

**Programme Specification**

GENERAL INFORMATION	
<i>Programme title</i>	MRes Global Political Economy
<i>Awarding Institution//Body</i>	University of Bath
<i>Teaching Institution</i>	University of Bath
<i>Programme accredited by (including date of accreditation)</i>	Economics & Social Research Council (ESRC), 14/01/11
<i>Subject Benchmark Statement*Subject Benchmark Statement:</i>	n/a for M level
<i>Date of Specification preparation/revision</i>	
<i>Applicable to cohorts</i>	
<i>Programme Approved by</i>	

Synopsis and academic coherence of programme

These four programmes are accredited (14/01/11) by the Economics & Social Research Council, specifically, as part of the larger South West Doctoral Training Centre (ESRC SWDTC) which is one of just 21 DTCs in the UK. The SWDTC is a joint initiative between three universities - Bath,

Bristol and Exeter. *[Many of the other MRes programmes in the Faculty of Humanities & Social Sciences at the University of Bath are also included in the ESRC SWDTC.]*

The SWDTC comprises 17 pathways, each pathway typically comprising a 1+3 study pattern, the '1' being a 12-month MRes programme and the '3' being the MPhil/PhD. Twelve pathways are discipline-specific and one is interdisciplinary (i.e. with no obligatory shared teaching between the universities, although joint activities are encouraged). The remaining four pathways are collaborative + interdisciplinary, i.e. each MRes includes at least one unit taught jointly by the collaborating universities. Progression to an MPhil/PhD at Bath in Economics or Psychology is not available however.

This Programme Specification relates to these four Collaborative MRes programmes offered by

Bath which address the ESRC Strategic Research Challenges set out in the Strategic Plan 2009-

14: Environment, Energy and Resilience; Global Economic Performance, Policy and

Management; Health and Wellbeing; Security, Conflict and Justice. The programmes reflect areas of collective research strength (across two or all three of the universities) that have grown out of broader institutional initiatives.

MRes Health & Wellbeing (*with Bristol & Exeter*) - examines avoidable health problems associated with poor lifestyles and socio-economic inequalities.

MRes Security, Conflict & Justice (*with Bristol & Exeter*) - draws together our combined strengths in security studies with expertise in human rights, conflict and violence, and cultural diversity.

MRes Global Political Economy: transformations & policy analysis (*with Bristol*) - trains doctoral students who can assess the impacts of globalisation both in the short run and longer term using new international data sources and comparative methods.

MRes Environment, Energy & Resilience (*with Bristol & Exeter*) - engages the latest critical thinking on risk management, critical infrastructure, public regulation, policy studies and the environmental sciences.

The overall objective of each MRes is to develop a systematic understanding and critical appreciation of alternative approaches, methodologies and paradigms of research in social and educational enquiry, with some awareness of the application of these approaches in the specific areas of social, educational and political enquiry in which students are specialising, and some ability to identify and investigate their own original research questions.

The overall goal of each MRes is to develop fully trained and competent social science researchers, able to understand and use research techniques appropriate to their subject area and conversant with approaches used by other social scientists. Each programme has a substantial theoretical, qualitative and quantitative core, which provides an essential basis for any working researcher, whether they are doing a PhD or otherwise engaged in research. The training aims to enable students to think through how they can use their knowledge and skills in different contexts and apply them to a variety of problems; and, progressively, to identify their own needs for training. For doctoral students the programme is designed to provide high quality

training, both to enable them to carry out their doctoral research and to equip them to pursue other professional research activities subsequently.

The MRes will do more than provide a student with the necessary foundations for doing a specific PhD. Its larger purpose is to create a craftsman/woman capable of contributing to research projects in any of the main methodologies of the social sciences. A student who goes on from the MRes to do the PhD would utilise and apply some of the craftsman's skills; but the student would be equally equipped to go on then to other types of research projects, also using methodologies quite different from those used for the PhD.

These four MRes programmes, as well as forming important roles within the SWDTC, also contribute to the suite of existing MRes training offered by the Graduate School to its doctoral students during the life of their doctoral programme.

