



**Faculty/School of Humanities and Social Sciences**

**Department of Social and Policy  
Sciences PGT Handbook**

**MSc International Development  
Programmes**

**2023/24**

This handbook is available online or in alternative formats. Please contact [sps-pg-admin@bath.ac.uk](mailto:sps-<u>pg-admin</u>@bath.ac.uk) if required.

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[NFAAR-PGT-VERSION]

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## Purpose and scope

Your handbook for academic year 2023/24 comprises the following three documents which should be read alongside each other:

1. University information
2. **Department handbook (this document)**
3. Your course specification

**These documents were made available to you as pdf files at the beginning of the academic year. You are expected to familiarise yourself with the contents.**

This handbook includes important information, about the Department and about your course, that you should be aware of whilst studying here.

This handbook can be provided in alternative formats. Please contact [sps-pg-admin@bath.ac.uk](mailto:sps-pg-admin@bath.ac.uk)

The content of this handbook is accurate at the time of publication (20/9/2023) but information contained within may sometimes be subject to change after this handbook has been issued. You will be informed of any changes and issued with a revised version, if there are any material changes to the information in this handbook.

**Please note that links to further information are embedded in the title of each section or in applicable text.**

## The Department

### Introduction to the Department

You have chosen to study a subject that really matters and can make a difference in our world. We are all convinced that the social sciences can shed important light on issues that are important in our lives such as gender, race, poverty, climate change, criminal justice, welfare and social care. The pandemic is another global challenge that has led to major upheavals in all aspects of our lives. Our social sciences expertise is needed more than ever!

You are a member of one of the strongest social sciences departments in the country. You are here because you deserve to be, and you should be proud of your achievements so far. We are certainly proud of you all and we hope that the year ahead helps you to grow as learners and as people.

In making plans for the new academic year, our priority has always been safety. We will continue to keep this as a priority throughout the year. This means that we need to look out for each other, keep in contact with each other, and care for each other. I would therefore encourage you all to stay in touch with staff in the department – we want to know that you are safe.

2023-24 will open new opportunities and challenges for us all. Let's work together to face those challenges and take advantage of the opportunities that come our way.

Dr Sarah Moore (Head of Department)



## Departmental information including course teams

The Department of Social and Policy Sciences includes staff from the disciplines of social policy, sociology, social work and international development. All academic staff are active in research, both in collaboration with each other and with colleagues from other universities and research centres. This provides an opportunity for work around common interests in the application of social sciences to the understanding of substantive policy issues and the policy process itself, both in the UK and in other countries.

### Who does what?

#### **Head of Department (HoD)**

**Dr Sarah Moore** is the Head of Department. She has overall responsibility for all academic affairs of the Department. **Dr Kate Gooch** is the deputy head of the department.

#### **Director of Teaching (DoT)**

The Director of Teaching has responsibility for the strategic development of learning and teaching within the Department. **Dr Jennifer Golan** is the Director of Teaching for programmes in DSPS.

#### **Director of Studies (DoS)**

The Director of Studies (DoS), Dr Mathilde Maitrot, has general responsibility for quality management and support to students within your course and oversees the assessment procedures. You should talk to your Director of Studies if you are thinking of taking Director of Studies approved units. Different courses have their own Directors of Studies.

#### **Assessment Officer (AO)**

**Caroline Hickman** is the Assessment officer for the Department. The Assessment Officer is responsible for processing all extensions requests and Individual Mitigating Circumstances (IMC) claims from students from all courses in the department.

- Extensions are requested through SAMIS

IMC Requests should be sent on the correct forms with evidence to support the claim to [sps-imc-ext@bath.ac.uk](mailto:sps-imc-ext@bath.ac.uk)

## Personal tutoring

When you join the University, you are assigned a Personal Tutor who is a member of academic staff. They will act as a personalised point of contact within your department, supporting your academic and personal development.

