



MA Peace, Resilience and Social Justice: Programme Specification

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

Academic Year:	2024/25
Degree Awarding Body:	The University of Bradford
Target award:	Degree of Master of Arts [Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) level 7]
Interim awards:	Postgraduate Diploma [FHEQ Level 7]; Postgraduate Certificate [FHEQ Level 7]
Programme Admissions:	September and January
Programme duration:	1 year full-time or 2 years part-time; with internship or placement, 15 months full-time or 27 months part-time
Date last approved by Faculty Board:	May 2022, December 2020

Please note: This programme specification has been published in advance of the academic year to which it applies. The curriculum may change, subject to the University's programme monitoring and review processes. Every effort has been made to ensure that the information is accurate at the time of publication, but changes may occur given the interval between publishing and commencement of teaching. Any change which impacts the terms and conditions of an applicant's offer will be communicated to them. Upon commencement of the programme, students will receive further detail about their course; any minor changes will be discussed and/or communicated at this point.

Minor Modification Schedule

1. June 2019: Module and curriculum changes
2. June 2020: January intake included. Additions of references to online learning and adjustments during the Covid pandemic
3. January 2021: Specification reformatted and made accessible. Added standard PG study abroad alternative.
4. April 2021: Further accessibility improvements
5. May 2021: Annual changes for 2021 academic year
6. May 2022: Annual changes for 2022 academic year
7. March 2023: Annual changes for 2023 academic year: Review and edits to make the document more user-friendly and improve accuracy re. different routes and times of entry.
8. May 2024: Annual review; updates to optional modules and electives for 2024/25 academic year.

Introduction

Our MA in Peace, Resilience and Social Justice is designed for those seeking an advanced understanding of the intersecting crises of climate change/ecological degradation, inequality and injustice, conflict and violence.

The programme critically examines how different actors are responding to these challenges, including efforts to rethink the assumptions and practices that shape our ways of life, public engagement, contentious collective action and practical efforts to design and create more resilient, sustainable and equitable communities.

We critically explore

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

This MA Programme 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, conflict and social justice 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 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.¹

The MA Peace, Resilience and Social Justice takes a distinctive approach to study, with an emphasis on exploring the connections and relationships between different issues. This integrative, interdisciplinary approach is particularly appropriate and important for understanding the complexities of many contemporary issues that bear on peace, resilience and social justice, and for thinking more clearly about the possibilities for social change. This exploration will also involve critical questioning of the meanings of key terms in the programme, including peace, resilience and social justice.

¹ Please note that off-campus learning activities may involve an extra cost.

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.

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

Programme Aims

This programme intends to enable students to develop advanced knowledge and understanding relating to the intersecting challenges of conflict, ecological crisis and inequality/injustice. The programme is designed to give students opportunities to:

- gain and apply an advanced understanding of key concepts used by academics, policymakers, practitioners and activists as they attempt to respond to these challenges.
- critically examine the ways in which these concepts are employed in different contexts and to different ends.
- engage in dialogue with each other and with academics and practitioners in this field about the values, assumptions and priorities they bring to this work, and about their implications for research and practice.
- develop a range of skills that will enhance their capacity to make positive contributions to building peace, resilience and social justice in different settings.
- pursue a pathway tailored to their own interests and priorities within a coherent and stimulating programme of study.

Programme Learning Outcomes

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

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

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

5. Recognise and be able to reflect critically on their own positionality, values and emotions and how these might bear on their academic and professional work.
6. Employ relevant skills and strategies to encourage constructive collaboration in informal, voluntary and professional contexts.
7. Develop a critical, ethical and reflective approach to practice, policy-based or activist interventions and understanding and assessing their implications in different cultural, geographic and socio-economic contexts.
8. 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.

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

9. Design, carry out and communicate the results of an independent dissertation project involving desk-based and/or applied research.

Learning and Teaching Strategy

Throughout the programme, students will be actively engaged in a diverse range of online and offline learning activities designed to develop their capacities for thoughtful analysis and reflective practice. These will include individual and group tasks that require students to apply theoretical concepts to real-world dynamics and scenarios. As such, the emphasis in teaching sessions will often be on active learning activities, with students undertaking reading and other preparatory work beforehand. This approach maximises opportunities

for discussion and feedback, whilst using selected inputs – such as short lectures, readings, or videos – to both frame and deepen the learning experience.