Educational aims of the programme

The Programmes have four broad aims:

1. to review systematically, and to evaluate critically, alternative approaches, methodologies and paradigms of research in social and educational enquiry;
2. to review systematically, and to evaluate critically, the application of these approaches in the specific areas of social and educational enquiry in which students are specialising;
3. to support students, within an active research community, in identifying and investigating their own original research questions;
4. to equip students with the skills to contribute to research projects using any of the main methodologies of the social sciences.

The PG Certificate focuses principally on (aim 1), but offers students scope for some specialist application of what they are studying (aim 2) and, through the Short Research Apprenticeship Project (SRAP), the opportunity to undertake a research enquiry on a modest scale (aim 3). The PG Diploma gives additional scope for appreciation and application of different methodologies of research in the student's specialist field (aim 2); the Large Research Apprenticeship Project (LRAP) gives a more substantial opportunity to undertake a research enquiry of the student's choosing (aim 3). The MRes involves a dissertation which meets (aim 3) on a still more substantial scale. The PG Certificate involves some attention to (aim 4), but this increases with the PG Diploma and the MRes, as a progressively wider range of research methodologies and their applications is critically reviewed.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge & Understanding: 	<p>All students will be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. understand the basic principles of research design and appreciate alternative approaches to research; 2. understand the significance of alternative epistemological positions that provide the context for theory construction, research design and the selection of appropriate analytical techniques. 3. acquire advanced knowledge of interdisciplinary research skills. <p>There are additional Learning Outcomes specific to particular specialisms:</p> <p>MRes Global Political Economy: transformations & policy analysis Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have a deepened and interdisciplinary understanding of social science discourses and methods for analysing global processes of change both generally and in specified policy areas. • be knowledgeable of key contributions to thinking about social, economic and political aspects of the planet as an interdependent social system. • have an understanding of how global and national policy processes interact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intellectual Skills: 	<p>All Students will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. be able to define researchable problems and formulate questions and hypotheses; 2. understand the relationships between, and the rationale for, particular qualitative and quantitative research methods and be able to select appropriate strategies for research and/or evaluation; 3. understand the role of sampling and the relationship between sampling and theory generation; 4. understand and apply concepts of generalisability, validity, reliability and replicability from a variety of standpoints; 5. be competent in questionnaire design, interviewing and survey design, the interpretation of measurement error, data gathering through the Internet; 6. be competent in methods of recording, analysing and interpreting qualitative data, including observation and the interpretation of text; 7. appreciate the strengths and weaknesses of data from primary and secondary sources, and be able to select relevant information and data sources; 8. acquire skills in specific data analysis methods and tools, including appropriate computer packages; 9. be proficient in using data from large scale surveys and qualitative data sets; 10. be able to construct new data sets; 11. be competent in descriptive and inferential statistics and be able to use, model and interpret multivariate statistical data; 12. be competent in the collection, analysis and interpretation of qualitative data using a variety of techniques. 13. be able to carry out high quality and informed research independently 14. be able to communicate research to specialist and non-specialist audiences 15. acquire other relevant skills for the critical evaluation of evidence 16. assess the outcomes of interventions reported by governments and other organisations in their chosen fields of specialisation. <p>There are additional Learning Outcomes specific to particular specialisms:</p> <p>MRes Global Political Economy: transformations & policy analysis Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be able to deal with complex academic economic arguments about global processes both systematically and creatively; • be able to evaluate different discourses of global transformation from different disciplinary perspectives, including through identification and analysis of epistemic communities. • be able to systematically compare and synthesise information produced at sub-national, national and supra-national levels to build a comprehensive understanding of global processes; • be able to demonstrate self-direction and some originality in framing and executing analysis of complex social systems and sub-systems spanning local, national and global levels
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional Practical Skills: 	

