

# MA Global Political Economy

## Programme Specification

**Awarding Institution:**

University of London (Interim Exit Awards made by Goldsmiths' College)

**Teaching Institution:** Goldsmiths, University of London

**Final Award:** MA Global Political Economy

**Programme Name:** MA Global Political Economy

**Total credit value for programme:** 180 credits

**Name of Interim Exit Award(s):**

Postgraduate Certificate in Global Political Economy

Postgraduate Diploma in Global Political Economy

**Duration of Programme:** 1 Year Full-Time or 2 Years Part-Time

**UCAS Code(s):** Not applicable

**HECoS Code(s):** (100489) International Politics

**QAA Benchmark Group:** Not applicable

**FHEQ Level of Award:** Level 7

**Programme accredited by:** Not applicable

**Date Programme Specification last updated/approved:** October 2022

**Home Department:** Politics and International Relations

**Department(s) which will also be involved in teaching part of the programme:**

Political Economy Research Centre

## Programme overview

We are living in the age of the Anthropocene. Our world is marked by intersecting crises of economy, ecology, inequality and insecurity and we need to build an intellectual response. Too often academic textbooks separate out 'the economic', 'the political' and 'the environmental' into distinct dimensions. Yet there can be no separation; societies organised by market relations are political all the way through. The study of Global Political Economy at Goldsmiths is a call to examine the world as it is in real life, not as it is imagined in textbooks.

The programme will trace the unsteady making of the capitalist world, its relation to the environment, and the theories we have developed to make sense of it. Students will gain a rigorous understanding of the global capitalist economy by examining the evolution of the international monetary and trading system, and its recurrent crises. They will also be introduced to the canonical GPE literature and its critiques.

Global capitalism has also radically transformed the natural environment. We will explore this relation between economy and ecology and make it core to how we study political economy. By doing this, we shall examine how new forms of politics and power – both progressive and regressive – are emerging to reshape our world.

This interdisciplinary MA is based in the Department of Politics and International Relations, and will also draw upon the expertise of scholars affiliated with the Political Economy Research Centre, Centre of the Understanding of Sustainable Prosperity, and scholars from the Department of Sociology, Anthropology, and Media, Communications and Cultural Studies.

Students will be taught by staff with international reputations in their disciplines and their areas of specialisation, which include finance, global governance, international development, post-colonialism, and imperialism.

## **Programme entry requirements**

A minimum of a second-class Bachelor's degree from a UK or overseas qualification of an equivalent standard is required. We will consider applicants with a background in any subject, although a degree in a social science or humanities subject, such as politics, economics, sociology, anthropology, history, cultural studies, journalism, would be an advantage. Non-native speakers of English will be expected to possess an IELTS score of 6.5, or equivalent. However, consideration may also be given to students without an academic background in a relevant subject area if they have professional experience in this area or are able to demonstrate their ability and commitment to the pursuit of a programme of rigorous academic study.

## **Programme Learning Outcomes**

You will develop a body of knowledge, and a set of cognitive skills enabling you to explain and critically analyse contemporary debates on Global Political Economy and emerging forms of politics and power across the world. Students are required to develop skills that will enable them to contribute to this body of knowledge, but which will also be of use in a broader range of professional contexts, particularly related to global governance and global justice.

Students exiting the programme with a Postgraduate Certificate in Global Political Economy should be able to:

## Knowledge and understanding

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
A1	Critically evaluate competing perspectives on key episodes of capitalist development.	Global Capitalism: Theory and History
A2	Evaluate key debates in empirical fields related to global political economy.	Global Capitalism: Theory and History Optional modules

## Cognitive and thinking skills

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
B1	Develop the analytic skills for identifying and analysing problems arising in the global political economy.	Global Capitalism: Theory and History
B2	Acquire a knowledge of broader political and historical contexts of capitalism, such that the empirical and conceptual knowledge gained can be applied to non-academic contexts.	Global Capitalism: Theory and History Optional Modules

## Subject specific skills and professional behaviours and attitudes

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
C1	Identify and critically evaluate competing theoretical discourses on the working of the global political economy and connect this to contemporary political movements.	Global Capitalism: Theory and History

## Transferable skills

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
D1	Demonstrate to a very high level a range of transferable skills such as 'communication skills, skills of initiative and personal responsibility', decision-making and 'the independent learning ability required for continuing professional development'.	Global Capitalism: Theory and History Optional Modules

