

IB Biology Field Course

International Baccalaureate
Diploma Programme
Biology Field Course
Slapton Ley



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Office hours: 08:30 – 17:00
Monday – Friday with an answer phone facility at other times.

The Field Studies Council (FSC) is an environmental education charity committed to helping people explore, understand and be inspired by the natural world. Each year over 100,000 people experience the FSC through visits to our network of 17 Centres



Overview of the course

Students will carry out fieldwork to collect case-study material for the **Core** and **Option G** of the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme. The Field Course can be tailored to the needs of students at Standard Level or Higher Level. Some groups may wish to complete a Group 4 Project.

Investigation	Content of Modules	Notes
Freshwater Ecology	Investigating how biotic and abiotic factors affect the distribution of freshwater invertebrates and relate this to energy flow and trophic structure within a freshwater habitat. Students will use a range of different techniques to measure abiotic factors and dichotomous keys to identify and classify organisms. Statistical analysis of results and evaluation of techniques, including Simpsons Index of Diversity.	Links to Topic 5.1, Option G.2.1 – G.2.5, Option G.3.1 – G.3.2 and Option G.4.1
Woodland Ecology	Using a range of data collection methods and sampling strategies to investigate differences in species richness and diversity between two areas of Slapton wood. Students will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use keys to identify and classify organisms. - Primary data collection of tree growth rates relating to the impacts of climate change. - Descriptive statistics including mean, median and standard deviation and evaluation of fieldwork techniques. 	Links to Topic 5.5, Topic 9.1 and Option G.3.1 – G.3.2.
Rocky shore ecology	To investigate how biotic and abiotic factors affect the distribution of organisms on the shore. Using a range of methods and sampling strategies including transects, quadrats and different methods of measuring abundance. Students will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - identify physical, behavioural and physiological adaptations - carry out fieldwork to assess the impact of climate change on the distribution of rocky shore organisms. 	Links to Topic 1.1.1-1.1.4, Topic 3.8, Topic 5.5 and Option G.1.2.
Shingle ridge succession	Slapton shingle ridge gives students the opportunity to observe all the stages of succession in the same place at the same time, and to investigate the ways in which vegetation and other related factors change during this process. Visiting the nature reserve to examine some of the ways in which human activity can halt the process of succession. Students will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use systematic sampling to investigate the changes in vegetation, climatic and edaphic factors on Slapton ridge. - Observe the ways in which conservation management practices alter the process of natural succession in a range of habitats in Slapton Ley Nature Reserve. Use a variety of methods to analyse and present both qualitative and quantitative data.	Links to Topic 1.1.6, Topic 9.1.1, Topic 9.2.10, Option G.1.6, Option G.1.1. and Option G.2.6-G.2.8.
Conservation day	Visiting Slapton Ley National Nature Reserve, and an introduction to a range of sampling strategies. Students will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consider the impact of human activities on an ecosystem. - Observe and assess a range of conservation management strategies. - Compile a case study of how the National Nature Reserve is managed. (Conservation can also be carried out as a half day, when sampling will be omitted)	Links to Option G3.4 – G.3.5 and Option G4.

Ecology Intro	An introduction to the basics of ecological sampling, by firstly compiling a glossary of basic ecology key terms. Includes discussion on sampling techniques, types of quadrats and methods of measuring abundance. Students will use the Lincoln Index Calculation on a practice example of the Mark-Release -Recapture technique.	Links to Option G.5.3, Option G.1.3 and Topic 5.1.1.
Individual Investigation	Students will implement and revise their plans, to collect valid and reliable data. On return to the centre, students will be supported through handling and analysis of their data. Data interpretation and evaluation of methodology, data and evidence including sources of error, may be carried out during the evening session.	Links to Topic 1 and others depending on choice of study.
Group 4 Projects	Students have the opportunity to work with other Group 4 subject students in analysing a common problem for their investigation. This day is ideal as the last day of the course, giving the students the chance to demonstrate the skills they have learnt and apply them in a group situation.	Links to Group 4 Project

About the centre

Located on the southern tip of the Devon coast, the Centre is surrounded by the 200 hectare [Slapton Ley National Nature Reserve](#). Owned by the Whitley Wildlife Trust and managed by the Centre, the Ley is the largest freshwater lake in the south west and is extensively used in the courses at Slapton. The surrounding coastline and nearby Dartmoor National Park provides unrivalled opportunities for field courses.



