

Faculty of Media and Communication

**MA International Political Communication**

# **PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION**

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## 1. BASIC FRAMEWORK / PROGRAMME DATA

Originating institution(s)	Bournemouth University
Award(s) and title(s)	MA International Political Communication PG Dip International Political Communication PG Cert International Political Communication
UCAS Programme Code(s) (where applicable and if known)	N/A
HECoSCode(s) per programme/pathway	100491 Politics
External reference points(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The UK Quality Code for Higher Education in particular: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Part A – Setting and maintaining academic standards (Comprising) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chapter A1: UK and European reference points for academic standards</li> <li>• Chapter A2: Degree-awarding bodies' reference points for academic standards</li> <li>• Chapter A3: Securing academic standards and an outcomes-based approach to academic awards</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Part B – Assuring and Enhancing Academic Quality</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB) links	N/A
Place(s) of delivery	Bournemouth University
Mode(s) of delivery	MA International Political Communication: Full-time / Part-time
Credit structure	MA 180 credits: (90 ECTS credits); PG Diploma 120 credits: (60 ECTS credits); PG Certificate 60 credits: (30 ECTS credits)
Duration	MA International Political Communication: 1 year full-time, 2 years part-time
Date of original approval(s)	MA International Political Communication: June 2014
Date of first intake	September 2015
Expected start dates	September 2015
Student numbers	Expected minimum intake: 12 Expected maximum intake: 30 Optimum* student intake: 18
Placements	None
Partner(s) and model(s)	None
Date and version number of this Framework/Programme Specification Student intake(s)/cohort(s)	November 2017: Version number 1.2-0918

### **Unique reference numbers:**

**E1314043**

**MS 1415 07**

**FMC 1718 05 approved 01/11/2017. Previously version 1.1**

**BU1819 01, approved 20/02/2019, previously version 1.2-0918**

## **2 AIMS OF THE DOCUMENT**

The aims of this document are to:

- 2.1 Define the structure of MA International Political Communication.
- 2.2 Identify programme learning outcomes.
- 2.3 Articulate the regulations governing the awards offered through this programme.

## **3 PROGRESSION ROUTES**

3.1 No specific progression routes are identified for the full-time route. Students choosing to study the programme part-time, over 2 years, will take the following route:

*Year 1: Semester 1*

Social theory and Political Communication (20)

The Psychodynamics of Political Culture and Society (20)

*Year 1: Semester 2*

Political Marketing and Campaigning (20)

*Year 2: Semester 1*

Political Journalism (20)

Research Imagination (20)

*Year 2: Semester 2*

Diplomacy and International Relations (20)

*Year 2: Semester 3*

Final Project

It is anticipated that MA International Political Communication could serve as a platform for future doctoral study for those wishing to undertake further study.

## **4 ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL CONTEXTS**

- 4.1 MA International Political Communication offers students the opportunity to study Political Communication within an international context at an advanced level. The programme is anticipated to draw students from relevant Communication and Media disciplines (Journalism, Public Relations, Mass

MA International Political Communication

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Communication, Media Studies), Political Sciences or related undergraduate disciplines and/or those with 2+ years relevant professional experience.

The programme will attract students both from relevant BU UG degree programmes and those offered by other UK, EU and non-EU institutions, as well as practitioners seeking to further develop their critical knowledge and skills in Political Communication in order to advance in their chosen profession. MA International Political Communication will provide an opportunity to recruit interested students from existing undergraduate programmes offered within the Corporate and Marketing Communications Academic Group (BA Public Relations, BA Politics, BA Advertising), as well as undergraduate programmes offered by other departments within the Faculty of Media and Communication and other Faculties within Bournemouth University, such as BA Multimedia Journalism, BA Communication and Media, BA Sociology and Social Policy etc. providing an opportunity for such students to specialise in communication within the context of politics.

This programme will be comparable with leading competitive offerings in the UK and abroad. MA International Political Communication will comprise a challenging and engaging curriculum that is balanced in terms of academic rigour and practical relevance and will offer students the opportunity to develop a critical understanding of the practices within industry, whilst developing insights into the latest techniques of research, planning and evaluation relevant to a political context, digital proficiency and key skills in team work and the presentation of ideas for diverse audiences. Students will be equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to advance to doctoral study for those wishing to progress their studies through to PhD or Prof Doc level.

The positioning of the proposed programme as specialist provision with a strong academic focus supported by engagement with industry, together with the profile of students targeted, means that the inclusion of a work placement within the curriculum is not considered appropriate.