This year your Personal Tutor is Dr Touseef Mir ([tm2227@bath.ac.uk](mailto:tm2227@bath.ac.uk)). He should arrange to meet with you on three occasions during your first semester and offer at least one meeting per semester on an ongoing basis for the remainder of your studies. This includes when away on placement. Your Personal Tutor can provide information and guidance about:

- your transition into the University community and your academic studies
- unit choices, placement opportunities and future career plans
- sources of support with any personal matters or situations involving your health and wellbeing
- providing you with a reference for work experience, your placement, further studies, or career

## [Contact information](#)

### **Taught Programmes Team hub office: Economics and Social Policy Sciences**

#### **How to contact us in person**

Our Taught Programmes Team is responsible for all aspects of administrative support for all taught programmes in the Faculty, ensuring that services are efficient, effective and adapt to changing circumstances. They provide students with support and advice from registration to graduation and work alongside academic teaching staff in our departments.

Duties include:

- managing administrative processes of the Faculty's taught programmes
- acting as a central point of contact for staff and students seeking advice
- offering programme-related operational support for academic teaching staff in departments

It is important that you get to know the administrators who look after your particular programme, as they can often provide invaluable guidance on various aspects of the programme.

#### **How to contact us remotely**

You can contact us using our shared mailboxes with your enquiries. We are happy to take your calls on Teams if you would like to talk to us, however we may not be able to answer immediately if, for example, we are in a meeting. You can use our shared mailboxes to email us and book in a time when we can call you back.

#### **Do you have an urgent enquiry?**

If your enquiry is urgent, we advise sending an email to the relevant shared mailbox which will be monitored between 9am and 5pm from Monday to Friday.

## **Key contacts/staff list**

Programmes	Teams call/Phone	Mailbox
All postgraduate MSc & MRes Social & Policy Sciences Programmes	Catherine Adams: 01225 38 6817 Sandra Swaby: 01225 38 3643	<a href="mailto:sps-&lt;u&gt;pg-admin&lt;/u&gt;@bath.ac.uk">sps-<u>pg-admin</u>@bath.ac.uk</a>
Director of Studies, MSc International Development programmes	Dr Mathilde Maitrot	<a href="mailto:mm880@bath.ac.uk">mm880@bath.ac.uk</a>
Practicums/Dissertations Coordinator	Dr Aurelie Charles	<a href="mailto:A.Charles@bath.ac.uk">A.Charles@bath.ac.uk</a>
IMC/Extensions	Dr Caroline Hickman	<a href="mailto:sps-imc-ext@bath.ac.uk">sps-imc-ext@bath.ac.uk</a>

### External Examiners

External Examiners are appointed for a course or set of courses and are important in assuring academic quality and standards. Please note that it is not appropriate for students to contact an External Examiner directly. If you have any queries or concerns, please contact your Director of Studies in the first instance.

The External Examiner for your programme is **Dr. Vasudha Chhotray Associate Professor, School of International Development, University of East Anglia.**

### The University's expectations of students

#### University regulations

When you registered with the University you agreed to abide by the Regulations for Students. These are important documents which set out the roles and responsibilities of both you as a student and the University. **You are expected to familiarise yourself with these.**

#### Attendance expectations

**You are expected to be in attendance and participate in all scheduled learning and teaching activities required by your course.** If you are ill or are likely to be ill for more than three days, please contact:

Your Personal Tutor – Touseef Mir [tm2227@bath.ac.uk](mailto:tm2227@bath.ac.uk) , or Director of Studies – Mathilde Maitrot [mm880@bath.ac.uk](mailto:mm880@bath.ac.uk)

## Learning and Teaching delivery

### Timetables

Using [MyTimetable](#), you can access your personal timetable and download it into an electronic calendar. MyTimetable updates regularly, so should there be a change to your timetable, it will be reflected.

Any ad hoc changes to your teaching schedule will be conveyed to you via the Announcement forums on Moodle and /or relayed by email using course and unit mailing lists.

### Learning resources, Moodle, and recorded lectures

All learning resources are provided in Moodle. You can find this information on the Moodle page for each unit you are studying.

### Option choices

If your course has option choices, then information about [how and when to choose your optional units](#) can be found online. If applicable, you will receive an email notification at the relevant point in the year when online unit selection is available. If you want to discuss your option choices, please contact your Director of Studies.

### Placements and placement support

The University is committed to enhancing students' vocational outcomes and learning experiences by supporting placements. We have a dedicated placements team to support and guide you through the process of applying for, securing and successfully completing a placement.

