

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

This document describes the **Master of Arts, Postgraduate Diploma and Postgraduate Certificate in Politics of Development** programmes.

This specification is valid for new entrants from **September 2019**.

The aims of the programmes are:

- to provide a systematic understanding and knowledge of theories, institutions, and practices in the disciplines of politics and international relations as they relate to the study of development in Africa, Asia and the Middle East;
- to encourage a critical awareness of current problems and developments in political science and international relations generally and in the specific sub-disciplines related to development and politics in the Third World;
- to provide theoretical insights and methodological techniques relevant to the creation and interpretation of knowledge in politics and international relations and to the critical evaluation of current research and advanced scholarship;
- to provide training in research techniques, particularly fieldwork methods;
- to foster an independent learning ability required for continuing professional development and/or further academic research;
- to develop key communications, IT and management skills relevant for postgraduate work.

The programme is delivered over one year of full-time study (52 weeks) or up to five years of part-time study (260 weeks). Teaching takes place during the day over two terms from September to April. The dissertation is submitted in September. Whilst being a self-contained degree in its own right, each programme provides suitable and recognised qualifications for entry to PhD study in the same or a closely related field.

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This document provides a summary of the main features of the programmes, and of the outcomes which a student might reasonably be expected to achieve if full advantage is taken of the learning opportunities provided. Further information is contained in the College prospectus, the College Regulations and in various handbooks issued to students upon arrival. Whilst Royal Holloway keeps all its information for prospective applicants and students under review, programmes and the availability of individual courses are necessarily subject to change at any time, and prospective applicants are therefore advised to seek confirmation of any factors which might affect their decision to follow a specific programme. In turn, Royal Holloway will inform applicants and students as soon as is practicable of any substantial changes which might affect their studies.

Learning outcomes

Teaching and learning in the programme are closely informed by the active research of staff. In general terms, the programme provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate the following learning outcomes:

Knowledge and understanding

an advanced knowledge and critical understanding of key concepts, theoretical debates, and developments in the fields of politics and international development;
a sound knowledge of the texts, theories and methods used to enhance understanding of the issues, processes and phenomena associated with the fields of politics and international development;
an advanced knowledge and critical understanding of research methods within the disciplines of politics and international development;
knowledge of advanced scholarship in the chosen area of the discipline to a level appropriate for a Masters degree.

Skills and other attributes

- the ability to evaluate relevant critical, theoretical and contextual research at the forefront of the field;
- the ability to articulate knowledge and the understanding of texts, concepts and theories at an advanced level, demonstrating self-direction and originality;
- the ability to assess the nature and value of a wide variety of source materials – including, where appropriate, academic commentaries, research-based literature, official publications and statistics, journalistic sources, political biographies – and make effective use of such materials;
- the ability to develop their own lines of criticism and argument;*
- the ability to conduct research independently at an advanced level using traditional and electronic resources;*
- the ability to assess the merits of contrasting theories, explanations and policies;*
- the ability to develop reasoned and balanced arguments;*
- the ability to manipulate precise and intricate ideas, construct logical arguments and use technical terminology correctly;*
- the ability to deal with complex issues, both systematically and creatively, and make sound judgments;*
- the ability to identify, investigate, analyse, formulate and advocate solutions to problems;*
- the ability to communicate complex information and ideas effectively, both orally and in writing;*
- the ability to write up a substantial dissertation project, using the appropriate methodological and bibliographical skills;*

In addition, the programme fosters the development of a range of personal attributes that are important in the world of work, and that strengthens our postgraduates' abilities to engage in lifelong learning and contribute to the wider community. These include personal motivation; the ability to work autonomously and with others; self-awareness and self-management; empathy and insight; intellectual integrity; awareness of responsibility as a local, national and international citizen; interest in lifelong learning; flexibility and adaptability; creativity.

* transferable skills

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Teaching, learning and assessment

Teaching and learning is delivered primarily by means of seminar discussions, informal lectures, oral presentations, guided independent research, and guided independent study. Assessment takes the form of various formative and summative assignments, all in the form of coursework submitted during the course of the programme. There are no exams. The final assignment for the programme is a dissertation on a topic developed in consultation with an assigned supervisor. It is expected that the dissertation will be researched and written primarily in the summer months, although supervision and dissertation training will begin during the academic year. Full details of assessments, including submission schedules and marking criteria, can be found in the Programme Handbook. Particular teaching and learning methods and specific assignments for each course are written into the various course outlines. Full details of individual courses can be obtained from the [Department](#).

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Details of the programme structures

The full-time programme lasts 52 weeks, beginning in September, and teaching is spread over the Autumn and Spring Terms. The Summer Term is devoted to completing a Dissertation.

The brief outline of the programme is shown below; however students can obtain further details from the Programme Handbook. Credits are indicated in brackets, and indicate proportional weighting towards the MA classification grade. The programme structure for the Postgraduate Diploma is as below, with the exception that students will not undertake the dissertation.

