

The Natural Sciences Handbook 2018*

Version: Intended for existing students

August 16, 2018



*The information in this handbook is correct at the time of going to press on August 16, 2018. However, the University reserves the right to make changes without notice to regulations, programmes, syllabuses and the timetable. If there is any conflict or disagreement between the information in this handbook and the regulations for the Natural Sciences degree programme, which are published in the University Calendar, the regulations are definitive.

Foreword

The Natural Sciences programme gives undergraduate students the opportunity to design their own degree or follow a Joint-Honours path in Science. In Single Honours programmes, students concentrate on one subject, and take few if any modules in any other subjects. On the Joint Honours path with Natural Sciences, students focus on two related subjects after their first-year on defined pathways. On the Natural Sciences path, students can take modules in two or three subjects, pursuing their academic interests across and beyond the Faculty of Science. Natural Sciences, together with the corresponding programmes based in the Faculty of Arts and Humanities and the Faculty of Social Sciences and Health, are the most free and flexible programmes in the University, and they particularly appeal to highly-qualified, self-motivated, and independent-minded students who are interested in making creative connections across their subjects.

Some of you will have been attracted to Natural Sciences by the possibility of studying two subjects as a Joint Honours programme. Others, however, will have selected Natural Sciences because it is significantly more flexible, and opens up a much wider range of academic possibilities. Whatever your reasons for choosing Natural Sciences, it offers you a framework within which you can take responsibility for your intellectual destiny, and, at the end of your studies an internationally recognizable qualification.

Dr. James Blowey

Director of Natural Sciences and Associate Professor in Mathematics

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Deputy Director of Natural Sciences and Associate Professor in Biosciences

August 16, 2018

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1 Welcome

The aim of this handbook is to give a general overview and to describe the structure of the Honours Degrees in Natural Sciences at Durham University. It is designed to be used both by prospective applicants and students who are already in Durham. By nature it is a living breathing document and hopefully the Contents on the previous page and Index at the back will be of use in helping you find the information you need — if you don't find the information easily, then please get in touch.

Every effort has been made to ensure that the information it contains is correct. The latest information about the Natural Sciences degree programme is available at

www.dur.ac.uk/natural.sciences/

where the up to date version of this booklet can be found.

The emphasis within Natural Sciences is flexibility, choice and depth. Within the Natural Sciences degree programme, you can study a variety of subjects, including some from the Faculty of Arts and Humanities and the Faculty of Social Sciences and Health, see Section 7.5. You can study up to four subjects in the first year and start a different subject in your second year. You can study for three years (B.Sc.) or for four years (M.Sci.) in certain subjects. In many cases, you can have a choice of subjects even in your final year. The M.Sci. in Natural Sciences is only available with certain subjects, see Section 8.4. You can study Joint Honours¹ degrees within Natural Sciences, see Section 7.6, which combines two subjects on a set of tightly defined rules.

The Natural Sciences degree programme allows you to study a variety of subjects throughout your three or four years at Durham and keep your option of transferring to a Single Honours programme open until the end of the first-year, see Section 9. The degree programme is always evolving and you should access the Natural Sciences website www.dur.ac.uk/natural.sciences to see the latest developments.

With all of this flexibility and choice, it is inevitable there will be a downside. You should be aware that not all combinations of modules or subjects can be taken and choices can be restricted by the University timetable. However, specific module combinations within Joint-Honours routes are guaranteed to work for students studying those degree routes, see Table 7.6.1.

If you have any queries about the degree programme, please do not hesitate to contact us, see Section 5.

2 Key University Dates

You can find the Induction and Term in the University Almanac at:

www.dur.ac.uk/dates/

and the dates of Examination at:

www.dur.ac.uk/learningandteaching.handbook/6/appendices/

In addition, some key dates that relate to registration are mentioned in Section 8.5 on Page 13 and for examinations Section 15.2, Page 18.

3 Enrollment and Registration

Information on enrollment, registration and verification for new and continuing students is available online:

¹Note that the phrase does not appear on the degree certificate, but rather B.Sc./M.Sci. in A and B within the Natural Sciences programme.

www.dur.ac.uk/student.registry/registration/

There is also some advice in the Student Welcome Guide at:

www.dur.ac.uk/studentsurvivalguide/.

Section 8 on Page 8 of this document is dedicated to giving detail advice on registration.

4 The “Department”

As such there is no Department. The Natural Sciences degree programme is managed by the Natural Sciences Management Committee. A Deputy Head of the Faculty of Science, known as the Director of Natural Sciences, acts on behalf of the Committee on a day to day basis and manages all the admissions to the degree. The Deputy Director of Natural Sciences provides additional support to the Director, such as managing careers liaison and chairing the Board of Examiners meetings.

Modules are taught by Departments across the University. Students must take a significant proportion of Science, see Section 7, and financially students belong to the Faculty which results in students having a high degree of flexibility to transfer into Single Honours programmes at the end of Year 1. Please feel free to contact the Director of Natural Sciences, see Section 5 of this handbook for details.

Formally, you can find the institutional policies relating to student feedback at:

www.dur.ac.uk/learningandteaching.handbook/5/

5 Contact Details and office hours

The Director operates an open door policy (my door is CG309 which overlooks the café in the Palatine Centre and is on the top floor of Chemistry.)

If you want to talk to the Director of Natural Sciences, check out “Availability” in DUO Announcements. If you need to talk about an issue that requires urgent resolution (here we exclude choosing modules) then please just drop in on the off chance, if it is outside normal working hours (see below) then send an e-mail. The reason for not having appointments is that (like at a Dr’s surgery) sometime appointments are not kept (so creating a backlog) and the Director needs clear time for focused work. So if you turn up at one of the advertised drop in sessions and for any reason I have had to pop out, then you should make an appointment to see me with the admin team.

Director of Natural Sciences
Faculty of Science
Level 3 Chemistry Building
Durham University
Durham DH1 3LE
Tel: 0191 334 1014 Fax: 0191 334 1018
Email: natural.sciences@durham.ac.uk
World-Wide Web: www.dur.ac.uk/natural.sciences

Normal office hours are 9:00-13:00 and 14:00-17:00.

6 Staff-Student Communication

All correspondence with students will occur by e-mail to students’ Durham e-mail address, so you should check this on a daily basis. To avoid over spamming students, a condensed e-mail will be

sent, at most, weekly making general announcements.

7 Learning and Teaching

The guidelines do not supersede the full programme regulations for the B.Sc. or M.Sci., published in the University Calendar at

www.dur.ac.uk/university.calendar/

and the Faculty Handbook at:

www.dur.ac.uk/faculty.handbook/

The Programme Specifications are available online for the B.Sc. and M.Sci. at

www.dur.ac.uk/programme.specifications/ug.programmes/

In order that this handbook is kept short, we recommend that students look at the Student Welcome Guide at:

www.dur.ac.uk/studentwelcomeguide/

which is designed to provide an introduction to the basics of University life, and to act as a resource for any problems or queries you may have. It is a 50 page document and covers the broad themes of: Studying at Durham; University Regulations; Facilities; Tuition fees; Financial Support; Student Support; Durham Students' Union and Student Organizations; Useful Contacts. As students take modules delivered by Departments it is recommended to get a copy of their handbook(s) and follow advice given therein, for instance: reporting academic progress; absence and illness.

7.1 Regulations

Full details of the University's degree regulations for the B.Sc. and M.Sci. can be found at

www.dur.ac.uk/resources/faculty.handbook/degrees/frameworks/cfg0.pdf

www.dur.ac.uk/resources/faculty.handbook/degrees/frameworks/fgc0.pdf

and are provided in the University Calendar. The Calendar is available in all departments, Colleges, the University Library and the Durham University website. The remaining subsections flesh out these regulations.

