

LEEDS BECKETT UNIVERSITY

Course Specification

MA International Political Economy

2018-19 (MAIPE)

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LEEDS
BECKETT
UNIVERSITY

School of Social Sciences

Award and programme title: MA International Political Economy

Level of qualification: Level 7

Contained awards available:

Award	Title	Level
PGDip	International Political Economy	7
PGCrt	International Political Economy	7

Length and status of programme and mode of study

ONSITE					
MA Full-time	x	Sept start: 12 months Jan start: 12 months	MA Part-time	x	Sept start: 24 months Jan start: 24 months

Course Specification

Overview and Aims

This award will be located within the Politics & International Relations (PIR) group. PIR takes a holistic approach to global issues of importance for the future of humankind. Our vision and values are: political, applied, global and ethical.

- By Political we mean focussed on common problems, collective and negotiated solutions, grounded in historical and theoretical insights.
- By Applied we mean focussed on real world problems and solutions. This extends from our research output and curriculum to the skills of our graduates, who will not only engage in critical academic thinking, but will be able to work within their environment to make a difference, whether this be through employment, entrepreneurship, activism or public life.
- By Global we mean focussed on global issues such as peace and conflict, climate change, poverty and fairer, more equitable societies; and also in the sense of the universality of our approach – from individual to society, in our personal and professional lives, and from local to global communities
- By Ethical we mean questioning the underlying assumptions and values behind our decisions and actions, and exploring notions of justice, responsibility and accountability in our practice.

The MA International Political Economy aims to provide a distinctive curriculum offer designed to challenge orthodoxy in International Political Economy against the premise that orthodox approaches are failing to address the most pressing political economy challenges facing the world today. The programme will provide a means of enabling students to develop the types of skills and knowledge to contribute to better understanding and addressing these problems through both further research and professional practice.

The aims of the programme are therefore to:

- provide an advanced qualification for students wanting to better understand the nature of global political, economic, social and environmental challenges;
- provide knowledge and an ability to challenge relevant theories of political economy and international political economy;
- provide an awareness of pressing global political, economic, social and environmental challenges;
- provide opportunities for the development of organisational skills necessary to work in organisations confronted by these challenges;
- provide a grounding in research methods relevant to advanced study of global issues;
- develop learners capable of deploying these research methods appropriately in advanced individual study;
- give students a high quality learning experience based upon a coherent and integrated programme of study.

Course Learning Outcomes

1	Demonstrate a systematic and critical awareness of knowledge, current problems and new insights of the study of International Political Economy , and evaluate and apply with due regard to ethical considerations, research methodologies relevant to International Political Economy
2	Evaluate, synthesise and apply advanced and contemporary theories and techniques to a range of complex and open-ended issues, problems and situations within the study of International Political Economy
3	Apply intellectual, transferable and subject/professional skills to a range of complex and open-ended organisational, political or social problems and situations, and communicate results in appropriate style
4	Learn interdependently and independently and accept responsibility for subsequent career and continuing professional development, appropriate to International Political Economy
5	Demonstrate a critical understanding of contemporary cross-cultural issues, ethical issues and global perspectives appropriate to International Political Economy and apply this to complex cross-cultural interactions, including an awareness of the potential contribution of political engagement;
6	Demonstrate originality in the application of theory and techniques, drawn from earlier studies, through the production of a significant piece of high level independent work in the fields of International Political Economy

Course Structure

Modules at Level 7 will build upon the knowledge and skills acquired during previous undergraduate levels with an emphasis on developing critical awareness of problems, issues and concepts at the forefront of current theory, research and policy in International Political Economy. Students will develop the ability to evaluate and critique methodologies and techniques, especially those emergent within the discipline, and to apply these to their own research in ways which demonstrate originality. Students will be expected to demonstrate autonomy and self-direction in tackling and solving problems as well as to develop the independent learning ability required for continuing professional development.

Semester 1	Core (Y)	Semester 2	Core (Y)
Global Consumer Economy	Y	Political Economy of Globalisation	Y
Theories of IPE	Y	Political Economy of Crisis	Y
The EU as a Global Actor	Y	Developing & Managing Projects	Y
Semesters 1, 2 & 3	Y		
Dissertation			

NB - All option modules are indicative.

