15	Core
Work-based Project	7509	7	May	15	Option
Sustainable Materials in the Built Environment	7507	7	June	15	Option
Sustainable Food Production: Techniques and Practices	7590	7	June-July	15	Core
Dissertation	7520	7	September start or February start	60	Core

Table 3. Sequence of activities for a typical eight-week module (Applied Research Design, Dissertation and Work Base Learning modules are exceptions to this structure).

Week	Typical Activities	Activities taking place over the whole module period
0	Release of written and other learning resources on Teams at the start of the module	Individual or group tutorials by Teams Practical exercises Further support as required
1	Onsite teaching; Live lectures for onsite and distance learners, OR Reading week for distance learners	
2-3	On-line seminars and tutorials over a range of times and days of the week	
4-8	The remaining period is for student-led learning with additional tutor support	
8	Coursework submission deadline is 8 weeks from the start of the module unless otherwise notified – refer to relevant Module Guide for each module.	

Dissertation

The dissertation module (7520CATSCI), a timetable for which is given in Table 4, starts on either the 1st September (Route 1) or 1st February (Route 2) and students can choose when to begin their dissertation. Dissertation project design, research skills and planning are taught via the Applied Research Design module (7521CATSCI) which runs *throughout the year* with focussed teaching in May of the last year of the student's taught modules. Please note the following:

- Before being allowed to begin a dissertation, students must submit a Research Design Proposal (RDP) which is assessed as part of the Applied Research Design module. Prior to commencement, projects must be approved and allocated a subject-relevant dissertation supervisor.
- Route 1 is expected to be the *normal progression for most students*: Full-time students start the programme in September and begin the dissertation-supervised period the following September. Part-time students start the dissertation supervision period in September two years after starting the programme. The Route 2 option is provided for students who may require flexibility as a result of intermitting or changing from full-time to part-time study modes.
- The part-time dissertation period is only available as an option for students who have completed at least 60 of their taught module credits as a part-time student. We cannot offer a part-time route to students beginning their supervision period in February.

Table 4. Outline timetable for dissertation module.

Dissertation Module Key Events	Route 1 Timetable for Dissertation Supervision Starting in September	Route 2 Timetable for Dissertation Supervision Starting in February
Applied Research Design module teaching	May 2026	May 2026
Research Design Proposal (RDP) submission deadline	July 2026	Nov/December 2026
Feedback on Research Design Proposal	July 2026	January 2027
<i>Next opportunity to submit RDP (if required)</i>	<i>November 2026</i>	<i>July 2027 (and switch to route 1)</i>
Dissertation Supervisor appointed	August 2026	January 2027
Dissertation supervision begins	1 st September 2026	1 st February 2027
Students submit dissertation	Full-time students: 31st January 2027 12 noon Part-time students: 1st June 2027 12 noon	All students: 29 th June 2027 12 noon THERE IS NO PART-TIME ROUTE
<i>Assessment board and confirmation of award</i>	Full-time students: June 2027 Part-time students: October 2027	All students: October 2027
Dissertation resubmission (if required)	Full-time students: 3 rd July 2027 12 noon Part-time students: 1 st November 2027 12 noon	1 st November 2027 12 noon
<i>Assessment board and confirmation of award</i>	Full-time students: October 2027 Part-time students: January 2027	All students: January 2028

How the programme will be assessed

Your work will be assessed via coursework submitted for each module. Which actual assessments you do will depend on which optional modules you choose, as well as your core modules (Table 5). All course work is submitted via Canvas (further details about Canvas can be found below). Deadlines for all assessments can be found in the Module Guides.

Table 5. Assessment methods for each module

Module title	Module code (CATSCI)	Assessment type	Weighting (per module)
Introduction to Sustainability and Adaption (CORE)	7522	1. Critique review	100%
Sustainability and Adaption: Concepts in Practice (CORE)	7523	1. Adaptation report	100%
Cities and Communities (OPTION)	7504	1. Report	100%
Food systems and sustainability (CORE)	7591	1. Case study	100%
Theories of social and system change (OPTION)	7593	1. Essay	100%
Introduction to the Politics and Economics of the Environment (OPTION)	7502	1. Report	100%
Ecosystems and Ecosystem Services (CORE)	7506	1. Literature review 2. Presentation	80% 20%
Restoration Ecology (OPTION)	7594	1. Management report	100%
Applied Research Design (CORE)	7521	1. Research Design Proposal 2. Poster	60% 40%
Work-Based Project (OPTION)	7509	1. Report	100%
Sustainable Materials in the Built Environment (OPTION)	7507	1. Essay 2. Poster	80% 20%
The Science of Sustainable Food Production (CORE)	7590	1. Scientific paper report 2. Technical note	60% 40%
Dissertation (CORE)	7520	1. Dissertation	100%

Using technology to enhance your learning

We will be using Microsoft Teams to deliver teaching and learning. Lectures and seminars will be delivered live via Teams to distance learners, and Teams will be where lecture and seminar recordings are stored, and where teaching and learning materials will be provided to all students. Information on how we use Teams will be sent separately via the information document 'GSE Information & Guidelines' along with your CAT email address.

Canvas is the university's Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). It offers easy access to learning materials and assessment activities for each of the modules you study. In most cases, you will submit assignments via Canvas. The process is simple will clear instructions provided. You will receive an on-screen notification of successful submission. Canvas also integrates with your Office 365 university account so that you can synchronously work on documents in the cloud and submit or share them within the VLE.

If you need help with using Canvas, a range of online help resources, including written guides and videos are available via the Canvas Student Community <https://community.canvaslms.com/community/answers/guides>.

Accessing your LJMU account

In order to access your LJMU email account and webpages on the LJMU intranet, you will need your LJMU Username and Password. Please be aware that the password expires every 60 days.

However, as long as you can remember your old password, even though it has expired, you can update it at <https://myaccount.ljmu.ac.uk/>.

Timetabling and attendance

Please make every effort to attend all your timetabled activities. The more effort you put into your studies, the more you will get out of them. This will be reflected in both your academic marks and your personal and professional development.

Timetables for each module will be made available in Teams for both onsite and distance learning. Table 2 summarises when each module begins, before running for 8 weeks, and Table 3 summarises when teaching periods, on-line seminars, periods for self-led learning, and working on your assessment materials will typically fall for each module 8 week period.

