PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

Course record information

Name and level of final award:	**MA International Relations**
	MA International Relations & Democratic Politics
	MA International Relations & Security
	These are Bologna FQ-EHEA second cycle degree or diploma compatible.
Name and level of intermediate awards:	Postgraduate Diploma International Relations
	Postgraduate Certificate International Relations
	Postgraduate Diploma International Relations & Democratic Politics
	Postgraduate Certificate International Relations & Democratic Politics
	Postgraduate Diploma International Relations & Security
	Postgraduate Certificate International Relations & Security
Awarding body/institution:	University of Westminster
Teaching Institution:	University of Westminster
Status of awarding body/institution:	Recognised Body
Location of delivery:	University of Westminster, Regent Street
Language of delivery and assessment:	English
Mode, length of study and normal starting month:	1 year full-time, 2 years part-time
QAA subject benchmarking group(s):	N/A
Professional statutory or regulatory body:	N/A
Date of course validation/review:	2012
Date of programme specification approval:	2014/15
Course Leader:	Aidan Hehir

Course URL:	westminster.ac.uk/courses/postgraduate
Westminster Course Code:	PMPIR03F (FT International Relations) PMPIR03P (PT International Relations)
	PMPIR01F (FT International Relations and Democratic Politics) PMPIR01P (PT International Relations and Democratic Politics)
	PMPIR02F (FT International Relations and Security) PMPIR02P (PT International Relations and Security)
JACS code:	L250/L240/L200
UKPASS code:	P018532/P004393/P039982

Admissions requirements

There are standard minimum entry requirements for all undergraduate courses. Students are advised to check the standard requirements for the most up-to-date information.

For most courses a decision will be made on the basis of your application form alone. However, for some courses the selection process may include an interview to demonstrate your strengths in addition to any formal entry requirements.

More information can be found here: westminster.ac.uk/courses/postgraduate/how-to-apply

Aims of the course

Master's courses at the University provide curriculums supported by high quality research, scholarship, staff development and a distinctive research culture that promotes breadth and depth of intellectual enquiry and debate. In all our courses we seek to create a rich learning environment that is receptive to the needs and views of Masters students, encourages them to achieve their full potential, and promotes a scholarly commitment to open and critical enquiry in the fields of international relations, democratic politics and security studies.

Each Master's course has its own distinct aims:

The Masters of Arts in International Relations aims:
1. To enable students to acquire knowledge and understanding of international relations and to make use of the concepts, approaches and methods of International Relations theory to critically analyse the contested nature of global, regional and national politics.

2. To examine at the Masters level events, processes, ideas and institutions of international relations and evaluate the significance of topics including state sovereignty, state failures and foreign interventions; the changing patterns of insecurity, violence and conflict; the role of religion in politics with focus on Islam and transformations in the Middle East; the emergence of non-Western powers of China and India; shifts within the European Union and its role as an international actor; controversies in United States foreign policies; politics of international governance and development.

The Masters of Arts in International Relations and Democratic Politics aims:
1. To ensure that students acquire knowledge and understanding of democratic processes and institutions, and use the concepts, approaches and methods of democratic theory and analysis to develop a critical understanding of their contested nature and application both in the domestic and international realm.
2. To examine at the Master's level the changing nature and dynamics of democratic politics, and to facilitate the development of analytical skills that enable students to understand different democratic initiatives and practice within a wider historical and theoretical framework.
3. To examine discourses of democracy promotion and facilitate an advanced understanding of complex processes of international policy making.

The Masters of Arts in International Relations and Security aims:
1. To ensure that students acquire knowledge and understanding of international relations and security, and use the concepts and approaches of theories of international security to critically analyse and interpret dominant security issues.
2. To examine at the Masters level events, ideas and approaches key to the understanding of the international security agenda, and to evaluate their application, implications and future trajectory within a broader theoretical and historical framework.

Employment and further study opportunities

Today's organisations need graduates with both good degrees and skills relevant to the workplace, ie 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 widely 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.

