**MA International Security Studies (On Location in Oman and Bahrain)**

Awarding Institution:  The University of Reading
Teaching Institution:  The University of Reading
Faculty of Economics & Social Sciences                Programme length: 24 months
For students entering in 2006                         Date of specification: 1/6/02
Programme Director: Professor Peter Woodward
Board of Studies: GIPIS
Accreditation: -

Benchmarking group:  Politics

## Summary of programme aims

The MA in Security Studies aims to develop students' understanding of contemporary conceptualisations of state-related security concerns and some of the major issues arising from them.  The programme aims to develop students' appreciation of the changing nature of the security agenda in relation to changing global and regional contexts; their knowledge of the roles of non-state actors in creating and resolving security problems; and their ability to assess critically different approaches to solving security dilemmas.

## Transferable skills

Students on this programme will develop their ability to:
   a.  understand and analyse critically a complex theoretical and empirical body of work.
   b.  evaluate and formulate oral and written arguments at postgraduate level
   c.  utilise professional relevant experience in academic analysis
   d.  work collectively and productively on complex issues
   e.  communicate clearly on complex issues
   f.  locate sources of knowledge in addition to those provided by programme teachers, including IT-based sources

## Programme content

| Mod Code | Module Title | Credits | Level |
|----------|-------------|---------|-------|
| PIM32 | International Security Studies | 30 | M |
| PIM33 | Strategic Studies | 30 | M |
| PIM34 | Regional Security Issues | 30 | M |
| PIM35 | Security and Conflict Resolution | 30 | M |
| PIM36 | Dissertation | 60 | M |

## Part-time/Modular arrangements
This is a part-time degree only.  Students are normally expected to complete it within 24 months, but exceptionally students may be allowed to complete the degree over a longer period, up to a maximum of 48 months.  Students are eligible only for the Masters degree – no PGCertificates or Diplomas are offered.

## Progression requirements
Students must obtain a pass mark (50%) in three of the four taught modules and have no mark below 40% in any module in order to progress to the dissertation.

**Summary of teaching and assessment**
Students will be taught on location in Oman/Bahrain in blocks of 4 days, with each module comprising two such blocks, spaced approximately ten weeks.  Each teaching block involves 24 hours of class contact. Teaching will combine lectures, seminars and group work in a pattern determined by each teacher.  Assessment of taught modules will be 80% coursework and 20% exams.

The classification of degrees will be as follows:

| Mark | Interpretation |
|------|----------------|
| 70%-100% | Distinction |
| 60%-69% | Merit |
| 50-59% | Pass |
| 0%-49% | Fail |

**Admission requirements**
This programme is offered exclusively to employees of Gulf  State governments, who are already working in areas related to security – for example the foreign and diplomatic services, the armed forces and police. Entrants to this programme are normally required to have obtained a first degree in Politics, International Relations or a cognate discipline.  In certain cases, substantial work experience of a nature directly related to Security Studies may replace this requirement.

Students are also required to have a good working knowledge of the English language.  Each applicant is interviewed by our partners, MDCI.  Many applicants have taken their first degree in the medium of English, but if there is any doubt about their command of the language, they are tested.  If doubts persist they are advised to take an IELTS preparation course.

Admissions Tutor: Director GIPIS

**Support for students and their learning**
Because this programme is taught on-location in Oman and Bahrain, some aspects of student support will be provided by MDCI in their local offices.  These include welfare support, study skills, language support and supplementary library resources housed in on-site libraries.

Students will have computer access to the Whiteknights Library, especially electronic journals. Module teachers will provide study packs where appropriate.

Module teachers will provide tutorial support both in person when on location and via e-mail at other times. The programme will have a dedicated administrator based in Reading, who will field and respond to student e-mail messages.

The Director GIPIS will act as Senior Tutor.

Reading staff will provide a one-day, Induction course for all students at the start of the programme.
**Career prospects**
Students are already established professionals in government or the armed forces, but the programme should enable them to advance their careers.

