

International Peace Studies - Frequently Asked Questions

1 What do students do with an M.Phil. (International Peace Studies) degree?

International Peace Studies opens up a wide range of career possibilities including higher education, development work, public service, journalism, law, and conflict resolution. Many of our graduates work for NGOs, as independent consultants, in diplomacy, as educators and teachers. In addition to recent university graduates, many students come to the School from careers in development organisations and other NGOs, from diplomacy, the military, and teaching.

2 What is 'unique' about International Peace Studies at the Irish School of Ecumenics?

International Peace Studies offers a rigorous and stimulating intellectual environment in which students are encouraged to reflect upon and challenge their values and the values embodied in our social and political institutions. Its programmes of study are the only ones of their kind in Ireland. In a wider context, the International Peace Studies programme is special because of its interdisciplinary focus and its particular concern with the ethical and philosophical dimension of international affairs. The small size of the school offers the opportunity for close contact with an international student body, and for easy access to faculty members.

3 What kind of students enrol for the programme and where do they come from?

We take a maximum of 40-45 students each year. Each year our students reflect a variety of backgrounds, nationalities, cultures, ages and experiences. Some come from careers in development organisations and other NGOs, and others from diplomacy, the military, teaching or straight out of university. Most years, there are about 12 different nationalities represented with students from Ireland and the UK, other EU countries, North America, Latin America, Eastern Europe, Africa and Asia.

For some students, International Peace Studies provides a solid foundation for the skills, expertise and knowledge that they will need in their chosen profession. Others find the programme in International Peace Studies gives them a fresh perspective and a valuable set of skills when they return to their profession. Still others find it offers the kind of reflection needed to help them effect a change of career. The degree awarded can also be an important stage on the path to doctoral studies.

4 Are there any funding possibilities available for students?

Yes. For more information, please visit the scholarship opportunities section of this website or contact the ISE Financial Assistance Committee at peacesec@tcd.ie. The ISE Trust Scholarship for the International Peace Studies programme is awarded to students who are from low-income countries and are of exceptional academic ability. Apart from funding from within the applicant's home country, there are some opportunities for funding from Irish government sources, details of which can be obtained from the Irish embassy in the home country.

5 What kind of library facilities are available?

ISE has an extensive specialised library of materials related to the courses which make up the teaching programme. Students have full access to the copyright library of Trinity College.

6 'Irish School of Ecumenics' sounds religious. Does this mean that the International Peace Studies programme is in some sense religious?

About a third of the students who enrol for the programme have no religious affiliation whatever, and it is likely that many others no longer regard their religious upbringing as relevant. On the other hand, probably a quarter of the student body in any one year would have a strong religious commitment and would view International Peace Studies as a secular discipline to strengthen their moral convictions. The programme itself is a secular body of studies like others in international relations and peace studies in Britain and North America, which neither requires, nor attempts to persuade, anyone to adopt or abandon any particular creed. ISE is an institute founded on Christian principles relating to community and reconciliation, and it is to these principles that the International Peace Studies programme at ISE owes its origin.

7 Is admission restricted to those with a primary qualification in politics, sociology, or closely-related disciplines?

No, it is open to any students who can demonstrate that they have the academic competence to attain the required standard. The programme develops analytical skills across a wide range of studies relevant to conflict and its resolution. Experience has shown that students from a literary or scientific background perform as well as those from more closely-related areas.

8 Is it possible to discuss the International peace studies programme with a current or former student before deciding to apply?

Yes. We are aware that intending applicants may wish to discuss the study experience with a current or former student. We can put you into email contact with a current or former student if you wish. Please contact peacesec@tcd.ie.

9 What is Dublin like?

You may like to take a quick tour of Dublin to see for yourself at <http://www.visitdublin.com/>.