4.2 The development of this programme has drawn upon the following external points of reference:

- QAA benchmark for Communication, media, film and cultural studies (2008). This is an undergraduate benchmark, but in the absence of any postgraduate benchmarks in this area, has been the principal source of benchmarking for postgraduate provision in the Faculty of Media and Communication. The subject benchmarks are located at: <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/AssuringStandardsAndQuality/subject-guidance/Pages/Subject-benchmark-statements.aspx> Communication, media, film and cultural studies (2008).

- The BU common academic framework (CAS) requiring semesterised delivery; units offering a minimum credit of 20 credits; notional study time calculated at the rate of 200 hours per 20 credit.

#### 4.3 Internal frames of reference include:

- The Bournemouth University Strategic Plan 2018.
- Vision and Values BU2018.
- The BU Key Performance Indicators.
- The Media School's Delivery Plan 2013-14
- The Common Academic Structure.
- Market research carried out in the development stage.

## 5 AIMS OF THE PROGRAMME

- 5.1 Drawing on the knowledge and expertise of the Politics Research Group (a group of researchers with national and international research profiles), the programme encourages an advanced understanding of the issues and debates around the theory and practice of political communication in the 21st century.
- 5.2 The framework is designed for graduates with good first degrees (or equivalent) in a relevant Communications and/or Media Studies discipline, Politics/Political Science or a related subject. Postgraduate study will develop students' critical thinking skills and subject understanding to a higher level. These skills will equip graduates for a professional career in communication within the context of politics, or for further study at doctoral level.
- 5.3 The Political Communications landscape has changed vastly in recent years, with movement towards issue based campaigning and digital media becoming more significant. Incorporating an international perspective, students will, therefore, be provided with insights into the latest techniques of political communication using the most recent technological innovations.
- 5.4 The curriculum invites students to analyse current issues and practice within aims to ask difficult questions about the fields of social science, psychological and international/diplomatic relations, focusing on areas such as diplomacy, campaigning, reporting, communication and media effects. These subjects are contextualised within the 21st Century global, 24/7, highly interactive communication and media environment in which politics operates.
- 5.5 The programme offers academic rigour supported by industry engagement and the opportunity for students to specialise in a variety of areas relevant to the scholarship and practice of communication within the context of politics. Course content addresses aspects of: Political journalism, applied research, campaign analysis and international relations.

- 5.6 The units will all be conceptually led, combining discussions of theory with an exploration of current and best practice within the context of democratic societies.
- 5.7 The programme aims to produce flexible graduates who can think critically and analytically and to apply knowledge to practical situations. The programme also aims to equip graduates with the necessary analytical skills, knowledge and understanding to continue to further academic research at doctoral level.
- 5.8 By the end of the course students will have developed strong oral communication skills and learned to present themselves and their ideas in a professional manner using a variety of communication techniques.
- 5.9 Employers of MA International Political Communication graduates are looking for students with the necessary in-depth knowledge of various political contexts within democratic societies, critical thinking skills, the strategic planning and practical tools relevant to the communication of politics; particularly in a digital context, as well as comprehensive understanding of a range of research methodologies and techniques for generating insights relevant to political marketing and campaign development. This is reflected in the aims and intended learning outcomes of the programme. It is expected that MA International Political Communication will support entry into a range of positions within political communication. Examples of potential roles include: political strategists, campaign consultants, communication advisors, speech writers, senior political editors or specialist correspondents.

## **6 INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES**

By the end of their programme, all students are expected to be able to demonstrate:

### **Subject Knowledge and Understanding**

MA International Political Communication will provide students with the following subject knowledge and understanding:

- A1 To have an advanced appreciation of contemporary theoretical and academic debates within the field of political communication research and appreciate the limitations of current knowledge and practices.
- A2 To have a developed understanding of the contemporary international, national, social and communication contexts for political communication
- A3 To have a critical understanding of the practices within the political communication and political journalism industries.
- A4 Develop comprehensive understanding of a range of research methodologies and techniques for generating insights relevant to the study and practice of political communication.



## **Intellectual Skills**

MA International Political Communication will provide students with the following intellectual skills:

- B1 A conceptual understanding of issues related to political communication to evaluate critically advanced scholarship within their discipline.
- B2 To have a critical understanding of the cognitive and behavioural impacts caused by practices within the political communication and political journalism industries.
- B3 To possess the skills required to conduct advanced research and contribute to knowledge in the field of political communication.
- B4 Demonstrate an ability to draw upon and bring together ideas from different sources of knowledge and from different disciplines relevant to the study and practice of political communication.

