Programme Specs/Benchmarking

**UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER**

**PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION**

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| **1 Awarding Institution** | University of Manchester |
| **2 Teaching Institution** | University of Manchester |
| **3 Programme Accreditation** | None |
| **4 Final Award** | MA/PG Diploma |
| **5 Programme Title** | MA International Relations (Standard) |
| **6 UCAS/Programme Code** |  |
| **7 Relevant QAA subject benchmark** | None available |
| **8 Department/Faculty** | Politics Department, School of Social Sciences |

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| 1. **EDUCATIONAL AIMS OF THE PROGRAMME**  The programme aims to:  * Provide an advanced, systematic and critical understanding of issues at the forefront of international relations * Provide an advanced critical awareness of the location of international relations within the wider fields of political and social science, both in terms of its subject matter and the most prominent theoretical and methodological orientations within it. * Provide research practice through a required dissertation linked to a research programme located within the department and supervised by an active researcher. * Train students to become autonomous and self-aware life-long learners, able to apply their existing knowledge and skills in innovative ways in a variety of contexts. * Enable students’ to communicate their acquired knowledge and research findings to specialist and non-specialist audiences * To provide students with the knowledge and skills to equip them for a range of careers in the public and private sectors requiring advanced knowledge of the theoretical and practical dimensions of international politics and permit students to specialise according to their anticipated career progression. | |
| 10 PROGRAMME OUTCOMES | |
| ***10.1 Knowledge & Understanding*** | |
| **A Knowledge & Understanding of**   1. Major areas of advanced debate and research innovation in international relations including:    1. The history of theoretical and conceptual thinking in international relations with particular reference to debates around the definition of the international and key actors, processes and outcomes within it.    2. Key methodological and conceptual debates at the foreground of contemporary research in international relations, with particular emphasis on the impact of recent social and political theory on the study of the international and the implications of globalisation    3. Through a range of programme-specific optional modules (and where relevant optional modules from other programmes) the application of theoretical and methodological knowledge to a range of substantive issue areas of relevance to the students’ individual research interests 2. The relationship international relations and cognate fields within political science, such as political theory and comparative politics, as well as related disciplines such as history, geography and moral philosophy, and the contributions such cognate fields and related disciplines might make to the students’ specific research interests   3. The principles of research design and strategy including the formulation of feasible and meaningful research questions, especially for internationally focussed political analysis  4. Key issues (philosophical, political and ethical) in research practice in the social sciences generally and research in international relations in particular | Teaching/learning methods Combination of interactive seminar learning, independent supervised study, and practical exercises. All these apply to all outcomes, but A1 (a, b) are particularly developed through seminar-based learning in programme-specific core modules and A1 (c) is particularly developed through optional programme modules and production of a supervised dissertation. A2 is developed through the selection of optional modules in the programme as well as from other cognate MA programmes A3 and A4 are developed through a combination of interactive seminars, workshops and presentation exercises within a compulsory dedicated research design module. A4 is addressed through a compulsory research ethics workshop The dissertation is a key task and engages all the outcomes above, particularly A1 (b), A2, A3, and A4.  ***Assessment***  Summative assessment of all outcomes is provided through a combination of assessed presentation exercises within seminars, essays and the dissertation.  Formative assessment is provided via written feedback on presentation exercises and assessed essays, the supervisory relationship required for the preparation of the compulsory dissertation, self-assessment, and peer review and comment (especially in the seminar setting). |
| ***10.2 Skills and other attributes*** | |
| **B Intellectual skills - able to**  1.Synthesise and analyse complex issues in the field of international relations specifically in a critical and systematic way  2.Exercise powers of enquiry, logical thinking and reasoned argument  3. Compare and critique a comprehensive range of methodologies  4. Plan, conduct and report on self-directed research within a range of formats, (short oral presentations, essays and a dissertation)  5. Reflect critically on the relationship between research context and one’s own role as a researcher | Teaching and learning methods Supervised independent study, interactive seminar learning, essay preparation and execution, oral presentations, workshops, and practical research design exercises. All these methods relate to all the outcomes under B.  ***Assessment***  Summative: seminar presentations, presentation exercises, seminar participation assessment, essays and a dissertation.  Formative: self-evaluation, peer review in the seminar setting, supervisors’ commentaries, and formal and informal comment on oral presentations and essays. |
| **C Practical skills - able to**  1. Manage library and bibliographic resources, including on-line, and build up an on-going bibliography for use as a professional research tool  2. Correctly cite, acknowledge and reference primary and secondary sources  3. Interpret and evaluate theoretical arguments and empirical evidence  4. Undertake effectively independent and self-managed learning  5. Clearly communicate research findings in oral and written form to peer audiences and participate effectively as part of such audiences | Teaching and learning methods Skills C1-5 are developed through Interactive seminars (and especially through presentation exercises), independent supervised learning, essay planning and writing, dissertation proposal preparation and execution, oral and written formative feedback on seminar performance, essay writing and dissertation preparation, personal academic development plans. C5 is particularly developed in a compulsory dissertation design module that includes the teaching and practice of effective audience participation. C1-4 are especially developed through the dissertation preparation process.  ***Assessment***  Summative: The compulsory dissertation is a key task that allows assessment of all of these skills, especially C1-4. Essays and oral seminar presentations also allow the assessment of these elements as well as C5.  Formative: Feedback from supervisor to student, peer feedback (especially in a compulsory dissertation research design module), and feedback on essays are all ways in which all these practical skills are evaluated. |
| **D Transferable skills - able to**   1. Clearly communicate, in writing and orally, complex material in a systematic, comprehensive and context-sensitive way to academic and non-academic audiences 2. Effectively manage and schedule complex research processes 3. Find information and use information technology 4. Develop an independent learning ability 5. Participate constructively in teams and groups 6. Demonstrate IT skills, including use of the Internet, word processing and spreadsheet software. | Teaching and learning methods Seminars, independent supervised learning, essay-writing, seminar presentations, dissertation/research proposal preparation and writing, practical research exercises, computer-based practical exercises, personal academic development plans. All these teaching and learning methods relate to skills D1-5. D6 is developed through a compulsory IT skills module delivered on-line with tutor support. Assessment Summative: The dissertation is a key task which allows assessment of skills D1-4. Essays and presentations also allow the assessment of these elements, particularly D1-3. D5 is assessed through the seminar participation element of the standard coursework marking schema. D6 is assessed by sequential progress through a compulsory IT skills module.  Formative: Feedback from supervisor to student, peer feedback, feedback on essays, class presentations and class participation are all ways in which all of these transferable skills can be evaluated. |

