

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

Course Record Information	
Name and level of final & intermediate Awards	MA in International Liaison and Communication Postgraduate Diploma in International Liaison and Communication Postgraduate Certificate in International Liaison and Communication PG Certificate of Special Study
Awarding Body	University of Westminster
Location of Delivery	Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities – 309 Regent Street
Mode of Study	Full Time or Part Time
UW Course Code	ILCPILC
JACS Code	L250
QAA Subject Benchmarking Group	
Professional Body Accreditation	N/A
Date of initial course approval/last review	2002/2012
Date of Programme Specification	2012

Admissions Requirements

Successful applicants are normally graduates who have a good first degree (2.1 within the UK) or equivalent from a recognised institution. Applications from non-graduates with at least five years demonstrable relevant work experience are considered. Such non-graduate applicants are required to provide evidence of their ability to undertake academic study at this level; this could be in the form of references from reliable sources, a work-experience portfolio, or examples of publications, or audio or video recordings.

All applicants must complete an MA International Liaison Communication application form and supply two appropriate references (academic and/or professional.) Applicants are expected to:

- explain adequately their reasons for wishing to undertake this specific postgraduate course of study;
- describe ways in which the attainment of the MA in International Liaison and Communication will enhance their professional development;
- relate the course to their previous study and/or personal and professional experiences.

Applicants are required to show competence in both written and spoken English to the University standard. International students will be required to have obtained one of the following (other equivalent English language qualifications may be accepted):

- GCSE or GCE O Level at grade C;
- British Council/Cambridge International English Language Testing Service (IELTS) minimum score of 6.5 in each tested component;
- American Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) score of 600 and Test of Written English (TWE) score of 4.5. The minimum overall score for the computer-based test is 250;
- Cambridge Proficiency Test in English grade C.

In addition to the above, the applicant's competence in English may be determined through interview. Should remedial study be required to bring a candidate's literacy skills to the University standard, they may be required to take an appropriate module from the University's English summer school modules. In such cases, if the required standard were reached in that module, then the applicant would be accepted onto the MA.

The course requires bi-lingual communication skills; therefore applicants must demonstrate that their second language is of a high enough standard to allow them to complete the course successfully - for example, competence of at least C1 in the Common European Framework of Reference. The applicant's competence in their second language may be determined through interview.

Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL) and Prior Experiential Learning (APEL)

The University operates a system of awarding credit for prior learning, either accredited (APCL) or experiential (APEL), which may contribute up to a maximum of 50% of the credits required for an award. If students think their prior experiential learning (e.g. work experience) or accredited learning (e.g. other study they may have undertaken) may qualify them for accreditation and thereby exemption from one or more modules they should contact their Course Leader, who will refer their application to the APL Committee

a. APL

In respect of accredited prior learning, the student will be required to submit specific evidence (such as original transcripts and syllabuses) which will be considered by the Course Leader, or their nominee. Specific credit towards the programme may be awarded for material sufficiently similar in content to a currently provided module to be considered to fulfil the requirements for that module or for prior qualifications, not related to a specific module, which are considered to have met the aims of the Course as a whole. Accreditation for prior learning will be given towards the Certificate, Diploma (or the equivalent taught component of the Masters programme) to students who can provide evidence of having successfully completed a postgraduate programme elsewhere which meets some of the aims of the course. A number of students who come to DAL's programmes have already obtained postgraduate diplomas in other institutions.

The Course Leader and Course Team, who already take the prime responsibility for admissions, will make judgements on whether the accrediting institution in question can be considered equivalent in standing to the University. Students are asked to supply course outlines of their previous programmes, including syllabuses. In some cases, such as where the prior learning took place several years earlier, or where the information supplied is incomplete for good reasons, it may be necessary to supplement the above with a viva.

