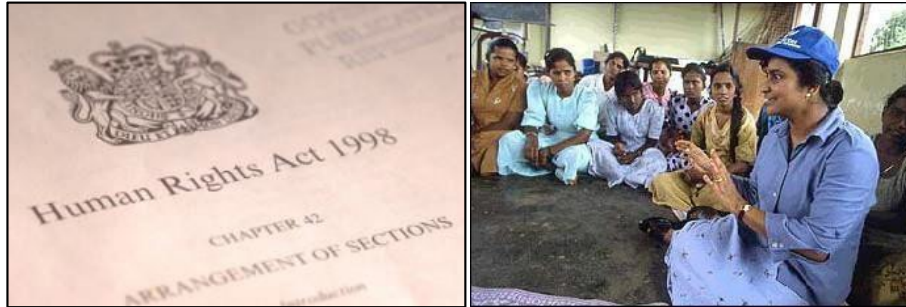


# MA Understanding and Securing Human Rights



## MA staff

**Professor Damien Short** [Damien.short@sas.ac.uk](mailto:Damien.short@sas.ac.uk)

Modules: Understanding Human Rights, Genocide and Reconciliation, Researching Human Rights: Social science research methods, Environmental Justice, Business and Human Rights (Subject to numbers), Human Rights in Latin America

**Dr Corinne Lennox** [corinne.lennox@sas.ac.uk](mailto:corinne.lennox@sas.ac.uk)

Securing Human Rights I and II, Indigenous Peoples, Minorities and Human Rights

**Dr Bronwen Manby** [Bronwen.manby@sas.ac.uk](mailto:Bronwen.manby@sas.ac.uk)

Translating Human Rights into Law, Topics in International Human Rights Law

Student Officer – [taught.degrees@sas.ac.uk](mailto:taught.degrees@sas.ac.uk)

## Programme Structure

All students must complete a minimum of three compulsory modules and three optional modules, plus the dissertation, in order to fulfil the requirement for the MA. In addition, students may wish to select one extra optional module (equalling 10 ECTS) and / or the internship (20 ECTS) for additional credit, totalling between 100 and 120 credits.

One module = 12.5% of the MA final grade (10 ECTS)

Six modules = 75% of the MA final grade (60 ECTS)

Dissertation = 25% of the MA final grade (30 ECTS)

If an additional optional module is taken (for an extra 10 ECTS), the final taught average is calculated from the three compulsory modules and the three optional modules with the highest grades.

The internship is not given a grade and is marked only as a pass or fail (extra 20 ECTS).

## Auditing Modules

All students are welcome to audit modules (i.e., attend without the intention to be assessed) but must ask the module convenor's permission first.

## Choosing Your Optional Modules

Optional modules run in the spring term. Students are required to select a minimum of three optional modules. Students will be invited to sign-up to optional modules in the Autumn term. It is possible for students to audit optional modules in the first week of the spring term, before finalising their choices. If a student wishes to change their module choices after the second week of term a written request must be submitted for approval by the MA teaching staff.

Please note that the internship can be taken on a non-assessed basis, in which case it is unaccredited. **If the internship option is taken on an**

**accredited basis (for 20 ECTS credits), this must be in addition to the minimum requirement of six taught modules (three compulsory and three optional). NB: the internship is awarded a pass or fail but no marks, so it will not affect your overall grade.**

### **Part-time study**

Students have the option to study the MA full time over one year, or part time over two or three years. Taking the MA over three years is known as Part Time Plus (PT+).

**Part-Time Students:** In the first year, part-time students start in the autumn term with the compulsory modules: Understanding Human Rights and The Foundations of International Human Rights Law. In the spring term of the first year, part-time students can then select to take either one or two optional modules. In year two, part-time students start in the autumn term with the compulsory module: Securing Human Rights I followed by either one or two optional modules in the spring term. Please note that Securing Human Rights II is only available as an option in the second year.

**Part-Time Plus Students:** In the autumn term of each year PT+ students start with the compulsory modules: Understanding I in the first year, The Foundations of International Human Rights Law in the second year, and Securing Human Rights I in the third year. In their first spring term, PT+ students will be able to take all optional modules apart from Translating Human Rights into Law and Securing Human Rights II. In the spring term of the second year, students will be able to take all optional modules apart from Securing Human Rights II. In the third year, there will be no restrictions on the modules PT+ students can take.

All students, whether full-time, part-time or PT+ must complete a minimum of three compulsory modules and three optional modules. Part-time and PT+ students may undertake more than one internship, e.g. in both years and/or during the summer between years one and two. The dissertation is to be completed over the summer of the second year in the case of part-time students and in the third year in the case of PT+ students.

MA Modules	ECTS Credits (90 Required)	Compulsory [C] or Optional [O]	Term
<i>Understanding Human Rights</i>	10	C	Autumn
Genocide and Reconciliation	10	O	Spring
<i>Securing Human Rights I</i>	10	C	Autumn
Securing Human Rights II	10	O	Spring
<i>Translating Human Rights into Law I</i>	10	C	Autumn
Topics in International Law	10	O	Spring
Indigenous Peoples, Minorities and Human Rights	10	O	Spring
Politics of Human Rights in Latin America	10	O/C (LA)	Spring
Environmental Justice, Business and Human Rights	10	O	Spring
Researching Human Rights: Social Research Methods	10	O	Spring
Human Rights Internship	20 (bonus)	O	Autumn + Spring
<i>Dissertation</i>	30	C	Summer

## Module Outlines

### Understanding Human Rights

*Understanding Human Rights* looks at ideas of human rights, their moral underpinnings and the basis of claims. We also address cultural critiques of universal rights and political challenges to human rights practice. We place rights in specific contexts from the global to the local level to illustrate topical challenges and some of the most fundamental problems in the world today. Finally, we look at the work of activists and pose the question: are rights to protest even being upheld in democracies or are we now living in a so-called 'post-representational' world?

### Securing Human Rights I & II

The modules in *Securing Human Rights* bring together the concepts explored in *Understanding Human Rights* and the legal mechanisms examined in the *International Human Rights Law* modules, and review strategies employed by inter- and non-governmental organisations, civil society groups and governmental agencies to secure human rights. We expose students to the practical work of various human rights actors, the context in which they operate, the techniques they use and the challenges they face. These modules build a range of the skills and knowledge necessary for undertaking human rights work in practice.

### Translating Human Rights into International Law I & II

The two International Human Rights Law modules engage students in a critical and nuanced examination of the successes and failings of international

law in protecting human rights. *The Foundations of International Human Rights Law* is compulsory for all students and takes place during the autumn term. We explore how human rights law functions as an international system and assess the effectiveness of different enforcement mechanisms. *Topics in International Human Rights Law* is an option during the spring term. Each week we focus on a different specialist area of human rights law in order to gain a broad and deep understanding of the crucial contemporary issues in this field.

