



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
School of Social
& Political Science

Master of Science International Development (online)



Address

Graduate School of Social
and Political Science
Chrystal Macmillan Building
15a George Square,
Edinburgh

Tel

Graduate School:
+44(0)131 651 3205

Email

pgtaught.sps@ed.ac.uk

Twitter

[@IntDev_at_UofE](https://twitter.com/IntDev_at_UofE)

ALTERNATIVE FORMATS

If you require this document or any of the internal University Of Edinburgh online resources mentioned in this document in an alternative format please contact Maria Brichs

✉ Email: PGTaught.sps@ed.ac.uk

📞 Phone: +44 (0) 131 651 3205

DISCLAIMER

It is your responsibility to familiarise yourself with the contents of this handbook and refer to it throughout the course of the academic year.

It should be read together with the [Online Learning Student Handbook](#), which provides information about rules and procedures for all online learning taught MSc programmes in the School of Social and Political Science. Policies and procedures described in this handbook may be subject to change. Any changes will be communicated to students via email.

This handbook does not supersede [University Regulations](#), the formal requirements for each degree as set out in the University's [Degree Regulations and Programmes of Study](#) and the [Taught Assessment Regulations](#), or the Terms and Conditions of Admission set out in the [Postgraduate Prospectus](#).

Every effort has been made to ensure that the information given here was correct at the time of writing, but this handbook does not form part of any contract between the University and student.

Welcome

The programme we embark upon together contextualises and analyses the processes that have shaped poverty and 'development' in developing countries, and the many responses to them.

We look at development issues across global, national, and local contexts using multi-disciplinary approaches that stress social, historical, and political factors.

Our students culminate their studies with a rigorous grounding in major debates, theories, and critical concepts as well as a proficiency in applying them to investigate contemporary development challenges, policy processes, and initiatives. This programme is perfect for those working or willing to work in international development organisations, United Nations agencies, charities, non-governmental organisations, government ministries, and the private sector as well as in research institutions.

The educational aims of the programme are to:

- Introduce and engage students with the central debates in international development, both in the past decades and in present day;
- Equip students with an advanced knowledge and understanding of international development, including its main actors;
- Enable students to critically evaluate the empirical, theoretical, and methodological dimensions involved in the study of international development and the assessment of developmental change and 'progress';
- Develop high-quality skills in the background research, analysis, and synthesis of information, and presentation of an argument, orally and in writing;
- Equip students with the knowledge and skills needed for progression to relevant professional work (including leadership positions) or to higher level academic study.

The role of the Handbook and the SSPS Online Learning Hub

This Handbook is a guide for students on the online MSc in International Development. You should familiarise yourself with it before starting your studies.

It is one of three 'levels' of Handbook that will help you to navigate your studies. You should make a note of where you can access them for future reference. The below gives an indication of which Handbook can help with the various kinds of information and guidance that you might need.

- The [Online Learning Student Handbook](#): this Handbook introduces the School, your points of contact there and the systems, regulations and processes which apply to all programmes and courses.
- The Programme Handbook (that's this one!): This contains all of the information that is specific to your particular programme of study. It introduces the Centre of African Studies, which will deliver your programme, your programme structure, and the approach to teaching, learning and assessment on the programme.
- The Course Handbooks: You will have access to a Handbook for each of the courses that you enrol on. These outline the course content (lectures, reading lists etc.) and assessment tasks, staff contact details and relevant deadlines. There is a separate Handbook for the MSc dissertation, which you will also have access to. These will all be made available on the relevant course Learn pages.

Another key source of information will be the [SPS Online Learning Hub](#) on Learn. The Hub contains a vast array of information including the Getting Started guide, instructions on using the library and other support services, and setting up your online course tools. All students will have access to the Hub when they commence their studies and will find it listed in their Learn pages.

About The School of Social & Political Science

School of Social & Political Science

[The School of Social and Political Science](#) is one of the largest Schools within the University of Edinburgh. Our interdisciplinary structure fosters vibrant research that cuts across traditional social scientific boundaries to bring together experts from across the School and the University.