Pastoral and Academic Support

You will be assigned a Personal Tutor during the first core module. Their role is to be available to help you direct your academic development as you progress through your studies. They will also help you find appropriate support should issues arise that affect your ability to complete your studies successfully. You will have a scheduled opportunity to meet individually with your Personal Tutor (this may be virtually or in person) at least twice per year, but you may of course contact them as and when needed. It is recommended that if you would like to arrange a one-to-one meeting that you email your tutor to arrange a mutually convenient time to either talk online or face-to-face during a module onsite. Please note that many academic staff work part-time and therefore there may be a delay in responding but they will endeavour to respond within 5 working days.

If you require further support during your studies at CAT, please take a look at the GSE Student Support and Welfare document found in policies and procedures on the GSE CAT Website (<https://cat.org.uk/graduate-school/studying/students/>). The Student Support team are usually available Monday-Friday 10am-4pm via email on student.support@cat.org.uk for administrative enquiries and signposting to services.

Key contacts

The link tutor at LJMU is Dr Lucia Galvez Bravo, email l.i.galvezbravo@ljmu.ac.uk

Please contact your Personal Tutor in the first instance for general academic queries or issues you might be having. They will refer you to the best person to contact if they cannot help. You can expect a response within 5 working days.

Please contact the Programme Leader, Dr Rebecca Kent, email rebecca.kent@cat.org.uk in the first instance for queries regarding the MSc Sustainable Food and Natural Resources Programme. You can expect a response within 5 working days.

Please contact the Student Support Office's email student.support@cat.org.uk for queries regarding your module choices, marks and payments (SSOs cannot take payments). You can expect a response within 5 working days.

Dr Adrian Watson, Director of School

The Director of School is responsible for overall management and academic leadership of the School, which includes School policy, strategic developments, line-management of School staff and control of School resources. They are responsible for representing the School at Faculty and institutional levels.

Contact Details

adrian.watson@cat.org.uk

+44 (0) 1654 704988

School Contacts

Staff member	Role and responsibilities	Contact information
Gabriela Gheorghita (mat. leave cover) Alice Leonard (mat. leave) Ben Watson	Student Finance Officers	student.finance@cat.org.uk
Jemma Barratt	Student and Programme Support Manager	jemma.barratt@cat.org.uk
Dr Cathy Cole	Lecturer on modules, especially behaviour change and ecosystems	cathy.cole@cat.org.uk
Tim Coleridge	Programme Leader for MSc Sustainability and Adaptation, MSc Sustainability and Adaptation in the Built Environment, MSc Sustainability and Adaptation Planning and MSc Green Building. Module Leader, Senior Lecturer.	tim.coleridge@cat.org.uk
Dr Jane Fisher	Programme Leader for MSc Sustainability and Ecology and MSc Sustainability and Behaviour Change. Module Leader of ecology modules, dissertation module and Senior Lecturer.	jane.fisher@cat.org.uk

Bryce Gilroy-Scott	Lecturer on modules, especially energy related topics.	bryce.scott@cat.org.uk
Dr Alexandra Hamer	Lecturer on modules, especially ecology related.	alexandra.hamer@cat.org.uk
Dr Rebecca Kent	Programme Leader for MSc Sustainable Food and Natural Resources. Module leader on food related modules. Chair of Ethics Committee	rebecca.kent@cat.org.uk
Dr Alan Owen	Senior lecturer. Specialist in energy sustainability	alan.owen@cat.org.uk
Anna Poston	Senior lecturer on building related modules. Additional Learning Needs Support	anna.poston@cat.org.uk
Dr Sam Saville	Senior Lecturer, especially in human geography related topics	sam.saville@cat.org.uk
Dr Rebecca Upton	Module Leader of behaviour change modules.	rebecca.upton@cat.org.uk
Dr Adrian Watson	Head of School, Chair of the Extenuating Circumstances Committee.	adrian.watson@cat.org.uk
Emily Westwell	Lecturer in food and politics related modules	emily.westwell@cat.org.uk
Katherine Barclay Diana Gall Helen Hayes	Student Support Officers – usually available 10am-4pm Monday-Friday (excluding bank holidays)	Student.support@cat.org.uk

Modules

Your programme is divided into units of study called modules. Each module explores a subject that is relevant to your programme of study. What you will learn in each module is described in its Learning Outcomes. These inform the criteria against which you will be assessed. Successful completion of the module assessment(s) results in the release of academic credit. You need to accumulate sufficient credit to enable you to progress through the programme and graduate.

Core and Option Modules

Depending on your programme, modules may be designated as either a Core or an Option:

- Core modules are compulsory.
- Where option modules exist, they offer choice from within a range of modules to be studied. Choice of modules may enable you to pursue areas of interest or to develop subject specialisms. In making a choice you may find it useful to think about future study and career aspirations.

Details on the modules offered on your programme of study can be found in Table 2 (page 11) and here

- <https://cat.org.uk/graduate-school/studying/students/>

Details on the modules offered on your programme of study can be found within the LJMU Course Catalogue, which can be accessed as follows:

- Students who commenced in academic year 2022-23 see the full time programme [here](#). And the part-time programme [here](#).
- Students who commenced in or before academic year 2023-24 see the full time programme [here](#). And the part-time programme [here](#).

- Students who commenced in academic year 2024-25 see the current programme specification [here](#)
And the part-time programme [here](#).
- Students who commenced in academic year 2025-26 see the current programme specification [here](#)
And the part-time programme [here](#).

You and LJMU

We want you to have the best student experience possible and make the most of the LJMU services available to you as a collaborative student. In addition to your personal tutor and other members of the programme team, we provide a range of support services available to you, please visit: <https://www.ljmu.ac.uk/academic-registry/collaborative-partners/students>.

Like any university, we have a range of rules and regulations that cover everything from freedom of speech and dealing with difficult personal circumstances to payment of fees and programme information. Their function is not to limit your experiences on your LJMU programme but to protect your rights and to define your responsibilities as a member of the university.

CAT also operates their own student policies and procedures which can be found on the [Current Student Webpage](#) under Policies and Procedures dropdown menu.

Library

LJMU Resources

As a collaborative LJMU student, you have access to some of LJMU's electronic library resources. Details of the resources available can be found on the Partner colleges page: www.ljmu.ac.uk/microsites/library/about-ljmu-libraries/visitors/partner-college-support.

If you have a query with using the electronic library, the library staff are always happy to help. Contact details are available at: www.ljmu.ac.uk/microsites/library/about-ljmu-libraries/contact-us. Live chat is available 24/7 and during normal service hours, library staff can also respond to enquiries on Twitter/X: @ljmulibrary.