The maximum number of credits, which a student may obtain by APL or APEL combined, should be no more than 40 credits for non MODLEB applicants; however 80 credits will be awarded to MODLEB Diploma holders and 60 to holders of the Advanced Certificate. APL or APEL is not given for the core Bi-lingual Presentation or the Dissertation. A brief description of the source of the credits awarded, and the number, will be recorded for each student and included in the data presented to the Examination Board.

b. APEL

In respect of prior experiential learning (APEL) the Course Leader will either allocate the student with a Mentor, or will perform this role themselves. The Mentor will assist the student in making their claim and will then submit it, together with their assessment of it, to a second assessor who will be a member of the Course Team, for an independent assessment. Once the second assessment has been made, the assessors make a joint agreed report to the University-wide APEL Assessment Board. It is the Board which makes the final assessment of what credit, if any, should be awarded to the student in respect of prior experiential learning.

The mentor will make it clear to the student that APEL is awarded, not for experience as such, but for the quality of learning from experience that he/she can demonstrate. It will be explained that the first task is to identify the relevant experience, and then to organise it in a form suitable for submission for assessment. The three stages are: identification of what was learned, writing a clear statement of this, and collecting and collating supporting evidence.

The method of presentation is the student portfolio. Students present a written account of the experience they have undertaken and demonstrate the learning they have gained from this by enumerating the knowledge and skills, which they have acquired.

Students must demonstrate that such learning and skills meet at least some of the general aims of the International Liaison and Communication programme as set out in the Student Handbook. Students will be required to state their learning in as much detail as possible, particularly with reference to the level of competence, which they have attained. The portfolio should be supported by documentary evidence where possible; for instance, students might be asked to provide copies of reports or briefing papers which they have prepared, where these are not confidential. Supportive letters from employers should be included where possible.

Assessment

Each submission for APEL will go first to academic assessor(s), who will be member(s) of the Course Team other than the mentor. There will be more than one academic assessor for the course. The academic assessor(s) will interview the student, on the basis of the submitted portfolio, and will check at the interview the accuracy of the student's claim, whether the learning has been retained, and ensure that the learning does in fact result from the experience stated. The academic assessors (at least two) will make a recommendation on the number of credits to be awarded to a sub-committee of the Examination Board, which normally includes, Dean of Faculty, Head of DAL and the Course Leader.

Timing

Normally, the actual process of preparing the portfolio with the guidance of the mentor will take place in semester one for those who enrolled in September and in semester two for those who enrolled in February. The portfolios will need to be ready for submission by the end of the relevant semester. The assessment procedure will take place at the end of each semester and students will be notified of the results before embarking on the second part of their programme.

Any credit awarded for prior certificated or experiential learning will be notified to the Conferment Board. Until a student who has applied for APCL/APEL has been formally advised of the outcome of their application for credit, they should register for and participate in their normal programme of modules, including any modules for which they are seeking credit. For further details, please refer to the full regulations governing APL, which appear in Section 4 of the *Handbook of Academic Regulations*.

Aims of the course

The MA in International Liaison and Communication programme is designed for professionals and aspiring professionals in areas such as international and multinational organisations and institutions, governmental and non-governmental organisations, and those who want to work in public diplomacy. It can be applicable to specific interest groups such as: bilingual liaison officers, foreign correspondents, personnel from international agencies and NGOs, personnel working in the international section of enterprises and graduates aspiring to a career in International Liaison and Communication.

The requirements for success on the course and in professional life range far beyond the mere ability to know two languages well; this is just a precondition for entry to the course. A liaison professional will play a number of roles to facilitate successful communication, in advocacy, mediation and conflict resolutions as well as representatives and advisers.

This requires extensive cultural, procedural and organisational knowledge as well as an understanding of specific areas that affect international communication such as how information is framed in the media and foreign policy analysis.

The liaison professional must also have extensive knowledge and understanding of world events and the ability to analyse how events might impact on the interaction between two individuals, or how information might need to be framed/reframed to achieve successful communication.

The Course is designed to help students develop potential professional specialisms and enhance their communication skills within an appropriate conceptual framework and equip with the necessary knowledge and competencies to be an effective international communicator.