D2	Develop analytic skills and empirical knowledge that can be utilised in a wide range of academic and non-academic settings.	Global Capitalism: Theory and History Optional Modules
D3	Hone the ability to present academic arguments to a variety of audiences.	Global Capitalism: Theory and History Optional Modules

In addition to the learning outcomes above, students exiting the programme with a Postgraduate Diploma in Global Political Economy should be able to:

### Knowledge and understanding

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
A1	Critically evaluate competing perspectives on key episodes of capitalist development.	Global Capitalism: Theory and History The political economy of The Anthropocene Optional Modules
A2	Demonstrate understanding of the history of capitalist development and use this to critically evaluate contemporary discourses of global political economy.	Global Capitalism: Theory and History The political economy of The Anthropocene Optional Modules
A3	Identify key theoretical discourses about the Anthropocene and connect these to key perspectives on political economy.	Global Capitalism: Theory and History The political economy of The Anthropocene Optional Modules

### Cognitive and thinking skills

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
B1	Develop the analytic skills for identifying and analysing problems arising in the global political economy.	Global Capitalism: Theory and History The political economy of The Anthropocene Optional Modules

B2	Acquire a knowledge of broader political and historical contexts of capitalism, such that the empirical and conceptual knowledge gained can be applied to non-academic contexts.	Global Capitalism: Theory and History The political economy of The Anthropocene Optional Modules
B3	Develop the analytical skills to critically evaluate and scrutinize academic and policy material on ecological crisis.	The political Economy of The Anthropocene

### Subject specific skills and professional behaviours and attitudes

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
C1	Identify and critically evaluate competing theoretical discourses on the working of the global political economy.	Global Capitalism: Theory and History Optional modules
C2	Develop critical responses to key theoretical discourses about the political economy of The Anthropocene.	The Political Economy of The Anthropocene
C3	Demonstrate the capacity to connect and critically evaluate the debates about political economy to competing understandings of the politics of The Anthropocene.	Global Capitalism: Theory and History The political economy of The Anthropocene Optional modules

### Transferable skills

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
D1	Demonstrate to a very high level a range of transferable skills such as 'communication skills, skills of initiative and personal responsibility', decision-making and 'the independent learning ability required for continuing professional development'.	Global Capitalism: Theory and History The political economy of The Anthropocene Optional modules
D2	Develop analytic skills and empirical knowledge that can be utilised in a wide range of academic and non-academic settings.	Global Capitalism: Theory and History The political economy of The Anthropocene Optional modules

D3	Hone the ability to present academic arguments to a variety of audiences.	Global Capitalism: Theory and History The political economy of The Anthropocene Optional modules
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In addition to the learning outcomes above, students exiting the programme with a MA in Global Political Economy should be able to:

### Knowledge and understanding

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
A1	Critically evaluate competing perspectives on key episodes of capitalist development.	Global Capitalism: Theory and History The Political Economy of The Anthropocene Optional modules Dissertation
A2	Demonstrate understanding of the history of capitalist development and use this to critically evaluate contemporary discourses of global political economy.	Global Capitalism: Theory and History The Political economy of the Anthropocene; Optional modules Dissertation

### Cognitive and thinking skills

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
B1	Demonstrate the ability to work critically in the production of an original research project.	Global Capitalism: Theory and History The Political Economy of The Anthropocene Optional modules Dissertation

### Subject specific skills and professional behaviours and attitudes

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
C1	Identify and critically evaluate competing theoretical discourses on the working of the global political economy.	Global Capitalism: Theory and History The Political Economy of The Anthropocene Optional modules Dissertation

## Transferable skills

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
D1	Capacity to undertake substantial independent research projects in a timely fashion.	Dissertation

