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MSc Food Security



Dr Montserrat Costa Font | 20 November 2025

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Meet the programme team



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Who/what is SRUC?

- Scotland's Rural College
- Specialist HEI with a focus on land-based industries and issues
- Research and education, but also a large consultancy business. A main research provider to the Scottish Government.
- University partner in MSc delivery. You are a normal UoE/GeoSciences MSc student!

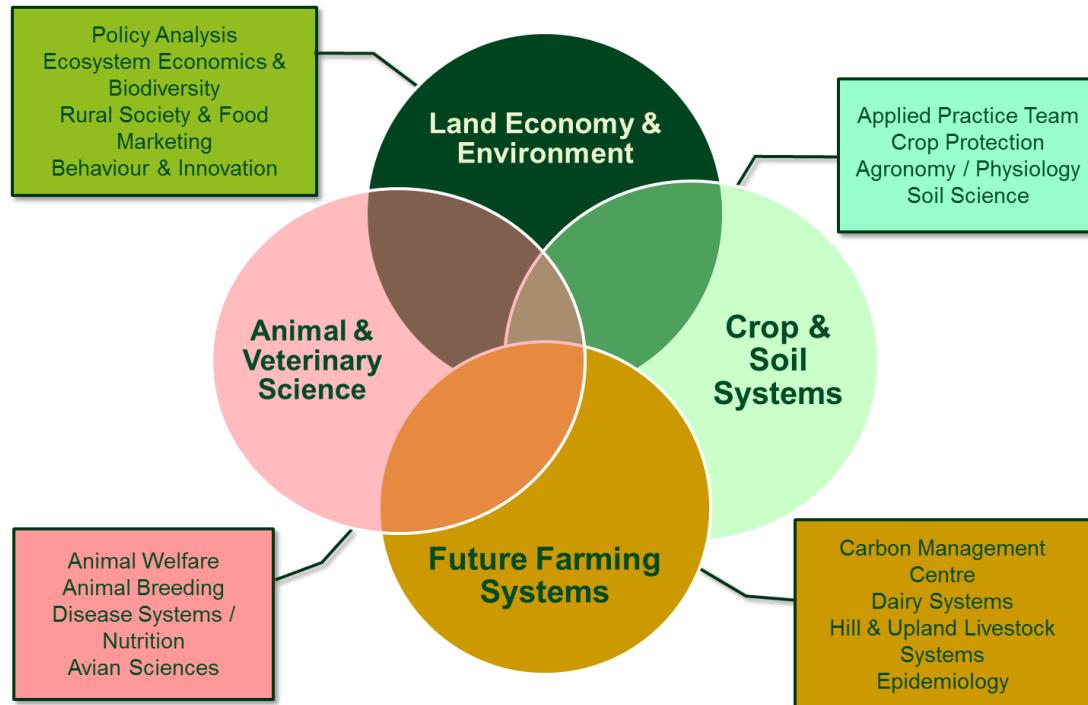


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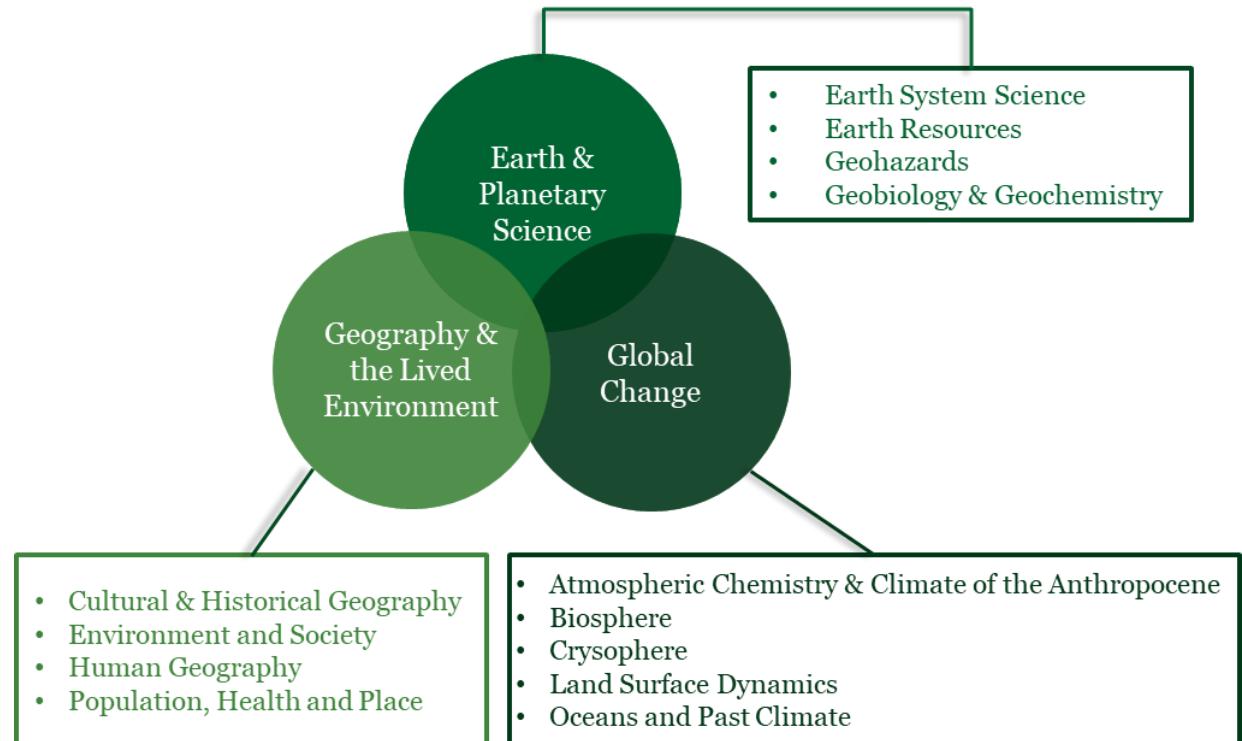


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Institutional Context



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
School of GeoSciences



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Why study MSc Food Security

Access to good and healthy food is a basic human right

- The global community is not on track to achieve Zero Hunger by 2030.
- Policies and coordinated action are essential to address inequalities and transform food systems (SDG Report 2023/24).



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Why study MSc Food Security

✓ Global Health Implications

Malnutrition contributes to disease, stunting, micronutrient deficiencies, and reduced productivity.

✓ Economic Implications

Hunger and malnutrition reduce human capital and cost the global economy trillions through lost productivity and slower development.

✓ Moral & Equity Dimensions

Persistent hunger exists despite global food surpluses — raising issues of justice and inequality.

✓ Political & Social Stability

Climate shocks, conflicts, and rising costs have worsened vulnerabilities across regions.

