



## Faculty of Management, Law and Social Sciences

### Programme Specification

Programme title:

**MA Advanced Practice in Peacebuilding and Conflict Resolution**

Academic Year:	2018/19
Degree Awarding Body:	University of Bradford
Partner(s), delivery organisation or support provider (if appropriate):	
Final and interim award(s):	[Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) level 7] MA Advanced Practice in Peacebuilding and Conflict Resolution Postgraduate Diploma Advanced Practice in Peacebuilding and Conflict Resolution Postgraduate Certificate Advanced Practice in Peacebuilding and Conflict Resolution
Programme accredited by (if appropriate):	
Programme duration:	1 year full time OR 15 months with internship/placement 2 years part time OR 27 months with internship/placement
QAA Subject benchmark statement(s):	n/a
Date of Senate Approval:	
Date last confirmed and/or minor modification approved by Faculty Board	Phase 1 approved November 2016 Phase 2 approved April 2018

### Introduction

This MA Advanced Practice in Peacebuilding and Conflict Resolution engages with the important issues concerning social conflicts, including violent conflicts, at all levels – local, community, national, transnational and international. It particularly focusses on developing the knowledge, understanding and skills required to engage

constructively with conflict, and the opportunities and limitations associated with different approaches to conflict prevention, intervention and resolution.

This MA Programme is offered by the internationally recognised Department of Peace Studies and International Development, drawing on over 40 years of experience as a leading centre of peace and conflict research, education and training. The programme will develop students' understanding of the causes and dynamics of social conflict, with a strong focus on case-study analysis. It will allow students to develop informed judgements about when and how to engage constructively with conflict, recognising the strengths and limitations of different approaches to intervention. Students will also consider critical questions surrounding and problematising efforts to build peace in different contexts, and in the light of contemporary trends, including converging environmental, economic and political developments. Through a diverse programme of study, including a significant applied, practical element, students will develop and demonstrate knowledge and recognised competencies essential to effective, ethically-aware practice within conflict engagement and peace practice - locally, nationally or internationally.

The curriculum has been carefully designed to ensure coherence and progression through the programme of study.

The first semester provides an advanced understanding in two core areas. First, it develops knowledge and skills for advanced conflict research and analysis, enabling students to develop advanced understanding of the contexts and conditions of violent conflict at different scales. Second, it examines the issues, methods and academic and practitioner debates relating to efforts to design and assess conflict intervention processes. The provision of an elective allows further specialisation in relation to a number of key areas, including options on dynamics of politics and security in Africa; contemporary security challenges; security and development in fragile and conflict affected areas; sustainable development, development theory or practice, peace studies in a changing world; discourses and practices of social-ecological resilience; or project planning and design.

Semester 2 extends the practical, applied dimension of the programme in a core module on skills for constructive conflict engagement. This builds directly on the previous core modules, using knowledge about conflict analysis and intervention design, but focused more closely on process management - for example, in mediation, dialogue or negotiation. Optional modules again afford opportunities to specialise in areas related both to conflict analysis or processes for addressing conflict and promoting social change. The core focus is on analysing and developing skills for practical conflict engagement. In addition, students can then develop their knowledge by choosing two options from a range of modules. For example, specialist regional understanding can be developed through engagement with either the module on Middle East Politics and Security Dynamics or the Africa Study Visit. Thematic knowledge may be developed through study of: movements for social and ecological justice; transnational challenges - problems and responses; gender, conflict and development; transnational security challenges; natural resource governance; political violence and terrorism; international environmental governance; or urban challenges and sustainable cities, while familiarity with skills and competencies associated with contemporary policy paradigms may be gained through participation in the modules Assessing Development Needs and Outcomes, or Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding.

Every student will participate in at least two intensive laboratory workshops or 'immersion days' on key cross-cutting thematic issues including: the roles and

significance of gender; the skills of using conflict analysis methods and conflict sensitivity guidelines for assessing and ensuring conflict sensitivity in fragile and conflict affected areas; These are incorporated into the core modules for the programme.