Learning outcomes

Learning outcomes are statements on what successful students have achieved as the result of learning. These 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
Specific skills

By the end of the course, you would be in a position to critically evaluate at an advanced level the nature and significance of international political practice; theoretical approaches and debates in international relations, security and democratic studies; concepts such as power, agency, the state, democracy, security and the international system; the origins and development of the international political system, including contemporary changes underway; the analysis of processes by which the social, political, economic and cultural dimensions of

globalisation relate to international politics; and the analytical study of the roles played by political actors, political institutions, strategic behaviour, communicative action and persuasion, hypothesis testing and empirical analysis.

Key transferable skills
By the end of your Masters course, you should be able to use the skills of critical analysis, academic enquiry, decision making and other higher order capabilities, gained from your studies, to demonstrate the following transferable skills:

1. Work independently, demonstrating initiative, self-organization and time management;
2. Construct reasoned argument, synthesize relevant information and exercise critical judgement at an advanced level;
3. Undertake sustained research in the areas of international relations, democratic politics, security and related areas;
4. Manage and deliver well-structured, coherently argued, timely and clearly-presented oral and written reports and presentations at an advanced level;
5. Collaborate with others to achieve common goals;
6. Reflect on your own learning and seek and make use of constructive feedback;
7. Manage your own further learning self-critically.

Many of the skills that you will acquire on the Masters of Arts in International Relations, Masters of Arts in International Relations and Democratic Politics, Masters of Arts in International Relations and Security are specifically transferable to future employment or further research training, so that at the end of your course you will be able to:

- Use acquired knowledge and understanding to initiate your own or your employer's research projects in international relations, politics or related fields;
- Work independently and self-critically on research tasks in a well-organized manner and within time and informational constraints;
- Develop with confidence and competence a research strategy, working hypothesis, and methodology in international relations and politics more generally and practice research, hypothesis adaptation, and data collection;
- Work effectively in a group, either as a director or a member, able to negotiate differences of opinion, collaborate in specific tasks, and manage deadlines;
- Communicate effectively and fluently in speech and writing on a variety of topics in international politics at an advanced level;

Using Your Masters Degree: Our Graduates' Careers

Recent graduates now have jobs in governmental, intergovernmental and non-governmental organisations; the mass media; and a range of international business and cross-cultural organisations. Others are studying for higher degrees at other universities throughout the world.

Here are some examples of the ways in which our Masters courses have provided recent graduates with important knowledge, understanding and specific skills that they have been able to transfer to new professional career challenges.

Joyanto M. from India gained his MA in International Relations and Contemporary Political Theory (now entitled International Relations and Democratic Politics) in July 2010, having begun his studies in January 2007. He returned to India in 2010 to take up a post as research analyst for the Strategic Foresight Group, a strategic think tank in Mumbai that specialises in economics and trade, recession and water security. At the time, he wrote: 'I am excited about

the work. I am working on south Asia and Western Europe. Strategic Foresight Group is a prestigious think-tank with a high reputation. It works closely with our government in India as well as with various governments across the globe and the UN. I am also giving lectures on journalism in top colleges across the city here.' In 2011 he moved to the Harkisan Mehta Foundation Institute of Journalism and Mass Communication, also in Mumbai, and was appointed institute director. The Harkisan Mehta Institute has produced some of the top media professionals in India over the last 20 or so years.

Richard S. joined our MA in International Relations in September 2007 and gained a Distinction in October the following year. He is now working in the European Parliament's Office for Promotion of Parliamentary Democracy (OPPD). Richard writes: 'A central aspect of my job - and the one I am most involved in - is hosting short term delegations and longer term Democracy Fellows in the Parliament … [so that] through contact with their European parliamentary equivalents the parliamentarians and officials get to know how the EP deals with particular aspects of parliamentary life. My job mostly involves preparing programmes for these visits.'

