# PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION: MSc African Development

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| **1.** | **Awarding Body** | LSE |
| **2.** | **Details of accreditation by a professional/statutory body,  e.g. ESRC; BPS etc** | None |
| **3.** | **Name of final award** | MSc |
| **4.** | **Programme Title** | African Development |
| **5.** | **Duration of the course** | 12 months |
| **6.** | **Based in the Department/Institute:** | International Development |
| **7.** | **Relevant QAA subject benchmark statements** | N/A |
| **8.** | **UCAS Code** | L8UA |
| **9.** | **First written/last amended** | *September 2014* |

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| **10.** | **The programme aims to:** |
| 1. provide advanced post-graduate education and training in the interdisciplinary field of Development Studies in a research-active environment and one that also brings together students from a wide variety of backgrounds (so helping to stimulate the learning by students from each other): 2. to provide students with the skills either to engage in further academic research or to work in the wide range of careers concerned with problems, issues and policies facing developing countries and in particular on the continent of Africa. 3. The aim of the MSc African Development is to provide interdisciplinary skills and knowledge to post-graduate students looking for high level careers in public, private and voluntary agencies related to the management processes at both national and international levels.   The programme aims to provide students with the knowledge and skills set required to assist Government, Aid, NGO or other organisations with problem solving, resolution and strategy. These are necessary requirements for organisations planning to meet the wide variety of different needs of any developing country. | |

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| **11.** | **Programme outcomes: knowledge and understanding; skills and other attributes** |
| * Have an understanding of the historical evolution of thinking about development and of the major theoretical, methodological and policy debates about the development process in both the academic literature and the world of development practice; * Understand the links between political, economic, administrative and social/cultural variables that determine the relationships between states, markets and society, and between global, national and local level structures in the humanitarian emergencies process; * Understand the meaning of scientific method, the major epistemological debates among those who work on development the principles of data collection and analysis, the key ethical and legal issues related to research, the advantages and disadvantages of qualitative and quantitative methods as well as those of rapid rural appraisal and participatory research common in the development field; * Be capable of embarking on interdisciplinary research either in their place of employment or, in the case of those who achieve excellence, a PhD programme; Students who complete the MSc African Development will often already have had some experience in development work before studying, and should in particular: * Be able to reassess their experience and problems of programme and project implementation, as well as processes of institutional and organisational reform, (or for those who have not yet had practical experience, have a critical appreciation of these problems and processes) with insights provided by new developments in institutional and organisational theory; * Be able to undertake rigorous analysis of the factors that determine effective performance in the organisations (public, private and voluntary) which societies use to provide people with the goods and services on which their welfare depends. | |
| **12.** | **Teaching, learning and assessment strategies to enable outcomes to be achieved and demonstrated** |
| **Teaching and learning strategies:**   * International Development communicates with all students offered places before they come to the School informing them of recommended preliminary reading, induction activities within the department, pre-sessional courses offered within the Department and School, as well as any late changes in course offerings or organisation. * All courses incorporate dedicated lecture series of from 18-20, 1.5 hour weekly lectures (10 for half unit courses). This is a longer lecture period than is usual in the School, in recognition of the range and diversity of the material covered in the courses. * A specific feature of the interdisciplinary programme is team teaching which has the advantage of providing students with a variety of expertise and a number of voices. * All courses offered by International Development also hold 1.5 hour weekly seminar classes where every effort is made to ensure that classes have a maximum of 15 students. * Each course gives students the opportunity to write and receive detailed written feedback as well as a grade on one formative essay (1500-2000 words) written in answer to specific questions on specific parts of the syllabus. Students are also given a talk about study skills in the Pre-Sessional Induction Workshop and are given advice when it is required by their supervisors. * All of the courses offered in International Development give students at least two to three opportunities to make an oral presentation to small class seminars and to participate in discussion and debate under the guidance of an experienced class teacher. * Information on academic staff interests is included in the Student Handbook as well as at Orientation. Students are informed they will be able to sign up to the academic adviser of their choice via Moodle. If there are no spaces left for a specific academic adviser, then students will need to sign up with someone else. Students who fail to sign with anyone, are allocated to an adviser who has available spaces. Advisers all post between 2-3 office hours per week and students can sign up as often as they like to discuss topics related to their research, general issues related to the course, as well as questions, problems or criticisms of the programme.   **Assessment strategies:**   * All courses are examined through unseen examinations in the Summer Term (with the exception of [DV428](http://www.lse.ac.uk/resources/calendar/courseGuides/DV/2013_DV428.htm): Managing Humanitarianism) and the results of these examinations as well as students dissertations are an important indicator, along with student feedback, external examiners’ reports and alumni surveys. Each exam is evaluated ‘blind’ and independently by two internal examiners. Most courses now contain an element of continuous assessment based on essays submitted, commonly in conjunction with class presentations. | |

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| **13.** | **Programme structures and requirements, levels, modules and awards** |
| [MSc in African Development](http://www.lse.ac.uk/resources/calendar/programmeRegulations/taughtMasters/2014_MScAfricanDevelopment.htm) | |

**Additional information**

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| **14.** | **Criteria for admission to the programme** |
| Applicants with a background in any subject will be considered, although a first degree in a social science or humanities subject would be an advantage. It is usually required that students should have at least good upper second class honours or a GPA of 3.5 or above; but these requirements may be relaxed for candidates with significant, relevant or professional experience.  Appropriate experience will be taken into consideration in applicants’ personal statement. Applicants are expected to include an indication of a potential trajectory of work that will be important to managing development programmes or public services or activities that are directly or indirectly relevant to the alleviation of poverty. | |
| **15.** | **Indicators of quality** |
| Quality is regularly assessed through centrally administered teaching evaluation at the end of each course; and in addition International Development conducts its own mid-term evaluations covering the same terrain and to provide more specific feedback. The results of the centrally administered TQARO exercises show that between 2006/07 and 2010/11 the general level of teaching in the MSc programmes has been consistently higher than “very good”. External Examiners’ reports attest to both the quality of the curriculum, by comparison with other institutions, and the quality of the work done by students. For example, the External Examiner for MSc Development Management stated in one of his reports “I have nothing but praise for the programme….You should be very proud”.  International Development are very oversubscribed for their current offering of MSc programmes:   * MSc Development Management (4:1) * MSc Development Studies (4.4:1) * MSc International development and Humanitarian Emergencies (3.3:1)   MSc Development Management 2008 2009 2010 2011 2012  All Applications (1 + 2 choice) 476 505 566 513 540  Actual registrations 77 72 80 71 73  Over/undershoot -3 -6 +7 -2 0  Demand 3.75 3.6 3.6 3.65 4  3.72 average demand    MSc Development Studies 2008 2009 2010 2011 2012  All Applications (1 + 2 choice) 773 828 605 660 633  Actual registrations 107 104 90 78 68  Over/undershoot 19 16 2 -2 -12  Demand 5.05 5 5.2 4.3 4.4  5.56 average demand  MSc International Development  And Humanitarian Emergencies 2011 2012  All Applications (1+2 choice) 246 218  Actual registrations 38 48  Over/undershoot 8 8  Demand 4.2 3.3  3.75 average demand | |

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| **16.** | **Methods for evaluating and improving the quality and standard of teaching and learning** |
| Teaching quality is regularly assessed both by the centrally administered TQA and by the Department of International Development’s own evaluations. The Student-Staff Liaison Committee is another conduit for regular feedback from students. The curriculum is subject to annual review by External Examiners and through regular review by members of staff in International Development. Methods of assessment are similarly reviewed by External Examiners and by the International Development faculty | |