

School of Biology

Head of School

Professor K T Sillar

These modules are designed to constitute a training for students who are accepted into a research degree in Biology, to equip them with the skills required for the completion of their research and provide them with the general skills necessary for undertaking a career as an academic biologist. Completing and passing these modules is a prerequisite for successful completion of the research degree. However, in cases where the students already have an appropriate research training, exemption from part or all of the modules may be agreed at the discretion of the Head of School. In the case of part-time students, or in the case of students arriving at non-standard times, the same session requirement could be waived at the discretion of the Head of School.

Modules

BL4001 Research Training: Safety in Science

Semester: 1

Co-requisite: Modules BL4001 - BL4007 are to be taken together in the same session. In the case of part-time students or in the case of students arriving at non-standard times, the "same session" requirement may be waived at the discretion of the Head of School.

Programme(s): Compulsory module for all students doing a research degree in Biology.

Description: The course covers a wide range of essential information for the research student to work safely in the School of Biology and enables the student to make full use of available facilities. Seminars cover the University Safety Policy, risk assessment, fire safety, COSHH regulations, and first aid in the laboratory and the field. This course also includes the University Radiation Protection course.

Class Hour: To be arranged.

Teaching: Seven 1 hour seminars.

Assessment: Continuous Assessment = 100%

BL4002 Research Training: Reviewing the Literature

Semester: 1

Co-requisite: Modules BL4001 - BL4007 are to be taken together in the same session. In the case of part-time students or in the case of students arriving at non-standard times, the "same session" requirement may be waived at the discretion of the Head of School.

Programme(s): Compulsory module for all students doing a research degree in Biology.

Description: A short module offering practical advice on library orientation, access to journals and the maintenance of bibliography information. Further seminars cover aspects of information retrieval from library databases and the Internet. In addition the student is made familiar with the information technology systems available in the University.

Class Hour: To be arranged.

Teaching: Two 2 hour seminars.

Assessment: Present a review of relevant literature in the scientific field of the student's research project (4,000 words) assessed by internal examiner.

Biology - 4000 Level modules

BL4003 Research Training: Technical Approaches and Project Planning

Semester: 1

Co-requisite: Modules BL4001 - BL4007 are to be taken together in the same session. In the case of part-time students or in the case of students arriving at non-standard times, the “same session” requirement may be waived at the discretion of the Head of School.

Programme(s): Compulsory module for all students doing a research degree in Biology.

Description: The course will enable the student to produce a short research plan detailing the overall aims, the planned technical approaches and the proposed handling of experimental results. The course will introduce the students to the range of biological techniques and the sources of biological expertise available. The student can then choose to investigate further techniques applicable to their own research area. The course offers information on experimental design and the statistical handling of data. To complement this module an additional seminar provides advice on maintaining good relationships between students and supervisor, and on maintaining direction in research.

Class Hour: To be arranged.

Teaching: Three 3 hour seminars.

Assessment: Produce a research plan (1000 words) assessed by internal examiner.

BL4004 Research Training: Writing a Report

Semester: 2

Co-requisite: Modules BL4001 - BL4007 are to be taken together in the same session. In the case of part-time students or in the case of students arriving at non-standard times, the “same session” requirement may be waived at the discretion of the Head of School.

Programme(s): Compulsory module for all students doing a research degree in Biology.

Description: This module includes seminars covering important aspects of communicating scientific findings to others within the scientific community. It also aims to inform the student of the consequences of commercialism and the legal aspects surrounding intellectual property rights. The course introduces the student to scientific writing skills, the structure of a report and the presentation of results.

Class Hour: To be arranged.

Teaching: Two 2 hour seminars.

Assessment: First year report (4000 words) examined by the Postgraduate Review Committee.

BL4005 Professional Skills: Visual Presentation

Semester: 1

Co-requisite: Modules BL4001 - BL4007 are to be taken together in the same session. In the case of part-time students or in the case of students arriving at non-standard times, the “same session” requirement may be waived at the discretion of the Head of School.

Programme(s): Compulsory module for all students doing a research degree in Biology.

Description: This module aims to enable the student to use a variety of information technology and media techniques to create visual representations of the research projects. The production of personal web pages to promote the research project of the student is encouraged. Students are provided with support from the project supervisor in the production of a poster presentation for the Annual Postgraduate Conference.

Class Hour: To be arranged.

Teaching: Two 2 hour seminars.

Assessment: Feedback is given on a Poster presentation at the Annual Postgraduate Conference and on the student's personal web page.

BL4006 Advanced Topics in Biology

Semester: Whole Year

Co-requisite: Modules BL4001 - BL4007 are to be taken together in the same session. In the case of part-time students or in the case of students arriving at non-standard times, the “same session” requirement may be waived at the discretion of the Head of School.

Programme(s): Compulsory module for all students doing a research degree in Biology.

Description: The aim of this course is to familiarise the student with recent advances in current research across a range of biological subjects. Students will attend sets of seminars given by invited speakers and also by staff within the School of Biology. They will be encouraged to participate in discussion sessions following seminars and to follow up areas of interest by reading publications by the speakers.

Class Hour: To be arranged.

Teaching: Seminars.

Assessment: Written critique on seminar content is submitted to postgraduate tutors.

BL4007 Professional Skills: Oral Presentation

Semester: 1

Prerequisite: Modules BL4001 - BL4006

Co-requisite: Module BL4007 is to be taken in the first session of year 2. In the case of part-time students or in the case of students arriving at non-standard times, these requirements may be waived at the discretion of the Head of School.

Programme(s): Compulsory module for all students doing a research degree in Biology.

Description: This module aims to complete the formal development of the postgraduate biology student by providing an informal environment in which the student can develop techniques necessary for presentation at scientific conferences. The course provides seminars on the skills involved in presenting talks on scientific topics. The seminars cover the value of structure, the production of visual aids, media skills and the development of individual style and technique. The supervisor assists in the preparation of a practised, well-delivered, oral presentation.

Class Hour: To be arranged.

Teaching: Two hour seminar.

Assessment: Oral presentation (20 minutes) at the Annual Postgraduate Conference.

