

International Development by distance learning MSc/PGDip

Study from anywhere in the world with practitioners in government, civil society and the private sector, as well as with people new to development.

This programme is designed to provide students with an understanding of the evolution of thinking and practice in international development over the last fifty to sixty years.

Course details: [Details](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/postgraduate/courses/distance/govsoc/international-development.aspx?OpenSection=CourseDetailsTab) | [Modules](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/postgraduate/courses/distance/govsoc/international-development.aspx?OpenSection=Modules) | [Fees and funding](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/postgraduate/courses/distance/govsoc/international-development.aspx?OpenSection=FeesAndFunding) | [Entry requirements](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/postgraduate/courses/distance/govsoc/international-development.aspx?OpenSection=EntryRequirements) | [How to apply](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/postgraduate/courses/distance/govsoc/international-development.aspx?OpenSection=HowToApply)

Study here and find out why the University of Birmingham was awarded The Times and The Sunday Times University of the Year 2013-14 (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/news/latest/2013/09/20-sep-Birmingham-announced-as-University-of-the-Year.aspx>)

Course fact file

Type of Course: Continuing professional development, distance learning, taught

Study Options: Part time

Duration: MSc: 2 - 4 years; Postgraduate Diploma: 18 months - 4 years.

Start date: September

Contact

Got a question? [Find your answers here](http://bham.hobsons.co.uk/ask.aspx?cid=1223&did=24)

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[School of Government and Society](/schools/government-society/index.aspx)

[International Development Department \(IDD\)](/schools/government-society/departments/international-development/index.aspx)

Details

Course details: [Modules](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/postgraduate/courses/distance/govsoc/international-development.aspx?OpenSection=Modules) | [Fees and funding](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/postgraduate/courses/distance/govsoc/international-development.aspx?OpenSection=FeesAndFunding) | [Entry requirements](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/postgraduate/courses/distance/govsoc/international-development.aspx?OpenSection=EntryRequirements) | [How to apply](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/postgraduate/courses/distance/govsoc/international-development.aspx?OpenSection=HowToApply)

The core module aims to familiarise students with key concepts (eg development and poverty) and theories (eg modernisation, dependency, neo-liberalism and the 'crisis' in development theory) and with the changing roles of international development organisations and states in promoting international development (eg through aid, trade and fiscal, monetary and social policies).

The emphasis throughout will be on encouraging students to reflect critically on what has worked well or not and why. Students will select five optional modules (at 20 credits each) based on their individual interests and career aspirations.

Specialist pathways

- [Conflict, Security and Development](/postgraduate/courses/distance/govsoc/international-development-conflict-security.aspx)
- [Poverty, Inequality and Development](/postgraduate/courses/distance/govsoc/international-development-poverty-inequality.aspx)

Modules

This main pathway is designed for flexibility, allowing you to choose five out of the six 20-credit modules from a list of options:

- [Critical Approaches to Development](/postgraduate/courses/distance/govsoc/modules/critical-approaches-development.aspx) (20 credits) – critically examine development theories and their application

Choice of optional modules (100 credits) – choose five modules from the following 20 credit modules:

- [Social Analysis of Inequality, Poverty and Development](/postgraduate/courses/distance/govsoc/modules/social-analysis-poverty-development.aspx)
- [Rural Poverty and Development](file:///C:/students/courses/postgraduate/taught/govsoc/modules/rural-poverty-development.aspx)
- [Urban Poverty and Development](/postgraduate/courses/distance/govsoc/modules/urban-poverty-development.aspx)
- [Development Politics](/postgraduate/courses/distance/govsoc/modules/development-politics.aspx)
- [Disability and Development](/postgraduate/courses/distance/govsoc/modules/disability-development.aspx)
- [Making Policy](/postgraduate/courses/distance/govsoc/modules/making-policy.aspx)
- [Conflict in Developing Countries](/postgraduate/courses/distance/govsoc/modules/conflict-developing-countries.aspx)

- [Post Conflict Reconstruction and Development \(/postgraduate/courses/distance/govsoc/modules/post-conflict-reconstruction-development.aspx\)](#)
- [Non-Governmental Organisations in a Changing International Context \(/postgraduate/courses/distance/govsoc/modules/ngo-changing-international-context.aspx\)](#)
- [Introduction to Development Projects \(/postgraduate/courses/distance/govsoc/modules/introduction-development-projects.aspx\)](#)

Dissertation (/postgraduate/courses/distance/govsoc/modules/dissertation-idd.aspx) (60 credits, MSc only) – pursue in-depth research with support from a dissertation supervisor. For distance learning students we recommend desk-based research.

The programme begins with a two week online induction module (non-accredited); and the dissertation work is preceded by a two week online research methods module (again, non-accredited).

Fees and funding

2015/16 fees:

MSc programme fee £10,620
PGDip programme fee £7,080
Single module fee £1,180

If a candidate is offered a place on the programme, we do request a £500 non-refundable deposit (which is discounted against the payment for the first assessed module) in order to secure the place on the programme.

For our distance learning programmes, we do not distinguish between UK/EU and international studies. There is no deferential fee.

