

Enhancing your student experience



The International Development Department (IDD) offers its students much more than just a degree. We pride ourselves on providing opportunities and support for our students to develop their academic and employability skills. Study at IDD and you'll be exposed to cutting edge research and debates in your areas of interest and also develop their international perspective and experience.

Below are just some of the ways IDD works to enhance your student experience:

Broadening your international outlook, networks and experience

Helping students to develop a better understanding of other countries and other cultures has always been at the core of our work. At IDD as we welcome students from many different countries you'll have the opportunity to experience other cultures through working with your fellow students.

- **[Overseas fieldwork opportunities \(/schools/government-society/departments/international-development/courses/fieldwork.aspx\)](/schools/government-society/departments/international-development/courses/fieldwork.aspx)**
Providing financial support for overseas fieldwork as part of your dissertation research.
- **[Wide range of modules \(/postgraduate/courses/taught/govsoc/modules/index-idd.aspx\)](/postgraduate/courses/taught/govsoc/modules/index-idd.aspx)**
You'll be exposed to a wide range of examples and case studies in taught modules. Our lectures regularly feature country experts and practitioners with significant international experience.
- **[Facebook groups \(/http://www.facebook.com/groups/IDDBham\)](http://www.facebook.com/groups/IDDBham)** IDD maintains Facebook groups which allow you to engage with former IDD students. Many are now working in development related roles or living and working in countries that you might wish to study for your dissertation research.

Exposing you to development practitioners

One of the best ways to understand how development works on the ground is to hear about it from current and former practitioners with decades of experience between them across the globe.

Guest lecturers and expert contributors in your taught modules, including speakers from Islamic Relief, the Tony Blair Foundation and the Overseas Development Institute.

As conveners of specialist modules- Our Introduction to Disaster Management module is taught by Moustafa Osman of Islamic Relief and the Conflict, Humanitarian Aid and Social Reconstruction module is run by the NGO Responding to Conflict.

- Through seminar series, particularly the **[NGO seminar series \(/schools/government-society/departments/international-development/news/2013/ngo-seminar-series.aspx\)](/schools/government-society/departments/international-development/news/2013/ngo-seminar-series.aspx)** in Spring Term.

Exposing you to cutting edge academic research with global reach

IDD staff pursue research which tackles both longstanding and contemporary development challenges, including issues related to development management and tackling conflict and fragility to improve development outcomes.

In IDD we bring cutting edge academic research directly to you in a number of ways:

- Through in-module discussion of the current research of our staff, including for example on: post war identity in Sri Lanka and Rwanda; community participation in coastal carbon capture; supporting peace processes in Nepal; dowry violence and gender in India.
- Through a **[guest seminar series \(/schools/government-society/departments/international-development/events/guest-seminar-series/2013-14/index.aspx\)](/schools/government-society/departments/international-development/events/guest-seminar-series/2013-14/index.aspx)** inviting external speakers to share their expertise and research findings.
- Occasional research assistance opportunities, allowing you to directly contribute to the work of IDD staff and build valuable experience for your CV.

Building your skills for academic work and future employment

We recognise that the competition for jobs in international development is fierce. We therefore provide opportunities and support at all stages of your time with IDD for you to develop both academic and work-related skills. These include:

- A programme of study skills support alongside the taught modules designed to make sure you maximise your potential.
- Dedicated dissertation and fieldwork methods workshops to develop your understanding of research and research skills.
- Exposure within taught modules to real-world tools and techniques relevant to development, including : film-making and communication projects; project planning, budgeting and management exercises; political economy analysis; corruption analysis; scoping studies; livelihoods analysis, and mediation.
- Providing links with development organisations in the UK and overseas, helping to support you in developing connections for dissertation fieldwork or short internships/work placements.

Providing an innovative learning and teaching experience

We use a range of teaching approaches across our modules designed to give you a varied experience, stimulate discussion and debate inside and outside class, and to introduce you to current issues and tools for working in development. Examples include:

- The use of forms of assessment beyond essays and exams. Examples in current use in modules include blogging, conflict vulnerability analysis and reflective learning logs, along with both group and individual presentations

- The incorporation of individual practitioner-led sessions in many modules, and the co-ordination of two optional modules by non-academic staff

Other activities and sources of funding to develop your own ideas

The School of Government and Society runs a series of enhancement events throughout the year, including sending student delegations to Model NATO and Model UN simulations in the United States. Details are available on our [student experiences page \(/schools/government-society/teaching/enhancing-student-experience/index.aspx\)](#).

There are also two funding opportunities for students seeking to come together to pursue their own activities to maximise their experience here at IDD.

- The School also runs a scheme where students can apply for funding alone or in small groups to undertake enhancement activities.
- The University-wide **Centre for Learning and Academic Development** (<https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/as/claddivision/index.aspx>) has a scheme through which students can apply for funds to develop enhancement events, with or without staff assistance.

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