The contact details for your Placements Manager and Placement Tutor for the Practicum can be found at:

<https://www.bath.ac.uk/teams/faculty-of-humanities-social-sciences-placements-team/>

**If you have any queries or concerns, then please contact the placements team.**

Students have the option of completing a dissertation or practicum (work-based project). The practicum involves an 8-week work placement. The process for identifying placement opportunities will be explained to students early in Semester 1. Students who opt to write a dissertation can still organise a placement. This may or may not be linked to a previously agreed dissertation topic. All placement students must have a named placement manager within the host organisation and be approved by the Director of Studies. Where placements require work that is incidental to the programme then the Director of Studies may grant an extension to the deadline for their dissertation and arrange a transfer to part-time registration.

## Research ethics

All MSc International Development students will receive training in research ethics and will be briefed on the department's research ethics policy as they prepare for their dissertation/practicum.

## Student Representation

Mechanisms for student representation are designed to enable you to be an active partner in continually improving your learning and teaching experience. The main ways in which your feedback will be sought will be through:

- Staff/Student Liaison Committees (SSLCs) ([Academic and Faculty Reps](#))
- surveys and evaluations
- [the Students' Union](#)

## Assessment

### Assessment Regulations

The University's New Framework for Assessment: Assessment Regulations: Phases 2 & 3 for postgraduate taught programmes ('NFAAR-PGT') specifies the rules governing progression from one stage of your programme to the next as well as for the award of degrees. The rules cover all areas of assessment, including supplementary assessment and the extent to which failure may be condoned.

If at any time you are in doubt about how NFAAR-PGT provisions apply to your work, please consult your Director of Studies.

This section highlights areas of the University's assessment framework for the type of programme you are undertaking. It explains the regulations that govern your assessment and outlines how the University makes decisions concerning your progression through your programme and award. Complete information is available in the [NFAAR-PGT document](#).

The full NFAAR-PGT, and definitions of terms used in it, are available online.

## YOUR PROGRAMME AND HOW YOU ARE ASSESSED

Within a programme of study, there are *compulsory units* (i.e. those units in a programme which must be taken by every student registered on the programme), and there may also be *optional units* (i.e. those units students may choose from a range of options).

**In the Programme and Unit Catalogues, there are links to the relevant appendices of the NFAAR-PGT which state exactly how the assessment rules operate for each stage of your programme.**

The following points will help you to understand how the assessment rules relate to your specific programme, such as pass marks, averaging of marks and dealing with any failures:

Firstly, there are several references below to the persistent generic rules on the extent of any failures of units permitted overall. The rules are that you can only (1) fail and retrieve units, or (2) marginally fail units and have them condoned, within set limits. Breaking these rules results in failure of the programme.

- Your programme has Designated Essential Units (DEUs) which you must pass to gain the award you seek; even marginal failure in these units cannot be condoned.
- Your programme is divided into stages, but does NOT have Stage Required Units (SRUs) that must be passed before being permitted to progress to the next stage. This means that, if you are required to undertake supplementary assessment, it will only have to be completed before the end of the programme. You must also never break one of the persistent generic rules.
- Should you fail to qualify for the award of the degree of Master, you may be considered for the award of a related Postgraduate Diploma or Postgraduate Certificate (subject to your having met the requirements for one of those awards).

The normal pass mark for a unit is 40%. In some units, you might need to achieve a threshold mark in one or more component assessments in order to pass the unit overall. Particular rules apply to failure of units of the 'Taught type', or in the 'taught' stages. They are as follows:

- If you fail any DEUs, you will have to undertake supplementary assessment – unless you have failed so many DEUs that you fail outright or the attempted retrieval would break the rule on how much failure can be retrieved.
- If you fail any non-DEU units badly (i.e. achieve less than 35%), you will have to undertake supplementary assessment – unless you have failed so many units that you fail outright or the attempted retrieval would break the rule on how much failure can be retrieved.
- If you fail only non-DEU units marginally (i.e. achieve 35%-39%), you might be able to progress without supplementary assessment. Whether you do progress will depend on the total credit value of the failed units.

