Keele UNIVERSITY

Programme Specification: Post Graduate Taught

For students starting in Academic Year 2023/24

1. Course Summary

Names of programme and award title(s)	MA in Human Rights
Award type	Taught Masters
Mode of study	Full-time Part-time
Framework of Higher Education Qualification (FHEQ) level of final award	Level 7
Normal length of the programme	1 year full-time or 2 years part-time
Maximum period of registration	The normal length as specified above plus 3 years
Location of study	Keele Campus
Accreditation (if applicable)	N/A
Regulator	Office for Students (OfS)
Tuition Fees	**UK students:** Full-time fee for 2023/24 is £8,900 Part-time fee for 2023/24 is £4,900 **International students:** Fee for 2023/24 is £17,700**

How this information might change: *Please read the important information at* http://www.keele.ac.uk/student-agreement/. *This explains how and why we may need to make changes to the information provided in this document and to help you understand how we will communicate with you if this happens.*

* We reserve the right to increase fees in subsequent years of study by an inflationary amount. Please refer to the accompanying Student Terms & Conditions for full details. Further information on fees can be found at http://www.keele.ac.uk/studentfunding/tuitionfees/

2. Overview of the Programme

In light of ongoing international problems such as war, famine, intervention, poverty and discrimination against vulnerable people, the language of human rights and justice play a highly significant role in an increasingly globalised world. However, the universal nature of human rights and justice is found increasingly controversial, given cultural, ethnic and other forms of diversity. Responding to these critical debates, Keele's postgraduate programme in Human Rights provides a distinct practical and theoretical exploration of human rights law and philosophy as well as the politics thereof at domestic, regional and international levels. It embeds this study in a keen awareness of issues of social justice and economic globalisation.

Developed by the Law School and the School of Social, Political and Global Studies (SPGS), the programme provides a reflective analysis of the theoretical foundations of human rights and addresses the challenges of interdisciplinary analysis. It also engages with discourses on equality, discrimination and minority rights; global trade, trafficking and economic law in an era of globalisation; and the politics of violence and terror in

contemporary global politics. In combination, these areas of study provide distinct and important insight into high-profile human rights issues in the contemporary world.

The three compulsory modules of the Human Rights programme provide a distinctive overview of human rights theory and practice and the politics of human rights and justice in an era of globalisation. The first, 'Foundations of Human Rights', provides an important background which explores historical, philosophical and structural aspects of human rights, including different models of legal, political and philosophical inquiry. This introductory module is followed by 'Equality, Discrimination and Minorities', which focuses on conceptual and institutional efforts regarding equality, non-discrimination and vulnerable communities, and which builds themes of race, ethnicity, indigeneity, gender, religion, and caste/descent in topical case studies. Module Three, 'Human Rights and Global Politics', further develops connections between global and local responses to contemporary human rights issues, focusing on strategies to advance human rights in the context of political violence and terror, whilst critically engaging with contemporary issues and phenomena such as 'humanitarian interventionism' and the debate around development and security in the global south.

3. Aims of the programme

The primary aim of the MA in Human Rights is to provide students with an intensive period of study in which to develop practical and theoretical knowledge of human rights law, politics and philosophy, at domestic, regional and international levels. The course also aims to provide key critical perspectives on human rights theory and practice, drawing in particular on feminist and subaltern critiques to engage with issues of gender, sexuality, race, class, ethnicity, religion and power in relation to human rights realisation.

