MRes in International Relations (European Studies)
For students entering in October 2010

Awarding Institution:	University of Reading
Teaching Institution:	University of Reading
Faculty:	Social Sciences
Programme length:	12 months
Date of specification:	2010
Programme Director:	Dr Jonathan Golub
Board of Studies:	GIPIS
Accreditation:	University of Reading

Summary of programme aims

The programme studies the political and economic dimensions of Europe from a multidisciplinary perspective. It provides students with a thorough knowledge of the political, economic and cultural dimensions of the EU and its place in the wider international context, a good grasp of tropical problems, developments and the current theoretical debates that surround the internal and external relations of the region.

Transferable skills

The programme will develop students' bibliographical skills by requiring them to compile bibliographies for their essays and dissertation. It will encourage students to develop their IT skills, by the use of a range of electronic databases and WWW resources in their research for essays and dissertation. It will enhance their presentational skills by making them present seminar papers to a group of students. The dissertation element will develop students' research skills and personal initiative as well as training them in structuring and summarising complex subject matter and in evaluating and presenting their own thoughts on a subject in a coherent and precise manner.

Programme content

The MRes in International Relations (European Studies) consists of 180 credits; a taught element (120 credits) and a dissertation (60 credits). There are four compulsory core modules: 'International Relations', 'Political Integration in Europe', 'Research Training Philosophical Issues' and 'Research Training Data Collection & Analysis, totalling 1200 credits. These run for two terms (Autumn and Spring). Students must also write a dissertation (60 credits), which is planned in consultation with a supervisor and submitted for assessment in September

Compulsory Modules

PIM09	International Relations	30	7
PIM15	Political Integration in Europe	30	7
PIM12	Dissertation	60	7
PIM44	Research Training Philosophical Issues	30	7
PIM45	Research Training Data Collection & Analysis	30	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 two modules 'International Relations' and 'Research Training Philosophical Issues'. The other modules and dissertation will be completed in the second year of study. The programme may not normally be extended beyond two years.

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.

All modules, except for the Dissertation, 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 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 MRes students must gain an average mark of 50 or more overall *and have no mark below 40 in any of their modules.* In addition the total credit value of all modules marked below 40 must not exceed 30 credits and for all modules marked below 50 must be less than 60 credits.

Students who gain an average mark of 70 or more overall including a mark of 70 or more for the dissertation and have no mark below 40 will be eligible for a Distinction. Those gaining an average mark of 60 or more overall including a mark of 60 or more for the dissertation and have no mark below 40 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 of their modules*. In addition the total credit value of all modules marked below 40 must not exceed 30 credits and for 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 40 will be eligible for the award of a Distinction. Those gaining an average mark of 60 or more and have no mark below 40 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 of their modules*. In addition the total credit value of all modules marked below 40 must not exceed 10 credits.

Admission requirements
Entrants to this programme are normally required to have obtained:
2:1 BA/BSc Hons Degree or equivalent. Students whose first language is not English must have an IELTS score of 6.5 or equivalent.

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 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 (www.reading.ac.uk/student).

Students meet with their Director of Studies once a term to assess their progress. A formative essay is written by students at the beginning of the Autumn term. This essay does not contribute to the students' degree but enables their Director of Studies to spot any academic difficulties at an early stage and to agree with the student concerned appropriate strategies to resolve them.

Career prospects

Students with an MRes in International Relations (European Studies) can find work, for example:

- in the diplomatic service,
- in EU institutions,
- in Non-Governmental Organisations,
- in Research Institutes,
- in Journalism for print media, radio and TV.

The emphasis in the programme on analytical abilities, the summarising and presentation of complex arguments and empirical evidence mean that students may go on to pursue careers in a wide range of fields such as teaching, marketing, IT, civil service, and local government. A number of students go on to further post-graduate studies at PhD level, both at The University of Reading and elsewhere.

Opportunities for study abroad or for placements
The programme allows for formal exchanges with the Université Libre de Bruxelles and with Charles University, Prague.

Educational aims of the programme
To provide a detailed and challenging introduction to the politics of the European Union.