Employment and Further Study Opportunities

Today's organisations need graduates with both good degrees and skills relevant to the workplace, i.e, employability skills. The University of Westminster is committed to developing employable graduates by ensuring that:

- Career development skills are embedded in all courses
- Opportunities for part-time work, placements and work-related learning activities are available to students
- Staff continue to widen and strengthen the University's links with employers in all sectors, involving them in curriculum design and encouraging their participation in other aspects of the University's career education and guidance provision
- Staff are provided with up-to-date data on labour market trends and employers' requirements which will inform the service delivered to students.
- MA ILC is intended to develop both a knowledge base in, various paradigms of international communication, information presentation and handling in a variety of contexts from the diplomatic field to international media, intelligence and security, and international NGOS. It also aims to enhance students' competencies in handling information across and between languages and cultures and in various professional settings. Students will have the training and preparation to make significant contributions in their professional context as high ranking officials, managers and researchers. Below are a series of possible entrants, the pathways they might choose and the modules they might take on the course:

Student A

Student A is a recent graduate in international relations, politics, or related discipline. They are also proficient in two or more languages, including English. Their desire is to progress to work within a European context, either for an EU institution or for an NGO or lobbying agent. In addition to the core modules, student A would take: EU Studies, Intercultural Communication and Information and Media Studies.

Student B

Student B is a language graduate with a background in interpreting and translation. They wish to extend the range of their competencies so as to compete in an increasingly narrow freelance market, being able to represent international organisations as well as facilitate communication between them. In addition to the core modules student B would take: Intercultural Communication, Information and Media studies and Foreign Policy Analysis.

Student C

Student C comes from a media and journalism background in their own country and wishes to enhance their expertise in an international context, either to return to their profession in a different capacity or to work in an international organization. In addition to the core modules Student C would take: Intercultural Communication, Information and Media studies and Foreign Policy Analysis.

Student D

Student D comes from a professional background working in a junior capacity for a state organization, or is someone aspiring to do so. Their aim is to further their career and promotion opportunities within their own state institutions. In addition to the core modules, Student D would take, Foreign Policy Analysis, Intelligence and National Security and Information and Media Studies.

Student E

Student E is a confident linguist who is unsure what profession to go into, but who would like to continue using their languages actively. Through the study on the course they become interested in various issues that affect the international community and gravitate towards working in the NGO sector. In addition to the core modules student E would take: Intercultural communication, Information and Media Studies and Foreign Policy Analysis (or EU studies, depending on where the NGOs they were interested in operate).

Student F

Student F arrives on the course with a particular interest in social issues. They may have worked in this area in their own country either professionally or as a volunteer. Their aim is to further their own career opportunities within the international NGO sector. In addition to the core modules, student F would take, Information and Media Studies, Intercultural Communication and Foreign Policy Analysis.

Student G

Student G comes from a commercial background, either as a graduate in business studies or related field, or through professional experience. Their aim is to enhance their profile to be able to operate as a global player within their chosen profession. In addition to the core modules, student G would take Information and Media Studies, Intelligence and National Security and Intercultural Communication.

Course Learning Outcomes

Learning outcomes are statements on what successful students have achieved as the result of learning. The threshold statements of achievement are linked to the knowledge, understanding and skills that a student will have gained on successfully completing a course.

Knowledge and Understanding

Graduates of the MA ILC will have

- Reflected and reassessed their personal contribution to their particular profession, chosen profession or chosen field of expertise

- Contributed to discussions on issues such as intercultural communication, intelligence and security, policy analysis and image projection in the fields of international communication with a focus on public diplomacy.
- Undertaken research in specific areas of professional interest.
- Applied skills and techniques of analysis to other professional areas
- Placed their own experiences within a conceptual framework constructed from the plurality of developments and issues;
- A sophisticated understanding of current theoretical positions and debates;
- Prepared themselves for further independent learning in their professional areas.
-

Specific Skills

Graduates of the MA will acquire a range of advanced analytic and critical skills such as:

- The development of research skills in International Liaison and Communication (including project formulation and planning; selection and application of appropriate methodology; the design and implementation of fieldwork);
- The analysis of the roles of liaison and communications personnel within state, non-governmental and international organisations.
- An informed response to the role of intercultural competence in international communication
- The review and development of appropriate bilingual communications techniques
- Techniques of textual analysis
- Enhanced understanding of the input from specific professional subject areas
- Scholarly skills appropriate to the discipline, including accurate citation of sources and use of bibliographic conventions.

