

**MA/Postgraduate Diploma/Postgraduate Certificate in International Relations
(Diplomacy)
For students entering in 2010**

Awarding Institution:	University of Reading
Teaching Institution:	University of Reading
Faculty:	Social Sciences
Programme length:	12 months
Date of specification:	March 2010
Programme Director:	Beatrice Heuser
Board of Studies:	GIPIS
Accreditation:	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 are two core modules. In addition, students choose optional modules totalling 60 credits [which can include up to 30 credits of research training*], from the list of optional modules outlined below. Students may take up to 30 credits in another MA programme subject to the approval of the Director of GIPIS.

Compulsory modules:		Credits	Level
PIM09	International Relations	30	7
PIM21	Contemporary Diplomacy	30	7
PIM12	Dissertation	60	7

Optional postgraduate modules:

PIM03	Conflict & Conflict Resolution	30	7
PIM11	International Security Studies	30	7
PIM15	Political Integration in Europe	30	7
PIM25	International Political Economy	30	7
PIM28	The United Nations, Humanitarian Intervention & Contemporary Warfare	30	7
PIM29	The Practice of Strategy in History	30	7
PIM30	Strategic Theory	30	7
PIM31	Modern Strategy		
PIM37	The Origins and Causes of War	30	7
PIM42	Conflict in the Middle East	30	7
PIM43	Terrorism in a Globalising World	30	7
PIM46	Cold War Culture	30	7
PIM44	Research Training – Philosophical Issues*	30	7
PIM45	Research Training – Data Collection & Analysis*	30	7
LWMTCI	Contemporary Issues in International Law	10	7
LWMTDS	International Dispute Settlement	20	7
LWMTEF	European Legal Frameworks : Constitutionalism, Citizenship & Democracy	20	7
LWMTHR	International Human Rights Law	30	7
LWMTIC	Prosecuting International Crimes: Contemporary Issues and Problems	10	7
LWMTIL	International Law in Theory & Practice	20	7
LWMTW	War Law	20	7

Part-time/Modular arrangements

The programme can be taken part-time over two years (or exceptionally on a flexible basis over a maximum of 6 years). In the first year of study, a student will be required to complete the core modules in Contemporary Diplomacy and International Relations; in the second year of study, a student will be required to choose two further optional modules and the Dissertation. The programme may not normally be extended beyond 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 are assessed by course work and examination. Failed coursework has to be re-submitted at the latest by 1st September the same year. If the examination is failed it has to be re-sat in September the same year. A failed dissertation has to be re-submitted within 12 months.

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 Certificates

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.

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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 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, School Senior Tutors, the Students' Union, the Medical Practice and the Student Services Directorate. The Student Services Directorate 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 website (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 as a Careers Advisor and the Institute's Director also provides student support. In addition, all students receive a detailed Handbook to help them study successfully.

Career 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 or for placements

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.

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.