7.2 Durham University's Modular Scheme

Durham University has a modular scheme where students take *precisely* 120 credits each year and credits are earned by taking modules. Typically students study six single modules (20 credits) which start in October and continue through to May or June of the following year. Durham has three terms each year: Michaelmas; Epiphany; Easter. The modules span across the terms and examinations are normally taken in the middle of Easter Term. The dates of the academic year are published in the University Almanac at:

www.dur.ac.uk/dates/

Note that Freshers have a one week induction and should visit:

www.dur.ac.uk/welcome/

Each module has an associated level, which indicates the normal year in which it is taken. However, in the second and third year Natural Sciences students may take credits from the adjacent level below, although in order to maintain the integrity of the degree programme the number of credits is limited to taking 30 credits in the year below.²

²MLAN/CFLS modules are Level 1 modules and from the adjacent level rule they count as credits below the current year of study!

7.3 Patterns of Study

From the start of the second year of the Honours Natural Sciences degree students study for either:

- a Natural Sciences degree in which two or more subjects or starting a new subject in the second year are studied;
- a Joint Honours degree within Natural Sciences in two subjects with a prescribed pathway.

Whether students are following a Natural Sciences degree or a Joint Honours degree within Natural Sciences, students will be considered to be on the Natural Sciences degree programme and the choice between these two alternatives does not normally have to be made until the end of the first year.

The Director gives a talk to progressing students after the exams period finishes in Easter Term and the slides are available in DUO.

7.4 The Natural Sciences Degree

There are two possible degree titles with this option:

B.Sc. Honours in Natural Sciences

M.Sci. Honours in Natural Sciences

In both cases any subject in which students take at least 40 credits from the second year onward will be listed on their degree certificate and appear in alphabetical order.

The decision as to whether students will follow a Natural Sciences Degree or a Joint Honours degree within Natural Sciences is normally taken at the end of the first year of study. Currently less than one-third of Year 2 Natural Sciences students take a Joint Honours degree within Natural Sciences and most students take the route described in this Section.

For an Honours degree in Natural Sciences in Year:

1. You take 120 credits at Level 1. You will select modules from at least two and no more than four subjects. You must take at least 60 credits from Group 1 subjects in the Faculty of Science, that is:

Group 1: Biology, Chemistry, Computer Science, Earth Sciences, Mathematics, Physics, and Psychology.

It is possible to take up to 80 credits in any one subject. You may take no more than 20 credits of appropriate credit-bearing language modules offered by the University's Centre for Foreign Language Study³. In order that students plan for their academic future they need to ensure that they will be prepared for at least one of the science routes outlined at:

www.dur.ac.uk/natural.sciences/prospective/bsc/capstone/

this lists the core material that needs to be covered for students in Years 1 and 2.

2. You select at least 90 Level 2 credits (not necessarily in the same subject) and no more than 30 Level 1 credits. Modules must be selected from at least two and no more than three subjects with at least 40 credits each in two subjects. It is possible to take up to 80 credits in any one subject. You may take no more than 20 credits of appropriate credit-bearing language modules offered by the University's Centre for Foreign Language Study⁴. For other students, this credit combination is not advisable and they should contact the Director of Natural Sciences.

³See <https://www.dur.ac.uk/mlac/cfls/>

⁴See <https://www.dur.ac.uk/mlac/cfls/>

3. You select at least 90 Level 3 credits (not necessarily in the same subject) and no more than 30 credits at Level 2. Modules must be selected from at least two and no more than three subjects. It is possible to take up to 100 credits in any one subject. It is *not* possible to take credit-bearing language modules offered by the University's Centre for Foreign Language Study.

B.Sc. students need to study at least 20 credits and no more than 60 credits of Capstone modules from at most two Departments in Year 3⁵, see

www.maths.dur.ac.uk/php/natural.sciences.php?job=capstone

for the list of Capstone modules.

4. You select 120 Level 4 credits. Modules must be selected from at least one and no more than three subjects. One module must be a project. Only the following subjects provide modules at Level 4: Biology (but only with Chemistry and Physics), Chemistry, Computer Science, Earth Science, Mathematics and Physics.

Finally, for the B.Sc. there is one overarching rule that in total students must take at least 120 credits across years 2 and 3 from Group 1.

7.5 Choice of Subjects

The nature of our Natural Sciences programme offers you a wide choice of subjects, see the Natural Sciences Website.

- Not all modules taught by Departments successfully combine because they might clash.
- You must satisfy the module regulations, such as having certain A-levels or equivalent qualifications, and the module needs to be Open or Tied to CFG0/FGC0. Further details are to be found in the module descriptions of the Faculty Handbook.

As these rules potentially allow students to get themselves into a pickle, current advice is contained in Section 8.4. There are some additional rules described in Section 7.4:

If you are taking a B.Sc. Natural Sciences degree, then there is a minimum threshold of Group 1 (Faculty of Science) modules that need to be taken, see the previous Section. Non-Science Subjects which contribute to Joint Honours degrees are known as:

Group 2: Anthropology, Business, Economics, Geography and Philosophy.

Other subjects that might be available within the University are known as:

Group 3: Sport, Education.

The number of credits taken from subjects in Groups 2 and 3 are limited and there is no guarantee that subjects in Groups 2 and 3 will fit in the timetable with subjects from Group 1 (except the Joint Honours degrees, see Table 7.6.1 below, where there is at least one set of modules that will fit together). The Natural Sciences website gives a full list of available modules, see Page 1.

⁵Capstone modules are those that are student driven and involve independent thought, personal management of the work's direction and are synoptic of the programmes learning outcomes. Typically, these modules will have a very small taught component, the major part of assessment is not via sat examination will have little formal contact with staff who will usually be acting as mentors, rather than delivers of information.

7.6 Joint Honours Degrees within Natural Sciences

The titles of the B.Sc. and M.Sci. Joint Honours degrees are:

B.Sc. in A and B within the Natural Sciences programme

M.Sci. in A and B within the Natural Sciences programme

where A and B are the two subject titles ordered alphabetically. Definitive details of the Joint-Honours degrees are outlined in Section 7.1. Table 7.6.1 shows the Joint-Honours programmes available⁶: In the soft copy version of the table below, the “*” and “*” provide direct links to the relevant Joint-Honours webpage

	An	Bi	Bs	Ch	CS	ES	Ec	Gg	Ma	Ph	Py	Ps
An		*										*
Bi	*			*,*		*		*	*		*,*	*
Bs					*							
Ch		*,*				*			*,*		*,*	
CS			*						*,*		*	
ES		*		*				*	*			
Ec									*			*
Gg		*				*			*			*
Ma		*		*,*	*,*	*	*	*		*	*,*	*
Ph									*		*	
Py		*,*		*,*	*				*,*	*		
Ps	*	*					*	*	*			

Table 7.6.1: Joint Honours combinations currently available in the A and B degree

The following abbreviations apply:

An	Anthropology	Bi	Biology	Bs	Business	Ch	Chemistry
CS	Computer Science	Ec	Economics	ES	Earth Sciences	Gg	Geography
Ma	Mathematics	Ph	Philosophy	Py	Physics	Ps	Psychology

The decision to follow a Joint Honours degree within Natural Sciences or a Natural Sciences is normally taken at the end of the first year of study. With a Joint Honours degree within Natural Sciences, you will study each of these subjects in each of the three/four years. In Year:

