

## Programme Specification

### Programme title: MSc Sustainable Development

Academic Year:	2019-20
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] MSc Sustainable Development Postgraduate Diploma Sustainable Development Postgraduate Certificate Sustainable Development
Programme accredited by (if appropriate):	N/A
Programme duration:	12 months full time 15 months full time with internship/placement 24 months part time 27 months part time with internship/placement
QAA Subject benchmark statement(s):	N/A
Date last confirmed and/or minor modification approved by Faculty Board	April 2018; July 2019

**Please note:** This programme specification has been published in advance of the academic year to which it applies. Every effort has been made to ensure that the information is accurate at the time of publication, but changes may occur given the interval between publishing and commencement of teaching. Any change which impacts the terms and conditions of an applicant's offer will be communicated to them. Upon commencement of the programme, students will receive further detail about their course and any minor changes will be discussed and/or communicated at this point.

### Introduction

Sustainability has once again become an important national and international concept and policy issue. There are serious challenges which need to be overcome before any society, country or city can claim to be on a path to sustainability. This programme develops knowledge and understanding at advanced level by focusing on a range of issues at different levels - global, national, regional and local community and critically examining how sustainable development shapes policy and strategy in these different spatial scales. The traditional concept of sustainable

development has the three pillars of economic, social and environmental dimensions. This programme aims to take a multi-disciplinary approach to sustainability and encourage enquiry into these and other dimensions including historical, cultural, political, institutional and gender dimensions to understand the issues and challenges of vulnerability, powerlessness, agency, responsibility and resilience. The programme aims to develop comprehensive and systematic understanding of students to various dimensions of sustainable development and the complexities of shaping, influencing and informing policy analysis and achieving impact in the world.

The MSc Sustainable Development is offered by the internationally recognised Division of Peace Studies and International Development, drawing on over 40 years of experience as a leading centre of peace and development research. Indeed, the Division made major contributions to international understanding and policy development concerning sustainable development. Students on this programme will be studying a highly topical and advanced postgraduate degree programme in a Division that has nearly half a century of outstanding international profile and expertise in a university that is strongly committed to sustainability principles and goals.

Academic staff of the Division have strong academic and applied research track records in aspects of the development of sustainable development as an international concept and objective; the negotiation of the Sustainable Development Goals and development of mechanisms and indicators to promote their implementation; economic inequality, poverty alleviation, natural resource governance and sustainability, resilience, peace-building, gender and conflict sensitivity analysis, project and strategic planning and capacity building. They are often involved in advocacy and policy analysis work for international, governmental and non-governmental organisations and agencies on these issues. We currently collaborate with national and local government agencies in the UK and several other developed and developing countries; EU institutions and European governments; UN agencies, the African Development Bank, and the Caribbean Development Bank; bilateral lenders and donors such as AusAid, DFID and the China Development Bank; and international NGOs such as the Aga Khan Foundation, Oxfam and Saferworld. Staff members have current research and knowledge transfer projects in many countries including North and South Korea, Japan, Indonesia, Cambodia, Vietnam, Laos, Myanmar, India, China, Nigeria, Ghana, Kenya, Ethiopia, Cote d'Ivoire, Tanzania, Sierra Leone, Brazil, and Colombia. Several staff members work closely with the City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council and currently are involved in developing a global network of inclusive, smart and sustainable cities.

The MSc programme encompasses study in each of the University's three strategic research priority areas: sustainable societies, innovative engineering and advanced healthcare. With respect to sustainable societies, the programme will enable students to develop an advanced knowledge and understanding of social, political, economic and development issues relating to the sustainable development goals, including inequality, poverty, conflict and social justice, as well as the environmental and ecological aspects of sustainability. Similarly, the programme will address policy issues related to the development and implementation of engineering and healthcare programmes and strategies for promoting sustainable development. For example, modules will offer opportunities to investigate development issues such as water supply governance and the politics of public health which combine the three strategic priorities in ways that encourage students to develop proposals for innovative solutions to real world problems.

Moreover, in the UK, the programme is also closely related to sustainability as a core value of the university. The University of Bradford prides itself on its record for being a University that has a very high commitment to sustainability and having one of the most sustainable campuses. According to the *Green Metrics* rankings, the University of Bradford is among the world's top 10 greenest universities. The University has an ambitious target of cutting down CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 50 per cent from its 2014 base by the year 2020 and is well on its way to achieving this with already becoming a net-exporter of electricity. The Ecoversity programme embeds sustainable development in all aspects of the University's mission, and the MSc in Sustainable Development contributes directly to this goal.

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: the development, implementation and debates concerning sustainable development concepts, norms, policies and programmes; and issues of governance and sustainable development. The provision of an elective allows further specialisation in relation to a number of key areas, including options on security and development in fragile or conflict affected areas; development theory; development practices; project planning and design; project appraisal; economic growth and development; dynamics of politics and security in Africa; contemporary security challenges; international relations; and designing and assessing conflict intervention processes.