## **Subject-specific / Practical Skills**

MA International Political Communication will provide students with the following subject specific skills:

- C1 The ability to devise, implement and manage communication programmes that help to achieve organisational objectives;
- C2 The ability to creatively and critically synthesise original ideas from both professional and academic sources of knowledge and be able to apply these within a political communications context;
- C3 The ability to make valuable original contributions towards political communications theory and practice within complex or unpredictable environments;
- C4 Demonstrate confidence and competence in the use of digital technologies and insights relevant to communication within the context of politics.

## **Transferable Skills**

MA International Political Communication will provide students with the following transferable skills:

- D1 The ability to work effectively, productively and accountably as a member of a team.
- D2 Critical reflection, originality and creativity in tackling and solving problems.
- D3 Be able to consider international issues and apply global perspectives to their work.

D4 Effectively communicate theories, concepts, issues and proposals relevant to the scholarship and practice of political communication to a diverse range of audiences; professionally present and rigorously defend ideas and produce accurately referenced work to a given format, brief and deadline.

D5 The independent learning ability required for continuing professional development.

## 7 LEARNING AND TEACHING STRATEGIES AND METHODS

7.1 There will be a range of learning and teaching methods and strategies employed across the programme, which reflect an emphasis on the acquisition and application of knowledge, as well as a focus on professional development. Students will be exposed to a range of pedagogic strategies providing opportunity to engage within blended learning experiences. Methods include lectures, seminars, workshops, debates, tutorials and independent study. Details of the pedagogic approaches to be adopted within units are provided within the Unit Specifications. It is critical that students are supported through tutorial contact, both through the delivery of units, and through their final dissertation. Students will be encouraged to learn from each other, and to informally link up with postgraduate students across the school. All students on the MA International Political Communications will be encouraged to join the University Political Society, interacting with undergraduates, they will also be encouraged to participate at other events regularly hosted by the Politics & Media Research Group, which comprises research-active academics engaging with a breadth of methodological and theoretical perspectives and with research profiles at both national and international level.

**Knowledge and understanding** of the subject will be developed through lectures, seminars, workshops and reading groups in which learning activities may include may include debates, presentations, critiques of academic papers and case studies. Knowledge and understanding will be assessed within all units via a variety of methods such as essays, presentations, debates and case studies.

**Intellectual skills** such as critical analysis, synthesis, evaluation and problem solving will be demonstrated through active learning processes involving political campaign analysis and design, in-class debates, reading groups and group-based workshops and individual tutorials. Intellectual skills linked to specialist knowledge, understanding and practical skills will be assessed via independent course work such as analysis of political campaigns, insight development relevant to political communication, essays and a final project.

**Practical skills** will be developed through opportunities to practise the activity within seminar/workshops and simulated activities such as general election media coverage. Assessment of competence in exercising practical skills will include in-class presentations and debates, political campaign design, and

experiential learning to develop news writing and reporting and management skills.

**Transferable/key skills**, will be developed through naturally arising opportunities within the curriculum. For example, global perspectives, critical reflection and independent learning will be developed through essays, report writing and other forms of self-directed study; creativity in tackling problems and professional presentation skills through the development of political campaigns and team working skills through a variety of collaborative projects. Skills will also be developed through extra-curricular activities organised by the BU Politics Society and the Politics and Media Research Group such as debates and Master Classes, as well as opportunities to participate in research and/or knowledge exchange projects coordinated by members of the academic team.

## 8 ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES AND METHODS

- 8.1 MA International Political Communication will be assessed through a variety of coursework designed to assess subject-specific knowledge and intellectual skills, as well as professional/practical skills relevant to the discipline. Semester 1 will typically focus on the acquisition and development of knowledge at an advanced level, whilst assessment within Semester 2 units will integrate relevant theory with the professional/practical skills necessary to become effective practitioners. There will be no examinations.

The programme will comprise a breadth of assessment strategies typically including live briefs, book reviews, essays, reports, reading diaries, the critique and development of political campaigns, presentations and reflective pieces. There will be an appropriate balance of individual and group work. All students will be required to complete an individual 'final project' in the form of either a dissertation or a research paper plus 'conference'. Details of summative assessment by unit is provided within the Unit Specifications.

