

**MA in Diplomacy**  
**For students entering in October 2006**

Awarding Institution:  
Teaching Institution:  
Faculty of Economic and Social Sciences  
Date of profile: **September 2006**  
Programme Director:  
Board of Studies:  
Accreditation:

**The University of Reading**  
**The University of Reading**  
Programme length: **12 months**  
  
**R Barston**  
**GIPIS**  
**The University of Reading**

**Summary of Programme Aims**

To introduce students to theoretical and practical approaches to the study of international diplomacy through the study of a core module in Contemporary Diplomacy and to encourage interdisciplinary scholarship. In particular this degree programme encourages the ability to delineate and evaluate issues, select relevant materials and produce arguments encompassing policy, existing practice and knowledge at an advanced level in diplomacy and the international relations of States. It seeks also to develop those practical, generic and personal transferable skills necessary to conduct independent research

**Transferable skills**

Students are encouraged to act independently in planning tasks and use feedback to reflect on their performance and re-assess the appropriateness of current levels of knowledge and skill. They are expected to acquire an ability to think analytically, to develop frameworks for considering and resolving complex problems, and to discriminate between good and bad arguments. In addition, an MA graduate will be used to presenting arguments (both technical and general) orally and in writing and should be able to present such arguments clearly and concisely. Students will be able to research a variety of sources in libraries and on the internet, and, in particular, to research and assess academic literature. Particular elements of the programme expose students to the use of information technology and encourage the development of general professional capabilities including recognition of deadlines and time management.

**Programme content**

The MA in Diplomacy consists of 180 credits: a taught component (120 credits) and a dissertation (60 credits). Within the taught element there is one core module in Contemporary Diplomacy. In addition, students choose option modules totalling 90 credits [or one 30 credit option plus the full complement of research training (60 credits)], from the list of optional modules outlined below. Students may take up to 40 credits in another MA programme subject to the approval of the Director of GIPIS.

Compulsory modules:		Credits	Level
PIM21	Contemporary Diplomacy	30	M
PIM12	Dissertation	60	M
Research Methods (for MA w/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

Optional postgraduate modules:

PIM03	Conflict and Conflict Resolution	30	M
LWM02A	International Human Rights Law	30	M
LWM03A	International Law and World Order	30	M
PIM09	International Relations	30	M
PIM10	International Relations of the Mediterranean	30	M
PIM11	International Security Studies	30	M
PIM08	International Politics of the Asia Pacific	30	M
PIM20	War, Peace and International Ethics	30	M
PIM28	The UN Humanitarian Intervention and Cont Warfare	30	M

### **Part-time/Modular arrangements**

The programme can be taken part-time over two years. In the first year of study, a student will be required to complete the core module in Contemporary Diplomacy and one further module; in the second year of study, a student will be required to two further optional modules and the Dissertation. The programme may not be completed over more than two years.

### **Progression requirements**

None

### **Summary of teaching and assessment**

Teaching methods will vary from module to module but teaching will primarily be by means of seminars. Certain modules may be partially taught by means of lectures and tutorials.

All modules, other than the Dissertation, will be assessed by means of a timed, unseen examination together with assessed written work or other forms of assessed work (for example an oral presentation). Details of the methods of assessment in individual modules are given in the Module Description Forms.

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:

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 First or Upper Second Class Honours in any relevant discipline.

All applicants are considered on their individual merits and the Institute may vary these requirements if it sees fit.

Admissions Tutor:

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### **Support for students and their learning**

University support for students and their learning falls into two categories. Learning support includes IT Services, which maintains several hundred computers across the university, 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 computer-based teaching and learning facilities. There are language laboratory facilities both for those students studying on a degree programme and for those taking modules offered by the Institution-wide Language Programme. Student guidance and welfare support is provided by Personal Tutors, the Careers Advisory Service, the University's Special Needs Advisor, Study Advisors, Hall Wardens and the Students Union.

Within the Graduate Institute of Political and International Studies, Directors of Studies will provide help and guidance on academic, and where appropriate, other matters. A member of the academic staff of the Institute acts a Careers Advisor and

the Institute has a Director and a Deputy Director to provide student support. In addition, all students receive a detailed Handbook to help them study successfully.

