PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

Course record information

Name and level of final award:	**MA International Liaison and Communication** The MA International Liaison and Communication is a masters degree that is Bologna FQ-EHEA second cycle degree or diploma compatible.
Name and level of intermediate awards:	Postgraduate Diploma International Liaison and Communication Postgraduate Certificate International Liaison and Communication
Awarding body/institution:	University of Westminster
Teaching Institution:	University of Westminster
Status of awarding body/institution:	Recognised Body
Location of delivery:	University of Westminster, Regent Street Campus
Language of delivery and assessment:	English
Mode, length of study and normal starting month:	Full Time (*1 year*) or Part Time Day (*2 years*) September and January start
QAA subject benchmarking group(s):	N/A
Professional statutory or regulatory body:	N/A
Date of course validation/review:	2002/2012/2019
Date of programme specification approval:	2019
Course Leader:	Rob Williams
Course URL: Westminster Course Code: JACS code: UKPASS code:	westminster.ac.uk/courses/postgraduate PMLAN02F (Full-time) PMLAN02P (Part-time) R990/Q910 P025912

Admissions requirements

There are standard minimum entry requirements for all postgraduate courses. Students are advised to check the standard requirements for the most up-to-date information.

westminster.ac.uk/courses/postgraduate/how-to-apply

For most courses a decision will be made on the basis of your application form alone. However, for some courses the selection process may include an interview to demonstrate your strengths in addition to any formal entry requirements.

More information can be found here: westminster.ac.uk/courses/postgraduate/how-to-apply

Aims of the course

The MA in International Liaison and Communication programme is designed for professionals and aspiring professionals in areas such as international and multinational organisations and institutions, governmental and non governmental organisations, and those who want to work in public and cultural diplomacy. It can be applicable to specific interest groups such as: bilingual liaison officers, foreign correspondents, personnel from international agencies and NGOs, personnel working in the international section of enterprises and graduates aspiring to a career in International Liaison and Communication.

The requirements for success on the course and in professional life range far beyond the mere ability to know two languages well; this is just a precondition for entry to the course. A liaison professional will play a number of roles to facilitate successful communication, in advocacy, mediation and conflict resolutions as well as representatives and advisers. This requires extensive cultural, procedural and organisational knowledge as well as an understanding of specific areas that affect international communication such as how information is framed in the media and foreign policy analysis. The liaison professional must also have extensive knowledge and understanding of world events and the ability to analyse how events might impact on the interaction between individuals, or how information might need to be framed/reframed to achieve successful communication.

The Course is designed to help students develop potential professional specialisms and enhance their communication skills within an appropriate conceptual framework and equip with the necessary knowledge and competencies to be an effective international communicator.

Employment and Further Study Opportunities

Today's organisations need graduates with both good degrees and skills relevant to the workplace, i.e, employability skills. The University of Westminster is committed to developing employable graduates by ensuring that:

- Career development skills are embedded in all courses
- Opportunities for part-time work, placements and work-related learning activities are available to students
- Staff continue to widen and strengthen the University's links with employers in all sectors, involving them in curriculum design and encouraging their participation in other aspects of the University's career education and guidance provision
- Staff are provided with up-to-date data on labour market trends and employers' requirements which will inform the service delivered to students.

MA ILC is intended to develop both a knowledge base in, various paradigms of international communication, information presentation and handling in a variety of areas from the fields of liaison within and between international institutions in business, NGO, cultural diplomacy contexts. It also puts a focus on analysing and decoding narrative and representation as seen in international media in the contexts of unfolding events and of global issues such as migration. It aims to enhance students' competencies in handling information across and between languages and cultures and in various professional settings as well as providing a platform for further research for students interested in pursuing an academic career path. Students will have the training and preparation to make significant contributions in their professional context as high ranking officials, managers and researchers. Below are a series of possible entrants, the pathways they might choose and the modules they might take on the course:

Student A

Student A is a recent graduate in international relations, politics, or related discipline. They are also proficient in two or more languages, including English. Their desire is to progress to work either for an international institution or for and NGO. In addition to the core modules, among others student A would probably take: International Organisations, Intercultural Communication and Values, Beliefs and Media Narratives. Depending on the field of interest they might also take Migration and Cultural Encounters

Student B

Student B is a language graduate with a background in interpreting and translation. They wish to extend the range of their competencies so as to compete in an increasingly narrow freelance market, being able to represent international organisations as well as facilitate communication between them. In addition to the core modules student B would probably take: Values, Beliefs and Media Narratives and International Organisations and Institutional Discourse. They would also probably choose between Analysing Spoken and Written Discourse and Sociolinguistics