## Grading Criteria (postgraduate)

Mark	Descriptor	Specific Marking Criteria
80-100%	Distinction (Outstanding/ Exceptional)	Through both the form and content of the writing the student has produced an exceptionally accomplished piece of work and exhibited an exceptional grasp of the knowledge, understanding and skills described in the learning outcomes of the module. The writing exhibits an exceptional understanding of the key concepts and issues that attend the topic addressed. It is superbly focused and demonstrates an exceptional understanding of the scope of the thesis advanced. The thesis is built through extensive, balanced and exceptionally sound research, acute critical analysis and highly fertile interpretations of the issues and ideas raised. This is linked to clear and highly creative thinking producing an exceptionally original, ambitious and insightful piece of writing. The writing is impressively well formed, well structured, well expressed, cogent and lucid. The work is communicated and presented in an exemplary, imaginative and engaging way without sacrificing clarity.
70-79%	Distinction	Through both the form and content of the writing the student has evidenced an excellent grasp of the knowledge, understanding and skills described in the learning outcomes of the particular module. The writing exhibits an excellent understanding of the key concepts and issues that attend the topic addressed. It is intensely focussed and demonstrates an excellent understanding of the scope of the thesis advanced. The thesis is built through balanced and extremely sound research, acute critical analysis and fertile interpretations of the issues and ideas raised. This is linked to clear and creative thinking producing an original, ambitious and insightful piece of writing. The writing is extremely well formed, well structured, well expressed, cogent and lucid. The work is communicated and presented in an extremely imaginative and engaging way

		without sacrificing clarity.
60-69%	Merit	A good piece of work that shows, in form and content, that the student has a good grasp of the knowledge, understanding and skills specified in the learning outcomes of the module. Key concepts and issues that attend the topic have been identified and addressed in good measure in the writing. The writing is focused and demonstrates a good understanding of the scope of the thesis advanced. The research, critical analysis and interpretations of the issues and ideas raised are of high quality, with coherent and sound ideas. They demonstrate a certain level of ambition and show some insight and originality. The form, structure and expression of the writing is of a good standard and the thesis is well articulated and persuasive. The work is well communicated and presented.
50-59%	Pass	A competent piece of writing that shows that the student has a fair grasp of the knowledge, understanding and skills described in the modules' learning outcomes. The writing exhibits some understanding of some of the key concepts and issues that attend the topic. A reasonable attempt has been made to focus the thesis and to engage with its implications and scope. The research, critical analysis and interpretations of the issues and ideas raised are adequate, with some ideas advanced and an adequate level of coherence. The work is straightforward and descriptive, demonstrating a minimal level of insight and originality. The form, structure and expression of the writing are of an adequate standard and the thesis is competently articulated. The work is adequately communicated and presented.
30-49%	Fail	The work may not be without merit but is not of Masters level. The knowledge, understanding and skills described in the Modules' learning outcomes for the most part have not been attained. The work is ill conceived and poorly considered. The work is not of a satisfactory standard in either what it sets out to express or in how it expresses it. The writing is deficient in a number of ways, such as: key concepts not being identified and/ or addressed; research being minimal or non-existent; ideas being poorly formulated and/or substantiated; the writing being unfocussed with irrelevant and inappropriate material included. Organisation and presentation are poor.
10-29%	Bad fail	The work is not of masters level. The knowledge,



		understanding and skills described in the Modules' learning outcomes have not been attained. The range of sources is very limited. There is little interpretation or analysis and a lack of breadth or awareness of contextual framework. The work demonstrates weak organisational structure, lacking in discussion and commentary and has unfocused/ incoherent argument. Presentation demonstrates incorrect scholarly procedures.
1-9%	Very bad fail	Work has been submitted but is too insubstantial to merit a bad fail.
0%	Non submission or plagiarised	Non submission.

## Mode of study

On this programme students can attend workshops, lectures and seminars to introduce ideas and concepts related to specific topics and will be encouraged to discuss and debate the issues raised. This will enhance academic knowledge of the subject, as well as improve communication skills. For each hour of taught learning students are expected to complete another 6.5-9 hours of independent study. This typically involves carrying out required and additional reading, preparing topics for discussion, or producing research projects. The emphasis is on independent learning, developing independent perspectives and ideas and finding evidence to support these. This requires excellent motivation and time management skills. Learning and teaching on this degree will take place through:

- Core lectures will highlight key aspects of the subject and provide the content and framework for group seminars.
- Seminars linked to core lectures, will enhance students' knowledge and understanding of a subject area. They will provide an opportunity for students to clarify their understanding of particular theoretical, practical and methodological themes and topics.
- Workshops will combine the lecture and seminar form through a three-hour, interactive discussion where the workshop leader will introduce the material through a short lecture at the beginning and summarise the discussion through a shorter lecture at the end.
- Presentations will provide students with opportunities to display and/or present their work that reflects the development of their knowledge and understanding. These forums are structured to provide an exploratory arena for constructive feedback.
- Online learning through the VLE will support the methods described above, and comprise of research material for lectures, seminars, briefs and other programme related material.