The programme culminates with research and preparation of a substantial Dissertation project on a subject of their choice (relating to the Programme's aims and learning objectives). This involves project research and analysis, and preparation of a Dissertation of up to 15,000 words. This is a major opportunity for students not only to research and prepare a substantial scholarly analysis of a specialist area in which they are particularly interested, but also to demonstrate an advanced understanding of relevant policy and practitioner agendas and debates to help them to use this Masters degree to pursue careers in their preferred areas.

The academic modules for this programme include a range of innovative approaches to teaching, learning and assessment, to enable students to actively engage with the key concepts and syllabus and to develop not only their academic knowledge and understanding but also to their skills and experience for the worlds of policy, practice and employment. There are opportunities to take specialist pathways, including thematic specialisms such as those indicated above, and also specialising in selected regions (e.g. Africa, Middle East), with opportunities for selected study visits. This includes the high profile Africa Study Visit to an African country recovering from conflict (which can be taken as an assessed element of the programme) or other further voluntary study visits to Northern Ireland, Hiroshima or to major locations of International Organisations, such as The Hague or Brussels as well as London. Students have opportunities to participate in an extended 'crisis response game' or the international 'Model United Nations' simulation game.

(Note that there may be an extra charge to students participating in some of these activities, but there may also be scholarship funding available on application to help with the costs.)

Students further benefit from studying at a major international centre for research and engagement with policy and practitioner communities working in the areas of peacebuilding and conflict resolution, providing many opportunities for interested students to participate or observe regular workshops, international conferences, research seminars, and engagements in or near Bradford with relevant NGOs, community organisations, governmental and international agencies, and with UK and other foreign and development agencies and police, military or justice services.

A part time route for this Programme, both with or without internship, is available on application. The Division has an excellent track record of integrating part-time students into this and its other programmes. Part-time students will be able to join with programme activities of interest to them, and to discuss their learning trajectory with the academic programme team at key points, and when requested.

#### 15 month programme:

There is an option to select either a 12 or 15 month Masters programme. Students normally register initially for the 12 month programme, but may transfer to the 15 month programme anytime up to the middle of Semester 2 (specific deadline dates are provided in the Programme Handbook each year). The 15 month option provides students with further opportunities for developing professional experience and practical skills during their Masters programme by undertaking a voluntary placement or internship in a relevant organisation for a period of up to three months. This internship or placement normally starts shortly after the end of Semester 2. After the internship is completed, students taking this 15 month

option return to the University to proceed with researching and preparing their Masters dissertation, with the same requirements and academic supervision as for students on the 12 month programme, except that the dissertation submission date is extended by approximately three months (actual submission dates are specified annually in the Programme Handbook) as appropriate for a 15 month programme.

Both the 12 and 15 month Masters programme options provide excellent opportunities for engaging with the spheres of policy and practice as well as with academic studies. However, the 15 month option provides further enhanced opportunities for integrating practitioner community engagement (such as internship experience) with their academic studies. This element of the 15 month programme is student-centred and student-led, and thus the initiative for identifying and applying for internships is driven by the students. Academic staff on the programme team can facilitate and support such searches for suitable placements with leads and suggestions, help with the writing of applications, and provide supporting letters of reference. They provide customised preparatory training before students who choose the 15 month option, and mentoring support as useful during the period of the placement or internship.

Students who transfer to the 15 month programme will be charged an additional tuition fee, reflecting this additional support.

### **Programme Aims**

The programme is intended to enable students to become very well-informed and skilful analysts and practitioners who can

- Conduct effective research into the causes and dynamics of social conflict, in a range of contexts and settings.
- Design ethical and constructive responses to particular conflict situations, with awareness of the potential and limitations of different strategies for conflict intervention.
- Select and employ relevant strategies and techniques for constructive engagement with conflict.
- Reflect critically on their own practice with reference to critical academic perspectives on the theory and practice of conflict resolution and peacebuilding, supporting continuous professional development in conflict and peace-related roles.

