School of Geography and Planning

Undergraduate Degree Programmes 2025
Top 100
in the world for Geography.

Accredited
RGS (Royal Geographical Society)
RTPI (Royal Town Planning Institute)
RICS (Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors)

92%
of graduates were in employment and/or further study, due to start a new job or course, or doing other activities such as travelling, 15 months after the end of their course.

Committed
to sustainability and environmental stewardship, in teaching and in School operations.

12th
in the UK for Town and Country Planning and Landscape Design.

Connected
with industry partners, governmental organisations, and NGOs, providing students with valuable placement opportunities and real-world experience.

Leading
at the forefront of research in areas such as climate change adaptation, urban regeneration, and sustainable development.

An interdisciplinary approach integrating human geography and planning, enabling students to tackle complex global challenges from multiple perspectives.

Graduate Outcomes 2020/21

Source: The Times Good University Guide 2024

Source: QS World University Rankings by Subject 2024
We’re passionate about understanding and shaping the world around us.

At heart, we’re innovators and problem solvers, dedicated to advancing knowledge and practice in geography and planning - and turning this into action.

We’re working on pressing global issues, from climate change and urbanisation to social justice and sustainable development.

We offer a dynamic learning environment where you’re encouraged to explore, question, and create.

You’ll develop a range of academic and transferable skills and a deep knowledge across your subject areas. From critical and creative thinking to ethical awareness, you’ll become an informed and responsible global citizen, embracing the differences that make us individuals.

Through fieldwork, collaborative projects, and real-world case studies, you’ll gain practical skills and insights that prepare you for a wide range of successful careers in sectors such as government, industry, academia, and non-profit organisations.

Diversity is central to who we are and what we do. We embrace different perspectives, experiences, and backgrounds, recognising the richness and strength that they bring to our community.

Whether it’s through our inclusive classroom discussions, progressive research collaborations, or acting on student feedback, we’re committed to creating an environment where everyone feels valued, respected, and empowered to succeed.

There has never been a more important time to study the subjects of human geography and planning.

We have both an opportunity and a responsibility to tackle the human, environmental and social challenges facing communities around the world. Together we can transform places, delivering better outcomes for people and planet. We’re committed to change and our whole approach - from our teaching to our research and how we operate and behave - is shaped by our core values.

We think critically and creatively; we work collaboratively and openly; we champion diversity; we take care of the environment; and we support placemaking which contributes positively to the wellbeing of future generations.

Our vibrant, solution-seeking and diverse community is a place where I’m sure you’ll fulfil your ambitions and thrive. Join us to build a better future for all.

Professor Gill Bristow
Head of the School of Geography and Planning

Watch Professor Pete Mackie talk about why you should choose to study at the School of Geography and Planning.
Imagine yourself standing at the edge of a bustling cityscape or looking out over endless green fields, equipped not just with a degree, but with a wealth of practical experience and the confidence to tackle today’s grand challenges.
**A bridge to the professional world**

Take a step into the professional arena by choosing to take a professional placement year, an immersive experience designed to bridge the gap between academia and the workplace.

You’ll work alongside seasoned professionals and those just starting in their careers, in leading organisations, lending your knowledge and insights to real-world projects, and honing your skills in a dynamic and fast-paced environment.

Whether you’re assisting in urban regeneration projects, conducting environmental impact assessments, or analysing spatial data for government agencies, your placement year empowers you to turn theory into practice, setting the stage for a successful career ahead.

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**Your hallmark of excellence**

As you progress through your degree, you can be reassured by the knowledge that your degree carries the stamp of excellence from industry-leading accreditation bodies.

Accreditation not only validates the quality of our programmes but also opens the door to a myriad of career opportunities, both at home and abroad.

Whether you’re working towards a career in urban planning, environmental management, or policymaking, our accredited programmes equip you with skills and industry recognition.
Learning beyond the classroom

Beyond lecture theatres and textbooks, we offer practical learning opportunities that boost your academic journey. For those who don’t want to take a year out of studying, in-programme work experience gives you the chance to gain real-world know-how.