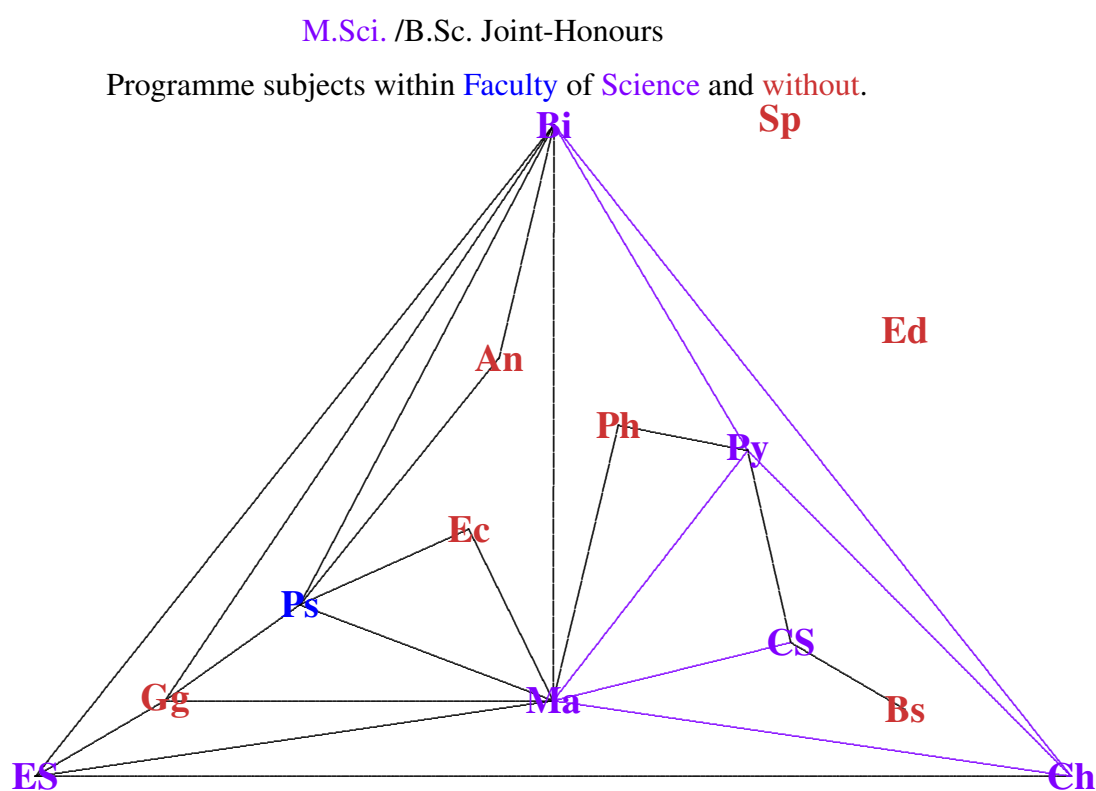
1. You take modules prescribed by the departments concerned (see Section 7.5). There is usually the opportunity to take modules in a third or occasionally fourth subject.
2. You study subjects A and B exclusively while taking no more than 80 credits in subject A and no fewer than 40 credits in subject B although normally there would be a 60:60 balance. Typically, all the modules would be at Level 2 but there are exceptions depending⁷ on the Joint-Honours degree, see either the B.Sc. or M.Sci. Joint-Honours website.

⁶ A “*” means that a B.Sc. Joint Honours is available; A “*” denotes that an M.Sci. Joint Honours is available. If a combination is not starred, it may still be possible to combine the subjects with other subjects, that are within a Natural Sciences degree as long as one of the subjects is in Group 1.

⁷The same rule for the Natural Sciences degree about the number of credits you are allowed to take at Level 1.

3. You study subjects A and B exclusively while taking no more than 80 credits in subject A and no fewer than 40 credits in subject B. B.Sc. students need to study at least 20 credits and no more than 40 credits of Capstone modules in Year 3, see Page 5. Normally, all the modules must be at Level 3 but there are exceptions depending on the Joint-Honours rules.⁸
4. You study subjects A and B exclusively while taking no more than 80 credits in subject A and no fewer than 40 credits in subject B. All the modules must be at Level 4 and one module must be a project.

The following graph shows the same data as in Table 7.6.1, but if you have the soft copy version it will be in colour and the subject abbreviations take you to the subject webpages. The purple denotes that the subject is available at Level 4. Colours purple and blue denote that the subject are in Group 1. A red colour denotes the subject is in Group 2 or 3. Note that where there is a triangle between three subjects, it is normally possible to find some combination of those subjects in Year 1⁹



7.7 Examples of Patterns of Study

To see examples of the patterns of study visit

www.maths.dur.ac.uk/php/natural.sciences.php?job=exemplar_list_overview.

There are four core sets of routes shown on the webpages and we cannot over stress that many others are possible, but to include these would make the webpages too long. The examples include:

- Computer Science, Mathematics and Physics

⁸The same rule for the Natural Sciences degree about the number of credits you are allowed to take at Level 2.

⁹The counter-example to this statement is that it is not possible to study Biology, Chemistry and Physics because Physics requires a significant amount of Mathematical support.

- Biology and Psychology
- Biology and Chemistry
- Earth Sciences

Other combinations are possible, but any combination will depend on the factors outlined in Sections 7.4, 7.5 and 7.6.

The key features of the examples are that:

you start new subjects in the second year;

you take three subjects throughout the degree or specialize after Year 1;

you take the same two subjects each year for all three years and no other subjects in the second and third years;

you transfer from a Single Honours programme at Durham;

you take an all final-year in one subject on an M.Sci. programme.

8 Module Selection

8.1 Introduction

Each department provides a selection of modules. However, some are tied to particular degree programmes and are not available for Natural Sciences students. A list of the modules available to Natural Sciences students may be found on the Natural Sciences website, see Page 1¹⁰.

It is important to select the correct modules from any subjects that you study to ensure that you can continue to study that subject in the following year. Most departments offer introductory modules, but sometimes they cannot be followed by any other higher level modules in that subject. Whatever you select, you must satisfy the rules set out in Section 7.1.

In order to select a module you need to check:

- (a) the module is compatible; that it is a permitted choice and does not clash in the University timetable with any of your other modules. An interactive timetable checker www.maths.dur.ac.uk/users/math.teaching/tt/module_checker.html can be accessed via the Natural Sciences website.
- (b) the module description to ensure that:
 - you have the necessary qualifications or “prerequisites”;
 - your module choice is not an excluded combination;
 - you satisfy the module “corequisites” if any — some modules require you to study a linked module or modules;
 - the module is open. If the module is tied, then the list of degree programmes the module is tied to must include Natural Sciences (i.e. CFG0 or FGC0).

The module descriptions detailing the prerequisites, corequisites, excluded combinations and ties can be accessed via the Natural Sciences website.

¹⁰We have tried to remove tied modules and invariably each year we will have missed one or two “new” modules.

- (c) the departments concerned are able to confirm your choice at registration. Please note that your choice of modules in your first year will probably affect your eligibility for modules in your subsequent years.

You also need to follow the “golden rules” in Section 8.4 on Page 9.

The Director of Natural Sciences (or their delegated representative) is available for consultations about your choice of modules and *must* approve your choice.

8.2 Modules for Natural Sciences Students

The modules that form the Natural Sciences programme are listed by subject on the Natural Sciences website, see Page 1 and students should adhere to the rules discussed in Section 8.4 below.

