

## MSc Project Planning and Management Programme Specification

Academic Year:	2020-21
Degree Awarding Body:	University of Bradford
Final and interim award(s):	[Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) level 7]  MSc Project Planning and Management  Postgraduate Diploma Project Planning and Management  Postgraduate Certificate Project Planning and Management
Programme duration:	September and January intakes:  12 months full time  15 months full time with internship/placement  24 months full time  27 months part time with internship/placement
Date last confirmed and/or minor modification approved by Faculty Board	April 2018; June 2019; June 2020; September 2020

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

The MSc Project Planning and Management programme builds advanced knowledge and skills in the planning and management of development projects and programmes. It is designed to deepen students' critical understanding of the strategies, processes, techniques and issues involved in taking ideas or policies for development and turning them into practical realities with identifiable outcomes and benefits. The programme considers both theory and practice of management skills for project and programme

management, focusing on both 'hard' and 'soft' skills for successful project implementation. The programme provides an excellent basis for career enhancement or conversion for students that have an interest in and experience of projects for development. The focus of the programme is on development projects in the public or third (voluntary and community) sectors but the underlying principles are applicable to all types of projects, including those for commercial benefit. It has strong vocational and skill-based elements, in line with the University's mission of 'Making Knowledge Work', and is designed to be relevant to contemporary issues and professions.

The MSc Project Planning and Management is offered by the internationally recognised Division of Peace Studies and International Development (PSID), drawing on over 40 years of experience as a leading centre of multidisciplinary development research and practice and peace & conflict research, education and training. The Division's activities include undergraduate and postgraduate programmes, short duration training programmes for development and other professionals, overseas-based consultancy, training and research. Academic staff in the Division are actively engaged in international research on the issues addressed in this course, with academic backgrounds in branches of economics, politics, management, and other social sciences, and have specialist areas of expertise in topics such as development institutions; public policy making and implementation; project and programme management; globalisation and trade, community development and institutional change. They also engage in a variety of ways with development policy and practitioner communities across virtually every region of the world.

Many postgraduate students in the Division have a strong personal commitment to development and have some work experience in related areas of the public, private and voluntary sectors. This programme can serve as a means to change careers: to acquire the necessary skills, knowledge and qualifications to become a development professional. Furthermore, students may already have embarked on a career that has some involvement with international development. A high proportion of postgraduate students in the Division are from overseas, studying for a higher qualification with the support of their employer. A postgraduate programme here provides students with the knowledge and skills required for advancement to more senior, specialist posts.

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

The first semester provides an advanced understanding in two core areas. First, key concepts, approaches and skills are developed concerning project planning and design. Second, methods, skills and practices concerning project financing and appraisal are developed to an advanced level, including issues relating to project finance and economic appraisal. The provision of an elective allows further specialisation in relation to a number of key areas, with options including: international development theory; international development practice, economic growth and development; governance for development; African politics and security dynamics; security and development in fragile and conflict-affected areas; sustainable development, applied conflict research; International relations; or contemporary security challenges.

Semester 2 offers opportunities to deepen knowledge of particular contexts, themes and methods relating to the management of project implementation, building directly on the previous core modules. The core focus is on the methods, good practices and challenges

of project implementation and management. In addition, students can then develop their knowledge by choosing two options from a range of modules, for example, advanced skills and competencies associated with contemporary development project and policy agendas may be gained through participation in the modules Assessing Development Needs and Outcomes, and Finance for Development. Thematic knowledge may be developed through study of Natural Resource Governance; Sustainable Cities; gender, conflict and development; and International environmental governance. Specialist regional understanding can be developed through engagement with either the module on Middle East Politics and Security Dynamics or the Africa Study Visit.

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.

The academic modules for this programme include a range of innovative approaches to teaching, blended 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 which includes a study visit of approximately 12 days to an African country recovering from conflict as well as preparatory and post-visit study and analysis (which can be taken as an assessed element of the programme). It also includes 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<sup>1</sup>. Students have opportunities to participate in an extended 'crisis response game'.

