Programme Specification (PG)

Awarding body / institution:	Queen Mary University of London
Teaching institution:	Queen Mary University of London
Name of final award and title:	MA International Relations
Name of interim award(s):	PGCert, PGDip
Duration of study / period of registration:	two years (part-time)
Queen Mary programme code(s):	
QAA Benchmark Group:	Politics and International Relations
FHEQ Level of Award:	Level 7
Programme accredited by:	
Date Programme Specification approved:	
Responsible School / Institute:	School of Politics and International Relations

Schools / Institutes which will also be involved in teaching part of the programme:

Collaborative institution(s) / organisation(s) involved in delivering the programme:

Programme outline

The MA in International Relations (distance learning) is concerned with analysing key issues and concepts in world politics. The compulsory course provides students with a comprehensive and sophisticated appreciation of the importance of theory to understanding international politics, providing a detailed knowledge of individual theories. Module options are designed to allow you to develop your expertise and apply theories and concepts within particular issue areas, including international security, international political economy, and the impact of the changes associated with globalization on the study of international relations. The programme provides you with a set of analytical skills and knowledge that will allow you to think, talk and write critically about contemporary international issues, as well as a firm foundation for further study.

Aims of the programme

The programme aims to deepen knowledge of the contemporary issues prevalent in international relations and to provide students with concepts and theories that will facilitate critical and cutting-edge analysis of these issues. Students will be able to critically assess the impact and extent of globalization on political actors and institutions, and to appreciate the diversity of these impacts across different issue areas and regions.

What will you be expected to achieve?

Upon successful completion of the programme, students will be able to:

* understand and evaluate the competing theories and concepts which help explain global politics and international relations
* use and apply theories of international relations in order to assess the impacts of globalization, development, technology, war/peace, or other political processes on specific case studies, countries or regions
* gain better insight into contemporary international affairs through the analysis and application of a range of theories, analytical frameworks, concepts, and empirical evidence.

Academic Content:	
A 1	Engage in some depth with the key issues prevalent in international relations
A 2	Critically analyse these issues with a range of analytical frameworks, theories, and concepts
A 3	Assess and articulate the different impacts of globalization, foreign policy, and war/security on particular regions and issue-areas

Disciplinary Skills - able to:	
B 1	Think critically and analytically, and to read a wide range of texts in a critical manner, assessing the strengths and weaknesses of different arguments
B 2	Combine conceptual, theoretical and empirical materials in the analysis of international relations and global politics
B 3	Gain practitioner relevant understandings of international relations through rigorous academic training

Attributes:	
C 1	Work autonomously and demonstrate initiative, self organisation, and time management, to plan and evaluate their learning and performance
C 2	Communicate knowledge, ideas and analysis systematically, clearly and concisely in both written and oral form
C 3	Think critically about competing arguments, ideas and interpretations

How will you learn?

The programme will be delivered entirely online and students are not expected to be present at QMUL.

Students will develop their knowledge and understanding of international relations, as well as their critical and analytical skills,

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by completing the required weekly readings and engaging with the online seminars. Students will have a dedicated Module Tutor who will be available for feedback and queries (equivalent to office hours for our on-campus modules) through the on-line platform. Each module week of content will also provide forum discussion/activities space where students will be able to interact with one another and with the Module Tutor on broader questions relating to the weekly topic. Each module will be led by a Module Convenor who will provide further guidance on assessments, feedback, and module content. Students will also receive a set amount of supervision for their own directed independent research (i.e. dissertation) via the on-line platform, and from an assigned dissertation supervisor.

How will you be assessed?

Assessments will be in the form of two assignments per module (one short and one long assessment), as well as a dissertation. Short assessments allow scope for article review or short essay, and long assessments allow scope for more in-depth research-based analysis (essay format).

In order to maintain a standard approach across modules (important for DL instruction and student expectation at a distance), the standard breakdown/weighting will be 40% (short assignment) and 60% (long assignment). To ensure consistency of marking standards across all modules, we will continue to mark/moderate *both* summative assignments on every module.

Formative feedback will also be given through online webinars, an online weekly discussion forum topic, as well as via two assessment webinars (led by the module convenor) per module; all with the explicit aim of assisting students prepare for their two summative assessments.

