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MSc Conflict, Security, and Development



Simeon Koroma | November 2025

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Agenda

- Introduction to the MSC CSD
- Programme Structure and Requirements
- Teaching and Learning Methods
- Additional Opportunities
- Career Prospects
- Questions



Why study for an MSc in Conflict, Security and Development?

What type of issues are you interested in?

- The intersection of conflict with key development issues such as poverty, governance and democracy
- The relationships between local security needs and grand politics
- The relationships between multi-level actors of security
- The systems that govern all these

What type of students are we looking for?

- Curious and passionate about the world and the people left behind in it
- Interested in making policy that can shape security outcomes
- Interested in understanding why conflicts happen, how they play out, what actors are involved and how to end them



Why Edinburgh?

- A world leading University
- The largest Centre of African Studies in the UK and one of the largest in Europe
- Strong security related research being conducted across the University
- The Centre for Security Research
- A vibrant and international student community
- An ancient, yet modern and absolutely beautiful city



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MSc CSD Programme Requirements, 2025-26

1. Three required courses:

Conflict, Security and Development

Politics and Theories of International Development

Peace and Conflict in Africa

2. Three optional courses:

Wide selection (see sample on next slide)

3. Standard Dissertation, Policy-Focused Dissertation, or Placement-Based Dissertation (Apr-Aug)



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Sample of Optional Courses

- Resource Politics and Development
- Policing and Punishment: Global Perspectives
- Rethinking Africa: Space, Race, and Power
- Displacement and Development
- Pursuing Justice After Violence
- Key skills in Development Practice
- Research in Africa
- Business and Development
- Humanitarianism and the Media
- Terrorism in Global Politics
- War and Peace: Anthropological Perspectives
- International Security
- Gender and Development
- International Relations and Contemporary Conflict
- Gender, War and Peacebuilding

**Some courses have limited spaces*



CSD Standard Dissertation

- Extended piece of independent, in-depth scholarship on a topic selected by the student related to programme content
- Student's own endeavour, but with individual supervisor;
- up to 15,000 words
- Opportunity to choose area/topic of interest
- Excellent preparation for further academic, teaching, or policy work careers
- Preparatory intensive workshop held in spring



CSD Policy-Focused Dissertation

- Extended piece of independent, in-depth scholarship on a topic with a policy focus
- Student's own endeavour, but with individual supervisor and advice from members of policy and practitioner community
- up to 15,000 words (13,500 main text and 1,500 policy briefing)
- Opportunity to choose area/topic of interest
- Aimed at those with interest in careers in policy and practitioner fields, provides experience pitching ideas to policy community and writing for policy audience
- Opportunity to build networks within professional fields of conflict, security and development and share dissertation findings with relevant policy audiences
- Preparatory intensive workshop held in spring



CSD Placement-Based Dissertation

- Extended piece of independent, in-depth scholarship on a topic with a policy focus in partnership with a host organisation.
- up to 15,000 words (12,000 dissertation and 3000-word reflective element)
- Secondary output (to host organisation)
- Varying methodologies; placements in-person, hybrid or digital
- Opportunities:
 - Network with influential professionals and organisations
 - Experience the reality of working in your chosen sector
 - Training in practice
 - See the impact of your research first-hand
 - Enhance your future employability within the wider sector
- Dedicated support from the Study and Work Away Service team
- Preparatory intensive workshop held in spring



How will you study?

Exploratory, critical and analytical

- The programme will introduce you to a range of analytical perspectives, and train you to adopt a critical, analytical and engaging approach to the study of conflict

Emphasis on independent work

- You will be expected to engage in independent reading, thought and writing, though you will be guided by lectures, seminar discussion, group work and supervised projects.



How will we teach you?

- Lectures/ Seminars
- Training workshops on methods, policy analysis, including access to security practitioners
- Self-led and Group Study
- Independent Research



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What other support can you expect?

