



BA (Hons) International Development Studies

Programme Specification

Primary Purpose

Course management and quality assurance.

Secondary Purpose

Detailed information for students, staff and employers. Current students should refer to the related Course Handbook for further detail.

Disclaimer

The University of Portsmouth has checked the information given in this Programme Specification. We will endeavour to deliver the course in keeping with this Programme Specification; however, changes may sometimes be required arising from annual monitoring, student feedback, review and update of units and courses. Where this activity leads to significant changes to units and courses, there will be prior consultation of students and others, wherever possible, and the University will take all reasonable steps to minimize disruption to students. It is also possible that the University may not be able to offer a unit or course for reasons outside of its control, for example; the absence of a member of staff or low student registration numbers. Where this is the case, the University will endeavour to inform applicants and students as soon as possible. Where appropriate, the University will facilitate the transfer of affected students to another suitable course.

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Course Details

1. Named Awards

BA (Hons) International Development Studies

2. Course Code (and UCAS Code if applicable)

C2149F/C2149S, L900

3. Awarding Body

University of Portsmouth

4. Teaching Institution

University of Portsmouth

5. Accrediting Body

N/A

6. QAA Benchmark Groups

Area Studies, Politics & International Relations, Geography, Economics

7. Document Control Information

August 2016

8. Effective Session

2017-2018

9. Author

Janet Bryant, Associate Head Academic

10. Faculty

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

11. Department

School of Languages and Area Studies

Curriculum

12. Educational Aims

- To enable students to acquire knowledge and understanding of a wide range of international development issues in the 21st century.
- To provide students with a curriculum that covers a wide range of developing countries and regions through units in history, politics, economics, human geography, and international relations.
- To provide students with knowledge and understanding of developing countries and emerging economies using a range of appropriate disciplinary or interdisciplinary approaches.

- To enable students to acquire an informed sense of the similarities and differences between areas, thus fostering cross-cultural and international perspectives.
- To equip graduates with the necessary transferable skills for lifelong learning and flexibility in the context of changing labour markets.
- To provide students with the skills and knowledge required to maximize careers and postgraduate study opportunities.

13. Reference Points

The programme and outcomes have been developed taking account of:

- The University of Portsmouth Curriculum Framework
- The scholarship and research expertise of members of academic staff
- QAA Code of Practice for the Assurance of Academic Quality and Standards in Higher Education
- Framework for HE Qualifications
- The Benchmark Statements for Area Studies; Politics & International Relations; Economics; and Geography.
- Outcomes which directly cross reference to the Area Studies Benchmark Statement are indicated with an (A); Politics & International Relations (PIR); Geography (G); Economics (E).
- Some additional outcomes may also be achieved depending on the choice of options selected and these are shown separately.

14. General Learning Outcomes

Level 4

Certificates of Higher Education are awarded to students who have demonstrated:

- knowledge of the underlying concepts and principles associated with their area(s) of study, and an ability to evaluate and interpret these within the context of that area of study
- an ability to present, evaluate and interpret qualitative and quantitative data, in order to develop lines of argument and make sound judgements in accordance with basic theories and concepts of their subject(s) of study

Typically, holders of the qualification will be able to:

- evaluate the appropriateness of different approaches to solving problems related to their area(s) of study and/or work
- communicate the results of their study/work accurately and reliably, and with structured and coherent arguments
- undertake further training and develop new skills within a structured and managed environment

And holders will have:

- the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of some personal responsibility

Level 5

Diplomas in Higher Education are awarded to students who have demonstrated:

- knowledge and critical understanding of the well-established principles of their area(s) of study, and of the way in which those principles have developed
- ability to apply underlying concepts and principles outside the context in which they were first studied, including, where appropriate, the application of those principles in an employment context
- knowledge of the main methods of enquiry in the subject(s) relevant to the named award, and ability to evaluate critically the appropriateness of different approaches to solving problems in the field of study

- an understanding of the limits of their knowledge, and how this influences analyses and interpretations based on that knowledge

Typically, holders of the qualification will be able to:

- use a range of established techniques to initiate and undertake critical analysis of information, and to propose solutions to problems arising from that analysis
- effectively communicate information, arguments and analysis in a variety of forms to specialist and non-specialist audiences, and deploy key techniques of the discipline effectively
- undertake further training, develop existing skills and acquire new competences that will enable them to assume significant responsibility within organisations

