



Al-Maktoum College  
of Higher Education



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# DIPLOMA IN MORAL ECONOMY & SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME HANDBOOK

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SCQF level 11

Programme code: GR2L 04

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## 1.1 WELCOME

### **Welcome to the *Diploma in Moral Economy and Sustainable Development***

This handbook contains the broad aims of the diploma programme, its distinct features and the details of the programme map including core/optional units and the overall assessment procedures.

The Diploma in Moral Economy and Sustainable Development is an intensive programme that allows business and non-business graduates to acquire the necessary tools and skills to pursue a successful career in the field of sustainable development. It is a cross-disciplinary specialised programme, aiming to provide management-related knowledge and skills to the students who study and specialise in human-centric development.

I hope that you will enjoy the programme and I wish you all the best in your studies.

#### **Dr Mohammad Alsaghir**

Programme Coordinator

Lecturer in International Political Economy and Sustainable Development

## 1.2 STAFF

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## 1.3 AIMS AND outcomes

The Diploma in Moral Economy and Sustainable Development degree is an intensive, one-year full-time programme. The programme responds to the emerging sustainable development agenda from a moral economic perspective. It employs a multi-disciplinary approach aiming to provide students with the necessary knowledge, tools and skills to pursue successful research or professional careers in areas of sustainable development. Sustainable development has become one of the key policy drivers in many societies. It covers a wide spectrum of inter-related moral, economic, environmental and social issues. Public and private institutions engaged with the sustainable development agenda need to appreciate the challenges and policy implications of the Sustainable Development Goals.

The programme explores the interaction of moral economy and sustainable development and aims to provide a high quality masters level study that:

- Systematically and critically explores the relationships between moral economy and sustainable development in the contemporary global and professional contexts.
- Develops knowledge and understanding to critically evaluate the key concepts, theories, frameworks and strategies used in debates around moral economy and sustainable development.
- Develops a critical understanding of management approaches and policy implications of religious beliefs, values and principles in sustainable development projects.
- Engages students in a range of contemporary sustainable development issues relevant to their particular interests, strengths, academic, professional and/or developmental needs.
- Facilitates self-direction and originality to act autonomously in designing, planning, implementing and critically analysing and evaluating at masters equivalent level in specialist areas.

### Special Features

- Focus on meeting the diverse developmental needs of students within a fast-changing educational landscape.
- Inclusion of specialist interim and full awards.
- Taught on-campus and other appropriate locations, depending on approval, viable numbers and staff availability.
- Students are able to undertake empirical and non-empirical research.
- Validated for part-time and full-time students.

### Intended Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of the programme students should be able to Demonstrate an in-depth understanding of the range of themes, concepts, theories and debates, frameworks and strategies related to social, economic and environmental issues in sustainable development and their examination from a religious human-centric perspective;

- Demonstrate a critical understanding of the practical and policy implications of moral beliefs, values, principles and institutions in social, economic and environmental issues in sustainable development;
- Critically evaluate and apply a range of strategies, and management models and techniques, and ethical principles, to interpret, analyse, formulate and implement sustainable development programmes within complex and changing global environment to meet stakeholders' interests and maximise achievement of strategic objectives;

- Identify and critically analyse contemporary sustainable development issues and challenges in a range of complex contexts;
- Apply evidence-based critical reasoning to examine practical, theoretical and ethical issues associated with sustainable development;
- Demonstrate originality and creativity in solving complex sustainable development management problems;
- Demonstrate an ability to evaluate and plan at a professional and strategic level;
- Demonstrate the application of research skills in developing and evaluating scholarly research in sustainable development;
- Clearly and accurately communicate conclusions to specialists and non-specialist stakeholders
- Work with people in a range of cultures
- Use critical judgement to identify and gather appropriate data (primary and secondary, and qualitative and quantitative) from a range of sources.
- Synthesise theory from a range of disciplines and/or data from a range of sources;
- Generate and critically evaluate a range of workable solutions to multifaceted problems in a changing and complex global environment.
- Undertake independent or self-directed study or learning and critically reflect on one's own strengths and weaknesses as a learner.

## 1.4 LEARNING HOURS

Each 20-credit unit comprises 200 hours of learning; this is made up of 40 hours of teaching and 160 hours of independent study.

Classes are made up of lectures, seminars and tutorials and you will have 2 hours of contact teaching per week.

## 1.5 UNIT INFORMATION

The programme comprises 120 SCQF credits. The three core units provide the foundations in sustainable development from conventional and moral economy perspectives. The optional units enable students to develop more in-depth knowledge and understanding in areas of their interest such as in raising finance, role of civil society in development, and sustainability and ethics. Students are also expected to submit a project report after the taught units are successfully completed.

