International Development
Postgraduate study.
We're a dynamic and vibrant community of researchers and international development professionals, committed to tackling some of the biggest issues in our changing world.
Welcome.

Our research and teaching works across the boundaries of social sciences, healthcare, humanities and physical sciences to understand and tackle complex global challenges. Our International Development courses engage with the most important issues of our time such as climate change, environmental sustainability, global inequalities and public health.

Our interdisciplinary Masters courses provide students with a critical understanding of the latest research, policy and practice in the field of International Development. This is combined with professional skills training, practical work experience and international fieldwork, some of which takes place at our field centre in Tanzania. This blend of practical and theoretical skills equips our students to work in development organisations across the world — our alumni have gone on to careers in the World Bank, the British Red Cross, WildAid, World Vision and Stop the Traffik.

International Development courses are based in the Department of Geography, which is ranked within the top 15 geography departments in the UK (REF 2014) and the top 50 in the world (QS 2019). The impact of our research is recognised as world-leading or internationally excellent.
The MA International Development brings together expertise in international development theory, policy and practice to engage with the challenges of inequality and injustice in the Global South. Students develop a critical understanding of international development through coursework, applied training and professional activities.

Students undertake a programme of professional skills development, carry out hands-on research during an overseas field class, and complete a placement-based dissertation which links together academic theory and development practice. Through this course, students develop the practical and theoretical skills needed to work within development organisations around the world.

Our MA programme reflects our research strengths and our internationally-recognised expertise in the areas of social and environmental justice, rural and urban development, governance, citizenship and sustainability. In addition, our teaching involves industry and sector specialists, helping students to make connections and contacts with a global network of expertise beyond the University.

The main attractions of the course at Sheffield were the practical and professional opportunities – the chance to conduct overseas research alongside NGOs offered me a holistic understanding of the sector. I am now working in London for a global humanitarian aid organisation. I love knowing that my work contributes to transforming the lives of others, turning emergency situations into opportunities for communities across the globe.

Claudia Winn, MA International Development
The MSc in Environmental Change and International Development brings together expertise in environmental science and international development to engage with the challenges of environmental change in the Global South.

Environmental considerations are now central to international development theory, policy and practice. Through high quality teaching, extensive fieldwork and innovative practitioner engagement, the MSc course provides students with an in-depth understanding of the complexities of international development as well as the role of society-environment interactions as both drivers and outcomes of international development policy and practice.

During this course, students undertake a programme of professional skills development, carry out hands-on research during an overseas field class, and complete a placement-based dissertation which links together academic theory and development practice.

In addition, our teaching involves industry and sector specialists, helping students to make connections and contacts with a global network of expertise beyond the University. Through this course, students gain the practical and theoretical skills needed to work within development and environmental organisations around the world.

One of the reasons I got my current job with the EU was because my dissertation was related to reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation. They were looking for a candidate with specific knowledge in forest areas, and my placement-based dissertation at the International Fund for Agricultural Development certainly enhanced my profile.

Mei Feng, MSc Environmental Change and International Development
The Masters in Public Health (MPH) International Development is a joint programme run by the Department of Geography and the School of Health and Related Research (ScHARR), bringing together expertise from development studies and public health to engage with the challenges of health and international development in today’s complex world.

The course prioritises the development and application of a critical understanding of international development theories and debates with a specific focus on public health and related research. The course draws together expertise from different disciplines to provide detailed insights into the intersections of international development and healthcare policy and practice in the Global South.

In addition, our teaching involves industry and sector specialists, helping students to make connections and contacts with a global network of expertise beyond the University. Through this course, students gain the practical and theoretical skills needed to work within development and health organisations around the world.

My experiences with field research and my placement were unique, an experience that many of my colleagues did not have during their Masters courses. The research experience I gained in Nepal and South Africa through the Masters greatly helped me understand the data collection methods and analysis that are now part of my role.

MokRyeon Cho, Project Action Officer at Korea Population Health Welfare Association
Learning and teaching.

Our courses provide high-quality, in-depth teaching to prepare students to advance their careers in development policy and practice or for further academic study and development research.

The programmes are driven by an equal commitment to development theory and practice, making these courses of interest to both recent graduates and those with existing professional experience. We are looking for students who will respond positively to the intellectual challenges and extensive professional training this degree programme provides. Students from - or with work experience in - the Global South are particularly encouraged to apply.

The placement-based dissertation offers students the opportunity to work within an international development organisation either in the UK or internationally whilst conducting research for their dissertation, thereby gaining valuable experience for their future careers. While placement options change annually according to the needs of host organisations, we have established partnerships with organisations in 25 countries.

The core field class to a country in the Global South provides students with practical field skills in a unique environment. Each field class is designed to ensure that students gain experience of applying their learning in a real world context as well as practicing specific research methods and techniques. We offer a range of field class destinations each year. In recent years, field classes have visited Kenya, Tanzania, India, Nepal and the Galapagos Islands.