For the Postgraduate Certificate students are required to pass mandatory courses worth only 60 credits to include Either

PR5952 Political Economy of Development (20 credits) and at least one of PR5954 The Political Economy of the Middle East (20 credits) or PR5957 Development Politics in Sub-Saharan Africa (20 credits) with any remaining credits from an optional course (20 credits).

Or

PR5949 Researching Politics and International Relations (40 credits) and PR5952 Political Economy of Development (20 credits)

Students **must take and pass** the following **mandatory non-condonable** courses:

PR5952 Political Economy of Development (20 credits)

PR5807 Dissertation (60 credits)

Students **must also take** the following **mandatory methods** course:

PR5949 Researching Politics and International Relations (40 credits)

In addition, students **must take** at least one of the following courses:

PR5957 Development Politics in Sub-Saharan Africa (20 credits)

PR5954 The Political Economy of the Middle East (20 credits)

And 40 credits worth of courses from available units (all 20 credits) in Politics and International Relations:

Politics and International Relations: Units exploring International Development

Politics and International Relations: Units exploring Comparative Politics

Politics and International Relations: Units exploring International Relations

Politics and International Relations: Units exploring International Security

Politics and International Relations: Units exploring Political Communication

Politics and International Relations: Units exploring Political Theory

Part-time programme structure

The programme can be taken part-time over two to five years beginning in September of year one. Part-time students studying over two years normally take four courses, including PR5952 *Political Economy of Development: Why some countries 'develop' more than others and what the consequences are* and PR5955 *Fieldwork Methods* in their first year, and the remaining courses with Dissertation in their second year.

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Progression and award requirements

Progression throughout the year(s) is monitored through performance in oral presentations, contributions to seminar discussion and coursework.

Please note that if you hold a Tier 4 (General) Student Visa and you choose to leave (or are required to leave because of non-progression) or complete early (before the course end date stated on your CAS), then this will be reported to UKVI.

For further information on progression and award requirements, please refer to the [Postgraduate Taught Regulations](#).

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Student support and guidance

- The Programme Director meets with the students on a regular basis to advise on academic, pastoral and welfare issues. The Programme Director acts as a point of contact for pastoral support and any questions about the programme throughout the year.
- Course coordinators, tutors and dissertation supervisors provide a back-up system of academic, pastoral and welfare advice.
- All students are allocated a Personal Tutor, with whom they can meet as required, to discuss all matters relating to their programme and for pastoral support.

In addition, students on these programmes have:

- Induction programmes for orientation and introduction to the Department and College by the Director of Graduate Studies.
- All staff available and accessible through an office-hour system.
- Representation on the Postgraduate Student-Staff Committee.
- Detailed Masters handbook and course booklets.
- Extensive supporting materials and learning resources in College and University libraries, as well as the Computer Centre.
- Dedicated Departmental computing facilities.
- College Careers Service and Departmental Careers and Employability Tutor.
- Access to all College and University support services, including Student Counselling Service, Health Centre, Students' Union and students with additional learning needs also have access to Disability and Dyslexia Services (DDS)
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Admission requirements

For details of admission requirements please refer to the [Course Finder](#)

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Further learning and career opportunities

The programme provides a firm foundation for postgraduate study and research, and graduates of programmes offered by the department have gone on to more advanced research degrees at Royal Holloway and elsewhere. There are PhD opportunities in the department, which has a vibrant and growing research student community. The programme also provide graduates with a range of intellectual, personal and social skills that are transferable to a wide variety of employment opportunities. Careers which will especially suit politics graduates include work in the civil service, local government, public and private sector management, political research and lobbying, teaching, and journalism and the media. For more details on further learning and career opportunities please refer to the [Careers & Employability Service](#).

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Indicators of quality and standards

Royal Holloway's position as one of the UK's leading research-intensive institutions was confirmed by the results of the most recent Research Excellence Framework (REF 2014) conducted by the Higher Education Funding Council (HEFCE). The scoring system for the REF 2014 measures research quality in four categories, with the top score of 4* indicating quality that is world-leading and of the highest standards in terms of originality, significance and rigour and 3* indicating research that is internationally excellent. 81% of the College's research profile was deemed to be within the 4* or 3* categories, an increase of over 20% since 2008. This result placed Royal Holloway 31st overall in the UK for 4* and 3* research and 33rd based on an overall Grade Point Average (GPA) score.

The Department of Politics and International Relations is ranked 37th in the UK for research of 4* standard and 18th for 3* and 4* research.

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List of programmes with details of awards, teaching arrangements and accreditation

The programme is taught entirely by staff at Royal Holloway, University of London, and the MA leads to an award of the University of London. The Postgraduate Diploma and Postgraduate Certificate lead to an award of Royal Holloway and Bedford New College. Programmes in Politics and International Relations are not subject to accreditation by a professional body. The Banner programme codes are given in parentheses.

MA Politics of Development (3104)

PG Diploma Politics of Development (3105)

PG Certificate Politics of Development (3106)

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