### **Programme Learning Outcomes**

To be eligible for the award of Postgraduate Certificate at FHEQ level 7, students will be able to:

- LO1 Conduct systematic research into conflict situations and contexts, using relevant techniques and technologies to gather, evaluate and manage evidence, data and information from valid, appropriate sources, and using data and theory in the analysis of causal mechanisms, conflict dynamics and impacts within contemporary case-studies.
- LO2 Design situationally appropriate and ethical conflict engagement processes, making informed judgements about the validity and application of different methods for the peaceful management, resolution or transformation of social conflict, in relation to real-world cases.

- LO3 Identify and critically assess the ideas, practices and conditions that influence long-term initiatives to address legacies of social conflict and build sustainable peace.
- LO4 Collaborate effectively with others in the completion of appropriate academic tasks, recognising and managing social dynamics related to conflict resolution theory.
- LO5 Generate clear, concise and coherent communication in which style, scope and depth are appropriate to task, purpose and audience.

Additionally, to be eligible for the award of Postgraduate Diploma at FHEQ level 7, students will be able to:

- LO6 Employ relevant competencies and strategies to engage constructively with conflict, in third-party and other appropriate roles.
- LO7 Identify and apply critical learning from past or current conflict intervention processes, and debates surrounding peace work internationally.
- LO8 Reflect critically on personal development as a practitioner in conflict resolution and peacebuilding, and cognate fields.
- LO9 Demonstrate initiative and independence in systematic academic inquiry, using relevant techniques and technologies to gather, evaluate and manage evidence, data and information from valid, appropriate sources.
- LO10 Plan and execute a range of assignments, including essays, reports and reflective pieces, in which style, scope and depth are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

Additionally, to be eligible for the award of Degree of Master at FHEQ level 7, students will be able to:

- LO11 Design and carry out, with appropriate ethical approval, an original and self-directed capstone research project, including a comprehensive and critical literature review.
- LO12 Exercise initiative and personal responsibility in completion of an advanced, original and self-directed capstone project, using critical reflective communication to deepen understanding of the learning process, with appropriate documentation
- LO13 Recognise and be able to reflect critically on one's own positionality, values and epistemological orientation in one's own academic work.

## Curriculum

Postgraduate Certificate – students will study 60 credits including 40 credits of core modules plus 20 credits of optional/elective modules, as below:

FHEQ Level	Module Title	Core/ Option/ Elective	Credits	Study Period	Module Code
7	Applied Conflict Research	Core	20	Sem 1	PES7036-B
7	Designing and Assessing Conflict Intervention Processes	Core	20	Sem 1	PES7039-B
7	African Politics and Security	Option	20	Sem 1	PES7035-B

	Dynamics				
7	OR Studying Peace in a Changing World	Option	20	Sem 1	PES7051-B
7	OR Elective	Elective	20	Sem 1	-

Students will be eligible to exit with the award of Postgraduate Certificate if they have successfully completed 60 credits and achieved the award learning outcomes.

Postgraduate Diploma – students will study 60 credits including 20 credits of core modules plus 40 credits of optional modules, as below:

FHEQ Level	Module Title	Core/Option/Elective	Credits	Study Period	Module Code
7	Skills for Constructive Conflict Engagement	Core	20	Sem 2	PES7049-B
7	Natural Resource Governance	Option	20	Sem 2	PES7045-B
7	Movements for Social and Ecological Justice	Option	20	Sem 2	PES7044-B
7	Transnational Challenges: Problems and Responses	Option	20	Sem 2	PES7055-B
7	Creative Conflict Transformation	Option	20	Sem 2	PES7038-B
7	Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding	Option	20	Sem 2	PES7046-B
7	Gender, Conflict and Development	Option	20	Sem 2	PES7041-B
7	Africa Study Visit	Option	20	Sem 2	PES7034-B
7	Terrorism and Political Violence	Option	20	Sem 2	PES7053-B
7	Sustainable Cities	Option	20	Sem 2	PES7052-B
7	Middle East Politics and Security Dynamics	Option	20	Sem 2	PES7043-B

Students will be eligible to exit with the award of Postgraduate Diploma if they have successfully completed at least 120 credits and achieved the award learning outcomes.