And holders will have:

- the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of personal responsibility and decision-making

Level 6

Bachelor's degrees/Bachelor's degrees with honours are awarded to students who have demonstrated:

- a systematic understanding of key aspects of their field of study, including acquisition of coherent and detailed knowledge, at least some of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of defined aspects of a discipline
- an ability to deploy accurately established techniques of analysis and enquiry within a discipline
- conceptual understanding that enables the student:
 - to devise and sustain arguments, and/or to solve problems, using ideas and techniques, some of which are at the forefront of a discipline
 - to describe and comment upon particular aspects of current research, or equivalent advanced scholarship, in the discipline
- an appreciation of the uncertainty, ambiguity and limits of knowledge
- the ability to manage their own learning, and to make use of scholarly reviews and primary sources (for example, refereed research articles and/or original materials appropriate to the discipline)

Typically, holders of the qualification will be able to:

- apply the methods and techniques that they have learned to review, consolidate, extend and apply their knowledge and understanding, and to initiate and carry out projects
- critically evaluate arguments, assumptions, abstract concepts and data (that may be incomplete), to make judgements, and to frame appropriate questions to achieve a solution - or identify a range of solutions - to a problem
- communicate information, ideas, problems and solutions to both specialist and non-specialist audiences

And holders will have:

- the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring:
 - the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility
 - decision-making in complex and unpredictable contexts
- the learning ability needed to undertake appropriate further training of a professional or equivalent nature

15. Learning Outcomes

A. Knowledge and Understanding of:

A.1 The multifaceted nature of the subject area and its relationship to other disciplines and interdisciplinary formations including history, politics, economics, and geography (A).

A.2 The subject area and the area/region(s) studied within a world context (A).

- A.3 The merits of contrasting methodologies, theories and research resources applied to the analysis of the regions studied (A).
- A.4 The similarities and differences between the areas studied and the student's normal residence, thus fostering cross-cultural and international perspectives. (A).
- A.5 The nature and significance of politics as a global activity; the different interpretations of world political events and issues; international politics and political phenomena (PIR).
- A.6 The specialised areas of international economics and of development economics (E).
- A.7 The reciprocal relationships between human and physical environments (in the developing world) (G).
- A.8 Specialist knowledge in the area researched for the Dissertation and Development in Practice.

B. Cognitive (Intellectual or Thinking) Skills, able to:

- B.1 Demonstrate awareness and critical understanding of contributory disciplines and critical theories, and the capacity to assess and compare the merits of contrasting approaches (A).
- B.2 Demonstrate awareness of and ability to use, evaluate and compare a diverse range of relevant information and research resources (A)
- B.3 Describe, differentiate and compare concepts from different disciplines and / or interdisciplinary approaches as a means of understanding the area under study (A).
- B.4 Synthesise information, adopt critical appraisals, and develop reasoned argument based on such appraisals (A); (PIR).
- B.5 Identify and analyse problems using relevant approaches, and reflect upon the scope and limitations of what has been ascertained and understood (A).

C. Practical (Professional or Subject) Skills, able to:

- C.1 Demonstrate awareness and understanding of a range of relevant political, economic, social and historical issues in the field of development studies.
- C.2 Critically analyse and demonstrate detailed knowledge of developing areas, their history, economy, political system, culture and society (A).
- C.3 Exploit for a variety of purposes a range of primary and secondary source materials across a range of development-related disciplines.
- C.4 A reasoned awareness and critical understanding of cultures and societies other than the student's own. This may be enhanced by a period of residence in the country or by a simulated experience (A) (L).

D. Transferable (Graduate and Employability) Skills, able to:

- D.1 Communicate ideas fluently in written form showing an ability to integrate and critically assess material from a variety of sources (A) (PIR).
- D.2 Present materials in written form with clarity in the use of language, professional referencing and effective layout, including tables, diagrams, graphics, illustrations, where appropriate (A).
- D.3 Present materials orally in a clear and effective manner, using audio-visual aids where appropriate, and answering questions from an audience with clarity, coherence and persuasiveness (A) (PIR).
- D.4 Utilise proficiently a range of information technology resources, including word processing, databases and text files, and locate, employ and evaluate internet sites (A) (PIR).
- D.5 Work independently, demonstrating initiative, self-organisation and time management (A) (L) (PIR).
- D.6 Reflect on personal learning and respond to constructive feedback; to manage own learning self-critically (A) (PIR).