Students studying within the Natural Sciences programme will often progress from one year to the next in a particular subject, whether they are studying for a Natural Sciences degree or a Joint Honours degree within Natural Sciences. Within a particular subject there are often modules that must be taken to allow this progression and these modules are listed in each subject section on the Natural Sciences website.

For students following a Joint Honours degree within Natural Sciences, there are often specific modules required in each year and these are listed by subject on the website. For students not following a Joint Honours, there is often a free choice of Level 3 modules in the final year, unless the subject section on the website specifies particular modules. Note that B.Sc. students need to take a Capstone module in Year 3 and M.Sci. students must undertake a Project in Year 4.

Note that the final digit of each module code {1, 2, 3, 7, 8} indicates whether it is a 20, 40, 60, 10 or 30 credits. Also, the first digit tells you the Level at which the module is delivered.

You can find out more details about each module on the website by clicking on the module code.

8.3 Rules for selecting modules: Freshers

There is a self-contained guide for selecting modules at

www.dur.ac.uk/natural.sciences/freshers/

where Freshers follow the 4 steps and complete the form about what they want to study. These choices are not binding (students can change their mind up to the third week of term) but thinking carefully about what students want to get out of their degree, while they have time, will save time and stress on arrival in Durham. This is a separate process from the official registration process that takes place through DUO and will fast-track the approval of registration.

8.4 Rules for Selecting Modules: Existing Students

This section is written for students taking modules in the academic year 2018-2019. If you:

- are uncertain of the interpretation of these rules;
- have a *really* strong urge to break the rules;
- need to discuss overarching advice and options;

then you need to be proactive and seek me out before the last two weeks of term. If you have very subject specific question, then you should approach the Department Natural Sciences Liaison Officer or your Academic Advisor(s), see Section 18.2.

Please use the time you have post exams to plan your programme of study carefully. Lots of Departments run half/full day sessions where they give you a flavour of what will be up and coming in modules. Also, if you are planning on taking a significant amount of a new subject from Level 1, then it might be advisable to return to Durham for the last two days of Freshers Week so that you are able to engage with the induction activities.

The fleshed out advice below is expanded from the Faculty Handbooks, see the degree regulations reference on Page 3.

Joint-Honours Natural Sciences students

Follow the rules on the B.Sc. or M.Sci. webpage strictly:

www.dur.ac.uk/natural.sciences/prospective/bscxandy/

www.dur.ac.uk/natural.sciences/prospective/msci/

any deviation means that you will no longer be a Joint-Honours student which can have undesired consequences, for instance you can't take an MLAN module and if you divert from an M.Sci. Joint-honours pathway which includes Biology then you wouldn't be able to study *any* Biology in Year 4 and you might be required to transfer to a B.Sc. Any questions, then consult the Director of Natural Sciences.

Unfortunately, you need to read on and follow the golden rules outlined below as well as the Joint-Honours rules if you want to remain on the Joint-Honours.

Not Joint-Honours Natural Sciences students

Aim: you need to choose modules to the value of precisely 120 credits which satisfy the progression rules. If you don't know exactly what you want to do, but have a vague idea use the Joint-Honours webpages as a starting point because they show "good" module combinations. Also, the Subject pages on the Natural Sciences pages has advice and then there are some exemplars, see Section 7.7. If you don't have a vague idea, drop in for a chat having read the golden rules and sleep on it.

Golden rules:

1. Make sure that you meet the prerequisites, corequisites of the module and you are not excluded from taking it by checking the Faculty Handbook, e.g. Molecules and Cells

http://www.dur.ac.uk/faculty.handbook/module_description/?module_code=BIOL1281

If the module is Open then you can take it. If the module is Tied then you can't take it unless it is tied to CFG0, FGC0, CFG1 or CFG2.

2. If you want to do a module and you do not meet all of the criteria in the Faculty Handbook, then that means that you can't take it. There are always exceptional circumstances to break rules (*they do need to be exceptional*) and in these cases talk to the Department first, see Section 18.2 on Page 21, about whether your plan is feasible and if it is, talk to the Director of Natural Sciences in person as they will need to raise a concession. The concession will require the reasons why you need to break the rules, how the Department will support you and once we have discussed this, I will need the rationale in writing and at that stage the administrative process begins *hopefully* culminating in the Deputy Head of Faculty of Science (Education) approving the concession request.
3. Understand the implication of taking your modules next year and into future years. Use the DUO Services link "Find which modules follow on" and look at any advice on:
 - (a) Natural sciences subject pages;
 - (b) Department webpages that are linked into the subject specific pages;

- (c) DUO > Natural Sciences Info > Q & A's;
4. Your 120 credits must be timetable compatible. If you are able to add these credits and submit in DUO, chances are that they will timetable.¹¹ Otherwise:
- (a) Use the timetable checker
www.maths.dur.ac.uk/users/math.teaching/tt/module_checker.html
 to build up your selection (red/starred modules will clash to a lesser or greater degree) with modules you have already added.
 - (b) Any yellow clashes may not be a problem (you should *not* assume that everything will be OK.)
 - (c) Any red clashes are potentially catastrophic, although I can condone a small degree of acceptability. *If you wish to take modules that clash, then you must let me know so that you are able to register your choices in DUO*, see Section 8.5 below. The deal is that:
 - If the clash is for no more than 5 weeks, this is acceptable on the understanding that:
 - you make good any clashes;
 - that you inform the Department with whom you miss the commitments and let them know your arrangements to make good;
 - prioritize compulsory activities (a “■” in the Faculty Handbook) otherwise you may get a warning later in the year for missing classes and this could ultimately lead to being placed on a Academic Progress Notice.
 - If the clash is for more than 5 weeks, you will need an exceptional reason (such as this is a key prerequisite for next year¹²) and you must see me in person to convince me of your argument as I will need to give permission for you to break the rules. If we make an agreement, I will need the rationale in writing. Unfortunately, I cannot enter into any dialogue by e-mail as this is not an efficient use of time.
 - (d) The module checker also has some Department links at the top of each column added with specific advice¹³.
5. Check the Q & A's area which has some useful advice on transferring to a single honours programme at the end of the first-year.

Overarching rules are that:

- B.Sc. students must take at least 20 and not more than 60 credits of Capstone modules in Year 3 from at most two Departments.
- Students are allowed to take: a 20 credit modules given by the Centre for Language Studies in Year 1; another 20 credit module in Year 2; **no** credits in Year 3.
- Any subject in which you take at least 40 credits from the second year onward will be listed on your degree certificate that will appear in alphabetical order.

Year specific rules:

Year 1 → Year 2

¹¹It could be the case that the alternative classes don't timetable, e.g. (b) comes in to play below.

¹²It costs nothing to ask, but as we need consistency don't be surprised if the answer is not positive.

¹³Particularly useful in the case of Chemistry as it shows the structure of modules.

- On the B.Sc. follow the advice on www.dur.ac.uk/natural.sciences/current/capstone/ rules for *at least one subject* because you will have to do Capstone modules.
- On the B.Sc., you must do at least 50% science in Years 2 and 3 (be cautious at this stage to give yourself flexibility next year.)
- On the M.Sc., if you are not following one of the M.Sc. Joint-Honours routes, check the “Natural Sciences website > M.Sc. Degrees > Year 4 in 1 Subject” as you may need to take 120 credits at Level 4 in Year 4 in one subject.
- At least 90 credits must be at Level 2.
- At most 30 credits can be at Level 1.
- You can take at most 80 credits in one subject.
- No Level 3 module may be taken.
- You should take at least 40 credits of two subjects in Year 2 that you can continue into Year 3.
- You can take up to three subjects, but don’t spread yourself too thin.
- Aim to have no less than 10 modules available in the final year to help maximize the possibility of timetabling your modules if you go for an “eclectic” mix.