Key Transferable skills

Graduates of the MA will:

- Be able to reflect on and assess their own role in and contribution to their professional area of expertise;
- Be prepared to contribute to discussion and policy-making on relevant issues;
- Be prepared for further, independent learning in their professional area of expertise;
- Know how to continue their own research in an academic or professional context in a chosen area of interest.
- Have further developed advanced skills in effective oral and written communication and argument.

Teaching, Learning and Assessment Methods

The MA ILC draws on the professional expertise of specialists who undertake or have undertaken the future activities of the students, as well as the informed input of academic applied linguists. The relevant areas of the curriculum are presented in different ways, and course participants can therefore expect a wide variety in teaching styles, including lectures, workshops, task-based group work, field work, presentations by course participants, and visits by outside guests. This variety of teaching styles reflects the range of topics covered, the range of learning styles among the course participants, and the demands of the coursework and examinations.

Lectures

Lectures are generally the presentation of a theme or topic by a specialist, followed by questions and clarification, leading to analytical discussion and further reading and private study. Much of the theoretical content of the MA ILC is delivered in lectures; the content of lectures should inform and influence course participants' other work, such as their projects, dissertation and practical work in examinations.

Workshops

Workshops analyse issues of academic interest and produce practical outcomes appropriate to the topic. Workshops also form a major part of the skills enhancement areas of the course. The results of workshops can be directly relevant to a course participant's current or future work, but the whole group can benefit from understanding the processes which led to these outcomes.

Task-based group work

Task-based group work requires the completion of a specific assignment by a group of course participants, following a brief given by a lecturer. The assignment will spring from the module content, and is decided by the staff or by the course participants in consultation with the staff.

Presentations by course participants

Presentations by course participants are an essential part of MA ILC. They occur throughout the course in different modules as part of the normal classwork. For one module a simulated public briefing and presentation, made bilingually with questions, answers and discussions, forms the basis of the assessment.

Visiting experts

Distinguished experts contribute to the MA ILC programme of lectures and workshops. These guests are normally professionals in the relevant areas or academics with an interest in the subject matter.

Simulation Exercises

A number of simulation exercises organised every year and students will be required to participate.

Assessment and Feedback**Assessment**

Formal assessment on the MA ILC is carried out through a combination of coursework and examination. The exact configuration of the assessment will depend on the module you are taking (see detailed module descriptions). Below is a summary of the kinds of activities involved in assessment on the programme:

Coursework

Coursework can be varied, reflecting the different topics covered in the course and the variety of ways in which the curriculum is presented. Writing tasks range from reports to written summaries, commentaries and critiques. Other activities include data-analysis, media presentations, and role-plays. The basic principles of coherent discourse presentation in speech, writing or electronic form informed by an understanding of theory and the application of best practice applies to all coursework.

An indicative list of types of coursework includes:

Essay

Written in good continuous prose, an essay presents your views on the given topic with academic arguments and citations from authoritative sources, which are listed in a bibliography.

Critical review

A critical review presents your evaluation of a body of knowledge or set of materials, which are chosen for you or by you. The materials you are evaluating may well be the sort of sources used as citations in essays and other coursework. The review you write is informed by your academic knowledge.

Commentary

A commentary is an academic statement about a piece of practical work, in which you show how your academic training informs your views of the source materials.

Report

In a report you give your account of an event such as an investigation, lesson or activity, in which you show how your academic training informs your views of the event.

Data analysis

An analysis of data must be carried out according to academic principles of rigour, sufficiency and necessity.

Audio-visual presentations

Your coursework could itself be an audio-visual or IT presentation. Instead of submitting work, you present it live, for example, to camera or in a seminar room.

Original research

Whatever form the original research takes, and however it is presented, it must always be informed by academic thinking and be accompanied by a reference bibliography.

Group work assignments

For some assignments, students may work in groups, each individual receiving a mark derived from the mark given for the work by the whole group.