### Genocide and Reconciliation

In this module, we explore the concept of genocide, its origins and practical applications in arenas such as international tribunals and the UN system. We bring genocide studies right up to date with exploration of emerging connections and themes, from colonisation to ecocide. Following discussions of such societal breakdowns we turn to ask the question: how do societies rebuild after periods of genocide and conflict? In the second half of the section we consider the concept of reconciliation as a peace-making paradigm and the role of rights therein.

### Researching Human Rights: Social Science Research Methods

This is an optional module that provides students with an essential grounding in social science research methodology and its relevance to human rights research and practice. It will cover all the basics of social science research methods before going on to focus on the emerging methodology specific to conducting Human Rights Impact Assessments (HRIAs), which are being increasingly used by NGOs, international organisations, think-tanks and academics. If you are interested in a research career in human rights this course will be invaluable.

### The Politics of Human Rights in Latin America

This module provides a comprehensive introduction to human rights issues in Latin America in the context of contemporary processes of democratization in the region.

### Environmental Justice, Business and Human Rights

The module will look at important developments in the field of environmental justice, business and human rights, developing on key theoretical and practical themes discussed in the autumn term, Understanding Human Rights module, including corporate power, externalities, and the potential for an international law prohibiting ecocide. It will draw heavily on the academic discipline of green criminology.

### Indigenous Peoples, Minorities and Human Rights

The module will investigate key historical and contemporary human rights issues faced by indigenous peoples and ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities that emanate from the relationship they have with the states in which they live and the international system. Topics covered range from colonial genocide and contemporary settler/indigenous relations to discrimination and accommodation of non-dominant ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities and struggles for equality and non-discrimination more

generally. The module will also look into how indigenous peoples and minorities are protected by international human rights law, considering the rights that have been established, the jurisprudence that has been developed, and the mechanisms for implementation that are currently used in practice.

## **Human Rights Internships**

As part of the MA in Human Rights, we assist students in finding internships with human rights organisations based in and around London during the academic year.

The commitment required will vary from one organisation to another but the usual requirement is two days per week for three months or one day per week for six months. Although this work is usually unpaid, it adds considerably to the understanding of human rights gained in lectures and may help you settle on a career path after graduation. (If you are a part-time student, there is an element of flexibility as to whether you do a placement in your first or second year, or both.)

Students seeking to obtain an extra 20 ECTS for this component are required to complete the equivalent of 25 working days to pass this module and will be required to submit a 1000 word assessment of their placement experience to the Programme Coordinator (see page 10 for the deadline). Guidelines for the assessment are included in the Placement Handbook (issued on Registration Day).

The kind of work undertaken on these placements varies depending on the type of organisation: it may be research, fundraising, lobbying or some other challenging task, but it is likely to include some routine office work as well.

Upon registration you will receive a list of organisations that are offering internships. You are encouraged to go through the list as soon as possible as it gives essential information about options, activities and areas of interest.

We will also organise an internship panel with alumni in the first few weeks of term. If you are interested in doing an internship, you are strongly urged to attend this panel to increase your chances of finding an internship and making the most of the internships that you do. Alumni sit on the panel to offer their advice.

Some of the organisations listed in the Internship Handbook have taken MA students for several years. They include, but are not limited to, Anti-Slavery International, Save the Children, Campaign Against the Arms Trade, Liberty, Detention Action, Minority Rights International, Rights Watch, Childhope and Peace Brigades International.

In past years, all students who actively sought an internship have successfully secured one. However, please be aware that we are not in a position to guarantee a placement for everyone on the course. We are, however, more than happy to act as facilitators in your search for an internship and will assist you as much as possible. For this reason, a short informal interview with the internship coordinator, Dr Corinne Lennox, will take place during the first three weeks of the autumn term.

Students are welcome to investigate their own internships with human rights

organisations before the course starts, and are free to contact Dr Corinne Lennox for any advice. Students can also arrange their own internship at any point during the academic year (and over the summer in between years one and two for part-time students). The Human Rights Consortium also receives regular notification of paid and unpaid NGO opportunities throughout the year and these advertisements are circulated to our MA students by email.

In order to achieve a successful outcome for both interns and the organisation, students are encouraged to complete a self-assessment prior to commencing their internship. The results can be shared with your supervisor at the internship organisation with the aim of establishing shared expectations and goals for the internship period. Students can also consult this self-assessment periodically during their internship to ensure that the experience is helping them to achieve the goals set for their own professional development. Guidelines for preparing a self-assessment are included in the Placement Handbook.

## Geneva Study Tour



Each year, the MA staff and students take part in a one-week study tour to Geneva. We attend sessions of the UN Human Rights Council and the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (or a similar UN treaty body). MA students are given a unique opportunity to meet representatives from various NGOs and UN agencies in order to get a feel for human rights advocacy in practice. Although not compulsory, the study tour is an excellent complementary element of the course. Given the practice-oriented focus of the MA, this is an opportunity to see for yourself how governmental, non-governmental and inter-governmental representatives work with (and within) the UN, thus complementing what you have learnt in lectures and from your reading.

The total cost of the Geneva Study Tour (including expenses) is around £500 and is not included in the programme tuition fees. The Geneva trip can take

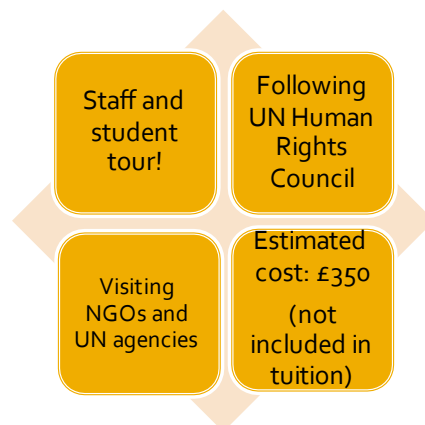
place at any time between the last week of May and the third week of June. Travel arrangements are the responsibility of the student. The Institute will organise accommodation, events and entry into the UN buildings, and travel insurance for those who want it.

Overseas students may be required to obtain a visa for entry into Switzerland. Information on this can be found at:

<http://ch.vfsglobal.co.uk/allaboutyourvisas.html>. It should be noted that only the applicant is permitted to ask the Swiss authorities for a visa. The Institute is not allowed to do this for you. Further information on visa requirements can be found here: <http://switzerland.embassyhomepage.com/>



## Geneva Study Tour



- I think it was great as we could have a chance to see the actual discussions on human rights at the UN, which is one of the major places for human rights dialogues taking place. Because of this, I was able to deepen my understandings of what I learnt through the taught modules.
- I think it really demonstrated to me how the UN works on both levels both the activist side and the state delegation side. I think this has really helped clear up in my mind where I want my career in the field to go.



