

University of Cambridge: Programme Specifications

Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information contained in this programme specification. At the time of publication, the programme specification has been approved by the relevant teaching Faculty or Department. It is, however, natural for courses to develop and change over time and we reserve the right, without notice, to withdraw, update or amend this programme specification at any time.

MPHIL in INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

1 Awarding body	University of Cambridge
2 Teaching Institution	University of Cambridge
3 Accreditation details	None
4 Name of Final award	Master of Philosophy
5 Programme Title	International Studies
6 UCAS Code	None
7 Benchmark Statement	None
8 Qualifications Framework Level	M
9 Date of production/revision	5 October 2005

Educational Aims of the Programme

The MPhil in International Studies is a one-year full-time course offered by the Centre of International Studies. The programme aims to:

- i) To prepare students for doctoral work in politics and international relations, with particular emphasis on security studies, international organisation and international relations theory, and in political and international aspects of selected areas of the world (Europe and Latin America in the first instance);
- ii) To equip students with an advanced understanding of the relationships between theory, investigation, and practice in their chosen area of study;
- iii) To give students a grounding in generic and subject-specific research methods and methodology sufficient for doctoral research and also for subsequent professional development.

Programme Outcomes

Knowledge and Understanding

By the end of the course, students should have acquired:

1. developed a broad grounding in either international politics or international relations theory, or both;
2. developed subject-specific knowledge in the area most relevant to his or her intended thesis.

Teaching and Learning Methods

(1) is developed through foundation lectures courses and seminars. (2) is developed through lectures and seminars for subject specific areas.

Assessment

(1) and (2) are assessed by two 4000 word research essays, one each for the two taught courses that students are required to take.

Skills and other attributes

By the end of the course, the students should:

3. have developed skills in sustained oral advocacy;
4. be able to speak from brief notes and lead discussion;
5. be able to deliver a longer written paper;
6. compose a research paper based on secondary materials;
7. have produced a thesis based in part on primary material with a requirement for originality;
8. have acquired the additional skills from the SSRMT: the capacity to frame research questions, to derive appropriate research designs, and develop awareness of alternative approaches; a competence and confidence in using a range of both qualitative and quantitative methods for gathering, analysing and interpreting evidence.

Teaching and Learning

(3)-(6) are developed through seminars. (6) and (7) are developed through supervisions for the thesis. (7) and (8) are developed through lectures, practicals and seminars of the SSRMT.

Assessment

(3), (4), (5) are assessed formatively through feedback received during seminars and oral presentations. (6) is assessed by two 4000 word research essays based on each taught course. (7) is assessed by a thesis essay or revised proposal in the Lent Term and by a 20,000 word thesis. (8) is assessed through workbook assignments and essays.

Programme Structure

Easter Term (April-June)

Thesis	Essay	SSRMT
Completion of thesis		Beginning of term: hand in all assignments

Lent Term (January-March)

Thesis	Essay	SSRMT
Thesis presentation and either thesis essay or revised detailed proposal, subject to negotiation with supervisor	Essays submitted by middle of term Taught courses end by middle of term*	IT and Introduction Statistical Methods Qualitative and Ethnographic Methods

Michaelmas Term (October-December)

Thesis	Essay	SSRMT
Work on thesis begins, including at least three supervisions and some written work	Essay titles submitted by end of term Lectures and seminars taught courses begin	IT and Introduction Survey Methods Qualitative and Ethnographic Methods

Taught Courses

from the MPhil in International Relations

- International Politics* (The Politics of European Integration, the International Politics of Latin America; China in the International System)
- International Theory*
- International Security
- International Law
- International History
- International Economics

* students must take at least one of these courses and may take both

from the MPhil in Contemporary European Studies

- European Foreign and Security Policy
- European Economics
- European History

from the MPhil in Latin American Studies

- Sociology and Politics of Latin America
- Themes in Latin American Intellectual History
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- Economic Relations of Latin America
- History of Latin American External Relations

Courses offered in the Centre of Latin American Studies last for the whole of Michaelmas and Lent, and essays are due at the end of Lent Term.

Requirements for the award of the degree

There are two components for successful award of the MPhil:

- (a) a compulsory essay examination which consists of one hand-written, invigilated closed-book examination, and three take-home essays to be completed over the 52 hours after the closed-book paper. Candidates may also be selected at random for an oral examination. This has no bearing on the marks awarded but is carried out to verify that take home exams are the candidate's own work;
- (b) a thesis of up to 20,000 words in length, for which an oral exam may also be required.

Grades awarded are High Performance (First Class undergraduate standard extrapolated for a further year's study), Pass (2.1 extrapolated), Redeemable Performance (high 2.2 extrapolated). Candidates must pass each part of the examination separately, except that a Redeemable performance in one part of the exam can be compensated by a High Performance in the other.

Students must take two of the course options at least one of which must be in International Politics or International Theory. Each optional paper counts as 12.5% of the total marks awarded. In addition students must complete the SSRMT (25%) and a dissertation (50%).

All elements must be passed.

Learning Support

All students are members of a College as well as the Centre and have access to learning support from both College and University. The College Tutor for Graduates will play a role in induction, support and guidance. Within the Centre each student is allocated an academic supervisor; students who have a supervisor whose primary affiliation is not the Centre also have a course advisor. The Director and Deputy Director are available to see students by appointment. There is also a Student Welfare Officer and a Computer Officer.

Evaluating and improving the quality and standards of learning

The Degree Committee deals with registration of students and recommends supervisors, assessors and examiners to the Board of Graduate Studies. Each MPhil course has a designated Course Director who is responsible for the overall management of the course. The Degree Committee delegates MPhil activities such as approval of change of thesis title, or changes in supervision arrangements to Course Director and/or Chief Examiner. Such matters are reported to the Degree Committee for note. Each MPhil programme elects a representative, who sits on the Teaching and Learning Committee of the Degree Committee for unreserved business (and there are also PhD reps). Reps are expected to liaise with their peers and the Course Director about issues. Serious problems should be communicated to the Director and Deputy Director. As part of course review students are asked to complete detailed questionnaires on both the taught courses and on thesis supervision, and attend a course review meeting at which they can discuss their experiences of the course, both positive and negative, with Centre staff. All forms of review are considered by the Course Director and Teaching and Learning Committee when they plan teaching for subsequent years.

The Centre participates in the University's quality assurance and enhancement system:

1. **External Examining:** the MPhil has an external examiner, who submits a report which is considered by the Degree Committee and its Teaching and Learning Committee. Action in response to reports includes, where appropriate, revisions or adjustments to the programme and its delivery.
2. **Course approval:** the Centre is required to obtain the approval of the Board of Graduate Studies and the General Board's Education Committee before any significant changes to courses are made.
3. **General Board Internal Review:** all the Centre's activities, including the MPhil are subject to review by the University's General Board.

Employment

Preparation for employment is provided in the opportunities for acquisition of relevant skills outlined above. See the University policy of employment skills (www.admin.cam.ac.uk/offices/education/learning/employers.html).

Students may be given leave to continue for a PhD if they achieve an overall average of 67% in both the essay examinations and the dissertation, although in practice competition for funding means that students with an average of less than 70% may well not be successful.

General information

More detailed information can be found at: www.intstudies.cam.ac.uk/study/mpis/index.html (MPhil) and <http://www.jsss.group.cam.ac.uk/> (SSRMT).