

MSc Communication for Sustainable Livelihoods

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| Awarding Institution: | The University of Reading |
| Teaching Institution: | The University of Reading Faculty of Life Sciences |
| Programme length: | 6 month Postgraduate Certificate, 9 month PG Diploma, 12 month MSc (for students entering in 2004) |
| Date of specification: | May 2004 |
| Programme Director: | Professor C J Garforth, International and Rural Development Department |
| Board of Studies: | IRDD |
| Accreditation: | None |
| Web site: | http://www.rdg.ac.uk/irdd/ma8-CSL.htm |

Summary of programme aims

The aims of the programme in Communication for Sustainable Livelihoods

- Develop a critical understanding of communication theory and the practical application of communication media in development contexts
- Strengthen professional competence in the design, planning and management of information and knowledge interventions.

Transferable skills

The programme requires a substantial amount of independent reading, research and study and students are expected to take personal responsibility and show initiative in developing their knowledge and understanding of the field of study. In following this programme students will also have the opportunity to enhance and develop their skills relating to communication (Oral and written), presentations, information handling, problem solving, teamwork, and the use of information technology. Students will learn to work independently, under time pressures, and will learn to set priorities and manage their time in order to meet strict deadlines. Career planning, via choice of modules, will be an integral part of the programme.

Programme content

Postgraduate Certificate:

Students take three specialist modules (30 credits) (IDM004, IDM044, IDM045) and two core modules (IDM001 and IDM002) (30 credits) to total 60 credits

Postgraduate Diploma:

Students take three specialist modules (30 credits) (IDM004, IDM044, IDM045) and two core modules (IDM001 and IDM002) (30 credits) and select a further 60 credits from a wide range of modules, subject to satisfying any module pre-requisites, to total 120 credits

MSc in Communication for Sustainable Livelihoods

Students take three specialist modules (30 credits) (IDM004, IDM044, IDM045) and two core modules (IDM001 and IDM002) (30 credits) and select a further 60 credits from a wide range of modules, subject to satisfying any module pre-requisites, to total 120 credits from the taught component of the programme. The MSc then additionally involves a dissertation project worth 60 credits.

| Module code | Module Title | Credits | Level |
|---------------------------|--|----------------|--------------|
| Core Modules | | | |
| IDM001 | Perspectives on Development | 20 | M |
| IDM002 | Communication for Sustainable Livelihoods Tutorials | 10 | M |
| Specialist Modules | | | |
| IDM004 | Communication in Development Processes and Interventions | 10 | M |
| IDM044 | Communication Research for Development | 10 | M |
| IDM045 | Principles of Communication Design for Development | 10 | M |
| Optional Modules | | | |
| IDM006 | Concepts and strategies of social development | 10 | M |
| IDM008 | Design of training programmes | 10 | M |
| IDM041 | Developing countries in the world economy | 10 | M |
| IDM011 | Environmental problems and policies | 10 | M |
| IDM015 | Learning, adult education and training | 10 | M |
| IDM020 | Participatory learning and action (PLA) in development and extension | 10 | M |
| IDM021 | Poverty, inequality and livelihoods | 10 | M |
| IDM046 | Governance, accountability and development | 10 | M |
| IDM005 | Comparative Extension | 10 | M |
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| IDM030 | Dissertation | 60 | M |

Part-time and Modular arrangements

All students have the modular flexibility described in the ‘Programme content’ section above. Part-time students may build up their modular credits towards a Certificate, Diploma or MSc over an extended period.

Degree Certification and Assessment

The University’s taught postgraduate marks classification is as follows:

| <u>Mark</u> | <u>Interpretation</u> |
|-------------|-----------------------|
| 70 – 100% | Distinction |
| 60 – 69% | Merit |
| 50 – 59% | Good standard (Pass) |

Failing categories:

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| 40 – 49% | Work below threshold standard |
| 0 – 39% | Unsatisfactory Work |

For Masters Degrees

To pass the MSc students must normally gain an average mark of 50 or more overall including a mark of 50 or more for the dissertation *and have no mark below 40 in Specialist and Core modules* (IDM004, IDM044, IDM045 plus modules IDM001 and IDM002). In addition the total credit value of all modules marked below 40 must not exceed 30 credits and for all modules marked below 50 must be less than 60 credits.*

Students who gain an average mark of 70 or more overall including a mark of 70 or more for the dissertation and have no mark below 40 will be eligible for a Distinction. Those gaining an average mark of 60 or more overall including a mark of 60 or more for the dissertation and have no mark below 40 will be eligible for a Merit.

For PG Diplomas

To pass the Postgraduate Diploma students must normally gain an average mark of 50 or more *and have no mark below 40 in Specialist and Core modules* (IDM004, IDM044, IDM045 plus modules IDM001 and IDM002). In addition the total credit value of all modules marked below 40 must not exceed 30 credits and for all modules marked below 50 must be less than 60 credits.*

Students who gain an average mark of 70 or more and have no mark below 40 will be eligible for the award of a Distinction. Those gaining an average mark of 60 or more and have no mark below 40 will be eligible for a Merit.

For PG Certificate

To pass the Postgraduate Certificate students must normally gain an average mark of 50 or more. In addition the total credit value of all modules marked below 40 must not exceed 10 credits.*

*The provision to permit a candidate to be passed overall with a profile containing marks below 40 is made subject to the condition that there is evidence that the candidate applied his or herself to the work of those modules with reasonable diligence and has not been absent from the examination without reasonable cause.