'The different ways in which to view international events, which were taught in the MA - the 'neo-colonial' perspective; the understanding of foreign policy as the result of various inputs, including bureaucratic politics and presidential preferences (both very recognizable from my current position); the poststructuralist re-readings; etc - were most valuable. These general approaches can be re-applied to new issue areas… Even though my MA in IR is not necessary in my position, it was certainly necessary for me to get the position in the first place. It functions as a signal of my interest in the general subject area and my basic analytical ability. As part of this signalling, the name of the faculty, 'Centre for the Study of Democracy', was probably also of central importance.

Mona E-K from Egypt gained her MSc in Politics from Cairo University in 2006. She won the University President's Scholarship to study for her masters in International Relations and Contemporary Political Theory (International Relations and Democratic Politics) at Westminster. She graduated in July 2008 with a Merit. After graduation she obtained an internship at the International Institute for Strategic Studies in London working on the Gulf. She recently completed her PhD on Representation in Egyptian public spaces at Kings College at the University of London.

Learning, teaching and assessment methods

One of the characteristics of our Masters is their focus on theoretical and conceptual issues with reference to a wide range of debates in international relations, democratic theory, security studies and cognate disciplines. The courses thus emphasise the importance of theoretically and conceptually-based research methodologies that relate to empirical and normative analysis. To this end, the core modules aim to give you the theoretical and methodological tools you will need to pursue independent research on more specific topics. Within the classroom, the theoretically-based approaches developed by the module leaders as part of the teaching process provide students with ongoing examples of how critical analysis may be developed and applied.

In particular, 7PIRS017W International Relations: Theoretical Perspectives, 7PIRS027W Theories of International Security and 7PIRS005W Democratic Politics: Key Debates and Issues seek to give you a critical introduction to a range of major theoretical approaches and models relevant to their cognate field of study. The weekly discussions in these modules are almost exclusively oriented to clarifying, critiquing and applying the key theoretical and methodological perspectives of the cognate fields. The remaining core modules – 7PIRS001W

International Relations: Beyond International Relations, 7PIRS025W The Politics of Global Complexity, 7PIRS002W Contemporary Controversies in International Security and the taught group sessions in 7PIRS007W, Dissertation and Research Methods - offer you further critical guidance in applying key theoretical and methodological approaches to specific empirical questions. The theoretical and methodological training you will acquire across the core modules, and particularly in the Dissertation and Research Methods module, will give you a sound methodological basis to build on in the optional modules and the writing of your dissertation.

Training in the use and development of more specific research skills and methods aimed to help you write your assignments and dissertation is provided by the Dissertation and Research Methods module 7PIRS007W, which forms an integral component of DPIR's Masters programme. At the beginning of your course of studies, you will be given the Dissertation and Research Methods module programme, which will include a specific timetable of taught sessions in your first and second semester. As with other modules, all students are required to attend.

Teaching

The Department's teaching and learning approach is one whereby staff and students take seriously their individual and group development in terms of life-long learning. Our teaching and learning approach encourages students and staff to see themselves as part of a learning community and encourages staff to develop not only their research, but also the ways in which they communicate and share their knowledge with colleagues and students. Our underlying aim is to enhance the learning experience for students and staff and to maximise learning opportunities for students.

In line with Faculty policy, the Department is committed to:

1. encouraging and developing student-centred, independent and active learning, so that students are encouraged progressively to think, act and learn for themselves and to reflect upon their learning.

2. equipping its graduates with the knowledge, understanding and professional skills to enable them to make an effective contribution to society and to build meaningful lives and careers for themselves.

3. continuous and rigorous improvement in the quality of the teaching delivered by its staff and the learning opportunities provided for its students.

4. a culture of professionalism and continuing professional development of its staff and all their activities.

5. valuing teaching and learning as its core business and developing mechanisms and structures that recognise and reward excellence in teaching.

6. providing programmes which meet the needs of students in London and the wider community, and to operating a teaching, learning and assessment strategy which maximizes participation, retention and completion.

7. underpinning and informing teaching excellence by staff research, apprising students of the latest relevant research, and involving students in staff research where possible.

8. sharing knowledge, life experience and expertise as part of the curriculum, maximising the wide range of experiences present in our diverse and international student body.

