



Programme Specification (Undergraduate)

FOR ENTRY YEAR: 2025/26

Date created: 31/03/2021

Last amended: 16/04/2025

Version no. 1

1. Programme title(s) and code(s):

MA in International Relations
Postgraduate Diploma* in International Relations
Postgraduate Certificate* in International Relations

*Approved as exit awards only

a) [HECOS Code](#)

| HECOS Code | % |
|------------|--------|
| [100490] | [100%] |

b) UCAS Code (where required)

[n/a]

2. Awarding body or institution:

University of Leicester

3. a) Mode of study

Full-time/Part time

b) Type of study

Campus-based

4. Registration periods:

MA International Relations

The normal period of registration is one year full-time or two years part-time.

The maximum period of registration is two years full-time or four years part-time.

5. Typical entry requirements

Applicants should have at least a good second class honours degree or equivalent, in a relevant subject. Equivalent relevant professional experience may be considered. For candidates whose first language is not English the University's standard English language requirements will apply (IELTS 6.5).

6. Accreditation of Prior Learning

There are no exemptions on the basis of APL.

7. Programme aims

The programme aims to achieve a balance between a thorough exploration of the theoretical dimension and the consideration of empirical issues and practical debates in post-Cold War international relations. It aims to provide students with the competencies and skills to understand contemporary

debates in international relations and to analyse international relations using a mixture of theoretical and empirical tools. By providing a thorough grounding in the subject, students are made aware of the importance of this topic to a sophisticated understanding of global political developments.

8. Reference points used to inform the programme specification

The programme has been developed with reference to the following sources:

- [University of Leicester Education Strategy](#)
- [University of Leicester Assessment Strategy](#) [Login required]
- University of Leicester Periodic Developmental Review Report
- QAA Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications

9. Programme Outcomes

Unless otherwise stated, programme outcomes apply to all awards specified in 1. Programme title(s).

a) Subject and Professional Skills

i) Knowledge

| Intended Learning Outcomes | | Teaching and Learning Methods | How Demonstrated? |
|----------------------------|--|---|---|
| MA | Advanced knowledge of the major themes and issues in post-Cold War international relations | Seminars; directed reading; independent research; dissertation supervision. | Contribution to discussions; problem-based exercises; seminar presentations; essays; dissertation |
| PGDip | Recognise, describe and discuss the major themes and issues in post-Cold War international relations | Seminars; directed reading; independent research | Contribution to discussions; problem-based exercises; seminar presentations; essays |
| PGCert | Identify and explain the major themes and issues in post-Cold War international relations | Seminars; directed reading; independent research | Contribution to discussions; problem-based exercises; seminar presentations; essays |

ii) Concepts

| Intended Learning Outcomes | | Teaching and Learning Methods | How Demonstrated? |
|----------------------------|---|--|---|
| MA | Enhanced grasp of the principles and theories of international relations. Ability to evaluate appropriate theories of international relations and apply these to specific issues | Seminars; problem solving tasks; directed critical reading; independent research; dissertation supervision | Contribution to discussions; problem-based exercises; seminar presentations; essays; critical reviews; dissertation |
| PGDip | Discuss, analyse and appraise the major international relations concepts and theories and relate these to empirical practices and developments | Seminars; problem solving tasks; directed critical reading; independent research | Contribution to discussions; problem-based exercises; seminar presentations; critical reviews; essays |
| PGCert | Explain and assess key concepts and | Seminars; problem solving tasks; directed critical reading; independent research | Contribution to discussions; problem-based exercises; |

| Intended Learning Outcomes | | Teaching and Learning Methods | How Demonstrated? |
|----------------------------|---|-------------------------------|---|
| | theories and relate these to empirical practices and developments | | seminar presentations; critical reviews; essays |

iii) Techniques

| Intended Learning Outcomes | | Teaching and Learning Methods | How Demonstrated? |
|----------------------------|--|---|---|
| MA | Mastery of theories and concepts, methodological tools and bibliographical, writing, oral and critical skills. Understanding of research methods and their application international relations | Induction; library training; study-skills workshops; seminars; problem solving tasks; directed critical reading; dissertation supervision | Contribution to discussions; problem-based exercises; seminar presentations; essays; critical reviews; dissertation |
| PGDip | Confidently apply key theories and concepts and learnt skills in referencing and appropriate written and verbal communication | Induction; library training; study-skills workshops; seminars; problem solving tasks; directed critical reading | Contribution to discussions; problem-based exercises; seminar presentations; critical reviews; essays |
| PGCert | Apply key theories and concepts and learnt skills in referencing and appropriate written and verbal communication | Induction; library training; study-skills workshops; seminars; problem solving tasks; directed critical reading | Contribution to discussions; problem-based exercises; seminar presentations; critical reviews; essays |