## Our projects

Defending and Securing  
Human Rights

Refugee Law Initiative

Environmental Justice

Indigenous Peoples', Minority  
Rights and Non-  
Discrimination



"Founded in 2009, the HRC brings together multidisciplinary expertise to provide a collaborative centre for the support, promotion and dissemination of academic and policy work in human rights."

## Opportunities for students

Formal Internships (2 days/week)–  
Communications & Research

Events Organizers – film nights, lunchtime  
seminars, conferences

Blogging and publishing opportunities

Joining the Human Rights Researchers  
Network - HRRN!

The Human Rights Consortium brings together the multidisciplinary expertise from within the School of Advanced Study to provide a national and international collaborative centre for the support, promotion and dissemination of academic and policy work in human rights. Professor Damien Short and Dr Corinne Lennox are Co-Directors of the HRC and MA teaching staff lead HRC research projects in their areas of interest and expertise. Ongoing projects include the Refugee Law Initiative, the Ecocide Project, the Extreme Energy Initiative, and the Indigenous Peoples & Minority Rights Project. There is ample opportunity for MA students to get involved in the HRC, either formally through an internship or less formally to gain experience in convening events, contributing to publications and developing digital resources for postgraduate students of human rights. For those considering further study, the HRC also offers a doctoral and post-doctoral affiliates scheme, and the opportunity to be involved research students' conferences co-organised with the University of Essex and the University of Glasgow. Visit [www.sas.ac.uk/hrc](http://www.sas.ac.uk/hrc) to explore!

## **Human Rights Film Series**

During the year, MA staff or students are encouraged to arrange screenings of human rights related films and sponsor post-film discussions. Students are also encouraged to contribute with film screenings of their choosing.

## **Fundraising and Events**

Students are also encouraged to arrange fundraisers, or events with a human rights theme. In recent years, the students held a number of fundraising events for Amnesty International, War on Want, Asylum Aid and Detention Action and others, with a variety of film screenings, theatre and guest speakers. Regular notifications of events are circulated to students. An

extensive programme of free talks and seminars across the SAS are listed here: [www.sas.ac.uk/events/list/sas\\_future\\_events](http://www.sas.ac.uk/events/list/sas_future_events)

## **Student Representatives**

Student representatives represent the views and interests of students and are involved in shaping the policies, participating in quality audits and attending three Staff-Student Liaison Committee (SSLC) meetings and two Higher Degrees Committee meetings per year. One student rep from each Institute is also asked to attend the yearly SAS Student Representatives Committee. A total of two MA representatives and one PhD representative are elected each year. For more information contact the Programme Coordinator.

## **Core Module Readings**

### **Introductory Reading List**

In preparation for the course, we recommend reading the following texts (purchase is optional).

Diana Hacker, *A Writer's Reference*, 6<sup>th</sup> edition (New York: Bedford/St. martin's 6 and companion website  
<http://bcs.bedfordstmartins.com/writersref6e/Player/Pages/Main.aspx>

Andrew Clapham, *Human Rights: A Very Short Introduction*, (OUP, 2007)

### **Understanding Human Rights**

Freeman, M., *Human Rights: An Interdisciplinary Approach*. (Polity: Cambridge, 2002).

Goodhart, M., (Ed.) *Human Rights Politics and Practice*, (OUP, Oxford, 2010).

### **Securing Human Rights I:**

Bob, C. (Ed.), *The International Struggle for New Human Rights* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009).

Keck M. E. and Sikkink K. *Activists Beyond Borders. Advocacy Networks in International Politics* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998)

### **Translating Human Rights into International Law:**

P.R. Gandhi, *Blackstone's International Human Rights Documents*, 8<sup>th</sup> edition (Oxford University Press 2012) or any similar text published after 2005.

M. Dixon and R. McCorquodale, *Cases and Materials on International Law* (5<sup>th</sup> edition OUP, Oxford 2011).

### **Module Reading Lists**

Reading lists (syllabi) and detailed schedules for each module will be provided at the start of each term and will also be available on Study Online.

## Study Online (VLE)

The MA programme offers students a website designed specifically to support and enhance their study and learning. Study Online is a Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), where students can access lecture and seminar information, resources and participate in discussion forums. Study Online can be accessed at [Home: All modules \(sas.ac.uk\)](http://sas.ac.uk)

## Course Requirements and Assessments

### Overall MA Qualification

The combined mark for the taught element of the MA (equalling 90 ECTS credits) totals 75% of your overall MA mark. The dissertation counts for 25%. The final MA qualification from the University of London will register one of the following marks:

- Pass with Distinction (70% and above)
- Pass with Merit (60% - 69%)
- Pass (50% - 59%)
- Fail (49% and lower)

For a distinction, a student must have an overall average of 70% or above across all six modules and the dissertation, including a mark of 70% or above on the dissertation and on at least one taught module. For a merit, a student must have an overall average of 65% or above across all six modules and the dissertation, including a mark of 65% or above on the dissertation and on at least one taught module. For a pass a student must have an overall average of 50% or above across all six modules and the dissertation, including a mark of 50% or above on the dissertation and on at least one taught module. **A student has to achieve a pass on the dissertation in order to pass the MA overall.**

Students may be required to withdraw from the MA where they fail so many modules that it is impossible for them to attain the MA. This would be the case where a student fails three or more modules. Students obtaining a minimum of 60 ECTS from taught modules (excluding the internship) may be able to exit the programme with a Postgraduate Diploma.

Final grades are decided using a weighted numerical average of all received marks.

### Postgraduate Diploma Supplement

A Diploma Supplement will be issued to students on graduation. This document describes the qualification you have received in a standard format across the European Union that is easy to understand and compare. It also describes the content of the qualification and the structure of the higher education system within which it was issued. It acts as a supplementary explanation of the qualification rather than a substitute for it.

### Requirements for Each Module

You are expected to come prepared to all lectures and seminars. In addition, you need to give yourself time to complete assessed work, presentations and group work for seminars throughout the year.

### **Understanding Human Rights**

Class participation = 10%  
Essays = 55% (3000 words)  
Student-led seminar = 5%  
Take home test = 30%

### **Genocide and Reconciliation**

Class participation = 10%  
Essay = 85% (5000 words)  
Student-led seminar = 5%

### **Securing Human Rights I**

Class participation = 10%  
Case Study Essay (4000 words) = 45%  
Funding Proposal (3000 words) = 45% (written proposal = 35% + oral presentation = 10%)

### **Securing Human Rights II**

Class participation = 10%  
Student led seminar = 20%  
Human Rights Policy Paper (3500 words) = 50%  
Human Rights Media Project = 20%

### **Foundations of International Human Rights Law**

Class participation = 10%  
Human rights law brief = 90% (6000 words)

### **Topics in International Human Rights Law**

Class participation = 10%  
Legal research essay = 90% (6000 words)

### **Researching Human Rights: Social Science Research Methods**

Essay = 100% or Research Proposal = 100% (both 6000 words)

### **The Politics of Human Rights in Latin America**

Class participation = 10%  
Essay = 90% (3000 words)

### **Environmental Justice, Business and Human Rights**

Class participation = 10%  
Essay = 90% (3000 words)

### **Indigenous Peoples, Minorities and Human Rights**

Class participation = 10%  
Shadow Report = 25% (1500 words)  
Essay = 65% (3000 words)

### **Changes in Assessments**

The MA staff may alter assessments or the weighting of assessments from one year to the next. If a student defers or re-takes an assessed piece of work

and the weighting changes in the meantime, the student will be assessed using the earlier weighting.

