Royal Holloway, University of London
Course specification for a postgraduate award
MA Politics of Development (3105)

Section 1 – Introduction to your course
This course specification is a formal document, which provides a summary of the main features of your course and the learning outcomes that you might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if you take full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. Further information is contained in the College prospectus, and in various handbooks, all of which you will be able to access online. Alternatively, further information on the College's academic regulations and policies can be found here. Further information on the College's Admissions Policy can be found here.   The course is delivered over one year of full-time study (52 weeks) or up to five years of part-time study (260 weeks). Teaching takes place during the day over two terms from September to April. The dissertation is submitted in September. Whilst being a self-contained degree in its own right, each course provides suitable and recognised qualifications for entry to PhD study in the same or a closely related field.   While Royal Holloway keeps all the information made available under review, courses and the availability of individual modules, especially optional modules are necessarily subject to change at any time, and you are therefore advised to seek confirmation of any factors which might affect your decision to follow a specific course. In turn, Royal Holloway will inform you as soon as is practicable of any significant changes which might affect your studies.   The following is brief description for some of the most important terminology for understanding the content of this document: *Degree course* – Also referred to as 'course', this term refers to the qualification you will be awarded upon successful completion of your studies. 'Courses' were formerly known as 'programmes' at Royal Holloway. *Module* – This refers to the credits you will study each year to complete your degree course. Postgraduate taught degrees at Royal Holloway comprise 180 credits. On some degree courses a certain number of optional modules must be passed for a particular degree title. 'Modules' were formerly known as 'course units' at Royal Holloway.

Section 2 – Course details			
Date of specification update	November 2023	**Location of study**	Egham Campus
Course award and title	MA Politics of Development	**Level of study**	Postgraduate
Course code	3105	**Year of entry**	2024/25
Awarding body	Royal Holloway, University of London		
Department/ School	Department of Politics, International Relations and Philosophy School of Law and Social Sciences	**Other departments or schools involved in teaching the course**	N/A
Mode(s) of attendance	Full-time / Part-time	**Duration of the course**	One year (52 weeks) full-time Two to five years (104 - -260 weeks) part-time
Accrediting Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body requirement(s)	N/A	**For queries on admissions:**	https://royalholloway.ac.uk/applicationquery.
Link to Coursefinder for further information:	https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/studying-here/		

Section 3 – Degree course structure				

3.1 Mandatory module information
The following table summarises the mandatory modules which students must take in each year of study

Module code	Module title	Credits	FHEQ level	Module status (see section 6)
PR5430	Dissertation	60	7	MNC
PR5600	Introduction to Research Methods	20	7	MC
PR5952	Political Economy of Development	20	7	MNC

This table sets out the most important information for the mandatory modules on your degree course. These modules are central to achieving your learning outcomes, so they are compulsory, and all students on your degree course will be required to take them. You will be automatically registered for these modules. Mandatory modules fall into two categories; 'condonable' or 'non-condonable'.

In the case of mandatory 'non-condonable' (MNC) modules, you must pass the module to successfully graduate with a particular degree title, or before you can proceed to the next year of your course where studying part-time. In the case of mandatory 'condonable' (MC) modules, these must be taken but you can still progress or graduate even if you do not pass them (see Academic Regulations on condonable fails). Please note that although Royal Holloway will keep changes to a minimum, changes to your degree course may be made where reasonable and necessary due to unexpected events. For example; where requirements of relevant Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Bodies have changed and course requirements must change accordingly, or where changes are deemed necessary on the basis of student feedback and/or the advice of external advisors, to enhance academic provision.

3.2 Optional modules

In addition to mandatory modules, there will be a number of optional modules available during the course of your degree. The following table lists a selection of optional modules that are likely to be available. However, not all may be available every year. Although Royal Holloway will keep changes to a minimum, new options may be offered or existing ones may be withdrawn. For example; where reasonable and necessary due to unexpected events, where requirements of relevant Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs) have changed and course requirements must change accordingly, or where changes are deemed necessary on the basis of student feedback and/or the advice of External Advisors, to enhance academic provision.There may be additional requirements around option selection, so it is important that this specification is read alongside your department's Student Handbook, which you can normally access via Moodle.