### **Careers prospects**

A postgraduate degree will open many doors in more specialised areas of employment such as academia (with further postgraduate study), the media (journalism and broadcasting), the civil service and other branches of public service. This degree is of particular relevance to those wishing to pursue a career in the international civil service with an international organisation or non-governmental organisation or indeed in the foreign service of their home State.

### **Opportunities for study abroad**

The programme does not involve study abroad.

### **Educational Aims of the programme**

The overarching aim of this course is to provide a programme of study which affords a conceptual framework for the study of diplomatic relations between states. As well as specific knowledge of international negotiation, international law and international economic relations, students should acquire the intellectual and practical skills expected of students with a postgraduate qualification.

### **Programme Outcomes**

The programme provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding, skills, qualities and other attributes in the following areas:

#### ***Knowledge and Understanding***

##### **A. Knowledge and Understanding of:**

1. Key issues in diplomacy including issues of politics, law and economics and the process of interdisciplinary analysis of international issues;
2. A range of research methodologies sufficient to formulate appropriate and relevant research questions and conduct independent research in diplomatic methodologies and techniques;
3. A select range of options to broaden understanding of the operation of diplomatic relations at an advanced level;

##### **Teaching and learning methods and strategies**

The basic knowledge in all modules is provided by seminars, although some modules may include lectures. All seminars allow a student to gauge his/her progress in that module and will require significant student input into the acquisition and dissemination of knowledge. The critical input into learning is provided by a student's own reading and preparation for group discussions (particularly engagement with primary sources).

##### *Assessment*

Modules adopt a variety of assessment methods but all modules utilise either summative assessed work or an end of year unseen, timed exam. The majority of modules utilise a combination of both methods of assessment.

### *Skills and other attributes*

**B. Intellectual skills – able to:**

1. Think logically;
2. Analyse and problems and issues;
3. Discriminate between relevant and irrelevant material;
4. Understand technical material;
5. Apply relevant knowledge effectively; and
6. Construct defensible arguments and exercise critical judgment.

**Teaching and learning methods and strategies**

Logic, analytical skill and the ability to apply relevant knowledge is inherent in the study of law and politics and these skills are encouraged and developed in seminars.

*Assessment*

Both formal examinations and summative assessed work assess all these skills either directly or indirectly.

**C. Practical skills – able to:**

1. Discover and use political, legal and/or economics and contextual materials from a variety of sources; and
2. Evaluate political, legal and/or economic and contextual material both individually and a part of a team;
3. Construct and present (orally and in writing) defensible arguments and exercise critical judgment.

**Teaching and learning methods and strategies:**

All the practical skills are present in each module and are developed through seminars. The essence of diplomacy is to provide an answer to a practical problems having identified the issues, selected relevant facts and used appropriate analysis to provide a solution. The encouragement of these faculties is inherent in all parts of the degree. All modules seek to develop powers of critical analysis and judgement.

*Assessment*

The written element of 3 is directly assessed through summative assessed work and/or formal examinations (examinations indirectly assess 1 and 2). The dissertation requires elements of 2 and 3. Some modules assess oral communication (formatively or summatively).

**D. Transferable skills** – able to:

1. Work independently and hard;
2. Use different types of information sources;
3. Communicate technical material effectively both orally and in writing; and
4. Construct defensible arguments and exercise critical judgement;
5. Reflect critically on one's own learning;
6. Consider career development.

**Teaching and learning methods and strategies**

Diplomacy is a subject of considerable complexity; some material is difficult and not all of it is of over-powering interest – a student must work hard to engage with such material. A student will be required regularly to participate in class discussions and make presentations. He or she will be required to engage with a considerable amount of academic and other literature and to assess and evaluate such literature critically and in the context of presenting advanced arguments both orally and in writing.

*Assessment*

Both formal examinations and summative assessed work assess all these skills (oral skills are assessed in at least one module) other than 5 & 6. Seminars encourage a student to reflect on his or her own learning. Guidance is given throughout the degree programme on career development.

**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 be expected 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 the module description and in the programme handbook. The University reserves the right to modify this specification in unforeseen circumstances, or where the process of academic development and feedback from students, quality assurance processes or external sources, such as professional bodies, requires a change to be made. In such circumstances, a revised specification will be issued.**