CSD Specific

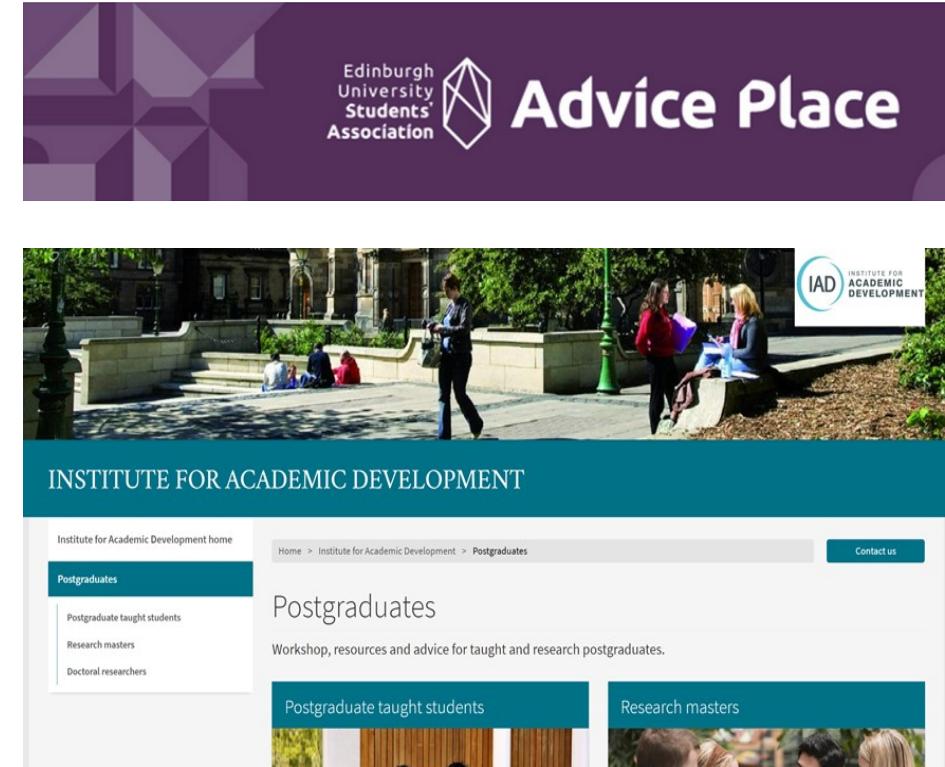
- Programme Director as core contact; oversight of whole degree; contact for personal academic support
- Programme Administrator
- Student Advisor for help with pastoral issues (student.sps@ed.ac.uk)

School Level

- Student Development Hub (career sessions, academic skills)

University Level

- Institute of Academic Development (writing workshops, etc)
- Award winning Student Association 'Advice Place'



The image shows the Edinburgh University Students' Association 'Advice Place' logo and a screenshot of their website. The logo features a purple geometric pattern on the left and the text 'Edinburgh University Students' Association' with a stylized diamond icon next to 'Advice Place'. Below the logo is a photograph of students on a university campus. The website screenshot shows a teal header with the 'INSTITUTE FOR ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENT' logo. The main content area is titled 'Postgraduates' and includes links for 'Postgraduate taught students', 'Research masters', and 'Doctoral researchers'. Below this is a teal footer with sections for 'Postgraduate taught students' and 'Research masters'.



Additional Opportunities

- Programme is hosted by Centre of African Studies
 - One of largest centres for the study of Africa in Europe
 - Weekly seminars with guest speakers
 - Regular social and cultural events
 - Annual conference
- Collaborations with Centre for Security Research
 - Hub for security research across the university
 - Regular events focused on pressing security issues from global perspective
 - Annual conference
- Huge range of student associations (<https://www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/events>)
- CSD-specific social events and activities



Career prospects

- Graduates can expect to work in a wide range of industries including:
- Security Research Industry
- Government Policy and Institutions
- International Organisations
- NGO sector
- Private sector
- Further education (PhD)



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Next steps...

<https://edin.ac/student-chat-pg>



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Contact details for follow-up questions

- We apologise if we did not get through all of your questions in the time allotted for this session. If you have further questions that have not been answered, please email: futurestudents@ed.ac.uk





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Thank you

Dr Simeon Koroma

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