



**Master of Arts in
Terrorism, Security and Radical Right Extremism**

Programme Specification

2021-22

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Introduction

This document describes the **Master of Arts in Terrorism, Security and Radical Right Extremism** awarded by Richmond University, the American International University in London, using the protocols required by *The Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland* (QAA, 2014).

The degree is delivered at a US Liberal Arts university with a degree structure in line with comparable MA degrees in the UK. Successful students complete 8 courses amounting to 36 US/180 UK credits. This is comprised of coursework (24 US/120 UK credits), with each course normally carrying 4 US/20 UK credits. The rest of the programme is completed either through an internship (4 US/20 UK credits) and a research project (8 US/40 UK credits) component, or, if an internship is not pursued, through a larger research project (12 US/60 UK credits). On this basis students are required to earn 36 US/180 UK credits in order to complete their degree.

Please note: This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if s/he takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided.

More detailed information on the learning outcomes, content, and teaching, learning and assessment methods of each course can be found in course specification documents and syllabi.

The accuracy of the information contained in this document is reviewed by the University and may be verified by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education.

1. OVERVIEW

Programme/award title(s)	Master of Arts in Terrorism, Security and Radical Right Extremism
Teaching Institution	Richmond, the American International University in London
Awarding Institution	Richmond, the American International University in London
Date of latest validation	TBC
Next revalidation	2026 TBC
Credit points for the award	36 US credits 180 UK credits (FHEQ Level 7)
Programme start date	1 September 2021
Underpinning QAA subject benchmark(s)	QAA Master's Degree Characteristics (February 2020): Politics and International Relations Subject Benchmark Document (December 2019)
Professional/statutory recognition	N/A
Language of Study	English
Duration of the programme for each mode of study (P/T, FT,DL)	FT (one year), PT (two years)
Dual accreditation (if applicable)	Middle States Commission on Higher last renewed 2017 QAA – Higher Education Review (AP) 2017
Date of production/revision this specification	May 2021

2. ABOUT THE PROGRAMME

The **Master of Arts Degree in Terrorism, Security and Radical Right Extremism** at Richmond provides a combination of practical and theoretical skills in a highly specified sub-discipline of International Relations. It also equips students with the intellectual and personal skills that will enable them to exercise influence and succeed in an increasingly inter-dependent and evolving world. The degree provides an in-depth appreciation of the various approaches to the study of terrorism, security and radical right extremism, as well as of the issues and difficulties in generating public policy responses to these threats. The degree also offers a range of practical case studies and examples in comparative and historical perspective, leading to a comprehensive understanding of the subjects studied across two semesters. The third semester is dedicated to researching and writing of the dissertation. An invaluable internship option is also available, thus strengthening the practical component of the programme.

The degree provides its own reward, as well as serving as a platform for further graduate or professional study, and as an avenue for career development in highly relevant and specific fields. In general terms, the degree can lead to eventual careers in roles that require articulate, clear thinking individuals with a grasp of contemporary events, including government, international organisations, international business, non-governmental organisations, social movements, finance, civil society, public affairs and the media, as well as to doctoral research. In keeping with the university's wider mission, the programme ensures that its graduates are well positioned to assume leadership responsibilities in careers in which issues with global implications are addressed. The highly specialised nature of the programme, furthermore, is explicitly designed to facilitate career progression in the field of the radical right and of political extremism, such as counter-terrorism.

Programme Goals

- To produce Masters level graduates in Terrorism, Security and Radical Right Extremism, whose subject specific knowledge, performance, understanding, skills and attributes; critical thinking and cognitive abilities; personal and enabling skills and attributes prepare them for their careers and for further study in the discipline.
- To provide students with a theoretically, conceptually and historically informed analytical framework in the field of Terrorism, Security and Radical Right Extremism, engaging with advanced debates regarding this subject area.
- To equip students with the skills necessary to undertake successful PhD and further studies and/or applied, advanced professional training.
- To maintain academic standards equal to or better than comparable MA degrees offered by UK universities and other higher education institutions in Europe, the USA and elsewhere.

