Physical sciences

SUMMARY

Physical sciences is a broad discipline, bringing together many scientific fields. Courses cover key subject areas such as:

- chemistry
- materials science
- physics
- forensic and archaeological sciences
- astronomy
- geology
- science of aquatic and terrestrial environments
- physical geographical sciences

A number of universities offer four year undergraduate or integrated master’s degrees in subjects such as geology (MGEOL/MSci), physics (MPhys/MSci), and chemistry (MChem/MSci).

TAUGHT

- MSc – one year full-time, two years part-time.

RESEARCH

- MRes – 18 months to three years full-time.
- MSc – one year full-time.
- MPhil – one to two years full-time
- PhD – three to four years full-time, seven to eight years part-time

For more information, go to www.ucas.com/postgraduate/what-to-study.

If you have identified a research group you would particularly like to work with, you can write speculatively by sending them your CV and a letter of introduction to make you stand out from the crowd. Make sure your application is highly targeted and refer to their publications and recent research, stating how you will be able to contribute.

(Royal Society of Biology).

WHO STUDIES PHYSICAL SCIENCES?

Total number of students – 19,300*

For more information, go to www.ucas.com/postgraduate/what-to-study.

*Total number of students studying physical sciences for the 2013/14 academic year.

**Other includes postgraduate diplomas, certificates, and professional qualifications, Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE), level 7 Diploma in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector, higher education provider postgraduate credits, and non-formal postgraduate qualifications.

If many students continue in higher education to study an applied postgraduate course in their chosen field, such as petroleum or mineral exploration, engineering, hydrogeology, or environmental science. This is becoming increasingly important to begin a career as a professional geologist.’

(The Geological Society)

continued on the next page...
**CAREER AREAS**

Key areas of employment include:

- aerospace and defence
- clinical research
- pharmaceuticals and biotechnology
- education
- meteorology
- oil and gas
- renewable energy
- scientific sales and marketing
- telecommunications

**Related careers:**

- astronomer
- chemist
- forensic scientist
- geoscientist
- medical physicist
- nuclear engineer
- pharmacologist
- research scientist
- physicist
- statistician
- science journal

### CAREER AREAS

**CAREER AREAS**

- **Agriculture, forestry, and fishing**
- **Mining and quarrying**
- **Manufacturing**
- **Electricity, gas, steam, and air conditioning supply**
- **Water supply, sewerage, waste management, and remediation activities**
- **Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles**
- **Transport and storage**
- **Accommodation and food service activities**
- **Information and communication**
- **Professional, scientific, and technical activities**
- **Public administration and defence, compulsory social security**
- **Electricity, gas, steam, and air conditioning supply**
- **Activities of extraterritorial organisations and bodies**

**Total number of people – 2,390**

### PEOPLE WHO STUDIED PHYSICAL SCIENCES WENT ON TO WORK IN... *

- **0.42%** Agriculture, forestry, and fishing
- **6.28%** Mining and quarrying
- **1.26%** Manufacturing
- **1.46%** Water supply, sewerage, waste management, and remediation activities
- **2.51%** Construction
- **3.56%** Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles
- **0.84%** Transport and storage
- **1.67%** Accommodation and food service activities
- **4.81%** Information and communication
- **1.88%** Financial and insurance activities
- **0.42%** Real estate activities
- **22.8%** Professional, scientific, and technical activities
- **6.69%** Public administration and defence, compulsory social security
- **27.2%** Education
- **0.42%** Unknown
- **2.51%** Arts, entertainment, and recreation
- **1.05%** Other service activities
- **3.77%** Human health and social work activities
- **1.26%** Educational activities
- **1.05%** Administrative and support service activities
- **0.21%** Activities of extraterritorial organisations and bodies

*Source: HESA DLHE tables (2013/14)

**ASSOCIATED PROFESSIONAL BODIES**

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<th>Association</th>
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<tr>
<td>Royal Society of Chemistry</td>
<td>020 7437 8656</td>
<td><a href="http://www.rsc.org">www.rsc.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geological Society</td>
<td>020 7434 9944</td>
<td><a href="http://www.geolsoc.org.uk">www.geolsoc.org.uk</a></td>
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<td>Physics.org</td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="http://www.physics.org/careers">www.physics.org/careers</a></td>
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