### **Re-Submitting Assessed Coursework or Re-Taking Exams**

The School of Advanced Study's policy permits a student to re-take any failed coursework or re-sit any failed exam one time only – except where doing so would not enable the student to pass the MA. The grade for any re-submitted assignment or re-taken exam will be reduced by half the difference between the mark and the pass mark. For example, if a student gets a 65% on re-submitted coursework, the final grade with reduction will be calculated as follows:

$$[65-50=15, 15/2= 7.5 (8), 50 + 8] = 58\%.$$

If a student fails a taught module, it would only be necessary to re-sit the failed element. In other words, the student does not need to re-take the entire taught module again. The failure of a take-home test will result in the test being retaken later on in the summer. A student may be charged a nominal fee for re-submitting coursework or re-taking a test. This fee will be determined by the Institute of Commonwealth Studies.

### **Grading Scale**

The following grading scheme will be applied to all coursework and exams.

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>A+</b>	<b>Distinction</b>	<b>75% - 100%</b>
<b>A</b>	<b>Distinction</b>	<b>72% - 74%</b>
<b>A-</b>	<b>Distinction</b>	<b>70% - 71%</b>
<b>B+</b>	<b>Merit</b>	<b>68% - 69%</b>
<b>B</b>	<b>Merit</b>	<b>65% - 67%</b>
<b>B-</b>	<b>Merit</b>	<b>63% - 64%</b>
<b>C+</b>	<b>Merit</b>	<b>60% - 62%</b>
<b>C</b>	<b>Pass</b>	<b>57% - 59%</b>
<b>C-</b>	<b>Pass</b>	<b>54% - 56%</b>
<b>D+</b>	<b>Low pass</b>	<b>50% - 53%</b>
<b>D</b>	<b>Fail</b>	<b>48% - 49%</b>
<b>D-</b>	<b>Fail</b>	<b>45% - 47%</b>
<b>F</b>	<b>Fail</b>	<b>0% - 44%</b>

### **Note on Marking**

A selection of assessed coursework will be moderated by a second assessor. Where the two marks differ, the assessors will come to an agreement on a final mark. Moderation and second marking is carried out by MA staff in the first instance.

All dissertations will be first and second blind-marked. The first assessor for the MA dissertations will be the dissertation supervisor. A cross-section of essays and dissertations will be sent to the external examiners for moderation.

All marks are provisional and subject to final approval by the Examiners Board. Students who are in debt to the University, Library or the Institute will have their marks withheld until the debts are paid and will be prevented from graduating or re-registering.

### **Assessment of Written Work**

In assessing written work, we will examine the quality of:

- 1) Analysis and understanding (including the persuasiveness and originality of arguments);
- 2) Research and referencing (including the extent of research and conformity with the Harvard referencing system (author-date-page numbers; see, for example, <http://libweb.anglia.ac.uk/referencing/harvard.htm#3.14>));
- 3) Organisation (including overall structure, clarity of introduction, and proper use of paragraphs with topic sentences); and
- 4) Writing skill and style (including grammar, punctuation, and spelling).

Written work does not have to fit all the criteria to fall into any particular marking category.

**Distinction (Range: 70% - 100%):** A mark in this range indicates that the work is of an excellent standard for the current level of your degree programme. The work will exhibit excellent levels of knowledge and understanding comprising all the qualities of merit-level work stated below, with additional elements of originality and flair. The work will demonstrate a range of critical reading that goes beyond that provided on reading lists. Answers or essays will be well-written and include independent argument that demonstrates awareness of the nuances and assumptions of the question or title. Essays will make excellent use of appropriate, fully referenced, detailed examples.

**Merit (Range: 60% - 69%)** A mark in this range indicates that the work is of a good to very good standard for the current level of your degree programme. Work of this quality shows a good level of knowledge and understanding of relevant course material. It will show evidence of reading a wide diversity of material and of being able to use ideas gleaned from this reading to support and develop arguments. Essay work will exhibit good writing skills and good organisation (with appropriate use of footnotes). References and the bibliography will conform well to the Harvard referencing system. Arguments and issues will be illustrated by reference to well documented, detailed and relevant examples. There should be clear evidence of critical engagement with the objects, issues or topics being analysed.

**Pass (Range: 50% - 59%):** A mark in this range indicates that the work is of an acceptable standard at the current level of your degree programme. Work of this type will show limited knowledge and understanding of relevant course material. It will show evidence of some reading and comprehension, but the essay or answer may be weakly structured, cover only a limited range of the relevant material or have a weakly developed or incomplete argument. The work will

exhibit weak essay writing or analytical skills. It may be poorly presented without properly laid out footnotes, references and bibliography.

**Fail (Range: 0% - 49%):** A mark in this range indicates that the work is below or well below the standard required at the current level of your degree programme. It indicates weak work of an inadequate standard. The work may suffer from being too short, poorly organised, or poorly directed at the essay title or question asked. It will show very limited knowledge or understanding of the relevant course material and display weak writing and/or analytical skills. Essay work may exhibit no clear argument, very weak spelling and grammar, inadequate or absent footnotes, references and/or bibliography, and/or major factual errors.

For a quick guide to grade descriptors, please see Appendix I.

### **Plagiarism**

The School is committed to ensuring the quality and status of the degrees it awards through the University of London. Plagiarism is a threat to that quality and is a serious academic offence and cases are dealt with under the University of London's regulations for proceeding in respect of examination Offences (Paragraph 12, Ordinance 15).

Students will have access to **Turnitin** plagiarism detection software. As part of the formal submission process it will be compulsory for students to run their work through Turnitin. Students will receive detailed procedures on use of the software once they have formally registered for the course.

### **What constitutes plagiarism?**

Plagiarism is the taking of another person's thoughts ideas, words, judgements, results, images etc. and presenting them as your own. If you submit any piece of work for assessment that contains work that is not your own, without indicating this to the marker (acknowledging your sources) you are committing 'plagiarism'.

The following are examples of plagiarism. These are not exhaustive:

- Direct quotations from published or unpublished work of others without identifying as such
- Copying the work of another student with or without their permission
- Using text downloaded from the internet
- Borrowing statistics or assembled facts from another person or source
- Buying/borrowing an essay/report and presenting it as your own
- Copying graphs, images, charts etc without proper citation
- Paraphrasing - putting another person's ideas and judgements into your own words without acknowledgement of the origin
- Submitting the same piece of your own assessed work (or a significant part thereof) more than once (credit can only be given once)

Students should feel free to discuss these issues with their personal tutors or other members of staff at any time, but they should also recognise that they must take personal responsibility for the integrity of their academic writing, which includes learning what is expected of them by those responsible for marking their work.