If you visit Liverpool, you can use any LJMU library using your LJMU student card. Our library has an extensive collection of books, journals and other information resources. It also provides technology-rich study spaces, digital studios and skills development facilities across three buildings: Aldham Roberts Library, Avril Roberts Library and the Student Life Building.

For the location, opening hours and further details about the library, please visit the library homepage at: www.ljmu.ac.uk/library.

Support Services

For further details about where to go for support and information at CAT please see the **STUDENT LEARNING SUPPORT SUMMARY** at the back of this Programme Guide.

Students studying at Collaborative Partner Institutions are expected to refer to local services at the partner. In addition, LJMU Student Advice and Wellbeing Services have a number of online resources available, which can be accessed here: www.ljmu.ac.uk/discover/student-support.

Harassment and Sexual Misconduct

The university has a responsibility to ensure that students are aware of the support available and the mitigations in place to try and prevent harassment and sexual misconduct. LJMU's document detailing all aspects of this provision is available here, and as part of this work, students will be invited to undertake awareness raising training when they start at the university. If any student needs/wants to report an incident of harassment or sexual misconduct, please use LJMU Report and Support.

How your studies will enhance your career prospects

LJMU students studying at Collaborative Partner institutions are advised to speak to their Programme teams for details of careers & employability support provided locally.

Work Related Learning

Work related learning is embedded into your programme of study. This includes developing transferable skills in information gathering, report writing, giving presentations, understanding and analysing data, as well as practical skills in your chosen areas of interest. These practical skills will vary depending on your module choices. In addition we promote applied skills in the Applied Research Skills module (7521CATSCI), work related learning in the Work-based Project module (7509CATSCI) and in the Dissertation (7520CATSCI).

Module registration

At the beginning of each academic year of study, the Student Support Officers will ask you to confirm your module choices for the course. You will need to confirm your intention to register on each module by booking online via the form which will be sent out early in September. Your module choices must be selected by 22nd September 2025. Towards the end of each academic year, in June, students will be asked to confirm their module choices for the following academic year, including dissertation route.

Payment of the first two 15-Credit core modules will be prior to the start of the course in September and again prior to the module week in November. Fees for each subsequent module must be paid in full before the start of the module. If you wish to stay in the accommodation at CAT, then food and accommodation associated with attendance will be charged in addition to the module fee. Refer to the Fees Terms and Conditions for payment dates <https://gse.cat.org.uk/index.php/about-us/policies-and-information>

Provisions will be made for you to change your module choices in the first term with only 2 weeks' notice, which you may wish to do as a result of, for example, changes in preferences or mode of study. After that, should you wish to change your module choices, you can do so by giving a minimum of one months' notice to the Student Support Officers (SSOs) that you wish to do so. If you give less than one months' notice, you will forfeit the module fee, and incur an additional module fee for any replacement module taken. If a change of modules became necessary as a result of severe, unexpected and sudden change in circumstances, then you will be allowed to change modules within the two-month notice period without loss of the module fee dependent on the receipt of a completed 'Sudden and Severe Change of Circumstances Form', and supporting evidence, and its acceptance by the Programme & Student Support Manager/Head of School. This form and instructions can be found within the [GSE Forms Hub](#). Full details are in the Fees Terms and Conditions which can be found on the [Fees and Funding webpage](#). The Centre for Alternative

Technology will operate a credit system or charge additional fees due, at the time that you confirm the module changes.

As you progress through your programme of study, your registration on core modules for the following year will be processed automatically. If you are on a programme that contains option modules, you will be contacted before the next enrolment period to choose your options.

Checking your Details

Prior to the start of the academic year, you will be asked to complete a Student Registration form to confirm or amend the personal information that the university holds about you. You will also be able to view the modules that you will be registered for in the next academic year. This indicates your intention to return to the next level of your programme of study. At this stage, you will also be asked to confirm how you will pay tuition fees for the next academic year.

Where to get help

LJMU has a dedicated Student Registration Helpline. Support is available by calling +44 (0) 151 231 3289 or by completing a student enquiry form at: <https://myservices.ljmu.ac.uk/Forms/RegistryHelp.aspx>.

Submitting coursework

Coursework for summative assessment must be submitted electronically to the submission schedule. Failure to comply with this requirement and complete associated documentation will mean the work is not accepted and a mark of zero will be recorded. All assessments submitted electronically need to be uploaded before 12 noon on the day of the deadline. Details of coursework requirements, marking criteria and submission deadlines are provided in the Module Guides on Teams. Coursework should all be submitted as a Word document (or a Microsoft-readable document) through Canvas, unless otherwise stated.

The coursework from each module is on a subject appropriate for the module's learning outcomes. Detailed mark sheets and marking criteria for each of these forms of assessment are provided within Module Guides. Grade descriptions are used as indicators of performance.

In exceptional circumstances students can apply for a 7-day extension to written coursework but will need to complete an 'Extension Request' form via the [GSE Forms Hub](#) at least 72 hours before the coursework deadline. This form must detail the reason why an extension is sought. Please ensure you have read the CAT extension policy fully before applying.

The university acknowledges that there may be occasions when a student's performance is adversely affected by serious and exceptional factors outside of their control. Such events include sudden acute illness or bereavement. These factors may, for example:

- Require an extension to a coursework deadline to allow a student to submit an assessment later than anticipated.
- Have caused a student to miss a coursework deadline or deadlines.
- Have prevented a student from attending an examination or other timed assessment (e.g. presentation or in-class test).

- Have severely impacted the ability of a student to finish a timed assessment (e.g. a student was taken ill during an examination or assessed presentation and was unable to complete the finish the assessment as a result).
- Require a student to withdraw their declaration that they were 'fit to attempt' an assessment when it becomes apparent that they were not in a fit state to make such a declaration.

Our Personal Circumstances Policy is designed to help students in such circumstances and provides details of the following processes designed to support students in those situations:

- Coursework extensions.
- Personal circumstances (non-attempt at assessment) applications, when circumstances have prevented the submission of coursework or attendance at an examination or assessed presentation.
- Personal circumstances (special mitigation) applications, when a student begins a time-limited form of assessment (such as a presentation or examination) but when the assessment could not be finished due to illness that occurred during the assessment.
- Personal circumstances (revocation of 'fit to attempt' declaration) applications, when a student declares that they have evidence that they were not in a fit state to decide whether they were 'fit to attempt' an assessment item.