9. continuous monitoring and evaluation of its teaching activities to ensure the quality of its provision

10. through the Faculty, to producing clear and measurable teaching and learning targets annually, which actuate our teaching and learning principles.

Assessment

The overall approach to assessment reinforces the philosophy, syllabuses and teaching strategy of the Masters Programme. In designing our assessment strategy, we purposely rejected traditional exams as not offering the best means by which we could assess higher order analytical, diagnostic, comprehension, imaginative, and critical skills; and because they might discriminate against students unfamiliar with the British higher education system. In lieu, we have designed sensitive methods of continual assessment that better meet course aims and objectives.

Continual assessment methods include delivering written project work, marked oral and written presentations, book reviews, essays, and the dissertation.

Course structure

This section shows the core and option modules available as part of the course and their credit value. Full-time Postgraduate students study 180 credits per year.

Core modules are compulsory. They define a particular course of study and provide you with its theoretical and intellectual foundations. In each of our Masters courses, they place questions of international order and politics at the centre of analysis; ensure that you are able to acquire appropriate knowledge and understanding and are able to understand and use relevant concepts, approaches and methods and how these relate to other areas of academic enquiry. One core module is common to all three Masters degrees: 7PIRS007W Dissertation and Research Methods module. In this module you will work independently, under the supervision of a tutor, to apply the knowledge, understanding and skills gained from other modules to design a research strategy and methodology that includes the development, adaptation, and testing of a hypothesis or research question contextualised in existing research, and which leads to you executing and writing up a relatively advanced piece of research.

One limitation is imposed: On all three of our Masters degrees, you may submit your dissertation only when you have taken all other modules in your course of study.

Option modules allow you to choose from a list of related modules that reflect your particular interests.

MA International Relations (Full-time)

Module code	Module title	Status	UK credit	ECTS
7PIRS017W	International Relations: Theoretical Perspectives	Core	20	10
7PIRS001W	International Relations: Beyond International Relations	Core	20	10
7PIRS007W	Dissertation and Research Methods	Core	60	30
4 Option Modules (20 credits each) selected from the list below. *Students choose two option modules per semester.* *No restrictions apply.*				
7PIRS002W	Contemporary Controversies in International Security	Option	20	10
7PIRS003W	Controversies in United States Foreign Policies	Option	20	10
7PIRS005W	Democratic Politics: Key Debates and Issues.	Option	20	10
7PIRS006W	Development Theories, Policies and Practices	Option	20	10
7PIRS024W	European Union as an International Actor.	Option	20	10
7PIRS010W	Global Change: Toward a Non-Western Order?	Option	20	10
7PIRS029W	Globalisation, Democratisation and Post Authoritarian Transition	Option	20	10
7PIRS012W	Governance of the European Union	Option	20	10
7PIRS018W	Islam and Politics in the Middle East	Option	20	10
7PIRS025W	Politics of Global Complexity: Rethinking Governance, Power and Agency	Option	20	10
7PIRS021W	Policy Governance and Democracy: International Perspectives	Option	20	10
7PIRS022W	Postcolonial International Relations: Theories and Concepts	Option	20	10
7PIRS023W	Regional Dimensions of Energy Security	Option	20	10
7PIRS011W	Global Politics of Energy and Environmental Change	Option	20	10
7PIRS026W	The State Politics and Violence	Option	20	10
7PIRS027W	Theories of International Security	Option	20	10

