

MA Peace, Resilience and Social Justice Programme Specification

<https://www.bradford.ac.uk/courses/pg/peace-resilience-social-justice>

Academic Year: 2022/23

Degree Awarding Body: **The University of Bradford**

Target award: **Degree of Master of Arts [Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) level 7]**

Interim awards: **Postgraduate Diploma [FHEQ Level 7]; Postgraduate Certificate [FHEQ Level 7]**

Programme Admissions: **September and January**

Programme duration: **1 year full-time or 2 years part-time; with internship or placement, 15 months full-time or 27 months part-time**

Date last approved by Faculty Board: ,May 2022, **December 2020**

Please note: This programme specification has been published in advance of the academic year to which it applies. The curriculum may change, subject to the University's programme monitoring and review processes. 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.

Minor Modification Schedule

1. June 2019: Module and curriculum changes
2. June 2020: January intake included. Additions of references to online learning and adjustments during the Covid pandemic
3. January 2021: Specification reformatted and made accessible. Added standard PG study abroad alternative
4. April 2021: Further accessibility improvements
5. May 2021: Annual changes for 2021 academic year
6. May 2022: Annual changes for 2022 academic year

Introduction

Students will critically explore

- the contested meanings of peace, resilience and social justice in a complex and changing world.
- the ways in which scholars, practitioners and activists are analysing and engaging with complex social-ecological systems and crises.
- creative approaches to conflict engagement, peacebuilding and the pursuit of social justice.
- their own positioning, responsibilities and vocation as a scholar, practitioner and/or activist within complex systems and relationships.

The MA programme in Peace, Resilience and Social Justice is for students who seek an advanced understanding of some the most significant contemporary trends shaping our world – a deepening environmental crisis, widening inequality and social division,

increasing competition over key resources, and intractable violent conflict – and their implications for the study and pursuit of peace. The programme also critically examines how people are responding to these challenges in different ways, from contentious collective action and political resistance, through to efforts to design and create more resilient, sustainable communities.

Why Bradford?

This MA Programme is offered by the internationally recognised Division of Peace Studies and International Development, drawing on over 45 years of experience as a leading centre of peace, conflict and social justice research, education and training. Academic staff in the division are actively engaged in research on the key issues and processes examined in this programme and are also actively engaged with relevant social movements and associated policy and practitioner communities. Our teaching is thus highly informed by both research and practice.

Students further benefit from studying at a major international centre for research and engagement with policy and practitioner communities working in the areas of peace, resilience and social justice, 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.

Peace Studies and International Development is a dynamic learning community within a diverse and active Faculty and wider University. We typically arrange numerous events and opportunities beyond the taught modules, fostering engagement with academic, policy and practitioner communities. These include invited speakers, seminars, workshops, activities and conferences, both off and on-campus.

Please note that off-campus learning activities may involve an extra cost, and that during the Covid pandemic some of our usual opportunities may not be available.

Programme Overview

The programme takes a distinctive approach to study, with an emphasis on exploring the connections and relationships between different issues. This integrative, interdisciplinary approach is particularly appropriate and important for understanding the complexities of many contemporary issues concerning peace, resilience and social justice, and for thinking more clearly about the possibilities for social change. The programme enables students to examine in detail topics including: the implications of climate change for ideas about peace and social justice; the role of resource limits and land-grabbing in the promotion of conflict; the emergence of movements for indigenous rights and food sovereignty; the crisis of democratic institutions and the rise of political populism; and the increase in contentious collective action, in both the ‘real’ and ‘virtual’ realms. The meanings of key terms in the programme, including peace, resilience and social justice will be also examined critically.

The programme also has significant applied and practical dimensions, with opportunities to undertake independent research projects, case-study analysis, problem-solving exercises, and engagement with practitioners from relevant fields. As such, graduates will

be able to demonstrate competence in a range of skills that are valued by civil society organisations, NGOs and political lobbyists, as well as developing a sound academic knowledge of current issues.

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. Every student will participate in at least two intensive laboratory workshops or ‘immersion days’ on key cross-cutting thematic issues and these are incorporated into the core modules for the programme.

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 Africa Study Visit to a country recovering from conflict (which can be taken as an assessed element of the programme) or other further voluntary study visits – in the past we have organised trips to Northern Ireland, Hiroshima or to major locations of International Organisations, such as The Hague or Brussels as well as London. Students have also taken part in local field trips (for example, studying climate adaptation measures in communities affected by flooding), and can choose to participate in an extended ‘crisis response game’.