3. PROGRAMME STRUCTURE

Master of Arts in Terrorism, Security and Radical Right Extremism Degree

The programme is a discrete and self-contained programme of 36 US/180 UK credits. As such, the structure does not follow the progressive UK PGDip ► MA structure of some other programmes although a UK PGDip is awarded as an exit award in recognition of students who complete the required 24 US/120 UK credits of taught course work. It is not possible for students to register for the PGDip.

The programme is delivered over one academic year full-time or two-years part-time from the start of September or January. Full-time students take six mandatory taught courses of 4 US/20 UK credits each, spread equally over the Fall and Spring semesters. Then in the final semester, students may take the internship course of 4 US/20 UK credits and write the research project, the MA thesis. This is submitted at the end of the Summer (with full-time Fall entry) or the end of Spring of the second Academic Year (for Spring entry). Full progression details, including for part-time students, are included in the appendices. Students must complete the six mandatory taught courses before progressing to the internship/research project. Part-time students take one or two courses in the autumn and spring semesters, completing the required course work over two years and complete the internship and research project in the final semester of year two. Full-time or part-time students who take an internship complete a 10,000-word MA thesis weighted at 8 US/40 UK credits. Those who choose not to take the internship complete an extended professional research project, submitting a 15,000-word MA thesis for 12 US/60 UK credits.

US credit is equivalent to one contact teaching hour per week and each course typically involves three to four contact hours per week over a 15-week semester, except the professional research project which requires self-directed learning with academic supervision, and the internship which requires part-time work placement. There is a ratio of 1 US to 5 UK credits at *FHEQ* Level 7.

Details of the University’s degree programmes, including approved Programme Specifications are Course Specification Descriptions (CSDs) are held in an official archive by academic year, available at <https://www.richmond.ac.uk/programme-and-course-specifications/>

All students on Masters programmes are expected to be in London for thesis/dissertation supervision and seminars, unless their internship takes them outside London. The student must be registered with the University at this time if the work is to be accepted for marking.

Successful students complete 36 US /180 credits at *FHEQ* Level 7

		US Credits	UK Credits
<i>FHEQ</i> Level 7 (Total)		36	180
INR 7100	Research Methodology	4	20
INR 7305	Insurgency, Civil War and Terrorism	4	20
INR 7304	Evolutions in Far Right Ideology	4	20
INR 7303	Security and Insecurities: Bodies, Identities, Images	4	20
INR 7301	Contemporary Radical Right Politics and Parties	4	20
INR 7302	Countering Extremism, Terrorism and Hate Crime	4	20

Programme specification and curriculum map – Master of Arts in Terrorism, Security and Radical Right Extremism

		24	120
Plus EITHER both of the following:			
INR 7902	Internship	4	20
INR 7500	Thesis Research	8	40
OR:			
INR 7550	Extended Thesis Research (Students not completing the internship complete an extended thesis of 12/60 credits)	12	60
		12	60

US Postgraduate Certificate (PGC) / UK Postgraduate Diploma (PGDip) in Terrorism, Security and Radical Right Extremism

The US Postgraduate Certificate (PGC) and UK Postgraduate Diploma in Terrorism, Security and Radical Right Extremism are awarded to students registered on the MA who have successfully completed in good academic standing (with a 3.0 GPA/B average) for all courses but: 1) fail to submit the final professional research project (without extenuating circumstances eligible for resubmission), or 2) fail to pass the professional research project. Both awards are therefore conferrable as exit awards in recognition of successful completion of postgraduate coursework, but it is not possible for students to register on the US PGC or the UK PGDip.

Successful students complete 24 US/120 UK credits at FHEQ Level 7

Successful students awarded the exit awards are able to demonstrate all learning outcomes for the MA except the professional research project component – see ‘H’ in Section 4 “Programme Outcomes” below, and in the Curriculum Map (Appendix I below).

4. PROGRAMME OUTCOMES

Programme-level learning outcomes are identified below, based on *SEEC* categories linked to level 7 of the *FHEQ*.