4. What you will learn

In terms of objectives, the course should equip students with the knowledge and skills to enable them to:

- Demonstrate critical awareness of the social and political contexts in which human rights law, politics and practices operate.
- Appraise human rights law at domestic, regional and international levels.
- Evaluate the political underpinnings of human rights law, philosophy and practice.
- Develop awareness of relevant literature on key critical perspectives on human rights theory and practice, and the ability to reflect critically upon this literature.
- Develop subject specific knowledge and skills as well as transferable skills.
- Retrieve, sift, and select extensive legal and non-legal documentary materials and to extract from them the material points to an advanced level.
- Enhance their intellectual and analytical skills in order to interrogate practical problems and to justify decisions.
- Enhance their written and oral communication skills.
- Develop strategies for self-directed study and time management, which enable them to demonstrate the ability to work independently in a coherent, focused and productive way.
- Engage in an informed and reasoned way with current debates relating to human rights law, politics and practice.
- For the MA, demonstrate a thorough knowledge of a particular issue or topic and the ability to produce a substantial piece of original research.
- Develop a life-long commitment to learning, through on-going critical enquiry of themselves and their environment.

By the end of the programme, graduates of this programme would be expected to have gained:

- Detailed knowledge of a range of human rights issues, and particularly of legal and non-legal theories, principles and methods.
- An ability to analyse critically concepts and theories from diverse interdisciplinary perspectives, particularly of Law, Politics, International Relations, Economics and Philosophy.
- A critical awareness of the social and political contexts in which human rights law, philosophy and practices operate.
- Subject-specific and non-subject-specific research skills, particularly those demanded by extended self-study in the dissertation component of the programme.
- An informed and reasoned analysis of current debates relating to human rights law, politics and practices.
- A capacity to evaluate evidence and respond constructively to criticism and alternative arguments.
- A life-long commitment to learning, through on-going critical inquiry of themselves and their environment.

How does the programme equip students for further study or employment?

The programme is designed to enable recent graduates to develop subject-specific and broader capacities relevant to many professions. Participation in the programme encourages attributes such as creative

problem-solving, effective communication, independent and autonomous thought and a critical appreciation of the global and environmental implications of one's studies. Whilst many students will have developed these abilities in their day-to-day working lives, they have the opportunity to deepen them significantly by taking this programme. In particular, the programme encourages students to locate, evaluate and synthesise complex and potentially conflicting information. These skills enable students to proceed to further academic study, such as doctoral research, and are relevant to practical work in the field of human rights, such as NGOs, civil service and diplomacy, legal advocacy or in broader-based care-work for victims of human rights violations. In sum, the course would enrich students' professional lives, and prepare graduates for further study or work in governmental and non-governmental organisations, human development agencies and voluntary sector.

Keele Graduate attributes

Engagement with this programme will enable you to develop your intellectual, personal and professional capabilities. At Keele, we call these our ten Graduate Attributes and they include independent thinking, synthesizing information, creative problem solving, communicating clearly, and appreciating the social, environmental and global implications of your studies and activities. Our educational programme and learning environment is designed to help you to become a well-rounded graduate who is capable of making a positive and valued contribution in a complex and rapidly changing world, whichever spheres of life you engage in after your studies are completed.

Further information about the Keele Graduate Attributes can be found here: http://www.keele.ac.uk/journey/

5. How is the programme taught?

The modules are taught between September and April, and the dissertation is submitted in the following September. Modules are taught during semesters 1 and 2, with a 2-hour seminar per week. Following the conventional University academic calendar will enable the students to further engage with University life and with the myriad curricular and extra-curricular activities offered by the University throughout the year.

The programme consists of 3 compulsory modules and 5 optional modules from the School of Law and SPGS (School of Social, Political and Global Studies). Allowing the students to engage with a broad range of optional modules strengthens the interdisciplinary nature of the Human Rights Programme.

Full-time Masters students complete the programme in one academic year. Part-time students undertake the taught modules during one year and their dissertation in the following year, thereby taking two years in total to complete the degree.

6. Teaching Staff

The programme is delivered by a group of academics at Keele with diverse, interdisciplinary and international teaching interests and significant research expertise. The majority of teaching is undertaken by staff from the School of Law and SPGS. Individual staff biographies can be found at: https://www.keele.ac.uk/law/people/academicstaff/.

The teaching programme is further enhanced by lectures by guest speakers from the School of Law, SPGS and external speakers (e.g. in the past we had Peter Gooderham, the United Kingdom Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the United Nations, as well as people working in human rights NGOs and researchers in the field).