MA International Relations & Democratic Politics (Full-time)				
Module code	**Module title**	**Status**	**UK credit**	**ECTS**
7PIRS025W	The Politics of Global Complexity: Rethinking Governance, Power and Agency	Core	20	10
7PIRS005W	Democratic Politics: Key Debates and Issues.	Core	20	10
7PIRS007W	Dissertation and Research Methods	Core	60	30
4 Option Modules (20 credits each) selected from the list below. *Students choose two option modules per semester.* *No restrictions apply.* Students who have no background in International Relations are strongly advised to choose International Relations: Theoretical Perspectives as an option module.				
7PIRS002W	Contemporary Controversies in International Security	Option	20	10
7PIRS003W	Controversies in United States Foreign Policies	Option	20	10
7PIRS006W	Development Theories, Policies and Practices	Option	20	10
7PIRS024W	European Union as an International Actor.	Option	20	10
7PIRS010W	Global Change: Toward a Non-Western Order?	Option	20	10
7PIRS029W	Globalisation, Democratisation and Post Authoritarian Transition	Option	20	10
7PIRS012W	Governance of the European Union	Option	20	10
7PIRS017W	International Relations: Theoretical Perspectives	Option	20	10
7PIRS001W	International Relations: Beyond International Relations	Option	20	10
7PIRS018W	Islam and Politics in the Middle East	Option	20	10
7PIRS021W	Policy Governance and Democracy: International Perspectives	Option	20	10
7PIRS022W	Postcolonial International Relations	Option	20	10
7PIRS023W	Regional Dimensions of Energy Security	Option	20	10
7PIRS011W	Global Politics of Energy and Environmental Change	Option	20	10
7PIRS026W	The State Politics and Violence	Option	20	10
7PIRS027W	Theories of International Security	Option	20	10

MA International Relations & Security (Full-time)				
Module code	**Module title**	**Status**	**UK credit**	**ECTS**
7PIRS027W	Theories of International Security	Core	20	10
7PIRS002W	Contemporary Controversies in International Security: Intervention, Terrorism and Self Defence	Core	20	10
7PIRS007W	Dissertation and Research Methods	Core	60	30
4 Option Modules (20 credits each) selected from the list below. *Students choose two option modules per semester.* *No restrictions apply.* Students who have no background in International Relations are strongly advised to choose International Relations: Theoretical Perspectives as an option module.				
7PIRS003W	Controversies in United States Foreign Policies	Option	20	10
7PIRS005W	Democratic Politics: Key Debates and Issues.	Option	20	10
7PIRS006W	Development Theories, Policies and Practices	Option	20	10
7PIRS024W	European Union as an International Actor.	Option	20	10
7PIRS010W	Global Change: Toward a Non-Western Order?	Option	20	10
7PIRS029W	Globalisation, Democratisation and Post Authoritarian Transition	Option	20	10
7PIRS012W	Governance of the European Union	Option	20	10
7PIRS017W	International Relations: Theoretical Perspectives	Option	20	10
7PIRS001W	International Relations: Beyond International Relations	Option	20	10
7PIRS018W	Islam and Politics in the Middle East	Option	20	10
7PIRS021W	Policy Governance and Democracy: International Perspectives	Option	20	10
7PIRS023W	Regional Dimensions of Energy Security	Option	20	10
7PIRS011W	Global Politics of Energy and Environmental Change	Option	20	10
7PIRS022W	Postcolonial International Relations	Option	20	10
7PIRS025W	Politics of Global Complexity: Rethinking Governance, Power and Agency	Option	20	10

7PIRS026W	The State Politics and Violence	Option	20	10

MA International Relations (Part-time)

Credit Level 7				
Module code	**Module title**	**Status**	**UK credit**	**ECTS**
Year 1				
7PIRS017W	International Relations: Theoretical Perspectives	Core	20	10
7PIRS001W	International Relations: Beyond International Relations	Core	20	10
	***Plus** 2 Option Modules (20 credits each, one per semester). Same list and as for full time students.*			
Year 2				
7PIRS007W	Dissertation and Research Methods	Core	60	30
	***Plus** 2 Option Modules (20 credits each, one per semester). Same list and as for full time students.*			

MA International Relations & Democratic Politics (Part-time)

Credit Level 7				
Module code	**Module title**	**Status**	**UK credit**	**ECTS**
Year 1				
7PIRS025W	Politics of Global Complexity: Rethinking Governance, Power and Agency	Core	20	10
7PIRS005W	Democratic Politics: Key Debates and Issues.	Core	20	10
	***Plus** 2 Option Modules (20 credits each, one per semester). Same list and as for full time students.*			
Year 2				
7PIRS007W	Dissertation and Research Methods	Core	60	30
	***Plus** 2 Option Modules (20 credits each, one per semester). Same list and as for full time students.*			