Refer to Appendix II – Curriculum Map for details of how outcomes are deployed across the programme of study.

Upon successful completion of the **MA in Terrorism, Security and Radical Right Extremism degree** successful students will be able to:

- A.** Demonstrate a deep and systematic understanding of key texts, thinkers, intellectual paradigms, themes and debates in the field of Terrorism, Security and Radical Right Extremism, while reflecting on their relationship to empirical evidence and to other relevant disciplines.
- B.** Develop critical and innovative responses to theories, methodologies and practices in Terrorism, Security and Radical Right Extremism and their impact on the how the knowledge base is interpreted.
- C.** Demonstrate a deep, systematic and innovative ability to adapt and apply knowledge in the fields of terrorism, security studies and extremism to multiple contexts, particularly those pertaining to the radical right.

- D. Design and undertake substantial investigations addressing significant areas of theory and/or practice in Terrorism, Security and Radical Right Extremism, using selected advanced methodological approaches.
- E. Engage with and evaluate complex, incomplete or contradictory evidence while critically reflecting on the different theoretical and methodological tools used
- F. Demonstrate the ability to exercise initiative in organising and pursuing both supervised and self-directed individual and/or team projects, while accepting full accountability for outcomes
- G. Demonstrate the ability to gather, organise and deploy complex and abstract ideas and diverse information in complex and specialised contexts, while reflecting upon and improving the skills required for effective communication
- H. Demonstrate the ability for innovative and autonomous learning, normative and ethical reflection, self-evaluation and engagement with disciplinary benchmarks

5. TEACHING, LEARNING, AND ASSESSMENT

Teaching and Learning Strategy

The teaching and learning strategy for the MA in Terrorism, Security and Radical Right Extremism is based on the understanding that all students are active learners and researchers and are embarking on advanced professional practice with a view to their future career development. This is designed to maximise student engagement in the programme and ensure full participation throughout. The precise approach will vary from course to course, but the learning outcomes relating to each class are designed to ensure that students immerse themselves fully in the subject and take full responsibility for their progress through the programme. The concept of progression through the distinct aspects of the degree (class-based learning focusing on theory and practice, guided independent study and practical work, internship and professional research project including a critical reflection) is integral to the intellectual journey that the students will make during their time on the programme.

A variety of approaches will be used in teaching, including:

- Formal seminars and debates
- Formal lectures, supplemented with audio-visual materials
- Informal lectures and discussions with guest speakers or on visits
- Individual and group projects, culminating in oral presentations and written work
- Group and individual tutorials
- Self-directed and directed reading

Student knowledge will be acquired through:

- Structured seminars and debates (including the sharing of other students' learning and experience), lectures, guest lectures, visits to agencies – including supporting materials
- Directed reading and use of electronic sources
- Independent research and work experience

Student thinking skills are developed through:

- Undertaking practical exercises and making presentations

- Learning alongside others, including group work, seminars, debates and discussions
- Conducting research
- Preparing assessed work

Student practical skills are developed through:

- Applying theory to practice in practical exercises and assessed work
- Specific training related to PR and journalism and related fields, including the use of different media
- Team and individual project work and reflection thereon
- Vocational experience gained through internships

The University welcomes applications from students with disabilities. These disabilities might include a physical or sensory impairment, a medical or psychiatric condition or a specific learning difficulty such as dyslexia, and may require additional support or adaptations to our facilities. The University endeavours to make all practical and reasonable adjustments to ensure students are able to fully participate in the University community.

Assessment Strategy

Assessment is by examination, essays, dissertations, and other forms of written work; oral presentations and group work; as well as projects and this assessment strategy meets the University Assessment Norms at level 7.

As seen above, the University places considerable emphasis on developing its students' learning and skills. Creating independent thinkers is a part of the University's mission statement and MA academic staff deliver on this promise in a number of different ways at the postgraduate level. A key aspect of their work involves devising methodologies, consistent with best-practice approaches within the field, with which to adequately assess students' performance. These approaches include the setting of learning outcomes encompassing each course as well as regular discussion and interaction amongst academic staff in order to set common goals for the entire degree and each of its courses.

