

**LEAD THE WAY TO A
SUSTAINABLE, SOCIALLY
INCLUSIVE FUTURE**



**SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT MSc
100% ONLINE**

US
UNIVERSITY
OF SUSSEX

ABOUT THE COURSE

Ranked 1st in the world for Development Studies*, the University of Sussex is at the forefront of teaching and research in sustainability.

As an online Sustainable Development student, you'll benefit from our unrivalled expertise in the field, gaining the interdisciplinary skills and insights you need to lead sustainable transformation in your business, sector and society at large.

You'll explore humanity's greatest threats, including health crises, conflict, security issues and climate change; you'll unearth the root causes of these complex global sustainability challenges; and you'll analyse the interconnected nature of environmental, social, political, and cultural issues.

Students are also encouraged to critically assess the international development sector and its current systems and solutions, including net zero, the circular economy, and the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Importantly, through practical exercises and engagement with real case studies, you'll acquire the sought-after policy analysis, critical thinking, research and leadership skills needed to make an impact and enhance your employability across NGOs, government institutions, public and private organisations.

Attracting an international student cohort, our online course offers a valuable opportunity to learn from those with varied regional, cultural and professional perspectives, and to connect with like-minded people that share your vision of an environmentally sustainable and socially inclusive world.

*QS World University Ranking 2017–2024



RESEARCH

Students on our online Sustainable Development MSc course will learn from research-active academics across Sussex's Science Policy Research Unit (SPRU), School of Global Studies and Institute of Development Studies (IDS).

The curriculum of our Masters course is reviewed constantly and evolves to reflect the findings and insights from these research centres, meaning you'll graduate with a truly contemporary degree and an awareness of the very latest developments and discourses in the sector.

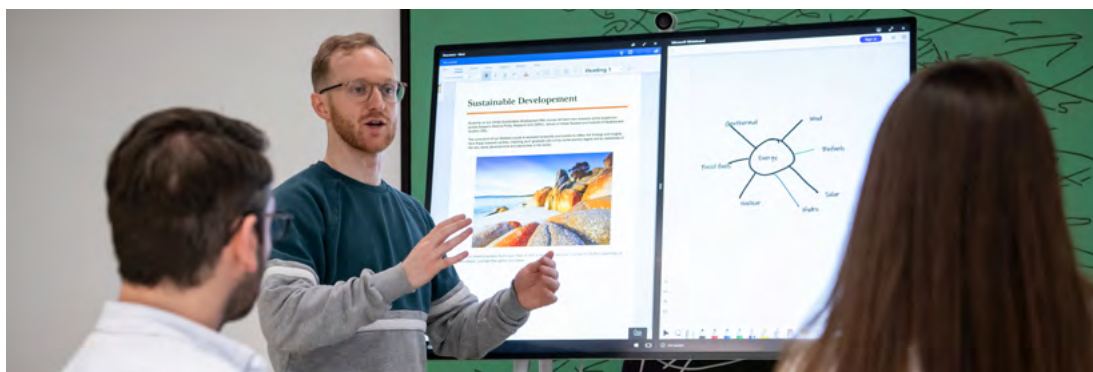


ABOUT SPRU

SPRU's world-renowned, multi-disciplinary research has helped policy makers to address real-world problems for over 50 years. The innovative and collaborative approach taken by the SPRU team has seen contributions to both theory and practice and has inspired

countless researchers and students. This combination of theory and practice, alongside a strong focus on external engagement within academia, the policy world and beyond, remains to this day.

[Learn more about SPRU](#)



ABOUT THE SCHOOL OF GLOBAL STUDIES

The School of Global Studies is a global hub at the heart of Sussex. Its engaged research and critical pedagogy addresses the most pressing global issues of our times – global inequalities and global justice, climate and environmental change, war and peace, global health and

finance crises, intolerance and discrimination. Its mission is to generate knowledge and understanding that can make a difference, for a fairer, safer, more sustainable and more inclusive world.

[Learn more about the School of Global Studies](#)



ABOUT THE IDS

The Institute of Development Studies (IDS) delivers world-class research, learning and teaching that transforms the knowledge, action and leadership needed for more equitable and sustainable development globally. Through equitable and sustainable partnerships, it works with governments, philanthropic foundations, non-governmental organisations, academics and civil society to transform approaches to progressive social, political and economic change in ways that ultimately make a difference to people's lives.

