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Development masters programs

The Master of Development Studies gives you specialist training in the fields of development and environment, development and gender, development and urbanisation, and health policy and development. In your studies, you'll tackle some of the most urgent and important issues affecting modern development - including debt and poverty, microfinance, culture and human rights, migration and transnationalism, food and environmental security, civil society organisations, and gender relations. You'll engage firsthand with insights from experts. You'll refine transferable skills that are crucial to delivering effective and inclusive development programs, including: Critical analysis, Communication, Cross-cultural understanding, Research methods, Project design, Project management, Teamwork. At professional practice seminars, research workshops, careers events, and alumni get-togethers, you can rub shoulders with top-notch policy makers and experts in the international development sector. You'll also have opportunities to undertake an exchange or study abroad with one of our esteemed global partners under the Melbourne Global Mobility program, or take an internship placement with a domestic or international development agency. You can specialise in the optional Gender and Development stream, which guides you through gender and development theory while tackling the practical concerns of planning for gender in development projects within government and non-government organisations. Who is the Master of Development Studies for? Our Master of Development Studies is for anyone who wants to think about and implement creative solutions to the challenging and evolving field of development by understanding the needs of all walks of life - from an inner-city office to an isolated village. Explore global poverty solutions with our MSc in International Development. Combine theoretical and practical teaching, gain critical insights, and receive personalised support from expert faculty in a supportive and diverse academic community. Position yourself to drive positive, sustainable change and make a significant impact on global poverty reduction, advancing your career and shaping the future. This course will run over 12 months in a full-time mode. There is also scope to undertake the programme on a part-time basis for Home students. Students will study one 20-credit core module focused on development theories, their historical and contemporary applications in economic, social, and political contexts as well as case studies. The remaining 100 credits are chosen from our list of International Development optional modules. Examinations will take place throughout the term as coursework, written exams and/or presentations. Combine theory and practical skills to address global poverty with our MSc International Development. Tailor your learning with diverse optional modules and receive dedicated support from experienced multi-disciplinary specialists and gain practical experience through overseas fieldwork opportunities. Benefit from our esteemed global reputation and diverse student body from all backgrounds, resulting in fostering a range of perspectives. Develop essential skills for careers in government, NGOs, and more, within an inclusive academic setting that promotes collaboration and networking. Blend theory and practical skills to effectively address global poverty challenges. Choose from diverse optional modules to tailor your degree to your interests and career objectives. Receive guidance from experienced multi-disciplinary specialists throughout your academic journey. Engage with a diverse student body, fostering a wide range of viewpoints and enhancing opportunities. International Development Department in the UK for research which impacts on society. REF 2021 Teaching will utilise a range of learning methods, including short lectures, problem solving, role play and group work. Lectures: Academics give organised talks to large groups of students who take notes, less interactive. Seminars: Small group sessions designed to complement lectures and are generally more informal in nature. They give you the chance to discuss issues with fellow students and allow for more interaction than a traditional lecture. Workshops: Workshops are for smaller groups, but instead of discussion, students might learn about a tool or a technique that they will be required to know about for their course. They are usually more hands-on learning that allow discussion regarding the given topic. To gain a place at Birmingham you will need to meet our general entry requirements, as well as those specific to your course. Your application will be reviewed by the course's Admissions Tutor, who will decide whether your application should receive an offer. Additional requirements for Upper 2:1 Honours degree or equivalent in a relevant field. Or Lower 2:1 Honours degree with excellent work experience. Standard Entry Requirements: An upper second-class Honours degree or equivalent from an approved university or an equivalent professional qualification in a relevant field (the equivalent US Grade Point Average is 3.2) or A lower second-class Honours degree from an approved university with excellent work experience. Adequate capacity in written and spoken English. Degrees from all disciplines are considered and a candidate's work experience can also be taken into consideration. If you are an international student, you will need to demonstrate