D.7 Listen effectively and work creatively, flexibly and adaptively with others (A).

16. Learning and Teaching Strategies and Methods

- Information about the area studied is conveyed through a combination of lectures, seminars, discussion classes or tutorials. This allows for whole-class teaching, small group projects and individual work (A1-8).
- Lectures are used to communicate information and introduce key themes (A1-7).
- Discussion classes and seminar sessions offer an opportunity for students to apply the knowledge that they have acquired in order to explain and analyse situations. Students are expected to prepare in advance selected readings which are provided on the VLE (A2-4).
- At FHEQ Level 4, priority is given to introducing the student to the disciplines and areas of study through directed learning and guided tasks. These complement the lecture programme and prepare students for conducting independent research using a range of sources; monitoring their progress and managing their time. Group-oriented tasks prepare students for working effectively as a team and engaging in peer learning (A1-7).
- At FHEQ Level 5, students are encouraged to work increasingly independently though still under tutor guidance. In addition to the lecture and seminar programme, students engage in individual and/or small group projects or case studies in order to pursue their own interests within the broader framework of the programme (A1-7).
- By FHEQ 6, students are expected to be working more independently, specialising in particular aspects of their programme in greater depth (A1-8).
- Source materials are available to students in English. These include written texts, on-line materials, video and audio materials.

At all levels, discussion classes and seminar sessions offer an opportunity for students to develop intellectual skills by testing out ideas, and applying the knowledge that they have acquired in order to explain and analyse situations. Workshops will deal with interpreting primary source materials, including reports, document analysis, statistics & databases, and historiographical issues (B1-5).

Students are expected to prepare in advance selected readings and secondary source materials which are provided on the VLE. This requires incisive reading of a variety of materials, identifying theoretical approaches, key arguments and issues; synthesising the information to present a coherent argument (B4-5).

Subject specific skills are conveyed on the core and optional units through a combination of lectures, seminars and discussion classes which allow for whole-class teaching, small group projects and individual work. Workshops will deal with interpreting primary source materials, including reports, document analysis, statistics & databases, and historiographical issues (C1-4). Some units merit specific mention here:

The level 5 unit Managing across Cultures provide students with an important insight to the nuances and sensitivities required when working with people and organisations from a range of different cultural backgrounds (C4).

The dissertation at Level 6 provides students with the opportunity to conduct independent research; to critically engage with development theory and practice (C1-3).

A wide range of transferable skills which enhance academic performance and promote employability among graduates are implicit and explicit within the teaching and learning strategies of BA (Hons) International Development Studies (D1-7). Many of these have been identified in the above sections but some benefit from specific mention.

- Academic study skills and basic research skills are embedded in the core units at level 4 in the Autumn & Spring Terms. The full range of these skills is noted above in Sections A, B, and C and are developed thoroughly in core and optional units throughout the programme (D1-3; D5-6).
- Tutorials in Level 4 facilitate the setting and monitoring of learning objectives; these are developed further in Level 5 in preparation for the dissertation and during the production of the dissertation or research project in Level 6 (D4-6).

- In the final year, the Dissertation enables students to develop skills in project and time management, organisation, independent working and self-discipline (D5, 6, and 7).
- Many units foster team working skills through seminar work, discussion classes, and presentations (D7).