## What could happen if you do plagiarise

A Misconduct hearing may result in:

- Expulsion from the School
- A mark of zero
- A record on your student file
- Becoming the subject of an investigation
- Cancellation of your examinations
- Not being allowed to re-enter an examination
- Loss of reputation

## Why you should not do it

Assignments provide a vehicle for assessing your performance during the course and contribute to your overall course result. However, they also assist you in understanding your subject and aid your learning on the course. When you attempt to use the ideas and material of the course independently, you learn more thoroughly and develop your own writing style.

There are good reasons why you should cite your source:

- Good scholarly practice
- Gives proper credit to other people's work and ideas
- Shows that you have researched widely
- Strengthens your work by lending weight to your ideas
- Enables others to check the evidence and accuracy of your information

When plagiarised material is included in your assignments, tutors are likely to notice the shift in style and are more than likely to recognise the source.

## Referencing

There are a number of different referencing style guides. Most modules on the MA programme use a Harvard Citation style (in-text citations) but the Law modules will generally use an OSCOLA format (footnote citations).

**Paraphrasing** – is where you restate information/ideas in your own words. However, just changing a few words here and there does not make them your own and you must still cite your source. Always check your paraphrasing against the original text to ensure that you haven't copied the same phrases.

**Web sources** – treat information found on the web in exactly the same as printed material but also make sure that you write the complete URL address and date accessed.

Students should note that the use of, or contribution to, online essay banks, ghost-writing agencies, or agencies who offer to edit essays in order to improve grades is strictly forbidden.

## What to do if you are caught if you are suspected of plagiarism

- Cooperate fully with the investigation. It is your interests to be open and honest.



- Get some help. Registry staff can direct those accused of plagiarism to sources of advice.

## **Web Sites**

How not to plagiarise: <http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources/how-not-to-plagiarize>

*For more information on the penalties for plagiarism please obtain a copy of the policy from the Registry or from your Institute.*

## **We have responsibilities as well.**

The School recognises its responsibility for managing plagiarism as follows and will undertake to:

- Ensure that all its students are provided with information about plagiarism in the Handbooks and at induction. This will include what constitutes plagiarism, how to avoid it, and an idea of the penalties associated with it.
- Ensure that students are instructed on the use and purpose of the Statement of Authorship form which should be submitted with each piece of work, see attached at Appendix 2.
- Ensure that students are given information on the correct referencing methods for the discipline.

## **Responsibilities of the Student**

- Act responsibly – don't plagiarise
- If you need help, ask for it!
- Plan your work properly. If you need more time to submit, please see your tutor.
- Always submit your work with the relevant statement of authorship form – your Institute will provide you with one.

## **Assessment of Class Participation**

Class attendance is required and students are encouraged to contribute to class discussions. Participation is the key to a lively class.

The 10% class participation mark for modules will depend upon contributions to our seminar sessions. Participation provides the opportunity to practice speaking and persuasive skills, as well as the ability to listen. Comments that are vague, repetitive, unrelated to the current topic, disrespectful of others or without sufficient foundation will not receive positive evaluations. Positive contributions include comments which draw on class readings and current discussion, synthesise and assess the ideas of others, and provide original contributions driving the debate forward. Such contributions will be positively evaluated according to the marking scheme below.

Class participation will be marked starting with week three in the autumn term and from week two in the spring term, once students are more comfortable with their seminar groups. Each week thereafter, students will receive a mark reflecting their contribution to that week's seminar. These weekly seminar marks will then be used to generate an overall average of the student's seminar performance during each module.

**Distinction (Range: 70% - 100%)** Contributions in seminar reflect exceptional preparation. Ideas offered are nearly always substantive; provide one or more major insights as well as direction for the seminar. Challenges are well substantiated and persuasively presented. If this person were not a member of the seminar, the quality of discussion would be diminished markedly.

**Strong Merit (Range: 65% - 69%)** Contributions in seminar reflect thorough preparation. Ideas offered are usually substantive; provide good insights and sometimes direction for the seminar. Challenges are well substantiated and often persuasive. If this person was not a member of the seminar, the quality of discussion would be diminished.

**Merit (Range: 60% to 64%)** Contributions in seminar reflect satisfactory preparation. Ideas offered are sometimes substantive; provide generally useful insights but seldom offer a new direction for the discussion. Challenges are sometimes presented and they are fairly well substantiated and sometimes persuasive. If this person was not a member of the seminar, the quality of discussion would be diminished somewhat.

**Pass (Range: 54% - 59%):** Contributions in seminar reflect inadequate preparation. Ideas offered are seldom substantive; provide few (if any) insights and rarely a constructive direction for the seminar. Integrative comments and effective challenges are absent. If this person were not a member of the seminar, the quality of discussion would not be changed.

**Low Pass (50% - 53%):** This person says little or nothing in seminar. If this person were not a member of the seminar, the quality of discussion would not be changed.

**No Show (45%):** This person fails to show up to seminar without notifying the lecturer in advance or presenting a compelling justification.

**Excused (Grade not calculated):** This person is excused from the seminar for medical or other legitimate reasons. The student's overall mark will be calculated without counting missed seminars for which s/he had a legitimate excuse. If you cannot attend a lecture or seminar, please inform the relevant lecturer or the Programme Coordinator. Failure to do so may result in you being graded a 'No show' for that day.

### **Late Submissions, Extensions and Penalties**

All written work must be submitted by 1pm on the dates specified above to the Programme Coordinator (Registry and Advice Centre, ground floor, Senate House). Assignments that are submitted late without prior permission (granted only for serious reasons) will have the final mark reduced by **3% for each day they are late**. For example, if a student submits an assignment two days late, and the essay would have received a 66% if submitted on time, that mark will be reduced by 6% to 60%.

All requests for extensions for assessed work must be submitted **in writing** and **in advance** to the Programme Coordinator. Extensions cannot be granted by individual lecturers, so please do not approach them with informal requests to make late submissions. If you have serious reasons why you are unable to meet a deadline, you must submit documentary proof (such as a medical certificate).

Requests for extensions will be decided by the Examiners Board in June. In the meantime students' work will be marked and returned to them. If the reasons for the extension or the documentation are considered inadequate by the Examiners Board, the normal late penalty will be applied. If the reasons and documentation are accepted by the Board, no penalty will be applied.