Semester 2 offers opportunities to deepen knowledge of particular contexts, themes or policies relating to peace, conflict and development and their inter-relationships, building directly on the previous core modules. One core focus is on contemporary urban challenges and the development of sustainable cities. In addition, students can then develop their knowledge by choosing an option 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. Your knowledge and skills with assessing progress towards sustainable development goals can be developed through the module Assessing Development Practices, Needs and Outcomes. Thematic knowledge relevant to sustainable development may be developed through study of natural resource governance; gender, conflict and development; transnational problems and international governance relating to environment, trafficking and crime, including the development, implementation and effectiveness of regional and international environmental regimes and their inter-relationships with global mechanisms for sustainable development and resilience; finance for development; or movements for social and ecological justice while familiarity with skills and competencies associated with contemporary policy paradigms may be gained through participation in the Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding.

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

After completing the taught modules, students then undertake a substantial Dissertation project on a subject of their choice (relating to the Programme's aims and learning objectives). This involves research and analysis, and preparation of a Dissertation of up to 15,000 words. This is a major opportunity not only to research and prepare a substantial scholarly analysis of a specialist area in which the student

is particularly interested, but also to demonstrate an advanced understanding of relevant policy and practitioner agendas and debates to increase the value of the Masters degree to pursue relevant careers.

There is also the possibility to conduct detailed and collaborative enquiries through the dissertation project working closely with specific organisations and gaining access to their data or conducting interviews (in compliance with the University Research Ethics policies). The University has partnership agreements with several universities for student exchange including in Australia, Italy, Republic of Korea, Japan, Malaysia, and the USA. In addition, individual staff members have research links with institutions across the UK and EU, and in Cambodia, Ghana, Kenya, India, Indonesia, China, Brazil and. While a student exchange visit is not possible in a 12-month postgraduate programme, it is possible to conceive a well-designed research project for dissertation with a fieldwork period based in one of those institutions. (Please note: additional costs, permissions and visa-related applications may be involved, although some international student exchange grants may be available on a competitive basis.)

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 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, which have recently included 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 similar international simulation games.

(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 sustainable development, 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.

There is an option to select either a 12 or 15 month Masters programme. The latter provides further opportunities for developing professional experience and practical skills by undertaking a voluntary placement or internship in a relevant organisation for a period of up to three months. Relevant internships provide 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, while academic staff on the programme team will facilitate and support such searches for suitable placements with leads and suggestions, and help with the writing of applications, and provide supporting letters of reference.

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.

The programme will equip students with advanced understanding and skills for work for example in national and local government; global governance institutions; research institutes; international, national and local development agencies; environmental advocacy and policy work; private sector strategy and governance for sustainability; and NGOs.

### **Programme Aims**

This MSc programme in Sustainable Development is intended to enable students to develop an advanced knowledge and understanding of sustainable development issues, policies and processes, and to become to develop an international cadre of informed and skilful analysts, practitioners and potential leaders with a deep understanding of sustainable development ideas, institutions, policies and networks and the necessary critical thinking skills to inform policy and contribute to long term impacts.

The programme is intended to:

- Enable students to develop advanced knowledge and understanding of concepts, theories and frameworks of sustainable development and their application in policy and practice.
- Develop students' skills to analyse, synthesise and critique current and emerging research and practice and critically appraise evidence using insights at the forefront of the discipline and practice.
- Advance students' knowledge and understanding of skills and techniques to develop innovative ideas and originality in the application of knowledge in relation to sustainable development policy and practice for their own research and advanced scholarship.
- Develop students' skills to formulate and independently investigate a complex issue related to sustainable development by developing appropriate research questions and critically evaluating evidence to answer such questions and communicating their findings at an advanced level.
- Develop autonomous learning skills for lifelong learning to become even better at being an independent learner and critical and creative thinker.
- Further develop skills in communicating complex ideas and issues to different groups of stakeholders.
- Equip students with the knowledge and skills to become a reflective and critical practitioner and work as an effective team member in culturally diverse groups and teams.

## Programme Learning Outcomes

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

- LO1 Critically evaluate advanced theoretical concepts in sustainable development and its framing in order to create original critiques of the existing literature and policy discourse.
- LO2 Critically appraise international development theories and policies of global development institutions and engage with debates at the forefront of the discipline.
- LO3 Synthesise complex information from a range of sources and on a range of issues related to sustainable development in order to develop new theoretical approaches and practical solutions.
- LO4 Use initiative in self-directed learning and construct better arguments that challenge existing knowledge paradigms.

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

- LO5 Develop advanced knowledge and understanding of contemporary transnational and global problems of environment and development and of the development, implementation and effectiveness of multilateral and global norms, institutions and mechanisms for tackling such problems and for governing environmental commons including the atmosphere and oceans.
- LO6 Show an advanced understanding of concepts and theories of sustainable cities; critically examine ideological, ethical and institutional perspectives on sustainable cities, the contradictions, possibilities and challenges of applying these concepts for urban policy and a number of issues related to sustainable smart cities; and critically examine the link between sustainability and well-being and existing and new indicators and their relevance to Sustainable Development Goals agenda.
- LO7 Develop a critical, ethical and reflective approach to implementing practice or policy-based interventions and understanding and assessing their applications in different cultural, geographic and socio-economic contexts.
- LO8 Apply originality and creative problem-solving in dealing with complex development problems in order to generate new approaches and insights with practical applications in the real world.