17. Assessment Strategy

All assessment strategies and assessment loads for units on this programme conform to the requirements of the Curriculum Framework Document and the December 2015 Policy on Maximum Assessment Loads. FHEQ Level 4, work is assessed primarily through 1500 word essays, plus other combinations of assessment including presentations (individual or group), posters, in class tests, or examinations of varying duration (60 minutes; 90 minutes; 120 minutes). The length of essays may extend to 2500 words in combination with fewer of the other assessment modes outlined above. Alternatively, some units may assess by examination only (3 hours) or entirely by coursework (4000 words). For FHEQ Level 4, assessment loads towards the lower end is usually the norm. FHEQ Level 5 is assessed through longer essays (up to 4000 words) in combination with individual and/or group presentations, reports, projects or case studies, in class tests and examinations of varying duration (60 minutes; 90 minutes; 120 minutes). Alternatively, some units may opt to assess entirely by coursework with portfolios or other artefacts (up to 4000 words), or solely through examinations (up to 3 hours). The same provision is made for assessment at FHEQ Level 6 but in addition, students are required to undertake a research project (4000 words) or a dissertation (10,000 words) (A1-8). There is a strong emphasis on building in formative assessment at all levels, but most especially at FHEQ Level 4, to facilitate constructive 'feed-forward' from academic staff to students.

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A range of assessment types are used at all levels to assess subject specific and practical skills. In particular, with reference to a range of issues these include assessments involving primary document analysis, and critical commentaries on secondary source materials; representation, application and interpretation of statistical data; and critical readings of development texts, reports, and other artefacts (C1-4).

The assessment methods described in Sections A, B, C demonstrate the development and achievement of the range of graduate and employability skills indicated in Section D. These are embedded in the units and consequently provide an accumulation of opportunities for students over the duration of their programme of study. However, some assessment forms such as the dissertation, group projects, presentations or posters, essays and reports merit particular mention (D1-7).

18. Course Structure, Progression and Award Requirements

See [Unit Web Search](#)¹ for full details on the course structure and units

One credit is equivalent to 10 hours of learning. Units are offered as 20 credits and the final year dissertation is worth 40 credits. Each level comprises of a minimum of 120 credits.

BA (Hons) International Development Studies Single Honours three-year programme. Students may undertake an optional Placement Year between Level 5 and Level 6. International Development Studies is also offered as part of the Combined Honours programme in combination with Languages (French, Mandarin or Spanish). These programmes are offered in full time (3 year and 4 year respectively) mode.

19. Employability Statement

Employability skills will be delivered (and assessed where applicable) throughout the curriculum. We will provide structured support to enable students to develop their employability skills from L4 to L6. Core units at each level will include most of the academic and employability skills that are listed in Annex 5 of the 2012 Curriculum Framework. In addition, some course teams will have relevant work-related units in the curriculum.

Career management skills specifically (as a subset of employability skills) will be embedded throughout the curriculum.

At **Level 4**, Studying at University (International Development) and Working Life Today (in the Development Sector) include an introduction to basic career management skills (self awareness, personal and professional development planning, CV writing etc) in order to get students to start thinking about what they might want from a career and what they might have to offer, and introduce students to a range of research methods for application in units throughout their degree. Additionally, these units provide a forum for students to begin researching possible fields of employment and postgraduate study if appropriate. Here students will research organisations, fields of employment and the range of skills, knowledge and attributes required in these. Online materials will be available to support all single and combined honours students in the Faculty.

At Level 5, we will continue with developing Career Management skills during Induction Week. There will be plenary sessions for students on the further development of career management skills and this will be backed up by interactive online exercises and website resources related to the subject area. Additional employability activities take place during the Consolidation and Assessment Period (CAP) for level 4 and 5 students.

At Level 6, as part of Induction Week, personal tutorials and PDP, we will provide further guidance and activities for students (as part of what are currently termed 'Pathfinder Exercises'). This will be linked to individual research/project skills related to the core 40 credit dissertation/project and group research/project skills in core units.

For both Level 5 and Level 6 students we also will run a series of Faculty-wide careers events with employers from a range of relevant employment sectors during the year (including a Faculty Alumni Day).

All these activities will be supported by the Personal Tutor system and a refocused PDP – developing students as professionals - **Professional Development Planning**.

Work-Related Learning:

We will provide opportunities for students to engage in work-related learning through active learning and the application of skills in work-related environments. This will consist of an understanding of working environments and the impact of globalisation on career goals (adapted to specific subject areas/disciplines where appropriate). In most subject areas of the Faculty, this will take place through simulated work-related environments in one or more core units. For some subject areas, this will involve real-world working environments.

¹ www.port.ac.uk/unitwebsearch

At **Levels 4, 5 and 6**, the core units provide opportunities for students to engage in work-related learning through active learning and the application of skills in simulated work-related environments. These include working in teams; writing reports & briefing documents; working with case studies and comparative studies; analysing statistical data.