	<p>All Students will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. acquire bibliographic skills, enabling them to identify and use library and other bibliographic resources and maintain a personal research bibliography; 2. acquire basic computing skills including word processing, spreadsheets and database management; 3. be able to evaluate research, including undertaking refereeing and book reviews; 4. understand issues posed by social research in relation to ethics, confidentiality and legality (including IPR), and acquire the skills needed in order to respect, consider and attend to the rights of other researchers and research participants; 5. understand the role of data from large scale surveys in public and commercial life; 6. acquire language skills where appropriate. 7. be able to work in team based research contexts, 8. understand the requirements for and be able to engage with policy focussed research , 9. be familiar with the format and mechanisms for the dissemination of research through relevant professional bodies, including conference papers, posters and journal articles, and the process of peer review 10. understand the principles of policy-relevant research – including the development of evidencebased policy. 11. develop good communication skills when delivering material to inter-disciplinary audiences. <p>MRes Global Political Economy: transformations & policy analysis Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have acquired appropriate statistical and econometric skills to carry out quantitative analyses of global problems using standard packages; • be able to utilise problem-solving skills including basic systems analysis to pursue independent research into global social and economic issues, • be able to monitor, evaluate and contribute to globalised policy debates and evaluate how they relate to those at national level and below. • understand the importance of global research and policy networks and how to build them.
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transferable/Key Skills: 	<p>All Students will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. develop writing, presentation and dissemination skills, including Internet-based tools; 2. develop competency in the presentation of research findings to practitioners and lay audiences; 3. develop an understanding of how the media communicates specialist material to lay audiences, and the skills required to engage with the media, such as writing press releases and being interviewed; 4. develop research management skills, including the development of research proposals for external funding, time and resource planning and monitoring, archiving of data and completion of end-of-award reports to sponsors; 5. develop skills in effective team working through collaboration in projects; 6. develop career management skills, including skills in using new technologies for obtaining information about new career opportunities, skills in networking and negotiation, evaluation of personal and career development needs, self-promotion and marketing. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be able to apply and use knowledge and skills in different research or policy contexts; • have advanced understanding of research communication and dissemination; • develop research leadership skills.
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Summary of assessment and progression regulations

NFA - fully compliant

Progression Regulations and Awards

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The Assessment & Progression rules (as with the majority of other masters-level programmes at the University of Bath) are dictated by the University's 'New Framework for Assessment':

Assessment Regulations (NFAAR)' (see <http://www.bath.ac.uk/registry/nfa/nfaar-pgt.pdf>). These have been introduced for all students commencing their studies from 2011/12 onwards (existing students, who started before this date, will retain their existing assessment/progression regulations). Specific regulations for the masters are summarised in Appendix 11 at <http://www.bath.ac.uk/registry/nfa/nfaar-pgt-appendix-11.pdf>.

Details of 'Stage Required Units' and 'Designated Essential Units' can be found in the Programme

Descriptions in Annex 1.

Pass Marks and Marking Schemes

The pass mark for all assessments at the UoBath is 40%, while marks of 60% to 69% indicate merit-level work and 70% or more indicate distinction-level work. However, for those students taking a unit delivered/graded by Bristol or Exeter, a different marking scale is used, such that their pass marks are both 50%. However, it is important to recognise the following:

- the standard of work required to pass is exactly the same as at Bath such that a piece of work achieving a bare pass of 40% at Bath would receive the bare pass of 50% at Bristol or Exeter (it is simply that the marking schemes are calibrated differently).
- Merit- and Distinction-level work will receive the same marks at the three universities such that work receiving 60% at Bath will also receive 60% at Bristol or Exeter).
- (in the case of a Bath student), once work has been marked by Bristol or Exeter (using their marking scheme), marks will be scaled to 'as if they had been marked using the Bath marking scheme. This will enable Overall Stage Averages (used by Boards of Examiners to determine progression and awards decisions) to accurately reflect a uniform marking scheme (and not to be 'inflated' by Bristol/Exeter marking).

A set of common descriptors (known as the MRes Marking Scheme) is used by the MRes markers for all core XX units. All assessed work will be marked by a lecturer and, apart from the Dissertation, a sample of work* will be moderated by an internal moderator (normally the other Unit Coordinator). All Dissertations will be marked by the dissertation supervisor and blind marked by a second marker from within the University. A sample of assessed work for all units and the Dissertation unit will be sent to the External Examiner.

* The sample selected will normally include all fails (below 40%); all Distinctions (above 70%); and at least 10% of assessed work awarded between 40% and 70%. **Schedule for Board of Examiners and Timings of Re-assessment**

Once assessed work has been marked/moderated and viewed by the external examiner, all marks are considered by a Board of Examiners for Units (BEU) – these typically meet at the end of each semester i.e. February and June, and once the dissertation has been completed in November. Once the marks have been officially agreed by a BEU, they are then collated and subsequently considered by a Board of Examiners for Programmes (BEP).

