



**UNIVERSITY
OF LONDON**

Programme Specification 2020–2021

Global Security and Strategy

MA

Important document – please read



IMPORTANT NOTICE FOR 2020-2021 ACADEMIC YEAR

Alternative Assessments during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Outbreak

In these unprecedented times, the University has and continues to respond quickly to the impact of COVID-19, which has resulted in changes to our assessment processes.

In line with our current General Regulations, the University may offer you alternative assessments where necessary. This includes holding online timed assessments in place of written examinations, which are usually held at examination centres. Please note that this statement replaces any published information relating to assessments or written examinations in any of our materials including the website. Previously published materials relating to examinations should therefore be read in conjunction with this statement.

The University of London continues to work towards supporting the academic progression of all its students. The University also continues to be mindful of the health and wellbeing of its students during this pandemic, whilst protecting the academic standards of its awards.

Contents

Important information regarding the Programme Specification	3
Programme title and awards	4
Entrance requirements	7
Educational aims and learning outcomes of the programmes	8
Learning, teaching and assessment strategies	9
Assessment methods	10
Student support and guidance	11
Quality evaluation and enhancement	11
After graduation	13

Important information regarding the Programme Specification

About this document

Last revised: 25 August 2020

The Programme Specification gives a broad outline of the structure and content of the programme, the entry level qualifications, as well as the learning outcomes students will achieve as they progress. Some of the information referred to in this programme specification is included in more detail on the University of London website. Where this is the case, links to the relevant webpage are included.

Where links to external organisations are provided, the University of London is not responsible for their content and does not recommend nor necessarily agree with opinions expressed and services provided at those sites.

If you have a query about any of the programme information provided registered students should use the *ask a question* tab in the [student portal](#) otherwise the *Contact Us* button on each webpage should be used.

Terminology

The following language is specific to the Global Security and Strategy programme:

Module: Individual units of the programmes are called modules. Each module is a self-contained, formally structured learning experience with a coherent and explicit set of learning outcomes and assessment criteria.

Elective modules: Optional modules that are studied in succession after the core module(s).

Dissertation development stage: A learning stage that follows each module which develops the skills needed to write and submit a final dissertation.

Module Convenor: Programme team member who ensures that design and delivery of high quality learning opportunities are available for students on the module.

Associate Tutor: Programme team member who delivers small group teaching, or may be used for their specialist expertise to deliver lectures or lead seminars.

E-tivity: online assessment prepared in response to a task or tasks specified by the Programme Director.

Key revisions made

Programme specifications are revised annually. The quality committee of SOAS, University of London, as part of its annual review of standards, confirms the programme structure and the educational aims and learning outcomes, and advises on any development in student support.

Where changes have been made which may impact on continuing students, these are listed below. For all new students, the programme and general information provided in this document is correct and accurate and will be applicable for the current year.

Significant changes made to the programme specification 2020-2021:

No significant changes.

Programme title and awards

Postgraduate Degrees of the University of London may be classified. The award certificate will indicate the level of the academic performance achieved by classifying the award. The classification of the degree will be based on the ratified marks from the completed assessments.

The classification system for this programme is as follows:

- Distinction
- Merit
- Pass

Postgraduate Diplomas and Postgraduate Certificates are awarded on a Pass/Fail basis only.

Specific rules for the classification of awards are given in the Programme Regulations, under Scheme of Award.

Programme

Global Security and Strategy

Award title

Students are registered on the following:

- Master of Arts in Global Security and Strategy

Exit qualifications

- Postgraduate Diploma in Global Security and Strategy
- Postgraduate Certificate in Global Security and Strategy

An exit qualification is an intermediate qualification, for which the student may not have registered at the outset but which may be awarded on completion of specific modules/courses (or credit accumulated) in a longer programme of study, if the student leaves the programme.

Exit qualifications are awarded at the discretion of the Board of Examiners and once a student has accepted an exit qualification they will not normally be permitted to continue their study of the same award with the University of London.

