University of Sussex

MSc Human and Social Data Science
Course Handbook for Postgraduate Students
2021-22

Contents

1. Introduction

Welcome to the MSc Human and Social Data Science at the University of Sussex. We hope that you will enjoy studying here and that you participate actively in the life of the University. Our aim for all students is to provide you with the opportunities to achieve your potential and obtain the best degree possible.

This document is a reference to key points about the MSc Human and Social Data Science at the University of Sussex. It describes how the course is organised and the faculty who are your key contacts. It provides links to the online descriptions of both compulsory and specialised options modules, and explains the methods of teaching and assessment we use. It also offers hints about how to make the best use of your time, outlines some of the teaching and learning resources provided on the course and at the University.

In addition to this handbook, the *Student Handbook* www.sussex.ac.uk/students/handbook provides you with University-wide information.

Dr Julie Weeds (EngInf) and Professor Enrico Scalas (MPS)
Course Convenors, MSc Human and Social Data Science

2. Course Information MSc Human and Social Data Science

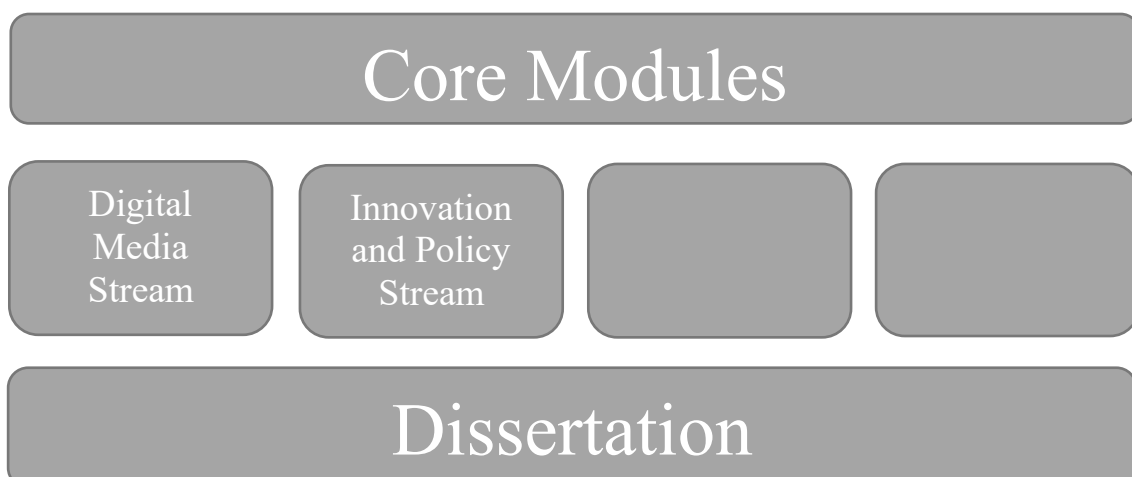For the full details of module content, module aims, and learning outcomes
www.sussex.ac.uk/mps/internal/departments/mathematics/pg/pgcourses

This course has a number of core modules common to all students on the MSc Human and Data Science, and a range of options that are organised into specialist streams. All students will have to choose a stream and complete a final dissertation.

If you decide the MSc course or stream you have selected is unsuitable for you and you wish to change to another, complete a Course Transfer Form as well as a new Module Options form for your intended new course. Please collect the three required signatures on the Transfer form yourself, then email the two forms to the mps_pgtoffice@sussex.ac.uk. **No Course or Stream Transfers will be allowed after WEEK TWO of the Autumn term.**

The form is available here:
http://www.sussex.ac.uk/mps/internal/departments/mathematics/pg/studyingmsc/modules

Core Modules			
Digital Media Stream	Innovation and Policy Stream		
Dissertation			

3. Choosing your modules

To select your option modules, you must complete the **Options form** for your MSc course. You can download the Options form for your MSc Course from http://www.sussex.ac.uk/mps/internal/departments/mathematics/pg/studyingmsc/modules

If you have already handed in an Options form and you want to change one or more of your modules, you must complete a new options form, get it signed by your MSc course convenor and email it to the School Office. Please note that we cannot guarantee any module changes as these are subject to availability (i.e. number of students in the module) and timetable clashes. **No option module changes will be allowed after WEEK TWO of each term (Autumn/Spring).**

4. Key Contacts

The course is managed and developed jointly by the Department of Mathematics within the School of Mathematical and Physical Sciences and the Department of Informatics within the School of Engineering and Informatics. The course convenors are Professor Enrico Scalas (MPS) and Dr Julie Weeds (EngInf).

