

Master's Degree in Humanitarian Action and Peacebuilding

GENERAL INFORMATION

WHAT IS THE MA IN HUMANITARIAN ACTION AND PEACEBUILDING?

The Master in Humanitarian Action and Peacebuilding (MAHAP) is a unique, interdisciplinary programme designed for professionals and researchers seeking to enhance their expertise in humanitarian response, conflict resolution, and peacebuilding strategies. A collaboration between United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) and [Oxford Brookes University](#), this programme integrates academic rigour with practical training, preparing students to address complex global challenges effectively.

By focusing on the intersection of humanitarian action, sustainable development, and peacebuilding, MAHAP equips students with the knowledge and tools to contribute meaningfully to policy development, field operations, and international cooperation initiatives.

WHEN DOES THE PROGRAMME START?

The programme has two start dates each year, with new cohorts beginning in January and September.



Awa Kajibwami

Programme Associate,
Emergency Preparedness
and Response Unit at the World
Food Programme (WFP)

GRADUATE HIGHLIGHT

I chose this course because Working in the challenging environment of insecurity due to past and ongoing armed conflicts in DR Congo, my course has provided invaluable guidance in my daily activities, including team leadership, stress management, and decision-making. It has significantly helped me to confidently assume my position and support my team in achieving sustainable results. I believed from the start that it could equip me with the skills needed to contribute to strengthen the resilience, saving and changing lives in my community. Through this program, I have also learned a lot about stress management and now apply the skills I have acquired to manage stress, even on a personal level.

Before starting this master's program, I was shy and embarrassed about my accent when speaking English. However, thanks to the webinars and interactions with other students, I was strongly encouraged by the professors and my peers to express myself. This has allowed me to improve my English, and today I am very happy to actively participate in classes. This has enriched me both professionally and socially.

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WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF THIS PROGRAMME?

This programme equips learners with essential knowledge and practical skills to address global conflicts and crises. MAHAP's focus areas include:

- Interconnectedness of Humanitarian Action, Peacebuilding, and Development.
- Cultural Sensitivity and Diversity.
- Collaboration and Innovation in Conflict Resolution.
- Practical Skills for Humanitarian Response and Peacebuilding.
- The Triple Nexus: Humanitarian Action, Peacebuilding, and Development.
- Addressing Emerging Challenges in Conflict Resolution.
- Mental Health, Psychosocial Support, and Well-being in Conflict-Affected Areas.
- Forced Migration, Protection, and Humanitarianism.
- Localisation and the Role of Local Actors.
- Concepts and Principles of International Humanitarian Law.

Alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):

- **SDG 16 - Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions:** Promotes peaceful and inclusive societies, focusing on preventing and resolving conflicts and strengthening institutions for peacebuilding.
- **SDG 3 - Good Health and Well-being:** Indirectly contributes to health and well-being by addressing conflicts and crises, ensuring access to essential services, reducing violence, and promoting stability.
- **SDG 4 - Quality Education:** Provides quality education and training in humanitarian action and peacebuilding, developing knowledgeable and skilled professionals.
- **SDG 10 - Reduced Inequalities:** Addresses conflicts and crises that exacerbate inequalities, promoting stability, social cohesion, and addressing root causes of conflicts.
- **SDG 17 - Partnerships for the Goals:** Highlights the collaboration between UNITAR and Oxford Brookes University, demonstrating the importance of partnerships in achieving sustainable development objectives.

Graduates will be able to:

- Identify contexts of humanitarian action and peacebuilding.
- Recognise theories and practices related to the different dimensions of humanitarian action and peacebuilding – with a specific focus on protection actions.
- Operate methods and tools (for mapping, assessment, management, etc.) needed by practitioners working in the fields of humanitarian action and peacebuilding to address current and emerging challenges.

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COURSE DETAILS

WHAT IS THE MODE OF DELIVERY?

The programme is organised on a modular credit system. Modules will offer a range of taught material, self-led study, group discussion, webinar, group and individual tutorials, virtual coffees, group work and personal reflection.

The course is structured to be fully online and mainly asynchronous, allowing students to access lectures, readings, and assignments at their convenience, and in their own time. This format offers significant flexibility, accommodating working professionals and catering to various learning and studying styles. However, to maintain a human-centred approach and accommodate those who prefer synchronous interaction, certain activities are also offered in real-time. This ensures that all students, regardless of their preferred learning style, have opportunities for engagement and support. The modules run from September to December, January to March and April to July, except for the dissertation module that runs over two terms.

WHAT IS THE DURATION OF THE PROGRAMME?

Modules run from September to December, January to March, and April to July, except for the dissertation, which spans two terms.