The University will attempt to minimise changes to our core teaching teams, however, delivery of the programme depends on having a sufficient number of staff with the relevant expertise to ensure that the programme is taught to the appropriate academic standard.

Staff turnover, for example where key members of staff leave, fall ill or go on research leave, may result in changes to the programme's content. The University will endeavour to ensure that any impact on students is limited if such changes occur.

7. What is the structure of the programme?

The MA requires 180 credits, made up of taught modules (120 credits) and a 60-credit dissertation. The 120 modules credit consists of the following:

- 3 compulsory modules, 15 credits each (45 credits altogether)
- 5 optional modules, 15 credits each (75 credits altogether), chosen from SPGS and the School of Law (students should enrol on at least 2 optional modules from each school).

The 15-credit compulsory modules are:

- Module One: Foundations of Human Rights
- Module Two: Equality, Discrimination and Minorities
- Module Three: Human Rights in Global Politics

All students must take the compulsory modules in order to graduate. Successfully completing the 3 compulsory modules and 4-5 optional (overall 120 credits) results in a Postgraduate Diploma (PGDip). Successfully completing the 3 compulsory modules and 1 optional (overall 60 credits) results in Postgraduate Certificate (PGCert).

Students may take optional modules from the School of Law and SPGS after consultation with the programme directors. Potential modules include (subject to availability):

School of Law Modules:

Introduction to International Economic Law (15 credits)

Foundations of International Law (15 credits)

Community Outreach and Socio-Legal Advocacy (30 credits)

International Law and Human Rights (15 credits)

International Environmental Law (15 credits)

International Humanitarian Law (15 credits)

SPGS Modules:

Perspectives in International Relations (15 credits)

The Changing International Agenda (15 credits)

War, Memory and Popular Culture (15 credits)

The Theory of Global Security (15 credits)

Diplomatic Law (15 credits)

Right-Wing Radical Parties (15 credits)

Rethinking Fault-Lines beyond the East-West Divide in Global Politics (15 credits)

Students must not take more than 75 credits in one semester. Full-time students should take all taught modules in the first year.

Students taking the MA in Human Rights write 7-8 module essays and a dissertation of 15,000-20,000 words. The dissertation is a self-study project, although ample assistance and support are provided throughout the process. The Dissertation Coordinator encourages students to develop an initial research proposal by December, which outlines the main themes of the project and the core literature to be addressed. Students are then assigned a supervisor, who reads the work and provides oral and written feedback. A dissertation workshop is normally held in the early summer, providing a lively opportunity for students to present their work-in-progress and receive feedback from the teaching team.

Credits cannot be awarded for the dissertation module unless all the required taught modules (120 credits comprised of the 3 compulsory plus optional modules, as specified above) are successfully completed and passed.

The distinct structure of the programme:

When compared with similar programmes in other UK Universities, it is evident that the structure of the Human Rights programme is distinct in two related aspects. First, it the largest credit weighting and number of compulsory modules (3 modules, overall 45 credits). Second, the compulsory modules are genuinely interdisciplinary. They are specially designed for the Human Rights programme; they bring together various schools of thought, and they are taught by different lecturers from the School of Law and SPGS. Thus, the interdisciplinary nature of the programme is not only expressed in offering the students different optional modules which are taught in different departments, but also in offering the students tailored modules which offer an interdisciplinary approach to the subject of human rights.

