



HUMAN
RIGHTS
CONSORTIUM

SCHOOL OF
ADVANCED STUDY
UNIVERSITY
OF LONDON

MA in Understanding and Securing Human Rights

hrc.sas.ac.uk

About the degree

The MA in Understanding and Securing Human Rights is the longest-running interdisciplinary, practice-orientated human rights master's degree programme in the UK. It was established in collaboration with Amnesty International to provide scholarly and practical training for future human rights defenders.

Located in Bloomsbury, the intellectual heart of London, it offers students easy access to world-class libraries and facilities, including Senate House Library, the British Library and the British Museum. The degree aims to develop students as human rights practitioners and to enable them to engage with the intellectual and philosophical foundations of human rights.

This programme is:

- Intellectually rigorous, engaging with human rights debates at the forefront of scholarly research
- Career-orientated, aiming to develop the next generation of human rights defenders, advocates and researchers through an emphasis on building practical skills, including campaigning, fundraising, and research—all of which are important for work in human rights advocacy
- Cutting-edge, seeking to widen the frame of human rights debates by looking at emerging issues, such as the impact of environmental destruction on human rights
- Policy-orientated, exploring human rights issues from a practical, solution-based perspective as well as a scholarly one

The degree brings together insights on human rights from a range of disciplines, including law, international relations and sociology. This unique interdisciplinary approach provides students with an extensive and diverse range of perspectives with which to understand contemporary human rights challenges.

Graduates of the MA in Human Rights have gone on to work for an impressive range of organisations, including Anti-Slavery International and the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights.

Students who successfully complete the programme receive a University of London Master of Arts degree.

How will this course benefit me?

For alumni of the programme, the MA has been a crucial investment in their careers as human rights advocates, with many of them finding work shortly after graduating. In the competitive field of human rights, our MA is recognised by recruiters at NGOs for imparting the necessary practical skills that employees will need. Students benefit from being part of a network in which they continue to find support after their studies end, through personal connections with staff and through our alumni network.

Our connections with people from a range of human rights organisations, who often deliver guest lectures, ensure that students are introduced to key contacts throughout their degree, helping them to understand the opportunities in the field and develop networks essential to working in the humanitarian and non-governmental sectors.

Degree highlights

In addition to providing students with the practical skills essential to pursuing a career as human rights practitioners, this degree addresses essential questions and debates within the field of human rights, such as:

- Where do rights come from?
- What are the foundations of and justifications for human rights?
- Can the discourse of rights secure social justice and equality?

We provide individually tailored support in finding internships with human rights organisations in and around London that will complement your studies and professional goals. Our long-standing relationships with a variety of NGOs—including Amnesty International and Minority Rights Group International—and our experience with the application and interview process give our students a competitive edge when applying for internships.

We run an annual one-week study tour to Geneva in the summer term that includes visits to the United Nations as well as meetings with human rights advocates inside and outside the UN framework, enabling students to learn from a wide range of experienced individuals and to build their personal networks.

Students also benefit from being able to participate in the activities and events of the Human Rights Consortium, either by attending its wide range of conferences and seminars, or by getting involved in the Consortium's research projects or human rights blog. Many students have found this interaction a unique opportunity that helps them build a career in human rights as they study.

Structure

The degree comprises four compulsory modules, including a dissertation and three optional modules.

Core modules (three in autumn term, dissertation in summer term)

- Understanding Human Rights I: Ideas and Contexts [10 ECTS]
- Securing Human Rights I: Actors and Mechanisms, Skills and Strategies [10 ECTS]
- Translating Human Rights into Law I: The Foundations of International Human Rights Law [10 ECTS]
- Dissertation (15,000 words) [30 ECTS]

Optional modules (three in spring term)

- Understanding Human Rights II: Genocide, Gross Human Rights Violations and Reconciliation [10 ECTS]
- Securing Human Rights II: Securing Human Rights in Development and in Conflict [10 ECTS]
- Translating Human Rights into Law II: Topics in International Human Rights Law [10 ECTS]
- The Politics of Human Rights in Latin America [10 ECTS]
- Researching Human Rights: Social Research Methods [10 ECTS]
- Business and Human Rights [10 ECTS]
- Indigenous Peoples, Minorities and Human Rights [10 ECTS]
- Citizenship and New Social Movements in Latin America [10 ECTS]
- Human Rights and Everyday Life in Latin America [10 ECTS]

Please note that the list of modules is indicative and may be subject to change.

How you study

This degree can be taken full time over one year or part time over 24 months or 36 months.

Students undertaking the MA part time over 24 months will complete three modules each academic year. Part-time students undertaking the MA over 36 months generally take one module per term; this mode of study is particularly suitable for students undertaking full- or part-time work during their studies.

Part-time students may undertake more than one internship (in both years and/or during the summer between their first and second years).

Entry requirements

The normal minimum entrance requirement is a First or Upper Second Class Honours degree from a university in the UK or an overseas qualification of an equivalent standard.