[Learn more about the IDS](#)



MAKE CONNECTIONS ACROSS THE WORLD

The online format of the Sustainable Development MSc enables students to join from all over the world – in fact, students from over 100 countries make up the alumni for this course. That means you'll access a wide range of regional perspectives and grow a valuable global network of sustainability professionals.



FLEXIBLE LEARNING

We have six entry points each year, allowing you to start your course at a time that suits you. You can step on and off the course if you need to take a break from your studies at any time*.

*Maximum study break applies – the course must be completed within 4 years from enrolment.



STUDY FROM ANYWHERE

Taught 100% online, you can benefit from our expert teaching, informed by our world-leading research, from wherever you are in the world – giving you the opportunity to build a global network.



SPREAD THE COST

You can choose to either pay your fees in one payment at the start of your course or pay for each module as you study to spread the cost out across the course.



NO NEED TO TAKE A CAREER BREAK

Learning online with us is the perfect way to develop your skills, knowledge and employability without taking time away from your professional or life commitments.



GAIN THE SAME QUALIFICATION AS ON-CAMPUS

You'll be taught by academics, researchers and practitioners with a wide range of expertise and study alongside students who are passionate about sustainable development.



24HR ACCESSIBILITY TO LEARNING MATERIAL

Our Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) is a bespoke platform, designed specifically to deliver our Masters to students around the world.

MODULE GUIDE

MODULES

Our interdisciplinary curriculum covers science, technology, economics, social sciences, and innovation studies, helping you to develop joined-up solutions to complex sustainability challenges.

To graduate from the course, students must successfully complete all 11 core modules plus one of the optional modules below. Each module lasts for seven weeks with the final module assessment deadline usually on the Monday of Week 8. Students should allow for 20 hours per week study time.

Assessments will take place throughout each module and must be completed within the module teaching period for students to progress through the course/to the next module.

The course uses multiple assessment methods to assess students' knowledge, competence, development and engagement through individual and group-work exercises, such as written reports, simulations, essays, project reports, MCQs, and portfolios. An indication for the likely assessment methods of each module is given, though this may be subject to change.



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: POLITICS AND POLICIES

This module provides an overview of the politics and policies of sustainable development in different parts of the world. From increasing inequality to toxic wastes and climate change, the challenges facing our world are daunting. Arguably then, the urgency of realising transformations to sustainability has never been greater.

Module teaching team: Saurabh Arora, Divya Sharma, Katerina Psarikidou

Types of assessments may include:

Group presentation (30%)

Essay (70%)

MODULE GUIDE

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

The mission of the module is to provide students with a grounding in a variety of economic and non-economic (systems) frameworks for studying issues of science, technology and innovation, and their collective relationship to energy production and policy. The module gives students from diverse disciplinary backgrounds the knowledge and shared concepts for their studies, enabling them to communicate with each other and with the wider industrial, academic and policy communities concerned with innovation. The module aims to provide a deep understanding of the processes of technical change and their relationships to organisations, markets and regulations.

Module teaching team: Paul Nightingale, Joshua Moon

Types of assessments may include:

Group presentation (30%)

Essay (70%)

POLICY ANALYSIS

This module will provide students with the concepts and tools to understand and analyse specific energy policy problems, identify relevant goals, develop evaluation criteria, identify alternative policy options, assess the likely impact of those options against the evaluation criteria and provide practical policy recommendations. The approach will be interdisciplinary and applied, drawing in particular upon ideas from welfare economics and public choice theory. Students will apply these ideas to contemporary challenges within energy and climate policy.

Module teaching team: Steve Sorrell, Noam Bergman

Types of assessments may include:

Exam (30%)

Report (70%)



MODULE GUIDE

UNDERSTANDING THE POLICY-MAKING PROCESS

This module will introduce students to the nature and operation of the policy process in modern societies. The module will examine the different stages of the policy process and assess competing explanations of that process, drawing upon ideas from policy studies and political science. The aim is to provide students with an understanding of how political systems are organised in different countries, how problems are constructed and brought onto the policy agenda, how policies are formulated, adopted, implemented and evaluated, how and why changes in policy occur, and how policy processes at different levels of government interrelate. Particular attention will be paid to international cooperation between nation states and the nature, operation and importance of the institutional arrangements that result (e.g., the UNFCCC and the Paris agreement). These ideas will be illustrated with practical examples and exercises from energy and other areas.