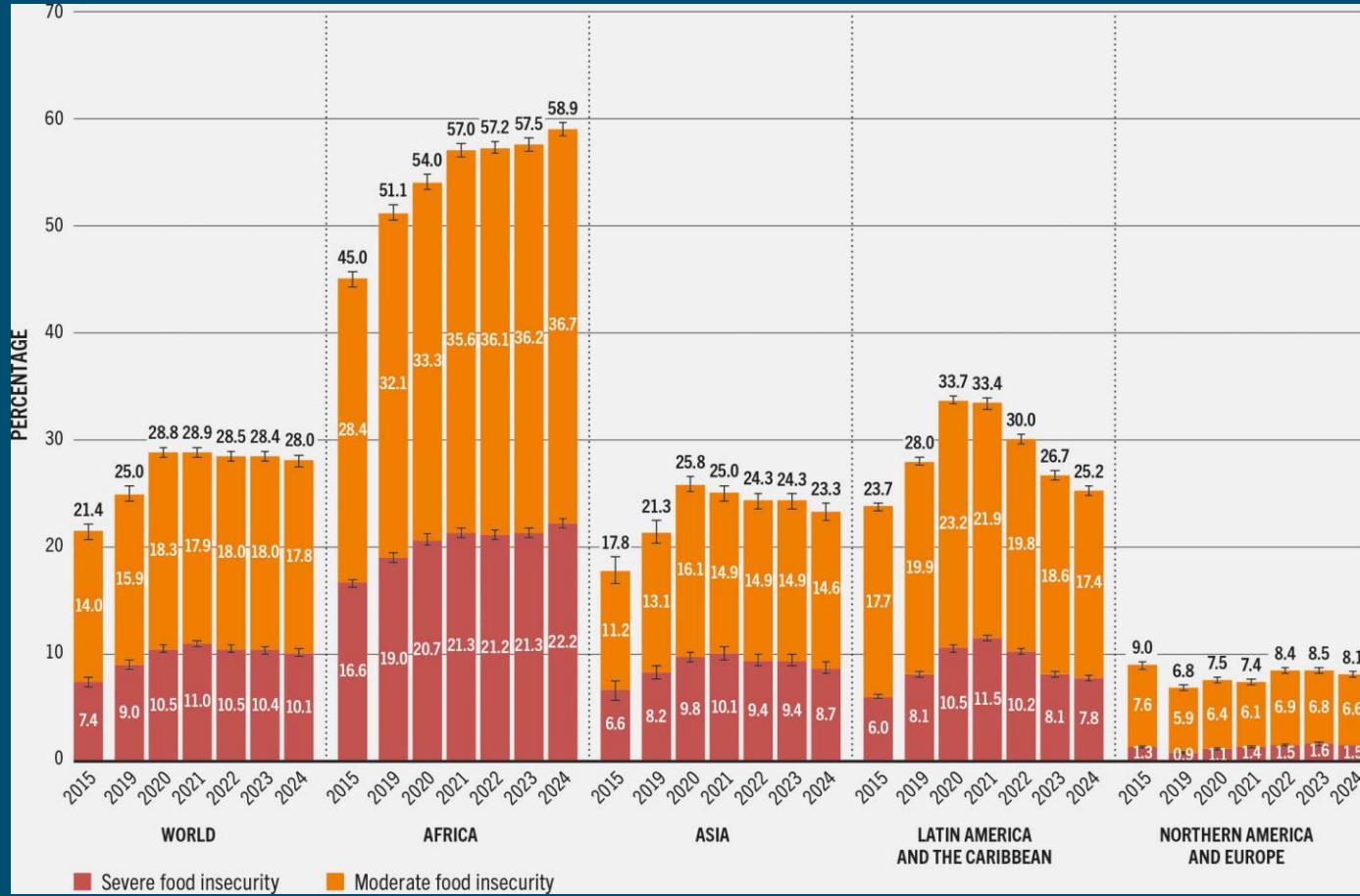


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Why study MSc Food Security?



- Moderate or severe food insecurity at the global level has increased from 2015 to 2024
- [FAO \(The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2025\).](#)



Why study MSc Food Security?

- Evaluate the various dimensions of food security by utilizing accessible tools and databases.
- Investigate the factors that threatens food security, addressing challenges at both global and local scales.
- Learn quantitative and qualitative analytical skills focused on the study of food security problems.



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Why study MSc Food Security?