### **Mitigating Circumstances**

Mitigating circumstances are defined as "conditions which are unforeseen and beyond the control [of the student] and temporarily prevent [them] from undertaking assessment or significantly impair the student's performance in assessment". Full guidelines on the school's extension and mitigating circumstances policy and a report form can be found on the SAS website:

<https://www.sas.ac.uk/about-us-6/how-we-are-run/policies> or please contact your Programme Coordinator for more information. Where mitigating circumstances apply, extension requests should be made to the Registry and a report form completed (available from the Registry).

### **Guidelines for Submitting Written Coursework**

Written coursework should reflect new and original work and should not have been previously submitted for assessment in this or any other degree program. Similarly, assessed essays for the Modules should not simply become chapters of the MA dissertation - although some of the same research and analysis may feature *this must not involve a verbatim 'cut and paste' approach, must be approved by your supervisor and cannot involve more than 3000 words in total.*

Word limits for assessed written work must be respected. Word limits **include** explanatory footnotes but **exclude** tables, bibliography and appendices. The word count must be given on the cover sheet of each piece of written work. For coursework exceeding the upper word limit by at least 10%, the work will be reduced by five percentage marks, subject to a minimum mark of a minimum pass.

Assessed written work (excluding the dissertation and essays for the Translating Human Rights into Law modules) must conform to the following guidelines for formatting and referencing:

- 1) Times New Roman, Calibri or Ariel font with 12 point for the main text and 11 point for the footnotes
- 2) Double-sided printing (saves paper)
- 3) 1-inch ( 2.5cm) margins on top, bottom, left, and right
- 4) The main text can be single, 1.5, or double-spaced
- 5) Left aligned or justified text
- 6) Footnotes (not endnotes)
- 7) Harvard referencing system (author-date-page numbers)

Please note that essays for the two modules of the Translating Human Rights into Law I and II may be better suited to referencing systems other than Harvard (e.g. Oscola). Please consult the module handbooks for further information.

Failure to comply with any one or more of these requirements for a coursework assignment may result in a **3% grade reduction**.

TWO typed copies of written work must be handed to the Programme Coordinator (or to SAS Registry in the event that the Programme Coordinator is absent) by 1pm on the required date with two coursework coversheets (copies will be provided). Additionally, an electronic copy of the assignment must also be submitted through Turnitin by the deadline.

### **Feedback**

Assessed coursework (except for the 24-hour take home test) will be returned to students, with written comments, within three weeks. Estimated return dates for assessed work are published on pp.8-9. You should feel free to discuss written comments and the marks with the assessor or the MA course convenor.

### **Module Evaluations**

Students complete anonymous evaluation forms for each of their modules towards the end of the autumn and spring terms. This is an important source of feedback for staff and helps us shape the student experience for current and future students. In addition, students are also requested to evaluate lectures given by guest speakers and the Geneva study tour.

### **48-hour Take-Home Exam (for Understanding Human Rights only)**

The take-home test for both Understanding Human Rights module will be scheduled for early June 2024. Results will be returned after the Examination Board which is usually held in late June and feedback will be available from Professor Short on request.

## SUMMER TERM

### Writing Your Dissertation

#### Topic Choice

Try and avoid broad topics where you may be tempted to merely re-present academic articles. Try instead to focus on one particular feature or process that could involve the application of a theoretical approach or model to a real situation. Often the broader the focus, the harder the investigation will be. Give careful thought to your choice of topic. It is important to choose an area that you find interesting **but you should also consider topics related to the modules you have studied**. Obviously it is important to define your research proposal clearly so that it is feasible to investigate it within the time available.

Students are encouraged to select dissertation topics that interest them, and which they may wish to publish or use in advancing their human rights career. Topics should be clearly defined. A piece of work carried out over 3-4 months to a 15,000 word limit can only provide scope for a limited amount of analysis so the more focused the subject of the dissertation, the greater the opportunity to produce an interesting and independent piece of work. Note: Students are encouraged to demonstrate an interdisciplinary understanding of their chosen topic area.

#### Proposals

The world of human rights lends itself to many forms of investigation and research. As students on this Programme you will potentially have the additional benefit of placement experiences with different agencies in the UK as a source of possible research interest. It is not suggested that your internship experience and/or study visits should be the sole determinant of the dissertation topic but the learning derived from those experiences (or past work experience) can be important and should be considered.

There is no requirement that dissertations should be based upon the gathering of primary research data using questionnaires or interviews. The type of research conducted should be guided by the dissertation proposal and question(s). Some excellent dissertations have been written using bibliographic sources alone. However, this is not meant to discourage the collection of primary data but where this is done, it should be integral to the research questions being asked and not gathering data for the sake of it. Please also bear in mind that access to busy people (in NGOs for example) is not always easy, particularly if they do not know you.

Although not wishing to restrict the choice of dissertation topics, it might be useful to consider the following conceptual framework that could guide selection:

#### (a) Specific - General

Topics selected will vary across this spectrum. At one end there is the case study of the work of a particular agency or, perhaps, an analysis of a series of events or incidents in the work of an agency. Somewhere in the middle of the range will be an examination of, for example, certain types of government or NGO strategy and intervention which might be common to a number of

projects. At the other end are the broader issues which might include topics such as globalisation, corporate power, the ecological crisis, ethics and regulation, social and cultural change etc. A good dissertation can range across the spectrum seeking to link the specifics of agency work with the 'big picture'.

#### (b) Theoretical - Practical

This dimension refers not only to the level of abstraction but also the extent to which the dissertation may be more applied, e.g. a piece of evaluation research or action research or a funding study. The dialectic of theory and practice will feature in every dissertation but there is nothing wrong with a topic that is predominantly theoretical. For example, a critical review of the concept of human rights within the context of international intervention would fall into this category. Similarly, a general examination of the cultural variations in ideas about children and work would also fit here. Ideally, however, a critical analysis of empirical case material should form the basis of your theoretical and generalised reasoning, and, eventually, your specific recommendations.

### Searching the Literature

Before beginning your research, you should systematically check through the literature on your topic, to see what has already been published. This will ensure that you are in touch with current trends and that you do not duplicate someone else's work. Your literature search should be in by clarifying the scope of your research topic from which you can then develop a list of key terms. Please ensure you keep a fully referenced note of your sources at this stage so that you can use them later without plagiarising.

Your search can be conducted using a variety of approaches. You should take note of the following sources of information:

- discussions with supervisors
- module bibliographies
- advice from library subject specialists
- subject bibliographies
- subject abstracts
- CD-ROM databases
- specialist databases accessed through the library
- the Internet (using different search engines)

Always search for the most recent commentaries on your topic and sub-topics because these may well survey preceding literature and point you in the direction of work that might be more relevant and interesting.

Although dissertations are not due in until the end of the academic year you may wish to start thinking about your area of interest early on in the course. ICwS Library staff will help you locate required material, and, if these are not accessible to you in London, we can help obtain them for you.