## PROGRAMMES STRUCTURES AND FEATURES, CURRICULUM UNITS, CREDIT AND AWARD REQUIREMENTS

**For more details see Programme Handbook.**

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| **Year** | **Course structure (credits)** | **Outcomes and progression** |
| 1 | ***Compulsory***  Generic research training course units  Dissertation Research Design (15) (Sem 2)  MA Dissertation (60) (June- September)  Health & Safety (0)  *Plus*  ***International Relations pathway core course units***  Graduate Seminar in International Relations Theory (15) (Sem 1)  Critical Approaches to International Politics (15) (Sem 2) Options Five specialist course units, at least two of which must come from a programme-specific list. Students, in consultation with the supervisor and/or the MA Director, may choose the other of their optional modules from any of the other two pathway-specific lists of optional modules or, if clearly justified by their intended doctoral research, from optional courses within the MA Political Science (Research) programme or other cognate MA programmes within the Graduate School of Social Sciences. \*  **Additional optional courses**  Language training | MA: Minimum 50% in all units with compensation arrangements\* \*  PgDip: Minimum 40% in all units with compensation/resit arrangements\* \*  All outcomes listed under 10 are developed in this year |

***\*See Programme Handbook for details.***

***\*\* See Graduate School Handbook for Taught Masters Programmes for details***

***12 CURRICULUM SKILLS MAP***

***Intellectual Skills Practical Skills Transferable Skills***

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| **Course Unit/Code** | | | **B1** | **B2** | | **B3** | | **B4** | **B5** | | | **C1** | **C2** | **C3** | **C4** | **C5** | **D1** | **D2** | **D3** | **D4** | **D5** | **D6** |
| **Level 1** | C | Dissertation Research Design | DA | DA | | DA | | DA | DA | | | DA | DA | DA | DA | DA | DA | DA | DA | DA | DA | D |
|  | C | Programme-specific core course unit I | DA | DA | | DA | | DA |  | | | DA | DA | DA | DA | DA | DA | DA | DA | D | DA | D |
|  | C | Programme-specific core course unit II | DA | DA | | DA | | DA |  | | | DA | DA | DA | DA | DA | DA | DA | DA | D | DA | D |
|  | O | Programme-specific optional course | DA | DA | | DA | | DA |  | | | DA | DA | DA | DA | DA | DA | DA | DA | D | DA | D |
|  | O | Optional course | DA | DA | | DA | | DA |  | | | DA | DA | DA | DA | DA | DA | DA | DA | D | DA | D |
|  | C | Dissertation | DA | DA | | DA | | DA | DA | | | DA | DA | DA | DA | DA | DA | DA | DA | DA | DA | D |
|  | O | Language Training |  | |  |  |  | | |  |  | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | D |  |  |

***C= compulsory course unit***

***O= optional course unit***

***D = skills are taught or developed by students within this course unit***

***A = skills are assessed within this course unit***

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| 1. **CRITERIA FOR ADMISSION**   Candidates must be able to satisfy the general admissions criteria of the University of Manchester and the Politics Department in the following way:  Upper Second Class Honours (or equivalent). If English is a second language then a minimum level of IELTS 7.0 or TOEFL 250 (computer based) is required.  All candidates who do not fulfil the MA examination requirements (including compensation and resit arrangements) but fulfil the diploma examination requirements are eligible for award of the PG Diploma.  Further details are available on the School of Social Sciences website: <http://www.socialsciences.manchester.ac.uk/subjects/politics/postgraduate-taught/> |
| **14 ASSESSMENT REGULATIONS**  ***Assessment Rules and Classifications***  Minimum MA pass mark for each course unit is 50%.  40-49% Pass at PG diploma  50-59% Pass at MA  60-69% Pass at MA with Merit  70+% Pass at MA with Distinction  Candidates for the MA are required to pass 8 x 15 credits course modules and a compulsory 12-15,000 word 60 credits dissertation according to the MA examination regulations (including compensation and resit arrangements).  Candidates for the PG Diploma are required to pass 8 x 15 credits modules according to the PG Diploma examination regulations (including compensation and resit arrangements) only.  Full details of assessment and compensation arrangements are in the Politics MA Handbook Classification Criteria Full details of classification criteria are on the School of Social Sciences Student intranet |
| **15. INDICATORS OF QUALITY**   * 2001 QAA Subject Review result: 24 |

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