- The programme covers issues such as:
 - Supply chains
 - Food distribution
 - Trade
 - Sustainability
 - The role of technology in food production
 - Poverty
 - Agricultural practices and land use
- Socioeconomic approach to food security
- Skills focus

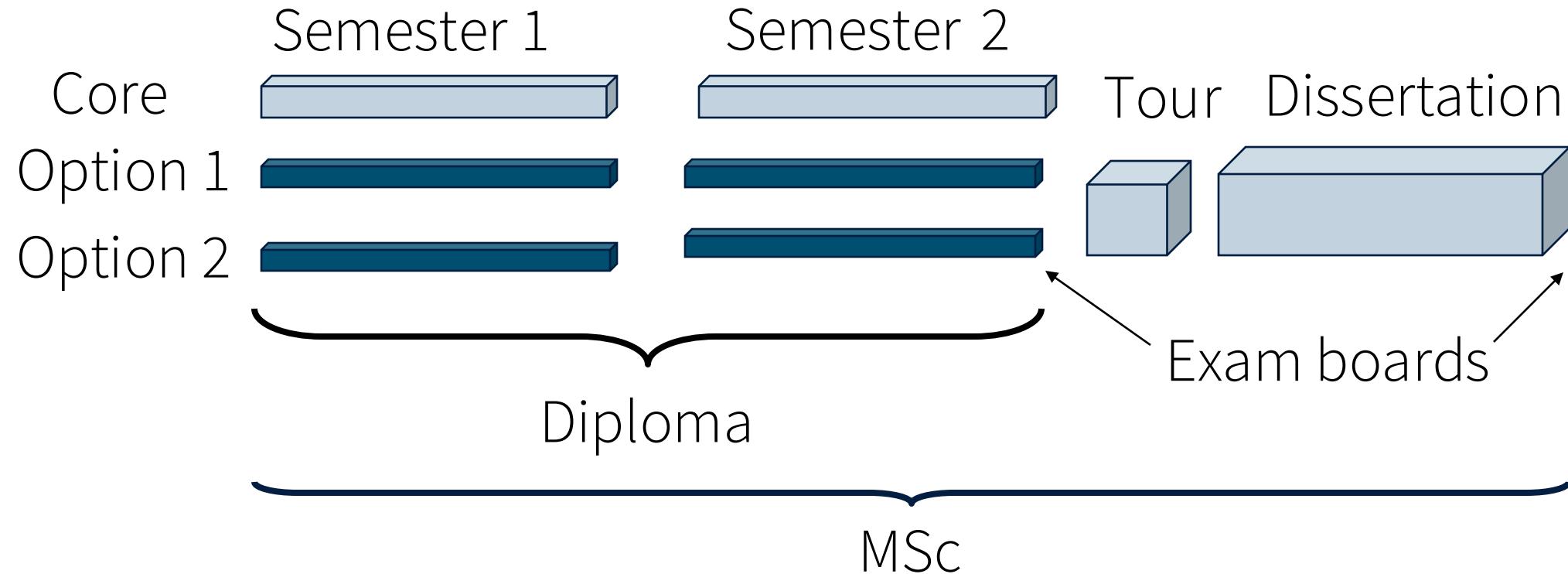


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Programme structure



120 credits of taught work (20 credits per course) and 60 credits for dissertation



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Programme structure

Find a full list of compulsory and option courses on the [Degree Programme Tables](#)

Compulsory Courses	Semester	Credits
Frameworks to Assess Food Security	Semester 1	20
Sustainability of Food Production	Semester 1	20
Interrelationships in Food Systems	Semester 2	20
Data Collection and Analysis for Food Security	Semester 2	20
Dissertation	April - August	60
2 option courses	1 per semester	40



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Structure of the programme

Courses from School(s) N - Food Security (SAC) (MSc) Recommended Sem 1 Options - Level(s) 11