iv) Critical analysis

| Intended Learning Outcomes | | Teaching and Learning Methods | How Demonstrated? |
|----------------------------|--|---|--|
| MA | Ability to identify and apply concepts and techniques with independence and rigour | Study-skills workshops; seminars; directed critical reading; independent research; dissertation supervision | Contribution to discussions; seminar presentations; essays; critical reviews; dissertation |
| PGDip | Analyse relevant concepts and practices with independence and rigour | Study-skills workshops; seminars; directed critical reading; independent research | Contribution to discussions; seminar presentations; essays; critical reviews |
| PGCert | Independently analyse relevant concepts and practices | Study-skills workshops; seminars; directed critical reading; independent research | Contribution to discussions; seminar presentations; essays; critical reviews |

v) Presentation

| Intended Learning Outcomes | | Teaching and Learning Methods | How Demonstrated? |
|----------------------------|---|--|---|
| MA | Ability to organise research material in a manner appropriate to the medium that is to be assessed; to distinguish relevant and non-relevant material; to write-up and deliver written work to a professional standard. | Induction; online resource- based learning; seminars | Seminar presentations; essays; dissertation |
| PGDip | Organise and present research material in a range of formats; develop arguments drawing on | Induction; online resource- based learning; seminars | Seminar presentations; essays |

| Intended Learning Outcomes | | Teaching and Learning Methods | How Demonstrated? |
|----------------------------|--|--|-------------------------------|
| | relevant material; write-up and deliver written work to a professional standard | | |
| PGCert | Organise and present relevant material; develop arguments drawing on material read; write-up and deliver written work to a professional standard | Induction; online resource- based learning; seminars | Seminar presentations; essays |

vi) Appraisal of evidence

| Intended Learning Outcomes | | Teaching and Learning Methods | How Demonstrated? |
|----------------------------|---|---|---|
| MA | Ability to analyse and assess a variety of complex political and conceptual issues in contemporary international relations Ability to mount and sustain an independent level of inquiry at an advanced level | Study-skills workshops; seminars; directed critical reading; dissertation supervision | Seminar presentations; essays; critical reviews; dissertation |
| PGDip | Confidently and persuasively assess the relevance and evaluate the quality of a range of primary sources and secondary literature. | Study-skills workshops; seminars; directed critical reading | Seminar presentations; essays; critical reviews; |
| PGCert | Appraise the relevance and quality of a range of appropriate sources | Study-skills workshops; seminars; directed critical reading | Seminar presentations; essays; critical reviews; |

b) Transferable skills

i) Research skills

| Intended Learning Outcomes | | Teaching and Learning Methods | How Demonstrated? |
|----------------------------|--|--|---|
| MA | Ability to: plan research projects, and locate, extract, produce and analyse relevant evidence; conduct significant background research and literature surveys; organise and marshal evidence and report on findings; analyse complex ideas and competing viewpoints; and construct informed critical arguments at an advanced level | Induction; online resource- based learning; study-skills and dissertation workshops ; directed critical reading of research methods literature; dissertation supervision | Essay plans; essays; dissertation; supervisory meetings |

| Intended Learning Outcomes | | Teaching and Learning Methods | How Demonstrated? |
|----------------------------|--|---|-------------------------------------|
| PGDip | Design appropriate research questions; develop research proposal; discuss the ethical implications of research; recognise and create effective literature reviews. | Induction; online resource- based learning; study-skills workshops ; directed critical reading of research methods literature | Essay plans; essays; tutor meetings |
| PGCert | Design appropriate research questions; develop research proposal; discuss the ethical implications of research | Induction; online resource- based learning; study-skills workshops ; directed critical reading of research methods literature | Essay plans; essays; tutor meetings |

ii) Communication skills

| Intended Learning Outcomes | | Teaching and Learning Methods | How Demonstrated? |
|----------------------------|--|---|--|
| MA | Ability to: deliver professional oral presentations; respond with focus and clarity to written or oral questions; write clearly and concisely; make effective use of graphical and statistical summaries, where appropriate; produce properly structured, clear essays and dissertations | Seminars; dissertation supervision; dissertation workshop | Contribution to discussions; seminar presentations; essays; dissertation |
| PGDip | Summarise, explain and analyse complex material, and formulate and present critical discussions and independent appraisals orally and in writing | Seminars; study skills workshops | Contribution to discussions; presentations; essays |
| PGCert | Summarise and explain complex material, and formulate and present discussions and appraisals orally and in writing | Seminars; study skills workshops | Contribution to discussions; presentations; essays; |