In the case of **Full-Time students**, BEPs meet at the *end* of the taught stage (in June) to make formal progression decisions and in November to make formal award decisions (including progression with resubmitted dissertations, exit with a lesser award, and failing). Interim subBEPs *may* meet at specific point(s) during the taught stage of the programme (typically in

February) to monitor student performance. Supplementary BEPs *may* meet in early September to consider supplementary assessment results taken over the summer.

Condoning and/or supplementary assessment requirements/timings/deadlines will usually be recommended at the full BEP in June and in November. All decisions will be based on the Persistent Generic PGT Rules for the programme (<http://www.bath.ac.uk/registry/nfa/nfaar-pgtappendix-11.pdf>). Whilst final award decisions are normally made at the November BEPs, occasionally where students may have had extensions to their original dissertation deadlines or may have had to submit revised dissertations, final award decisions may have to be made in the June boards (and very occasionally in the February board).

In the case of **Part-Time students**, decisions on condoning and/or supplementary assessment requirements will be made at each June BEP *during* the taught stage (as well as at the *end* of the stage) to avoid the student having to wait until they have completed all their taught units. Any decisions regarding condoning and/or supplementary assessment requirements will be based on the Persistent Generic PGT Rules *for the whole taught stage*

(<http://www.bath.ac.uk/registry/nfa/nfaar - pgt - appendix - 11.pdf>). It should be noted however that, very occasionally, those decisions made *during* the stage may have to be reconsidered at a subsequent BEP, depending on the students' performance during the remainder of the stage, taking into account the timeframe in which supplementary assessment has to be completed. Given the extended durations for dissertations, final award decisions may be delayed beyond the normal November BEP to the following June BEP.

Details of Work Placements Requirements / Work Based Learning / Industrial Training Requirements

Work placements are encouraged on the existing Humanities & Social Sciences MRes

programmes, and students often use placements as part of their SRAP, LRAP and/or Dissertation work. These four DTC programmes offer the same opportunity to students.

The University of Bath leads the management of the Placement Programme on behalf of the

SWDTC consortium of three universities, facilitated through the appointment of a SWDTC Placement Officer. Whilst based at Bath, students draw on the experience of its well-established and successful placement programme for undergraduates, as well as on the experience/contacts at Bristol and at Exeter.

As well as receiving support from the SWDTC Placements Officer, students also receive subject-specific support/guidance from their Director of Studies and/or their academic supervisor. Where placement entails work experience incidental to the programme, the Director of Studies may grant extensions to deadlines (usually dissertation) if this is considered appropriate. However, where the placement is closely aligned with the dissertation, an extension may not be necessary.

All students on placement will be given appropriate preparation and training. This may include ethics support, risk and safety assessment, and language training.

Exact timings of placements will depend on the programme (and the availability) and may fall either during the MRes itself (typically in the summer after the taught component but before or during the dissertation) or later during the MPhil/PhD phase. Examples of programme-specific placement opportunities include:

MRes Global Political Economy: transformations & policy analysis

Relevant placement opportunities may be with a wide range of private companies and non-profit organisations with global clients, affiliates, investments and/or competitors, or who are affected by global regulatory networks. Placements could also be with public regional, national and international organisations engaged in promotional or regulatory activities with global scope in particular sectors. These include regional development bodies, national government departments and multilateral agencies such as the EU and UN system.

Details of Study Abroad Requirements

Details of Professional Accreditation

Admissions Criteria including APL/APEL arrangements

1. Students should normally have a 2.2 or higher first degree or equivalent in an appropriate social science subject, or a 2.1 in an appropriate other subject, or equivalent skills and competencies gained through professional experience.
2. A strong command of spoken and written English is required for all candidates. Those who have not undertaken a first degree delivered in English will be expected to achieve:

- IELTS 7.0 (with not less than 6.5 in each of the four components)

English language training may be offered to help some applicants to obtain this.

3. Accredited Prior Learning or Accredited Prior Experiential Learning (APL or APEL) - exemptions may be offered for up to 12 credits of the Certificate, 24 credits of the Diploma, and

36 credits of the MRes programme, taking account of a student's previous academic and/or experiential learning. Whether the student concerned is then required or permitted to take alternative units in place of those for which exemption has been granted will be for the Director of Studies to decide, taking the particular circumstances into account.

