**MA in International Relations (International Security Studies)**
**For students entering in 2011/2**

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| Awarding Institution: | University of Reading |
| Teaching Institution: | University of Reading |
| Relevant QAA subject Benchmarking group(s): | |
| Faculty: | Arts, Humanities and Social Science Faculty |
| Programme length: | 1 years |
| Date of specification: | 10/Aug/2012 |
| Programme Director: | Dr Andreas Behnke |
| Programme Advisor: | |
| Board of Studies: | GIPIS |
| Accreditation: | |

**Summary of programme aims**

The programme aims to equip students with a thorough understanding of key theories, concepts and scholarly debates related to international and global security, broadly defined, and their relationship to contemporary security problems. As well, it aims to provide students with empirical knowledge of specific security issues, especially since the Cold War period, and with the ability to critically analyse these. Opportunities for specialisation are offered in various areas of strategic studies, diplomacy and conflict resolution, and the international relations and politics of particular regions.

**Transferable skills**

**Programme content**

The MA in International Security Studies consists of 180 credits; a taught element (120 credits) and a dissertation (60 credits). There are two compulsory core modules, 'International Relations' (30 credits) and 'International Security Studies' (30 credits), which run for two terms (Autumn and Spring). In addition, students choose optional modules totalling 60 credits from the list below [which can include up to 30 credits of research training*]. Students may take up to 30 credits in another MA programme subject to the approval of the Director of GIPIS. Students are also required to write a dissertation (60 credits), which is planned in consultation with a supervisor and submitted for assessment in September.

| Code | Title | Level | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | *Compulsory Modules* | | |
| PIM09 | International Relations | 30 | 7 |
| PIM11 | International Security Studies | 30 | 7 |
| PIM12 | Dissertation | 60 | 7 |
| | *Optional Postgraduate Modules* | | |
| PIM03 | Conflict & Conflict Resolution | 30 | 7 |
| PIM15 | Political Integration in Europe | 30 | 7 |
| PIM21 | Contemporary Diplomacy | 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 | 30 | 7 |
| 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 | 10 | 7 |

|         |                                      |    |   |
|---------|--------------------------------------|----|---|
|         | Problems                             |    |   |
| LWMTIL  | International Law in Theory & Practice | 20 | 7 |
| LWMTW   | War Law                              | 20 | 7 |

**Part-time or 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 'International Relations' and 'International Security Studies'. 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.

**Assessment and classification**
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 good 2.1 Honours degree or its equivalent. Students whose first language is not English should also have obtained an IELTS score of 6.5.

**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 is provided by a wide array of services across the University, including: the University Library, the Student Employment, Experience and Careers Centre (SEECC), In-sessional English Support Programme, the Study Advice and Mathematics Support Centre teams, IT Services and 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 advisers in the Student Services Centre. The Student Services Centre is housed in the Carrington Building and offers advice on accommodation, careers, disability, finance, and wellbeing. 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 and runs workshops and seminars on a range of topics. For more information see www.reading.ac.uk/student

**Career prospects**
The degree prepares well for many careers as in the civil and foreign service, non-governmental and international organisations, private firms, journalism, teaching and research. A number of students also go on to further post-graduate studies at the PhD level, at the University of Reading or other institutions.

**Opportunities for study abroad or for placements**
The Graduate Institute has exchange arrangements with Charles University, Prague, and with the Université Libre de Bruxelles. It organises annually a weeklong study trip to Brussels, which includes visits to numerous institutions located there.

**Programme Outcomes**

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**Knowledge and Understanding**

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**A. Knowledge and understanding of:**

(a) key theories, paradigms and concepts of international and global security, and their application to contemporary issues;
(b) major debates in security studies;
(c) empirical security issues and threats (military and non-military), and alternative means of managing them;
(d) research methods and skills relevant to security studies.