Year 2 → Year 3

- At least 90 credits must be at Level 3.
- At most 30 credits can be at Level 2.
- No credits may be taken at Level 1 not even Centre for Language Studies (MLAN) modules.
- You can take at most 100 credits in one subject.
- You are allowed to do up to three subjects, but don’t spread yourself too thin.
- On the B.Sc., you must do at least 50% science in Years 2 and 3.
- On the B.Sc. you must take at least 20 credits and no more than 60 credits of Capstone modules from at most two Departments.
- On the M.Sc., check the “Natural Sciences website > M.Sc. Degrees > Year 4 in 1 Subject” as you need to take 120 credits at Level 4 in Year 4
- M.Sc. students combining more than one subject need to aim to have no less than 10 modules available in the final year to help maximize the possibility of timetabling your modules.

Year 3 → Year 4

- All modules must be at Level 4.
- You can take all modules in one subject.
- You are allowed to do up to three subjects, but this is almost unheard of.

Adding modules to DUO

If you are reasonably certain about what you want to study next year, I would like to strongly encourage you to submit your module choices to DUO - even if you don't submit them. That way I can check them and if necessary intercept without you needing to do anything. Note that you are *not able to add your modules in DUO* if there is a *timetable clash* in which case:

- Ensure that you meet the criteria in 4(c) of the “Golden Rules” above.
- Add as many of your favourite 120 credits in DUO;
- E-mail me with ”CLASH IN DUO” as the subject line;
- Tell me the module you want to add and the module it clashes with;
- Don't tell me anything else except your name!¹⁴

Alternatively, you could come to see me in person to get a module override.

8.5 Registration and Related Deadlines

If you follow the guidelines above, then once you have selected your modules in DUO and completed the registration process with Departments (see Registration for modules post in DUO announcements for dates etc.) I will register you in your absence, although it is always good to see you!

For guidance on registration from Departments look for any e-mails they might have sent you. There is also some coordinates advice in DUO Announcements.

If you have a plan to leave Durham before registration then you need to bear in mind that some Departments arrange activities in the weeks following exams. As for the process of registration itself, I strongly recommend that you liaise with all of your Departments and follow my advice about the registration process.

Key Dates

- The Faculty Handbook is normally published on the first day of Easter Term starts.
- The Natural Sciences webpages are normally updated shortly after the Faculty Handbook is released.
- The Timetable is normally published three weeks before the end of Easter Term.
- Registration in DUO for individual modules normally opens three weeks before the end of Easter Term.
- Natural Sciences registration normally takes place on the last two days of Easter Term.
- In Section 2 on Page 1, key University dates are highlighted.

¹⁴Yes, a bit extreme but I find out everything I need to know as part of that process except possibly your name which I might be able to get from your e-mail account!

8.6 Changing Modules

Once you have completed registration, the process of switching modules is electronic and students should visit the Director to switch a module or complete a form available on the Durham network from “DUO > Natural Sciences Info > Services”. In the Science Faculty you can switch modules up until the end of Week 3 of Michaelmas. This is not uniform across the University, so significant changes in module registration should take place in Weeks 1 and 2 and minor changes in Weeks 2 and 3.

8.7 Fieldtrips

Natural Sciences students have no obligatory fieldtrips associated with their programme of study. However, based on students’ individual module choices there might be a fieldtrip element. The cost of some fieldtrips may be subsidized by or covered completely by the University. In cases where costs are not covered in full, students will be required to incur the associated costs and they should consult the relevant Departments for further guidance prior to registration.

9 Changing Degree Programme

Details about changing degrees can be found at www.dur.ac.uk/natural.sciences/current/faqs/ in the “Registration, degrees and modules” section. Switching between the B.Sc. and M.Sci. degree programmes is routine, but should normally take place in the first three weeks of Michaelmas Term or at registration in the last 3 weeks of Easter Term. After that point it requires intervention by the Director.

Normally, there are two ways into the Natural Sciences degree programme:

- at the beginning of the first year, either via the normal UCAS application process or once students arrive in Durham which is preferred¹⁵
- at the end of the first year by transferring from a Single Honours degree within the Faculty of Science at Durham University (note that it is not possible to make this transfer from Engineering). Such a transfer will require students to achieve an average mark of 55% in Year 1 exams.

All transfers require permission from the Deputy Head of Faculty of Science (Education) which you should not assume will always be granted.

It is also possible, for students to transfer from a Natural Sciences degree to a Single Honours degree in the Faculty of Science at the end of the first year¹⁶, see Discussion Board in DUO or www.dur.ac.uk/natural.sciences/freshers/transfers/. This assumes that you take the appropriate modules in the first year (normally 60 credits) and the department responsible for the Single Honours degree are willing to support the transfer and have space. Permission will also be needed from the Deputy Head of Faculty of Science (Education)

¹⁵;

¹⁶See <http://www.dur.ac.uk/natural.sciences/freshers/transfers/>

10 International Opportunities

All students have the opportunity to take a year abroad. There is currently the Erasmus¹⁷ exchange programmes and the Overseas Exchange Programme. Within Natural Sciences students on the M.Sci. can apply to do a replacement year abroad in their Year 3 and B.Sc. students can do an additional year abroad between Years 2 and 3. Exchanges with universities outside of the EU are available which are allocated by the International Office

www.dur.ac.uk/international/studyabroad/exchange/outgoing/partnerunis/
on a competitive basis. Erasmus⁺ exchanges are allocated by Departments
www.dur.ac.uk/international/studyabroad/erasmus/outgoing/degree/where/
Second year students need to attend the Study Abroad Fair, which takes place in late October or early November, where they can find out more about how to secure a placement as part of their degree.

The process of applying for an Overseas Placement can be found on the International Office website

www.dur.ac.uk/international/studyabroad/exchange/outgoing/howtoapply/
and for European Universities at
www.dur.ac.uk/international/studyabroad/erasmus/outgoing/nextsteps
which have distinct deadlines (for the OEP it is towards the end of November and for Erasmus it is in January). One key distinction that you need to be wary of when completing the form is that you need to get approval from each of your subject Departments for modules you wish to take as well as for Natural Sciences. Note that for the Overseas Exchange Programme, Natural Sciences takes the lead but on Erasmus, it is the Department that holds the Erasmus exchange agreement.

Further details, including the Study Abroad Handbook and details of all applications (which should have been anonymized) are kept can be found at:

DUO > Natural Sciences Info > Content > Year Abroad.

For summer schools, there would normally be a fee involved and unlike the Year Abroad degree your study would not count towards your degree but it would be a way to internationalize students CV.

11 Placement Opportunities

Placements are increasingly important for student employability. A recent report by High Fliers Research Limited entitled “The Graduate Market in 2013” stated that a third of 2013 entry-level positions were expected to be filled by graduates who have already worked for their organisations – either through industrial placements, vacation work or sponsorships. Also more than half of recruiters warn that graduates who have had no previous work experience at all are unlikely to be successful during the selection process and have little or no chance of receiving a job offer for their organisations’ graduate programmes. With this in mind we offer a B.Sc. Natural Sciences with Placement degree. Placements are carried out between the penultimate year and final year. The placements must be a minimum of 40 weeks duration, with an emphasis on a job description or project related to the broad area of at least one core subject of the degree. Students must be in good academic standing with an average of at least 55% to be accepted for placement.