### Structure, design and layout

The desirable length of the dissertation is **15,000** words. The precise word limit is no more than 500 words over this amount or 1,000 words under and any breach will be penalised with a 3% deduction in the final mark. Please

state the word count at the end of the main body, i.e. before the appendices. Some allowance may be given for the use of forms of visual presentation, e.g. tables, charts, photographs, images, diagrams.

The presentation of the dissertation in a clean and correct form is an important part of the dissertation-writing process, and examiners will take it into account in awarding marks. The final text should be carefully examined for typing errors before it is submitted.

Both copies of the dissertation should be bound in secure and firm folders. Students are advised to make an additional copy for themselves. In addition, students must submit electronic copies of their dissertation via Turnitin.

The dissertation should include the following elements:

- 1) **Cover:** this should state the title of the dissertation, the degree scheme for which it is submitted, the date, your name and the word count.
- 2) **Title Page:** this should contain the approved dissertation title, your name and qualifications, a statement of the degree for which the dissertation is being submitted (MA Understanding and Securing Human Rights), the name of the departments and universities hosting the programme and the date of submission.
- 3) **Table of Contents:** this should list the contents of the dissertation by chapters, with sections where appropriate, and the page number for each, together with the page number for the notes, bibliography, and any maps, figures and tables. Page numbers should be given for each section and chapter. It is best presented in tabulated form with indents for sub parts.
- 4) **Abstract:** this should be a summary of the content of your dissertation and should be no longer than 300 words.
- 5) **Acknowledgements:** this is where you have the opportunity to thank people and organisations who have assisted you with your work. It is not essential and should not be overly sentimental.
- 6) **Declaration Form:** students must include a signed and dated declaration, stating: *“The work I have submitted is my own effort. I certify that all the material in the Dissertation which is not my own work, has been identified and acknowledged. No materials are included for which a degree has been previously conferred upon me.”*
- 7) **Main text:** each main heading (chapters, references and bibliography) should start on a new page; sections within main headings may continue on the same page. Please see further guidelines below.
- 8) **References:** footnotes (not endnotes) should be used and should be numbered consecutively. The Harvard referencing system (author-date-page numbers) should be employed.
- 9) **Bibliography:** this should be a complete listing of all the relevant works you have explicitly used and referred to in references. Recording your sources in the Bibliography is an important task. A quick guide to tutors for the potential quality of a project is to look at the bibliography and to see how extensive and realistic it is. The list of sources is arranged alphabetically by author. Give full details and follow the Harvard protocol.
- 10) **Appendices:** any material mentioned in the main body but is too detailed or bulky to place in the main body, or is supplementary to the main text (e.g. interview questions, questionnaires, consent forms, etc.).

Do not put material you do not refer to in an appendix. The appendices are not included in the overall word count.

## **A Guide to the Main Text**

### Introduction

This is where you hope to catch a potential reader's interest. Present very briefly, but explicitly, what is the problem area you are focusing on and make a clear statement of your headline research question or hypothesis or argument; i.e. articulate **your problem area and what your objectives are**. Give an outline of the thesis with a brief review of the contents of the chapters to follow.

It may also contain a contextualisation (the nature of the organisation, its context and internal workings, or the nature of the issue/topic), a short introduction to the theoretical framework, and/or existing work on the issue, and a brief outline of the purpose of the research (this should ideally be spelt out in one single sentence and avoid multiple and overly broad areas). You may also comment on why the topic is of importance and why it is of interest to you.

Chapters/sections in the main body of the dissertation – these should contain, for example:

### Analytical framework

Write a review of the main body of published work relating to the problem area your thesis deals with (such as individual vs. collective rights, pros and cons with specific group rights, implementation policies, the very existence of human rights). This acts to set out your project in the context of existing knowledge and debates. It is therefore the main evidence of your secondary research efforts.

It should show how much theory you use and what the main academic “disputes” are in your field of interest. The analytical framework provides a critical insight, especially to a new reader, into the topic under investigation. A couple of textbooks and a few web sites are not adequate. Make use of academic journals: save time and search using abstracts.

### Methodology

This really concerns any primary research you did and tells the reader what research techniques/methodology you used and why. It would thus include how you conducted your research (e.g. describing questionnaire design and fieldwork management); and also how your choice of research methods gave you access to the empirical data needed to answer your research questions satisfactorily. You are free to choose from a wide range of social scientific research methods, but always keep in mind the relationship between research questions and methods. For example, some research questions may demand data collection through well-chosen, semi-structured interviews with key personnel and practitioners, and/or observations of the agency's practices. You are also free to work from a single disciplinary perspective but we encourage inter-disciplinary insight. Your choice in this regard should be justified in this section. For other research questions a questionnaire survey may be better suited for data collection. Ethical aspects of your research should be considered and discussed here.



## Findings

This is where you incorporate the main body of your primary research data and where you develop the main argument(s) of your dissertation. Describe and systemise your data. If you use quantitative methods please don't go overboard with data tables, coloured Excel graphs and pie charts as these can be disproportionate to the quality and size of your samples. Analyse your data and evaluate them through the perspective of your research design and its strengths and limitations/weaknesses, your research questions and the literature review. Remember to interpret/analyse the data in relation to existing works and theories in order to build a sound argument. You must link the analytical framework to any primary research in this way. Too often students write two mini-reports and fail to see that the analysis of the primary work must be informed by the secondary research. Relate back to the introduction where you set out what you were trying to find. Be self-critical about any shortcomings in your research methods in terms of validity and reliability.

## Conclusion

The conclusion should begin by describing what you set out to do followed by a brief summary of each section of the report showing how you developed your ideas. Provide an overall conclusion to your findings. If appropriate, suggest further investigation or developments in the area, but avoid introducing new material as this would be a new finding. Also try to avoid the common mistake of writing a conclusion that is weak and too brief.

## Recommendations

This section is only appropriate if your title suggests a terms of reference calling for policy recommendations. Try to keep recommendations separate from conclusions. Don't make the common mistake of recommending before concluding on your findings. A good dissertation is problem-focused and therefore would normally have a recommendations section.

## **Format**

The text should be written in English and the font should be Times New Roman, Calibri or Ariel with 12 point for the main text and 11 point for the footnotes. The abstract and main text can be single, 1.5, or double-spaced; acknowledgments, bibliography and footnotes should be single-spaced. Dissertations must be produced on A4 size paper with all pages numbered and printed double-sided (to save both space and paper). There should be a margin of at least 1" approximately 2.5 cm at the top bottom and right hand margin. It is advisable that a left-hand margin of 1½ inches (4cm) is used to allow for binding. Well-designed dissertations have plenty of white space to assist the reader.

The bibliography and references must comply with the Harvard referencing system (author-date-page numbers). The bibliography should list only those materials referenced in the main text of the dissertation (it does not include all the material consulted in the course of preparing the dissertation).