To enable students to understand the debates surrounding the political integration of the European Union.

To enable students to understand the debates surrounding how integration in the European Union has altered its relations with the wider international society.

Using a range of theoretical approaches to enable students to develop an understanding of the complexity of the above issues.

To provide the analytical and intellectual basis for further academic research on the region or for careers that require a thorough understanding of the politics of the European Union.

To develop further students' critical and analytical skills through their engagement with a range of challenging theoretical and empirical literature and to demonstrate these in essays, presentations and examinations.

Programme Outcomes

Knowledge and Understanding

A. Knowledge and understanding of:	**Teaching/learning methods and strategies**
1. the history of the development of European Union policies and institutions, 2. the theoretical and conceptual debates surrounding European integration and the relationship of European integration to the external policies of the European Union, 3. the debates surrounding the policies of the European Union, 4. research methods.	The programme is taught primarily through seminars with student presentations and structured discussion, with lectures where appropriate. Other teaching provision includes: individual tutorials, training sessions in the library and an optional study visit to the institutions of the European Union. Students are given wide ranging bibliographies covering the subject area, including basic and advanced texts. Essays, seminar and exam questions are set at a level that will stretch students' capabilities and ensure that they must be using sources that are at the forefront of the scholarship of the subject. Students are obliged to locate and use appropriate sources for their reading that are informative and significant within the subject area. In the Research Methods modules, 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. *Assessment* Students' knowledge is tested through a combination of coursework, examination and dissertation.

Skills and other attributes

B. Intellectual skills – able to:	**Teaching/learning methods and strategies**
1) conduct independent analysis informed by a sound understanding of appropriate theoretical, conceptual and methodological approaches, 2) undertake substantial independent research and demonstrate originality in the application of knowledge. 3) use the scholarly literature to develop their own research.	Through seminar presentations and the following structured discussions students are encouraged to develop their own analysis backed up by the ability to justify their position with reasoned argument and empirical evidence and a good knowledge of the relevant theoretical approaches. Lectures provide and introduction to the relevant theoretical, conceptual and methodological approaches to the subject area. This is backed up by a reading list which covers everything from basic to advanced literature on the subject area. Students are encouraged from the first seminar to seek out new sources on the subject matter. Thus students are pushed to undertake independent research from the beginning of the programme. The challenging nature of the seminars encourages them to develop originality in their application of knowledge. Through the process of devising and writing a dissertation on one aspect of the subject area with supervision from a tutor, the student is further encouraged to develop their research skills and an originality in the application of knowledge. *Assessment* All these intellectual skills are assessed throughout the programme in essays, exams and the dissertation

C. Practical skills – able to:

1) identify, locate and use written sources,

2) memorise and be able to recall written arguments and empirical evidence,

3) identify appropriate resources including the internet for the study of the subject.

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

Students will be familiarised with the relevant archives, library collections and internet resources in all modules and will be given advice on how to use these resources effectively. Students will develop these skills throughout the programme, but will gain greatest experience in the dissertation module.

Assessment

1 and 2 are assessed throughout the programme in coursework. The other skill (3) is not formally assessed but its effective use will enhance the performance in the modules undertaken

D. Transferable skills – able to:

1) amass evidence derived from textual sources,

2) evaluate evidence using reasoned arguments,

3) structure complex arguments,

4) articulate their own thoughts in a coherent fashion,

5) give oral presentations,

6) put together a bibliography,

7) manage their time,

8) use IT and other resources.

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

The intellectual skills represented by 1, 2, 3, and 4 are taught in all components of the course, with 3 and 4 being of special importance for the dissertation module. Among the other skills that of giving an oral presentation (5) will be acquired in the modules taught during the first two terms of the programme. Bibliographical skills and the use of IT (6 and 8) will be developed throughout the course but especially in the dissertation module. The latter will also be very important for teaching time management skills.

Assessment

1,2,3, and 4 are assessed throughout the programme in coursework. The other skills are not formally assessed but their effective use will enhance performance in the modules undertaken

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.