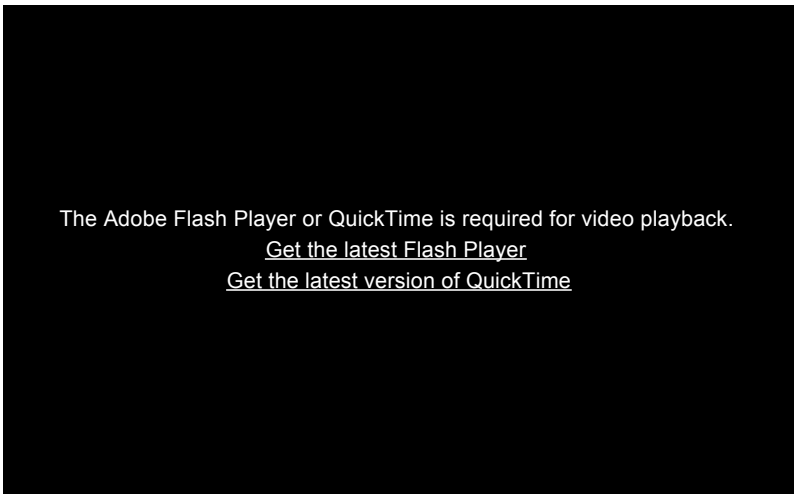
We use cookies to ensure that we deliver the best user experience of our website. If you would like to, you can change your cookie settings at any time. Continue

Masters degrees by distance learning

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



MSc degrees currently being offered in distance learning mode:

International Development

- **International Development by distance learning MSc/PGDip (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/courses/distance/govsoc/international-development.aspx)**
- **Conflict, Security and Development by distance learning MSc/PGDip (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/courses/distance/govsoc/international-development-conflict-security.aspx)**
- **Poverty, Inequality and Development by distance learning MSc/PGDip (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/courses/distance/govsoc/international-development-poverty-inequality.aspx)**

Public Administration and Development

- **Public Administration and Development by distance learning MSc/PGDip (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/courses/distance/govsoc/public-administration-development.aspx)**

Both of these courses take a minimum of two years to complete, 18 months for the six taught modules and six months for the dissertation.

Lydia Emer, Public Administration and Development programme, 2006 "I highly recommend the course if you are a self-directed student, who is eager for a greater understanding of the world and globalisation"

Course structure

Open all sections

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.

Entry requirements and **how to apply (/schools/government-society/departments/international-development/courses/apply.aspx)** .

© University of Birmingham 2014