To find out about the Personal Circumstances process, please visit: www.ljmu.ac.uk/academic-registry/student/registry-services/assessment-coursework-and-examination/problems-completing-your-assessment.

The university also acknowledges that there may be occasions when a student needs a little extra time to complete their coursework but doesn't have a valid reason to request an extension to the deadline. Therefore, a student can submit coursework up to 5 working days late without an agreed extension, but the mark will be capped at the pass mark for the module. This only applies to the first attempt at the coursework and not any subsequent referral (second or third) attempts.

Marking criteria

Marking/Assessment criteria set out the knowledge, understanding and skills that you are expected to demonstrate in an assessment. These criteria are based on the intended learning outcomes and should help you to understand what you need to do. We use these criteria when marking your assignments to determine the mark awarded and to provide feedback to you on your performance.

All assignments that contribute to the final module mark are assessed in line with institutional grade descriptors to ensure that module learning outcomes, key academic skills and technical proficiency in the English Language are effectively assessed.

The LJMU grade descriptors can be accessed here: <https://www.ljmu.ac.uk/~media/files/ljmu/public-information-documents/academic-quality-and-regulations/academic-policy/grade-descriptors.pdf?la=en>

Table 7. Generic Master's marking criteria.

80-100. Distinction	An accomplished piece of work with no grammatical or other errors. Shows exceptional insight and originality in the use of evidence, which might be
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	from the literature or experiment. Where appropriate, it makes connections between experimental evidence and the literature. Contains material of publishable quality in a peer-reviewed journal. Worthy of retaining for reference.
70-79. Distinction	An original or insightful answer that draws on the student's own observations combined with a critical treatment of the literature. The work demonstrates clear understanding of the subject and current theoretical debates. Contains material that may be potentially of publishable quality in a scientific journal paper, and worthy of retaining for reference.
60-69. Merit	A well organised, clearly expressed and direct response to the topic, showing broad evidence of reading and good analytical skills. A competent answer that shows a thorough understanding of arguments and evidence and sets them in context. It makes efficient use of relevant reading and examples, where appropriate. The work does not display the outstanding ability, critical acuity or originality that characterises distinction-level answers.
50-59. Pass	A coherent, adequately structured and expressed response to the topic, showing evidence of adequate critique and sound argument, but little originality or critical insight. A competent yet pedestrian treatment of ideas and concepts from lectures or set reading, but little evidence of deeper understanding and independent critical appraisal. The work is descriptive, lacking the depth of critical analysis that characterizes merit-level answers.
40-49. Fail	Fails to meet the criteria and requirements of the assignment. The work shows some understanding of the topic and of the broader subject area but includes little evidence of real understanding or detailed knowledge. Contains mistakes, misunderstandings or irrelevant material. Poor organisation and an uncritical approach that is not well expressed.
0-39. Fail	Substantially fails to meet the criteria and requirements of the assignment. At best, not a direct response to the question or topic, but shows some understanding of the general field, or conveys some understanding and argument. At worst, nothing of relevance in answer to the question or topic. Likely to be muddled or incomplete, and inadequately expressed.

Word limit policy

What does the word count mean?

Written assessments have a maximum allowed length. Word lengths are stated in the module specification and defined by detailed coursework criteria within the Module Guide for each module.

Why is there a word count?

It is an important skill in academic and professional contexts to write to a defined word limit. The reason for this is to support you in learning to gather your thoughts and express them concisely. Many workplaces, and similar settings, require this competence.

What is included?

The wordcount includes all your core narrative and reasoning, including introduction and conclusion. It also includes:

- Subtitles (but not the main title);
- In-text citations;
- Calculations;

- Direct quotations from another's work (which must be indicated using quotation marks).

The wordcount DOES NOT include:

- Cover sheet
- Title.
- Table of Contents
- Abstract (unless otherwise noted);
- Captions and other text on or in figures, tables or boxes;
- Headers and Footnotes (which are discouraged anyway);
- References (In the Reference list at the end of the assessment);
- Appendices (which may be used to contain supporting information but are not taken into consideration for marks).

What are the penalties?

Initially the penalty for exceeding the word limit is threefold:

1. Any work beyond the word-count will not be marked, so you will lose the opportunity to gain crucial marks for this part;
2. You are quite likely to lose further marks for structure, as your structure may become less focussed and less appropriate to the task (which was to produce an essay etc. of that length);
3. You miss out on the learning outcomes – which often include an element of learning to communicate effectively.

How can I manage this?

If Microsoft Word or an equivalent programme is used, it can help significantly. Styles can be defined and applied for abstract, captions, references etc, and separate styles applied to the 'body text', which counts towards the total.

Inserting figures, tables, or boxed text as 'images' (e.g. pdfs, jpeg) can also help manage your wordcount as the text within them will be excluded by word-count tools (but please note, the contents will NOT be marked as part of the narrative).

Feedback strategy

Feedback is a critical part of the learning process. It provides information on your performance in a single assignment as well as how you can develop your skills for future work.

Our policy is that:

Details of assessment submission deadlines and feedback return will be provided in programme and module guides. Feedback may mean marks as well as more detailed written comments.

Under normal circumstances, you should expect to receive feedback on assessed written coursework within 15 working days of the published assessment deadline if you submit on time.

Working days exclude Saturday and Sunday, bank holidays and any other day on which the university is closed. Sometimes teams are unable to meet this deadline. In these cases, they will inform you of the delay and provide a new deadline.

Early on in each year of study you will have an opportunity for face to face feedback on a piece of assessed work. This will not necessarily be in a one-to-one meeting with your tutor but could be in a group setting.

Your tutor will invite you to a one-to-one tutorial to discuss your work, and general progress, after you have received marks and feedback from the first modules. Please see the Appendix 'Student learning support Summary' for our policy on feedback on draft assessed work.

Understanding Assessment

Assessment is a key aspect of university life. We have a wide range of processes and procedures to ensure that all marking is fair, consistent and upholds academic standards. To help you understand these, we have produced a Student Guide to Assessment at LJMU. This guide explains the key rules around assessment and the diverse types of assessments that you may be asked to complete. It also outlines the options that you have if you need any extra time to complete an assessment and what you need to do if you do not pass. Please take a little time to familiarise yourself with this, but remember that you can always ask for clarification, advice and support from your personal tutor, module leader or Programme Leader.