In terms of following up with the assessment of student learning and consistent with US Liberal Arts traditions, MA classes rely on the system of continuous assessment on a course by course basis and throughout any given semester. This approach often involves the use of short essays, research papers, learning journals, annotated bibliographies, gallery reviews, book reviews, student presentations, research proposals and general class discussion. Not every component applies to every course, but most do relate to many of the classes that are offered. There is an emphasis on writing essays, particularly research papers, at postgraduate level, and reflective work including learning journals.

The variety of instruments used permits academic staff to assess each student's developing and evolving knowledge and skills base as outlined in the previous section. For example, the research paper tests for, amongst other things, a student's ability to engage with primary and/or secondary sources of information and his or her ability to evaluate and analyse these. Site visits encourage students to engage with objects, applying theory and method taught in classes. In

addition to this, the University sets specific guidelines on the weighting of coursework in order to effect balance in the process of assessment. As the coursework load for each course set out in the course descriptor shows, a variety of assessment strategies with weighting spread facilitates this across the courses, with the typical course settling for around 50% for the final research paper.

A component part of the programme's efforts to ascertain an appropriate approach to the assessment of student learning involves the use of grade descriptors. This information allows the student to see the expected level of performance that co-relates with a particular letter grade summarizing his or her overall achievement level. The programme also has a formalised system of exit questionnaires and feedback meetings punctuated at key moments throughout the year (mid-semester break, end of semester and end of year) for its students as a framework through which the views and opinions of those who have experienced the programme, as students, can be captured and responded to. Evidence of this approach in action is demonstrated in minutes of meetings with students and academic staff and response to comments from the External Examiner.

The academic staff are confident that the assessment processes will be sound, a confidence that emanates from the existing undergraduate practices and postgraduate programmes, and the feedback received in this regard from External Examiners. An equally important measure is the success that students enjoy in their post-Richmond experiences. In line with other postgraduate programmes at Richmond, it is expected that students will move on to successful careers, and in the case of the brightest students, to further postgraduate study. The outcomes we aim to see in our graduate cohorts will be a strong indication of the academic staff's and University's ability to fulfil its mission.

Academic Standing

A graduate student is in good academic standing if maintaining a cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA) of 3.0 (B).

Graduate students with a cumulative (GPA) of less than 3.0 (B) risk dismissal from the university (see below under "Grade Point Average" and "Academic Probation").

Grades

A	4.0 Excellent
A-	3.7 Very good
B+	3.3 Above Satisfactory
B	3.0 Satisfactory (also cumulative GPA required for the award of the degree)
B-	2.7 Redeemable Fail
C+	2.3 Fail – Poor (may be awarded at graded activity level, but not at course level)
C	2.0 Fail – Deficient (may be awarded at graded activity level, but not at course level)
C-	1.7 Fail – Seriously Deficient (may be awarded at graded activity level, but not at course level)
F	0.0 Fail (may be awarded at graded activity level, and <u>is awarded at course level for any course grade calculated to be lower than B-</u>)

Grade Point Average

A grade point average (GPA) is calculated each semester and summer session and is recorded on the student's transcript. A cumulative GPA, including all graduate courses taken at Richmond, is also calculated. The numerical equivalent for the grade (see above) of each course is multiplied by the number of credits for that course to give the number of quality points for the course.

The GPA is then the sum of quality points for all courses divided by the total number of credits of all courses attempted.

- Students achieving a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.7 and above will be awarded the UK degree with Distinction.
- Students achieving a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.30 to 3.699 will be awarded the UK degree with Merit.
- Students achieving a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 to 3.299 will be awarded a UK Pass.
- Students achieving a cumulative GPA of less than 3.0 will fail the UK and US degree.

