

Peacebuilding and Conflict Resolution MA

Programme Specification

<https://www.bradford.ac.uk/courses/pg/peacebuilding-and-conflict-resolution>

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| Academic Year: | 2025/26 |
| Degree Awarding Body: | The University of Bradford |
| Main Location: | City Campus |
| Delivery Support Partners: | The Rotary Foundation |
| Qualifications Framework: | Framework for HE Qualifications of UK Degree Awarding Bodies (FHEQ: QAA 2014) |
| Target Degree Award: | Master of Arts (MA) Peacebuilding and Conflict Resolution [FHEQ Level 7] |
| Intermediate/exit awards: | Postgraduate Diploma (PGD), or Postgraduate Certificate (PGC) [FHEQ Level 7] |
| Programme Admissions: | UK and international students |
| Programme Start Dates: | September, January |
| Programme Modes of Study: | 12-15 months full-time or 24-27 months part-time |

Please note: The University has a set of terms and conditions for all students accepting an offer to study on a course here at Bradford. This is called the Student Contract. This document sets out the Terms and Conditions which apply when you accept an offer of a place on a programme of study at the University of Bradford. [View our Student Contract for further details](#). Information about this programme and its modules 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.

Minor Modification Schedule

1. March 2023: Review and edits to make the document more user-friendly and improve accuracy re. different routes and times of entry.
2. May 2024: Programme title updated from 'MA Advanced Practice in Peacebuilding and Conflict Resolution' and annual review; updates to optional modules and electives for 2024/25 academic year.
3. July 2025: Annual Review, additional optional modules added for semester 2 for 2025/6 and changes to academic regulations.
4. October 2025: Corrected typos, updated links and reformatted specification for improved accessibility.

Programme Overview

The MA Peacebuilding and Conflict Resolution is designed to develop students' understanding of the causes and dynamics of social conflict in a range of contexts, with a strong focus on applied analysis. It will allow students to develop the knowledge, understanding and skills required to engage constructively with conflict, recognising the strengths and limitations of different approaches to intervention.

Students will explore critical questions surrounding 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 resolution and peace practice - locally, nationally or internationally.

The MA Peacebuilding and Conflict Resolution is offered by the internationally recognised Department of Peace Studies and International Development, drawing on over 45 years of experience as a leading centre of peace and conflict research, education and training. Academic staff in the department are actively engaged in research on the key issues and processes examined in this programme and are also actively engaged with relevant policy and practitioner communities. Our teaching is thus highly informed by both research and practice.

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.

This programme runs both full-time and part-time, with intakes in September and January. There is an option to select an internship or placement opportunity which extends programme duration by 3 months.

Table 1: September and January Full Time Student Journeys Compared

| September Start | Study Period and Year | January Start |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Start Taught Component with Semester 1 Modules | Semester 1, Year 1 | Pre-enrolment |
| Conclude Taught Component with Semester 2 Modules and Dissertation Preparation | Semester 2, Year 1 | Start Taught Component with Semester 2 Modules |
| Summer Holiday Period & Dissertation or Optional Field Experience | Summer, Year 1 | Summer Holiday Period & start Dissertation Preparation |
| Dissertation/Submission and Graduation (Winter) | Semester 1, Year 2 | Conclude Taught Component Semester 1 Modules & continue work on Dissertation |
| Dissertation Submission (after Field Experience) | Semester 2, Year 2 | Optional Field Experience and Dissertation Submission (March) |
| Graduation (Summer) | Summer, Year 2 | Graduation (Summer) |

Programme Aims

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

- A1. conduct effective research into the causes and dynamics of social conflict, in a range of contexts and settings.
- A2. design ethical and constructive responses to particular conflict situations, with awareness of the potential and limitations of different strategies for conflict intervention.
- A3. select and employ relevant strategies and techniques for constructive engagement with conflict.
- A4. reflect critically on their own evolving practice with reference to academic and practitioner perspectives on the theory and practice of conflict resolution and peacebuilding.