Scholarships

We do not have any scholarships for our distance learning programmes, although some of our students do manage to get funding from their employers to undertake our programmes.

Entry requirements

MSc/PGDip:

- An upper second-class Honours degree or equivalent from an approved university or an equivalent professional qualification in a relevant field (the equivalent US Grade Point Average is 3.0) or
- A lower second-class Honours degree from an approved university with excellent work experience.
- Adequate capacity in written and reading English. For those whose first language is not English, evidence of this capacity is required.
- Applicants should reach at least level 6.5 in the IELTS.
- Degrees from all disciplines are considered and a candidate's work experience can also be taken into consideration.

How to apply

When clicking on the Apply Now button you will be directed to an application specifically designed for the programme you wish to apply for where you will create an account with the University application system and submit your application and supporting documents online. Further information regarding how to apply online can be found on the [How to apply pages \(http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/courses/postgraduate/apply-pg/index.aspx\)](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/courses/postgraduate/apply-pg/index.aspx)

[Apply now \(https://pga.bham.ac.uk/lpages/COSo91.htm\)](https://pga.bham.ac.uk/lpages/COSo91.htm)

Learning and teaching

The programme is delivered online, using a web communications tools system (Canvas) and this web environment is where students are expected to take part in online discussions and group activities, guided by a tutor. All required reading is provided (either in hard copy or via our extensive electronic library, or via Internet links). Assessment takes the form of 2 items of assessment per module, plus a 10,000 to 15,000 word dissertation for the MSc.

Course structure

In delivering our distance learning programmes, we have drawn on lessons learned by academic institutions about how to provide effective distance learning and use a blended learning approach:

- An intensive online induction programme is included to familiarise students with the web-based discussion boards, the online library facilities and the requirements of the programme
- Required reading materials are provided in hard copy
- Discussions and group activities take place within an online learning environment
- Students benefit from interacting closely with each other and their tutors even while they are separated by continents and time zones (we have students in Africa, the Caribbean, the US, Eastern Europe, South East Asia and the UK)
- Whilst discussion groups and access to the electronic library rely on the use of a computer, students are not tied to the computer for other reading materials
- A short online research methods course is provided prior to starting the dissertation project
- We pride ourselves on strong administrative, academic and pastoral support for students

Our distance learning courses use a variety of teaching and assessment methods: Hard copy teaching and reading materials

- Textbooks and CDs / DVDs
- Electronic access to the University's extensive eLibrary facility containing ejournals, ebooks and databases
- Group online discussion activities (using Canvas, which is part of our 'virtual learning environment')
- Dissertation
- Individual reading and reflection

Each module takes six weeks to complete (with guided online discussions). The MSc does not include any face-to-face element.

The course is assumed to be part time, and students study one module at a time.

Course requirements

IDD has designed its distance learning courses to be accessible for a working professional person and we have kept the technical requirements to a minimum. However, before you commit to distance learning, we recommend that you consider the following:

IT equipment: To complete a distance learning course successfully, you will need:

- Extended access to a computer with Word, Excel, Internet Explorer, a media player software and a CD-ROM drive.
- Regular access to the Internet for visiting the web-based discussion boards, email and some online library research (whilst this is obviously easier with broadband, we have many students who participate successfully through a dial-up connection).

IT skills: You will find this course less challenging if you are already a confident Internet user, although we are available extensively to coach you through becoming familiar with the web-based discussion format and to address other IT questions.

Time: This course requires that you read a good deal and regularly check into the web-based discussions during the six 'live' weeks of discussion for each module. If you are forced to miss some of the discussions for work or personal reasons, this can be coped with, but if you are regularly out of touch you will find it hard to complete the assignments to the required standard. Writing the assignments is also time-consuming.

Employability

Career opportunities

This programme tends to recruit students who are either currently working for, or plan to work for, NGOs, aid donors, the public service sector, etc.

Alumni

Currently more than 3,800 [IDD alumni \(/schools/government-society/departments/international-development/alumni/index.aspx\)](/schools/government-society/departments/international-development/alumni/index.aspx) have taken their knowledge and experience to over 148 countries around the globe and are working in a variety of jobs in the public, private and voluntary sector.



We are extremely proud of the achievements of our alumni; many of them have gone on to do fantastic things post graduation including [Concy Aciro \(/schools/government-society/departments/international-development/alumni/profiles/postgraduate/2011-12/aciro-concy.aspx\)](/schools/government-society/departments/international-development/alumni/profiles/postgraduate/2011-12/aciro-concy.aspx) (MSc Poverty Reduction, 2007) who won the University's alumna of the year award in 2008.

“As a Member of Parliament and a leader, I will continue to use the skills and knowledge I acquired during my time at Birmingham and I am sure the experience will continue to support my efforts as both a Member of Parliament and in leading my constituents.” **Concy Aciro (2009)**

See what some of [our alumni \(/schools/government-society/departments/international-development/alumni/profiles/index.aspx\)](/schools/government-society/departments/international-development/alumni/profiles/index.aspx) are doing now and what they thought about studying with us at IDD.

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