Student C

Student C comes from a media and journalism background in their own country and wishes to enhance their expertise in an international context, either to return to their profession in a different capacity or to work in an international organization. In addition to the core modules Student C would probably take: Values, Beliefs and Media Narratives, International Organisations and Institutional Discourse and Migration and Cultural Encounters

Student D

Student D comes from a professional background working in a junior capacity for a state organization, or is someone aspiring to do so. Their aim is to further their career and promotion opportunities within their own state institutions. In addition to the core modules, Student D would probably take: Values, Beliefs and Media Narratives, International Organisations and Institutional Discourse, and Migration and Cultural Encounters

Student E

Student E is a confident linguist who is unsure what profession to go into, but who would like to continue using their languages actively. Through the study on the course they become interested in various issues that affect the international community and gravitate towards working in the NGO sector. In addition to the core modules student E would take: Values, Beliefs and Media Narratives, International Organisations and Institutional Discourse, and Migration and Cultural Encounters

Student F

Student F arrives on the course with a particular interest in social issues. They may have worked in this area in their own country either professionally or as a volunteer. Their aim is to further their own career opportunities within the international NGO sector. In addition to the core modules, student F would take: Values, Beliefs and Media Narratives, International Organisations and Institutional Discourse, and Migration and Cultural Encounters

Student G

Student G comes from a commercial background, either as a graduate in business studies or related field, or through professional experience. Their aim is to enhance their profile to be able to operate as a global player within their chosen profession. Values, Beliefs and Media Narratives and International Organisations and Institutional Discourse. They would also probably choose between Analysing Spoken and Written Discourse and Sociolinguistics

Course Learning Outcomes

Learning outcomes are statements on what successful students have achieved as the result of learning. These threshold statements of achievement and are linked to the knowledge, understanding and skills that a student will have gained on successfully completing a course.

Knowledge and Understanding
Graduates of the MA ILC will have:

- (KU1) Reflected and reassessed their personal contribution to their particular profession, chosen field of expertise or academic interest
- (KU2) Contributed to discussions on issues such as interpersonal communication intercultural communication, image projection in diverse fields of international communication.
- (KU3) Undertaken research in specific areas of professional and/or academic interest.
- (KU4) Applied skills and techniques of analysis to diverse areas of professional and or academic interest
- (KU 5) Placed their own experiences within a conceptual framework constructed from the plurality of developments and issues;
- (KU 6) A sophisticated understanding of current theoretical positions and debates;
- (KU7) Prepared themselves for further independent learning in their chosen areas.

Specific skills

Graduates of the MA will acquire a range of advanced analytic and critical skills such as:

- (SS1) The development of research skills in International Liaison and Communication (including project formulation and planning; selection and application of appropriate methodology; the design and implementation of fieldwork);
- (SS2) The analysis of the roles of liaison and communications personnel within state, non-governmental and international organisations.
- SS3) An informed response to the role of intercultural competence in international communication and liaison
- (SS4) The review and development of appropriate communications techniques.
- (SS5) Techniques of textual analysis
- (SS6) Enhanced understanding of the input from specific subject areas
- (SS7) Scholarly skills appropriate to the discipline, including accurate citation of sources and use of bibliographic conventions.

Key transferable skills

Graduates of the MA will:

- (KTS1) Be able to reflect on and assess their own role in and contribution to their professional area of expertise and/or field of interest;
- (KTS2) Be prepared to contribute to discussion and decision-making on relevant issues;
- (KTS3) Be prepared for further, independent learning in their professional area of expertise and/or field of interest;
- (KTS4) Know how to continue their own research in an academic or professional context in a chosen area of interest.
- (KTS5) Have further developed advanced skills in effective oral and written communication and argument

Learning, teaching and assessment methods

The MA ILC draws on the professional expertise of specialists who undertake or have undertaken the future activities of the students, as well as the informed input of academics in applied languages and intercultural communication. The relevant areas of the curriculum are presented in different ways, and course participants can therefore expect a wide variety in teaching styles, including lectures, workshops, task-based group work, field work, presentations by course participants, and visits by outside guests. This variety of teaching styles reflects the range of topics covered, the range of learning styles among the course, and the demands of the coursework and examinations.