Module teaching team: Caitriona McLeish, Alex Mankoo, Katerina Psarikidou

Types of assessments may include:

Project - group work submission (30%)

Essay (70%)



KEY PERSPECTIVES IN INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

This module provides the epistemological foundations of development studies, mapping the historical evolution of key ideas and the political, socio-economic and cultural influences on them. It highlights the deeply contested nature of development and the different insights that academic disciplines such as economics, gender studies, anthropology, sociology, geography and political science have contributed to the evolution of development thinking. Students will reflect on their own motivation and positionality and how these influence their interpretation of the meaning and goals of development.

Module teaching team: Linda Waldman, Violet Barasa

Types of assessments may include:

Report (20%)

Peer review (10%)

Report (70%)

MODULE GUIDE

DEMOCRATISING SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Modern sciences and technologies are deeply entangled with social power. Techno-scientific developments such as gene editing and climate geoengineering are political issues, embroiled not only in controversies among scientists and engineers, but also subject to wider public debates. These debates highlight the importance of continuous opening up of the techno-sciences to democratic scrutiny, in order to achieve a greater diversity of knowledge, artefacts, ecologies and cultures necessary for achieving transformations to sustainability.

Module teaching team: Katerina Psarikidou, Andrew Stirling, Saurabh Arora

Types of assessments may include:

Observation activity - critical reflection and peer review (10%)

Essay plan - (20%)

Essay - (70%)

GLOBALISATION AND THE ENVIRONMENT: CAPITALISM, ECOLOGY AND POWER

This module explores the central relationship between the organisation of the global political economy and processes of social and environmental change. It examines the key pillars of the global economy in terms of production, trade and finance as well as looking at the political economy of key issues such as climate change, energy, food and water. These issues are studied in terms of the economic origins of socio-ecological impacts, their governance and contestation and struggles for alternatives.

Module teaching team: Lucila Newell, Peter Newell

Types of assessments may include:

Participation activity (20%)

Group written submission (30%)

Portfolio (50%)



MODULE GUIDE

PERSPECTIVES, METHODS AND SKILLS

This module provides students with the basic building blocks for the production and use of social scientific research, giving special consideration to interdisciplinary research. The aim is to develop students' abilities to understand, critically evaluate, conduct, and communicate research. Module contents are relevant to students interested in pursuing careers in public and private sectors, and in research. The module will help students develop more sophisticated interpretative lenses, a strong understanding of methodological approaches used in the social sciences, and effective communication abilities. These skills are highly applicable to academic and non-academic tasks.

Module teaching team: Marie Claire Brisbois, Katerina Psarikidou

Types of assessments may include:

Group project (40%)

Project (60%)



INNOVATION FOR SUSTAINABILITY

This module will explore the role that innovation can play in sustainable development in industrialised and developing countries. A number of ideas will be used to provide a framework for experiential learning, including past and current theory on sustainability, growth and competitiveness (with specific reference to the role of technology); understanding and influencing directions of innovation – both in terms of green industrialisation and grassroots innovation; and the governance of socio-technical transitions. Specific topics will be explored to illustrate the utility of each idea, such as: the barriers to the diffusion of sustainable innovations; the role of innovative green niches in systems transformations; and the challenges of international co-ordination and regulation within the multilateral trading system. These topics will be illustrated with reference to real world case studies in a number of different sectors.

Module teaching team: Adrian Ely

Types of assessments may include:

Essay (30%)

Essay (70%)

MODULE GUIDE

MARKET-BASED SOLUTIONS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: PITFALLS AND POSSIBILITIES

This module examines the emergent place and problems of market-based approaches for achieving sustainability and will cover topics such as payments for ecosystem services, carbon and biodiversity markets, offsetting and banking, and no net loss approaches. It probes questions of equity, justice and efficacy in treating nature as 'capital' and financialised commodity.

This module is offered jointly with the School of Global Studies

Module teaching team: Lucila Newell, James Fairhead

Types of assessments may include:

Group work submission (30%)

Essay (70%)