The assessment of **knowledge** will be particularly sought through essay assignments, reports and reading diaries and through seminar/workshop presentations and discussions. **Intellectual skills** will be assessed through coursework such as critiques of academic papers, book reviews, and research reports. Individual essays, literature reviews, and reflective accounts will provide an important means by which students can develop, refine and present their ideas in a coherent and persuasive way, using relevant scholarship to develop and sustain their arguments. Assessment of **subject-specific/practical skills** will be via practice-based sessions such as newswriting and reporting skills covering live and/or simulated political debates, insights development and evaluation, oral presentations and reports. Finally, **Transferable Skills** will be assessed through group work such as campaign development, oral presentations and reports, as well as individual reflective accounts (reflection on action)

## 9 PROGRAMME SKILLS MATRIX

9.1 This aim of this section is to show the relationship between ILOs specified at programme and unit levels using the standard matrix.

**Matrix table showing the relationship between ILOs for a programme and its constituent units**

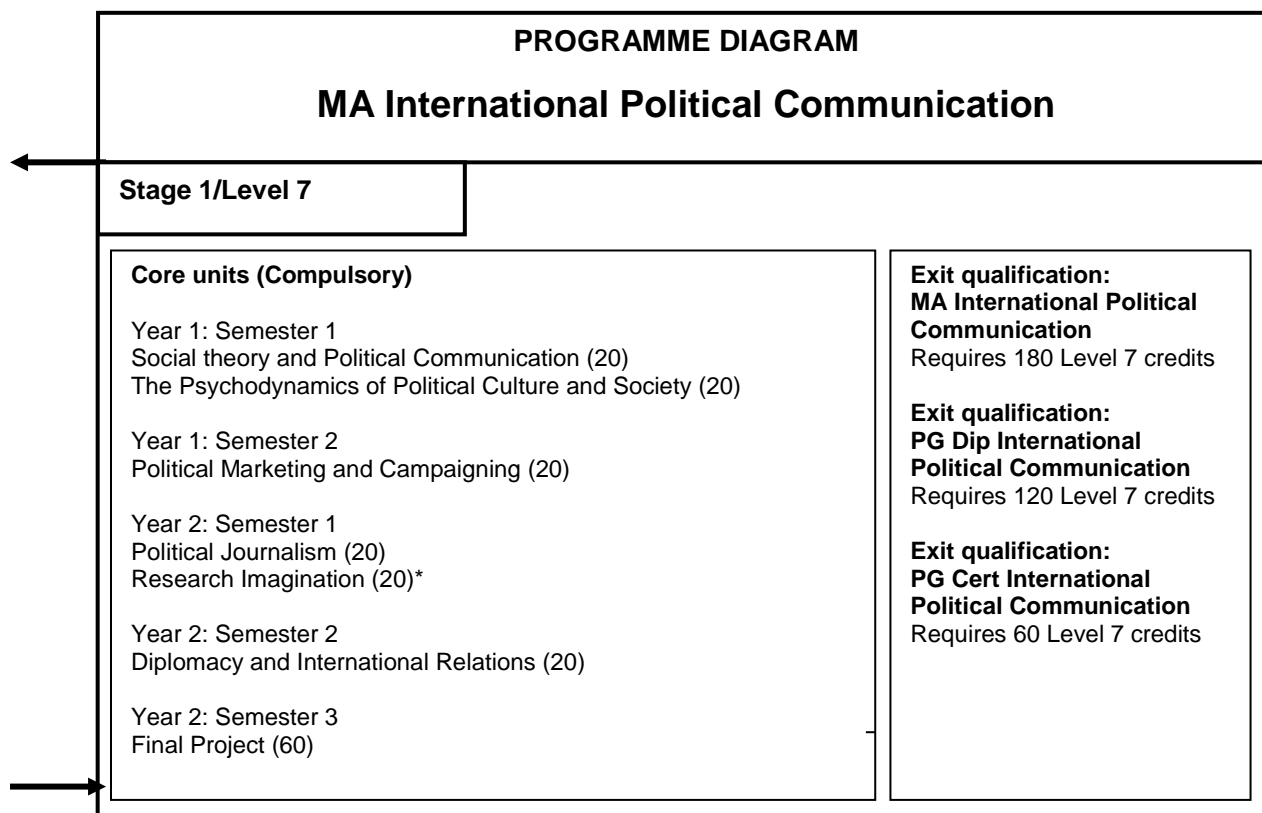
Units		Programme Intended Learning Outcomes																						
		A 1	A 2	A 3	A 4		B 1	B 2	B 3	B 4		C 1	C 2	C 3	C 4		D 1	D 2	D 3	D 4	D 5			
L E V E L 7	Social theory and Political Communication (20)	*	*				*		*	*			*	*	*		*	*	*	*	*			
	The Psychodynamics of Political Culture and Society (20)	*	*				*	*	*	*			*	*			*	*	*	*	*			
	Research Imagination (20)				*		*	*	*	*		*		*			*	*		*	*			
	Political Journalism (20)		*	*			*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*	*			
	Political Marketing and Campaigning (20)	*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*	*			
	Diplomacy and International Relations (20)	*	*	*			*			*		*	*	*			*	*	*	*	*			
	Final Project (60)	*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*		*	*			*	*	*	*	*				
<b>A - Subject Knowledge and Understanding</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To have an advanced appreciation of contemporary theoretical and academic debates within the field of political communication research and appreciate the limitations of current knowledge and practices.</li> <li>To have a developed understanding of the contemporary international, national, social and communication contexts for political communication.