MA in International Relations
For students entering in October 2005

Awarding Institution:	**The University of Reading**
Teaching Institution:	**The University of Reading**
Faculty of Economic and Social Sciences	Programme length: **12 months**
Date of specification: **14 August 2005**	
Programme Director:	**Dr Chris White**
Board of Studies:	**GIPIS**
Accreditation:	**The University of Reading**

Summary of programme aims

The programme aims to provide students with a deeper knowledge and theoretical understanding of the academic discipline of International Relations than that provided at the undergraduate level. It seeks to acquaint them with the current debates in the field and their relationship to contemporary problems of world politics. It also aims to strengthen their ability for critical analysis of International Relations. It offers the opportunity for specialisation in various aspects of international politics, strategic studies, international political economy, international law, international organisations, and area studies.

Transferable skills

This module will enhance students' capacity for independent study by requiring them to prepare for weekly discussions using recommended bibliographic materials (print and electronic). It will help them to develop further their IT skills by using a variety of internet sites and public access databases in the preparation of assignments. It will enhance their presentational skills by requiring them to make oral presentations to groups of fellow students. It will strengthen their written communication skills through the writing of essays and a dissertation. The dissertation component will strengthen students' research skills and their ability to structure complex subject material as well as evaluate and present their own thinking on a subject in a coherent and precise manner. This module provides training for doctoral programmes as part of the ESRC 1 + 3 scheme.

Programme content

The MA in International Relations consists of 180 credits; a taught element (120 credits) and a dissertation (60 credits). There is a compulsory core module 'International Relations' (30 credits), which runs for two terms (Autumn and Spring). In addition, students choose module options totalling 90 credits from the list below [or one 30 credit option plus the full complement of research training (60 credits)], which run concurrently with the core module. Students may take up to 40 credits in another MA programme subject to the approval of the Director of GIPIS. Students must also write a dissertation (60 credits), which is planned in consultation with a supervisor and submitted for assessment in September.

Mod Code	*Module Title*	*Credits*	*Level*
Compulsory Modules			
PIM09	International Relations	30	M
PIM12	Dissertation	60	M
	Research Methods (for MA with research training):		
PIM01	Philosophical Issues in the Social Sciences	10	M
PIM02	Data Collection and Analysis	20	M
EDMES1	Essentials of Research Methods for the Social Sciences	20	M

EDMES2	Transferable Skills for Social Sciences	10	M

Option Modules

PIM03	Conflict & Conflict Resolution	30	M
PIM21	Contemporary Diplomacy	30	M
PIM19	Domestic Politics & Foreign Policies of the Middle East	30	M
PIM26	EU as a Global Actor	30	M
PIM24	EU Enlargement in Eastern Europe	30	M
M02A	International Human Rights	30	M
LWM03A	International Law & World Order	30	M
ECM25	International Political Economy	20	M
PIM08	International Politics of Asia–Pacific	30	M
PIM10	International Relations of the Mediterranean	30	M
PIM11	International Security Studies	30	M
ECN48	Issues in Euro-Asian Studies I	20	M
ECN49	Issues in Euro-Asian Studies II	20	M
PIM18	Strategic Studies	30	M
PIM17	Terrorism and Security	30	M
PIM27	The Politics of the Monetary Union	30	M
PIM28	The United Nations, Humanitarian Intervention & Cont Warfare	30	M
PIM20	War, Peace and International Ethics	30	M

Part-time/Modular arrangements

The programme can be followed part-time over a period of 24 months. It can also be taken on a modular basis for a period up to but not exceeding 72 months.

Progression requirements

None

Summary of teaching and assessment

The programme is taught by a mixture of seminars with student presentations and structured discussion, individual tutorials (especially where the dissertation is involved), and a small number of lectures.
The Core Module and most Option Modules are assessed on the basis of 50 per cent course work and 50 per cent examination (though some Option Modules may also be assessed on the basis of coursework only, or of 75 per cent examination and 25 per cent coursework). The pass mark for all modules is 50 per cent.

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

Mark	Interpretation
70 – 100%	Distinction
60 – 69%	Merit
50 – 59%	Good standard (Pass)
Failing categories:	
40 – 49%	Work below threshold standard
0 – 39%	Unsatisfactory Work

For Masters Degrees

To pass the MA students must 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 any module*. The total credit value of all modules marked below 50 must not exceed 55 credits.

Students who gain an average mark of 70 or more overall including a mark of 60 or more for the dissertation and have no mark below 50 will be eligible for a Distinction. Those gaining an average mark of 60 or more overall including a mark of 50 or more for the dissertation and have no mark below 50 will be awarded eligible for a Merit.

For PG Diplomas

To pass the Postgraduate Diploma students must gain an average mark of 50 or more *and have no mark below 40 in any module*. In addition the total credit value of 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 50 will be eligible for the award of a Distinction. Those gaining an average mark of 60 or more and have no mark below 50 will be awarded eligible for a Merit.

For PG Certificate

To pass the Postgraduate Certificate students must gain an average mark of 50 or more *and have no mark below 40 in any module*.