MA International Relations & Security (Part-time)

Credit Level 7				
Module code	**Module title**	**Status**	**UK credit**	**ECTS**
Year 1				
7PIRS027W	Theories of International Security	Core	20	10
7PIRS002W	Contemporary Controversies in International Security: Intervention, Terrorism and Self Defence	Core	20	10
	***Plus** 2 Option Modules (20 credits each, one per semester). Same list and as for full time students.*			
Year 2				
7PIRS007W	Dissertation and Research Methods	Core	60	30
	***Plus** 2 Option Modules (20 credits each, one per semester). Same list and as for full time students.*			

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

Academic regulations
The current Handbook of Academic Regulations is available at westminster.ac.uk/academic-regulations

HOW WILL YOU BE SUPPORTED IN YOUR STUDIES?

Academic Support
Upon arrival, an induction programme will introduce you to the staff responsible for the course, the campus on which you will be studying, the Library and IT facilities, additional support available and to your Faculty Registry Office. You will be provided with the Course Handbook, which provides detailed information about the course. Each course has a course leader or Director of Studies. All students enrolled on a full-time course and part time students registered for more than 60 credits a year have a personal tutor, who provides advice and guidance on academic matters. The University uses a Virtual Learning Environment called Blackboard where students access their course materials, and can communicate and collaborate with staff and other students

Learning Support
The Academic Learning Development Centre supports students in developing the skills required for higher education. As well as online resources in Blackboard, students have the opportunity to attend Study Skills workshops and one to one appointments.

Learning support includes four libraries, each holding a collection of resources related to the subjects taught at that site. Students[1] can search the entire library collection online through the Library Search service to find and reserve printed books, and access electronic resources (databases, e-journals, e-books). Students can choose to study in the libraries, which have areas for silent and group study, desktop computers, laptops for loan, photocopying and printing services. They can also choose from several computer rooms at each campus where desktop computers are available with the general and specialist software that supports the courses taught at their Faculty. Students can also securely connect their own laptops and mobile devices to the University wireless network.

Support Services
The University of Westminster Student Affairs department provide advice and guidance on accommodation, financial and legal matters, personal counselling, health and disability issues, careers, specialist advice for international students and the chaplaincy providing multi-faith guidance. The University of Westminster Students' Union also provides a range of facilities to support students during their time at the University.

How do we ensure the quality of our courses and continuous improvement?
The course was initially approved by a University Validation Panel in 1998; 2008 and 2001. The panel included internal peers from the University, academic(s) from another university and a representative from industry. This helps to ensure the comparability of the course to those offered in other universities and the relevance to employers.

The course is also monitored each year by the Faculty to ensure it is running effectively and that issues which might affect the student experience have been appropriately addressed. Staff will consider evidence about the course, including the outcomes from Course Committees, evidence of student progression and achievement and the reports from external examiners, to evaluate the effectiveness of the course. Each Faculty puts in to place an action plan. This may for example include making changes on the way the module is taught, assessed or even how the course is structured in order to improve the course, in such cases an approval process is in place.

A Course review takes place periodically to ensure that the curriculum is up-to-date and that the skills gained on the course continue to be relevant to employers. Students meet with review panels to provide feedback on their experiences. Student feedback from previous years e.g. from Course Committees is also part of the evidence used to assess how the course has been running.

How do we act on student feedback?
Student feedback is important to the University and student views are taken seriously. Student feedback is gathered in a variety of ways.

- Through Course Committees students have the opportunity to express their voice in the running of their course. Student representatives are elected to Committee to expressly represent the views of their peer. The University and the Students' Union work together to provide a full induction to the role of the student representatives.

- Each Faculty also has its own Faculty Student Forum with student representatives; this enables wider discussions across the Faculty. Student representatives are also represented on key Faculty and university committees.

---

[1] Students enrolled at Collaborative partners may have differing access due to licence agreements.

- All students are invited to complete a 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 Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey or PTES which helps us compare how we are doing with other institutions, to make changes that will improve what we do in future and to keep doing the things that you value.