Programme Specification
A statement of the knowledge, understanding and skills that underpin a taught programme of study leading to an award from
The University of Sheffield

1	Programme Title	Quantitative Social Science
2	Programme Code	SMIU01
3	JACS Code	L990
4	Level of Study	Undergraduate
5a	Final Qualification	BA
5b	QAA FHEQ Level	6
6a	Intermediate Qualification(s)	None
6b	QAA FHEQ Level	None
7	Teaching Institution (if not Sheffield)	Not applicable
8	Faculty	Social Science
9	Department	The Sheffield Methods Institute
10	Other Departments involved in teaching the programme	Town and Regional Planning, Landscape Architecture, Politics, Sociological Studies, Law, Management
11	Mode(s) of Attendance	Full-time
12	Duration of the Programme	3 years for regular degree; There may also be options for study overseas or for employment experience.
13	Accrediting Professional or Statutory Body	Not applicable
14	Date of production/revision	October 2014, Revised March 2019

15. Background to the programme and subject area

In the UK, there is a shortage of social science graduates with quantitative skills, yet an increasing number of employers demand related skills; such as the ability to evaluate evidence and analyse large datasets. The Nuffield Foundation, in collaboration with the ESRC and HEFCE, have funded 15 national centres to address this problem and Sheffield has one of them. This degree is part of that initiative. The degree will be one of a number of interdisciplinary degrees located within the Sheffield Methods Institute.

16. Programme aims

1. To develop undergraduate social science students' skills in quantitative data analysis;

2. To provide a strong grounding in substantive social science knowledge, reflecting the subject areas of the participating departments;

3. To give students strong practical experience in the use of quantitative analytical techniques to address substantive social science problems.

4. To give students practical experience of survey design and implementation.

17. Programme learning outcomes

Knowledge and understanding:	
K1	Familiarity with intellectual debates in contemporary social science;
K2	Strong knowledge of quantitative data analysis methods in social science;
K3	The capacity to conduct independent quantitative research in social science;
K4	The ability to design and conduct a social survey.

Skills and other attributes:	
S1	Strong skills in the quantitative analysis of social science data;
S2	Clear oral and written communication skills;
S3	A strong capacity for logical thought and analysis.

18. Teaching, learning and assessment

Development of the learning outcomes is promoted through the following teaching and learning methods:

K1: Lectures will provide grounding in the core material, while seminars will allow students to debate and hone their understanding. In addition, students will be expected to read widely around their subjects.

K2: Lectures in quantitative methods will provide the core background; practical classes and assignments will provide hands-on experience of data analysis and of the interpretation of results; field assignments will give students practical experience of collecting data to answer substantive social science problems.

K3: Throughout the degree, students will conduct small research projects and assignments which will require them to put their data analysis skills into practice. The compulsory third year dissertation project will require students to design, implement and report on a major piece of original quantitative social science research on a subject of their own choosing.

K4: At all stages of the degree, students will take part in the design and implementation of an annual 'State of Sheffield' questionnaire survey.

Opportunities to demonstrate achievement of the learning outcomes are provided through the following assessment methods:

S1: Quantitative methods modules will be assessed through exams and practical assignments. In addition, the research project modules at levels 1 and 2, and the research dissertation module at level 3 will require students to implement the quantitative skills they have developed in pursuit of substantive research questions.

S2: Written communication skills will be assessed through essays, projects, and the dissertation. Oral communication skills will be assessed via participation in an annual undergraduate conference (one module each year will be devoted to this).

S3: This will be assessed via exams, projects, and the dissertation.

19. Reference points

The learning outcomes have been developed to reflect the following points of reference:

- Substantive subject understanding as outlined in the subject benchmarks for the participating departments.
- Core competencies in social science quantitative methods, as outlined in the Nuffield/ESRC/HEFCE Q-Step initiative.

20. Programme structure and regulations

Students on the degree share methodology and research project modules at all levels. Substantive social science modules are delivered through three different routes, emphasising different areas of social science: (i) the Geography, Urban Studies and Landscape route; (ii) the Politics, Sociology and Criminology route; and (iii) the Management route.

Students will choose which route through the degree they intend to follow before the commencement of level 1 of the course, though there will be scope to move from one route to another during the first three weeks of semester 1 level 1. Once embarked on a route through the degree, however, students will normally be unable to switch to another route when progressing from one route to another.

At level 1, all students take:

- 60 credits of core Quantitative Methods modules, including modules on survey design; data visualisation; data analysis; a research project; and a student conference;

Level 1 students on the Geography, Urban Studies and Landscape route and the Politics, Sociology and Criminology route also take:

- 40 credits of substantive social science modules, chosen from level 1 modules offered by the relevant participating departments;
- 20 credits of unrestricted choice.

Level 1 students on the Management route also take:

- 50 credits of substantive social science modules, chosen from level 1 modules offered by the relevant participating department;
- 10 credits of unrestricted choice

At level 2, all students take:

- 40 credits of core Quantitative Methods modules, including: multivariate analysis; research design; a research project; and a student conference;
- 60 credits of substantive social science modules, chosen from level 2 modules offered by the seven participating departments;
- 20 credits of unrestricted choice.

At level 3, all students take:

- 80 credits of core modules: a 40-credit research dissertation in quantitative social science; and a 20-credit student conference module;
- 40 credits of substantive social science modules, chosen from level 3 modules offered by the seven participating departments;
- 20 credits of unrestricted choice.

Detailed information about the structure of programmes, regulations concerning assessment and progression and descriptions of individual modules are published in the University Calendar available on-line at http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/calendar/regs.

21. Student development over the course of study

Over the course, students will develop their understanding of substantive social science issues through the study of appropriate modules at levels 1, 2 and 3. Throughout, students will strengthen their communication and presentation skills not only via written projects and assignments, but through participation in the annual student conference in which students enrolled on the programme will showcase their own research work (based on assigned projects at levels 1 and 2, and on the research project at level 3).

Core to the intention of the degree is also the development of students' capacities to understand and conduct quantitative social science research:

- At level 1, the emphasis is on data collection, data visualisation, and a firm grounding in basic descriptive statistics, statistical inference, and bivariate analytical methods;
- At level 2, the focus is on multivariate statistical analysis and training to design and conduct independent quantitative social science research (in preparation for the level 3 dissertation);
- At level 3, the focus shifts to the implementation of the research methodologies developed at levels 1 and 2, through the medium of the independent research project in quantitative social science.

22. Criteria for admission to the programme

Detailed information regarding admission to programmes is available from the University's On-Line Prospectus at http://www.shef.ac.uk/courses/.

A-levels: ABB

International Baccalaureate: 34

BTEC: DDM

Cambridge Pre-U: D3 M2 M2

Scottish Highers: AAABB

Welsh Baccalaureate + 2 A levels: B + AB

Advanced Diploma: Minimum of grade A + A level grade B (Hair and Beauty Studies, Sport and Leisure, Hospitality, Travel and Tourism not accepted).

23. Additional information

This specification represents a concise statement about the main features of the programme and should be considered alongside other sources of information provided by the teaching department(s) and the University. In addition to programme specific information, further information about studying at The University of Sheffield can be accessed via our Student Services web site at http://www.shef.ac.uk/ssid.