Lectures

Lectures are generally the presentation of a theme or topic by a specialist, followed by questions and clarification, leading to analytical discussion and further reading and private study. Much of the theoretical content of the MA ILC is delivered in lectures; the content of lectures should inform and influence course participants' other work, such as their projects, dissertation and practical work in examinations.

Workshops

Workshops analyse issues of academic interest, consider relevant theoretical perspectives, and produce practical outcomes appropriate to the topic. Workshops also form a major part of the skills enhancement areas of the course. The results of workshops can be directly relevant

to a course participant's current or future work or area of study, but the whole group can benefit from understanding the processes which led to these outcomes.

Task-based group work
Task-based group work requires the completion of a specific assignment by a group of course participants, following a brief given by a lecturer. The assignment will spring from the module content, and is decided by the staff or sometimes by the course participants in consultation with the staff.

Presentations by course participants
Presentations by course participants are an essential part of MA ILC. They occur throughout the course in different modules as part of the normal classwork. For one module a simulated public presentation, made bilingually with questions, answers and discussions, is a component of the assessment.

Assessment and Feedback

Assessment
Formal assessment on the MA ILC is carried out through a combination of coursework and examination. The exact configuration of the assessment will depend on the modules you are taking (see detailed module descriptions). In addition, you will receive formative assessment in the form of ongoing feedback as the course progresses. Below is a summary of the kinds of activities involved in the formal assessment on the programme:

Coursework
Coursework can be varied, reflecting the different topics covered in the course and the variety of ways in which the curriculum is presented. Writing tasks range from reports to written summaries, commentaries and critiques. Other activities include data-analysis, media presentations, and role-plays. The basic principles of coherent discourse presentation in speech, writing or electronic form informed by an understanding of theory and the application of best practice applies to all coursework.

An indicative list of types of coursework includes:

- **Critical review**
  A critical review presents your evaluation of a body of knowledge or set of materials, which are chosen for you or by you. The materials you are evaluating may well be the sort of sources used as citations in essays and other coursework. The review you write is informed by your academic knowledge.

- **Commentary**
  A commentary is an academic statement about a piece of practical work, in which you show how your academic training informs your views of the source materials.

- **Report**
  In a report you give your account of an event such as an investigation, lesson or activity, in which you show how your academic training informs your views of the event.

- **Data analysis**
  An analysis of data must be carried out according to academic principles of rigour, sufficiency and necessity.

- **Audio-visual presentations**
  Your coursework could itself be an audio-visual or IT presentation. Instead of submitting work, you present it live, for example, to camera or in a seminar room.

- **Independent research**
  Whatever form the original research takes, and however it is presented, it must always be informed by academic thinking and be accompanied by a reference bibliography.

Feedback

Whatever form your formal assessment takes, you will received detailed feedback in good time to use this for your next pieces of work. Written work is graded on the virtual learning environment and you will receive reports on the presentation and simulation components of the course. There will also be the opportunity to talk with your module leaders about the grades and comments you receive.

Formative Assessment

The MA International Liaison and Communication focuses on the practical communication skills and strategies needed in a range of professional situations and the theories that underpin and inform these practices. Some concepts and their applications in the field of communication need to be learned and mastered through practice. Such activities are carried out on a regular basis in classes and feedback is delivered on these. This feedback can take the form of in class discussions where you analyse what has taken place in class. Module leaders may arrange one to one tutorials to identify and discuss your strengths and areas to improve. Whilst this feedback does not form part of formal assessment it is a fundamental part of the instruction on the course. These activities include:

- Classroom role-plays and simulations
- Presentation rehearsals
- Debates
- Delivering speeches

Reflection

You are asked to reflect on your own performances and those of your colleagues either through group or class discussion or in written form. This is a fundamental part of building the skill of personal reflection as a lifelong learning skill in the professional environment as well as being training for components of the final assessment in some modules.

You will receive feedback form your tutors on both your performance and your reflections both in class and through tutorial where appropriate. Exchanges and presentations may be recorded on audio and video. These may also be used as part of the feedback.

Examinations

One of the assessment components in the core International Liaison module is an examination. These takes the form of a simulation of a spoken interaction with the attendant written documentation.

Course Structure

This section shows the core and option modules available as part of the course and their credit value. To gain the award students have to gain 180 credits in total.