you have a suitable level of English proficiency, usually through the form of an IELTS or equivalent qualification or a Pre-sessional English course. For this course we require IELTS 6.5 with no less than 6.0 in any band, which is equivalent to: TOEFL iBT overall with no less than 21 in Reading, 20 Listening, 22 Speaking and 21 in Writing Pearson Test of English (PTE): Academic 67 with no less than 64 in all four skills Cambridge English: C1 Advanced - minimum overall score of 176, with no less than 169 in any component Language Cert ESOL SELT (UKVI): B2 'Communicator' with no less than 33 in each skill If you have a conditional offer for Birmingham where English is a requirement, you can take a Pre-sessional English course as an alternative to retaking IELTS or a similar qualification. We offer on-campus courses all year round starting from September including additional online courses in the summer term. Teaching takes place in small classes with no more than 18 students to maximise class participation. Pre-sessional English course Fees information for: Full-time Part-time We charge an annual tuition fee. Fees for 2025 entry are above. The fees quoted are for one year only. For those studying courses that are longer than one year, tuition fees will also be payable in subsequent years of your programme. Paying your tuition fees can either be paid in full or by instalments. You can check whether you are eligible for UK or international fees with our admissions team. Learn more about postgraduate tuition fees and funding. Postgraduate taught courses fees International students undertaking a postgraduate taught degree are required to pay a tuition fee deposit before an electronic Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) can be issued. Scholarship information for: To help with the cost of studies, this loan is available to all UK students. You can use this loan towards fees, maintenance or other costs at your own discretion. It's available for all full-time, part-time and distance learning Masters programmes, as long as you don't already have a Masters qualification (or equivalent). If you're a student from Wales, Scotland or Northern Ireland, you can apply for Masters loans from your country's government. To help you afford your studies, we've put more than £33 million into student support and scholarships. We also offer a range of advice on searching for funding and managing your finances. Explore scholarships and funding We want to welcome the brightest talent to our postgraduate community. That's why our Birmingham Masters Scholarships award £3,000 to more than 300 students each year. Birmingham Masters Scholarship To apply for a postgraduate programme, you will need to submit your application and supporting documents online. Standard requirements for Application deadline for UK and non-visa requiring applicants. We will close applications as soon as the programme is full. Early applications are encouraged. Application Fee For international applicants this programme is subject to a £50 non-refundable application fee. At the end of the application form, before you can submit it to us, you will be required to pay, or indicate how you will pay the required fee in order for us to process your application. Please complete and submit your application before paying your application fee. Personal Statement Entry to this programme is highly competitive and as a result your application and personal statement will be closely scrutinised by our Admissions Tutors. Please ensure that you spend some time familiarising yourself with the programme modules and outcomes. Personal Statements should be relevant to the programme and how you believe it will enable you to achieve your career goals. Our MSc in International Development will equip you to tackle global poverty with a deep understanding of development theories and practical approaches. Whether you aim for roles in international organisations, government, NGOs, or consultancy, our programme offers flexibility and expert support to tailor your studies. Benefit from hands-on fieldwork experiences, a diverse academic community, and comprehensive skills in critical analysis, governance, and effective communication—essential for shaping the future of policies and initiatives worldwide. Get ready for tomorrow, with advice, guidance and opportunities at every step of your studies. From developing new skills to preparing for a PhD, our Careers Network can help you gain an advantage in the job market or advance in your field. Whatever you plan to do after your degree, the Careers Network offers a range of events and support services including networking opportunities, career coaching, one-to-one guidance, careers fairs and links with leading graduate recruiters. We also offer subject-specific careers consultants and a dedicated careers website for international students. Careers and employability Find out why we are the most targeted UK university by top graduate employers (High Fliers report, The Graduate Market 2024) by meeting some of our successful alumni. Meet our graduates Our International Development MSc combines interdisciplinary training in subjects including development theory, political economy, and social policy, with applied country and region-based case studies. Skip to content Sustainable development is increasingly critical in a shrinking world, requiring practitioners able to link an interdisciplinary skill set and philosophy. Through the master's degree in the field of global development practice you: Develop