Feedback

The MA International Liaison and Communication focuses on the practical communication skills and strategies needed in a range of professional situations as well as how these are informed by relevant theories. Some concepts and their applications in the field of communication need to be learned and mastered through practice. Such activities are carried out on a regular basis in classes and feedback is delivered on these. Whilst this feedback does not form part of formal assessment it is a fundamental part of the instruction on the course. These activities include:

Classroom role-plays and simulations

Presentation rehearsals

Debates

Delivering speeches

Reflection

Students are asked to reflect on their own performances and those of their colleagues either through group or class discussion or in written form. This is a fundamental part of building the skill of personal reflection as a lifelong learning skill in the professional environment as well as being training for components of the final assessment in some modules.

You will receive feedback from your tutors on both your performance and your reflections both in class and through tutorial where appropriate. Exchanges and presentations may be recorded on audio and video. These may also be used as part of the feedback.

Examinations

One of the assessment components in a module may be an examination. These will either take the form of a formal written paper or the simulation of a spoken interaction with the attendant written documentation.

Course Structure

This section shows the core and option modules available as part of the course and their credit value. To gain the award students have to gain 180 credits in total.

Core Modules: (Students have to take these modules)

SMIL700	International Communication (20 credits)
1MIL7A5	International Liaison (20 credits)
SMIL7A6	Research Project – Bi-lingual Presentation, (20 credits)
1MIL7A7	Dissertation (60 credits)

Students complete their 180 credits with 3 more modules chosen from the optional modules. At least one of these modules has to come from option A

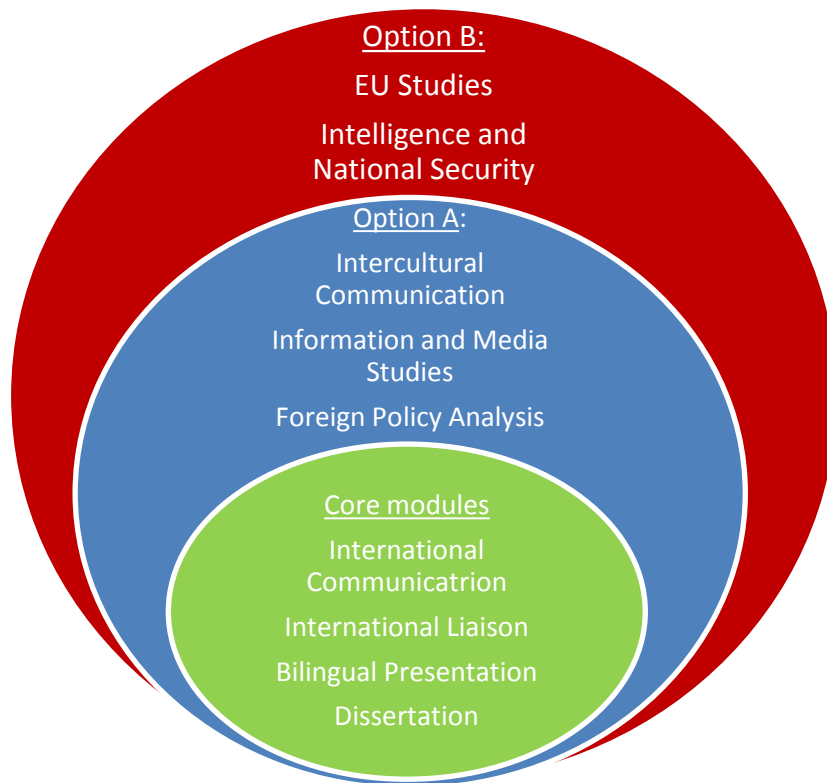
Option A Modules:

1MDS7B3	Foreign Policy Analysis (20 credits)
1MDS7A4	Information and Media Studies (20 credits)
1MDS7B2	Intercultural Communication (20 credits)

Option B Modules

1MDS7A7	European Union Studies (20 credits)
1MDS7B5	Intelligence and National Security (20 credits)

The structure of the course is shown in the chart below:



The duration and delivery of the modules in terms of semesters is shown in the table below

Semester 1	Semester 2
Compulsory – you have to take these	
1MIL7A7 Dissertation 60 credits	
SMIL7A6 Research Project - Bi-Lingual Presentation 20 credits	
1MIL7A3 International Communication 20 credits	1MIL7A5 International Liaison 20 credits
Option A – you have to take at least one of these	
1MDS7B2 Intercultural Communication 20 credits	
1MDS7A4 Information and Media Studies 20 credits	1MDS7B3 Foreign Policy Analysis 20 credits
Option B	
1MDS7A7 European Union Studies 20 credits	1MDS7B5 Intelligence and National Security 20 credits

NB: Not all option modules will necessarily be offered in any one year.