#### Degree of Master

FHEQ Level	Module Title	Core/Option/Elective	Credits	Study Period	Module Code
7	Dissertation	Core	60	Diss	PES7040-E

Students will be eligible for the award of Degree of Master if they have successfully completed at least 180 credits and achieved the award learning outcomes.

For those choosing the 15-month Full Time option or a Part Time route (on application) including voluntary placement/internship, the degree of master will be awarded on successful completion of a voluntary placement or internship of up to three months. Those on the 15-month Full Time route are expected to start the placement/internship shortly after the end of Semester 2, that is to undertake it during the summer period (semester 3). Those in the Part Time route are able to do this (on application) after they complete the 120 credits of taught programme.

FHEQ Level	Module Title	Core/Option/Elective	Credits	Study Period	Module Code
7	Professional Experience	Core	0	Sem 3	PES7056-Z
7	Dissertation	Core	60	Diss	PES7040-E

The voluntary placement/internship is a work experience element of the programme. This normally takes the form of an internship in another organisation and can be either undertaken in the UK or abroad. Students often use their placement period and experience to inform and shape their dissertation.

Planning for the placement/internship starts several months in advance, usually in the first semester and at the latest by mid-Semester 2. The Division will provide information sessions. The process may involve several steps including:

- Identifying and searching for voluntary placement/internship opportunities;
- Preparing applications, covering letters, supporting letters of reference;
- Contacting relevant organisations, arranging for and agreeing specifics such as location, domain of work, start and end dates, focal point, terms of reference of placement and what the student is expected to do and the days and hours;
- Sorting out financial planning issues, visas, travel risk assessments and permissions;
- Discussing with the relevant contact person in the host organisation about aims and reviewing arrangement.

Students are required to complete a form detailing their proposed activities and receive permission from the Division before they are able to go on placement/internship. The Division provides relevant additional training to students and transfer to the 15 month option, to help to ensure a successful and safe placement/internship.

Upon completing the period of placement/internship, students return to the programme at the University of Bradford and need to submit a completion report satisfactorily summarising key learning points before they can formally continue work on their dissertation.

### Learning and Teaching Strategy

The learning and teaching strategy for this programme emphasises the active development of students' academic skills and professional competencies related to conflict resolution and peacebuilding. These have been designed with reference to

professional competencies frameworks developed by professional agencies in the fields of humanitarian, peace and conflict work<sup>1</sup>, and to negotiation, mediation and facilitation training guides. Successful completion of the Masters Degree will equip with the skills graduates need to begin a career in a range of roles related to conflict analysis, conflict resolution and peacework.

Throughout the programme, students will be actively engaged in a diverse range of learning activities designed to develop their capacities for thoughtful analysis and reflective practice. These will include individual and group tasks that require students to apply theoretical concepts to real-world dynamics and scenarios, simulations, field trips and real-life briefs set by practitioners in our field. As such, the emphasis in timetabled teaching sessions will often be on active, problem-based learning activities, with students undertaking reading and other preparatory work beforehand. This 'flipped classroom' approach maximises opportunities for discussion and feedback, whilst using selected inputs – short lectures, readings, video, etc. – to both frame and deepen the learning experience.