iii) Data presentation

| Intended Learning Outcomes | | Teaching and Learning Methods | How Demonstrated? |
|----------------------------|---|--|---|
| MA | Ability to synthesise research data and present it coherently and effectively | Online resource-based learning (e.g. accessing online archives, such as Digital National Security Archives); study-skills workshops; directed critical | Seminar presentations; essays; dissertation |

| Intended Learning Outcomes | | Teaching and Learning Methods | How Demonstrated? |
|----------------------------|---|---|-------------------------------|
| | using appropriate IT resources | reading of research methods literature; dissertation supervision | |
| PGDip | Synthesise research data into coherent and sustained arguments using appropriate IT resources | Online resource-based learning (e.g. accessing online archives, such as Digital National Security Archives); study-skills workshops; directed critical reading of research methods literature | Seminar presentations; essays |
| PGCert | Present research data using appropriate IT resources | Online resource-based learning (accessing online archives, such as Digital National Security Archives); study-skills workshops; directed critical reading of research methods literature | Seminar presentations; essays |

iv) Information technology

| Intended Learning Outcomes | | Teaching and Learning Methods | How Demonstrated? |
|----------------------------|---|---|---|
| MA | Advanced ability to retrieve and present information using appropriate information technology, for example, bibliographic software, data archives, data analysis software | Induction; study skills workshop; online resource- based learning | Problem-based exercises; essays; critical reviews |
| PGDip | Retrieve, utilise and present information using appropriate information technology, for example, bibliographic software, data archives | Induction; study skills workshop; online resource- based learning | Problem-based exercises; essays; critical reviews |
| PGCert | Retrieve and present information using appropriate information technology, for example, bibliographic software, data archives | Induction; study skills workshop; online resource- based learning | Problem-based exercises; essays; critical reviews |

v) Problem solving

| Intended Learning Outcomes | | Teaching and Learning Methods | How Demonstrated? |
|----------------------------|---|--|---|
| MA | Ability to identify, investigate, analyse, formulate and advocate solutions to problems | Seminars; dissertation supervision; online resource-based learning | Problem-based exercises; essays; dissertation |
| PGDip | Identify, investigate, analyse, formulate and advocate solutions to problems | Seminars; online resource-based learning | Problem-based exercises; essays |
| PGCert | Identify and analyse relevant problems and select between appropriate responses | Seminars; online resource- based learning | Problem-based exercises; essays |

vi) Working relationships

| Intended Learning Outcomes | | Teaching and Learning Methods | How Demonstrated? |
|----------------------------|---|--|---|
| MA | Knowing how and when to draw on the knowledge and expertise of others; ability to contribute and comment on ideas in seminar groups | Problem solving tasks; seminars; dissertation workshop | Contributions to discussions; problem-based exercises |
| PGDip | Collaborate effectively as part of a team. Identify appropriate opportunities for drawing on the knowledge and expertise of others; contribute and comment on ideas in learning groups | Problem solving tasks; seminars | Contributions to discussions; problem-based exercises |
| PGCert | Collaborate as part of a team. Identify appropriate opportunities for drawing on the knowledge and expertise of others; contribute and comment on ideas in learning groups | Problem solving tasks; seminars | Contributions to discussions; problem-based exercises |

vii) Managing learning

| Intended Learning Outcomes | | Teaching and Learning Methods | How Demonstrated? |
|----------------------------|---|--|--|
| MA | Management of an extensive literature and familiarisation with key issues and concepts Ability to plan and implement tasks and manage work-loads | Study-skills and dissertation workshops; independent research; dissertation supervision; | Essays; dissertations; supervisor meetings |
| PGDip | Develop and implement personal plan of work to meet a deadline Work independently and in groups towards the completion of a range of tasks | Study-skills workshops; independent research; | Essays; tutor meetings |
| PGCert | Develop and implement personal plan of work to meet a deadline Work independently and in groups towards the completion of a range of tasks | Study-skills workshops; independent research; | Essays; tutor meetings |

viii) Career management

| Intended Learning Outcomes | | Teaching and Learning Methods | How Demonstrated? |
|----------------------------|--|--|-------------------|
| MA | <p>Ability to take charge of one's own progress and development</p> <p>Reflection on one's strengths, interests, motivations and skills; recognition of one's achievements</p> | Personal Tutor System; Dissertation Supervision; PhD and careers seminar | Tutor meetings |
| PGDip | <p>Take charge of one's own progress and development</p> <p>Reflect on one's strengths, interests, motivations and skills; recognise one's achievements</p> | Personal Tutor System; PhD and careers seminar | Tutor meetings |
| PGCert | <p>Take charge of one's own progress and development</p> <p>Reflect on one's strengths, interests, motivations and skills; recognise one's achievements</p> | Personal Tutor System; PhD and careers seminar | Tutor meetings |

10. Special features:

The programme draws on the multitude of approaches within International Relations to the study and examination of global politics, the shift in balances of power, and contemporary issues in war, peace, security, and regional geopolitics. The programme enhances students' competencies in engaging with the approaches of classical International Relations Theory, Strategic Studies, national security policy, and more.