Building many and varied opportunities to engage with and learn from each other into the programme is integral to fostering an inclusive learning environment. Our approach to learning and teaching makes a conscious effort to encourage collaboration and honest dialogue and puts significant emphasis on the development of interpersonal and intercultural skills. Throughout, the curriculum is designed to encourage reflection on the relative (un)peacefulness of relationships, and this includes the interpersonal level and the wider structures in which interpersonal dynamics are situated. Reflections on power, inequality and privilege will open up difficult conversations about dynamics that can stand in the way of inclusion, while other parts of the curriculum explore the question of how constructive changes can be fostered and encouraged. Creating an inclusive and welcoming learning environment also involves appropriate design of the physical spaces and online spaces in which we teach.

There will be an emphasis on practice, feedback and reflection throughout the programme. Students will have opportunities to develop their own interests throughout the programme, e.g. via case studies chosen for study and assessment and the design and execution of their final dissertation project. In addition to student learning within modules, personal academic tutors will support individual students' academic development, helping them to analyse their learning needs, develop appropriate learning strategies and reflect on their progress.

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

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

While all of our assessment tasks 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.

Students will take the following compulsory taught modules:

- Studying Peace in a Changing World
- Social-Ecological Systems and Crises
- Creative Practice in Conflict Engagement and Peacebuilding

In the second semester, the core module opens up an exploration of creative approaches to peace, conflict and social justice work and provides an opportunity to deepen skills for reflective practice.

Across the two semesters, there are opportunities for students to tailor their own pathways through the programme via choosing options and/or an elective from a wide range of modules that are being offered within the Department and beyond (for optional modules, please see table below).

The programme culminates with a substantial dissertation project on a subject chosen by each student (relevant to the Programme's aims and learning objectives). This is a major opportunity for students not only to research and prepare a substantial scholarly analysis of a specialist area in which they are particularly interested, but also to demonstrate an advanced understanding of relevant policy and practitioner agendas and debates to help them to use this Masters degree to pursue careers in their preferred areas.

Semester 1 (September)

During semester 1 (September), students will study the core modules *Social-Ecological Systems and Crises: Concepts, Cases, Contestations* and *Studying Peace in a Changing World*.

These core modules provide an advanced understanding in two key areas. First, they develop knowledge and understandings of debates about the nature and priorities for peace studies in a changing world: how do trends like climate change, rising inequality and complex cycles of violence challenge or change our conceptions of peace, and of what it means to build peace? How should peace research and associated fields of practice respond? Second, they introduce key concepts for understanding complex social-ecological systems and crises and critically explore different discourses and practices of resilience and social justice.

In addition, students will select a further 20-credit optional module from the following choices:

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

Semester 2 (January)

During Semester 2 (January), the core modules are - *Creative Practice in Conflict Engagement and Peacebuilding* - opens an exploration of creative approaches to peace, conflict and social justice work and provides an opportunity to deepen skills for reflective practice.

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

In addition, students will select 2 optional modules from the following choices:

Module Code	Module Title	Module Type	Credit	Study period	FHEQ Level
PES7041-B	Gender, Conflict and Development	Option	20	Sem 2	7
PES7043-B	Middle East Politics and Security Dynamics	Option	20	Sem 2	7
PES7062-B	Environment, trafficking and crime: transnational issues and International Governance	Option	20	Sem 2	7
PES7046-B	Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding	Option	20	Sem 2	7
PES7034-B	Africa Study Visit	Option	20	Sem 2	7

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.

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

Placement and Study Abroad

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 can 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.

Students on the Rotary Peace Fellows route

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

All other students

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

Study Abroad

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

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

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

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

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

Assessment Regulations

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

Achievable Awards

- Students will be eligible to exit with the award of **Postgraduate Certificate in Peace, Resilience and Social Justice** if they have successfully completed 60 credits and achieved the award learning outcomes.
- Students will be eligible to exit with the award of **Postgraduate Diploma in Peace, Resilience and Social Justice** if they have successfully completed at least 120 credits and achieved the award learning outcomes.

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

Admission Requirements

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

Academic Admission Requirements

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

Language Competency

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

Access and Recognition of Prior Learning

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

If applicants have prior certificated learning or professional experience which may be equivalent to parts of this programme, the University has procedures to evaluate and recognise this learning in order to provide applicants with exemptions from specified modules or parts of the programme.

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