Building on many and varied opportunities to engage with and learn from each other into the programme is integral to fostering an inclusive learning environment. Our approach to learning and teaching makes a conscious effort to encourage collaboration and honest dialogue and puts significant emphasis on the development of interpersonal and intercultural skills. Throughout, the curriculum is designed to encourage reflection on social relationships, and this includes the interpersonal level and the wider structures in which interpersonal dynamics are situated. Reflections on power, inequality and privilege that are central to conflict processes will open up difficult conversations about dynamics that can stand in the way of inclusion, while other parts of the curriculum explore the question of how constructive changes can be fostered and encouraged. Creating an inclusive and welcoming learning environment also involves appropriate design of the physical spaces in which we teach, and where possible, we will make a conscious effort to reflect our ethos in the set up and aesthetic design of teaching spaces. Our overall aim is to develop reflective practitioners who take a thoughtful approach to engaging with others, and our own practices as a teaching team seek to model and foster this ethos.

### **Assessment Strategy**

Our assessment strategy for this programme is based on principles of constructive alignment, diversity and inclusion. Assessment tasks are designed to help students both develop and demonstrate their skills as set out in the learning outcomes for the programme overall and for specific modules. Because these learning outcomes cover different aspects of learning – including the demonstration of academic knowledge, academic skills and professional-related competencies – assessment will be similarly varied, including some more traditional assignments (essay-type tasks) alongside more competency-based assessment. Our overall strategy attempts to strike a balance between developing students' abilities to succeed in a balanced and

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<sup>1</sup> For details, see <https://startnetwork.org/resources/all/all/all/all/21186>; <http://euhap.eu/>;  
[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/553163/Conflict-sept16.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/553163/Conflict-sept16.pdf).

diverse range of assessment tasks and to stretch beyond existing comfort zones on the one hand, and allowing them to play to their strengths on the other hand.

The formative assessment strategy includes monitoring learning throughout each semester using a range of class activities, tutorials and coursework, including reports, essays, reflective notes, literature reviews, oral or audio-visual presentations, and group and individual tasks; for which formative feedback is given. For example, in Semester 1 personal tutorials are designed and timetabled to offer close support to the teaching and assessment students will experience on their modules. In Semester 2, students will continue to get formative feedback from their personal tutors as well as the teaching staff on particular modules. During the process of selection, refinement, research and drafting of the dissertation project, formative feedback and guidance will be provided by a personal supervisor, as well as by other members of academic staff on request. The dissertation module has been designed with a view to maximising students' engagement in a structured process of research, with formative feedback built in from the start.

Summative assessment is similarly through a variety of tasks, including essays, reports, policy briefs, case study analyses, oral and audio-visual presentations, and reflective notes. Each module is assessed by specified modes of assessment, as described in the relevant module descriptor. Some of the modules may be assessed through submission of a portfolio of work. A Portfolio is a specific set of assignments of varying types and lengths, including reports, essays, and written or oral project presentations. Throughout, students will encounter a diversity of assessment tasks, with opportunities for choice on substantive content and presentation formats where appropriate. While all of our assessment tasks will be designed with the aim of promoting an inclusive and accessible curriculum for all, we will, in co-ordination with the Disability Service, work with any individual students who might have additional access requirements to find solutions appropriate to their needs.

### **Assessment Regulations**

This Programme conforms to the standard University Assessment Regulations which are available at the link below

<http://www.bradford.ac.uk/agpo/ordinances-and-regulations/>

### **Admission Requirements**

The University welcomes applications from all potential students and most important in the decision to offer a place is our assessment of a candidate's potential to benefit from their studies and of their ability to succeed on this particular programme. Consideration of applications will be based on a combination of formal academic qualifications and other relevant experience.

The standard entry requirements for the programme are as follows:

All applicants are required to have an Honours Degree at 2:2 or above (or equivalent). Relevant professional or voluntary experience would be desirable.

Also for international students, a minimum IELTS at 6.0 or the equivalent.

Applications are welcome from students with non-standard qualifications or with significant relevant experience.

### **Recognition of Prior Learning**

If applicants have prior certificated learning or professional experience which may be equivalent to parts of this programme, the University has procedures to evaluate and recognise this learning in order to provide applicants with exemptions from specified modules or parts of the programme.

### Minor Modification Schedule

Version Number	Brief description of Modification	Date of Approval (Faculty Board)
1		