Throughout the programme, students will be encouraged to make use of the support provided by the Learning Resources team, subject librarians and the events hosted by the Political Economy Research Centre, as well as events hosted by other Units and Centres across the College. These will be introduced to students as part of the first compulsory module and will provide an important ongoing resource as they develop greater independent design and research capacities over the course of the programme.

## Programme structure

Students undertaking this programme are required to do the following modules:

- Global Capitalism: Theory and History (30 credits) Autumn Term
- The Political Economy of the Anthropocene (30 credits) Spring Term
- Dissertation (60 credits) Summer Term

Optional:

- 60 credits of Optional Modules to be taken from within the Department (or across the College upon request)

## Full-time mode

Module Title	Module Code	Credits	Level	Module Type	Term
Global Capitalism: Theory and History	PO71039C	30	7	Compulsory	1
The Political Economy of The Anthropocene	PO71056C	30	7	Compulsory	2
Dissertation	PO71020C	60	7	Compulsory	2-3
Modules to the value of 60 credits chosen from a list provided annually by the Department of Politics and International Relations	Various	60	7	Optional	1,2

## Part-time mode

### Academic year of study 1

Progression Requirements – Part-time candidates will be required to have passed the compulsory module before proceeding to the second year

Module Title	Module Code	Credits	Level	Module Type	Term
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Global Capitalism: Theory and History	PO71039C	30	7	Compulsory	1
Modules to the value of 30 credits chosen from a list provided annually by the Department of Politics and International Relations	Various	30	7	Optional	1-2

## Academic year of study 2

Module Title	Module Code	Credits	Level	Module Type	Term
The Political Economy of The Anthropocene	PO71056C	30	7	Compulsory	2
Modules to the value of 30 credits chosen from a list provided annually by the Department of Politics and International Relations	Various	30	7	Optional	1-2
Dissertation	PO71020C	60	7	Compulsory	2-3

## Academic support

Support for learning and wellbeing is provided in a number of ways by departments and College support services who work collaboratively to ensure students get the right help to reach their best potential both academically and personally.

All students are allocated a Personal Tutor (one in each department for joint programmes) who has overall responsibility for their individual progress and welfare. Personal Tutors meet with their student at least twice a year either face-to-face, as part of a group and/or electronically. The first meeting normally takes place within the first few weeks of the autumn term. Personal Tutors are also available to students throughout the year of study. These meetings aim to discuss progress on modules, discussion of the academic discipline and reports from previous years if available (for continuing students). This provides an opportunity for progress, attendance and assessment marks to be reviewed and an informed discussion to take place about how to strengthen individual learning and success.

All students are also allocated a Senior Tutor to enable them to speak to an experienced academic member of staff about any issues which are negatively impacting their academic study and which are beyond the normal scope of issues handled by Programme Convenors and Personal Tutors.

Students are provided with information about learning resources, the [Library](#) and information available on [Learn.gold \(VLE\)](#) so that they have access to department/ programme handbooks, programme information and support related information and guidance.

Taught sessions and lectures provide overviews of themes, which students are encouraged to complement with intensive reading for presentation and discussion with peers at seminars. Assessments build on lectures and seminars so students are expected to attend all taught sessions to build knowledge and their own understanding of their chosen discipline.

All assessed work is accompanied by some form of feedback to ensure that students' work is on the right track. It may come in a variety of forms ranging from written comments on a marked essay to oral and written feedback on developing projects and practice as they attend workshops.

Students may be referred to specialist student services by department staff or they may access support services independently. Information about support services is provided on the [Goldsmiths website](#) and for new students through new starter information and induction/Welcome Week. Any support recommendations that are made are agreed with the student and communicated to the department so that adjustments to learning and teaching are able to be implemented at a department level and students can be reassured that arrangements are in place. Opportunities are provided for students to review their support arrangements should their circumstances change. The [Disability](#) and [Wellbeing](#) Services maintain caseloads of students and provide on-going support.

The [Careers Service](#) provides central support for skills enhancement, running [The Gold Award](#) scheme and other co-curricular activities that are accredited via the Higher Education Achievement Report ([HEAR](#)).

The [Centre for Academic Language and Literacies](#) works with academic departments offering bespoke academic literacy sessions. It also provides a programme of academic skills workshops and one-to-one provision for students throughout the year.

## **Employability and potential career opportunities**

Graduates of the MA Global Political Economy can expect to enter a wide range of careers, from researching for international organisations and political parties, working for NGOs, progressing further in academia, entering into journalism or writing.