The role of External Examiners

The university engages an External Examiner for every programme. They will either be from another university or Higher Education Institution and, where required by a professional body, from industry. An External Examiner is an expert in the subject from outside the university and will look at samples of work from across the programme. This helps the university to assure itself that students' work is properly and fairly marked. Once the marks for all the assessments on your programme have been moderated and finalised a Board of Examiners can meet.

External Examiners report to the university annually. This report is discussed and available to student representatives at Board of Study meetings. The External Examiner report will be made available to all students. Please ask your Programme Leader or Student Representative for further information.

The university engages External Examiners to ensure the quality management of Higher Education programmes and it is not part of their remit to communicate with individual students. For this reason, please do not make direct contact with External Examiners in respect of your assessed work or performance. Any issues should be relayed directly to the Module or Programme Leader. However, you may be invited to meet with the External Examiner(s) for this programme whilst they discharge their quality assurance function.

The External Examiner for the Sustainable Food and Natural Resources programme is Dr Rebecca Wells Senior Lecturer in Food Policy at City St Georges, University of London.

Progression and classification

Award marks determine the grade of the award as follows:

Distinction – overall mark of 70% or above

Merit – overall mark between 60 and 69%

Pass – overall mark between 50 and 59%

In addition, you will be awarded the higher grade of degree where:

- i. the Award Mark is 1% below the award boundary and;
- ii. more than half of the mark-bearing credits at Level 7 are in the grade above that indicated by the Award Mark

For further information, the Postgraduate Academic Framework Regulations are available at <https://www.ljmu.ac.uk/about-us/public-information/academic-quality-and-regulations/academic-framework>.

If there is a professional body associated with your programme, you need to know if any additional regulations apply to your programme. Where this is applicable further information is available in the Professional Accreditations section of this guide.

If you have not achieved the full amount of credits for your award at the first attempt, you will be allowed a referral in the modules you have failed.

Referrals/deferrals

Types of Referral

A referral is the opportunity to re-take assessment in a module in which you attained no credit after your first attempt. Students have the right to two referral opportunities in any failed module(s). No further attempts are permitted. Students who have failed the first referral opportunity will be allowed an Exceptional Second Referral on the same module(s), up to 20 credits at any Level, provided that 100 credits at that level have been achieved and the module failure(s) are not eligible for compensation (see section UG.C7.8 or PG.C7.7). Students who have failed the first referral in more than 20 credits will be offered the opportunity to register for a Final Referral. Exceptional Second Referrals and Final Referrals will be a final single attempt (therefore there can be no subsequent referral) and marks can be carried forward from previous attempts. Final Referrals will require attendance. See the Academic Framework Regulations, section C7.14 for further details (accessible here: <https://www.ljmu.ac.uk/about-us/public-information/academic-quality-and-regulations/academic-framework>).

The maximum mark obtainable from a referral, Exceptional Second Referral or Final Referral is the minimum pass mark for the module.

Some modules may not be eligible for Exceptional Second Referrals or Final Referrals. These are usually modules related to professional competency requirements.

Deferral

A deferral is the opportunity to undertake an assessment at the next assessment opportunity. This can only happen if you follow the Personal Circumstances procedure within the specified timeframe – see <https://myservices.ljmu.ac.uk>.

Deferred assessment attempts are marked as if you were attempting them for the first time i.e. not capped to the minimum pass mark.

Variance

Sometimes it is necessary for programme to seek permission to operate within the university's Academic Framework Regulations with agreed differences (known as variance). Such instances are normally due to the requirements of accrediting/professional bodies or subject practice. If your programme has permission to operate with variance from any of the university's Academic Framework Regulations, details can be found within the "Approved variance from Academic Framework Regulations" section of your Programme Specification, which is available via the LJMU Course Catalogue (see **Modules** section).

Boards of Examiners

Boards of Examiners meet to consider the progress of every student at least once a year. The Boards make decisions on level completion, progression and awards. The Board ensures the maintenance of appropriate standards of assessment and that all students are assessed fairly in accordance with the approved regulations and procedures.

Getting your results

You will receive your results after the end of year Board of Examiners meeting. A Result Statement and a Progress Transcript will be issued, the latter providing a detailed breakdown of assessment results. This is the only method by which results will be communicated, and the University will not give out results over the telephone or by e-mail. Students who must undertake further assessment will have this requirement confirmed by the Board of Examiners and will receive details (including nature and timing of required re-assessment) of their referral/deferral requirements with their Result Statement.

The Student Support Officers will contact you about the next steps if you have been given a referral or deferral on any of your modules, or if you haven't gained enough credit to proceed with your chosen award.

Academic Appeals

All students have the right to appeal against the decisions of a Board of Examiners, which confirms assessment results and makes final awards. Students also have the right to appeal against the decision of a Personal Circumstance Panel or an Academic Misconduct Panel. There are strict eligibility criteria and timescales for appeals.

Students on collaborative programmes follow the same appeal procedures as local LJMU students and should ensure that they submit their appeals to the LJMU Student Governance office. Follow the link below for full details.

Information and guidance on appeals is available here: www.ljmu.ac.uk/about-us/public-information/student-regulations/student-appeals.

Student Complaints

LJMU students studying at collaborative partner institutions are expected to refer their complaint to the partner institution's complaints procedure in the first instance.

The GSE's Complaints policy and procedure can be found here <https://cat.org.uk/graduate-school/studying/students/>

If a complaint has not been resolved or satisfactorily dealt with by the academic partner, some students can then submit a formal complaint to LJMU. Alternatively, a student can complain directly to LJMU if it is appropriate to do so. If the issues that a student wishes to raise relate solely to the actions of LJMU or relate solely to events that occurred at LJMU and not at a partner of the university, the student should complain directly to LJMU, and any complaint will be dealt with at all stages by LJMU.

Details of the LJMU Student Complaints Procedure for Academic Partnerships can be found at: www.ljmu.ac.uk/students/supporting-your-study/student-policy-and-regulations.

If you have any queries about the LJMU Student Complaints Procedure then please email the Student Governance Office at: StudentGovernance@ljmu.ac.uk.

The Office of the Independent Adjudicator

The Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA) runs an independent scheme to review student complaints. LJMU is a member of this scheme. If you are unhappy with the outcome of an appeal or a complaint, you may be able to ask the OIA to review this. You can find more information about making a complaint to the OIA, what it can and can't look at and what it can do to put things right if something has gone wrong here: <https://www.oiahe.org.uk/students>.