4. A student who has already been awarded the University of Bath PG Certificate in Research or PG Diploma in Research within the particular discipline (within five years of initial registration) may be admitted directly onto the next Stage of the programme, subject to agreement by the Admissions Tutor, payment of the necessary fees and rescinding the previous certificate.

All decisions are subject to agreement by the Director of Studies/Admissions Tutor.

Details of Support Available to Students

These four programmes are accredited by the Economics & Social Research Council, specifically, as part of the larger South West Doctoral Training Centre (ESRC SWDTC) – accredited (21st January 2011) as one of 21 DTC's in the UK. The SWDTC is a joint initiative between three universities – Bath, Bristol and Exeter.

The ESRC's accreditation of masters courses and outlets is part of its quality assurance procedures and is designed to ensure that students funded by the ESRC receive high quality training, supervision and support in an active research environment. The core requirements for ESRC recognition are detailed in the Postgraduate Training Guidelines

(<http://www.esrc.ac.uk/funding-and-guidance/guidance/postgraduates/ptguidelines.aspx>).

Many of the other MRes programmes in the Faculty of Humanities & Social Sciences at the University of Bath are also included in the ESRC SWDTC.

Department and Programme Specific Support Information

1. Initial induction programme to clarify expectations, identify computing training needs, brief students on available learning resources, strengthen group identity and reflect upon diverse learning styles, as well as [Academic Orientation](#) - a resource intended to answer a number of questions that you may have about studying at University.
2. Detailed programme handbook and outlines for each Unit.
3. Each student has a home department and a personal tutor. The personal tutor will meet frequently with the student, to review progress during the Master's year, and to facilitate, where appropriate, the transition from MRes to MPhil/PhD. Access to a wide range of additional staff within the Faculty able to assist in more specialised areas. Staff in these roles will be able to respond to many of the questions and concerns raised by their students. However, there is also a range of specialist student support services that will offer both information and advice to support these staff working with their students, as well as take referrals to work more directly with the students. Students can also self-refer to these services.
4. Support services offer information, advice and support in relation to accommodation, emotional difficulties, assessment of needs and provision of support relating to disability, student funding, general welfare, academic problems, student discipline and complaints, careers, international students, spiritual matters, part time work, security and personal safety. The Students' Union can also provide advocacy for students. More information about these services can be accessed via: <http://www.bath.ac.uk/students/support/>. There are also Medical and Dental Centres, and a Chaplaincy on campus that are very experienced in meeting the needs of a student population, as well as a University nursery and vacation sports schemes are sometimes available for older children during the school holidays.
5. Established student representation – automatic membership of the Student Union, access to representation on departmental Staff/Student Liaison Committees (and other Faculty and University committees). Students' Union also has the AWARE Centre, which provides students with information and *confidential* advice on welfare and representational issues.
6. Access to an extensive range of courses (see <http://www.bath.ac.uk/learningandteaching/student/>), including:
 - a very wide range of workshops, resources and support through the Students' Union SORTED training opportunities offered by the [Students' Union, SORTED training sessions skills for study](#);
 - careers counseling, employer events and job/internship opportunities, the [Careers Advisory Service](#) offers a range of placement preparation and skills training workshops;
 - for those wishing to further develop their English language skills, there is the [Academic Skills Centre](#) which offer a range of opportunities, including a range of credit-rated units, such as *Academic writing for Taught Masters, Formal Academic Spoken English, Seminar Skills & Informal Spoken English, Reading & Vocabulary* and *English for Business*.
1. Membership of a wider academic community (through seminars and social activities) for those engaged in applied social science research and study. As part of the SWDTC, this community is extended across to students/staff in the University of Bristol and University of Exeter.
2. Student internet communications and VLEs (University of Bath uses Moodle).
3. Mutual support among those enrolled together on the programme is also very important, and students are encouraged to develop this, particularly during the induction phase and quarterly organised student lunches.
4. Extensive library, including 24-hour access to computers, the web and many on-line journals and databases.
5. High class sports and arts facilities enable students to develop themselves in an all-round manner.