We’ve incorporated a short-term placement opportunity into the 3-year Human Geography (BSc) and Human Geography and Planning (BSc) programmes through the Geographies of Work and Employability module. You could be conducting fieldwork in diverse landscapes, analysing spatial data to solve real-world challenges, or collaborating with local communities to develop sustainable solutions to real problems.

There are also other opportunities for on-campus paid internships to work on research or teaching and learning projects, enhancing your CV, and boosting your knowledge.

Find out more

Studying in the field

Field study visits are an integral part of our curriculum, designed to provide you with hands-on experience in diverse and dynamic environments. These excursions take you to places ranging from major European cities to the scenic landscapes of Wales.

During these visits, you’ll engage in a variety of activities that bring classroom learning to life. In urban settings like Amsterdam and Barcelona, you’ll analyse complex planning and development issues, explore urban sustainability practices, and study the impact of policy decisions on city landscapes.

In rural and coastal areas of Wales, you’ll investigate environmental management practices, assess the effects of tourism on local economies, and examine strategies for rural development and conservation.

These field study visits give you practical, real-world applications of theoretical concepts. By observing and participating in real-world scenarios, you’ll develop a deeper understanding of the challenges and opportunities in geography and planning.
Our Degree Programmes

We offer three single-honours degree programmes, and all are available with the option of a professional placement year.

To fully explore what each programme offers, review their entry criteria, and dig deeper into the modules we offer and the themes of study you can explore, visit our website.
Human Geography (BSc)
UCAS code: L700

Highlights

• Accredited by the Royal Geographical Society (RGS).
• Enhance your skills - Develop your technical and practical skills with software including GIS (Geographic Information System) & Edina digimap mapping.

This programme explores the complexities of human interaction with the environment, society, and space. Through a blend of theoretical exploration and practical application, you’ll engage with key concepts in human geography, such as urbanisation, globalisation, cultural landscapes, and social inequality.

You’ll develop your knowledge and critical understanding of the complex relations between the natural and human world, and an awareness of how places outside your everyday experience are created.

Together, we’ll explore geographical ideas and practice at various spatial scales, making connections between the local, regional, national, and global levels.

The programme offers a flexible curriculum that allows you to tailor your studies to your interests, with opportunities to specialise in your chosen areas of expertise.

Human geography entails a range of topics and explores the many aspects of the subject.

The School is set in a beautiful location and the facilities are superb. The teaching staff are amazing, they make the lectures and seminars really interesting and show a lot of passion for their subject. They are always there to help and allow you to develop your full potential.

Katherine Brennan
Human Geography with a Professional Placement Year (BSc)

Watch Francesca Funnell, a human geography student, talk about why she would recommend coming to study at the School of Geography and Planning.
Human Geography and Planning (BSc)
UCAS code: LK74

Highlights

- Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI)-accredited path available.
- Develop your technical and practical skills with software including GIS (Geographic Information System) & Edina digimap mapping.

With a unique focus on both human geography and planning, this programme equips students with the interdisciplinary knowledge and practical expertise needed to make meaningful contributions to the sustainable and equitable development of our cities and regions.

Gain an understanding of global, national, and local processes of change, key environmental, social, cultural, political, and economic trends and the role that planning plays in shaping their effects on different places.

Delve into the complex dynamics of urbanisation, sustainable development, spatial planning, and social justice, gaining a nuanced understanding of how human activities shape - and are shaped - by the spaces we inhabit.

Detailed case study work through field study visits, away days and projects will give you an appreciation of transnational spatial change.

This programme can be taken on accredited and non-accredited pathways. More information is available on our website.

I would highly recommend the School of Geography and Planning. They offer great courses that are interesting, engaging, and different.

The option modules allow you to explore and find your personal passions. I’ve loved my time in the School, and am very thankful for the experiences offered, the supportive teachers, and amazing friends made.

Grace Warmington
Human Geography and Planning (BSc)

Find out more at our website.
Urban Planning and Development (BSc)
UCAS code: K490

Highlights

• Accredited by the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) (partial) and the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS).

• Enhance your skills - Develop your technical and practical skills with software including GIS (Geographic Information System) & Edina digimap mapping.