How is the programme structured?
Please specify the structure of the programme diets for all variants of the programme (e.g. full-time, part-time - if applicable). The description should be sufficiently detailed to fully define the structure of the diet.

The programme has been designed as a part-time / 2 year (six consecutive terms) programme of study, with three student intakes per year (September, January, May). Terms 1-3 are completed in a student's first year, and Terms 4-6 are completed in a student's second year.

Regardless of start date, all students will complete four taught international relations modules (IR) during their first four terms, followed by two terms for dissertation (module and dissertation project completion). Regardless of start date, all students will begin the programme with POLM090 (Contemporary World Politics: Theories, Concepts, Themes).

The ordering of subsequent modules will vary slightly depending on whether a student begins the programme in September, January or May. In all cases, however, the basic requirement of 4 x IR taught modules + dissertation (module and project) remains the same.

Each term or taught module is 12 weeks in duration. For a student starting in September, Term 1 begins in September and runs 12 weeks, aligning with the on-campus Semester A calendar. For a student starting in January, Term 1 begins in January and runs 12 weeks, aligning with the on-campus Semester B calendar. For a student starting in May, Term 1 begins in mid/late-May and runs 12 weeks, ending in mid-August.

An indicative programme journey for each intake of students is as follows:

SEPTEMBER INTAKE:

Term 1   (Sep-Dec) :   POLM090 Contemporary World Politics: Theories, Concepts, Themes (DL)
Term 2   (Jan-Apr)   :   POLM096 War and International Security (DL)
Term 3   (May-Aug) :   POLM075 Themes and Cases in US Foreign Policy (DL)
Term 4:   (Sep-Dec) :   POLM073 Globalisation and the International Political Economy of Development (DL)
Term 5-6: (Jan-Aug) :   POLM077 Dissertation (DL)

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JANUARY INTAKE:

Term 1   (Jan-Apr) :   POLM090 Contemporary World Politics: Theories, Concepts, Themes (DL)
Term 2:   (May-Aug):   POLM075 Themes and Cases in US Foreign Policy (DL)
Term 3:   (Sep-Dec):   POLM073 Globalisation and the International Political Economy of Development (DL)
Term 4:   (Jan-Apr) :   POLM096 War and International Security (DL)
Term 5-6: (May-Dec):   POLM077 Dissertation (DL)

MAY INTAKE:

Term 1:   (May-Aug) :   POLM090 Contemporary World Politics: Theories, Concepts, Themes (DL)
Term 2:   (Sep-Dec):   POLM073 Globalisation and the International Political Economy of Development (DL)
Term 3:   (Jan-Apr):   POLM096 War and International Security (DL)
Term 4:   (May-Aug):   POLM075 Themes and Cases in US Foreign Policy (DL)
Term 5-6: (Sep-Apr):   POLM077 Dissertation (DL)

Please Note:

* The Dissertation (module and project) will be undertaken after the four taught modules and in accordance with a progression hurdle (i.e. students must have completed all taught modules to the value of 120 credits in order to proceed to the dissertation). The dissertation must be passed in order to achieve the MA.

* For PG Diploma: Students must complete all four taught modules (120 credits) but are not required to complete the dissertation (or PG Dip is awarded where a student has completed the four taught modules but has failed the dissertation).

* For PG Cert: Students complete two of the taught modules (POLM090 + one other), within three terms (one year), and do not complete a dissertation.

Academic Year of Study

Module Title	Module Code	Credits	Level	Module Selection Status	Academic Year of Study	Semester
Contemporary World Politics: Theories, Concepts, Themes (DL)	POLM090	30	7	Compulsory	1	Semester 1
War and International Security (DL)	POLM096	30	7	Compulsory	1	Semester 2
Themes and Cases in US Foreign Policy (DL)	POLM075	30	7	Compulsory	2	Semester 3
Globalisation and the International Political Economy of Development (DL)	POLM073	30	7	Compulsory	2	Semester 1
Dissertation	POLM077	60	7	Core	2	Semesters 2 & 3

What are the entry requirements?

Minimum 2:1 degree in politics or a cognate subject and/or appropriate career experience. We will consider applicants with academic and/or professional trajectories that deviate from the criteria above when their career experience and motivation indicate they should be able to successfully undertake the programme.

