Cultures and Societies of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA)

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**What will you learn from this Elective?**

Drawing on the expertise of a wide range of teaching staff, this module begins with introductory lectures to the modern Middle East and North Africa, exploring their societies and cultures through regionally and historically focused investigations. It continues with an exploration of historical and contemporary European and Western interventions and perspectives on the Middle East. How have these impacted on the region?

Overall aims include:
1. Facilitating your engagement in a critical investigation of western narratives and political interventions in MENA
2. Exploring and assessing the societal impact of such interventions and representations in both historical and contemporary perspectives;
3. Equipping you with the knowledge and critical skills to investigate contemporary societal challenges of the region with a view to articulation of solutions;
4. Ensuring that your perspectives on MENA are informed by the views of your peers in the region through online discussion

Broader aims include:
- Development of the critical thinking skills and tools required to interrogate dominant narratives;
- Enhancement of each student’s development as a responsible global citizen

**Student Workload**

2 x 1 hour lectures or student led seminars per week
2.5 x hours per week self-directed study
2 hours per week team research project preparations

**Assessment Components**

Team Research: student groups identify a topic to investigate over a period of five weeks. The results of this research are assessed through:
- A student led seminar where each of the teams “bids” for a specific research topic (10%)
- A multimedia presentation – (weighting 20%)
- A student led seminar on the team’s research topic (20%)
- 1 X 4 minute student produced podcast with Q and A session (weighting 20%)
- 1 x 800 word reflective report (30%).

**Indicative Reading List**

Mansell, P. *Levant: Splendour and Catastrophe on the Mediterranean* London 2010
M.Pace and S. Sen (editors) *Syrian Refugee Children in the Middle East and Europe: Integrating the Young and Exiled*. London 2018