Dissertation/Project units have their own special rule on failure: only cases of marginal failure (i.e. 35%-39%) will be given permission for attempted retrieval through supplementary assessment, and any resubmission that is permitted for marginal failure must be made within a specified period. Ultimately, you must pass a Dissertation/Project unit (or have an average of at least 40% for them if there are more than one) for satisfactory completion of the requirements for Dissertation/Project elements.

Your unit results are combined as follows to make overall assessment/award decisions:

- The Taught Stage(s) Average (TSA) will be calculated by taking the credit-weighted average of marks for all units required to contribute to the taught stage(s), or by taking the credit-weighted average of marks for all units defined as of 'Taught type' required to contribute to the programme.

- The Dissertation/Project Average (DPA) will be calculated by taking the credit-weighted average of marks for the unit(s) required to contribute to the Dissertation/Project stage(s), or by taking the credit-weighted average of marks for the unit(s) defined as of 'Dissertation/Project type' required to contribute to the programme.
- The Overall Programme Average (OPA) will be calculated by taking the credit-weighted average of marks for all units required to contribute to the programme.

### **Calculating your degree outcome**

A Board of Examiners will decide at appropriate points whether you are continuing to meet the requirements for the programme (including not breaking persistent generic rules whereby you can only fail and retrieve, or marginally fail and have condoned, units within set limits), and/or whether you have met all the requirements for your target award or any alternative that might be available. The outcomes will depend on both your performance in individual units and your overall performance. Generally, if you pass each of your units, you will progress and, in due course, be recommended for an award.

If you fail units beyond certain credit values, or you fail some too badly, you might break one of the persistent generic rules whereby you can only fail and retrieve, or marginally fail and have condoned, units within set limits, and this will result in failure of the programme – without any opportunity for supplementary assessment. (Further information on supplementary assessment is provided below.)

The criteria for making awards with distinction or with merit are described in the relevant NFAAR-PGT rules (paras. 78-80).

### **Supplementary assessment**

'Supplementary assessment' is the term normally used for an opportunity given to a student to retrieve failure before starting the next stage of a programme, or by the end of the programme if it is a single-stage programme or the failed units are not Stage Required Units (SRUs).

[Academic year dates](#), including the supplementary assessment period, can be found online.

Each unit's method of supplementary assessment is shown in the online Unit Catalogue.

At supplementary assessment, students will normally have the opportunity to gain credit for units they successfully passed and to have the mark gained reported to them for feedback purposes, but a maximum mark of 40% will be awarded and used in the Overall Stage Average, the Overall Programme Average, the Taught Stage(s) Average, and any award calculation.

If you pass all your supplementary assessments, you will be able to progress onto the next stage of your programme and/or, as appropriate, be considered for an award. If you do not pass them all, the outcome will depend on your overall performance including consideration

of the rules about passing particular types of units and the persistent generic rules (as set out above).

#### Exit awards

If you leave the University early, without completing your course, you may be eligible for an exit award. You will find information on these awards in your course specification.

#### Switching courses

If you are considering transferring to a different course, where this would be permitted, you should speak to your Director of Studies in the first instance. In certain circumstances you may be able to or may be required to transfer onto a specific alternative course, known as a Designated Alternative Course/Programme (DAC/P) if you have not met the criteria to remain on your current course of study.

Academic Registry have also published [further information and guidance on assessment arrangements](#). This also includes a link to the [University's Academic Integrity Training and Test](#). **All students will be unable to progress beyond the next progression point in their studies until they pass the test.** The test has a pass mark of 85% but you can take the test as many times as you need to.

#### [Individual Mitigating Circumstances \(IMCs\)](#)

We acknowledge that you may experience circumstances that disrupt your assessment attempt or performance. Submitting an IMC claim allows you to report any conditions which prevented you from taking assessment or significantly impaired your performance. If accepted an IMC recognises that your assessment was affected.

**You are expected to familiarise yourself with the information available about IMCs** including the process for submission, the evidence requirements, how claims are considered and what can (and cannot) happen if a claim is accepted as valid.