You normally need to have completed the complaint or appeal procedure before you complain to the OIA. LJMU will send you a letter called a "Completion of Procedures Letter" when you have reached the end of our processes and there are no further steps you can take internally. If your complaint or appeal is not upheld, LJMU will issue you with a Completion of Procedures Letter automatically. If your complaint or appeal is upheld or partly upheld, you can ask for a Completion of Procedures Letter if you want one. You can find more information about Completion of Procedures Letters and when you should expect to receive one here: <https://www.oiahe.org.uk/providers/completion-of-procedures-letters>.

Students must make their complaint to the OIA within 12 months of completing this procedure. The 12-month period will normally run from the date of the Completion of Procedures Letter.

Academic Misconduct

Academic misconduct is deemed to cover deliberate attempts to gain an unfair advantage in assessment. This includes plagiarism, unauthorised collusion, falsification of research data, cheating in an examination

the submission of material purchased or commission from a third party and the use of artificial intelligence software to gain an unfair advantage.

If you are accused of academic misconduct you will be sent details of the allegation plus supporting evidence and asked to attend an Academic Misconduct Panel. Please note the panel may draw adverse inferences if a student does not take the opportunity to attend and defend their work.

For information relating to LJMU's Academic Misconduct Policy, please visit: www.ljmu.ac.uk/about-us/public-information/student-regulations/academic-misconduct.

The LJMU Penalty Tariff

The university strives to ensure fairness and consistency in the application of penalties to students across all Faculties and has adopted a standard penalty tariff to be used in all cases of proven academic misconduct.

The principle behind the tariff is simple and serves to ensure that all students are aware of the penalties that they will receive if they are found guilty of academic misconduct.

The Penalty Tariff is contained within the university's Academic Misconduct Policy: www.ljmu.ac.uk/about-us/public-information/student-regulations/academic-misconduct.

Report and Support

As a university, we are committed to fostering a safe and inclusive environment for all members of our community. The university's Report and Support harassment reporting tool has been designed to empower students, staff, and faculty to report incidents of harassment and obtain support. Harassment can have a profound impact on the well-being, academic performance, and personal development of individuals. We believe in creating a culture that promotes respect, dignity, and equal opportunities for everyone. By reporting harassment, you contribute to the collective effort of addressing and preventing such incidents, making our university a better place for all.

Key Features of the Harassment Reporting Tool

- **Confidentiality:** We understand the importance of maintaining privacy and anonymity throughout the reporting process. The tool ensures that your identity is protected, unless you choose to disclose it.
- **Easy-to-Use Interface:** Report and Support has an intuitive and user-friendly interface that makes it simple to navigate and submit your report. We have designed the tool to be accessible and inclusive, ensuring that everyone can easily report incidents.
- **Detailed Incident Reporting:** The tool allows you to provide a brief account of the incident, including how long the circumstances you are experiencing has been going on, the locations of the incident(s) and the factors you believe have played a role in what you experienced. This information helps us understand the situation better and take appropriate action.
- **Follow-up and Support:** Once you have submitted your report, our dedicated team will promptly review it and initiate the necessary actions. If you have chosen to leave your contact details, a case worker will contact you within 2 working days.

Further information can be found here: [Report and Support](#)

Student Feedback

We want your feedback

There may be many ways that you can provide feedback on your course. Most common of these is simply talking to someone from the programme team or professional services. We value your feedback and encourage students to complete any formal surveys you receive.

The School takes student feedback very seriously, and there are several systems in place to facilitate recording of feedback from our students and communication of how feedback has been used to enhance programme delivery:

- 1. Module Survey:** There will be an on-line and on-site feedback surveys released for each module (typically accessible through Canvas) that can be completed anonymously. The online feedback form enables you to score your level of satisfaction and provide written comments on the module's academic activities and administration. The on-site feedback survey can take a variety of forms from collecting free-text responses, completing a paper survey to verbal feedback given as part of a group discussion.
- 2. Feedback Meetings:** Student-Staff Liaison Committee meetings are run three times per year and follow a broader agenda, inviting programme-wide discussion and feedback. Details of these will be made available.
- 3. Programme Representatives (Reps):** Programme (or 'Course') Reps (see below) represent students from all CAT Master's degrees on Academic Council, Programme Committee and Staff Student Liaison Committee meetings, and among other official duties, act as on-going conduits for student feedback on programme-wide matters. This initiative aims to be a valuable forum for engagement and communication between staff and students. Current reps can be contacted through the Student Support Officers or via the Student Rep email (msc.reps@student.cat.org.uk). It is intended that reps will act for a year at a time. If you are interested in acting as a Course Rep please contact the Programme Leader or Student Support Officer.

Student representation and getting involved

School Reps

School reps are like senior course reps, who work at a school level and therefore represent not just their peers on their course, but all students across all courses within their school. This means that they not only collect feedback from a variety of students across courses, but also from other course reps within their school.

These academic reps attend Faculty Education Student Experience Committees, feeding back any school-wide issues, rather than course specific issues, to the relevant academic staff and professional services within these meetings.

This student leader role is paid by JMSU, as we are keen to ensure our student leaders know their time is valuable, and that we are putting money back into students' pockets.

School reps are paid for their work and managed by JMSU while having strong connections with their school team. Appointed at the end of each academic year, usually after spring break and assessments) any student is able to apply to be a school rep via JMSU.

Find out more by visiting this link- <https://www.jmsu.co.uk/student-voice/school-reps>.

Student Representatives at CAT

Student reps work at a graduate school level and therefore represent not just their peers on their course, but all students across all courses within their school. This means that they not only collect feedback from a variety of students across their courses, but will also liaise with other course reps within the GSE.

Our student reps are vital to our courses, ensuring the student voice is heard both informally with Student Support/Programme Leaders and also formally at our quarterly Academic Council meetings. If you would like to hear more about the work our reps do, please email msc.reps@student.cat.org.uk to speak to one of the current student reps about the role. Academic reps also attend quarterly Course Committees and Academic Council, feeding back any school-wide issues, rather than course specific issues, to the relevant academic staff, link tutors and student support services within these meetings.

There may be occasions, such as when we are subject to external QAA review, when CAT needs to appoint a lead student rep to represent the entire student body. This student leader role, drawn from the student reps, will play an important part in the review and will receive an honorarium paid by CAT, as we are keen to ensure our student leaders know their time is valuable.

Student reps are elected by students at the beginning of each academic year. Any student is able to apply to be a student rep during the election process.

If you would like to hear more about the work our reps do, please email msc.reps@student.cat.org.uk to speak to one of the current student reps about the role

What is the Board of Study?