Students further benefit from studying at a major international centre for research and engagement with policy and practitioner communities working in the areas of development, project management, finance, peace and conflict research, 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 economic, 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 are able to join with programme

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

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 economic, public service or development agencies and ministries; international development institutions; research institutes; international, national and local development agencies; development or environmental advocacy and policy work; private sector strategy and governance for sustainability; and NGOs.

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 any time 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 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 develop an advanced knowledge, competencies and skills concerning project planning and management; and to develop their capacities as informed and skilful analysts and practitioners who can:

- Perform skilfully in project and programme management, with advanced appreciation of the nature and purpose of projects.
- Apply autonomous skills for lifelong learning.

- Apply advanced personal and transferable skills in management, research and planning.
- Analyse project planning at an advanced level, in a development context.
- Apply advanced knowledge and skills to perform as a reflective, critical and effective project manager.
- Critically analyse current and emerging research and practice.
- Critically appraise the nature of evidence in project management.
- Formulate and independently investigate and problem related to project and programme management.

## **Programme Learning Outcomes**

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

- LO1 Critically evaluate theoretical concepts in the planning, design, appraisal and management of projects.
- LO2 Critically appraise practise in planning, designing and managing projects.
- LO3 Evaluate complex information on a range of issues related to project planning and management.
- LO4 Use initiative in self-directed learning and construct written argument.

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

- LO5 Critically reflect on advanced theoretical concepts of project management skills.
- LO6 Critically appraise working practices and change management in organisations.
- LO7 Develop a critical reflective approach to practice or policy-based intervention.
- LO8 Apply originality and creative problem solving in dealing with complex issues.

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

- LO9 Demonstrate a detailed and critical knowledge of current research and scholarship in a specialist area of project planning and management.
- LO10 Identify appropriate research designs and methods for specific purposes and applications.
- LO11 Identify gaps and inconsistencies in the evidence base guiding policy and practice.
- LO12 Apply critical reasoning to the existing evidence base and scholarship.

## Curriculum

The Master's programme in Project Planning and Management is built on a programme of advanced study of the principles and practice of project planning and design tools and techniques, project appraisal and cost benefit analysis and project management skills and approaches. Students will take the following compulsory taught modules plus the Dissertation:

- 1 Project Planning and Design
- 2 Project Finance and Appraisal
- 3 Project Implementation Management

This programme also provides the opportunity for granular personalised learning and specialism where students can take one optional module in Semester 1 and two options in Semester two.

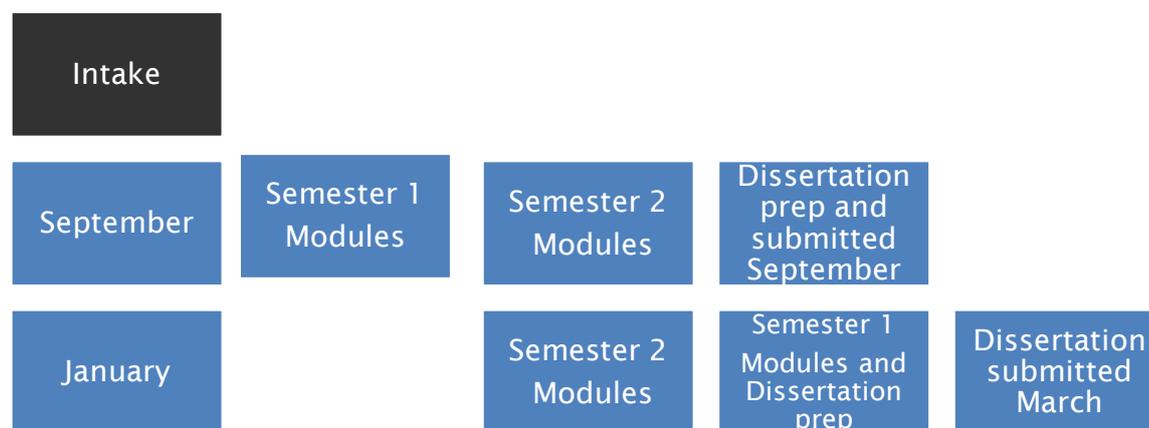
Students that undertake the part-time route will commence the Dissertation prep and submit the dissertation in the second year of study.