#### Coursework

Assignment briefs, word counts and deadlines

#### Submission deadlines

Submission deadlines for coursework can be found in Unit Handbooks and on the Moodle page for the Unit. Make sure you read the Unit Handbooks carefully to understand the assessment requirements; each unit has its own requirements. These can vary from online only submission to having to hand a hard copy of a particular piece of coursework

It is important that you make sure you have the correct submission information which also includes the correct deadline date and time. Please note that if you are taking units from outside the department, they also may have different requirements to your own department, so it is extremely important to check this.

## Word counts

Coursework tasks will normally have a word limit or word range. This, and the penalty for non-compliance, will be confirmed when you receive an assignment. You will be expected to hand in all assessed coursework and dissertations/projects by a specified date and time. This is to ensure fairness to all students.

## Feedback on assessment

During your course, you will receive feedback on your assessed work. This feedback may take different forms, depending on the subject and type of assessment. You will be informed of the timing and nature of the feedback you will receive on each assessment, including whether the piece of work itself will be returned to you. You can discuss feedback you receive on assessments alongside your performance and progress in your studies at meetings with your Personal Tutor.

Anonymous marking applies for most Postgraduate units in the Department of Social and Policy Sciences, with the exception of the dissertation/practicum, which is double-marked by two members of academic staff. Methods of feedback vary according to assessment type, level of study, and your own individual needs. Written feedback will be provided for all assessed coursework and normally within three working weeks after the final submission deadline. Please note that coursework marks are provisional until they are agreed by the Faculty Board of Studies. Exam marks are also released on SAMIS following the meeting of the Faculty Board of Studies. In addition to this, generic feedback on students' performance in a particular exam is provided via unit Moodle pages. Feedback on your overall academic performance is available from your Personal Tutor. Students are encouraged to seek out this holistic feedback after results for each semester are released on SAMIS.

## The Purpose of Feedback

We are committed to providing timely and appropriate feedback to you on your academic progress and achievement. The purpose of feedback is to help you understand (i) the marks or grades you have received for the work submitted, and (ii) how your performance might be improved in future. Feedback therefore enables you to reflect on your progress and plan your academic and skills development effectively. In this respect, feedback, and acting on feedback, is part of the active learning process throughout your programme of study.

## Responsibilities of staff

Staff are committed to providing feedback, consistent with the Department's generic marking criteria, which will aid your academic development. The feedback will help you establish what you have done well and where improvement could be made. Unit conveners will provide clear information on the assessment process, the manner in which feedback will be returned to students, and the grading criteria applied to each assessment. The Department's generic marking criteria is available in the Programme Handbook, on Moodle, and in the Appendix to this document. General coursework submission rules can be found in the Programme Handbook. Unit Handbooks and Moodle pages also provide unit-specific information on coursework submission.

## [Written coursework](#)

Staff are committed to providing written feedback on both formative and summative written assignments within three working weeks of the published submission date. If students require clarification or further feedback, one-to-one sessions can be arranged with the marker.

## [Oral presentations](#)

Staff have a responsibility to explain to students the expected structure and duration of the presentation, as well as the criteria used to assess this form of work. Staff will also explain the form in which students will receive feedback. If the presentation is a summative assessment, written feedback will always be provided. If the presentation is formative, staff might give feedback orally. Feedback will normally be provided within three working weeks of the presentation.

## [Dissertations](#)

All dissertations are double-marked in DSPS. The markers will provide you with joint feedback on this piece of work. Students can also expect feedback from their supervisor on drafts of some parts of their dissertation. Dissertation handbooks detail the amount of material for which supervisors will provide feedback.

## [Student responsibilities](#)

It is in your interest to read and take note of feedback. The feedback does not just explain your mark, but should also guide your further study. As such, you have a responsibility to consider feedback given on your work, to seek to understand it, and to act on it. On receiving your written feedback, if you are unsure of any of the marker's comments, you should take the opportunity to meet with your personal tutor or unit convener to discuss the feedback and ways you can improve your work. It is also your responsibility to locate, understand, and follow the coursework submission rules, including those in other Departments if you are taking a unit outside of DSPS.

## [Coursework extensions](#)

If you find you are facing circumstances that are preventing you from submitting on time you can request an extension to your deadline before the work is due. Short extensions are often granted but occasionally there may be a better measure to support you depending on your individual circumstances and the type of assessment. You will need to give a brief explanation of how your circumstances are impacting on your ability to complete on time. Extension requests require evidence to confirm what has happened and when.