Individual modules

There is no provision for individual modules of the programme to be studied on a stand-alone basis.

Award titles may be abbreviated as follows:

Master of the Arts – MA

Postgraduate Diploma – PGDip

Postgraduate Certificate – PGCert

Level of the programmes

The Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies (FHEQ) forms part of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education of the [Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education](#) (QAA).

The qualifications are placed at the following Levels of the FHEQ:

- | | |
|--|---------|
| • Master of Arts (MA) | Level 7 |
| • Postgraduate Diploma (PGDip) (exit award) | Level 7 |
| • Postgraduate Certificate (PGCert) (exit award) | Level 7 |

Relevant QAA subject benchmarks group(s)

Not applicable

Awarding body

University of London

Registering body

www.london.ac.uk

University of London

Academic direction

SOAS, University of London through the Centre for International Studies and Diplomacy (CISD)

Accreditation by professional or statutory body

Not applicable

Language of study and assessment

English

Mode of study

Flexible and online study. Supported by an individual personal tutor and dedicated Associate tutor for each module.

Programme structures

The MA Global Security and Strategy consists of four modules and a dissertation as follows:

- One core module
- Three elective modules chosen from a list of options
- A dissertation

All students must study the core module first. All assessments for each module must normally be submitted before a student may progress to a subsequent module.

Full details of the Scheme of Award are included in the [Programme Regulations](#).

Maximum and minimum periods of registration

The maximum and minimum period of registration, from a student's effective date of registration, are:

	Minimum	Maximum
MA degree	Two years	Five years

Study materials are made available after registration and on payment of the applicable fee.

Credit value of modules

Further information about the credit systems used by universities in the UK and Europe is provided by the [Quality Assurance Agency](#) and the [European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System](#).

Where credits are assigned to each module of a programme, credit indicates the amount of learning carried out in terms of the notional number of study hours needed, and the specified Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England (FHEQ) credit level indicates the depth, complexity and intellectual demand of learning involved. The details below indicate the UK credits and the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) values.

For the Global Security and Strategy programme, credits are assigned to the modules as follows:

- 30 UK credits or 15 ECTS credits at FHEQ Level 7 for the core and elective modules.
- 60 UK credits or 30 ECTS credits at FHEQ Level 7 for the dissertation module.

A student awarded the MA Global Security and Strategy will have accumulated 180 UK credits or 90 ECTS credits.

One UK credit equates to a notional ten hours of learning.

Recognition of prior learning and credit transfer

Recognition of prior learning is a generic term for the process by which we recognise and, where appropriate, award credit for learning that has taken place elsewhere, before entry onto this programme of study.

Where the prior learning covered a similar syllabus to a module/course studied elsewhere, credit will be awarded as if you took the University of London module/course.

See the [General Regulations](#) (Section 3) [and [Programme Regulations](#)] for more rules relating to prior learning.

Prior learning will not be recognised or accredited for this programme.

If you are registered on the MA degree and have been allowed to proceed to the elective modules, you may study up to **two** elective modules at SOAS on an equivalent part-time basis in place of online learning modules (Blended Learning). The credit obtained will be transferred to your programme of study.

There will be restrictions on the availability of elective modules available for Blended Learning study.

Entrance requirements

Postgraduate entrance requirements

Applicants must submit an application in line with the procedures and deadlines set out on the SOAS [website](#).

Entrance requirements for postgraduate awards vary. Full details are provided on the programme page under the [Overview](#) tab.

All details of the programme specific requirements, and details of the application process, are provided on the [programme page](#).

English language requirements

All applicants must satisfy the English language requirements for the programme. These are set out in detail on the programme page under the [Apply](#) tab.

Where an applicant does not meet the prescribed English language proficiency requirements but believes that they can demonstrate the requisite proficiency for admission the University may, at its discretion, consider the application.