**Opportunities for study abroad or for placements**
Not applicable

**Educational aims of the programme**

The MA in Security Studies aims to develop students' understanding of state-related security issues. Security Studies is a fast-developing field of academic enquiry, both in terms of its conceptualisation and in terms of the impact of globalisation and other international processes. The programme aims to challenge students' perceptions of 'security'. To this end, it develops their understanding of not only the traditional, essentially military, aspects of security, but also the 'new' security agenda, encompassing issues such as natural resources and migration. The programme will develop students understanding of why and how security problems arise and require them to think critically about a variety of solutions to these dilemmas. The programme aims to raise students' awareness of how the international and regional contexts create security dilemmas and offer both constraints and opportunities for their resolution. Students will also be asked to think critically about internal, external and global security threats and the relationship between the two. Students will be required to engage with classic works of strategy and security studies, but also with new and critical thinking in the field. This is intended to develop students' ability to analyse security issues in a rooted but imaginative manner.

**Programme Outcomes**

*Knowledge and Understanding*

| A. Knowledge and understanding of: | Teaching/learning methods and strategies |
|---|---|
| 1) The traditional and more recent conceptualisations of state-related security<br>2) The origins of and possible solutions to security dilemmas<br>3) A range of political and military theories relevant to the study of these concepts of security | All modules contribute to these outcomes, as they combine theoretical and empirical materials. Module 01 takes a broadly international approach to conceptualising and theorising security issues; Module 02 focuses on strategic issues; Module 03 focuses on regional factors; and Module 04 concentrates on order and conflict resolution. Module 05 gives students the opportunity to analyse a particular security issue in depth.<br>*Assessment*<br><br>Assessment of taught modules is through an exam and two essays of 4,000 words in length. Essays arising from one teaching block must be submitted before the next teaching block begins. The Dissertation is 12,000 words and must be submitted within six months of the final teaching block. |

## *Skills and other attributes*

| **B. Intellectual skills** – able to: | **Teaching/learning methods and strategies** |
|---|---|
| 1) think analytically and critically about security issues.<br>2) reflect on their own and others' ideas in a spirit of collegiality and intellectual discovery<br>3) become a more autonomous learner and develop the confidence to formulate ideas and respond constructively to criticism | 1) On all modules students are encouraged to think in a disciplined and critical manner about competing theories, concepts and interpretations. They will be required to do this in seminars and group work, developing agendas of issues to be analysed and engaging in debate with tutors and other students.<br>2) On all modules, students will be confronted with a range of competing ideas, none of which is offered as definitive truth. Students will be challenged not simply to accept the possibility of competing 'truths', but to use them in a constructive manner.<br>3) In all modules, students will be required to participate actively, both as individuals and in groups. Module 05 places considerable emphasis upon the independent development and execution of an extended piece of analysis.<br><br>*Assessment*<br><br>Students must develop and use all these intellectual skills in seminars, group work, essays, exams and the Dissertation. |

| **C. Practical skills** – able to: | **Teaching/learning methods and strategies** |
|---|---|
| 1) use libraries and internet data bases<br>2) use e-mail for educational, tutorial and administrative purposes | 1) students are expected on all modules to engage with recent research and scholarship, much of which is available through electronic journals. Students are also encouraged to use critically the multiplicity of web-sites relating to security issues<br>2) there will be considerable communication via e-mail, especially between teaching blocks.<br>*Assessment*<br><br>Evidence of engagement with recent research and websites will be expected in class work and written exercises |

| **D. Transferable skills** – able to: | **Teaching/learning methods and strategies** |
|---|---|
| 1) analyse complex issues<br>2) evaluate and formulate arguments<br>3) utilise professional experience<br>4) work collectively<br>5) communicate clearly<br>6) locate sources of knowledge | 1) students are required to read widely and to engage with complex materials competing ideas as preparation for seminars and essays.<br>2) students required in seminars and other group work to refine, combine and generate explanations<br>3) students will be asked to reflect on their professional engagement with security-related issues as a means of informing discussion<br>4) students will be required to work in sub-groups as well as whole-class seminars as a means of producing sound analyses of issues<br>5) this will be developed in seminars and other group-work<br>6) students will be expected to use these in seminar preparation and discussion<br><br>*Assessment*<br><br>1, 2,5 & 6 opposite are all assessed in essays and 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 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.**