

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

Name, title and level of final qualification(s)	MSc Social Research (Level 7)
Name and title of any exit qualification(s)	PG Dip Social Research PG Cert Social Research
Awarding Body	University of London
Teaching Institution(s)	Birkbeck, University of London/
Home school/other teaching departments	School of Social Sciences
Location of delivery	Central London
Language of delivery and assessment	English
Mode of study, length of study and normal start month	Full-time (1 year) Part-time (2 years) September
Professional, statutory or regulatory body	N/A
QAA subject benchmark group(s) Higher Education Credit Framework for England	Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) training requirements
Birkbeck Course Code	TMSSOCRS_C
HECoS Code	100471
Start date of programme	Autumn 2010
Date of programme approval	Summer 2010
Date of last programme amendment approval	November 2022
Valid for academic entry year	2024-25
Date of last revision to document	20/10/2022

Admissions requirements

A second class honours degree (2:2 or above) in a related area, or relevant experience combined with an adequate academic background (subject to interview).

We welcome applicants without traditional entry qualifications as we base decisions on our own assessment of qualifications, knowledge and previous work experience. We may waive formal entry requirements based on judgement of academic potential.

Course aims

MSc Social Research is an interdisciplinary programme designed to prepare students for further research in the workplace or for doctoral study. This course, taught by leading figures in the field, provides a rigorous training in a range of quantitative and qualitative methods while also addressing critical issues in social science research. Students also write a dissertation, putting into practice the methods and theoretical concepts they have been taught. Through flexible evening study, this course provides a vibrant environment for theoretically informed and socially engaged research. The course also includes two compulsory modules that provide students with a conceptual toolkit to theorise different varieties of political and socioeconomic events and to develop in-depth knowledge of advanced research methods. This course satisfies Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) training requirements.

Course structure

Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credit	Comp Core/ Option	Likely teaching term(s)
Full-time – 1 year					
7	SSPO263S7	Investigating the Social World	30	Compulsory	2
7	SSPO019S7	Masterclass in Social Research	30	Compulsory	3
7	SSPO239H7 SSPO240H7 SSPO241H7 SSPO245H7 SSPO242H7 SSPO243H7	Four from Introduction to Quantitative Social Research, Applied Social Data Analysis in R, Advanced Topics in Quantitative Social Research, Experiments in Social Science, Qualitative Social Research Methods or Qualitative Social Research Design	60	Core	1-3
7	SSPO018D7	Social Research Dissertation	60	Core	3
Part-time – 2 years					
Year 1					
7	SSPO263S7	Investigating the Social World	30	Compulsory	2
7	SSPO239H7 SSPO240H7 SSPO241H7 SSPO245H7 SSPO242H7 SSPO243H7	Two from Introduction to Quantitative Social Research, Applied Social Data Analysis in R, Advanced Topics in Quantitative Social Research, Experiments in Social Research, Qualitative Social Research Methods or Qualitative Social Research Design	30	Core	1-3

Year 2					
7	SSPO019S7	Masterclass in Social Research	30	Compulsory	3
7	SSPO239H7 SSPO240H7 SSPO241H7 SSPO245H7 SSPO242H7 SSPO243H7	Two from Introduction to Quantitative Social Research, Applied Social Data Analysis in R, Advanced Topics in Quantitative Social Research, Experiments in Social Research, Qualitative Social Research Methods or Qualitative Social Research Design	30	Core	1-3
7	SSPO018D7	Dissertation	60	Core	3*

*In term 3 of year 1, part-time students undertake initial preparatory work for their dissertation which is completed at the end of the second year.

Core: Module must be taken and passed by student

Compulsory: Module must be taken but can be considered for compensated credit (see CAS regulations paragraph 24)

Option: Student can choose to take this module

How you will learn

Your learning and teaching is organised to help you meet the learning outcomes (below) of the course. As a student, we expect you to be an active learner and to take responsibility for your learning, engaging with all of the material and sessions arranged for you.