Internet access and computer specification

Students will require regular access to a computer with an internet connection to use the University of London's online resources and systems. A webcam may be required in the event that online timed assessments (if offered) are proctored, and in such a case, it is a student's responsibility to ensure that they have a webcam.

The computer should have at least the following minimum specification:

- a web browser with Cookies and JavaScript enabled (a latest version of Firefox or Chrome is recommended);
- a good internet connection;

And the following applications installed:

- a word processor that accepts Microsoft Word formats (.doc and .docx);
- a pdf reader.

Students with access requirements

The University of London welcomes applications from disabled students and/or those who have access requirements. The University will make every effort to provide reasonable adjustments to enable those with a disability, learning difficulty or access requirements to have the same opportunity as all other students to successfully complete their studies.

The University is committed to managing the application procedure and the programme itself to ensure that services are accessible for all students and that an inclusive environment is created. Students with a disability, or others who may need access arrangements to assist in taking examinations, should complete the relevant section of the application form, or contact the [Inclusive Practice Manager](#). A separate room or other arrangements may be considered. Requests are considered by a University panel, whose purpose is to ensure that students with disabilities and/or specific access requirements are neither advantaged nor disadvantaged by such arrangements when compared with other students. These considerations remain separate from the academic selection processes.

For further information, see [Inclusive Practice Policy](#)

Sources of funding and scholarships

Information about potential sources of funding and scholarships is updated annually and where available is included in the prospectus web pages.

For further information see the [website](#)

Educational aims and learning outcomes of the programmes

Programme aims of the Global Security and Strategy programme:

- The programme takes an integrated approach to knowledge, intellectual, practical and transferrable skills.
- As such this programme will allow students to achieve the following:
- a critical understanding of Global Security and Strategy,
- employability skills relevant to careers in the fields of Security and Strategy in the public and private sectors,
- engage with security related international institutions and issues,
- appreciate and demonstrate a variety of approaches, which de-emphasise Western thinking and reflect SOAS's regional expertise.
- This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the Global Security and Strategy programme. The learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if they take full advantage of the learning opportunities provided by the programme. More detailed information on the specific learning outcomes, content and the learning and teaching and assessment methods of each module can be found on the [SOAS website](#).
- Students who successfully complete the MSc Global Security and Strategy will be able to:

Subject specific knowledge and understanding

- demonstrate an in-depth critical understanding of the nature of Global Security and Strategy. By showing a command of the reading in both formal assessment and in the weekly discussions;

- understand the relationship between theory and policy in international studies and diplomacy and political economy with special reference to Global Security and Strategy;
- show a clear understanding of the security landscape in Global Security by showing a command of the reading in both formal assessment and in the weekly discussions;
- demonstrate detailed knowledge of issues in Global Security and politics in historical and contemporary contexts. By providing a thorough grounding in the subject, students are made aware of the importance of this topic to a sophisticated understanding of global policy and governance developments;
- develop in-depth knowledge of the scholarly literature of more than one discipline that constitutes the field (e.g. Diplomacy, Development, Gender).

Intellectual and transferable skills

- possess a theoretical and historical understanding of the practice of Global Security and Strategy broadly conceived;
- develop the ability to think critically, with reference to theoretical and empirical (historical and/or contemporary) content about Global Security and Strategy;
- analyse, evaluate and reflect critically on information received;
- develop and present new ideas coherently and concisely extracting key elements from complex information;
- research core issues independently;
- present written materials clearly and effectively and to engage constructively with feedback

Subject-based practical skills

- engage with international studies and diplomacy in Global Security and Strategy with particular institutional relevance of the perspective of the global South and other areas of expertise from within SOAS;
- develop the skills needed for further independent research, writing and thinking in Global Security and Strategy.

Learning, teaching and assessment strategies

Students learn on this programme by engaging with academically rigorous and up-to-date learning materials and resources in a Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). For each module, students will be provided with access, through the University of London Online Library, to all necessary reading materials from a range of appropriate sources, as well as having access to the relevant journals and academic databases subscribed to by the University.

