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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



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# 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)



# 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

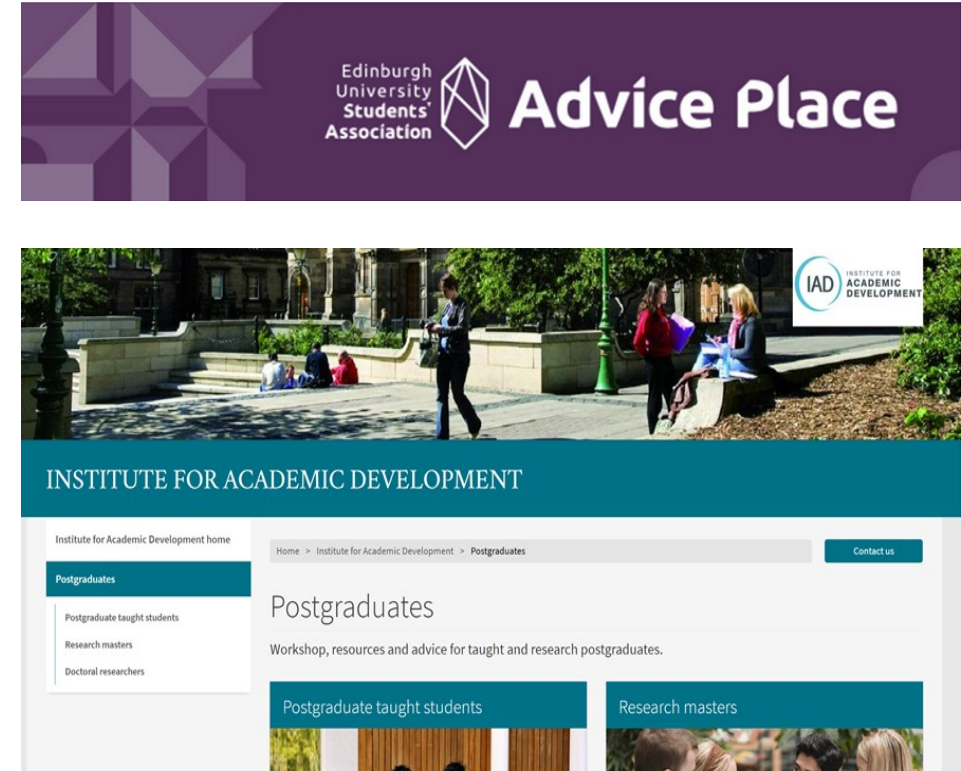
- Programme Director as core contact; oversight of whole degree; contact for personal academic support
- Programme Administrator
- Student Advisor for help with pastoral issues ([student.sps@ed.ac.uk](mailto:student.sps@ed.ac.uk))

## School Level

- Student Development Hub (career sessions, academic skills)

## University Level

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



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# 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](mailto:futurestudents@ed.ac.uk)







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# Thank you

Dr Simeon Koroma