DECOLONISING KNOWLEDGE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

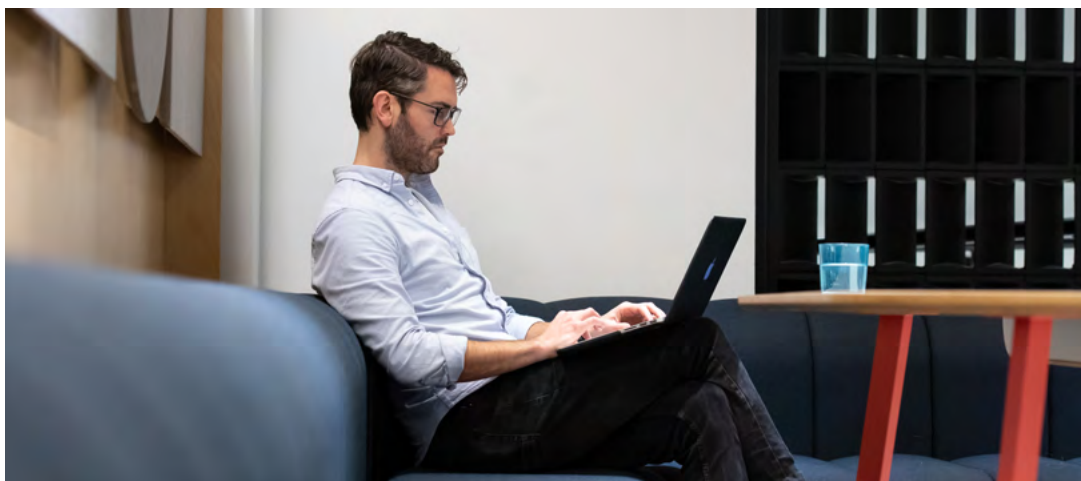
This module examines the ways in which the current development apparatus is rooted in colonial history and ways of knowing, and how the politics and practices of sustainability both reinforce and challenge coloniality. We will explore non-Eurocentric forms of knowledge production focussing on the global South (such as feminist and critical race theory and practices, environmental and indigenous movements) that critique coloniality, rework the meaning of sustainability and offer visions for socio-ecologically just transformations.

Module teaching team: Divya Sharma, Saurabh Arora

Types of assessments may include:

Presentations (30%)

Essay (70%)



MODULE GUIDE



OPTIONAL: CRITICAL ISSUES IN SUSTAINABILITY: ENVIRONMENT, AGRICULTURE, HEALTH

This module examines key policy issues and debates relating to sustainability and global development in the domains of agriculture, health and the environment. A case study approach is used to explore real-life policy dilemmas, through topics such as agricultural transformation, carbon politics, the commodification of nature, the governance of infectious diseases, resource extraction, and climate change.

This module is offered jointly with the Institute of Development Studies.

Module teaching team: Dominic Glover

Types of assessments may include:

Terms of reference (ToR) document (30%)

Essay (70%)

OPTIONAL: SUSTAINABILITY IN BUSINESS OPERATIONS AND SUPPLY CHAINS

This module provides the student with knowledge and understanding on how sustainability principles are embedded in business processes, products and services by exploring real world case studies in different sectors. The module introduces a variety of frameworks and operational practices to develop a deep understanding of how the fundamental principles of sustainability can support the improvement of operations and supply chains, including product design, manufacturing, and logistics.

Module teaching team: Maria Holgado

Module lead: Dr Samuel Power

Types of assessments may include:

Essay (30%)

Report (70%)

The University of Sussex regularly reviews modules to provide the most innovative and relevant courses of study. As a result, module offerings may change. The information in this leaflet is correct as of July 2023, but please keep an eye on our website for the most up-to-date course information.

KEY INFORMATION

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

A lower second-class (2.2) undergraduate honours degree or above from any UK university or international equivalent.

Follow our step-by-step guide on [how to apply for an online Masters course.](#)

ENGLISH LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS

Applicants whose first language is not English (and whose first degree was not taught in English) need to supply evidence of IELTS (Academic) – 6.5 overall, including at least 6.0 in each component.

FEES AND FUNDING

Total course fee: £12,660

Cost per module: £1,055

Fees can be paid at the start of the course or on a module-by-module basis. Students must pay the first module fee of £1,055 to secure their place on the course.

Course fees will remain fixed for 24 months from your initial course start date. Thereafter, the course fee will rise at a rate of 2.5% per calendar year (subject to rounding for administration purposes).

Please visit our [fees and funding page](#) for more information.





Visit the course page to learn more.

**[STUDY-ONLINE.SUSSEX.AC.UK/
SUSTAINABLE-DEVELOPMENT-MSC](https://study-online.sussex.ac.uk/sustainable-development-msc)**



Disclaimer: This brochure was published July 2023. The University of Sussex has made every effort to ensure that this information is both helpful and accurate but some changes, for example to courses, facilities or fees, may become necessary due to legitimate staffing, financial, regulatory or academic reasons.

[Visit the Sussex online website](#)