Students are responsible for finding and securing their own placement. The Placement Officer will circulate details of any placement opportunities that they are made aware of via DUO. The Placement Officer will work with the Careers, Employability and Enterprise Centre to develop

¹⁷Students may take a European placement with the agreement of a Durham single honours department. In the future we expect to continue to do so.

and circulate lists of possible placement providers. The placement must be at a recognised and reputable, UK based company, organisation or institution to ensure that students receive good quality and well supervised work experience in a healthy and supportive environment, preferably with opportunities to undertake their own research project. All placement providers must meet the University's Health and Safety criteria.

Placements (and placement providers) must be approved by the Placement Officer before the student accepts the offer. Assessment is via a short report or reflective portfolio (6,000 word limit) that is required that describes the work or an aspect of the work experience that students undertook whilst on placement. The Natural Sciences Placement Officer will also ask the employer to prepare a short report about the student's performance whilst on placement. A placement tutor will visit the host organisation once and write a short report about the visit.

The report and performance review collectively will be awarded a provisional pass or fail for the placement year. The external examiner will review the submitted work and the provisional pass/fail designation during the June exam period. Subsequent comments from the external examiner will be relayed to the Natural Sciences Board of Examiners at the final exam June meeting and official awarding of the pass or fail designation be conferred at this meeting by the Board of Examiners.

If the student passes the year, the degree title conferment will be "with placement". If the student fails the year, the degree will not carry the "with placement" designation however failure will have no impact on the student's overall average or final degree classification.

Further details, including the Placement Handbook can be found at:

DUO > Natural Sciences Info > Content > Placement Year.

12 Accredited Routes Through Natural Sciences

Certain routes through the Natural Sciences degree will result in degrees that are accredited by a professional body. These routes can be followed as part of a Joint Honours degree or a Natural Sciences degree in more than two subjects. Currently accredited pathways exist for the Royal Society of Chemistry, Geological Society and the British Psychology Society. Definitive information on accreditation can be found in the B.Sc. and M.Sci. programme regulations in the final few paragraphs.

The Institute of Physics

There is "recognized" status for some Joint-Honours MSci degrees involving physics. Note that individual graduates of non-accredited programmes who are keen on IoP membership may apply directly to the IoP — they supply evidence of which modules they took and how these compare with an accredited/recognized programme.

M.Sci. in Natural Sciences students who take at least 120 credits, with at least 60 credits beyond year one, and a project (which need not be in physics) are eligible to have their degree recognized.

13 Student Engagement

Natural Sciences students have three levels of relationships in their learning: module; department; programme. The University requires that questionnaires be filled in by all students. The questionnaires are intended for you to tell your departments about your learning experience in a way that will lead to the development and improvement of teaching. Further, an annual survey is made to give your views at a programme level.

The Director of Natural Sciences summarizes the questionnaire results and Staff-Student Consultative Committee recommends the changes proposed to the Natural Sciences Management Committee. The Director of Natural Sciences reports its response to the annual survey at the end of the academic year; you can see “the report in: Natural Sciences Info”. Your views are important in quality assurance and enhancement and are treated in confidence. Through these channels, students can air their views on teaching and learning issues and influence changes in the delivery of the curriculum.

The current mechanism for appointing subject representatives is determined by the Student Union in consultation with the University Education Committee.

13.1 Commenting on a module or on the Degree Programme

A channel to air views about modules is at the departmental Student-Staff Consultative Committees. Students who wish to make comments about a module, should go to their department Liaison Officer as a first point of contact, see Section 18.2.

The role of the Natural Sciences Student-Staff Consultative Committee is overarching where we consider the Natural Sciences degree and broader issues, not problems with specific modules which should be raised with the department SSCC. You can find the names of these representatives in the Services area of DUO. If you have any comments about the degree programme itself these can be made to the Director of Natural Sciences or your representative on the Natural Sciences Student-Staff Committee Committee.

The Director of Natural Sciences uses a number of modes to obtain student input and feedback, such as focus groups and pop questionnaires. The results of such ad hoc consultation is reported to the Natural Sciences Management Committee and to the SSCC.

13.2 Questionnaires

You will be asked to complete questionnaires for modules and your replies will be considered carefully by the Departments responsible for the module. You will also be asked to complete an annual questionnaire for the Natural Sciences degree programme. Your responses will be carefully considered by the Management Committee for the Natural Sciences degree.

The National Student Survey is an on-line questionnaire for final year students. The results of the survey are published nationally and are used by prospective applicants to assist them in their choice of university. You are therefore encouraged to complete the on-line survey to make your views known about your experience of Natural Sciences at Durham.

14 Withdrawing from your Programme

Details about the financial elements of withdrawing can be found in the Tuition Fees section of the Student Welcome Guide, see Page 3.

15 Appeals and Complaints

There are details about making complaints and appeals in the Student Welcome Guide, see Page 3.Assessment

15.1 Introduction

The University's Learning and Teaching Handbook, see
www.dur.ac.uk/learningandteaching.handbook/.

provides definitive information on everything related to learning, teaching and assessment procedures.

Modules may be assessed using a variety of methods. Details are given under the Section headed "Summative Assessment" on each module description on the Faculty Handbook web pages, see

www.dur.ac.uk/faculty.handbook/

Please note that you will be asked to undertake other work which will not contribute to your final module mark ("Formative Assessment").

Students are expected to meet all their academic commitments, such as submission of work and attendance at classes. Failure to do so may ultimately result in students being required to withdraw from the University. In the event that students are experiencing problems managing deadlines they should approach the relevant Departmental Chair of the Board of Examiners/Departmental Administrator/delegated representative to see if an extension can be given.

15.2 Other exam information

Key information on Timetable Publication Dates; Main Examination Period; Preliminary Year Examination Boards; Natural Sciences Second, Third and Final Year Examination Boards; Publication Dates can be found at:

www.dur.ac.uk/learningandteaching.handbook/6/appendices/

Other dates can be found at:

www.dur.ac.uk/student.registry/student/assessment/exam_timetable/

and there are more key University dates in Section 2 on Page 1.

15.3 Plagiarism

The University considers plagiarism and other forms of malpractice as serious offenses and has produced the following statement on plagiarism:

"In formal examinations and all assessed work prescribed in degree, diploma and certificate regulations, candidates should take care to acknowledge the work and opinions of others and avoid any appearance of representing them as their own. Unacknowledged quotation or close paraphrasing of other people's writing, amounting to the presentation of other persons' thoughts or writings as one's own, is plagiarism and will be penalized. In extreme cases, plagiarism may be classed as a dishonest practice under Section IV, 2(a) (viii) of the General Regulations and may lead to expulsion. The facilitation of plagiarism through publication may also be classed as a dishonest practice under Section IV, 2(a) (ix) of the General Regulations and may lead to expulsion. (See also General Regulation XI, Intellectual Property Rights). Any student work may be uploaded to a plagiarism detection system, such as that operated by JISC, at the discretion of the department concerned if plagiarism is suspected. The system may also be used routinely to screen work for plagiarized text: for this purpose students are required to sign a declaration at registration authorizing the uploading of their work onto the system."

Further details can be found in the Learning and Teaching Handbook (see Page 18).

15.4 Calculators

The use of electronic calculators is allowed in some module examinations and other module assessments. The only models that will be allowed in science are either a Casio fx-83 GTPLUS or a Casio fx-85 GTPLUS. In particular, examination invigilators will refuse to allow a candidate to use any calculator other than the model(s) specified, which will be explicitly stated on the front of the examination paper.