If you are due to submit coursework, you should normally request an extension in advance of the deadline. For all units that you require an extension for you should apply for an extension here: [SAMIS on the Web](#)

General information regarding extensions can be found here  
<https://www.bath.ac.uk/guides/coursework-extensions/>

When you apply for an extension or submit an IMC form, you should detail the nature of the mitigating circumstances and the impact upon your assessments.

You WILL NEED to submit some kind of evidence otherwise your extension request may be rejected. Details about what constitutes sufficient evidence is available here.

- Any Correspondence from University support services/Wellbeing or Staff
- Disability Access Plans (DAPs)
- Statement, correspondence or documents from external, third-party professionals or support services.
- Copies of official documentation
- Copies of correspondence with/from family/friends at the time the circumstances occurred.

That said, if you are unsure about what evidence to submit or you are not able to submit evidence, you can seek advice by emailing [sps-imc-ext@bath.ac.uk](mailto:sps-imc-ext@bath.ac.uk).

We cannot normally grant extensions for other coursework such as group presentations and these would usually be covered by an IMC – please email the Assessments Officer at: [sps-imc-ext@bath.ac.uk](mailto:sps-imc-ext@bath.ac.uk) in the first instance.

#### [Late submission of coursework](#)

To ensure fairness to all students, you will be expected to hand in all assessed coursework and dissertations/projects by a specified date and time, and [there are penalties for submitting work after the specified deadline. If you are experiencing difficulties completing work on time, please seek help before the deadline.](#)

If there are valid circumstances preventing you from meeting a deadline, your Assessments Officer may grant you an extension to the specified submission date. You can use SAMIS to request these. To contact the Assessments Officer please use the email [sps-imc-ext@bath.ac.uk](mailto:sps-imc-ext@bath.ac.uk)

#### [Marking and feedback](#)

We have in place processes to ensure that assessment is conducted and marked in a fair and rigorous manner which upholds the academic standards of the University. You can find further information [on such processes, and their purpose, on our website.](#)

**Marking:** Assessments you will complete during your programme are marked according to:

- *marking criteria (or assessment criteria)* - these are the knowledge, understanding and skills that students should demonstrate in the assessment. They are based on the learning outcomes being assessed
- *marking schemes* - these are detailed descriptions of how specific numbers of marks should be assigned against individual components of an answer within the assessment task

- *grade descriptors* - these are descriptions of the levels of achievement required in order to get a result within a given band of marks (e.g. 70% or more).

**Anonymous marking:** The University has adopted a principle of anonymous marking in order to protect students and staff from bias, and the perception of bias, in the marking process. It applies to all assessment where practicable. It is not possible to mark all coursework anonymously as in some types of assessment the student can be easily identified by the marker (e.g. presentations, group work, laboratory work) or it might not be practical, or in the student interest, to do so. You will be informed when your coursework is to be marked anonymously.

**Moderation:** Both the setting and the marking of assessments are independently checked through a process known as moderation to ensure that questions test the learning outcomes and are set at the right standard, and that marking is consistent and fair. Moderation is conducted by internal examiners and by your External Examiner (see below).

**Boards of Examiners:** Assessment decision-making at the University is the responsibility of Boards of Examiners established at three levels: assessment outcomes go first to *Boards of Examiners for Units*, then *Boards of Examiners for Programmes*, then finally to *Boards of Studies*. Boards of Studies confirm decisions relating to student progression, re-assessment, and the final award. **The assessment marks you are given initially by markers are therefore provisional up until the point when they have been confirmed by the Board of Studies (BoS) for your programme.** An official release date is set when your confirmed results will be made available to you via SAMIS (the University's student records system). An academic appeal can only be made in relation to a confirmed result (see the section in this Handbook on **Academic Appeals**).

## Your course

### Programme and Unit Catalogue

This is where you will find details about individual units for the current academic year. The catalogues also provide links to the relevant assessment regulations.

### Course Specification

Course Specifications set out important key information about your course, including the award title, the intended learning outcomes, and the structure of the course, as well as regulations for meeting the requirements for any exit awards and any agreed exemptions from your Assessment Regulations. You are expected to be familiar with this document and its contents.