

MA in International Law and World Order

For students entering in October 2009

Awarding Institution:	University of Reading
Teaching Institution:	University of Reading Faculty of Social Sciences
Programme length:	12 months F/T 24 months P/T
Date of specification:	May 2009
Programme Director:	Dr Andreas Behnke
Board of Studies:	GIPIS
Accreditation:	University of Reading

Summary of Programme Aims

To introduce students to theoretical and practical approaches to the study of the separate but related disciplines of International Law and International Relations through the study of core modules in International Law in Theory and Practice and Contemporary Issues in International Law, 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 International Law and International Relations. 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 programme consists of 180 credits; a taught element (120 credits) and a dissertation (60 credits). The dissertation must be written on a topic that has a meaningful relationship to international law or international politics.

Within the taught element there are two core modules: LWMTIL International Law in Theory and Practice (20 credits), LWMTCI Contemporary Issues in International Law (10 credits) (and students must also take at least 30 credits of research methods modules.) The remaining credits of the taught element must be taken from any of:

- listed Master's-level or Honours-level modules offered by the Law School or by GIPIS, or

- unlisted Master's-level modules offered by the Law School with permission of the Director of Taught Postgraduate Studies in Law.
- unlisted Master's-level modules offered by GIPIS with permission of Programme Director.
- Up to 30 credits in another MA programme with permission of the Programme Director.

All module selections are subject to timetabling requirements and availability in any given year.

Of the 120 taught credits, students must be enrolled in a minimum of 45 credits in each of the Autumn and Spring terms. (For this purpose a 30 credit module taught across two terms will count as 15 credits in each term.)

Compulsory modules:

<i>Code</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Credits</i>	<i>Level</i>
PIM12	Dissertation	60	7
LWMTIL	International Law in Theory and Practice	20	7
LWMTCI	Contemporary Issues in International Law	10	7

Only 30 credits maximum of research methods allowed (marked with *):

Optional Modules

PIM44	Philosophical Issues in the Social Sciences *	30	7
PIM45	Data Collection and Analysis *	30	7
LWMTR	Research Methods *	30	7
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PIM42	Conflict in the Middle East	30	7
PIM03	Conflict and Conflict Resolution	30	7
PIM21	Contemporary Diplomacy	30	7
LWMTEF	European Legal Frameworks: Constitutionalism, Citizenship and Democracy	20	7
LWMTDS	International Dispute Settlement	20	7
LWMTHR	International Human Rights Law	30	7
LWMTLT	International Law and Terrorism	20	7
PIM09	International Relations	30	7
PIM11	International Security Studies	30	7
PIM15	Political Integration in Europe	30	7
LWMTIC	Prosecuting International Crimes: Contemporary Issues and Problems	10	7
PIM43	Terrorism in a Globalising World	30	7
LWMTW	War Law	20	7

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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 modules LWMTIL International Law in Theory and Practice (20 credits) and LWMTCI Contemporary Issues in International Law (10 credits) and further modules to the value of 30 credits. In the second year of

study, a student will be required to complete further optional modules to the value of 60 credits 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)
<u>Failing categories:</u>	
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 a related discipline.

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

Admissions Tutor: Dr P.J. Giddings

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 Personal Tutors, School Senior Tutors, the Students' Union, the Medical Practice and the Student Services Centre. The Student Services Centre is housed in the Carrington Building and includes the Careers Advisory Service, the Disability Advisory Service, Accommodation Advisory Team, Student Financial Support, Counselling and Study Advisors. Student Services has a Helpdesk available for enquiries made in person or online (www.risisweb.reading.ac.uk), or by calling the central enquiry number on (0118) 378 5555. Students can get key information and guidance from the team of Helpdesk Advisers, or make an appointment with a specialist adviser; Student Services also offer drop-in sessions on everything from accommodation to finance. The Carrington Building is open between 8:30 and 17:30 Monday to Thursday (17:00 Friday and during vacation periods). Further information can be found in the Student Diary (given to students at enrolment) or on the Student website (www.reading.ac.uk/student).

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.

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 legal and political study which affords a conceptual framework for the study of the international relations of states which will facilitate the recognition and appreciation by students of the overall mosaic of law and politics in the international sphere and permits detailed study of some aspects of law and politics. As well as specific knowledge of international law and international 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 international law and international relations 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 law and politics;
3. A select range of options to broaden understanding of the operation of law and politics at an advanced level;
4. Appropriate contextual background to understand the substantive law.

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 legal and/or political and contextual materials from a variety of sources; and
2. Evaluate legal and/or political 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 legal study and the study of political science 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

International law and international relations are subjects 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.