During examinations no sharing of calculators between candidates will be permitted, nor will calculators or replacement batteries be supplied by the Department or the Student Registry.

16 Serious Adverse Circumstance, Medical Evidence and Personal Difficulties

If students feel that they are having personal difficulties that are affecting your ability of study effectively, then they are *strongly* encouraged to visit the Director of Natural Sciences at your earliest convenience. It is important that you do this as soon as you are aware of the problem, for instance on receipt of the first warning from the department as the longer you leave your personal difficulties the harder it is to make a satisfactory solution.

The University policy on medical or personal problems is as follows:

Students should inform boards of examiners of any “serious adverse circumstances” (such as illness or bereavement) which seriously affects his/her assessment. These are circumstances beyond the student’s control - for example, illness or bereavement - which have seriously affected his/her work and need to be brought to the attention of the board of examiners when they make a final decision on the student’s progression to the next year of study or his/her class of degree. The board of examiners has discretion to take serious adverse circumstances into account when making decisions regarding progression to the following year of study or the degree classification. Students must inform the board of examiners before they meet.

The University Learning and Teaching Handbook contains detailed guidance on procedures for student absence and illness (see Page 18). It is important to be aware that it is a student’s responsibility to inform a Board of Examiners of any difficulties by using the Serious Adverse Circumstances form which can be obtained from Colleges or Departments (see Appendix (A6.11 a) of the Learning and Teaching Handbook) — you should submit any SAC to *all* affected Departments and Natural Sciences. You should not assume that because you have told somebody such as a member of staff or college tutor or counsellor, that the Board of Examiners will be aware of the difficulty — you should always complete a form. As the SAC is graded by a number of Departments the Natural Sciences Board of Examiners has a Scrutiny Sub-Committee that has a process for addressing differences in gradings by Departments.

17 Progression Regulations and Qualification Conventions

Definitive information is given in:

www.dur.ac.uk/university.calendar/volumeii/undergraduate.programmes/

but there is a link to the succinct regulations flowchart in Section 2.1 of the Student Welcome Guide, see Page 3 of this booklet, which gives clear advice in the event that you fail one or more modules. In this case it is helpful to know that a compensatable fail is a mark is no less than 30. A

module is deemed to be “non-compensatable” under the programme regulations with a ~ mark in the programme regulations. Natural Sciences has no non-compensatable modules but note in the even that you fail a module which is a prerequisite for a module in later years then you would not be able to take that module in future years.

17.1 Qualification Conventions

Definitive information is given in:

www.dur.ac.uk/university.calendar/volumeii/undergraduate.programmes/

on the classification of Honours degrees. Below some elements are extracted which may be of use/interest:

Year 1

Some Level 1 modules offered in the Faculty of Science contain Faculty approved examinations, called Collections, which you are required to take in January at the beginning of Epiphany Term. Collections are intended to provide information on how you have progressed in the early stages of your degree programme.

At the end of your first year you will be required to complete your Preliminary Honours Examinations by May/June. You will need to pass (a mark of not less than 40%) in each module in order to proceed to your second year. If you do not pass a first year module(s), you are allowed to resit up to 120 credits but you may only resit each component of assessment *once*.

Following your resit examinations, if you are ineligible for an Honours degree you may be allowed to proceed to the second year of the Ordinary Degree in Natural Sciences subject to the certain conditions.

If you do not pass your Preliminary Honours Examinations, having exhausted your right to resit, you will be required to withdraw from the University. The marks awarded for your Preliminary Honours Examinations will not count towards the final classification of your degree.

Year 2 and beyond

You are allowed to resit up to 60 credits¹⁸ needs you at the end of the second year, but the marks obtained in the resit will be capped at 40%. There are no resit examinations in the third or fourth year.

On the M.Sci., B.Sc. with Placement and B.Sc. with Year Abroad there is a 55% threshold that students need to achieve at the end of Year 2.

The final degree result for a B.Sc. is determined by combining the average mark for all modules taken in the second year with the average mark of all modules taken in the third year in the ratio 2:3.

The final degree result for a M.Sci. is determined by combining the average mark for all modules taken in the second year with the average mark of all modules taken in the third year and with the average mark of all modules taken in the fourth year in the ratio 2:3:4.

18 Student Support and Guidance

18.1 Introduction

In this section we provide information about getting academic advice, for other forms of advice see the Student Welcome Guide, see Page 3, which is *extremely informative*. In particular it offers

¹⁸When you include compensation that means that at your first sitting you can fail up to 80 credits which must include a fail in a 20 credit module with a mark which is not less than 30%.

advice on: Careers and Employment; International Support; Health Safety and Security; Services for Students with Disabilities; University Counselling Service.

Overarching aspects of academic performance and progress (where the sum of modules are to be considered) are provided by the Director of Natural Sciences through an open door policy. The Director can provide guidance, advice and support to students of appropriate future modules to take. All support and guidance is provided through a number of mechanisms which include, but are not limited to: talks on progression; bookable individual meetings; open door policy; webpages; DUO; e-mail.

Where students wish to find out about individual module performance, progress, feedback or content at a module level, these needs are best addressed by the departments, see next section.

18.2 Academic Advisors and Natural Sciences Liaison Officers

The twelve departments that contribute to the Joint-Honours degrees in Natural Sciences have Liaison Officers who are able to advise directly on: module content; skills and knowledge developed by studying modules in that department; members of staff who are responsible for dealing with Mitigating Circumstances and Serious Adverse Circumstances. The list of contacts is available on the Natural Sciences website under the “Current Students” area and also in the Services tab in DUO.

Any student that takes 40 credits in any *science* subject (namely Group 1) will automatically be allocated an advisor in the first few weeks of Year 1. If this fails to happen, then visit the department/school office to politely request for one. The role of the advisor should be described is described at:

www.dur.ac.uk/learningandteaching.handbook/2/principles_for_student_support/

and fleshed out in the Department Handbook¹⁹ **It is important** to understand that you will not be allocated an Advisor from without science and therefore in those circumstances, you should raise questions with your Liaison Officer.

In the first instance your science academic advisor(s) in that Department/school should be the first point of contact if the question is not Natural Sciences specific. Note that if you take modules outside of Groups 1 and 2 and you need advice, seek the relevant Combined Honours Coordinators.

18.3 Difficulties with the Content of a Module

If you are having academic difficulties in a particular module, you should consult: the lecturer or your tutor; Departmental Advisor; Liaison Officer. If you feel unable to do this or you are continuing to struggle, you are *strongly* encouraged to visit the Director of Natural Sciences to discuss the issue and possible solutions at an early date.

18.4 Deadlines

In this section we discuss deadlines and how to approach them. The first thing to understand is that a summative deadline (where they count towards the module mark) is *not* seen as being a guide to do something, but *needs* to be seen in strict terms. Managing workloads by planning ahead and dealing with deadlines are key life skills. We know that it is not always possible to meet deadlines for perfectly good reasons. For instance, you might have a personal problem or

¹⁹ A link to an old description of what you might expect to happen each year can be found by clicking on this link in the softcopy.

competing deadlines. Sometime when students don't know where to start they talk to me to get advice on how best to approach the problem and generally I give the following advice:

- **Competing summative deadlines:** In such cases you should try to prioritize the work, but if this simply isn't possible then you should approach the relevant module leader or departmental administrator for advice to see if an extension could be given. Official departmental advice on what to do is normally contained in Handbooks or in the module information provide or on DUO — ask at each Department for a Handbook if you don't already have one as each one will be slightly different.
- **Formative deadline:** Contact the module leader or individual who is managing the marking process. Bigger issues: Talk to the Departmental Chair of the Board of Examiners/Departmental Administrator/Liaison Officer.
- **Personal problem** In this case there are lots of people to talk to College Welfare, Disability Support in the Palatine Centre, Advisors. I am always happy for you to talk to me . We might not be able to fix your personal problem, but we can most certainly give good advice on your first step(s).