Each course is divided into modules. You will find information on the virtual learning site (Moodle, see Academic Support below) about each of your modules, what to expect, the work you need to prepare, links to reading lists, information about how and when you will be assessed.

Your learning for this course will be organised around the activities outlined below.:

Teaching on this course is a combination of lectures (pre-recorded) and seminars. Lectures are designed to provide you with an outline or overview of the topic, to engage you with the material and direct you to other resources. They are a springboard for your own learning. Seminars are group sessions where you will be asked to contribute to discussion or group work around the topic, with material set in advance for which you need to prepare.

How we will assess you

The course will use a variety of assessment methods. Assessment is used to enhance your learning rather than simply to test it. For most of the modules associated with this course, your assessment will mainly be through essays and online examinations (usually completed at home or in a workspace in college), but may also involve short written exercises, quizzes and multiple-choice questionnaires, practical assessments, case studies, or problems to solve.

Learning outcomes (what you can expect to achieve)

'Learning outcomes' indicate what you should be able to know or do at the end of your course. Providing them helps you to understand what your teachers will expect and also the learning requirements upon which you will be assessed.

At the end of this course, you should be able to:

- apply quantitative and qualitative methods to social research
- demonstrate understanding of issues in designing social research, including ontological, epistemological and ethical issues
- employ the analytical, evaluative and critical skills developed in addressing problems presented in other academic and non-academic work settings
- demonstrate the ability to conduct an independent research project
- obtain and analyse information from a wide array of sources.

Careers and further study

Our graduates go into a variety of research roles, for instance, in private firms, government departments, think tanks, NGOs, and political parties. The course also helps students prepare for doctoral study and satisfy ESRC funding requirements.

Birkbeck offers a range of careers support to its students. You can find out more on [the careers pages of our website](#).

Academic regulations and course management

Birkbeck's academic regulations are contained in its [Common Award Scheme Regulations](#) and Policies published by year of application on the Birkbeck website.

You will have access to a course handbook on Moodle and this will outline how your course is managed, including who to contact if you have any questions about your module or course.

Support for your study

Your learning at Birkbeck is supported by your teaching team and other resources and people in the College there to help you with your study. Birkbeck uses a virtual learning environment called Moodle and each course has a dedicated Moodle page and there are further Moodle sites for each of your modules. This will include your course handbook.

Birkbeck will introduce you to the Library and IT support, how to access materials online, including using Moodle, and provide you with an orientation which includes an online Moodle module to guide you through all of the support available. You will also be allocated a personal tutor and provided with information about learning support offered within your School and by the College.

[Please check our website for more information about student support services](#). This covers the whole of your time as a student with us including learning support and support for your wellbeing.

Quality and standards at Birkbeck

Birkbeck's courses are subject to our quality assurance procedures. This means that new courses must follow our design principles and meet the requirements of our academic regulations. Each new course or module is subject to a course approval process where the proposal is scrutinised by subject specialists, quality professionals and external representatives to ensure that it will offer an excellent student experience and meet the expectation of regulatory and other professional bodies.

You will be invited to participate in an online survey for each module you take. We take these surveys seriously and they are considered by the course team to develop both modules and the overall courses. Please take the time to complete any surveys you are sent as a student.

We conduct an annual process of reviewing our portfolio of courses which analyses student achievement, equality data and includes an action plan for each department to identify ongoing enhancements to our education, including changes made as a result of student feedback.

Our periodic review process is a regular check (usually every four years) on the courses by department with a specialist team including students.

Each course will have an external examiner associated with it who produces an annual report and any recommendations. Students can read the most recent external examiner reports on the course Moodle pages. Our courses are all subject to Birkbeck Baseline Standards for our Moodle module information. This supports the accessibility of our education including expectations of what information is provided online for students.

The information in this programme specification has been approved by the College's Academic Board and every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information it contains.

Programme specifications are reviewed periodically. If any changes are made to courses, including core and/or compulsory modules, the relevant department is required to provide a revised programme specification. Students will be notified of any changes via Moodle.

Further information about specifications and an archive of programme specifications for the College's courses is [available online](#).

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