a holistic understanding of human health risks, socio-ecological system dynamics, technological innovations, and economic approaches to advance sustainable development. Identify and challenge assumptions, seek alternatives, determine solutions, and engage organizations to think and behave differently. Leverage local knowledge within a global context. Learn with and from a global network of development professionals. Harvard Extension School is a member of the Global Association of Master in Development Practice and meets the association's standard of core development practice competencies. Our program is one of the only MDP programs in North America to offer a primarily online curriculum. Customizable path, stackable certificates, & experiential learning instructors who are global development practitioners & Harvard University faculty Personalized academic & career advising Entrepreneurial opportunities through the Harvard Innovation Labs Peer community, including the Global Development Practice Club Harvard Alumni Association membership upon graduation Our curriculum is flexible in pace and customizable by design. Study part time, choosing courses that fit your schedule and align with your career goals. You'll complete core foundation courses on theory and practice, explore a wide variety of topics through elective courses, and complete a capstone project. Primarily asynchronous courses are offered during the fall, spring, January, and summer terms. Sample Courses: Global Development: Theory and Practice Foundations of Sustainable Development Practice Case Studies in Development Economics A One Health Approach to Global Sustainable Development Just Transitions to Net Zero: Navigating the Complexities of Decarbonizing Energy Systems Sustainable Cities You'll take this course in person, executing the development action plan for an industry partner that you created in the pre-capstone course. Choose between an accelerated or standard pace. An online course with an intensive weekend on campus in the spring A 3-week summer session The path to your degree begins before you apply to the program. First, you'll register for and complete two courses for admission, earning at least a B in each. These foundational courses are investments in your studies and count toward your degree. We also offer an alternative admissions pathway: the MTX MicroMasters® Program Pathway. Admission Course Preview ENVR E-101 Proseminar: Introduction to Graduate Studies in Sustainability and Global Development Next Start Term: Fall 2025 You can enroll in your first admission course this fall. Course registration opens in mid-July. Explore the degree requirements, confirm your initial eligibility, and learn more about our unique "earn your way in" admissions process. Explore Admissions & Degree Requirements Through our learner-centered approach, students define problems, engage with stakeholders, evaluate evidence, determine priorities of action, and deliver an implementable plan. Upon successful completion of the required curriculum, you will receive your Harvard University degree — a Master of Liberal Arts (ALM) in Extension Studies. Field: Global Development Practice. Download: Global Development Practice Master's Degree Fact Sheet 36 Average Age 1-2 Courses Taken Each Semester 77% Work Full Time 100% Would Recommend the Program 47% Professional Experience in the Field Most Pursuing for Career Change Graduates of our Global Development Practice Master's Program work in a variety of roles and organizations. Our alumni hold such titles as: Community Agribusiness Advisor Director of Strategic Development Financial Leadership Development Program Analyst Project Engineer Research Analyst Our alumni work at a variety of leading organizations, including: Peace Corps Manna Project International Feinstein Institute for Public Service The Leap Agency Santander Bank Career Advising and Mentorship Whatever your career goals, we're here to support you. Harvard's Mignone Center for Career Success offers career advising, employment opportunities, Harvard alumni mentor connections, and career fairs like the online All Ivy Environmental and Sustainable Development Career Fair. Your Harvard University Degree Upon successful completion of the required curriculum, you will earn the Master of Liberal Arts (ALM) in Extension Studies. Field: Global Development Practice. Expand Your Connections: the Harvard Alumni Network As a graduate, you'll become a member of the worldwide Harvard Alumni Association (400,000+ members) and Harvard Extension Alumni Association (29,000+ members). After earning my degree, I became more qualified for the kind of jobs I wanted to be doing in the next phase of my career. It also allowed me to move more freely across the different thematic issues under the sustainable development framework, which I couldn't do before. Master of Liberal Arts in the field of Global Development Practice '21 Affordability is core to our mission. When compared to our continuing education peers, it's a fraction of the cost. Our Tuition (2024-25 rate) \$3,340 per course Average Tuition of Peer Institutions \$4,330 per course Average Total Cost \$40,080 After admission, you may qualify for financial aid. Typically, eligible students receive grant funds to cover a portion of tuition costs each term, in addition to federal financial aid options. Learn more about the cost of attendance. Professionals in this space tackle challenges affecting people, economies, and climates globally. They may tackle issues of access and