The School has a long tradition of sharing knowledge and engaging in public policy debates within Scotland, Europe and beyond. With numerous faculty members coming from across the world, and many dynamic international research collaborations, the School's connections span the globe.

Centre of African Studies

This MSc programme is administered by the Centre of African Studies (CAS) at the School of Social and Political Science, in collaboration with the following departments and Schools: Global Health Policy Unit (SSPS), Department of Social Policy (SSPS), School of Geoscience, Edinburgh Medical School, Moray School of Education.

Today, CAS is one of the world's leading centres for the study of Africa and international development, a history going back to its founding in 1962 when it was among the first of its kind in the UK.

As the largest dedicated centre in the UK, we provide vibrant, cutting-edge research and teaching – and it is our pleasure to welcome you into our community.

As part of SSPS, our interdisciplinary focus cuts across traditional social scientific boundaries, creating a stimulating environment in which to work and study that bridges virtual and physical classrooms and contexts.

Who to contact

Programme Director

Dr Barbara Bompani

Email: B.Bompani@ed.ac.uk

Skype (only by appointment): bbompani

Phone: +44 (0)131 6513891

Programme Administrator

Maria Brichs, Graduate School Office

Email: PGTaught.sps@ed.ac.uk

Phone: +44 (0) 131 651 3205

Personal Tutor

You should contact your personal tutor for any personal or pastoral support. Contact details can be found on MyEd.

Programme structure

The MSc in International Development (180 credits) includes

- 3 core courses (each 20 credits) and a
- compulsory course on research methods (20 credits),
- 2 optional courses (20 credits each),
- and a final dissertation (60 credits).

Our students also have the option to take the 3 core courses as a Postgraduate Certificate in Global Development Challenges (60 credits).

To be awarded a Postgraduate Diploma in International Development (120 credits), they would combine the 3 core courses with 3 optional courses.

Students may take a maximum of one optional course from outside SSPS (taught by other schools within the University of Edinburgh). Please check your online Degree Programme Table for the latest updates as well as description of courses:

2-year MSc:

<http://www.drps.ed.ac.uk/20-21/dpt/ptmscinter2p.htm>

3-year MSc:

<http://www.drps.ed.ac.uk/20-21/dpt/ptmscinter3p.htm>

Any enquiry to transfer from a programme to the other should be made to the programme directors, copying the programme administrator.

Please note that transfer is not automatic and may not be administratively possible (and cannot be used to re-take a course).

Core Courses

- Politics and Theories of International Development (20 credits)
- Global Development Challenges (20 credits)
- Analysing Development (20 credits)
- Researching International Development (20 credits)

Elective Courses

SSPS courses – each 20 credits

- Health Systems Analysis
- Public Health and Health Policy
- Displacement and Development
- Global Health Governance
- Key Skills in Development Practice
- Critical perspectives on mental health and well-being in the Global South
- Roots of African Poverty and Development

Outside SSPS – each 20 credits

- Activist Social Research
- Theories and Politics of Social Justice
- Community Engagement: Co-constructing Knowledge with Communities
- Evaluation of Global Health & Development Programmes
- Policy Analysis for Social Justice

Dissertation

You will complete the dissertation at the end of your final year. To prepare you for the dissertation you will take the course Researching International Development, which will provide the research training essential to your success, while the core and optional courses will equip you with the necessary theoretical and analytical skills.

You must pass the course Researching International Development with a mark of 50% or above in order to proceed to the MSc dissertation. If you fail this course, you may still be eligible for a PG Diploma.

You will have many opportunities to discuss your dissertation topic with the programme director from the end of your first year in the programme. As you approach the dissertation stage, you will receive guidance in the dedicated dissertation Learn page, and the [Dissertation Handbook](#).

Your supervisor will be drawn from CAS and from other departments involved in International Development teaching and research.

DISSERTATION TIMELINE (EXACT DATES TBC)

First Year (for MSc 2-Years) or Second Year (for MSc 3-Years)

- April/May - Start to think about dissertation topic
- June - Submit a one-page outline of your idea
- August/September - Skype meeting with Programme Director

Final Year

- From September - Access the Dissertation Learn site
- January - Submit a two-page proposal
- January-April - Complete the course Researching International Development
- March-April - Dissertation supervisor identified. First meeting with supervisor to discuss proposal
- May-July - Work with your supervisor on your dissertation project
- August - Submit dissertation

Placement-Based Dissertation

Selected postgraduate students can undertake an eight-week research project in collaboration with external host organisations, as an alternative to a standard dissertation.