This programme helps students develop their critical and analytical abilities as well as a great number of practical sought-after skills and competencies.

Students will be equipped with the necessary expertise to develop a personal professional practice where they can expect to operate in roles such as researcher in public, private or

third sector. The programme also supports students who wish to further develop their design practice or research interests in an academic setting, for example students who wish to continue their postgraduate training at MPhil/PhD level or fulfil other research roles.

This programme also aims to support students in developing the five overarching categories of skills as outlined by the 'Goldsmiths Graduate Attributes' model in the following ways:

### **Problem Solving Skills**

1. Critical and Analytical skills (taught by all modules): Students will be encouraged to creatively and critically engage in debates relating to the global political economy demonstrating an advanced level of conceptual thinking. There is emphasis on a critical and analytic approach to conducting research and producing outcomes across all teaching formats (lectures, seminars, workshops), and linked to the learning outcomes of compulsory and option modules.
2. Numeracy and literacy (taught by all modules): Literacy is emphasised throughout the programme through the production and analysis of research data, essays and reports required for assessment in the various modules.
3. Creativity (taught by all modules): Creativity is core to this programme and is linked to critical and analytic skills throughout in written work. Creativity is fostered in relation to questioning and critiquing theoretical perspectives; inventive and creative approaches to research material.

### **Business and Entrepreneurial Skills**

1. Computer literacy (taught by all modules): The programme supports the development of computer literacy through the implementation of emerging digital media. Practically, students will be using computers as part of their day-to-day design work including presentations, reports and essay writing, presentation and communication in Keynote or equivalent, as well as Online journaling in the form of blogs and twitter. Students will also be required to use Goldsmiths VLE.
2. Initiative (taught by all modules): Initiative is supported and encouraged in all areas of the programme through identifying and undertaking research, formulating inventive research techniques and methods, initiative demonstrated in written coursework, including reviewing and analysing relevant literature and the initiative to link theoretical perspectives with policy institutes and programmes.
3. Negotiation skills (taught by all modules).
4. Teamwork (taught by all modules): The programme provides various opportunities for teamwork including group seminars, workshop sessions as well as public events.
5. Leadership skills (taught by all modules): The programme will support the development of leadership skills in relation to group-based seminar and workshop sessions.
6. Diplomacy (taught by all modules): Students will be asked to respond to each other's

work throughout the programme. In doing so they will be encouraged to practice sensitivity and diplomacy in providing critical reflection on other students' work.

7. Empathy (taught by all modules): The programme encourages students' empathy in interactions with fellow students and research settings as well as a commitment to socially and ethically responsible design outcomes for producers, users and stakeholders. Empathy is assumed to be a critical aspect of all design interventions and outcomes.

## **Interpersonal Skills**

1. Planning and organisational skills (taught by all modules): Skills associated with devising, planning and organising practice-based outcomes will be practiced in all modules. Planning and organisational skills will also be fostered as students manage the undertaking and delivery of assessed work.
2. Time management (taught by all modules): See Planning and Organisational skills.
3. Reflection (taught by all modules): Students will be encouraged to reflect critically on their own work and that of their fellow students throughout all modules in the programme.
4. Self-motivation (taught by all modules).

## **Communication Skills**

1. Articulation (taught by all modules): Students will develop various approaches to articulating outcomes of their research. Articulation will also be practiced in written work and oral presentations conducted throughout the programme.
2. Presentation skills (taught by all modules): The development of presentation skills subtends the programme as a whole with regular oral presentations to their peer group as well as presentation skills associated with engagements with research and other settings.
3. Persuasiveness (taught by all modules): Students will develop the ability to present arguments for innovative concepts with clarity and confidence.

## **Programme-specific requirements**

All taught postgraduate degrees have a minimum total value of 180 credits and involve one calendar year of full-time study. Some programmes may extend over more than one calendar year and, when this is the case, they have a higher total credit value. Programmes are composed of individual modules, each of which has its own credit value. Part-time students normally take modules to the value of 90 credits each year. If a programme has a part-time pathway, the structure will be set out in the section "How the programme is structured" above. Normally, all modules are at level 7 of the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications.

More detailed information about the structure and requirements of a Goldsmiths degree is provided in the [Goldsmiths Qualifications and Credit Framework](#).

## **Tuition fee costs**

Information on tuition fee costs is available at: <https://www.gold.ac.uk/students/fee-support/>

## **Specific programme costs**

Not applicable