</li> <li>To have a critical understanding of the practices within the political communication and political journalism industries.</li> <li>Develop comprehensive understanding of a range of research methodologies and techniques for generating insights relevant to the study and practice of Political Communication.</li> </ol>												<b>C – Subject-specific/Practical Skills</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The ability to devise, implement and manage communication programmes that help to achieve organisational objectives.</li> <li>The ability to creatively and critically synthesise original ideas from both professional and academic sources of knowledge and be able to apply these within a political communications context.</li> <li>The ability to make valuable original contributions towards political communications theory and practice within complex or unpredictable environments;</li> <li>Demonstrate confidence and competence in the use of digital technologies and insights relevant to communication within the context of Politics.</li> </ol>												
<b>B - Intellectual Skills</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A conceptual understanding of issues related to political communication to evaluate critically advanced scholarship within their discipline.</li> <li>To have a critical understanding of the cognitive and behavioural impacts caused by practices within the political communication and political journalism industries.</li> <li>To possess the skills required to conduct advanced research and contribute to knowledge in the field of political communication.</li> <li>Demonstrate an ability to draw upon and bring together ideas from different sources of knowledge and from different disciplines relevant to the study and practice of Political Communication.</li> </ol>												<b>D - Transferable Skills</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The ability to work effectively, productively and accountably as a member of a team.</li> <li>Critical reflection, originality and creativity in tackling and solving problems.</li> <li>Be able to consider international issues and apply global perspectives to their work.</li> <li>Effectively communicate theories, concepts, issues and proposals relevant to the scholarship and practice of political communication to a diverse range of audiences; professionally present and rigorously defend ideas and produce accurately referenced work to a given format, brief and deadline.</li> <li>The independent learning ability required for continuing professional development</li> </ol>												