This programme focuses on the social, economic, and environmental challenges of creating better places in which to live.

Gain a comprehensive understanding of the dynamic forces shaping our cities and regions through a blend of theory, practice, and hands-on experience. You’ll explore the multifaceted aspects of urban planning, including land use, transportation, housing, economic development, and environmental sustainability.

Whether designing sustainable neighbourhoods, analysing urban growth patterns, or crafting policies to promote inclusive development, you’ll graduate with the skills and expertise needed to pursue a career in fields as diverse as urban planning, policy analysis, and community development.

With a focus on fostering creativity, critical thinking, and ethical leadership, this programme equips you with the skills and knowledge to make a real difference to the way people live, shaping more equitable, resilient, and sustainable cities for future generations.

This degree carries partial (spatial) RTPI accreditation. For full RTPI accreditation, once you have completed your spatial-accredited undergraduate degree, you need to complete a RTPI specialist-accredited master’s degree.

“I would say that this is the best place to come and learn planning. It offers the highest quality lecturers in the field.”

Kieran Horspole
Urban Planning and Development with a Professional Placement Year (BSc)

Find out more at our website.
Leading the change
Dr Francesca Sartorio

*Why did you decide to study planning?*

When I started studying - and then practicing - planning, I wanted to change this world. Planning is about managing change in space and, by doing so, mediating between interests that can be predatory and devastating on people and environments, or kind and respectful or, more often, a mix of the two.

The land is a crucial element for societies around the globe; it provides us with the means for our sustenance and shapes the contexts we live in. Its morphology, resources, limitations have the potential of enhancing, or limiting, the quality of life of localised societies and it is both the result and root of cultural arrangements.

It seemed to me, that by changing the place(s) we inhabit for the better we could push inequalities to disappear, live in tune with nature and with others - and planning is key.

Dr Ruth Potts

*What excites you about human geography and planning?*

I’ve always loved travelling and exploring new places. I noticed that each place I visited was completely unique, even though each city had many of the same things you’d expect to see in a city such as shops, houses, parks, offices and public transport.

As I got older, I became aware that all those things are not happening randomly, but have been put there by planners who have weighed up decisions around location, types of development, local community needs, and the needs of future generations of that area.

Big issues like climate change were becoming increasingly important to address, and I became interested in how I could make a difference to the world by becoming an urban planner, and influencing development to be more sustainable.

Planning excites me because it influences every part of the places we live, play and work and I love that I get to be a part of that and educating future planners to shape their communities for the better.
I choose the School of Geography and Planning because of the wide range of different modules and the interesting field trips - and Cardiff is a brilliant city. There are plenty of places to explore, and it's very student-orientated.

The structure of the course allows for plenty of time to carry out both independent study and pursue my hobbies and interests without feeling overwhelmed. It is a real honour to study in such a beautiful building.

If the course is of interest to you and if you would like the chance to live in a busy but peaceful city, then do not hesitate to take that leap and never look back.

Harry Webb
Human Geography and Planning (BSc)
Important Legal Information

The contents of this brochure relate to the Entry 2025 admissions cycle and are correct at the time of going to press in July 2024. However, there is a lengthy period of time between printing this brochure and applications being made to, and processed by us, so please check our website at: www.cardiff.ac.uk before making an application in case there are any changes to the course you are interested in or to other facilities and services described here.

Where there is a difference between the contents of this brochure and our website, the contents of the website take precedence and represent the basis on which we intend to deliver our services to you.

Your degree: Students admitted to Cardiff University study for a Cardiff University degree.

This brochure is printed on paper obtained from well managed sources using vegetable-based inks. Both the paper used in the production of this prospectus and the manufacturing process are FSC® certified.

The printers are also accredited to ISO14001, the internationally recognised environmental standard.

Mae’r ddogfen hon hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg.

This document is also available in Welsh.

Cardiff University is a registered charity, no. 1136855

This prospectus can be made available in alternative formats, including large print (text), Braille and on audio tape/CD.

To request an alternative format please contact Laura Roberts:
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To find out more about the School of Geography and Planning please visit our website:

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