- **Master's Degree:** 30 months (minimum 18 months, maximum 5 years).
- **PG Certificate:** 12 months (maximum 2 years).

CURRICULUM

WHAT ARE THE AVAILABLE MODULES?

Each module corresponds to 20 Brookes Credits or 10 ECTS (European Credit Transfer Scheme), which equates to approximately 200 hours of student workload per module.

Core Modules (20 Brookes Credits / 10 ECTS each):

- Culture-Sensitivity in Conflict and Post-Conflict Settings
- From Conflict Sensitivity to Conflict Transformation
- Leadership, Team, and Self-Management in Conflict Settings

Optional Modules (20 Brookes Credits / 10 ECTS each):

- Protection of Civilians in Conflict and Post-Conflict Settings
- Post-Conflict Stabilisation and Recovery
- Humanitarian and Peacebuilding Programmes in Urban Conflicts
- Mental Health, Psychosocial Support, and Well-being in Conflict-Affected Areas
- Forced Migration, Protection, and Humanitarianism
- Triple Nexus, Localisation, and the Local Turn
- Concepts and Principles of International Humanitarian Law

Acceptable Module (20 Brookes Credits / 10 ECTS):

- Independent Study

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EXIT AWARDS AND CERTIFICATION

MASTER'S DEGREE 180 BROOKES CREDITS / 90 ECTS

The Master's programme exit award requires the successful completion of:

- Three Core Modules.
- Three issue-based modules (chosen from the Optional Modules).
- One Research Methods Module as preparation for the dissertation. The research component requires 600 hours of student workload and is made up of:
 - Conflict and Post-Conflict Research: Methods and Ethics (10 Brookes Credits / 5 ECTS).
 - Practice-based Study/Dissertation (50 Brookes Credits / 25 ECTS).

DIPLOMA 120 BROOKES CREDITS / 60 ECTS

Awarded after completion of:

- Three Core Modules.
- Three issue-based modules (chosen from the Optional Modules). One of these modules could be replaced by an Independent Study, should students wish to investigate a specific issue in depth.

PG CERTIFICATE 60 BROOKES CREDITS / 30 ECTS

Awarded after completion of:

- Three Core Modules.

SHORT-COURSE CERTIFICATION 60 BROOKES CREDITS / 30 ECTS EACH (FOUR OPTIONS AVAILABLE)

1. Triple Nexus, Localisation, and the Local Turn; Culture-Sensitivity in Conflict and Post-Conflict Settings; Independent Study.
2. Leadership, Team and Self-Management in Conflict Settings; Mental Health, Psychosocial Support, and Well-being in Conflict-affected Areas; Independent Study.
3. Protection of Civilians in Conflict and Post-Conflict Settings; Concepts and Principles of International Humanitarian Law; Independent Study.
4. Humanitarian and Peacebuilding Programmes in Urban Conflicts; Forced Migration, Protection, and Humanitarianism; Independent Study.

INDIVIDUAL MODULE CERTIFICATION 20 BROOKES CREDITS / 10 ECTS (AVAILABLE FOR SPECIFIC TOPICS)

Applicants can enrol as associated students for individual modules, taking any from the list of Core and Optional Modules.

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APPLICATION AND ADMISSION

WHAT IS THE APPLICATION DEADLINE?

For a **January 2026 start**, please **apply until** the beginning of January 2026.

For a **September 2026 start**, please **apply until** the beginning of September 2026.

WHAT ARE THE ENTRY REQUIREMENTS?

Please visit the [programme webpage](#) to review all programme entry requirements.

HOW CAN I APPLY?

All applicants are required to apply online through the UK Pass. Students must complete all required fields and uploads prior to submission. Programme Coordinators are available to assist students in the application process.

- [Apply Online - Oxford Brookes University](#)

For any questions, learners are encouraged to email the Programme Coordinators at: mahap@unitar.org or mahap@brookes.ac.uk.

FEES AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION

WHAT IS THE TUITION FEE FOR THE PROGRAMME?

For 2025 / 26

- **Home (UK) distance learning:** £5,500 (MA year 1 & Certificate)
- **International distance learning:** £5,500 (MA year 1 & Certificate)

Fees are quoted for the first year only. Fees for the second year will remain the same.

The following factors will be taken into account by the University when it is setting the annual fees: inflationary measures such as the retail price indices, projected increases in University costs, changes in the level of funding received from Government sources, admissions statistics, and access considerations including the availability of student support.

For more information about the **Tuition Fees, Financial support and Scholarships** please visit: <https://www.brookes.ac.uk/courses/postgraduate/humanitarian-action-and-peacebuilding>.

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CONTACT INFORMATION

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