Students who choose not to submit the professional project, or who do not obtain a minimum grade of B (3.0) on the thesis/dissertation/project, may transfer programs and apply to receive UK and US exit awards in recognition of their achievement in this area. A minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 on all coursework is required for the exit awards.

6. ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Details of the entry requirements, including English language requirements, may be found at the appropriate page of the University website listed below, where a comprehensive Admissions Policy and Summary of Practice document is also published.

<http://www.richmond.ac.uk/admissions/postgraduate-admissions/>

7. STUDENT SUPPORT AND GUIDANCE

Every student is advised academically by the Programme Director who takes a close interest in the students' academic progress. Students who need a particular form of academic help can approach the director who can then provide the necessary liaison with Registry Services, Student Affairs, Library and other offices forming the key parts of the academic and pastoral support infrastructure.

In accordance with the 2010 Equality Act, and with Chapter B4 of the Quality Code, Richmond endeavours to make all practical and reasonable adjustments to ensure students are able to fully participate in the University community. Students who declare a physical disability or a special educational need are accommodated to ensure the quality of their educational experience meets their individual requirements – the university disability officer works with individual students to determine accommodations, and works with colleagues in the Academic Registry and the Schools to see that their needs are addressed. SEN students, for instance, receive extra time in examinations, and have the option of writing exams on university-provided computers, and/or of taking exams in a separate room.

The University operates a well-staffed Student Affairs department that provides services intended to support and encourage student welfare, safety and development. This department oversees medical registration of students and provides counselling services. It also organizes a range of extracurricular activities and travel designed to further enhance students' educational experiences. Disciplinary and social grievance procedures are also overseen by this department.

8. INTERNSHIPS

The Careers & Internship Office of the University offers a formal mechanism through which students may receive work-placement opportunities. These placements are supervised, career-related work experiences combined with reflective, academic study that help students apply theoretical knowledge in the workplace. Participation in the internship programme is optional but highly encouraged because the Masters Programmes have been designed to offer students the option to graduate with both a qualification as well as experience of the workplace.

The internship has been established to act as a conduit between the classroom and a career, enabling students to meet and work with potential future employers. The internship programme demands that students interact with professionals in their field, allowing them to learn by seeing as well as by doing. Key to the success of this initiative is the relationship that has been developed with organisations and governmental agencies.

Expectations with regard to careers education, information, advice and guidance (as outlined in The UK Quality Code for Higher Education) are handled by the university's Student Affairs department. This department conducts a variety of career services for students, ranging from resource provision to a CV service, and in particular through the professional development seminar series. For full details of career services offered to students at Richmond may be obtained from the Student Affairs Department.

In addition to these services, the alumni office offers networking opportunities where students may contact alumni working in a variety of fields. The alumni office also offers these services via social media such as LinkedIn and Facebook.

In the MA Terror, Security and Radical Right Extremism degree, many of the internship opportunities are sourced by the programme's partner, CARR, the Centre for Analysis of the Radical Right. This ensures high-quality, focused internship opportunities in the specific area of interest for students taking this MA programme.

9. POSTGRADUATE ACADEMIC POLICIES

Please see the Policies page on the University website listed below for the relevant academic policies of this programme.

(<https://www.richmond.ac.uk/policies/>)

10. REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

The MA in Terrorism, Security and Radical Right Extremism is operated under the policy and regulatory frameworks of Richmond the American International University in London, the Middle States Commission on Higher Education, the Framework of Higher Education Qualifications, and the UK Quality Code for Higher Education.

Also key to the background for this description are the following documents:

- QAA (2018). The Revised UK Quality Code for Higher Education. (www.qaa.ac.uk)
- QAA (2008). Higher Education Credit Framework for England: guidance on academic credit arrangements in Higher Education in England.
- SEEC (2016). Credit Level Descriptors for Higher Education. Southern England Consortium for Credit Accumulation and Transfer (www.seec.org.uk).
- Middle States Commission on Higher Education. Standards for Accreditation and Requirements of Affiliation. 2014: Thirteenth Edition; Rev. Ed. 2015. (<http://www.msche.org/publications/RevisedStandardsFINAL.pdf>)

Ensuring and Enhancing the Quality of the Programme

The MA in International Relations degree features detailed published educational objectives that are consistent with the mission of the institution. All course outlines contain course specific objectives that are regularly monitored by the individual instructors and by the faculty as a group.