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Language requirements if first language is not English:

IELTS Academic: 7.0 overall including 6.0 in Writing, 6.0 in Reading, 6.0 in Listening and 6.0 in Speaking.
TOEFL: 100 overall including 21 in Writing, 19 in Reading, 18 in Listening and 21 in Speaking.
PTE Academic: 76 overall including 65 in Writing, and 65 in Reading, 65 in Listening and 65 in Speaking.

How will the quality of the programme be managed and enhanced? How do we listen to and act on your feedback?

The programme is monitored through the Student Voice Committee (SVC), with student representatives, chaired by the Academic Student Experience Lead, and the Education Committee (EC) chaired by the Director of Education (DoE). Issues arising from student evaluations are fed into the Education Committee. External examiners oversee assessment and marking procedures; this is handled by the Chair of Exams. The programme is evaluated through the Programme Review process.

The Student Voice Committee provides a formal means of communication and discussion between schools/institutes and its students. The committee consists of student representatives from each year in the school/institute together with appropriate representation from staff within the school/institute. It is designed to respond to the needs of students, as well as act as a forum for discussing programme and module developments. Student Voice Committee meets regularly throughout the year.

A special student representative for DL taught masters programme will be appointed to Student Voice Committee. She/he will send comments/queries to the SSLC via email. Discussions will be minuted in the usual fashion and the DL representative will receive all documentation via email. If issues raised at SSLC need to be taken forward to Education Committee then the DL representative will be kept informed of these developments. It might occasionally be necessary for the DL representative and Chair of SVC or Chair of Education Committee to discuss matters by phone/MS Teams.

Each school/institute operates an Education Committee, or equivalent, which advises the School/Institute Director of Education on all matters relating to the delivery of taught programmes at school level including monitoring the application of relevant QM policies and reviewing all proposals for module and programme approval and amendment before submission to Taught Programmes Board. Student views are incorporated in the committee's work in a number of ways, such as through student membership and consideration of student surveys.

What academic support is available?

Academic support for DL programmes will be provided by the coordinated efforts of module tutors and convenors, programme administrator, and programme director. Students will also be assigned a dissertation supervisor (during Semester 5), with whom they will communicate for the dissertation project.

Students are also kept informed about support and help available through an online 'student hub' / dashboard which will provide information and contacts for all relevant School/university guidelines and services. Additional online instruction (e.g. an academic research and writing module, non-credit bearing and non-compulsory) will also be available to students through their online student hub/dashboard.

Programme-specific rules and facts

n/a

How inclusive is the programme for all students, including those with disabilities?

Queen Mary has a central Disability and Dyslexia Service (DDS) that offers support for all students with disabilities, specific

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learning difficulties and mental health issues. The DDS supports all Queen Mary students: full-time, part-time, undergraduate, postgraduate, UK and international at all campuses and all sites.

Students can access advice, guidance and support in the following areas:
• Finding out if you have a specific learning difficulty like dyslexia
• Applying for funding through the Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA)
• Arranging DSA assessments of need
• Special arrangements in examinations
• Accessing loaned equipment (e.g. digital recorders)
• Specialist one-to-one "study skills" tuition
• Ensuring access to course materials in alternative formats (e.g. Braille)
• Providing educational support workers (e.g. note-takers, readers, library assistants)
• Mentoring support for students with mental health issues and conditions on the autistic spectrum.

We will liaise with the DDS to ensure that these facilities, where appropriate and possible, are extended to our DL students.

Links with employers, placement opportunities and transferable skills

The programme is primarily aimed at providing advanced skills training and knowledge preparing students for jobs aimed at individual and collaborative knowledge creation in academic institutions, financial institutions, think tanks, NGOs, and civil service among others. However, both the subject specific knowledge and transferable skills prepare students for a wide range of employment opportunities, including careers in the civil service, journalism, social work, local , national and international governance and third-sector organisations.

Programme Specification Approval

Person completing Programme Specification:	Diego de Merich
Person responsible for management of programme:	Diego de Merich
Date Programme Specification produced / amended by School / Institute Education Committee:	20 Nov 2024
Date Programme Specification approved by Taught Programmes Board:	

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