The Study and Work Away service (SWAY) works closely with the Student Development Office and manages the [Placement-Based Dissertation scheme](#) (PBD).

Placements focus on connecting researchers with external organisations, providing real-life research questions in your particular area of interest. As well as offering a range of pre-negotiated placements, the team can help students set up their own project with an organisation of their choosing. As of July 2020, The University advises that placements should be conducted online.

Placement-Based Dissertations timeline (exact dates tbc)

- September - Placement-Based Dissertation Information Session
- November - Student-led placements workshop
- December - SWAY-sourced Projects: Application advice session
- Mid-December - Release of SWAY-sourced projects
- January - Placement information & application session (recap)
- January - SWAY-sourced placements application deadline
- Early February - Academic selection panel meets
- February - Preliminary allocation of students to projects – placement confirmation usually dependent on interview with host organisation
- March - Project details finalised and signed off. Begin literature review
- March - Student-led placement proposals due for approval
- April - Pre-placement information session
- May-June - Placement with the organisation
- August - Hand in dissertation
- August - Placement showcase session

If you have any further questions, please contact the work placement advisor, Rachel Parks at ssps.student-development@ed.ac.uk

Timetable

This MSc is offered as a 2-year and 3-year programme. You will complete 120 credits of taught courses (4 core courses and 2 elective courses), and a dissertation (60 credits). Elective courses can be taken in any semester except semester 1 of Year 1.

MSc in International Development Part-time Structure (2 Years)

Year 1		Year 2		
Semester 1	Semester 2	Semester 1	Semester 2	Summer
Global Development Challenges	Analysing Development	(Elective)	Researching International Development	Dissertation
Politics and Theories of International Development	(Elective)	(Elective)	(Elective)	

MSc in International Development Part-time Structure (3 Years)

Year 1		Year 2		Year 3		
Semester 1	Semester 2	Semester 1	Semester 2	Semester 1	Semester 2	Summer
Global Development Challenges	Analysing Development	Politics and Theories of International Development	Elective	Elective	Researching International Development	Dissertation

Approaches to assessment

Constructive alignment

This approach seeks to link academic content, assessment methods, and the intended learning outcomes, and is the guiding principle for assessment on this programme. By seeking to design courses that promote continuous learning through both formative and summative assessment activities, assessment supports your learning. Courses will be assessed through a diverse range of methods and will support your development as an independent and critical learner.

Assessment methods will, for example, include both traditional academic work such as essays as well as new kinds of approaches that help link theory to practice such as blogs, case studies, policy briefings, and other activities. Note, there are no exams on this programme.

Formative Feedback

Each taught course on the programme will provide you with opportunities to receive formative feedback on your work from tutors and peers. This might take the form of, for example, structured discussion, blog comments, feed-forward tasks, formative assignments, or mid-course feedback. Formative feedback is valuable in supporting your understanding of what is expected from the assessments on each course, pushing your ideas forward, and helping you make the most of your time on the programme.

Useful information

These short-links refer to documents mentioned in this programme and are collected here, in one place, for ease of access.

http://edin.ac/2yU8CA0	Online Learning Student Handbook
https://edin.ac/2yRRmvj	University Regulations,
https://edin.ac/1TSYUEy	Degree Regulations and Programmes of Study
http://edin.ac/2PmPTDo	Taught Assessment Regulations
https://edin.ac/2yPc4vQ	Postgraduate Prospectus.
https://edin.ac/2OP9wZB	SSPS Online learning hub
https://edin.ac/2OPLhdA	Student Online Getting Started Guide



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Master of Science International Development (online)

Please contact us for more information:

General Enquiries: PGTaught.sps@ed.ac.uk

Admissions: <https://www.ed.ac.uk/studying/postgraduate/degrees/index.php?r=site/view&id=945>

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