Please 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.

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.

This programme runs both full-time and part-time with intakes in the Autumn (September, Semester 1) and Spring (January, Semester 2):

September Full-time Intake	January Full-time Intake
Semester 1 Modules	Pre-enrolment
Winter Holiday Period	
Semester 2 Modules & Dissertation Preparation	Semester 2 Modules
Summer Holiday Period & Dissertation	Summer Holiday Period
Dissertation Submission (September)	Semester 1 Modules & Dissertation Preparation
Graduation (Winter)	Dissertation
Studies completed	Dissertation Submission (March)
	Graduation (Summer)

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 activities of interest to them, and to discuss their learning trajectory with the academic programme team at key points, and when requested.

Work Placement Opportunity

There is an option to select an internship or placement opportunity which extends your programme duration by 3 months. Students may transfer to the placement route any time up to the middle of Semester 2 (specific deadline dates are provided in the Programme Handbook each year). The 15-month option (full-time) or 27-month option (part-time) 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 an internship is completed, students 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 shorter 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 longer programme.

All of the Masters programme routes provide excellent opportunities for engaging with the spheres of policy and practice as well as with academic studies. However, the 3-month placement options provide further enhanced opportunities for integrating practitioner community engagement (such as internship experience) with their academic studies. This element of the programme is student-centred and student-led, and thus the initiative for identifying and applying for internships is driven by the students. The academic staff in 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 placement route, and mentoring support as useful during the period of the placement or internship.

Students who transfer to the 15-month/27-month programme may be charged an additional tuition fee, reflecting this additional support. Please see the Placement and Study Abroad section for more details.

Programme Aims

This programme intends to enable students to develop advanced knowledge and understanding relating to the intersecting challenges of conflict, ecological crisis and inequality/injustice who can:

- gain and apply an advanced understanding of key concepts used by academics, policymakers, practitioners and activists as they attempt to respond to these challenges.

- critically examine the ways in which these concepts are employed in different contexts and to different ends.
- engage in dialogue with each other and with academics and practitioners in this field about their own values, assumptions and priorities, and their implications for research and practice.
- develop a range of skills that will enhance their capacity to make positive contributions to building peace, resilience and social justice in different settings.
- pursue a pathway tailored to individuals own interests and priorities within a coherent and stimulating programme of study.

Programme Learning Outcomes

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

1. Identify and critically deploy key concepts, theories, trends and evidence relevant to the advanced study of peace and social justice in contemporary societies, at different scales and in different socio-cultural and ecological contexts.
2. Systematically assess the dimensions of, and prospects for, social-ecological resilience in the context of dynamic social, political, economic and environmental trends.
3. Evaluate initiatives to design, establish and govern more resilient, sustainable and socially just communities.
4. Plan and execute a range of assignments, including essays, reports, presentations and reflective pieces, in which style, scope, depth and mode of communication 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:

5. Explain and analyse efforts to define, challenge and transform social injustice at different levels and in a range of socio-cultural contexts, with particular emphasis on contemporary movements that are tackling the intersections of social (in)justice and ecological crisis.
6. Synthesise complex information from a range of sources and on a range of issues related to Peace, Resilience and Social Justice, in order to develop new theoretical approaches and practical solutions.
7. Employ relevant skills and strategies to encourage constructive collaboration in informal, voluntary and professional contexts.
8. Develop a critical, ethical and reflective approach to practice, policy-based or activist interventions and understanding and assessing their implications in different cultural, geographic and socio-economic contexts.

9. 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.
10. Recognise and be able to reflect critically on their own positionality, values and epistemological orientation in their academic work.

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

11. Design, carry out and communicate the results of an independent capstone project involving desk-based and/or action research, and/or the demonstration of advanced reflective practice in an appropriate and relevant real-world setting.

Learning and Teaching Strategy

Throughout the programme, students will be actively engaged in a diverse range of online and offline 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. As such, the emphasis in timetabled online and campus-based 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 – such as short lectures, readings, or videos – to both frame and deepen the learning experience.

There will be an emphasis on practice, feedback and reflection throughout the programme. Students will have opportunities to develop their own interests throughout the programme, e.g. via case studies chosen for study and assessment and the design and execution of their final capstone project.