inequality, particularly in developing countries. They develop and implement strategies and solutions to improve agriculture, education, governance, human rights, communication technology, safety, security, and humanitarian assistance. What is a master's degree in development practice? Master's degree programs in global development practice, or development practice, involve an interdisciplinary approach to addressing challenges in sustainable development. The program is designed for development practitioners, policy administrators, educators, and private sector professionals tasked with addressing sustainable development problems. The Harvard Extension School graduate program meets the Global Association of Master in Development Practice's standard of core development practice competencies. To understand the differences between sustainability and global development, read Sustainability vs. Global Development Practice — Which One is Right for You? How Long Does It Take to Complete the Global Development Practice Graduate Program? Program length is typically between 2 and 5 years. It depends on your preferred pace and the number of courses you want to take each semester. For an accelerated journey, we offer year-round study, where you can take courses in fall, January, spring, and summer. While we don't require you to register for a certain number of courses each semester, you cannot take longer than 5 years to complete the degree. In our MA programme, you'll immerse yourself in cutting-edge theories and lively debates within the field of development studies. You'll be equipped to effectively apply this knowledge to address real-world challenges in development and catalyze social change. Majors The Majors form an important part of the MA programme in Development Studies. The courses are closely related and are designed to give students deeper insight and a higher level of competence in their field of study. Students write their research paper under the guidance of staff with relevant expertise. You must choose one major when applying for our MA programme. The Master of Arts in Development Studies at the International Institute of Social Studies offers a strong academic foundation coupled with hands-on training in essential theories and methodologies vital for the field of development studies. Designed for those aiming to kickstart or elevate their careers in development, our programme provides a holistic framework for both academic rigor and practical skill development. Why this study In our MA programme, you'll immerse yourself in cutting-edge theories and ongoing debates within your field. Through rigorous study, you'll not only master these concepts but also cultivate the skills to adeptly apply them to real-world challenges in development and social change. Programme overview There are currently no events specifically for this Study programme. Find out everything you need to know at one of these (online) events. All our education events Numerous candidates pursuing an MA at ISS transition from their prior roles in search of fresh challenges within the academic or developmental spheres. Upon completion, some of our MA graduates opt to further their academic pursuits by pursuing a PhD, while others gravitate towards opportunities in local and international development. Humanitarian efforts, civil society, or public service. For additional details, kindly explore our ISS Career Services page. This could be your future Abbas now heads into her MA thesis with two different research paths in mind. She says, 'I have a lot of different things that I am interested in like gender fluidity in pre-colonial India and how it was policed with the onset of colonization. I am also looking at transgender rights in Pakistan today. Recently, we had a legal act passed two years back which guaranteed some fundamental rights, so one idea I have is to look at the politics of citizenship and identity in Pakistan regarding transgender identities. It was quite funny because after hearing about gender fluidity, my supervisor advised me to narrow down my [thesis] topic, but I ended up expanding it even more!' 'I feel motivated to continue working [in the fields] of social justice and inclusion.' Abbas, jovial and multifaceted, has a bright future ahead. And, she keeps busy, to say the least. She is currently undertaking an internship as a creative researcher at a local science and cultural museum in The Hague in combination with doing her master's thesis. She is keen on any opportunities arising as they come, but she knows that her career path will be rooted in inclusion and social justice efforts: 'I am a Muslim, but I also belong to a minority sect in my country, the Shiite community. Although it is the largest minority group in Pakistan, there is a lot of discrimination and marginalisation against the community. Even regarding other communities, I feel motivated to continue working [in the fields] of social justice and inclusion.' Interested in our programmes after hearing Fatima's story? Learn more about our MA in Development Studies programme. Choosing a study is quite a challenge! Still in doubt about this study and want to have a good overview? Receive a clear digital brochure for this study. Request brochure Get the latest student and graduate news straight to your inbox. Use our tool to find your perfect course. Answer a few questions and we will do the rest! Start Matching Our expert teams are here to help start your academic journey by guiding you through the application process. Know More