## Awards

**Postgraduate Certificate:** 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 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 Masters:** 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.



FHEQ Level	Module Title	Type	Credits	Study Period	Module Code
7	Project Planning and Design	Core	20	Sem 1	DEV7033-B
7	Project Finance and Appraisal	Core	20	Sem 1	DEV7041-B
7	Issues in Development Theory	Option	20	Sem 1	DEV7003-B
7	Economic Growth for Development	Option	20	Sem 1	DEV7007-B

7	Critical Perspective on Sustainable Development	Option	20	Sem 1	DEV7026-B
7	Theories and Practices in Conflict Resolution	Option	20	Sem 1	PES7064-B
7	Security and Development in Fragile and Conflict Affected Areas	Option	20	Sem 1	PES7048-B
7	Project Implementation Management	Core	20	Sem 2	DEV7040-B
7	Natural Resource Governance	Option	20	Sem 2	PES7045-B
7	Sustainable Cities	Option	20	Sem 2	PES7052-B
7	Gender Conflict & Development	Option	20	Sem 2	PES7041-B
7	African Study Visit	Option	20	Sem 2	PES7034-B
7	Middle East Politics and Security Dynamics	Option	20	Sem 2	PES7043-B
7	Assessing Development Practices, Needs and Outcomes	Option	20	Sem 2	DEV7039-B
7	Finance for Development	Option	20	Sem 2	DEV7001-B
7	OR Elective	Elective	20	Sem 1 or 2	-

## Dissertation

FHEQ Level	Module Title	Type	Credits	Study Period	Module Code
7	Dissertation	Core	60	FLYR	PES7040-E

## Dissertation and Voluntary placement/Internship

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.

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	Type	Credits	Study Period	Module Code
7	Voluntary placement/internship	Core	0	Sem 3	PES7056-Z
7	Dissertation	Core	60	FLYR	PES7040-E

## Students on the Rotary route

FHEQ Level	Module Title	Core/ Option/ Elective	Credits	Study Period	Module Code
7	Professional Experience (Rotary Peace Fellows Applied Field Experience)	Core	0	Sem 3	PES7023-Z
7	Dissertation	Core	60	FLYR	PES7040-E

## Learning and Teaching Strategy

The learning and teaching strategy for this programme emphasises the acquisition of academic and professional skills and competencies related to work in project planning and management in development and associated contexts. The strategy provides a wide range of teaching and blended 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.

Career development 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 module.

Students start the programme with an intensive induction week to develop their learning and personal development planning skills and to provide an introduction to IT and library resources. Additional group and one to one support is provided as required. Students will be introduced to academic writing, research and analytical skills as part of the preparation for writing their dissertation.

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 Project Planning and Management issues), 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 of development policies and programmes in fragile and conflict affected areas. These are incorporated into the core modules for this 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 staged learning outcomes for each module and for the Programme overall. Our overall strategy attempts to strike a balance between developing students' abilities to succeed in a balanced and diverse range of assessment tasks.

The formative assessment strategy includes monitoring learning throughout each semester using a range of class activities, tutorials and coursework, including reports, essays, computer workshops and exercises, 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 also varies between modules and includes essays, reports, planning and management exercises, case study analysis and oral and audio-visual presentations. The preparation based on an analysis and interpretation of current issues project planning and management project documents and literature. 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, with a total word length as appropriate for the level.

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 for Postgraduate Programmes which are available at the following link: <https://www.bradford.ac.uk/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, normally at the level of a good 2:2 or above (or equivalent) plus equivalent of GCSE Grade 4 (old grade C) or above in English Language.

International students should have minimum IELTS 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

Version Number	Brief description of Modification	Date of Approval (Faculty Board)
1	Module and curriculum changes	June 2019
2	January Intake included	June 2020
3	Specification reformatted and made accessible	December 2020