To reflect the special focus of the MA programme, students taking this programme will be required to choose a dissertation topic that aligns with the many controversies, themes, debates, and issues raised in International Relations.

Students are able to engage with opportunities outside of the core programme by attending events organized by HyPIR research clusters, which include prestigious guest speakers which often include practitioners, panel events, an annual postgraduate research conference, lunchtime seminars and staff research peer review sessions, all of which help provide experience for our students to enhance professional transferrable skills and develop their awareness of professional academic practices and developments in the wider world with guest speakers.

The programme is based on a social constructivist learning model and includes blended learning environments.

11. Indications of programme quality:

- Considerable departmental experience in blended learning as a result of the development and success of our existing DL programmes;
- Presentations from current students and former students at national and international conferences;
- Regular progression of former students into academic posts and postdoctoral and research projects;
- Consistent, positive feedback from current and former students;
- Consistent positive feedback from external examiners.

12. Scheme of Assessment

[Senate Regulation 6: Regulations governing taught postgraduate programmes](#) of study applies

13. Progression points

As defined in [Senate Regulation 6: Regulations governing Taught Postgraduate Programmes of Study](#) (see Senate Regulations)

In cases where a student has failed to meet a requirement to progress he or she will be required to withdraw from the course and a recommendation will be made to the Board of Examiners for an intermediate award where appropriate.

14. External Examiners:

The details of the External Examiner(s) for this programme and the most recent External Examiners' reports can be found [here](#).

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Appendix 1: Programme structure (programme regulations)

The University regularly reviews its programmes and modules to ensure that they reflect the current status of the discipline and offer the best learning experience to students. On occasion, it may be necessary to alter particular aspects of a course or module.

| Academic year | Module | Change |
|---------------|---|-----------------------|
| 2025/26 | HS7310 Global History | Option module removed |
| 2025/26 | HS7304 American Freedoms | Option module removed |
| 2025/26 | HS7311 Religious Conflict and Coexistence | Option module added |
| 2025/26 | PL7099 Astropolitics | Option module removed |

MA INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Level 7/Year 1 2025/26

Credit breakdown

| Status | Year long | Semester 1 | Semester 2 |
|----------|------------|------------|------------|
| Core | 60 credits | 30 credits | n/a |
| Optional | n/a | 45 credits | 45 credits |

180 credits in total

Core modules

| Delivery period | Code | Title | Credits |
|-----------------|--------|--|------------|
| Sem 1 | PL7161 | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AFTER THE COLD WAR | 30 credits |

| Delivery period | Code | Title | Credits |
|-----------------|--------|--------------|------------|
| Year long | PL7000 | DISSERTATION | 60 credits |

Notes

[n/a]

Option modules

| Delivery period | Code | Title | Credits |
|-----------------|--------|---|------------|
| Semester 1 | HS7037 | AFTER THE HOLOCAUST: HISTORY AND MEMORY IN POSTWAR EUROPE | 30 credits |
| Semester 1 | PL7089 | THE POLITICS OF HUMAN RIGHTS | 30 credits |
| Semester 1 | PL7168 | INTERNATIONAL SECURITY | 30 credits |
| Semester 2 | HS7026 | A GENOCIDE - MASS MURDER IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE | 30 credits |
| Semester 2 | HS7212 | GLOBAL CITIES: THE VIEW FROM ASIA | 30 credits |
| Semester 2 | PL7076 | U.S. FOREIGN POLICY: THEMES AND CONTROVERSIES | 30 credits |
| Semester 2 | PL7095 | GLOBAL ETHICS IN PRACTICE | 30 credits |
| Semester 2 | HS7311 | RELIGIOUS CONFLICT AND COEXISTENCE | 30 credits |

Notes

This is an indicative list of option modules and not definitive of what will be available. Option module choice is also subject to availability, timetabling, student number restrictions and, where appropriate, students having taken appropriate pre-requisite modules.

Appendix 2: Module specifications

See [module specification database](#) [Login required] (Note - modules are organized by year of delivery).