10 PROGRAMME DIAGRAM

MA International Political Communication (full-time) – (no progression requirements)



**MA International Political Communication (part-time) – (no progression requirements)**



## **11 ADMISSIONS REGULATIONS**

11.1 The regulations for this programme are the University's Standard Postgraduate Admission Regulations with the following amendments:

Section 4 to read:

Applicants must present a good 2:1 degree or above

Applicants whose mother tongue is not English must offer evidence of qualifications in written and spoken English. Acceptable qualifications are:

IELTS (academic) 6.5 minimum (with a minimum of 6 in each of the four categories)

## **12 ASSESSMENT REGULATIONS**

12.1 The regulations for this framework are the University's Standard Postgraduate Assessment Regulations.

**13 PROGRAMME PROFILE**

Originating Institution(s): Bournemouth University School: Faculty of Media and Communication Partner: None			Place(s) of Delivery: Bournemouth University Language of delivery (if not English): Programme HESA JACS code: L200		Programme Award and Title: MA International Political Communication Interim Award and Titles & required credits: PG Certificate International Political Communication PG Diploma International Political Communication					Mode(s) of study: FT & PT Expected Length of study : FT= 12 months PT= 24 months BU Credit Structure & ECTS : MA = 180 credits (90 ECTS) PG Dip = 120 credits (60 ECTS) PG Cert = 60 credits (30 ECTS)			
Unit identification			Cost Centre(s)			Unit Details				Assessment Regs: SR			
Unit version no.	Unit name		HECOS Subject Code	CC 1	%	Prog year FT	Prog year PT	Core / option	No of credits	Level 4,5,6,7	Assessment Element Weightings		
											Exam 1	C/Work 1	C/Work 2
1	Social Theory and Political Communication (20)		100628	133		1	1	Core	20	7		100%	
1	The Psychodynamics of Political Culture and Society (20)		100493, 100493, 100491, 100505	145		1	1	Core	20	7		100%	
1	Research Imagination (20)		100962	133		1	2	Core	20	7		100%	
1	Political Journalism (20)		100442	133		1	2	Core	20	7		100%	
1	Political Marketing and Campaigning (20)		100075	133		1	1	Core	20	7		100%	
1	Diplomacy and International Relations (20)		100490	145		1	2	Core	20	7		100%	
1	Final Project (IPC) (60)		100962	133		1	2	Core	60	7		100%	
Effective from Prog Year / Month / Year Yr. 1    Sep    2015 Yr. 2    Sep    2016 Yr. 3    Sep    2017 Yr.4    Sep    2018			Contact in Faculty: Darren Lilleker Email: DLilleker@bournemouth.ac.uk			Date approved <sup>11</sup> : June 2014		Programme Specification version no.: Version 1.1: August 2015			Placement: None.		
			Name of Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body (if appropriate): None. N/A			Diploma Supplement Statement regarding PRSB accreditation: N/A							



## Appendix 1:

### QAA FHE Q Level 7 Descriptor

#### QAA Descriptor for a higher education qualification at level 7: Master's degree

The descriptor provided for this level of the framework is for any master's degree which should meet the descriptor in full. This qualification descriptor can also be used as a reference point for other level 7 qualifications, including postgraduate certificates and postgraduate diplomas.

#### **Master's degrees are awarded to students who have demonstrated:**

a systematic understanding of knowledge, and a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of their academic discipline, field of study or area of professional practice

a comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to their own research or advanced scholarship

originality in the application of knowledge, together with a practical understanding of how established techniques of research and enquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in the discipline

conceptual understanding that enables the student:

to evaluate critically current research and advanced scholarship in the discipline

to evaluate methodologies and develop critiques of them and, where appropriate, to propose new hypotheses.

#### **Typically, holders of the qualification will be able to:**

deal with complex issues both systematically and creatively, make sound judgements in the absence of complete data, and communicate their conclusions clearly to specialist and non-specialist audiences

demonstrate self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems, and act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional or equivalent level

continue to advance their knowledge and understanding, and to develop new skills to a high level.

#### **And holders will have:**

the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring:

the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility

decision-making in complex and unpredictable situations

the independent learning ability required for continuing professional development.

Much of the study undertaken for master's degrees will have been at, or informed by, the forefront of an academic or professional discipline. Students will have shown originality in the application of knowledge, and they will understand how the boundaries of knowledge are

advanced through research. They will be able to deal with complex issues both systematically and creatively, and they will show originality in tackling and solving problems. They will have the qualities needed for employment in circumstances requiring sound judgement, personal responsibility and initiative in complex and unpredictable professional environments.

Master's degrees are awarded after completion of taught courses, programmes of research or a mixture of both. Longer, research-based programmes may lead to the degree of MPhil. The learning outcomes of most master's degree courses are achieved on the basis of study equivalent to at least one full-time calendar year and are taken by graduates with a bachelor's degree with honours (or equivalent achievement).

Master's degrees are often distinguished from other qualifications at this level (for example, advanced short courses, which often form parts of continuing professional development programmes and lead to postgraduate certificates and/or postgraduate diplomas) by an increased intensity, complexity and density of study. Master's degrees - in comparison to postgraduate certificates and postgraduate diplomas - typically include planned intellectual progression that often includes a synoptic/research or scholarly activity.

Some master's degrees, for example in science, engineering and mathematics, comprise an integrated programme of study spanning several levels where the outcomes are normally achieved through study equivalent to four full-time academic years. While the final outcomes of the qualifications themselves meet the expectations of the descriptor for a higher education qualification at level 7 in full, such qualifications are often termed 'integrated master's' as an acknowledgement of the additional period of study at lower levels (which typically meets the expectations of the descriptor for a higher education qualification at level 6).

First degrees in medicine, dentistry and veterinary science comprise an integrated programme of study and professional practice spanning several levels. While the final outcomes of the qualifications themselves typically meet the expectations of the descriptor for a higher education qualification at level 7, these qualifications may often retain, for historical reasons, titles of Bachelor of Medicine, and Bachelor of Surgery, Bachelor of Dental Surgery, Bachelor of Veterinary Medicine or Bachelor of Veterinary Science, and are abbreviated to MBChB or BM BS, BDS, BVetMed and BVSc respectively.