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

- LO9 Demonstrate a detailed, rigorous and original critique of current research and scholarship at the forefront of the discipline in a specialist area of sustainable development – focusing on the complex real world context of either a developed country or region or a developing country or region or fragile and conflict affected countries or regions.
- LO10 Identify, design and apply appropriate research methods and strategies for specific purposes and applications demonstrating a comprehensive, critical and reflective understanding of relevant techniques in the field.

## Curriculum

FHEQ Level	Module Title	Core/ Option/ Elective	Credits	Study Period	Module Code
7	Critical Perspectives on Sustainable Development	Core	20	Sem 1	DEV7026-B
7	Policy Analysis for Governance and Development	Core	20	Sem 1	DEV7037-B
7	African Politics and Security Dynamics	Option	20	Sem 1	PES7034-B
7	Issues in Development Theory	Option	20	Sem 1	DEV7003-B
7	Sustainable Cities	Core	20	Sem 2	PES7052-B
7	Natural Resource Governance	Option	20	Sem 2	PES7045-B
7	Gender, Conflict and Development	Option	20	Sem 2	PES7041-B
7	Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding	Option	20	Sem 2	PES7046-B
7	Africa Study Visit	Option	20	Sem 2	PES7034-B
7	Movements for Social and Ecological Justice	Option	20	Sem 2	PES7044-B
7	Assessing Development Practices Needs and Outcomes	Option	20	Sem 2	DEV7039-B
7	Environment, trafficking and crime: transnational issues and International Governance	Option	20	Sem 2	PES7062-B
7	Finance for Development	Option	20	Sem 2	DEV7001-B
7	Elective	Elective	20	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.

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 a voluntary placement/internship, the degree of master will be awarded on successful completion of a voluntary placement of up to three months. Those on the 15-month Full Time route are expected to do this 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 Professional Experience 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 normally 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 itself. 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 obtain permission from the Division before they are able to go on placement/internship.

Upon completing the period of placement/internship, students should come back on the programme and submit a completion report summarising key learning points before they can formally continue work on their dissertation.

### **Learning and Teaching Strategy**

As an advanced postgraduate programme, learning and teaching is based on developing critical reflection and active learning. Research-led teaching means that the staff members delivering the teaching will be themselves engaged in research at the cutting edge of the field. This is the case in all our modules.

The learning and teaching strategy for this programme emphasises the acquisition of academic skills, familiarity with contemporary policy and professional competencies related to peace and development work. The strategy provides a wide range of teaching and learning methods and opportunities in and across modules, including lectures and directed study, but also discussion of in-class and pre-class student research findings; simulations, presentations and other methods of communicating arguments - within groups and to whole class audiences. A range of

innovative approaches to teaching and learning are incorporated throughout the programme, enabling active study and analyses of important contemporary issues relating to sustainable development, so that learning about theories develops closely with understandings about the application to real problems.

Employability and professionalism capabilities and attributes are developed through group and pair work, in and out of class, and experience with oral, written and other audio-visual presentations. In some modules, these skills are given a sharp focus, and self-reflection on skill development is an explicit learning outcome for the modules.

Extensive optionality is provided within some modules, where students are supported to select their own projects, case-studies and topics within the overall syllabus. The dissertation project is also chosen (within the overall scope of issues relating to Sustainable Development), designed and undertaken by each student, under academic supervision. Furthermore, during the first and second semesters of the programme, students will undertake at least two intensive laboratory workshops or 'immersion days' on key cross-cutting thematic issues including on: the roles and significance of gender; and 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.

Peace Studies and International Development is a very dynamic division, within a diverse and active Faculty and wider University. It arranges numerous events and opportunities each semester beyond the taught modules to engage with not only academic but also policy and practitioner events and issues. These include invited speakers, seminars, workshops, activities and conferences, both off and on-campus. Please note that such off-campus learning activities may involve an extra cost to the student.

### **Assessment Strategy**

The assessment strategy is based on principles of rigour, constructive alignment, diversity and inclusion. It employs a well-developed range of formative and summative assessments tasks which are designed to help students to develop and demonstrate their understandings and skills as set out in the learning outcomes for each module and for the Programme overall. 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. 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.

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 Regulations which are available at the following link:

<http://www.bradford.ac.uk/aqpo/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) plus GCSE Grade 4 (old grade C) or above in English Language.

Also International students should have minimum IELST 6.0 or above or 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**

<b>Version Number</b>	<b>Brief description of Modification</b>	<b>Date of Approval (Faculty Board)</b>
1	Module and curriculum changes	June 2019