Programme Learning Outcomes

For the FHEQ level 7 Postgraduate Certificate award eligible students will be able to:

- 1. 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.
- 2. 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.
- 3. Identify and critically assess the ideas, practices and conditions that influence long-term initiatives to address legacies of social conflict and build sustainable peace.
- 4. Collaborate effectively with others in the completion of appropriate academic tasks, recognising and managing social dynamics related to conflict resolution theory.
- 5. Generate clear, concise and coherent communication in which style, scope and depth are appropriate to task, purpose and audience.

For the FHEQ Level 7 Postgraduate Diploma award eligible students will additionally:

- 6. Employ relevant competencies and strategies to engage constructively with conflict, in third-party and other appropriate roles.
- 7. Identify and apply critical learning from past or current conflict intervention processes, and debates surrounding peace work internationally.
- 8. Reflect critically on personal development as a practitioner in conflict resolution and peacebuilding, and cognate fields.

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. 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.

For the FHEQ Level 7 Degree of Master award eligible students will additionally be able to:

11. Design and carry out, with appropriate ethical approval, an original and self-directed capstone research project, involving desk-based and/or applied research.

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. Successful completion of the Masters Degree will help equip graduates with the skills needed to begin or further develop a career in a range of roles related to conflict analysis, conflict resolution and peace-work.

The programme has been designed with reference to professional competencies frameworks developed by professional agencies in the fields of humanitarian, peace and conflict work, and to negotiation, mediation and facilitation training guides:

- [START Network Core Humanitarian Competencies Guide](#) (2011 & 2016)
- [European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations](#) (ECHO, since 2014)
- UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office ([FCDO](#)) [technical competency frameworks](#) (since 2016)

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. As such, the emphasis in 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.

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. 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 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 aims to monitor and support learning throughout each semester. Preparatory assignments, in-class activities, tutorials and the preparation of coursework assignments all provide evidence of learning and development and create opportunities for peer or tutor-led feedback in different forms. Personal tutorials and dissertation supervision in particular provide opportunities for formative feedback and guidance. 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.

Each module is assessed formally in order that students can demonstrate their achievement of module learning objectives. Throughout the course, 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 are 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 and provides the opportunity for granular personalised learning and specialism where students can take **one** 20-credit option in Semester 1 and **two** 20-credit options in Sem. 2.

Semester 1 (September)

This semester includes two core areas of study. First, the module **Applied Conflict Research** develops both theoretical knowledge and professional skills for advanced analysis of the causes, dynamics and consequences of (violent) conflict. This module includes a significant case-study focus, to test what theories and concepts offer in the task of analysis. A second core module – **Theories and Practices of Conflict Resolution** - introduces some key approaches to conflict intervention – including negotiation and mediation – and how these have been theorised and applied. Again, there is a mix of theory, case-study analysis and practical skill development – in this case, developing skills associated with the design and delivery of processes for constructive conflict engagement.

Students will take 60 credits of modules including one chosen option:

Table 2: Semester 1 Modules

| Mod. Code | Module Title | Credit | Level | Selection |
|-----------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|--------|--------|-----------|
| PES7036-B | Applied Conflict Research | 20 | FHEQ 7 | Core |
| PES7064-B | Theories and Practices of Conflict Resolution | 20 | FHEQ 7 | Core |
| PES7048-B | Security and Development in Fragile and Conflict Affected Areas | 20 | FHEQ 7 | Option 1 |
| PES7065-B | Social-Ecological Systems and Crises | 20 | FHEQ 7 | Option 2 |
| PES7051-B | Studying Peace in a Changing World | 20 | FHEQ 7 | Option 3 |

Semester 2 (January)

This semester extends the practical, applied dimension of the programme via the core module **Creative Practice in Conflict Engagement and Peacebuilding**. This opens up an exploration of creative approaches to peace, conflict and social justice work and provides an opportunity to deepen skills for reflective practice. Please note that while all optional modules run subject to student numbers, the Africa Study Visit will only run when it is safe and viable to do so.