At **Level 5 and 6** students will also have the opportunity to take the Faculty-wide **Learning from Experience (LiFE)** unit. This allows students to gain credit from paid or unpaid work including volunteering, placements, internships, working on research projects for staff etc.

At **Level 5 / 6**, students may undertake an optional period of residence abroad through the Erasmus scheme for work placements in a development-related field. This experience enhances students' employability by providing opportunities to develop essential life skills including problem solving, inter-cultural awareness, and acquiring or improving foreign language skills.

All SLAS programmes now have a core/optional placement year between levels 5 and 6. Students wishing to undertake study abroad and/or placement based learning are fully supported by a combination of the departmental Placement and Internship Centre, the Year Abroad/Placement Tutor, designated Institutional Coordinators, or the programme Course Leader. Details of what students must do to complete this phase of the programme, where the study abroad or placement learning is credit bearing, are set out in the SLAS Placement Supplement Student Handbook (<http://moodle.port.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=3935>).

At **Level 6**, all students will have an opportunity to undertake a work-based learning dissertation/project (where appropriate) as an alternative to the traditional dissertation.

Internationalisation & Global Graduate Skills:

Degree programmes in SLAS have a strongly international flavour and this feeds into the world of work in the unit **Managing Across Cultures**. Students can apply what they learn in the unit to employment fields relating to their programme of study including development organisations. The following skills are embedded in this unit:

- Applying and reflecting on their graduate and employability skills in a real or simulated work environment in an international and cross cultural context.
- Gain insights and learning into the world of work in a national, international and cross cultural context.
- Gain an understanding of how organisations work and how they plan their business and make decisions.
- Gain an insight into how they manage themselves in a range of situations found in the workplace.

The unit is optional on all undergraduate degree programmes in SLAS (**Level 5** for home & EU students; **Level 6** for international students).

We are committed to providing opportunities for students to study a **language** as part of preparing students for the global labour market and as part of our commitment to internationalisation.

Course Management

20. Support for Student Learning

- The Course is managed by a Course Leader.
- Extensive induction programme introduces the student to the University and their course.
- Each student has a personal tutor, responsible for pastoral support and guidance.
- The department has a number of Learning Support Tutors to support students in their learning
- The Placement and Internship Centre (PIC) is located in the Department.
- University support services include careers, financial advice, housing, counselling etc.
- The Academic Skills Unit (ASK).

- The Additional Support and Disability Advice Centre (ASDAC).
- Excellent library facilities.
- The University of Portsmouth has consistently been awarded an excellent rating for student support and guidance in a number of Quality Assurance Agency inspections.
- Student course and unit handbooks provide information about the course structure and University regulations etc.
- Feedback is provided for all assessments.
- Personal Development Planning (PDP) for all awards.

21. Admissions Criteria

A. Academic Admissions Criteria

Students are recruited with a variety of different qualifications. As general guidance:

- A-levels: should include 2 x 6 units
- GNVQ: students must have achieved at least a C grade for a single 12-unit GNVQ in a relevant area.
- Students may also offer more varied GNVQ and A/AS combinations, including 6-unit and 3-unit GNVQ awards.
- Professional qualifications & experience and other equivalent qualifications considered positively.
- Access courses: 60% overall.
- Mature and International students are welcomed.
- Highly accurate English writing and listening skills with an IELTS or equivalent of at least 6 for applicants for whom English is not their mother tongue.

If appropriate Recognised Prior Learning (RPL) may be assessed and accredited.

Requirements for students considering a work placement or study abroad may include:

- Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks.
- Statutory health checks or fitness standards.

Some placements may not be appropriate for all students.

B. Disability

The University makes no distinction in its admissions policy with regard to disability and will endeavour to make all reasonable adjustments in order to make it possible for students to study at Portsmouth on a course of their choice.

22. Evaluation and Enhancement of Standards and Quality in Learning and Teaching

A. Mechanisms for Review and Evaluation

- Course Leader's Annual Standards and Quality Evaluative Review.
- Head of Department's Annual Standards and Quality Evaluative Review.
- Unit and Course Level student feedback considered at Board of Studies.
- Unit Assessment Board consideration of student performance for each programme.
- Annual Standards and Quality Reports to Board of Studies, including consideration of Subject and Award External Examiner Reports.
- Periodic Programme Review.
- Student Representatives and Student/Staff Consultative Committees.
- National Student Survey.
- Staff Performance and Development Review.