Professional skills training provides students with the opportunity to tailor a portfolio of specialist and transferable skills that are designed to enhance student employability. Skills are taught through practical activities and scenario-based problem-solving activities run by external experts and international development professionals. Specialist skills include writing tenders for contracts; writing funding applications; monitoring and evaluation; and GIS.

COURSE STRUCTURE

Full-time students complete 180 credits of study over a 12 month period. Modules are delivered through lectures, seminars, workshops, supervision and independent study. Each module speaks to current trends, draws on recent research and incorporates the individual expertise of our academic staff. A wide range of assessment methods - including research reports, policy briefs and oral presentations - ensure that students develop a core set of communication skills tailored to the international development sector.
International Development at Sheffield.

THE SHEFFIELD INSTITUTE FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Sheffield Institute for International Development (SIID) is a flagship interdisciplinary research institute at the University of Sheffield. The network includes over 70 scholars and hundreds of postgraduate students, in addition to a wider community of academic and practitioner partners in governments, think tanks and NGOs around the world. This provides students with the opportunity to engage with internationally-recognised teams of researchers who are working across traditional discipline boundaries to address global development challenges.

siid.group.shef.ac.uk

SIDSHARE

SIDshare is a student run social enterprise that operates as an NGO. It promotes engagement and partnership through knowledge exchange involving outreach work with local organisations and schools and through partnerships with more than 40 international development organisations and funding bodies. SIDshare provides students with practical experience of running an NGO focused on issues of international development.

sidshare.org.uk

GLOSS

As part of the Faculty of Social Sciences, students in our department can take part in exciting initiatives like our Global Learning Opportunities in the Social Sciences (GLOSS) scheme. GLOSS gives taught postgraduate students the chance to apply to attend major international summits like the G20. In recent years, students from our department have attended the Global Land Forum in Indonesia and World Urban Forum 9 in Malaysia.

sheffield.ac.uk/gloss
THE SHEFFIELD EXPERIENCE

There aren’t many cities in the UK that can surprise you like Sheffield. For a big city to have such a strong sense of community is unusual. Then there’s the fact that a third of the city is inside the Peak District National Park, an area of outstanding natural beauty.

Most of our student accommodation is in one of Sheffield’s nicest residential areas, a short walk from campus. For an urban university, this is pretty special. As well as en suite apartments, we also have houses – near good schools – for students with families.

At the heart of everything is our students’ union, ranked No1 in the UK for ten years running*. All your support services are based here. There are over 400 student societies to try out or join, hundreds of sports teams and one of the UK’s biggest student volunteering programmes.

With a little guidance from us and lots of freedom to explore, you’ll find this all adds up to a unique experience, one that sees you form strong relationships with your fellow students, deepen your ties to the community and discover what it means to be part of something.

*CAREERS SUPPORT

We want you to realise your potential, to be happy and lead the kind of life you want. So we support your development throughout your course and for up to three years after you graduate.

We cover everything from figuring out what you want to do to succeeding at interviews. There are lots of opportunities to network with employers in your field. And we’ll help you find the kind of work experience that’s right for you.

We take your ambitions seriously. Whatever you want to do, wherever in the world you choose to build your career, we can help.

As a result of the combination of academic training, fieldwork experience and professional development offered by our programmes, our graduates have high success rates in securing employment in their chosen career. Our international alumni community includes students from more than 50 countries, working for organisations such as DFID; Oxfam; Rainforest Foundation UK; Save the Children; United Nations; US AID; WildAid; World Vision; WaterAid; and World Bank.

FUNDING

We value talent, which is why we invest in scholarships (£4m in 2018–19) for exceptional UK and international students. Government loans are available for UK and EU masters students studying eligible courses. And if you did your first degree at Sheffield, you could get a discount on your tuition fees.

Find out more about loans, scholarships and other funding here:
sheffield.ac.uk/postgraduate/taught/funding

*Times Higher Education Student Experience Survey 2009–2018
Entry requirements.

The MA International Development and MSc Environmental Change and International Development are intended for graduate students with a good honours degree (a 2:1 from a UK university or equivalent) and an engagement with international development.

Students of Medicine can intercalate into the MPH International Development for one year, subject to certain eligibility criteria.

Work experience is not essential and you do not need to have studied international development before.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Overall IELTS grade of 6.5 with a minimum of 6.0 in each component, or equivalent.

The Department is committed to a policy of equality of opportunity in the application process and wishes to ensure a diversity of students on its courses. We therefore particularly welcome applications from people from non-standard academic backgrounds, from people with relevant employment experience, from minority ethnic students, from women, from mature students and from students with disabilities.

sheffield.ac.uk/geography