The University has several methods for evaluating and improving the quality and standards of its provision. These include:

- External Examiners
- Internal Moderation
- Student representation
- Curricular change approval process
- Annual Programme Monitoring and Assessment
- Formal Programme Review, every 5 years
- Course evaluation
- Student satisfaction surveys and the NSS
- Feedback from employers and professional bodies

The **MA in Terrorism, Security and Radical Right Extremism** is provided through a system of ongoing evaluations that demonstrate achievement of the programme's objectives, and uses the results to improve the effectiveness of the programme. Ongoing evaluation is carried out for both US (the Middle States Commission on Higher Education) and UK (QAA) reviews. The University is a voluntary subscriber member of the QAA, and underwent its first full Institutional Review in May 2013 and a Higher Education Review (AP) in 2017.

Credit Articulation

Programme specification and curriculum map – Master of Arts in Terrorism, Security and Radical Right Extremism

The ratio for credit translation at the Masters level (Level 7) is as follows:

	US credit	ECTS credit	UK credit
UK Level 7	1	2.5	5
Required minimum number of credits for MA	36	90	180 (120 of which must be at Level 7)
Richmond MA in International Relations	36	90	180 (at Level 7)

Levels

The *FHEQ* (Framework for Higher Education Qualifications) in the UK defines Higher Education levels in the following way:

Levels 4-6 (previously HE1-3) – years 1 to 3 of a UK undergraduate degree

Level 7 (previously M) – UK Masters degrees and postgraduate diplomas and certificates

Level 8 (previously D) – UK Doctoral degrees

Each level is illustrated by, and each award determined by, reference to a qualification descriptor. The level 7 descriptors can be found in the *FHEQ* (QAA, August 2014).

References

QAA. *The Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland*. November 2014.

QAA. *The Higher Education Credit Framework for England: guidance on academic credit arrangements in higher education*. August 2008.

QAA. *Academic Credit in Higher Education in England – an introduction*. 2009

European Communities. *ECTS Users' Guide*. February 2009; *ECTS Users' Guide—Draft Revision* January 2015.

Appendix I: Curriculum Map

The table below table indicates which core courses assume responsibility for delivering and assessing (✓) particular programme learning outcomes.

FHEQ Level 7 -- MA in Terrorism, Security and Radical Right Extremism

Course ID	Course Title	Learning Outcomes							
		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
INR 7100	Research Methodology		x			x	x	x	
INR 7305	Insurgency, Civil War and Terrorism		x	x		x		x	
INR 7304	Evolutions in Far Right Ideology	x		x		x		x	
INR 7303	Security and Insecurities: Bodies, Identities, Images	x	x	x		x		x	
INR 7301	Contemporary Radical Right Politics and Parties		x	x	x	x			
INR 7302	Countering Extremism, Terrorism and Hate Crime	x	x			x			x
Plus Either both of the following									
INR 7902	Internship	x	x	x					
INR 7500	Professional Research Project	x	x	x	x		x	x	x
Or									
INR 7550	Extended Professional Research Project	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

Appendix 2: Time to Completion for the Various Entry Points Chart

Possible Progression Pathway									
Year 1				Year 2			Year 3		
Full time				Full time			Full time		
	Fall	Spring	Summer	Fall	Spring	Summer	Fall	Spring	Summer
Sept Start	3 courses	3 courses	Internship and Dissertation		Award dated late-December				
Jan Start	N/A	3 courses		3 courses	Internship and Dissertation	Award dated early-September			
Part time				Part time			Part time		
Sept Start	3 courses split over both semesters			3 courses split over both semesters		Internship and Dissertation		Award dated late-December	
Jan Start		2 courses		3 courses split over both semesters			1 course	Internship and Dissertation	Award dated early-September