The Board of Study oversees the management and operation of the programme. Membership consists of all staff teaching on the programme, other staff essential to the running of the programme and student course representatives. The Link Tutor from LJMU may also attend. You can discuss any aspects of your programme with your course representative for them to raise in the Board of Study. In this way you can contribute to the formal running of the programme. Programme Leaders will ensure that Board of Study papers are available to all students via the VLE.

Please note that at CAT we call 'Board of Study' 'Academic Council'. The Student Course Reps will be sent information on the dates and times of Academic Council meetings when they are appointed. Course reps should contact their Programme Leader for more information about the Academic Council meetings. Minutes from Academic Council meetings are posted on MS Teams. Further information on Academic Quality can be found in MS Teams in the 'Student Information Hub' > Quality management (channel).

Equal Opportunities, Disability and Data Protection

Equality and Diversity

Liverpool John Moores University (LJMU) is committed to creating a learning and working environment which values and recognises the full potential of each person.

The university has a comprehensive Equality & Diversity Policy that complies with the national and European Union anti-discriminatory legislation. The policy articulates the rights and respects for every individual and a clear commitment for challenging discrimination and the distress this causes. For example, LJMU will not tolerate any form of unfair discriminatory practice, violence and extremist behaviour, hate crime, terrorism activities, or harassment including offensive remarks, language, graffiti, pin-ups and jokes, which are based upon a person's protected characteristic(s). The nine (9) protected characteristics identified by the Equality Act 2010 are: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation and marriage and civil partnership. Unwelcome physical advances also constitute harassment. Students may be disciplined and dismissed where discrimination is proven. You are advised to familiarise yourself with the LJMU Equality & Diversity Policy, including the Equality Objectives and Action Plans by visiting the website.

- To find out more about LJMU's equality and diversity policy, click here: www.ljmu.ac.uk/about-us/public-information/equality-and-diversity
- For the university's Equality Objectives and Action Plans, click here: www.ljmu.ac.uk/~media/sample-sharepoint-libraries/policy-documents/251.pdf?la=en

Data Protection

Liverpool John Moores University (LJMU) takes your privacy very seriously. LJMU needs to obtain and process certain information about our students to allow us to register students, organise programmes, and to carry out other essential university activities. The university cannot exercise its responsibilities and fulfil its education, training and support obligations to its students, without holding and using this personal data. We process your personal data for recruitment, admission, enrolment, the administration of our programmes of study and student support and associated funding arrangements, monitoring performance and attendance, supervision, assessment and examination, graduation and alumni relations, advisory, pastoral, health and safety, management, research, statistical and archival purposes.

The information we collect is stored safely and securely, used fairly, and not disclosed to any other person unlawfully. To do this we comply with the data protection obligations as set out in the Data Protection Act 2018 (The Act) and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

The university and all staff or others who process or use any personal information must ensure that they follow the university's Data Protection Policy. You can find further information and a copy of the Data Protection Policy at www.ljmu.ac.uk/about-us/data-protection.

If you have any questions about our Data Protection procedures, please contact the Data Protection Officer on +44 (0) 151 904 6134 or at email: DPO-LJMU@ljmu.ac.uk

We also process applicant and student data to meet our statutory and other binding obligations. These may include submission of statistical returns to government or its agencies, including the Office for Students (OfS), and other official bodies, such as the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA), the Student Loan Company (SLC), or other equivalent bodies from other countries. **Please read the Student Data Collection Notice at**

www.ljmu.ac.uk/about-us/data-protection which will explain how HESA also collect and share your information. As a Tier 4 licensed sponsor we may be required to give information to the UK Visas and Immigration Agency (UKVI) about students with visas to study. Our sponsorship duties include informing the UKVI if a student fails to register, withdraws, or fails to attend classes and hand in work.

We disclose your personal data to other third parties only with your consent, or if requested by an organisation with a statutory function, such as the police, in a case where non-disclosure would prejudice law enforcement; or to meet a statutory or regulatory obligation e.g. a court order; in a medical emergency or otherwise in accordance with the university's Notification with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO), Registration Number Z5616967, and the terms of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

Your Rights:

You have the right to:

- Find out what personal data the university holds about you, why it holds it and what it does with it, how long it keeps it and to whom the University discloses it.
- Ask the university to correct inaccurate data.
- Ask that access to your data is limited in certain circumstances.
- Object to us processing your personal data if you dispute the justification for the processing or if the processing involves making a decision by a computer.
- Request a copy of your personal information held by the university. This is known as a subject access request (SAR). You can find more information on how to do this at www.ljmu.ac.uk/about-us/data-protection. The university has one calendar month to comply with your request after receiving your proof of identity and there will be no charge.
- If your personal data has been provided by consent, you have the right to withdraw that consent at any time.

Further Information:

- Contact the Data Protection Officer on +44 (0) 151 904 6134 or by email: DPO-LJMU@ljmu.ac.uk
- Follow the links in the university's Data Protection webpage www.ljmu.ac.uk/about-us/data-protection
- Student data collection: this explains what student data we share with the Higher Education Statistics Agency www.hesa.ac.uk/about/regulation/data-protection/noticesh
- You can access the university's entry in the Information Commissioner's Register of Data Controllers at <https://ico.org.uk/about-the-ico/what-we-do/register-of-data-controllers/>. The university's Registration Number is: Z5616967. This register entry describes, in very general terms, what personal data we process and why, how we obtain personal data and to whom we may disclose it.
- You can find out further information about who we share your information with at www.ljmu.ac.uk/about-us/data-protection or the Data Protection Officer.
- The GSE's equal opportunities, safeguarding and Prevent policies can be found on the [current student website](#) under policies and procedures, and information on our teaching and learning quality

and strategies here <https://gse.cat.org.uk/index.php/about-us/policies-and-information/category/9-gse-quality-and-strategy-information>.

- Information on what data the Centre for Alternative Technology collect and how we use it can be found here <https://cat.org.uk/privacy-notice/>

John Moores Students' Union

As collaborative students, CAT students aren't members, and don't have access to JMSU's full membership offer. But you do still have the option to engage with the Students' Union. We're here to help you get the most from your LJMU days. We can help you make friends, learn new skills, offer advice and support and bring lots of fun to your time as a student. We're run by students and for students and will fight for the things that matter most to you to improve your university experience.