To help a student to organise their time, a bespoke Study Timetable is provided for each module and for the overall programme. This sets out the timetable for their learning and assessment. The programme and the modules themselves are carefully designed to allow students to progress according to their own learning styles. Modules are run over two six-

monthly periods, in conjunction with the ongoing study of the dissertation. Each module lasts 16 weeks, followed by one of the four stages of the dissertation module.

The VLE will give students instant access to current module materials, including the assessment tasks known as “e-tivities”, electronic journals and other materials provided by the Online Library. Students will have a direct link to their dedicated Associate Tutor who will be the main point of contact between SOAS and the student. The Associate Tutor will facilitate student learning by helping students to structure their learning and by being available to assist students with any questions that they may have about the academic content of the programme. A member of the administrative staff is also available to answer questions about the administrative aspects of the student’s studies. A technical team may also be called upon to help with any difficulties in accessing the VLE. A key component of the student experience will be peer to peer learning, and so students will be enrolled in bespoke discussion forums.

Each module, with the exception of the dissertation module, has six online assessments (e-tivities), which take the form of written work prepared in response to a task or tasks specified by the Programme Director. E-tivity 6 for all modules (except the dissertation module) is a 4,500-5,000 word assignment submitted online.

The e-tivities provide formative and, in the case of e-tivities 2-6, summative feedback to Students, highlighting areas in which they can improve. E-tivities also act as a means of monitoring student progress. Timely and concise feedback for each e-tivity will be provided by either the Module Convenor or the assigned Associate Tutor, as appropriate. The Global Security and Strategy Board of Examiners will be the final arbiter of the above regulations and a student’s completion of these criteria.

Students will also undertake a dissertation that relates to the named award. The dissertation module is divided into four dissertation development stages; one stage is completed at the end of each module. Appropriate research methods are taught in each of the four stages to allow completion of the module as a whole through the submission of the dissertation. At the end of the second stage, students submit a research proposal counting for 15 % and at the end of the fourth stage their dissertation counting for 85% of the overall dissertation module mark.

The purpose of this is to enable the student to develop and demonstrate their capacity to carry out a substantial piece of independent academic work on a selected topic. Students will be assessed on their capacity to define a topic, to articulate a coherent scheme for examining the topic, to gather necessary information and to analyse and present this information in a way that satisfactorily assesses the topic.

Assessment criteria for the programme take into account the level at which these skills have been achieved.

Assessment methods

Both the core and elective modules are assessed through a series of e-tivities culminating in the online submission of a written assessment, e-tivity 6, of 4,500-5,000 words (excluding footnotes, endnotes, bibliography and figures). E-tivities 2, 3, 4 and 5 have word counts between 400 and 1,500 words and are also submitted online. Of the six e-tivities, e-tivity 1 is assessed solely through formative assessment, e-tivities 2-6 carry either 5, 15 or 70 marks but also provide for summative assessment and feedback.

The dissertation module is assessed by the submission of a written dissertation of approximately 15,000 words, excluding the bibliography and appendices, which will account for 85% of the mark awarded for the module. The remaining 15% of the module mark will be based on the mark obtained for a 1,500 word research proposal.

Full details of the dates of all examinations are available on the [website](#).

Student support and guidance

The following summarises the support and guidance available to students:

- The Virtual Learning Environment (VLE): This gives access to materials (including lessons, activities and assignments) for each module studied.
- The VLE also includes a range of additional study resources such as:
 - Online student café and discussion areas which allow students to communicate with each other.
 - Past examination papers and Examiners' commentaries; these provide generic feedback from assessment.
 - Employability skills module; guidance on how to manage your career in the future
- Module subject guides for each module studied; these introduce and develop the topics.
- [Programme Regulations](#).
- [The Online Library](#): This provides a range of full-text, multidisciplinary databases where journal articles, book reviews and reports can be found.
- [The SOAS online library](#).
- University of London library: Registered students may use the resources located within the Senate House library.
- A University of London email account and web area for personal information management.