Year	Compulsory	Optional		Electives	
		Min	Max	Min	Max
Level 7	105	75	75	0	0

Module Lists

Level 7

Compulsory modules	Module Code	Credits	Period
Human Rights and Global Politics	LAW-40046	15	Semester 1
Equality, Discrimination, Minorities	LAW-40047	15	Semester 1
Foundations of Human Rights	LAW-40048	15	Semester 1
Dissertation - Law (60 credits)	LAW-40015	60	Semester 2-3

Optional modules	Module Code	Credits	Period
International Law and Human Rights	LAW-40038	15	Semester 1
Foundations of International Law	LAW-40040	15	Semester 1
International Environmental Law	LAW-40043	15	Semester 1
Regulating Data and the Digital World	LAW-40066	15	Semester 1
The Theory of Global Security	PIR-40088	15	Semester 1
The Changing International Agenda	PIR-40093	15	Semester 1
Dimensions of Environmental Politics	PIR-40106	15	Semester 1
The US Presidency and Public Policy	PIR-40130	15	Semester 1
Quantitative Research and Data Analysis	GRT-40020	15	Semester 2
Qualitative Research Methods	GRT-40021	15	Semester 2
Introduction to International Economic Law	LAW-40037	15	Semester 2
Advanced International Law	LAW-40042	15	Semester 2
International Environmental Law	LAW-40043	15	Semester 2
International Refugee Law	LAW-40058	15	Semester 2
Comparative European Politics	PIR-40096	15	Semester 2
Race and Justice: Civil Rights in the U.S.	PIR-40119	15	Semester 2

Students in this programme are allowed to take any module that is offered by Keele, as elective/option, subject to the programme's Director(s) approval.

Learning Outcomes

The table below sets out what students learn in the programme and the modules in which that learning

takes place. Details of how learning outcomes are assessed through these modules can be found in module specifications.

Level 7

Subject Knowledge and Understanding	
Learning Outcome	**Module in which this is delivered**
Appraise and evaluate a range of human rights issues, and particularly a range of legal and nonlegal theories, principles and methodologies.	All taught modules

Subject Specific Skills	
Learning Outcome	**Module in which this is delivered**
Analyse critically legal principles and institutions from the diverse interdisciplinary perspectives of Law, Politics, International Relations and Philosophy.	All taught modules
Critical awareness of the social contexts in which human rights philosophy and practices operate.	All taught modules, including dissertation module
Subject-specific and non-subject- specific research skills, particularly those demanded by extended self-study in the dissertation.	All taught modules, including dissertation module
A life-long commitment to learning, through on-going critical inquiry of themselves and their environment	All aspects of the programme

Key or Transferable Skills (graduate attributes)	
Learning Outcome	**Module in which this is delivered**
An informed and reasoned evaluation of debates relating to human rights law, politics and practices.	All taught modules
A capacity to evaluate evidence and respond constructively to criticism and alternative arguments	All taught modules; dissertation planning and workshop.

8. Final and intermediate awards

Master's Degree	180 credits	You will require at least 150 credits at Level 7
Postgraduate Diploma	120 credits	You will require at least 90 credits at Level 7
Postgraduate Certificate	60 credits	You will require at least 40 credits at Level 7

9. How is the Programme Assessed?

The wide variety of assessment methods used on this programme at Keele reflects the broad range of knowledge and skills that are developed as you progress through the degree programme. Teaching staff pay particular attention to specifying clear assessment criteria and providing timely, regular and constructive feedback that helps to clarify things you did not understand and helps you to improve your performance. The following list is representative of the variety of assessment methods used on your programme:

The MA programme is assessed on the basis of 7-8 module essays and presentations. In the three compulsory modules, the assessment entails a 3,000 word essay (80% of the final mark) and a presentation relating to the essay (20% of the final mark). The assessment regime in the 5 optional modules from the

School of Law and SPGS varies and depends on the specific assessment of each module. The objective of having both written essays and presentations as summative assignments is to further equip the student with practical skills (e.g., communications skills, ability to articulate oneself in a clear and constructive way), which will be extremely useful for both students wishing to continue onto doctoral studies and practitioners. The programme is also assessed by a dissertation of 15,000-20,000 words. The assessment format may vary in optional modules, but coursework is generally marked out of 100. Through essay writing, students demonstrate their interdisciplinary perception of particular themes in human rights law and theory, justice and globalisation. The dissertation invites students to utilise their research skills in a sustained and autonomous manner, and is assessed according to the quality of its critical reflection and research and investigative skills. Significantly, ideas central to the dissertation are developed through workshop presentations. Whilst they are not assessed, the presentations assist students to form their key arguments in conversation with students and staff.