The Natural Sciences Consultative Committee has discussed at length whether coordination of departmental deadlines is desirable, reasonable and feasible. In the end we rejected the idea as it would duplicate information and increase the possibility of misinformation and potential for errors — for instance if a department changed a deadline and didn't communicate these changes to Natural Sciences.

Departments normally advertise summative deadlines at the start of modules or in handbooks well in advance in the Faculty of Science. So hopefully you have a better understanding of what is expected from you and how you can cope if you get into trouble with your deadlines. You can help yourself before it becomes a problem by using the support that is available discussed in the next section.

18.5 Academic Skills Programme

The Academic Skills Programme is based in the Careers Centre. The programme aims to support all undergraduate students to develop their study skills and comprises face-to-face workshops, online provision and one-to-one support in six thematic areas: IT Skills; Maths and Statistics; Communication Skills; Information Skills; Literacy Skills; Personal Effectiveness, see

<https://www.dur.ac.uk/academic.skills/>
for more details.

18.6 Self-Support: Bespoke Information

By logging at a CIS PC, then at “DUO > Natural Sciences Info > Services” existing students can find bespoke information:

- A personalized timetable;
- Other Natural Sciences students registered on their modules;
- Sources of departmental advice, including the Student-Staff representatives and liaison offices;
- Guidance on module progression.

There is also a gallery of photographs of Natural Sciences students on the corridor leading to the Directors Office.

18.7 Self-Support: FAQ's

The “Frequently Asked Questions” Section on the Natural Sciences website (see Page 1) gives answers to frequent queries about the degree programme.

A few very specific pieces of useful advice:

- The Physics Report writing guidelines, see www.dur.ac.uk/physics/students/assessment/reportwriting/ provides excellent advice for any Natural Sciences student.
- If you have to find a room, you will be interested to know that for the iPhone there is a “DU Guide” app. Static links where you can find out about rooms at www.dur.ac.uk/cis/local/facilities/search/ www.dur.ac.uk/timetable/local/roominfo/location/ and there is an excel spreadsheet: www.dur.ac.uk/timetable/roominfo/durhamrooms/
- The list of library webpages and liaison librarians for each subject highlight information sources and also provide links to research skills training materials from these pages, see www.dur.ac.uk/library/resources/subject/

19 Graduation

The date of graduation is normally advertised at:

www.dur.ac.uk/ceremonies/congregation/schedule/summer/

Normally, there is a celebration event afterwards where we there will be a prize giving ceremony and a photographer will be taking pictures for us to post on the Natural Sciences website:

www.dur.ac.uk/natural.sciences/graduates/

If you are visiting a school and would like any promotional material, then please contact us at the address below.

20 Career Prospects

20.1 Introduction

Durham University has an excellent record for graduate recruitment. Natural Sciences offers you a broad career path. Many employers prefer a broadly based multidisciplinary science degree rather than specialism in a single field. Recent graduates have gone into accountancy, administration, advertising, the Armed Forces, banking, the “City”, the Civil Service, financial management, general management, information technology, sales, marketing, publishing, retailing, teaching, telecommunications, industrial, academic research and many other careers. The Natural Sciences Careers website

www.dur.ac.uk/natural.sciences/prospective/careers/

gives a good account of what our students have done with a Natural Sciences degree. To quote Deloitte:

We offer a vast scope of services to a wide range of clients from a variety of industry sectors. As such, it is essential that this diversity of client base is reflected in our people and the skills they can offer. Attributes gained from a Durham University degree include critical thinking, an analytically approach and ability to reason with information; alongside experience in building relationships and leading teams. These skills are put into daily practice in Professional Service and is why, year on year, we return to Durham University to recruit such talented individuals to our Firm.

20.2 Placement Years

Students are encouraged to find work experience (including placements and/or internships) during their studies, in order to maximise their chances of securing the job they want after graduation. The careers service have an online database²⁰ of such opportunities, which all students can access.

Full year placements in students' penultimate year of study on the B.Sc. are possible, see Section 11 on Page 15, but not currently formally recognized as part of the M.Sci. degree. Students on the M.Sci. degree are advised to talk to the Natural Sciences Placement Officer prior to application to receive appropriate advice and support.

Placement years with employers are recognised as a valuable way of increasing employability skills and gaining essential work experience to improve graduate job prospects; they also help to increase maturity, improve technical, industry or subject knowledge, and gain transferable skills which will support their final year academic studies.

Students registered for the B.Sc. placement degrees pay fees at a reduced rate and are a registered student with many of the standard benefits of being a student. M.Sci. students on a year out would not be a registered Durham University student meaning that no tuition fees would be payable, but neither would the student have recourse to any public funding from the Student Loans Company (e.g. maintenance loan).

20.3 For existing students

The Careers, Employability and Enterprise Centre (CEEC) is located on the ground floor of the Palatine Building on the Science Site. CEEC are able to offer students information, advice, skills development, opportunities for entrepreneurial or business start-up activities, work experience and contact with employers, even after get your degree. However, you are strongly advised that prior to or on arrival at Durham you complete the University Skills Audit to discover the skills have and those that you need to build on for employers. You can find this through DUO under the **Employability and Skills** tab.

There is a dedicated area of DUO "Natural Sciences Info > Careers" which has links to the CEEC website, a filmed presentation by a Careers Liaison Officer and also advice on where you can get a reference and statement of marks from. In particular the Director will write a generic reference for any student on request and where the reference needs to be enhanced, so that it is appropriate for the job, additional information should be forthcoming from a reputable third party for inclusion in a timely manner. Where a student requires a subject specific reference, they are directed to their Departmental Advisor, Liaison Officer or other appropriate staff in the department.

To access an official letter confirming your student status, log on to DUO and click on the "*Banner Self Service*" link. A new window will open and you will see a new link for "*Confirmation of Student Status*"

²⁰Students should follow this link: <https://www.dur.ac.uk/careers/> and click on the tab Access the student services portal this will take you to the database, you can then apply filters to look for a range of vacancies internships, placements, paid work, volunteering etc. and also filter by sector e.g. scientific services, education, engineering etc.

20.4 Summer Placements

Summer Placements are becoming increasingly important to be able to secure to facilitate getting a job and CEEC have a webpage where existing opportunities are listed. We advertise any adhoc e-mails we get on DUO and some Departments choose to send out blanket e-mails. In terms of work within department, the University has some schemes that are formally advertised also some lecturers do sometimes take students on for a few weeks and occasionally can get funding. Typically, these kind of opportunities get “advertised” by lecturers within a relevant lecture. You can also approach individual lecturers and ask them if they will be able to accommodate a summer work experience student.

21 English Language Centre

Durham University provides English language and literacy support as part of the university’s overall tuition package which is free of charge to Durham University students. All students wishing to receive this support are required to take the University’s English language assessment so we can provide you with the tuition you need and help you join the most appropriate classes. See

www.dur.ac.uk/englishlanguage.centre/

22 University Codes of Practice

The University has a number of Codes of Practice and Conduct on a number of matters ranging Diversity & Equality; Respect at Work and Study; Freedom of Speech; ITS Public Facilities; etc., see

www.dur.ac.uk/university.calendar/volumei/codes_of_practice/

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