

# Online MSc in Sustainable Mountain Development

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University of the  
Highlands and Islands  
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Centre for  
Mountain Studies



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



UNESCO Chair in  
Sustainable Mountain Development  
University of the Highlands and Islands

We're a little **different...**

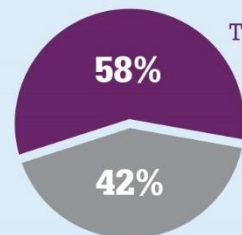
**13** colleges and research centres and over **70** local learning centres



Regional university

Higher education

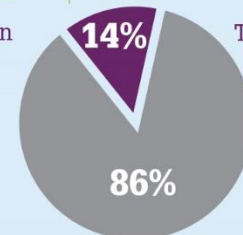
Further education



Total higher education students **9381**

Full-time students **5468**

Part-time students **3921**



Total further education students **31646**

Full-time students **4357**

Part-time students **27289**

# History

2002: initial thoughts about online MSc courses in sustainable rural and mountain development

2004: Validation/recognition

- 2004: UK only
- 2007: revalidation: Europe only
- 2009: UNESCO Chair
- 2012: revalidation: global



- Common issues/principles
  - Similar choice of modules
  - Contextualised assessment

# Course structure

- Specific core modules
    - Mountain: Environmental & social issues in mountain areas
    - Rural: Communities and Nature
  - Other core modules : rural / mountain assessments
    - Sustainable development (mountain core)
    - Policy analysis (mountain core)
    - Developing communities (rural core)
    - Local economic development (rural core)
- Possible to leave with Postgraduate Certificate (3 modules)

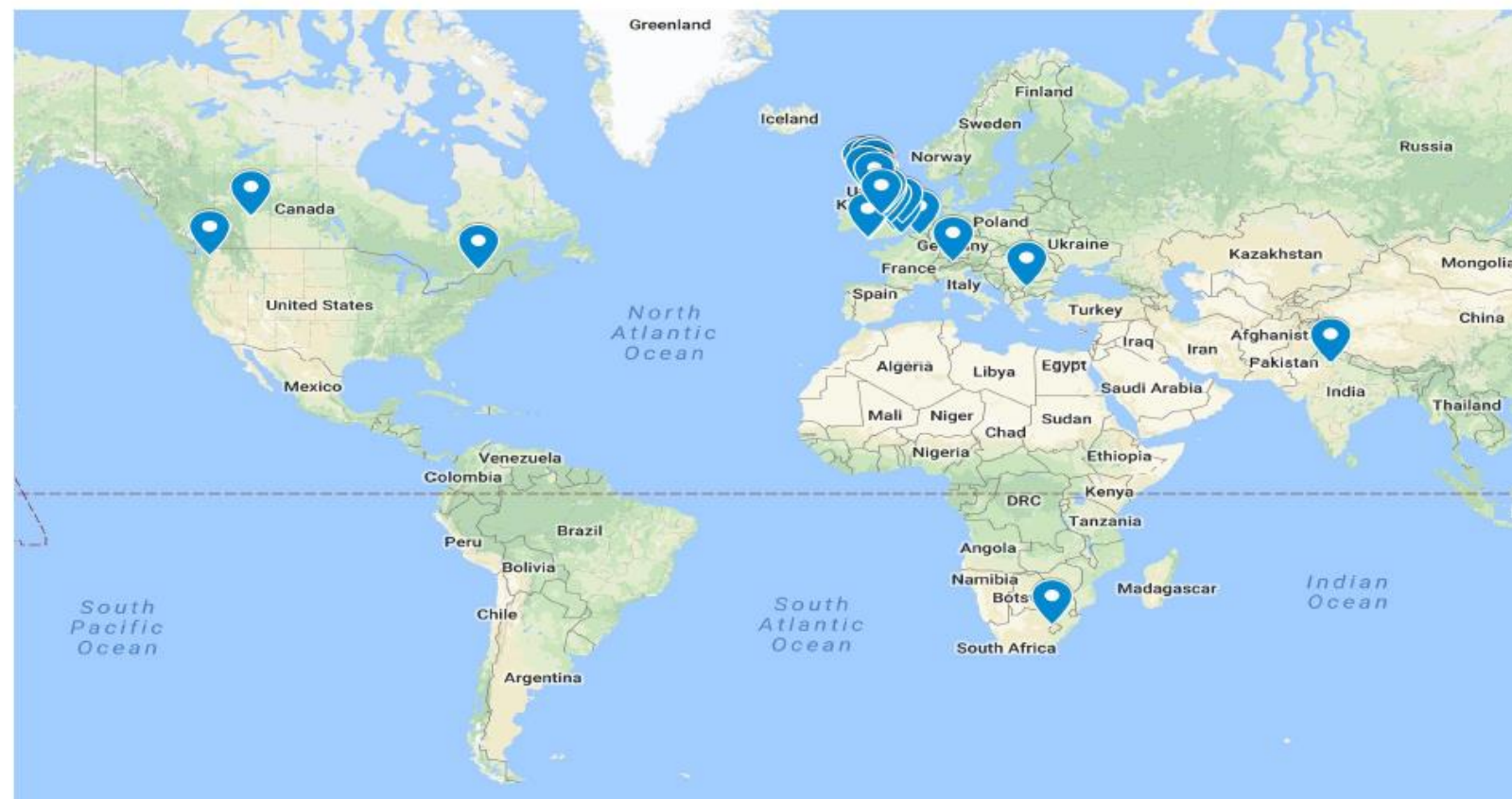
# Course structure

- Optional modules: mountain/rural assessments
  - core modules from other degree
  - Biodiversity management
  - Sustainable land use and energy
  - Water management
  - Sustainable deer management
  - Developing potential through placement
  - Research methods and techniques
  - Sustainable tourism
  - elective
- Possible to leave with Postgraduate Diploma (6 modules)  
or continue to MSc (15,000 word dissertation)

# Graduates/awards since 2004

- MSc: 36
- Postgraduate Diploma: 13
- Postgraduate Certificate: 19
- Countries: Bulgaria, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, UK, USA
- Sustainable Deer Management module: 50
- Two awards: Alpine Convention, Royal Geographical Society
- Three peer-reviewed papers

# Current students





# Challenges / opportunities

- Diverse 'markets'
  - practitioners
  - educators
  - career shift
  - mountaineers
  - 'mountain people'
    - peer learning
- Fees
  - Scotland: € 615 per module, € 5,500 for MSc
  - International: € 1,055 per module, € 9,500 for MSc
- Dissertation supervisors



Thanks for your attention!