In addition to student learning within modules, personal academic tutors will support individual students' academic development, helping them to analyse their learning needs, develop appropriate learning strategies and reflect on their progress.

Building 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 the relative (un)peacefulness of relationships, and this includes the interpersonal level and the wider structures in which interpersonal dynamics are situated. Reflections on power, inequality and privilege 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 and online spaces in which we teach. 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.

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 module.

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 Peace, Resilience and Social Justice), 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.

Assessment Strategy

The assessment strategy for this programme is based on principles of constructive alignment, diversity and inclusion. Assessment tasks are designed to help students develop and demonstrate their skills as set out in the learning outcomes for the programme overall and for specific modules. Formative tasks throughout the programme provide the opportunity to practice and develop skills and to receive interim feedback, building up towards summative assessment.

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.

Curriculum

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 understandings of debates about the nature and priorities for peace studies in a changing world: how do trends like climate change, rising inequality, or renewed political populism challenge or change our conceptions of peace, or what it means to build peace? How should peace research and associated fields of practice respond? Second, the programme examines the emergence of a systemic framework for understanding human and ecological relationships (social-ecological resilience thinking), what this contributes to our perspective on contemporary issues in peace and development studies, and how different discourses and practices of resilience are debated.

In the second semester, 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: transnational

challenges; gender, conflict and development; 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.

The provision of an elective in either semester 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; applied conflict research; theories and practices of conflict resolution; or project planning and design.

The programme culminates with a substantial Dissertation project on a subject chosen by each student (relevant to the Programme's aims and learning objectives). This involves project research and analysis and the 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.

Semester 1 (September)

Students will study the core modules Social-Ecological Systems and Crises: Concepts, Cases, Contestations; Studying Peace in a Changing World; and select a further 20-credit optional module from the following choices:

FHEQ Level	Module Title	Module Type	Credits	Study Period	Module Code
7	Social-Ecological Systems and Crises: Concepts, Cases, Contestations	Core	20	Sem 1	PES7065-B
7	Studying Peace in a Changing World	Core	20	Sem 1	PES7051-B
7	African Politics and Security Dynamics	Option	20	Sem 1	PES7035-B
7	Applied Conflict Research	Option	20	Sem 1	PES7036-B
7	Critical Perspective on Sustainable Development	Option	20	Sem 1	DEV7026-B
7	Security & Development in Fragile & Conflict Affected Areas	Option	20	Sem 1	PES7048-B
7	Theories and Practices of Conflict Transformation	Option	20	Sem 1	PES7064-B
6/7	University Semester 1 Elective	Elective	20	Sem 1	Any

Students may elect to study no more than 20 credits from outside of this list in the programme as a whole (a University Elective in either Semester 1 or Semester 2, but not in both).

Semester 2 (January)

Students in Semester 2 will study the core module Creative Practice in Conflict Engagement and Peacebuilding:

FHEQ Level	Module Title	Module Type	Credit	Study period	Module Code
7	Creative Practice in Conflict Engagement and Peacebuilding	Core	20	Sem 2	PES7063-B

and select 2 optional modules from the following choices:

FHEQ Level	Module Title	Module Type	Credit	Study period	Module Code
7	Natural Resource Governance	Option	20	Sem 2	PES7045-B
7	Sustainable Cities	Option	20	Sem 2	PES7052-B
7	Gender, Conflict and Development	Option	20	Sem 2	PES7041-B
7	Assessing Development Practices Needs and Outcomes	Option	20	Sem 2	DEV7039-B
7	Middle East Politics and Security Dynamics	Option	20	Sem 2	PES7043-B
7	Environment, trafficking and crime: transnational issues and International Governance	Option	20	Sem 2	PES7062-B
7	Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding	Option	20	Sem 2	PES7046-B
7	Africa Study Visit	Option	20	Sem 2	PES7034-B
7	University Semester 2 Elective	Elective	20	Sem 2	-

Students may elect to study no more than 20 credits from outside of this list in the programme as a whole (a University Elective in either Semester 1 or Semester 2, but not in both).

Dissertation

The preparation and submission period will vary depending on the student's route (academic or internship) and mode of study (full-time or part-time). Full-time students will prepare begin to prepare their dissertation in semester 3 and submit in the autumn/winter. Students who undertake the part-time route will commence the dissertation process and submit their dissertation in the second year of study. All students will be supported in their dissertation work by an academic supervisor.