Select exactly 20 credits of the following courses

SELECTED COURSES MUST BE TAKEN DURING **SEMESTER 1**

Biodiversity Under Pressure

ECLG11004 20 credits

Energy & Society I; Key Themes and Issues

GESC11010 20 credits

Foundations in Ecological Economics

PGGE11004 20 credits

Land Use/Environmental Interactions

PGGE11010 20 credits

Soil Science Concepts and Application

PGGE11180 20 credits

Soil Protection and Management

PGGE11183 20 credits

Ecosystems and Global Change

PGGE11247 20 credits

Sustainable Entrepreneurship

PGGE11289 20 credits

Environmental Justice and Development

PGGE11294 20 credits

Development and Justice

PGGE11295 20 credits

Resource Recovery and Circular Economy

PGGE11300 20 credits

Nutrition for Food Security

VESC11187 20 credits



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Courses from School(s) N - Food Security (SAC) (MSc) Recommended Sem 2 Options - Level(s) 11

Select exactly 20 credits of the following courses

SELECTED COURSES MUST BE TAKEN DURING **SEMESTER 2**

[Eco-evolutionary Responses to Anthropogenic Change](#)

ECLG11005 20 credits

[Applications in Ecological Economics](#)

PGGE11003 20 credits

[Environmental Impact Assessment](#)

PGGE11009 20 credits

[Environmental Governance and Policy](#)

PGGE11257 20 credits

[Environmental Survey and Monitoring](#)

PGGE11263 20 credits

[Nature-based Solutions](#)

PGGE11265 20 credits

[GIS and Spatial Analytics for Health](#)

PGGE11272 20 credits

[Creativity and the Environment](#)

PGGE11285 20 credits

[Centring Racial Justice in Sustainability Transformations](#)

PGGE11292 20 credits

[Public Participation in Policy](#)

PGGE11305 20 credits

[Innovation in Sustainable Food Systems](#)

PGSP11400 20 credits

[Making science relevant to policy and decision-making](#)

VESC11260 20 credits

[Water Resource Management](#)

PGGE11018 20 credits

[Professional Skills in Environment & Development](#)

PGGE11267 20 credits

[Ecological Processes in Soils](#)

PGGE11304 20 credits



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Part-time programme structure

- Two-year and three-year part-time options are available.
- We recommend living within a commutable distance from Edinburgh in order to undertake part-time study, and we encourage you to contact us to discuss part-time study in more detail.

2-year programme	
Year 1	3 compulsory courses
Year 2	1 compulsory course Dissertation
Years 1 & 2	+ 60 credits in option courses across both years
3-year programme	
Year 1	3 compulsory courses
Year 2	1 compulsory course
Year 3	Dissertation
Years 2 & 3	+ 60 credits in option courses across Years 2 and 3



Teaching and Assessment

- Courses can be delivered through a mix of lectures, seminars, reviewing materials before class (such as watching videos or reading papers), computer workshops, and round table discussions
- Assessments can include blogs, broadcasts, essays, technical and group reports, presentations, and reflective pieces.
- No exams. Assignments are submitted online



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Dissertation

- An opportunity to explore, in-depth, a topic of your choice in relation to the programme, with the support of an academic supervisor
- Fieldwork (UK-based or international) or desk-based research
- Typically 10,000 – 15,000 words
- You may also have the option to complete a dissertation project in partnership with an external organisation
- You can use the dissertation to demonstrate your work, research skills and knowledge of academic conventions to potential employers



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Previous dissertation topics

- Impact of food price inflation on the demand for animal protein in Scotland.
- Turning Edible Insect and Crab Shell Wastes to Control Plasmodiophora Brassicae (Clubroot Disease)
- Fruit and Vegetable Box Schemes, Food Security and Food Waste in Scotland
- Identifying and Prioritizing Local Indicators for Food Systems Transformation in Hawaii: A Delphi Method Approach.
- Enhancing Scotland's potential for bread fermentation
- Perceptions of agroforestry among farmers in Scotland: awareness, motivations and barriers and the potential impact on its long-term
- The impact of international price changes on consumers in Ghana
- Analyzing the Feasibility of Fair-trade in the Cashew nut Value Chain System – Case study: Guinea Bissau
- Consumer Perceptions and Attitudes Towards GeneEdited Crops Among Gen Z and Millennials in Nigeria



What a typical week looks like...