The Department of Mathematics is based in Pevensey 2/3 buildings, and the School Office is in Pevensey 2 Building. Many of your classes will take place in the Department of Informatics which is based in the nearby Chichester 1/2 buildings.   If you have any queries about your course overall, or your module choices, you should contact the School Office for the School of Mathematical and Physical Sciences:
E: mps@sussex.ac.uk

T: 01273 873254

This course is also supported by DISCUS, the Centre for Data Intensive Science at the University of Sussex. DISCUS staff can help you with identifying project supervisors, industry mentors and industrial placements. Throughout the year, DISCUS will organise various events including HackEvents, seminars and social events. You can contact the DISCUS Centre manager for more information about any of this

Louise Winters, DISCUS Centre Manager
E: l.winters@sussex.ac.uk

For each stream, the key academic contacts are as follows:

Innovation and Policy stream:
Dr Simone Vannuccini, Science Policy Research Unit, USBS
E: S.Vannuccini@sussex.ac.uk
Dr Julie Weeds, AI Group, Department of Informatics
E: juliewe@sussex.ac.uk

Digital Media stream:

Dr Beatrice Fazi, Digital Humanities, School of Media Film and Music
E: B.Fazi@sussex.ac.uk
Dr Julie Weeds, AI Group, Department of Informatics
E:juliewe@sussex.ac.uk

5. External Examiners
Dr Guido Germano

6. Teaching Strategy
This course is offered as a one-year full-time course, or as a part-time course over two academic years. The course begins in September in the autumn term and finishes at the beginning of September in the following year.
Term dates are available here
http://www.sussex.ac.uk/aboutus/keydates
Course modules are spread across the autumn and spring terms, and are taught in lectures, seminars, workshops and practical sessions according to the requirements of the module. Over the summer period students take on a major research project for their MSc Dissertations which they must hand in by the specified date in August.

7. Assessment Strategy
The course uses a number of different modes of assessment including unseen examinations, coursework, project work and dissertation. In order to pass a particular module you need a mark of at least 50%. This mark may be derived from a single exam or as the weighted average of several units of assessment (exam, coursework, etc.). In order to pass your MSc, you are expected to gain 180 credits by passing all of your modules, both core and optional.

Assessment details for each module are listed on-line:
www.sussex.ac.uk/mps/internal/departments/mathematics/pg/pgcourses

Assessments and Deadlines for Formal Submissions

Coursework is submitted during the period of the module and submission dates are notified to you in advance. Each one of your core and option module assessments and deadlines for submission appears in your study timetable on the Sussex Direct web page, as well as on Canvas. It is your responsibility to be aware of these deadlines.

It is important that such deadlines are met; the University applies a system of penalties to assessments that are handed in late. For more details, please consult the University Examinations and Assessment Regulations:
http://www.sussex.ac.uk/adqe/standards/examsandassessment

Note that tutors are not allowed to provide extensions to submission deadlines. However, there are central mechanisms in place to allow students with specific learning needs or exceptional circumstances to have an extension (usually of up to 1 week). In other cases, late

submission is usually permitted up to 1 week after the advertised deadline but a penalty will normally be applied (usually 5-10%).

Exams take place in three assessment periods. Term 1 modules will be examined in January, and Term 2 modules will be examined in May/June. There is also a formal period for resitting assessments in August/September. We encourage you to regularly check your study timetable in Sussex Direct and e-mails. The MSc Dissertation is handed in on a specified date during August.

Submitting your work

All modules now support electronic submission of coursework via Canvas, which is the Virtual Learning Environment used at the University of Sussex. It is your responsibility to ensure that you upload the correct files to Canvas. If you should have any technical problems submitting your work, you should contact the module convenor and the MPS School Office as soon as possible.

The assessment of the MSc research project/dissertation includes a dissertation and, for some modules, an oral presentation. Supervisors for MSc research projects/dissertations are allocated in the Spring Term, in consultation with the relevant MSc convenor. Due to the cross-curricular nature of the course, some projects will require co-supervision by faculty in different departments.

8. Feedback to students

There are a number of ways in which you will receive feedback regarding your progress:

- Marked Work - You will get feedback via Canvas each time you have a piece of coursework marked. Additional feedback can also be picked up in lectures or during a Lecturer's feedback/office hour.
- Lecturers' feedback hours - For details, please search Sussex web pages for the relevant staff member and their feedback hours for the week will be displayed.

9. Support for your learning

In addition to your MSc course convenor, you will have a dissertation supervisor. You will choose the topic and the supervisor within the core Spring Term module Data Science Masters Research Proposal. If you have any queries with a specific module, you can visit the lecturer during their advertised feedback/office hours.