Optional modules.

Module Title	Credits	Module Title	Credits
PR5601 Advanced Quantitative Methods	20	PR5602 Advanced Qualitative Methods	20
PR5954 International Relations of the Middle East	20	PR5957 Development Politics in Sub-Saharan Africa	20
Politics and International Relations Units exploring Elections, Campaigns and Democracy	20	Politics and International Relations Units exploring International Development	20
Politics and International Relations Units exploring International Public Policy	20	Politics and International Relations Units exploring International Relations	20
Politics and International Relations Units exploring International Security	20	Politics and International Relations Units exploring Political Communication	20
Politics and International Relations Units exploring Political Theory	20		20

3.3 Optional module requirements

The choice of modules a student can take is subject to the following rules:

- You must take either PR5601 or PR5602
- You must take at least one option from PR5954 and PR5957.
- You must take optional modules to a total value of 80 credits.
- Please note that not all optional modules run each year. The full list of modules available for the current academic year can be obtained from http://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/computerscience/.

Section 4 - Progressing through each year of your degree course

 For further information on the progression and award requirements for your degree, please refer to Royal Holloway's Academic Regulations.

Please note: all postgraduate taught students are required to take and pass the non-credit bearing Moodle-based Academic Integrity module SS1001 to be awarded. The pass mark for the module assessment is stated in the on-line Academic Integrity Moodle module. Students may attempt the assessment as often as they wish with no penalties or capping. Students who otherwise meet the requirements for award as stipulated in the College's Postgraduate Taught Regulations (Section 15: Consideration and classification of candidates for the award) but fail to pass the Moodle-based Academic Integrity module will not be awarded.

Progression throughout the year/s is monitored through performance in summative or formative coursework assignments. Please note that if you hold a Tier 4 (General) Student Visa and you choose to leave (or are required to leave because of non‐progression) or complete early (before the course end date stated on your CAS), then this will be reported to UKVI.

Part-time course structure

The part-time course normally lasts two years (104 weeks), beginning in September of year one. Part-time students normally complete their mandatory modules (except dissertation) and one option in the first year and take their remaining option modules in the second year, submitting their dissertation at the end of the second year.

Section 5 – Educational aims of the course

The aims of this course are to:

- to provide a systematic understanding and knowledge of theories, institutions, and practices in the disciplines of politics and international relations as they relate to the study of development in Africa, Asia and the Middle East;
- to encourage a critical awareness of current problems and developments in political science and international relations generally and in the specific sub-disciplines related to development and politics in the Third World;
- to provide theoretical insights and methodological techniques relevant to the creation and interpretation of knowledge in politics and international relations and to the critical evaluation of current research and advanced scholarship;
- to provide training in research techniques;
- to foster an independent learning ability required for continuing professional development and/or further academic research;
- to develop key communications, IT and management skills relevant for postgraduate work.

Section 6 – Course learning outcomes

**In general terms, the courses provide opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate the following learning outcomes. (*Categories – Knowledge and understanding (K), Skills and other attributes (S), and Transferable skills (*))*