Connect with us:

Web: www.jmsu.co.uk

Email: coursereps@ljmu.ac.uk

Phone: +44 (0) 151 231 4900

Facebook: facebook.com/johnmooreessu

TikTok: [@johnmooreessu](https://tiktok.com/@johnmooreessu)

Instagram: [Instagram.com/johnmooreessu](https://instagram.com/johnmooreessu)

APPENDIX - STUDENT LEARNING SUPPORT SUMMARY

Student Learning Support summary for 2025-26 for LJMU validated programmes	
<p>Purpose of the document: this table provides a summary of the academic, pastoral and administrative support available for CAT's MSc SFNR, SE and SBC programmes across all stages of students' engagement with the Graduate School of the Environment (GSE).</p> <p>Refer to Table 6, for further information, including staff contact details.</p>	
Type of Student Learning Support	Provided by
Pre-Course	
Admissions:	
Open Days (onsite and virtual) & Visitors	Student Support Officers (SSOs)
Applications	SSOs
Admissions enquiries (general)	SSOs
Academic admissions & entry requirements queries	Programme Leader (PL)
International students' enquiries	SSO & Head of School (HoS)
Enrolled Students	
Administrative Support	
<p>All aspects of administrative support throughout your time on the programme, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application, Enrolment and induction. • Course IT including CAT student email, Outlook and MS Teams, UEL Moodle VLE access. • Module booking and registration, booking food and accommodation for residential study at CAT – note, food and accommodation is booked through the GSE Forms Hub. • Coursework assignment submission procedures, accessing marks and feedback in Canvas, Turnitin and UEL Direct. • Clarifications and guidance on CAT's student policies and procedures – which can be downloaded from CAT's website. • Clarifications and guidance on coursework Extensions, Extenuating Circumstances and Sudden and Severe Changes of Circumstances – noting the relevant policies, procedures and application forms are accessible from the GSE Forms Hub. • Clarifications and guidance on Intermission (study breaks), Programme Transfer and Programme Withdrawal – application forms are accessible from the GSE Forms Hub. • Providing feedback on module teaching and the overall student experience – survey links are accessible from the GSE Forms Hub. 	<p>Student Support Manager & SSOs</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keeping records of study and modules completed. • Confirming time limits of study, student status, programme completion or withdrawal. Forwarding copies of award certificates given by LJMU. • (Note, CAT's SSOs will in the vast majority of instances liaise with LJMU administrative staff on your behalf as necessary. See Sections on 'Academic Appeals', 'Student Complaints', 'Equal Opportunities, Disability and Data Protection pages for instances where you may want to contact LJMU directly). 	
Fees terms and conditions / enquiries / payment	SSM & Student Finance Officer
Academic Support	
<p>1. Taught Study Skills & Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Study Skills – e.g. critical thinking, academic integrity, writing a good essay or critique of paper at MSc level, basic building physics, use of Excel and PowerPoint, etc.; • Self-directed study skills exercises and resources, Harvard Referencing, Personal Development Planning. 	<p>Personal tutor and study skills sessions tailored to the learning outcomes of specific modules.</p> <p>Self-directed. Resources available via Study Skills team and LJMU's Skills for Study resource https://www.skillsforstudy.com/</p>
<p>2. Module Specific Support and Feedback:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Module and coursework specific study skills – e.g. seminars during onsite modules & available on-line, workbook tasks, recordings, 'assignment specific Q&A' discussion forums etc. – typically made available through the module's Team. • Example coursework assignments and Extra Resources (including example Dissertations) for each module – typically made available through the module's Team. • Assessment, moderation and feedback on coursework. • One-to-one support from the Module Leader or member of the module delivery team (by request) e.g. to clarify coursework requirements, clarify feedback given or marks awarded. <p>(Students on all modules, priority given to students with identified additional learning needs (ALN)).</p>	<p>Module Leaders & module delivery teams</p> <p>Module Leaders & module delivery teams</p> <p>Module Leaders & module delivery teams</p> <p>Module Leaders & module delivery teams</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coursework development including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 'First assignment support' formative review of assignment structure or full first draft; ○ Review of assignment structure and topic for subsequent assignments. (Priority given to students taking their first 60 credits & students identified with additional learning needs (ALN)) • Support for coursework re submission. 	<p>Personal tutor</p> <p>Personal tutor, Module Leaders & module delivery teams as appropriate</p> <p>Personal tutor & Module Leaders as appropriate</p>

<p>3. Pastoral Support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Personal Tutor's scope and remit are based on LJMU's 'Pastoral and Academic support guidance'. <p>Students should make contact with their Personal Tutor within the first 3 weeks of each term (min.).</p> <p>Personal tutors will invite their students to attend at least two one-to-one tutorial r year to discuss progress, provide guidance on non-module specific queries, such as students seeking advice regarding modules choices, general study planning, personal development planning etc.</p> <p>Students may contact their personal tutor in confidence at other times of year to seek guidance on specific academic matters, such as when personal circumstances are affecting the progression of study.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Officer: <p>A dedicated member of academic/support staff acts as a central point of contact for students with specific educational needs, provide additional tutorial support by arrangement, and can liaise with relevant facilities at LJMU and externally – see below.</p>	<p>Personal Tutor – each student is assigned a Personal Tutor after enrolment at the start of the programme and typically remains</p>
<p>4. Peer support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> MSc Student Representatives ('Student Reps') elected from the MSc student body act as an ongoing conduit for student liaison and feedback on programme-wide matters – refer to 'Student Feedback' section of the Programme Handbook for further information. Peer-to-peer informal support from fellow students. 	<p>Student Reps - current Student Reps can be contacted by email: MSc Student Reps msc.reps@student.cat.org.uk</p> <p>Peers, via online forums – MS Teams discussion boards.</p> <p>Student led social media platforms – including WhatsApp and Facebook groups, personal communication etc.</p>
<p>Academic Support for Dissertation Module</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Academic Support throughout the Dissertation Module 	<p>Supervisor and Module Leaders – Refer to Dissertation Module Guidelines</p>
<p>Graduation Ceremony</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Booking a place and making arrangements to attend the GSE Graduation Ceremony at CAT 	<p>SSOs</p>
<p>Alumni & Destinations</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enquiries and destination surveys etc. Keeping in touch with CAT and the GSE, e.g. becoming a member of CAT, attending CAT's annual Conference, careers or marketing opportunities etc. 	<p>Programme Leader & SSOs GSMO</p>
<p>Further details of module specific requirements and support will be made available through Module Specifications and Module Guides.</p>	