This course is also supported by DISCUS, the Centre for Data Intensive Science at the University of Sussex. DISCUS staff can help you with identifying project supervisors, industry mentors and industrial placements. Throughout the year, DISCUS will organise various events including HackEvents, seminars and social events. You can contact the DISCUS Centre manager for more information about any of this or if you have any course-related queries (and they will point you in the right direction).

Louise Winters, DISCUS Centre Manager
E: l.winters@sussex.ac.uk

You can also get valuable information, advice and support from the Student Life Centre. They can help you with many issues including:

- Personal concerns affecting study progress or well-being
- Funding and finance including scholarships, bursaries and hardship funds
- Sources of help to improve academic performance – identifying obstacles to learning
- Understanding university systems and regulations in relation to assessment, services, complaints, conduct, and discipline.
- Progression, intermission and withdrawal processes - discussion and support
- Referrals to other professional services on campus
- Exceptional Circumstances

http://www.sussex.ac.uk/studentlifecentre/

Study Skills and Resources

Turnitin

Turnitin is an online 'text matching' tool that compares a student's work to a huge database of other files and shows where there are strong similarities. It is often referred to as plagiarism detection software.

S3 guide to study skills

The University's S3 guide to study skills gives advice on writing well, including hints and tips on how to avoid making serious mistakes. Visit and make use of the resources there. You will also find helpful guides to referencing properly and improving your critical writing skills.
http://www.sussex.ac.uk/s3/

Referencing

These are some useful websites and places to go to for advice on how to reference essays and dissertations:

- S3 website on referencing http://www.sussex.ac.uk/s3/
- Use the resources associated with your modules on Canvas.

Student Support Unit

The Student Support Unit is a team of specialist advisors who work with students who may need support at the university due to a long term condition.
http://www.sussex.ac.uk/studentsupport/

Academic Development Support

The services of Academic Development Support are available **free of charge** to all full-time international/overseas students completing a full degree. They offer support with academic cultural differences; learning styles; what is meant by plagiarism, argument and critical analysis, as well as looking at English for academic purposes.

The Sussex Language Institute runs free 'English Language and Study Skills Support' sessions for International students, including in-depth guidance on referencing. There is also advice on how to reference using the Harvard, Vancouver, Numeric and MLA referencing styles.
http://www.sussex.ac.uk/languages/english/acadev

Plagiarism and Academic Misconduct

The following are most commonly referred to terms and definitions. Plagiarism, collusion, and cheating in exams are all forms of academic misconduct which the University takes very seriously. Every year, some students commit academic misconduct unintentionally because they did not know what was expected of them. The consequences for committing academic misconduct can be severe, so it is important that you familiarise yourself with what it is and how to avoid it. Guidance on avoiding academic misconduct can be found here:
http://www.sussex.ac.uk/s3/

Full details on terms and procedures with regard to Academic Misconduct can be found here:
http://www.sussex.ac.uk/adqe/standards/academicmisconduct

- *Plagiarism* is the use, without acknowledgement, of the intellectual work of other people, and the act of representing the ideas or discoveries of another as one's own in written work submitted for assessment.
- *Collusion* is the preparation or production of work for assessment jointly with another person or persons unless explicitly permitted by the assessment
- *Personation* in written submissions is where someone other than the student prepares the work, part of the work, or provides substantial assistance with work submitted for assessment.
- *Misconduct in examinations* includes attempting to use or gain access to any unauthorised written or elctronic material
- *Fabrication of results* is the invention of observations or experimental results in practical or project work

During your induction, you will receive a Declaration on Academic Misconduct form. You must fill in and sign this form, and return it to the MPS School Office in Pevensey 2, room 3A20.

10. Giving feedback about your course
Each module will have a feedback period, and your lecturer will explain when and how to give feedback. You can talk to your lecturers during their office hours, if you have any concerns

about the course. You can also discuss this with the MSc Course Convenor, or the Head of Department. All staff contact details are available on the University web pages.

You can also give feedback to your student representative. Student reps are democratically elected to represent their peers. They enable a useful and effective communication link between staff and students. They provide helpful feedback to staff on modules and courses; raise concerns in a constructive manner; give feedback to other students on why particular decisions are made; and can help to pre-empt concerns becoming serious issues.

To find the details of your student rep, please check the noticeboard in the School, or visit:

http://www.sussex.ac.uk/mps/internal/departments/mathematics/studentreps

http://www.sussex.ac.uk/mps/internal/departments/physicsandastronomy/studentreps