- Peer Review and Development Framework.
- Faculty Learning and Teaching Committee.

B. Responsibilities for Monitoring and Evaluation

- Unit Co-ordinators for unit content and delivery.
- Course Leader for day-to-day running of course.
- Board of Studies with overall responsibilities for operation and content of course.
- Head of Department.
- Associate Dean (Academic).
- Associate Dean (Students).
- Quality Assurance Committee.
- Unit, Award and Progression Board of Examiners.

C. Mechanisms for Gaining Student Feedback

- Student Representation on Board of Studies.
- Student Staff Consultative Committees.
- Unit and Course level student feedback questionnaires.
- University participates in external student surveys, e.g. National Student Survey (NSS), Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) and International Student Barometer (ISB).

D. Staff Development Priorities

- Academic staff undertake activities related to research, scholarship, teaching and learning and student support and guidance.
- Annual staff performance and development reviews match development to needs.
- Managers undertake a variety of management development programmes.
- Academic staff undertake initial and continuing professional development within the Academic Professional Excellence Framework (APEX) programme which is aligned with the Higher Education Academy (HEA)'s UK Professional Standards Framework (UKPSF)
- All academic staff encouraged to seek Higher Education Academy membership.
- Support Staff are encouraged to attend short courses in areas such as minute taking, and specific IT packages.

23. Assessment Regulations

The current University of Portsmouth academic regulations will apply to this programme (see [Assessment and Regulations²](#)).

24. Role of Externals

Subject External Examiners who will:

- Oversee unit assessment and usually attend Unit Assessment Boards
- Review unit assessment strategy
- Sample assessment artefacts
- Present report to Unit Assessment Boards

Award External Examiners (usually also a Subject External Examiner) who will:

- Oversee and attend Award/Progression Boards
- Scrutinise and endorse the outcomes of assessment

² www.port.ac.uk/departments/services/academicregistry/qualitymanagementdivision/assessmentandregulations/

- Ensure that the standard of the award is maintained at a level comparable with that of similar awards elsewhere in the United Kingdom

25. Indicators of Standards and Quality

A. Professional Accreditation/Recognition

N/A

B. Periodic Programme Review (or equivalent)

This programme underwent External Periodic Review in March 2014. The Review confirmed the 'fitness of purpose' of the curriculum and the effectiveness of its annual monitoring and review processes.

C. Quality Assurance Agency

QAA Higher Education Review, March 2015, judgements about standards and quality meet UK expectations (*for full report see [Higher Education Review of the University of Portsmouth, March 2015](#)*³).

D. Others

UoP made one of the largest submissions to REF2014 in Area Studies and is in the top 4 universities for research power# in Area Studies in the UK.

25% of our research was rated world-leading (4*) and 68% either world-leading (4*) or internationally excellent (3*). This compares to 15% 4* and 45% either world-leading or internationally excellent in 2008. Overall, the unit has 26.79 FTE staff whose work was rated at 4*/3*. This places Portsmouth in the top ten universities in the UK for 4* and 4*/3*-rated research.

40% of our impact was rated outstanding 4* and 84% as either outstanding or as being very considerable in terms of reach and significance. This places Portsmouth in the top ten universities in the UK for impact in area studies.

90% of our Environment was rated as 4* (world leading) or 3* (internationally excellent).

The Grade Point Average for the equivalent submission (to European Studies in 2008) was 2.4 and this has risen to 2.9 in 2014. Our GPA this year for Impact (3.24) and Environment (3.20) was significantly above the national average.

26. Further Information

Further information may be found in:

- Student Handbook
- University of Portsmouth Curriculum Framework Document
- University of Portsmouth Prospectus
- [University of Portsmouth](#)⁴ and [School/Department](#)⁵ websites

³ www.qaa.ac.uk/en/ReviewsAndReports/Documents/University%20of%20Portsmouth/University-of-Portsmouth-HER-15.pdf

⁴ www.port.ac.uk/

⁵ <http://www.port.ac.uk/school-of-languages-and-area-studies/>