

Programme Specification

I. Programme Details

Programme title	Violence, Conflict & Development			
Final award (<i>exit awards will be made as outlined in the Taught Degree Regulations</i>)	BA	<input type="checkbox"/>	MA	<input type="checkbox"/>
	BSc	<input type="checkbox"/>	MSc	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Mode of delivery	Distance-learning	<input type="checkbox"/>		
	On-campus	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Professional body accreditation (<i>if applicable</i>)	n/a			
Academic year this specification was created	2016/17			
Dates of any subsequent amendments				

II. Programme Aims: What will the programme allow you to achieve?

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To provide a thorough analytical grounding in understanding of violence and conflict, especially relating to developing countries; 2. To encourage development of specialised knowledge of particular case studies, as well as overall trends.
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III. Programme Learning Outcomes: What will you learn on the programme?

There are four key areas in which you will develop:

Learning Outcomes: Knowledge	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Understand main theories of the origins, dynamics, and consequences of social violence and violent political conflict; 2. Knowledge of sources of data on incidence of civil war, military spending and trade, sexual violence, etc; 3. Awareness of main international institutional responses (analytical, policy and financial) to violence and conflict in developing countries; 4. An understanding of range of policy implications; combine theoretical knowledge with building up case study knowledge; 5. Around the knowledge and understanding through the core course, develop specialized knowledge and understanding through choice of other taught courses (e.g. in law/human rights, regional economics, political economy of development, etc.), dissertation, and case study project. 	
Typical Teaching Methods	Typical Assessment Methods
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are required to attend all classes, study extensively on their own and prepare non-assessed work regularly. Where appropriate lectures and seminars explore limitations of available data in conflict (and development) research, using the extreme case of conflict (collapsing registration systems and statistical services, politicization of information, etc.) to introduce critical thinking about sources and reliability of development data in general. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through unseen examinations, long essays, course work and a dissertation. In an innovation for SOAS, the core course of the MSc reduces the share of final grade (and the length) of the exam and introduces a case study project in which groups of 5/6 students are assessed as a group for their preparation and presentation of the case study.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through core course lectures and seminars plus assessed work. • Through lectures, seminars and assessed work for other taught courses and dissertation. Students have choices of taught courses (except the core course): they choose one of three 'development' courses (political economy of development; theory, policy and practice of development; anthropology of development); and they have a wide range of option courses from which to choose, in the development studies department and in other departments. Students form their own groups of five or six and through an iterative process with staff help select the group case studies they will carry out. 	
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Learning Outcomes: Intellectual (thinking) skills	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students should become precise and cautious in their assessment of evidence, and understand the strengths and weaknesses of different datasets, claims made on the basis of various kinds of evidence, and methodologies for arriving at substantive claims; 2. Students should question interpretations, however authoritative, and reassess evidence for themselves. They should also be able to engage in contemporary policy debates in relevant fields (e.g. on aid and conflict, on 'post-conflict' reconstruction policy in Afghanistan, Angola, Sri Lanka, etc.); 3. Students should develop an interest and confidence in thinking in interdisciplinary ways, drawing insights, questions and evidence from a variety of perspectives; 4. Students should be able to formulate research questions and to work independently towards addressing those questions. 	
Typical Teaching Methods	Typical Assessment Methods
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These are fostered in all courses offered in the Programme, in that all courses introduce information that needs to be assessed critically and demonstrate how conflicting interpretations arise from the same information. • Students are encouraged not simply to summarise evidence and arguments but through application of critical questioning to develop their own assessments of the relative value of a range of arguments/sources of evidence. • Through the structure and content of the core course, which has a core political economy identity but is interdisciplinary and draws on ideas and readings in history, economics, political science, anthropology, psychology, etc. • Students carry out independent dissertation work, including refining a broad 'topic' into a narrower, manageable and more precise research question/hypothesis. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through unseen examinations, course work, long essays and a dissertation; and in the core course through the group assessed case study project.

Learning Outcomes: Subject-based practical skills	
<p>The programme aims to help students with the following practical skills:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Awareness of data problems in developing countries, particularly in conflict affected countries, and on data problems specific to understanding social and political violence; 2. Awareness of different research methodologies, including case studies, quantitative analysis, surveys, etc. Development of skills in asking critical questions of commonly used datasets and evidence-based claims; 3. Understanding roots of conflicting estimates and interpretations. Knowledge of main relevant data sources. Write good essays and dissertations; 4. Retrieve, sift and select information from a variety of sources; 5. Present seminar papers; 6. Listen and discuss ideas introduced during seminars; 7. Practice research techniques in specialized research libraries and institutes and by drawing on data and analysis available on the web; 8. In the core course, work professionally in teams; 9. Develop initiative and capacity to define own dissertation research question/hypothesis, and to adjust hypotheses and approach in the light of work undertaken for the dissertation; 10. Reading regularly and rapidly a variety of types of report/paper, incorporating different types of evidence, methodology and disciplinary perspectives; 11. Understand unconventional ideas and question common evidence-based claims about social and economic development and especially about the relationships between development and violence/conflict; 12. Use a wide range of written and digital materials, in libraries and research institutes, of a kind and range that they will not have used as undergraduates. 	
Typical Teaching Methods	Typical Assessment Methods
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through the writing of long essays and dissertations. • Through essays, dissertation and core course group case study project. • Through regular seminar presentations. • Through seminar discussion. • Through independent work for dissertations. • Through group case studies. • Through work on own, departmental dissertation guidance notes and meetings, meetings with supervisor. • Through required regular readings for weekly seminar discussions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By unseen examination, dissertation, long essays and course work, and in core course through group assessed case study presentation.

Learning Outcomes: Transferrable skills	
<p>The programme will encourage students to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Communicate effectively in writing; 2. Structure and communicate ideas effectively both orally and in writing; and digest rapidly and effectively substantial amounts of reading; 3. Present material orally; 4. Develop capacity to work in teams. 	
Typical Teaching Methods	Typical Assessment Methods
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through long essays, course work and dissertation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through unseen examinations, dissertation, long essays and course work, and group case study.

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Through seminar presentations, discussions and essays.• Through demonstration in lectures, through discussion in seminars, through questions in exams.• Through preparation of group case study presentations and through supervised work on dissertations.• Classroom participation in seminars.• Group case study project work (involving division of labour, collective prioritization of issues/evidence, development of a common perspective and interpretation).	
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MSc Violence, Conflict & Development

	Dissertation
credits	60
module code	15PDSC999
module title	Dissertation in Development Studies
status	compulsory module

All MSc students in Development Studies are eligible to attend the one-term, non-assessed module Economics for Beginners, which introduces students to basic concepts in microeconomics, macroeconomics, development economics, and statistics and econometrics.

Taught Component
30
15PDSC001
Theory, Policy & Practice of Development
compulsory module

	Taught Component
credits	30
module code	15PDSC003
module title	Political Economy of
status	core module

OR
30
15PDSC002
Political Economy of
compulsory module

Taught Component
30
see list of departmental options
guided option*

Taught Component
30
see list of SOAS PGT open options
open option

OR
30
15PANC090
Anthropology of Development
compulsory module

*List of modules (subject to availability)

<http://www.soas.ac.uk/development/programmes/mscviolconfdev/>