Marks are awarded for summative assessments designed to assess your achievement of learning outcomes. You will also be assessed formatively to enable you to monitor your own progress and to assist staff in identifying and addressing any specific learning needs. Feedback, including guidance on how you can improve the quality of your work, is also provided on all summative assessments within three working weeks of submission, unless there are compelling circumstances that make this impossible, and more informally in the course of tutorial and seminar discussions.

10. Accreditation

This programme does not have accreditation from an external body.

11. University Regulations

The University Regulations form the framework for learning, teaching and assessment and other aspects of the student experience. Further information about the University Regulations can be found at: http://www.keele.ac.uk/student-agreement/

If this programme has any exemptions, variations or additions to the University Regulations these will be detailed in an Annex at the end of this document titled 'Programme-specific regulations'.

12. What are the typical admission requirements for the Programme?

The MA is open to all students with a first or second class honours degree in Law, Politics, Philosophy or a cognate discipline, such as Economics, Criminology, Sociology, or Anthropology. Applicants with substantial work experience instead of traditional qualifications are assessed on a case-by-case basis. Normally, students whose first language is not English, and who have not previously studied in English, require a pre-sessional English Language qualification of a suitable standard. The normal requirement is an IELTS result at a minimum grade of 6.5, or an equivalent score in other testing systems. Students are also required to provide two satisfactory academic references.

See the relevant course page on the website for the admission requirements relevant to this programme: https://www.keele.ac.uk/study/

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is considered on a case-by-case basis and those interested should contact the Programme Director. The University's guidelines on this can be found here: https://www.keele.ac.uk/qa/programmesandmodules/recognitionofpriorlearning/

13. How are students supported on the programme?

The Course Directors oversee the progress of all students, and may be approached on any issue, including for personal issues and for feedback on assignments. In addition, each student is assigned an Academic Mentor, who tends in practice to be the student's 'first contact' regarding personal or academic matters. Module convenors provide academic support by commenting on essay plans in person or via email, and by supplying written feedback on assignments. Members of the course team also provide consistent contact by email and telephone, which is particularly valuable for students based at a distance from Keele. Additionally, the first module's session on Study Skills provides academic support in the form of guidance on essay writing, good academic practice, referencing and the avoidance of plagiarism. Members of the course team liaise frequently to discuss further support for students experiencing difficulties with assignments. All students have the chance to meet the Course Team, and in particular their Academic Mentor, at the start of the programme. Throughout the programme all have access to a Postgraduate Study Room in the Law School, which provides a key forum for informal discussion and debate.

Students whose first language is not English are offered language classes, facilities and services by the University's Language Centre. Following diagnostic English language assessment, students may be required or recommended to take English language classes offered by the Language Centre. In addition to modules on English for academic study, students have access to one-to-one tutorials for individual help and advice, and

to a wealth of resources for self-study and practice. Any student, international or otherwise, can request a 30 min 1-1 session if they need it. Students requiring English language support (on testing) will be allocated to one or two of the following modules:

ENL-40001: Academic English for Postgraduate Students 1 - semester 1

ENL-40004: Academic English for Postgraduate Students 1-B - semester 2

ENL-40002: Academic English for Postgraduate Students 2 - semester 1 or 2

For students required to undertake these English Language modules, determination of progression to the dissertation module (as outlined above) will include an evaluation of the student's engagement and performance on the respective English Language modules