Learning and Teaching

Learning and Teaching Approaches

The philosophy of the course is that participants are encouraged to develop critical understanding of the issues involved and to translate this awareness into a wide variety of individually defined practice oriented tasks. The course aims to develop critical awareness and independent analysis, and therefore emphasises the importance of reading, research and discussion in the formulation of a principled and reflective position on issues such as poverty and inequality, peace and war, climate change, and human rights.

The programme will utilise a variety of pedagogical techniques including both teacher-led and student-led activity with the balance progressively moving from the former to the latter. Face-to-face and podcast lectures will be augmented by small group teaching and discussion forums. Some of these draw on problem-based and enquiry-based learning methods. Small groups are used to explore ideas and material introduced in lectures in an interactive way and are used to enable students to develop and demonstrate their understanding and awareness. Students will be expected to engage in face-to-face and online discussions give presentations, write reports and academic essays.

The curriculum emphasis in this award is on the development and application of theory and critical thinking to contemporary issues in International Political Economy. This gives an applied feel to the curriculum with students asked to take a problem solving approach throughout. Knowledge, understanding and skills are developed through appropriate assessment, learning and teaching strategies, delivered by staff who have teaching, practice and research expertise in the cognate areas. Assessment is developed through formative

and summative approaches to include assignments, presentations, group work, practical activities, research and dissertation.

Students are encouraged to develop digital literacy skills to support their assessment and learning, and all staff use MyBeckett to deposit power point presentations, as well as journal articles and embedded multi-media clips.

The course attracts a diverse student group in terms of nationality, ethnicity and background. This is a strength as learning is predicated on student contribution and interdependent learning. Appropriate strategies are put in place to support students with specific needs.

Learning and Teaching Activities

Teaching methods will focus on small group discussion and debate, supported by mini lectures. These are supplemented where relevant by sessions in IT labs to develop skills using appropriate software. Students are encouraged to set their own tasks, within clearly identified structures, to meet the learning outcomes and assessment criteria. Similarly, reading lists are less prescriptive and encourage students to locate their own resources. Students will benefit from having access to outside speakers through the Politics & International Relations seminar series which will broaden their learning experience. The VLE is used to provide materials but also a forum for discussion and the sharing of resources and thoughts.

Use of the Virtual Learning Environment

The course makes extensive use of the VLE in all modules. In all modules use of the VLE meets the University's e-learning strategy. In addition, the VLE is frequently used in different modules for the following additional elements:

- Links to external learning modules designed by Module Leaders and video lectures
- Hosting of additional learning resources such as video resources placed on the University's streaming facility.
- Discussion forums – for each module a student café discussion forum provides opportunities for students to raise questions related to the module.
- Turnitin and grade mark are used systematically across all modules.

There is a lively Facebook group that provides support to students across all levels and a Politics & International Relations twitter feed which provides access to the latest news and research in international relations, politics, peace and development studies.

Use of Blended-Learning

No element of the course is provided wholly online but all modules supplement face to face contact time with tutor contact on the VLE through live discussions, participation in sequential discussions and through the posting of video and other additional learning resources.

Assessment Strategy

The assessment strategy for this course has been developed with the following key principles in mind:

- The course ensures assessment variety within the confines of a single year (or equivalent for PT) and appropriate to MA study.
- In this course the assessment types include academic essays, applied report style written assignments, group tasks, presentations, data analysis exercises, production of authentic outputs such as a funding application or press release, and an extended academic dissertation.
- The inclusion of a range of assessment types avoids the over-reliance on a narrow range of assessment methods, and allows the development of a greater range of personal, academic and employability skills.
- Assessments are spaced throughout the semester to avoid 'bunching' of submission dates and to allow for formative feedback in one assessment to be incorporated into the summative assessment.

Assessments are designed to prepare students for a variety of career destinations.

Feedback on Assessed Coursework

Feedback will be provided on all assessments, in a variety of forms. In some modules and some assessments feedback may be oral, in others it will be written, and may include group feedback to highlight common issues. All module leaders will provide details of the feedback that students should expect in their module handbooks and this will form part of the introductory session for each module. This information will also be routinely available for reference for each module and each assessment on the relevant section of the VLE.