Preparation of the bibliography is an important part of the dissertation. The bibliography should be presented in the following form: (1) primary and grey

literature (including unpublished documents such as pamphlets); (2) secondary literature (including books, journal articles, newspaper articles, web-based reports); and (3) interviews (people interviewed should be listed in alphabetical order, with a brief description of their position and the place and date of the interview: i.e. (name, date), or for direct quotes (name, date: page number)). Any in-text reference should be found at the end of the bibliography. Good referencing avoids plagiarism – the use of other people’s material without acknowledgement – which is a serious academic misdemeanour.

## **Deadlines**

- Monday 29<sup>th</sup> April 2024 – Dissertation idea submitted to [Damien.short@sas.ac.uk](mailto:Damien.short@sas.ac.uk)
- Monday 10<sup>th</sup> June 2024 – Dissertation title, abstract, outline and bibliography (by e-mail to above)
- **16<sup>th</sup> September 2024 – Dissertation final submission**

Submission deadlines (dates and times) are firm deadlines. A student may, however, apply for an extension, for medical or other pressing reasons. Documentary evidence will normally be required. Please refer to the extension and mitigating circumstances policy on p.14 -15.

## **Academic Requirements**

The dissertation counts for 25% of the total assessment for the MA programme. Students are required to complete the dissertation to a satisfactory standard (a mark of 50% or higher) in order to pass the MA. If the dissertation is deemed unsatisfactory, a student may be required to resubmit it.

The purpose of the dissertation is to enable students to demonstrate their capacity to carry out a substantial piece of independent academic work on a selected topic. Students will be assessed on their ability to define a topic for examination, to articulate a coherent scheme for examining that topic, to gather the necessary information, and to analyse and present that information in a way which satisfactorily assesses the topic which they have set themselves.

Students are reminded that their dissertations must be expressed in their own words and incorporate their own ideas and judgments. Students will be required to sign a declaration to this effect.

The dissertation should be a new and original piece of work. Portions of the dissertation should not have been previously submitted as assessed work on this or any other degree program.

Students are encouraged to look at earlier MA dissertations, which are on file in the ICwS library.

## **Supervisor’s Role**

Dissertation supervisors will be assigned on the basis of the topics and one-page outlines submitted. Students that change their topics may be reassigned to a different supervisor.

The responsibilities of the supervisor are as follows:

- to approve the student's initial choice of topic and agree that it fits within the scope of the MA programme;
- to discuss the dissertation with the student and approve the dissertation plan;
- to help the student with initial problems and difficulties which arise in preparing the dissertation, give guidance on the sources to be used and the citation of sources.

Taking into account the sizable number of MA students and the need for fairness, supervisors and other MA staff are not able to read or comment on dissertation drafts, whether in whole or in part. Most of the supervision will take place during a maximum of three meetings between the supervisor and student in June. The focus of these meetings will be on the dissertation abstract, outline, and bibliography. Thereafter students will be expected to work independently and only contact supervisors with urgent queries.

The supervisor does not have any responsibility for the preparation of the dissertation itself, for the ideas and material that it includes, or for the standard that it attains. The dissertation must be entirely the student's own work, and the help given by the supervisor must necessarily be limited. Assessment of the dissertation will be provided by the markers of the dissertation.

## **Research Ethics**

The School of Advanced Study at the University of London is committed to carrying out its research, teaching, consultancy and other activities within a comprehensive ethical framework.

The School's principles are applicable to all research consultancy projects and studies conducted at, by, or in the name of, the School of Advanced Study, University of London and aim to provide current and prospective members of the School with a clear understanding of the ethical review process operated by the School.

The School supports a culture of academic freedom and excellence by providing a framework for review, which subjects research proposals and other studies to a level of scrutiny that is in proportion to the risk of harm or adverse effect to participants, researchers, the University and to society as a whole.

The School Policy is managed and monitored by the [School Research Ethics Committee](#), which may decide to develop additional guidance or policies as code of practices across the UK and the worldwide research landscape evolve.

The School Research Ethics Policy forms a part of the [School's Code of Good Practice](#) in research.

## Initial Self-Evaluation

Anyone undertaking research at the School is asked to review the policy and the guidance notes and undergo an initial self-evaluation which will need to be forwarded to the research office once completed.

More information and all relevant documents and instructions can be found through this link: <https://www.sas.ac.uk/research-engagement/research-governance-policies/research-ethics-policies-and-guidance>

## Appendix I: Grade Descriptors – A Quick Guide

Min mark %	Max mark %	Grade	Mark	Description
85	100	Distinction	A+	Outstanding performance above a distinction level. Work is of exceptional quality. The highest level of knowledge and understanding is demonstrated by independence and originality in conception, the highest level of critical skill, synthesis and analysis. The work contains analysis of sufficient originality and importance to change the conventional way of approaching the subject, and its presentation is of the highest standard. The work will be well-argued, well-organised and impeccably documented, and be of publishable or near-publishable quality.
75	84	Distinction	A to A+	Excellent work, demonstrating a consistently very high level of knowledge and understanding. It shows clear evidence of originality and/or independent critical evaluation, high levels of skill in synthesis and analysis. Propositions are analysed with sufficient originality to challenge received ideas, and in a clear, sustained, relevant and focussed manner. Presentation standards will be excellent.
70	74	Distinction	A- to A	Very good to excellent work, demonstrating a very good level of knowledge and understanding. Work shows strong evidence of originality and/or independent critical evaluation, high levels of skill in synthesis and analysis. Arguments are well-organised and lucid. Presentation standards are very good, with very good documentation.
65	69	Merit	B+	Good to very good work, showing a good level of knowledge and understanding, demonstrated by evidence of originality of in conception, a good level of critical skill, synthesis and analysis. It demonstrates use of a wide range of relevant material. Work will be well-organised, clearly argued, coherent, and well- and appropriately referenced. Presentation will be of a high standard.
60	64	Merit	B	The work is of satisfactory to good standard, showing clear knowledge and understanding of relevant material, and signs of independence and originality of conception. The work exhibits sound synthesis and analysis skills, is well-structured and coherent. Presentation will be to a good standard and well-referenced.
50	59	Pass	C	The work is of an acceptable standard, demonstrating an adequate level of knowledge and understanding, some evidence of competence in synthesis and analysis, and adequate levels of presentation.
47	49	Fail	D+	Unsatisfactory work, showing a basic but incomplete level of knowledge and understanding. Important elements may be lacking, and the argument may be persistently obscure, and lacking in coherence and focus.

35	46	Fail	D	Poor or very poor work, below or well below the standard required at the current stage. Work that is very or seriously flawed, displaying a lack of research and a lack of engagement with the question; incoherence or a grave misunderstanding of the topic; no signs of independence and originality in conception, little or no critical skill or ability to synthesise and analyse; very poor standards of presentation including inadequate or extremely poor referencing; short work.
25	34	Fail	E	Extremely poor work, demonstrating all the flaws outlined above
0	24	Fail	F	Unacceptable or not submitted