Admission requirements

Entrants to this programme are normally required to have obtained a 2.1 Honours degree or its equivalent and, for students whose first language is not English, an IELTS score of 7.0.

Admissions Tutor: Dr R. J. McKeever

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.

GIPIS has its own handbook as well as a full induction programme at the beginning of the university year. Student progress is monitored via termly progress reports written by the Unit Convenor and provided to the Director of Studies. Through its formative essays scheme GIPIS also gives individual help to students whose early assignments have revealed the need for remedial effort to enhance their writing skills.

Career prospects

Students with a postgraduate degree in International Relations may be able to pursue careers in a wide range of areas in government, business, research, journalism, publishing, teaching, and the

work of non-governmental organizations. A number of students also go on to further post-graduate studies at the PhD level.

Opportunities for study abroad or for placements

The Graduate Institute has exchange arrangements with Charles University, Prague, and with the Université Libre de Bruxelles. Each year a weeklong study trip to Brussels is organised to visit EU and other governmental and non-governmental institutions.

Educational aims of the programme

Upon completion of the MA programme, students will have broadened and strengthened their knowledge and understanding of International Relations in a systematic way. They will be aware of the main epistemological and theoretical issues relevant to the academic study of International Relations, and of current debates within the discipline. They will have a general familiarisation with the full range of quantitative and qualitative research skills relevant to the study of International Relations and will have practical knowledge of specific methods and research techniques. They will have engaged in a sustained piece of independent and critical research within the context of close and supportive supervision. They will also have acquired non-subject specific research skills and generic skills and knowledge appropriate to a research and other careers.

Programme Outcomes

Knowledge and Understanding

A. Knowledge and understanding of:	Teaching/learning methods and strategies
(a) the principal concepts and theories associated with the academic discipline of International Relations; (b) the major issues and debates in contemporary world politics and the relevance of International Relations theory to these questions; (c) specific aspects of International Relations; (d) research methods	Students will be taught by means of seminars with students presentations and structured discussion, individual tutorials, and a limited number of lectures. In the Core module students will become familiar with the key concepts and theories of International Relations and with the major issues and debates. In the Option modules, students will gain specialised knowledge of different aspects of International Relations, including international politics, strategic studies, international political economy, international law and international organisations. In the Research Methods module, students will become familiar with the full range of quantitative and qualitative research skills and underlying issues, train in a range of methods of data collection and analysis, and acquire an understanding of the main epistemological and theoretical issues in the social sciences. In the Dissertation module, students will, under the guidance of dissertation supervisor, apply appropriate methods of analysis to a specific topic, taking increasing responsibility for their own learning. *Assessment* Students' knowledge is tested through a combination of coursework, examinations and a dissertation.

Skills and other attributes

B. Intellectual skills – able to:

(a) analyse and interpret patterns and processes of world politics in a theoretically aware manner;
(b) identify and employ relevant scholarly literature in support of one's own research;
(c) demonstrate a sound understanding of research methods and techniques appropriate to the study of International Relations;
(d) structure complex arguments;
(e) criticise and defend intellectual positions in a well reasoned and empirically substantiated fashion;
(f) express oneself orally and in writing in a cogent and effective manner.

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

These intellectual skills will be taught in all modules: Core, Option, Dissertation and (for the MA in research training), Research Methods. These skills will be taught by means of seminars with students presentations and structured discussions, some individual tutorials, essay writing, workshops and the writing of a dissertation. Additional training will be available to students through study visits to the library and other research resources, and through the support of Study Advisors.

Assessment

All these intellectual skills are assessed throughout the programme in termly essays, exams and the dissertation.

C. Practical skills – able to:

a) cull relevant material from select bibliographies for the preparation of oral presentations and written assignments;
b) use library and electronic resources, including databases and websites, for the purpose of conducting research;
c) budget one's time satisfactorily for the completion of weekly assignments, exam preparation and the writing of a dissertation;
d) memorise and recall key concepts, theories and historical data in support of one's work.

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

The Graduate Institute's induction day includes an introduction to the use of the University Library and other relevant resources. Students learn through independent study, availing themselves when necessary of guidance from the Course Convenor and Study Skills Advisors.
Assessment

The practical skills developed during the course form an integral part of knowledge and intellectual skill acquisition and are assessed throughout the programme in coursework, exams and the writing of the dissertation.

D. Transferable skills – able to:

a) engage in independent study;
b) evaluate evidence using reasoned arguments;
c) structure complex arguments;
d) articulate one's own thoughts in a coherent fashion;
e) give oral presentations;
f) write effectively;
g) manage one's time efficiently;
h) use IT (e.g., internet sites and electronic databases) and other scholarly resources.

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

These skills are taught by means of seminars with students presentations and structured discussions, some individual tutorials, essay writing, workshops and the writing of a dissertation. Additional training is available to students through study visits to the library and other research resources, and through the support of Study Advisors.

Assessment

The transferable skills developed during the course form an integral part of knowledge and intellectual skill acquisition and are assessed throughout the programme in coursework, exams and the writing of the dissertation.

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 and programme handbooks.