We will consider applications from candidates who do not meet the formal academic requirements but who offer alternative qualifications and/or relevant experience.

For complete information on entry requirements, please visit sas.ac.uk/graduate-study/entry-requirements.

Assessment

The MA is assessed through essays and examinations and through work similar to that produced by professionals in the human rights field, including legal reports, a media project and a mock funding proposal. Class participation also forms an element of the MA assessment.

Course summary

Degree structure

The degree comprises four compulsory modules, including a dissertation, and three optional modules.

Mode of study

12 months full time | 24 or 36 months part time

Fees 2017–18

Home and EU students: full time, £7,960 | part time 24 months, £4,540 |
part-time 36 months, £3,120

Overseas students: full-time, £14,100



Lecturing and teaching

The MA convenor is Dr Corinne Lennox, Senior Lecturer in Human Rights. Other core lecturers include Dr Damien Short (Reader in Human Rights), Dr David Cantor (Reader in International Human Rights Law), and Dr Sarah Singer (Lecturer in Refugee Law). Their research interests include caste-based discrimination, ecocide, environmental destruction and human rights, genocide, international human rights law and the rights of indigenous peoples and minorities. In addition to their scholarly expertise, our academic staff have been and continue to act as human rights advocates, practitioners and consultants, and their teaching draws on their extensive experience.

Lecturers for the optional modules bring a wealth of experience and interdisciplinary perspectives to the MA. In previous years, they have included Dr Julian Burger, who worked at the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights for more than 20 years, during which he was the head of the Indigenous Peoples and Minorities Programme, and Dr Lucy McMahon, who teaches modules focused on human rights in Latin America in the spring term.

The programme is enriched by an extensive range of guest lecturers, including academic specialists and human rights practitioners who offer practical perspectives on a number of topics. In previous academic years the course has benefited from the insights of representatives from Amnesty International, Christian Aid, Freedom from Torture and the Red Cross, among others. Speakers from NGOs are able to provide practical, policy-oriented perspectives on the impact of human rights norms and policies on the ground, thus providing different insights into the practicalities of human rights work.

The experience of our staff, plus the insights of human rights practitioners, means that the degree stays current with new developments in the field.

Why choose this degree?

- If you want to work in the field of human rights, or are currently working in the field and wish to develop your career, this degree is particularly suitable for you as it is designed to develop students as human rights professionals. This degree situates human rights theory firmly within current affairs, using case studies to consider the causes and consequences of human rights violations.
- Students benefit from small class sizes, so you can learn, debate and discuss ideas in a friendly and open environment while receiving individually tailored feedback on your work. Our lecturers are accessible and arranging meetings to discuss aspects of the course is actively encouraged.
- We provide a stimulating experience for our students that helps them achieve their intellectual and professional goals. Our student satisfaction rate has averaged 92 per cent over the last three years.
- We prioritise practical experience as much as theoretical knowledge. Over the course of their degree, students are provided with access to a wide range of human rights representatives from organisations across London through guest lectures, evening seminars, international conferences and international study tours.
- This degree is interdisciplinary, meaning that your understanding of human rights will be broad, complementary and inclusive, beyond the approach of any single discipline. This will enable you to understand the theoretical, legal and political, and practical aspects of human rights implementation at national and international levels, and to translate human rights theory into transformative practice working for human rights.

Learn more

For details of entry requirements, tuition fees, funding opportunities, English language requirements, disability support, accommodation and how to apply, please consult the School graduate study webpages. Detailed course descriptions and information about assessment are available on the Institute's graduate study webpages.

School graduate study webpages:

sas.ac.uk/graduate-study

Institute graduate study webpages:

hrc.sas.ac.uk/graduate-study

The **Human Rights Consortium** (HRC) at the School of Advanced Study brings together multidisciplinary expertise across a range of areas within human rights, including ecocide, the impact of environmental destruction on human rights, indigenous rights, international refugee law and securing rights for LGBTI people worldwide. The HRC acts as a national and international collaborative centre to support, promote and disseminate academic and policy work in human rights and hosts a number of seminars and research-led conferences on different themes in human rights throughout the academic year.

The **School of Advanced Study** is the UK's national centre for the support and promotion of research in the humanities. Located at the heart of the University of London in Bloomsbury, the School provides an unrivalled scholarly community in which to pursue postgraduate study and research. Students learn from leading specialists in their fields, hone their research skills in highly regarded training programmes, expand their knowledge through an extensive calendar of events, and become part of a worldwide network of humanities scholars. Funding opportunities include AHRC-sponsored London Arts and Humanities Partnership studentships, SAS studentships, and a number of subject-specific bursaries and awards.

For further information on the range of programmes we offer, please visit our website or contact us at:

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Please note that the information in this leaflet was correct at the time of its production in February 2017 but that the University of London reserves the right to alter or withdraw courses and amend other details without prior notice.

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