Summary of teaching and assessment

Teaching is organised in modules. The delivery of materials takes a variety of forms including lectures, classes, seminars and group exercises.

Assessment is modular and involves coursework and for some modules unseen examinations. The nature of the assessment is determined by the aims of the module.

A dissertation supervisor is appointed for each student.

Admission requirements

Entrants to this programme are normally required to have obtained an honours degree or its equivalent in a relevant subject but applicants with other qualifications as may be approved by the Senate, and who have at least 2 years' professional experience in a relevant field of development

work are also eligible to apply for admission to this programme. References are also taken into account.

Admissions Tutor: The programme director is responsible for admissions

Support for students and their learning

University support for students and their learning falls into two categories. Learning support includes IT Services, which has several hundred computers and the University Library, which across its three sites holds over a million volumes, subscribes to around 4,000 current periodicals, has a range of electronic sources of information and houses the Student Access to Independent Learning (S@IL) computer-based teaching and learning facilities. There are language laboratory facilities both for those students studying on a language degree and for those taking modules offered by the Institution-wide Language Programme. Student guidance and welfare support is provided by Programme Directors, the Careers Advisory Service, the University's Special Needs Advisor, Study Advisors, Hall Wardens and the Students' Union.

A Study Skills module is available to support learning throughout the taught component of the programme and to develop independent learning skills required for successful completion of the Dissertation

Career prospects

The MSc in Communication for Sustainable Livelihoods will prepare students for work in the communication and information departments of national and international development agencies and for independent careers in development communication in fields such as health, HIV/Aids, natural resource management and social development.

Opportunities for study abroad or for placements

With the agreement of the supervisor, students may be allowed to study abroad or take up placements during the Summer Term as part of their dissertation work.

Educational aims of the programme

- Develop a critical understanding of communication theory and the practical application of communication media in development contexts
- Strengthen professional competence in the design, planning and management of information and knowledge interventions

Programme Outcomes

Knowledge and Understanding

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| <p>A. Knowledge and understanding of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Ways in which the links between international development and communication processes have been conceptualised and studied2. The social, economic and political forces which shape people's access to communications technology and infrastructure3. Principles of human communication in the context of sustainable livelihoods | <p>Teaching/learning methods and strategies Mixture of lectures, seminars, directed reading, group and individual project work, individual and group presentation, guided readings and guidance on key sources of reference material. Feedback and guidance are important elements complementing an emphasis on self-directed study.</p> <p><i>Assessment</i> By coursework and, in some cases, formal examinations; coursework to include essay assignments and presentations</p> |
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Skills and other attributes

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| <p>B. Intellectual skills – able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Structure, analyse and evaluate theoretical and conceptual issues and the bases for their relevance in the context of secure livelihoods.2. Think logically and analytically and to understand the difference between positive and normative statements relating to 'knowledge transfer'3. Identify key communication approaches and evaluate them with reference to practice and outcome.4. Critically analyse communication theory and the practical application of communication media in a development context5. Comprehend the rapidly evolving discourse of development and the factors influencing both the change and the pace of change. | <p>Teaching/learning methods and strategies Students are frequently challenged in all teaching situations to complete logical arguments, analyse problems, seek and evaluate alternative explanations, and justify held beliefs. Long essay, debate, group work and presentations provide the principal vehicles by which intellectual skills are developed.</p> <p><i>Assessment</i> By formative tests and presentations. Other assignments, including coursework and, in some cases, formal examinations; dissertation</p> |
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| <p>C. Practical skills – able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Apply appropriate communication processes in the planning and implementation of planned development interventions 2. Evaluate the appropriateness and effectiveness of alternative development implementation strategies. 3. Effectively apply a range of communication frameworks useful in the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of development interventions and processes. 4. Design and plan a communication intervention for a development context 5. Identify, access, evaluate, synthesise, analyse, collate and represent data relevant to the critical evaluation of development policy and practice. | <p>Teaching/learning methods and strategies</p> <p>Students are required to undertake and understand a wide range of reading, from traditional published sources, web-based material and other grey literature relating to development policy and practice. This includes both directed reading and through researching their own sources of information. Discussion in lectures and seminars emphasises the use of empirical evidence, and the strengths and weaknesses of alternative theories, methodologies and practices.</p> <p>The practical skills are achieved through lectures, seminars, presentations, case studies, group work, and dissertation, and in particular, 4. is achieved through a project and assignment on unit ID/M/045</p> <p><i>Assessment</i></p> <p>Long essays, presentations and unseen examinations</p> |
| <p>D. Transferable skills – able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Communicate knowledge and opinions effectively to a wide range of people 2. Work independently, responsibly and professionally 3. Reflect and evaluate his/her own academic progress and its implications for emerging/changing professional practice 4. Identify, access, evaluate, synthesise, analyse, collate and represent data relevant to the issue at hand. 5. Manage time and prioritise workloads in the context of changing demands | <p>Teaching/learning methods and strategies</p> <p>The presentation of well-researched written work is a fundamental element of the programme and requires the application of all the skills listed in 1-5. This is complemented and reinforced by enhanced oral skills, developed through lecture and seminar discussions, tutorials and group activities.</p> <p><i>Assessment</i></p> <p>By formative tests and presentations. Other assignments, including coursework and, in some cases, formal examinations; dissertation</p> |

Please note: This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably expect to achieve and demonstrate if he/she takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information on the learning outcomes, content and teaching, learning and assessment methods of each module can be found in module descriptions.