FHEQ Level	Module Title	Type	Credits	Study Period	Module Code
7	Dissertation	Core	60	Full Year, Academic Year or Non-Standard Academic Year	PES7040-E

Placement and Study Abroad

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. Many organisations also offer virtual placements or virtual internships and in the context of Covid19 and such health risks, these may be a more feasible option.

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 on the Part Time route are able to do this (on application) after they complete the 120 credits of taught programme.

Students on the Rotary route

FHEQ Level	Module Title	Module Type	Credits	Study Period	Module Code
7	Professional Experience (Rotary Peace Fellows Applied Field Experience)	Core	0	Sem 3	PES7023-Z

All other students

FHEQ Level	Module Title	Module Type	Credits	Study Period	Module Code
7	Voluntary placement/ internship	Core	0	Sem 3	PES7056-Z

Other Study Abroad

Students are welcome to explore available opportunities for a Study Abroad Semester that may be viable for them via our International Opportunities team.

A Study Abroad Semester can be available **ONLY** if the modules offered by the host institution allow the student to meet the learning outcomes of the Bradford Programme during Semester 1 **OR** Semester 2.

Any student wishing to study abroad for a semester should first contact the International Opportunities Team to explore the opportunities and funding in place and, secondly, the Faculty Exchange Coordinator to check if the available options and relevant modules are in line with the University requirements. Following these checks, the International Opportunities Team and the Faculty Exchange Coordinator will liaise with the relevant Programme Leader to validate the modules and the semester exchange.

The semester exchange requires students to study only modules suitable to the Bradford programme when abroad. Therefore, all modules selected for the exchange will have to be mapped to the Bradford programme learning outcomes and be approved by the Programme Leader and the Director of Studies in Bradford in advance of the exchange. During the exchange, if the student needs to change the modules, this can only be done after approval of the Programme Leader and Director of Programmes.

If the student fails a module abroad, the student must immediately inform the International Opportunities Team and the Faculty Exchange Coordinator and explore the possibility of re-taking any exams at the host institution.

During the exchange, students will have support from the relevant University services. All credit successfully obtained whilst on study abroad semester will count towards the student's final degree. Our International Opportunities team can advise students about the available funding to support their study or work experience abroad.

The list of exchange partners and network of Universities available for Study Abroad Semester, as well as further information about international opportunities can be found online at www.bradford.ac.uk/exchanges/current-students.

Please note: Some exchange institutions are only available to undergraduate or postgraduate students. Any potential overseas exchange is dependent on student eligibility, student finance, and the appropriate modules required to fulfil the requirements of the programme being available at either institution.

Assessment Regulations

This Programme conforms to the standard University Postgraduate Assessment Regulations which are available at the link www.bradford.ac.uk/regulations.

Achievable Awards

Students will be eligible to exit with the award of **Postgraduate Certificate in Peace, Resilience and Social Justice** 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 in Peace, Resilience and Social Justice** if they have successfully completed at least 120 credits and achieved the award learning outcomes.

Students will be eligible for the degree award of **Master of Arts in Peace, Resilience and Social Justice** if they have successfully completed at least 180 credits and achieved the award learning outcomes.

Admission Requirements

We take into consideration a number of factors when assessing your application. It's not just about your grades; we take the time to understand your personal circumstances and make decisions based on your potential to thrive at university and beyond.

Academic Admission Requirements

The standard entry requirements for this postgraduate programme are that all applicants have at least a Bachelor's degree with honours classified as lower second-class (2:2, or equivalent). Relevant professional or voluntary activities would be desirable as the course will draw on your experience and the experiences of your fellow students.

Language Competency

As the programme is taught in English, all applicants are required to have GCSE Grade 4 (national grade C) or above in English Language. Alternative RQF Level 2 qualifications such as Key Skills are also acceptable if equivalent. For international students, the standard postgraduate English language requirements for the University apply and these are listed at <https://www.bradford.ac.uk/international/entry-requirements/> .

Access and Recognition of Prior Learning

Applications are welcome from students with non-traditional qualifications, or with significant personal and professional experience.

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.

The University of Bradford has always welcomed applications from disabled students. To discuss adjustments or to find out more about support and access, you may wish to contact the Disability Service before you apply: www.bradford.ac.uk/disability/before .