1. An advanced knowledge and critical understanding of key concepts, theoretical debates, and developments in the fields of politics and international development **(K)**;
2. A sound knowledge of the texts, theories and methods used to enhance understanding of the issues, processes and phenomena associated with the fields of politics and international development **(K)**;
3. An advanced knowledge and critical understanding of research methods within the disciplines of politics and international development **(K)**;
4. Knowledge of advanced scholarship in the chosen area of the discipline to a level appropriate for a Masters degree **(K)**;
5. The ability to evaluate relevant critical, theoretical and contextual research at the forefront of the field **(S)**;
6. The ability to articulate knowledge and the understanding of texts, concepts and theories at an advanced level, demonstrating self-direction and originality **(S)**;
7. The ability to assess the nature and value of a wide variety of source materials – including, where appropriate, academic commentaries, research-based literature, official publications and statistics, journalistic sources, political biographies – and make effective use of such materials **(S)**;
8. The ability to develop their own lines of criticism and argument **(S*)**;
9. The ability to conduct research independently at an advanced level using traditional and electronic resources **(S*)**;
10. The ability to assess the merits of contrasting theories, explanations and policies **(S*)**;
11. The ability to develop reasoned and balanced arguments **(S*)**;
12. The ability to manipulate precise and intricate ideas, construct logical arguments and use technical terminology correctly **(S*)**;
13. The ability to deal with complex issues, both systematically and creatively, and make sound judgments **(S*)**;
14. The ability to identify, investigate, analyse, formulate and advocate solutions to problems **(S*)**;
15. The ability to communicate complex information and ideas effectively, both orally and in writing **(S*)**;
16. The ability to write up a substantial dissertation project, using the appropriate methodological and bibliographical skills **(S*)**.

Section 7 - Teaching, learning and assessment

Teaching and learning is delivered primarily by means of seminar discussions, informal lectures, oral presentations, guided independent research, and guided independent study. Assessment takes the form of various formative and summative assignments, all in the form of coursework submitted during the course. There are no exams. The final assignment for the course is a dissertation on a topic developed in consultation with an assigned supervisor. It is expected that the dissertation will be researched and written primarily in the summer months, although supervision and dissertation training will begin during the academic year. Full details of assessments, including submission schedules and marking criteria, can be found in the Course Handbook. Teaching and learning methods and specific assignments for each module are written into the various module outlines. Full details of individual modules can be obtained from the Department.

Section 8 – Additional costs

There are no single associated costs greater than £50 per item on this degree course.

These estimated costs relate to studying this particular degree course at Royal Holloway. General costs such as accommodation, food, books and other learning materials and printing etc., have not been included, but further information is available on our website.

Section 9 – Indicators of quality and standards

QAA Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) Level	7

Your course is designed in accordance with the FHEQ to ensure your qualification is awarded on the basis of nationally established standards of achievement, for both outcomes and attainment. The qualification descriptors within the FHEQ set out the generic outcomes and attributes expected for the award of individual qualifications. The qualification descriptors contained in the FHEQ exemplify the outcomes and attributes expected of learning that results in the award of higher education qualifications. These outcomes represent the integration of various learning experiences resulting from designated and coherent programmes of study.

QAA Characteristics Statement (Master's Degrees) – September 2015	https://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/quality-code/supporting-resources

Subject benchmark statements provide a means for the academic community to describe the nature and characteristics of courses in a specific subject or subject area. They also represent general expectations about standards for the award of qualifications at a given level in terms of the attributes and capabilities that those possessing qualifications should have demonstrated.

Section 10 – Further information

This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the course and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate when taking full advantage of the learning opportunities that are available. More detailed information on modules, including teaching and learning methods, and methods of assessment, can be found via the online module catalogue. The accuracy of the information contained in this document is reviewed regularly by the university and may also be checked routinely by external agencies.

Your course will be reviewed regularly, both by the university as part of its cyclical quality enhancement processes, and/or by your department or school, who may wish to make improvements to the curriculum, or in response to resource planning. As such, your course may be revised during the course of your study at Royal Holloway. However, your department or school will take reasonable steps to consult with students via appropriate channels when considering changes. All continuing students will be routinely informed of any significant changes.

Section 11 – Intermediate exit awards (where available)

You may be eligible for an intermediate exit award if you complete part of the course as detailed in this document. Any additional criteria (e.g. mandatory modules, credit requirements) for intermediate awards is outlined in the sections below.

Award	Criteria	Awarding body
PG Diploma	Passes in at least 120 credits, with fails of between 40% to 49% for up to 40 credits condonable (with the exception of any course specific requirements).	
PG Certificate	Passes in at least 60 credits with no condonable fails	

Section 12 - Associated award(s) with Banner Codes

MA Politics of Development (3104) PG Certificate Politics of Development (3106)	PG Diploma Politics of Development (3105)