Students will take 60 credits of modules including two chosen options:

Table 3: Semester 2 Modules

| Mod. Code | Module Title | Credit | Level | Selection |
|-----------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|--------|-----------|
| PES7063-B | Creative Practice in Conflict Engagement and Peacebuilding | 20 | FHEQ 7 | Core |
| PES7041-B | Gender, Conflict and Development | 20 | FHEQ 7 | Option 1 |
| PES7045-B | Natural Resource Governance | 20 | FHEQ 7 | Option 2 |
| PES7046-B | Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding | 20 | FHEQ 7 | Option 3 |
| PES7053-B | Terrorism and Political Violence | 20 | FHEQ 7 | Option 4 |
| PES7043-B | Middle East Politics and Security Dynamics | 20 | FHEQ 7 | Option 5 |
| PES7069-B | Politics, Security and Development in South Asia | 20 | FHEQ 7 | Option 6 |
| PES7034-B | Africa Study Visit | 20 | FHEQ 7 | Option 7 |
| PES7062-B | Environment, Trafficking and Crime: Transnational Issues and International Governance | 20 | FHEQ 7 | Option 8 |

Dissertation

The programme culminates with research and preparation of a substantial dissertation project on a subject of the student's choice (relating to the Programme's aims and learning objectives). This is a major opportunity for students to research and prepare a substantial scholarly analysis of a question or topic they are particularly interested, and to tailor their degree towards a specialism that may help them in their future careers.

The preparation and submission period for the dissertation will vary depending on the student's route (September or January entry, with or without placement) and mode of study (full-time or part-time). For all routes, the main period of work on the dissertation will be after two semesters of teaching. For routes that involve placements, it will be after those are completed. All students will be supported in their dissertation work by an academic supervisor.

Table 4: Core Dissertation Module

| Module Code | Module Title | Credits | Level | Study Period | Programme Started |
|-------------|--------------|---------|--------|--------------|-------------------|
| PES7040-E | Dissertation | 60 | FHEQ 7 | Full Year | September |
| PES7040-E | Dissertation | 60 | FHEQ 7 | NS Year | January |

Placement Opportunities

For students on the 15-month full time or 27-month part time routes that include voluntary placement/internship, the programme includes successful completion of a voluntary placement or internship of up to three months. This normally takes the form of an internship in another organisation and can be either undertaken in the UK or abroad. Students may use their placement period and experience to inform and shape their dissertation.

Planning for the placement/internship starts several months in advance. Students are required to complete a form detailing their proposed activities and obtain permission from the Department 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.

Table 5: FHEQ Level 7 Placement Module

| Mod. Code | Module Title | Credit | Period | Route |
|-----------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|---------|----------------------|
| PES7023-Z | Professional Experience (Rotary Peace Fellows Applied Field Experience) | 0 | NS Year | Rotary Peace Fellows |
| PES7056-Z | Voluntary placement/ internship | 0 | NS Year | All other students |

Study Abroad

As well as or instead of the Africa Study Visit in Semester 2, 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.

Further information about general and Faculty-specific placement and study abroad opportunities is available, visit:

<https://www.bradford.ac.uk/careers/jobs/internships-and-placements/>

<https://www.bradford.ac.uk/study/abroad/>

Assessment, Continuation and Award Regulations

This programme follows the Assessment, Continuation and Award regulations published on the University's website (<https://www.bradford.ac.uk/media-v8/aeo/regulations/Regulation-9-Postgraduate-Taught-Assessment-Continuation-and-Award-1.0b.pdf>) for postgraduate courses (Regulation 9).

Achievable Awards

Students will be eligible to exit with the award of **Postgraduate Certificate in Peacebuilding and Conflict Resolution** 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 Peacebuilding and Conflict Resolution** 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 Peacebuilding and Conflict Resolution** if they have successfully completed at least 180 credits and achieved the award learning outcomes.

Admission Requirements

Information in this document is for the contemporary recruitment cycle and was accurate at time of publication. The current tariff and accepted qualifications for entry onto the programme is published at the online course page: <https://www.bradford.ac.uk/courses/pg/peacebuilding-and-conflict-resolution>

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 students' experiences.

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 Functional 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 welcomes 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: <https://www.bradford.ac.uk/disability/>