**Teaching/learning methods and strategies**

Teaching takes the form of seminars with student presentations and structured discussion, individual tutorials, and lectures where appropriate. Other provisions include training sessions in the University Library and an optional annual study trip to Brussels.
The Core Module introduces students to concepts and issues of security, during and since the end of the Cold War. It surveys different approaches to questions about what security is and how to promote it, and who should be made secure. Critically examined are concepts of 'international', 'global' and 'human' security; the nature of various threats to security; and ways in which states and other actors have sought and now seek to tackle them.
The Option modules provide students with opportunities to gain in-depth knowledge of particular areas and issues including strategic studies, diplomacy, conflict resolution, terrorism, and the politics of specific regions.
The Research Methods module introduces a broad range of research tools (quantitative and qualitative), and provides training in different methods of data collection and analysis. It provides students with knowledge of the major epistemological and theoretical issues in the social sciences. In the Dissertation module, students apply, under the guidance of dissertation supervisor, appropriate methods of research and analysis to a specific topic.

*Assessment*
Students' knowledge is tested through a combination
of coursework, examinations and a dissertation.

## Skills and other attributes

**B. Intellectual skills** - *able to:*

(a) critically assess and compare major paradigms
and concepts of security;
(b) apply current debates and paradigms of security
to empirical issues and events, and vise versa;
(c) formulate and defend intellectual positions
effectively, including with reference to relevant
scholarly literature and empirical evidence;
(d) undertake independent research, and in so doing
demonstrate understanding of and the ability to
apply research methods appropriate to the field of
security studies.

**Teaching/learning methods and strategies**

These intellectual skills are taught in the Core and
Optional Modules, in the work on the Dissertation,
and (for the MA with research training) Research
Methods. The teaching takes the form of seminars
with student presentations and structured
discussions, individual tutorials, and the preparation
of essays and a dissertation.
Additional training is available, as needed, through
the support of Study Advisors and a variety of
library and research resources.

*Assessment*
These intellectual skills are assessed throughout the
programme in essays, examinations and the
dissertation.

**C. Practical skills** - *able to:*

(a) select and assess quality materials on assigned
topics, using library and electronic resources;
(b) distill the essence of and organise large amounts
of information on contested issues, and prepare it for
presentation orally and in writing;
(c) refer effectively to key concepts, theories and
empirical data in support
of one's arguments;
(d) manage time effectively in the completion of
weekly assignments, termly essays, exam
preparation, and the writing of a dissertation.

**Teaching/learning methods and strategies**

- The Induction Programme at the beginning of
the academic year, as well as the Core and
Optional Modules, introduce students to library
collections and internet resources, and advise
them on how to use these in their work.
- Effective processing and presentation of
information, and the use of concepts and
empirical data, are demonstrated and practiced
in seminars and assignments.
- Time management and other study skills are
acquired by students independently, and/or via
Course Convenors and Study Skills Advisors.

*Assessment*
The practical skills developed during the course
form an integral part of knowledge and intellectual
skills acquisition. They are assessed throughout the
programme in coursework, exams and the writing of
the dissertation.

**D. Transferable skills** - *able to:*

(a) undertake independent study and research,
including through the use of IT;
(b) evaluate different sources of information and
evidence, and formulate and defend positions and
arguments effectively;
(c) process large amounts of information, and
present it and one's arguments effectively orally and
in writing;
(d) manage time effectively in the completion of
work assignments.
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**Teaching/learning methods and strategies**

These skills are taught through weekly assignments
to prepare for seminar discussions, oral
presentations to fellow students and participation in
seminar debates, and the preparation of essays and a
dissertation. Additional tuition is available from
Study Skills Advisors and Course Convenors

*Assessment*
The practical skills developed during the course
form an integral part of knowledge and intellectual
skills acquisition. They are assessed throughout the

programme in coursework, exams and the writing of 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 process or external sources, such as professional bodies, requires a change to be made. In such circumstances, a revised specification will be issued.**