

Access to H.E. Regional Programme Graded Unit



Pathway(s): Humanities and Social Science
 Science and Engineering
 Construction and the Built Environment

Module(s): Geography and Environmental Studies

Unit Title: The Biosphere and Ecosystems

Unit Code: GA33GEO01

Level: Three

Credit Value: 3

Pages: Page 1 of 2

Valid From: 1 August 2014

Valid To: 31 July 2019

QAA GRADE DESCRIPTORS:

1	Understanding of the subject
2	Application of knowledge
5	Communication and presentation
7	Quality

LEARNING OUTCOMES	ASSESSMENT CRITERIA
The learner will:	The learner can:
1. Understand basic ecological principles and terminology.	1.1 Explain the meaning of the term biosphere. 1.2 Use examples to illustrate the meaning of the terms: population, community, environment, ecosystem, biome, habitat, ecological niche and biodiversity.
2. Understand the flow of energy and materials in a community.	2.1 Use information to construct food chains and food webs and to identify trophic levels (producer, primary and secondary consumer, and decomposers). 2.2 Use data to draw pyramids of numbers, energy and biomass. 2.3 Explain the shapes of pyramids of number, energy and biomass in terms of the flow of energy and materials, including top heavy pyramids of number.

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LEARNING OUTCOMES	ASSESSMENT CRITERIA
The learner will:	The learner can:
3. Understand the factors affecting ecological succession and the effects of human activity on climax communities.	3.1 Describe ecological succession for a named bare substrate (e.g. bare rock, sand [dune], lifeless pond). 3.2 Explain the concept of the climax community and describe the typical climax community in the UK. 3.3 Explain the stability of climax communities. 3.4 Define the term plagioclimax and use an example to explain the effects of human activity on succession.