Semester 1, Week 3	
Classes	Timetable
Frameworks to Assess Food Security – Lecture	Wed, 09:00-13:00
Sustainability of Food Production – Lecture	Fri, 14:10-17:00
Option course: Biodiversity Under Pressure – Lecture	Mon, 14:10-16:00
Option course: Biodiversity Under Pressure – Computer Workshop	Tues, 13:10-15:00
Total class hours	Roughly 11hrs

- Please note that the option course listed is just an example – hours will vary depending on the option courses you choose.



Other activities

- You will also need to take into account a minimum of 6-10 hours of independent study per week to prepare for lectures, revise material, and work on assignments
- Students engage through lecture-based discussions, seminar activities, and group work. Seminars are interactive and group-based: students discuss set topics together and then present their ideas to the class
- Independent study commonly takes place in the university library, MSc study rooms, or at home
- The programme also organises short trips around Scotland when possible, and, together with the students, arranges social events such as movie screenings, potlucks, visits to local allotments, and other activities suggested by the student group.



Field trips

Please note that field course locations may vary year to year, but will always align with course learning outcomes

- During the first and second term we organise day visits to different food production sites such as food factories, dairy farms, urban farms, food banks, etc.



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Field trips

- Later in the year, the cohort attends a study tour. Previously, we have visited Italy, Malaysia, Kenya and Peru.
- The purpose is to see, in person, how the food system works in different countries and to identify how stakeholders and international institutions engage with the food security challenges explained in the classroom.
- Typically, it is an intense experience, full of excitement, enthusiastic discussions, and personal growth.



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Kenya



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Peru



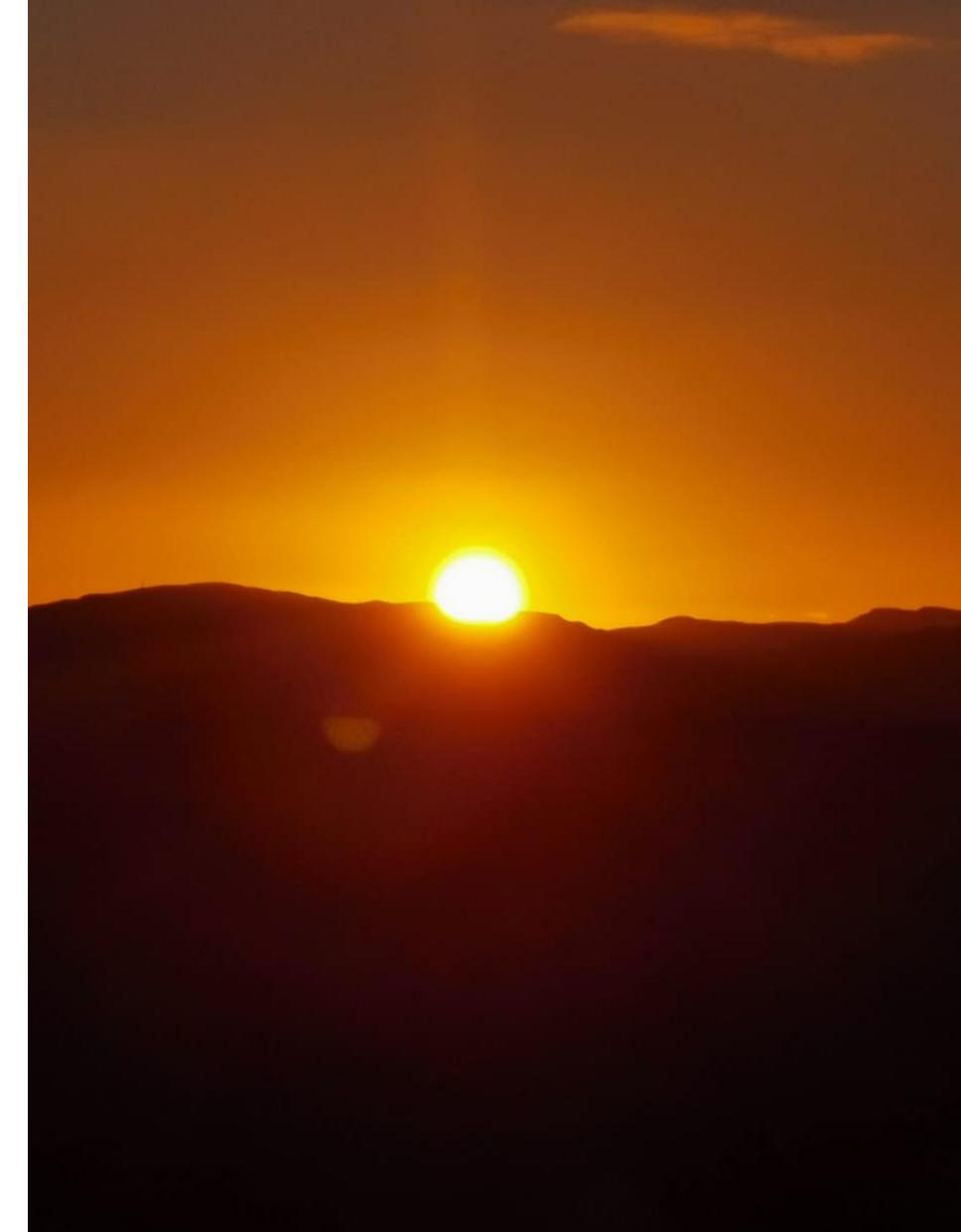
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Career opportunities