Credit Level 7				
Module code	Module title	Status	UK credit	ECTS
7LANS009W	Theories and Practice of Global Communication	Core	20	10
7LANS006W	International Liaison	Core	20	10
7TRSL058W	Intercultural Communication	Core	20	10
7LANS011W	Professional Project **OR**	Core	60	30
7TRSL017W	MA Thesis	Core	60	30
7LANS003W	Values, Beliefs and Media Narratives	Option	20	10
7LANS008W	International Organisations and Institutional Discourse	Option	20	10
7LANS010W	Migration and Cultural Encounters	Option	20	10
7ENGL001W	Analysing Spoken and Written Discourse	Option	20	10
7ENGL005W	Sociolinguistics	Option	20	10

Academic regulations
The current Handbook of Academic Regulations is available at westminster.ac.uk/academic-regulations

How will you be supported in your studies?

Course Management
Course Leader – responsible for all issues of course delivery and academic quality:
Mr Rob Williams

Head of School – responsible for overseeing the course delivery and the links between this MA and other postgraduate and undergraduate provision in the school:
Prof. Alexandra Warwick

Academic Support
Upon arrival, an induction programme will introduce you to the staff responsible for the course, the campus on which you will be studying, the Library and IT facilities, additional support available and to your Campus Registry. You will be provided with the Course Handbook, which provides detailed information about the course. Each course has a course leader or Director of Studies. All students enrolled on a full-time course and part time students registered for more than 60 credits a year have a personal tutor, who provides advice and guidance on academic matters. The University uses a Virtual Learning Environment called *Blackboard* where

students access their course materials, and can communicate and collaborate with staff and other students. Further information on Blackboard can be found at westminster.ac.uk/blackboard.

Learning Support

The Academic Learning Development Centre supports students in developing the skills required for higher education. As well as online resources in Blackboard, students have the opportunity to attend Study Skills workshops and one to one appointments. Further information on the Academic Learning Development Centre can be found at westminster.ac.uk/academic-learning-development.

Learning support includes four libraries, each holding a collection of resources related to the subjects taught at that site. Students[1] can search the entire library collection online through the Library Search service to find and reserve printed books, and access electronic resources (databases, e-journals, e-books). Students can choose to study in the libraries, which have areas for silent and group study, desktop computers, laptops for loan, photocopying and printing services. They can also choose from several computer rooms at each campus where desktop computers are available with the general and specialist software that supports the courses taught at their Faculty. Students can also securely connect their own laptops and mobile devices to the University wireless network.

Support Services

The University of Westminster Student and Academic Services departments provide advice and guidance on accommodation, financial and legal matters, personal counselling, health and disability issues, careers, specialist advice for international students and the chaplaincy providing multi-faith guidance. Further information on the advice available to students can be found at westminster.ac.uk/student-advice. The University of Westminster Students' Union also provides a range of facilities to support students during their time at the University. Further information on UWSU can be found at westminster.ac.uk/students-union.

How do we ensure the quality of our courses and continuous improvement?

The course was initially approved by a University Validation Panel in 2002. The panel included internal peers from the University, academic(s) from another university and a representative from industry. This helps to ensure the comparability of the course to those offered in other universities and the relevance to employers. The course was also reviewed in 2019.

The course is also monitored each year by the College to ensure it is running effectively and that issues which might affect the student experience have been appropriately addressed. Staff will consider evidence about the course, including the discussions with current students, evidence of student progression and achievement and the reports from external examiners, to evaluate the effectiveness of the course. Each course puts in to place an action plan. This may for example include making changes on the way the module is taught, assessed or even how the course is structured in order to improve the course, in such cases an approval process is in place.

A Course review takes place periodically to ensure that the curriculum is up-to-date and that the skills gained on the course continue to be relevant to employers. Students meet with review panels to provide feedback on their experiences. Student feedback from previous years e.g. from Course Committees is also part of the evidence used to assess how the course has been running.

How do we act on student feedback?

Student feedback is important to the University and student views are taken seriously. Student

feedback is gathered in a variety of ways.

- Through Course Committees students have the opportunity to express their voice in the running of their course. Student representatives are elected to Committee to expressly represent the views of their peer. The University and the Students' Union work together to provide a full induction to the role of the student representatives.

- Each Faculty also has its own Faculty Student Forum with student representatives; this enables wider discussions across the Faculty. Student representatives are also represented on key Faculty and university committees.

- All students are invited to complete a questionnaire before the end of each module. The feedback from this will inform the module leader on the effectiveness of the module and highlight areas that could be enhanced.

- The University also has an annual Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey or PTES which helps us compare how we are doing with other institutions, to make changes that will improve what we do in future and to keep doing the things that you value.