14. Learning Resources

Each module on the MA in Human Rights is supported by a virtual learning environment (the 'KLE'). The KLE contains digitalised texts and links to readings located in the University library's extensive electronic catalogue. Outlines of teaching sessions and further reading lists are also available via the KLE, with references to books, journal articles and legal cases available either in traditional text-based format or in digital form. Each module's KLE is made available prior to the teaching dates to enable pre-course reading, allowing students to become familiar with module themes in advance. In addition, the KLE provides possibilities for student group discussion boards and on-line blogs. Postgraduate Taught students within the School of Law have access to a dedicated, recently re-refurbished room on the second floor of the School. This is equipped with networked pcs, an adjustable workstation and a meeting table. It's an ideal space for postgraduate students to work in the School between classes, either as an individual or within groups. All teaching for the programme takes place in the recently opened Moot Room, which provides a high-quality learning environment, including access to laptops within the study session.

University Library

Students have full access to the University library databases and print materials, and are issued with a Library Card. More information about library facilities may be found at the University Library's website: http://www.keele.ac.uk/library/support/. Students may apply for readings that are not available at Keele on the University's inter-library loan service.

Computer Facilities

For information about IT Services please consult the IT Services website: http://www.keele.ac.uk/it/. IT Services is located in the library building and is responsible for the computing infrastructure in the university and for the support of all staff and students undertaking academic computing tasks. There are a large number of 'open access' PCs available for students. All student PCs use a standard platform, which includes software such as Microsoft Office, web browsers, and other standard applications students may need. Printing facilities are available in the library building. Students must ensure that they have read form CC.03, which is the Conditions of use of the Computer Facilities. Opening Hours: in order to check if the computer facilities and the Help Desk are open, students should telephone: 01782 733636 or 733838. Further information can be found at: http://www.keele.ac.uk/it/.

15. Other Learning Opportunities

Keele is a vibrant academic community which regularly hosts guest speakers, public lectures and research seminars. The majority of these seminars are available to students on this programme, and provide an important means to develop ideas through informal interaction with staff and students. Email notification is provided to all students regarding seminar programmes held during the year. Furthermore, students will have the opportunity to apply for an Internship at the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (UN CERD) in Geneva, Switzerland. Internships will be offered to 1-3 students, following an interview.

16. Additional Costs

As to be expected there will be additional costs for inter-library loans and potential overdue library fines, print and graduation. We do not anticipate any further costs for this programme.

17. Quality management and enhancement

The quality and standards of learning in this programme are subject to a continuous process of monitoring, review and enhancement.

- The School Education Committee is responsible for reviewing and monitoring quality management and

enhancement procedures and activities across the School.

- Individual modules and the programme as a whole are reviewed and enhanced every year in the annual programme review which takes place at the end of the academic year.
- The programmes are run in accordance with the University's Quality Assurance procedures and are subject to periodic reviews under the Revalidation process.

Student evaluation of, and feedback on, the quality of learning on every module takes place every year using a variety of different methods:

- The results of student evaluations of all modules are reported to module leaders and reviewed by the Programme Committee as part of annual programme review.
- Findings related to the programme from the annual Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES), and from regular surveys of the student experience conducted by the University, are subjected to careful analysis and a planned response at programme and School level.
- Feedback received from representatives of students on the programme is considered and acted on at regular meetings of the Student Staff Voice Committee.

The University appoints senior members of academic staff from other universities to act as external examiners on all programmes. They are responsible for:

- Approving examination questions
- Confirming all marks which contribute to a student's degree
- Reviewing and giving advice on the structure and content of the programme and assessment procedures

Information about current external examiner(s) can be found here: http://www.keele.ac.uk/qa/externalexaminers/currentexternalexaminers/

18. The principles of programme design

The programme described in this document has been drawn up with reference to, and in accordance with the guidance set out in, the following documents:

a. UK Quality Code for Higher Education, Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education: http://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code
b. Keele University Regulations and Guidance for Students and Staff: http://www.keele.ac.uk/regulations

Version History

This document

Date Approved: 18 April 2023

Previous documents

Version No	Year	Owner	Date Approved	Summary of and rationale for changes
1	2022/23	YOSSI NEHUSHTAN	06 September 2022	