Postgraduate Diploma in ILC

Students study the three core modules (Bilingual Presentation, International Communication, International Liaison (20 credits each) and a further three other modules (20 credits each)

Postgraduate certificate in ILC

Students complete the bilingual presentation (20 credits) and two other modules (20 credits)

Postgraduate certificate of Special Study

This is awarded for the study of one module of specific personal or professional interest

Support for Students

On arrival, an orientation programme will introduce students to the staff responsible for the course, the site on which they will be studying, the Library and IT facilities and to the Site Administration. Students will be provided with the Course Handbook, which provides detailed information about the course. Students are allocated a personal tutor who can provide advice and guidance on academic matters.

Learning support includes the Library, which, across its four sites, holds print collections of 356,000 printed books, 29,000 print and e-journals and over 45,000 electronic resources (databases, e-journal and books). Access to all resources is facilitated through Library Search, a new online service.

There are over 3,500 computers spread over the four University sites available for students use. The University uses a Virtual Learning Environment called Blackboard where students can access course materials and communicate with staff and other students via message boards.

At University level, Services for Students provide advice and guidance on accommodation, financial and legal matters, personal counselling, health and disability issues, careers and the chaplaincy providing multi-faith guidance. The International Education Office provides particular support for international students. The University of Westminster Students' Union also provides a range of facilities to support all students during their time at the University.

Key Reference Points for the course

Quality Management and Enhancement

Course Management

The management structure supporting the Course is as follows:

Course Leader – responsible for all issues of course delivery and academic quality
Mr Rob Williams

Administration

Sally Clark
Faculty Registry Office

Course approval, monitoring and review

The course was initially approved by a University Validation Panel in 2002. The Panel included internal peers from the University and external subject specialists from academia and industry to ensure the comparability of the course to those offered in other Universities and the relevance to employers. Periodic Course Review helps to ensure that the curriculum is up-to-date and that the skills gained on the course continue to be relevant to employers.

The course is monitored each year by Faculty to ensure that it is running effectively and that issues that might affect the student experience have been appropriately addressed. Staff will consider evidence about the course, including the outcomes from each Course Committee, evidence of student progression and achievement and the reports from External Examiners, to evaluate the effectiveness of the course. The Site Academic Standards Group audits this process and the outcomes are reported to the Academic Council of the University, which has overall responsibility for the maintenance of quality and standards in the University.

Student involvement in Quality Assurance and Enhancement

Student feedback is important to the University and student views are taken seriously. Student feedback is gathered in a variety of ways. The most formal mechanism for feedback on the course is the Course Committee. Student representatives will be elected to sit on the Committee to represent the views of their peer group in various discussions. The University and the Students' Union work together to provide a full induction to the role of the Course Committee.

All students are invited to complete a Module Feedback questionnaire before the end of each module. The feedback from this will inform the Module Leader on the effectiveness of the module and highlight areas that could be enhanced. The University also has an annual Student Experience Survey, which elicits feedback from students about their course and University experience.

Students meet with Review Panels when the periodic review of the course is conducted to provide oral feedback on their experience on the course. Student feedback from Course Committees are part of the Faculty's quality assurance evidence base.

For more information about this course:

Rob Williams

Postgraduate admissions officer: Louise Mollison

R.Williams04@westminster.ac.uk

L.Mollison@westminster.ac.uk

Please note – This programme specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the course and the learning outcomes that a student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if s/he takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. This specification should be read in conjunction with the Course Handbook provided to students and Module Handbooks which provide more detailed information on the specific learning outcomes, content, teaching, learning and assessment methods for each module.