Module Assessment Methods

Module Titles	Core (Y)	Essay	Presentation	Case Study Report	Portfolio	Oral Presentation/Blog Post	Report	Proposal	Press Release	Project Proposal & Presentation	Dissertation
Theories of International Political Economy	Y	50	50								
The Global Consumer Economy	Y	100									
The EU as a Global Actor	Y	75	25								
Political Economy of Crisis & Global Governance	Y	50	50								
Political Economy of Globalisation	Y					20	80				
Developing & Managing Projects	Y							80	20		
Dissertation	Y				30						70

NB - All option modules are indicative.

Employability and Professional Context

The MA in International Political Economy is an ideal opportunity for Postgraduate study for graduates with an interest in a wide range of disciplinary backgrounds such as politics, economics, philosophy, geography, history religious studies and theology. The course combines academic study with the development of applied transferable skills which would be of use in an organisational context related to international issues such as conflict resolution in a variety of different settings, project work, campaigning organisations, internationally oriented NGOs, international organisations, international financial institutions, think-tanks and government departments. While the course has a firm grounding in understanding theoretical issues in relation to the study of IPE, the inclusion of modules on Dissertation (which includes research methods training) and Developing and Managing Projects provide vital skills development and opportunities to enhance graduates' careers development.

Work-Related Activities

Placement or Work-Related Activity Level: Not applicable.

Placement or Work-Related Activity Length in Weeks: Not applicable.

Type of Placement or Work-Related Activity: Not applicable.

Reference Points used in course design and delivery

All our courses leading to Leeds Beckett University awards have been designed and approved in accordance with UK and European quality standards. Our courses utilise the Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) and relevant subject benchmarks (where these are available) and professional, statutory and regulatory body requirements (for professionally accredited courses).

We review our courses annually and periodically, responding to student feedback and a range of information to enhance our courses. Our University is also subject to external review by the Quality Assurance Agency. Our latest report can be found on the QAA website at <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/reviews-and-reports>

We appoint External Examiners to verify that our University sets and maintains standards for awards which adhere to relevant national subject benchmark statements and the FHEQ (UK), ensure standards and student achievements are comparable with other Higher Education Institutions in the UK, with which they are familiar, and ensure that assessments measure achievement of course and module learning outcomes and reach the required standard. External Examiners may also provide feedback on areas of good practice or potential enhancement.

Academic Principles and Regulations

MA IPE adheres to Leeds Beckett University's Academic Principles and Regulations <https://www.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/staff/academic-regulations.htm>

A pass, merit and distinction is available to students who complete the MA as follows:
The award of a merit may be made to those students who have demonstrated excellent performance against:

- the attainment of an average of 60% or more in assessments contributing to the final award

The award of a distinction may be made to those students who have demonstrated excellent performance against:

- the attainment of an average of 70% or higher in assessments contributing to the final award

Student Support Network

If you have a question or a problem relating to your course, your Course Administrator is there to help you. Course Administrators work closely with academic staff and can make referrals to teaching staff or to specialist professional services as appropriate. They can give you a confirmation of attendance letter, and a transcript. You may also like to contact your Course Rep or the Students' Union Advice team for additional support with course-related questions.

If you have any questions about life at our University in general, call into or contact the Student Hub on either campus to speak to our Student Experience Team. This team, consisting of recent graduates and permanent staff, are available to support you throughout your time here. They will make sure you have access to and are aware of the support, specialist services, and opportunities our University provides. There is a Student Hub on the ground floor of the Rose Bowl at City Campus and one in Campus Central at Headingley. You can also find the team in the Gateway in the Leslie Silver Building at City Campus. The telephone number is 0113 812 3000, and the e-mail address is StudentHub@leedsbeckett.ac.uk.

Within MyBeckett you will see two tabs (Support and Opportunities) where you can find online information and resources for yourselves. The **Support** tab gives you access to details of services available to give you academic and personal support. These include Library Services, the Students' Union, Money advice, Disability advice and support, Wellbeing, International Student Services and Accommodation. There is also an A-Z of Support Services, and access to online appointments/registration.

The **Opportunities** tab is the place to explore the options you have for jobs, work placements, volunteering, and a wide range of other opportunities. For example, you can find out here how to get help with your CV, prepare for an interview, get a part-time job or voluntary role, take part in an international project, or join societies closer to home.