

This is a programme offered through the University Graduate College. It offers an excellent environment in which to exchange ideas and experiences across disciplinary boundaries within the social sciences.

The MSc in Social Science Research Methods aims to provide advanced training in research methods across the full range of the social sciences. Students are provided with a thorough theoretical and practical knowledge of how to construct effective research studies, of the variety of data collection methods available to the social scientist and of the principal methods of analysing social scientific data. They are also introduced to the political and ethical frameworks within which social science research is conducted; and to some of the ways in which the results of social science research are disseminated.

The Programme is recognised by the ESRC as appropriate training for PhD research.

Course Aims

The course pathways have ESRC recognition and they each provide the appropriate training basis for proceeding to a PhD. These programmes provide extensive opportunities for interdisciplinary study, the application of social research expertise for occupational career development, and the pursuit of substantive areas of interest at Masters level. The programmes also provide knowledge and expertise suitable for careers in research and development, business, market studies, public agencies at international, national and local levels, education, teaching and other public services work, and voluntary organisations.

Course Description

This programme offers an opportunity to develop analytical skills, an interdisciplinary knowledge base, and a practical understanding of research fields. The areas covered reflect the teaching and research expertise of the School.

Students may apply for one of six pathways through the MSc/Diploma in Social Science Research Methods. The various pathways are:

- Education
- Social Policy
- Social Work
- Criminology
- Sociology
- Science and Technology Studies

Taught modules are divided into core modules (Research Design; Quantitative and Qualitative Methods; Contemporary Social Theory; Study Skills), and Specialist Modules (depending on the pathway - these include Evidence and Evidence-Based Policy and Practice; Critical Debates in Education; Strategies and Methods in Criminological Research; Theories and Issues about Globalisation; Strategies for Applied Research; Social Policy Analysis and Research), and a wide range of Optional Modules.

Period of Study

The period of study is twelve months (October - September). The taught coursework takes place over two semesters (October - June). The dissertation is begun in the second semester but is completed during the summer months. The summer is a period of independent research with one to one supervision.

Dissertation

On successful completion of the coursework component, students prepare a dissertation (of a maximum 20,000 words) to be submitted by mid-September.

Special Features

The MSc will take one year to complete on a full-time basis, and will usually take two years if studied part-time. Students studying for the Diploma are not required to submit a dissertation.

Taught by research-active staff, including internationally renowned scholars in qualitative and quantitative methods

Entry Requirements

A good first degree or a recognised equivalent qualification. Non-graduates will be considered if they can demonstrate, through some recent and relevant professional experience, that they have the ability to undertake the course. Where English is not the applicant's first language, we do require a minimum IELTS score of 6.5 or above (including a score of at least 6.5 in the reading element and 6.0 in the writing element).

This course is suitable for graduates in social science and cognate disciplines including sociology, politics, critical psychology, education, social policy and social work, criminology, management and business studies, history, area studies, geography, pedagogy, public administration, industrial and employee relations, and law.

Note: International students pursuing part-time programmes of study are not eligible for Tier 4 (General Student) visas and must have alternative leave to remain in the UK if they intend to study at the University in person.