Quality evaluation and enhancement

The University of London delivers the majority of its flexible and distance learning programmes through a collaboration between the University of London Worldwide and member institutions of the University of London. However some of the flexible and distance learning programmes draw solely on academic input from the University of London, and are delivered without academic lead by a member institutions. The policies, partnerships (where applicable) and quality assurance mechanisms applicable for the programmes are defined in the following key documents: The Quality Framework, the [Quality Assurance Schedules](#), [Guidelines for Examinations](#), [General Regulations](#) and, for each programme, [programme specific regulations](#).

Award standards

All University of London qualifications have to align with the [Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies](#) to assure appropriate standards for each qualification. In addition, every programme that is developed by a member institution of the University of London (or a consortium with representation by more than one member institution) will be developed to the same standard as would be applied within the institution concerned. Proportionate and robust approval procedures, including external scrutiny and student engagement are in place for all programmes. Learning materials are written and all assessments are set and marked by academic staff who are required to apply the University's academic standards.

Review and evaluation mechanisms

Some of the key mechanisms in place to assure the standards of all University of London qualifications and the quality of the student experience, include:

- Annual programme reports: produced for all programmes in order to review and enhance the provision and to plan ahead;
- Independent external examiners: submit reports every year to confirm that a programme has been assessed properly and meets the appropriate academic standards;
- Annual student information statistics: prepared for all systematic reporting within the University of London;
- Periodic programme reviews: carried out every 4-6 years to review how a programme has developed over time and to make sure that it remains current and up-to-date.

Improvements are made as necessary to ensure that systems remain effective and rigorous.

Student feedback mechanisms

The principal channel for collecting feedback from students is the Student Experience Survey. Carried out every two years, this collects feedback from the student body on a range of topics relating to the student lifecycle. The results are analysed externally and then considered in a number of different ways, including by the programme team, principal committees and the senior leadership team. Details of any resulting actions taken are published on the Virtual Learning Environment and the Student Portal.

Additionally, on completion of their programme of study students will be invited to take a survey that seeks to measure what they have gained from their studies.

There are also opportunities for students to get involved in governance. An undergraduate and postgraduate student member is appointed by the University to the majority of committees through an annual appointment round. Some programmes also recruit student members at the programme level. Students are frequently invited to take part in quality review processes such as Periodic Programme Reviews, Programme approval, Thematic Reviews, MOOC review panels and ad hoc focus groups. Opportunities such as these are advertised through social media and on the website. More information can be found on the [website](#).

Students can also apply to join the Student Voice Group, which meets four times a year to consider initiatives for enhancing student experience. Notes from these meetings are published on the Student Portal.

After graduation

Further study

Successful completion of the programme can allow students to progress to a higher level award in the subject area.

Graduate employment routes

Students who choose to attend CISD do so as it provides them with an opportunity to merge a strong theoretical understanding with equally rigorous practical skills that equip them to go out into the workforce with both knowledge and the ability to deliver. CISD use an intricate combination of SOAS expertise, cutting edge research and practical skills which makes its students attractive to employers.

CISD programmes provide sound intellectual and skills training, which are useful for analysing and designing solutions to many of today's global problems. Graduating students have gone on to a variety of professions where they have been able to utilise the knowledge and skills they learned while studying at the Centre.

Graduates of the MA in Global Security and Strategy will be well placed for a career in security related industries including NGOs and security focused international organizations such as the UNSC and NATO.

The Alumni Community

Upon finishing a course of study, graduates automatically become part of the University of London alumni community, a diverse global network of more than one million graduates in over 180 countries, providing lifelong links to the University and to each other.

Alumni are encouraged to keep in touch after they graduate and to become active members of the alumni community; in return they receive a number of benefits and services, including an extensive programme of events and engagement opportunities.

More information is available on the alumni [webpage](#).

Follow the alumni community on social media: [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [LinkedIn](#)