- There is an urgent need for professionals who understand how food production and consumption are changing, their impacts on the planet, and the pathways toward a more sustainable and equitable food system for the future.
- Food security is a complex, interconnected field that links to agriculture, environment, policy, economics, culture, and education — opening diverse career opportunities across research, government, NGOs, and industry.



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Career opportunities

- Examples of graduate roles include:
 - Government Analyst
 - Climate Policy and Advocacy Specialist
 - Communication Officer
 - Food Security & Sustainability Program Manager (Council)
 - Marketing Analyst
 - Consultant Analyst, Economic Development Team
 - Researcher
- Examples of where our graduates have gained employment:
 - USDA
 - Soil Association
 - The food foundation
 - Embassy of Denmark in Indonesia
 - Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
 - World Business Council for Sustainable Development
 - EU



When to apply?

- Due to high demand for this programme, we operate on a series of early application deadlines.
- We strongly recommend you apply as early as possible.
- You should avoid applying to more than one degree. Applicants who can demonstrate their understanding and commitment to a specific programme are preferred.
- If you plan to apply to more than one programme, you should discuss your choices with us before you submit your application.
- Where possible, we may make an alternative programme offer if you have been unsuccessful in your chosen programme.



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Student cohort

- We welcome students from a wide range of backgrounds, from agricultural and environmental science to economic or political science, allowing you to benefit from a diverse set of insights and perspectives
- 466 applicants for 2025 entry
- 33 new students on programme in 2025/26



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Scholarships and funding

- Featured funding
 - [Mastercard Foundation Scholarships](#)
 - [Chevening Scholarships](#)
- School of GeoSciences scholarships
 - [See potential funding for GeoSciences students](#)
- You are encouraged to research the range of potential scholarships and other funding outside the University for which you may be eligible.
 - [Search for funding](#)
- Scotland's Rural College (SRUC) alumni discount
 - [Visit the SRUC website](#)



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Next steps...

<https://edin.ac/student-chat-pg>



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Contact details for follow-up questions

- We apologise if we did not get through all of your questions in the time allotted for this session. If you have further questions that have not been answered, please email: futurestudents@ed.ac.uk
- Alternatively, email Montse.CostaFont@sruc.ac.uk.



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Thank you

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