About the tutor

The course will be lead by FSC staff based at Slapton Ley. FSC staff are experienced in leading and inspiring students with a wide variety of fieldwork activities, covering both human and physical elements of geography.

Course fees

Course Fees vary according to the time of year and length of course selected. Please contact us to discuss your specific requirements.

What is included within the fee?

- Up to 10 hours of tuition a day.
- Expert tuition by fully trained staff.
- Full board accommodation including a cooked breakfast, picnic lunch, home made cakes and an evening meal. Vegetarian and other dietary options are available. Fresh salad available for packed lunch please bring suitable container.
- Use of resources including library, workrooms, studios and the Centre grounds
- Transport to all field sites, where required, during the course.
- Rigorous and proven health and safety procedures including 24 hour emergency cover.
- Access to risk assessments.
- Specialist equipment and exclusive access to specially developed resources.

What to bring

- (Old) Warm Clothes – we may get muddy and wet
- Waterproof top and trousers (can be borrowed from the field centre).
- Suitable footwear (wellingtons can be borrowed from the field centre).
- Day sack, hat & gloves
- Packed lunch box & flask. A box is essential if you would like a salad with your packed lunch!

Directions to the centre

The Field Centre is located between Kingsbridge, Dartmouth and Totnes and is about 20 minutes from each.

- Totnes Station is on the South West Main Line.
- Under 3 hours direct to London Paddington.
- Under 3 hours direct to Birmingham New Street.
- A pick up from the train station can be arranged, please contact the Centre for more details.



Booking procedure

Provisional bookings can be made by telephoning the centre.

Why Come to FSC Slapton Ley?

Some of the reasons our customers give for coming to our popular Field Centre are:

- A unique location, Slapton Ley is near a dynamic coastal environment and shingle beach that is under threat from the sea. We are close to rivers that we are able to study from upland Dartmoor to the sea.
- Slapton Ley National Nature Reserve with shingle ridge, freshwater lake and ancient woodland ecosystems within walking distance.
- We are easily accessible from London, Bristol and Birmingham, with excellent train connections.
- Expert tuition from our tutors who have a passion for the environment and are knowledgeable ecologists and geographers.
- A friendly welcoming place to stay, with hearty meals and great service.
- Comfortable and spacious bedrooms, many single, twin and 4 bed rooms with en-suite facilities.
- An academic community with a rich tradition of research on the National Nature Reserve.

Quality Tuition

The tutor delivering the content plays a vital role in ensuring successful learning outcomes are achieved.

This is why we have taken great care in developing a qualified team of highly trained and CRB checked field teachers working full time, all year round.

Not only are they experts, they are gifted teachers with a real passion for the subject being taught. FSC field teachers are the reason why many schools return year after year.



External Recognition of Quality

Rhyd-y-creuau has been awarded the Quality Badge by The Council for Learning Outside the Classroom. The badge is awarded to organisations that have demonstrated that they consistently deliver high quality teaching and learning experiences and manage risk effectively.

This means that you will have to complete less paperwork when visiting our centre.

Protecting Fieldwork Opportunities

Growing pressures on outdoor learning has led the FSC to take on an important role; championing the rights and opportunities for people of all ages to experience the environment at first hand.

The FSC has led in campaigns to reverse the continuing decline in fieldwork within secondary schools and to build opportunities for out-of-classroom learning. The FSC continues to work closely with the government and other partners to develop out-of-classroom learning.

As a registered charity, the FSC receives no statutory funding. It relies solely on fees charged for courses and membership. Therefore, by visiting an FSC Centre not only are you receiving a high quality educational experience for your students, you are also helping to protect fieldwork opportunities for everybody.