### **Content**

The programme develops a critical and analytical approach to sustainable development. It covers issues such as ethics and sustainable development, ethical economics, microfinance, poverty reduction, human rights and gender issues, social responsibility, development policy, role of civil society and democratic institutions, and international management issues in sustainable development from a moral economy perspective. The programme provides a critical analysis of moral economy values and principles and appreciation of their application in management of sustainable development projects. Students will also have an opportunity for an in-depth exploration of a specific issue of sustainable development from a moral economic perspective in the project report.

## Skills

Students who undertake this programme will enhance their academic and professional development and expertise. They will develop a range of skills including: critical reflection, critical reading and writing, creative thinking; analysis, problem solving skills, research skills, independent learning, team working skills, project management, communication skill and IT skills, as well as being exposed to industry players to appreciate the real world of practitioners in the field.

## Programme Structure

Normally, the diploma programme will be delivered full-time comprising two semesters.

The programme comprises 120 masters level credits to be completed over two semesters as shown below:

- 60 credits taught core units
- 60 credits taught optional units (students choose 60 credit units from a choice of 90 credits)The core units (three 20 credit units) provide the foundations in sustainable development from conventional and moral economy perspectives. The optional units enable students to develop deeper knowledge and understanding in areas of their interest such as in sustainability ethics, role of civil society, and governance. Students are also expected to submit a project report after the taught units are successfully completed.

The three 20 credits core taught units are: (i) Islamic Moral Economy and Finance, (ii) Sustainable Development: Discourse and Policy, and (iii) Research Methods.

The remaining 20 credits taught units are options/electives. Students should choose 60 credits from the electives menu. The elective units are: (i) Sustainability and Ethics, (ii) Sustainability Governance and Democracy, (iii) Civic Institutions and Sustainable Development.

Elective units will be offered on student preference and viability of group size. This will be made clear to applicants for the programme, and details of optional units available sent to applicants before the start of each academic year.

Each semester is 10 weeks' duration of taught sessions. Students should pass all their units and project report in order to be awarded a full Diploma in Moral Economy and Sustainable Development.

### Compulsory

Unit code	Title	SCQF level	Credits
J3SC 04	Research Methods and Project report	11	20
J3RS 04	Islamic Moral Economy and Finance	11	20
J3S2 04	Sustainable Development: Discourse and Policy	11	20

### Optional

Unit code	Title	SCQF level	Credits
J3S3 04	Sustainability Governance and Democracy	11	20
J3SA 04	Civic Institutions and Sustainable Development	11	20
J3RX 04	Theoretical and Practical Entrepreneurship in Islam	11	20
J3S4 04	Development Policy and Application	11	20
J3W9 04	Sustainability and Ethics	11	20

## **Research Methods and Project report**

The unit is organised in two parts and will be two semester long:

The first part covers the research philosophies and approaches of social sciences. It aims to prepare students to produce a research proposal. This part of the unit examines research strategies, research design, ethics of research, and research methodologies with particular reference to both qualitative and quantitative research methods. It aims to develop students' critical and analytic skills, which are essential aspects of learning and conducting independent research at the postgraduate level. At the end of this part, students will be required to produce a research proposal (1,000 words) as part of the assessment.

The second part of this unit will be an independent study project and students will be required to produce a 6,000 - 7,000 – words project report. This will provide an opportunity for supervised research based on students' research proposal (from part one) related to their programme of study. In developing their project reports, students will be expected to design, organise, and execute an agreed research plan. They will be required to take a high degree of responsibility for the learning process and they will be required to manage their own learning, reflect on it critically, and seek and use constructive feedback. The project report requires students to evaluate and synthesise relevant literature and use appropriate research methodology to produce high-quality academic work. The work may be either empirical, literature or mixed-method based depending on the topic chosen.

### **Assessment:**

**Component 1:** 20% A Research Proposal of 1,000 words;

**Component 2:** 80% A Dissertation of 6,000 - 7,000 words.

## **Islamic Moral Economy and Finance**

This unit aims to emphasise the practical relevance of Islamic economics through combining the implicit economic insight of jurisprudence (*Maqāsid al-Shari'ah*) and relevant mainstream economic theories, thereby yielding a coherent discipline of public moral policy. The scope and significance of Islamic economics is presented within the current debate on economic methodology. Islamic economics emerges as a pragmatic policy-oriented discipline that rests on the Qur'an, the Prophet's tradition (peace be upon him) and the on-going up-to-date *Itjihad* (scholarly juristic application). Three main themes are the focus of this unit: an overview of the foundation of Islamic economic analysis of the prevailing theories, Islamic macroeconomic theories and the major structural themes of Islamic economics related to the voluntary sector, prohibitive elements in market transactions, appraisal of the factors of production from an Islamic perspective.

### **Assessment:**

**Component 1:** 60% One assignment of 3,000 words;

**Component 2:** 40% A closed-book written exam lasting for two hours

### **Sustainable Development: Discourse and Policy**

This module provides a foundation in understanding sustainable development. It explores the evolution of ideas and introduces strands of thought in the analysis of sustainable development. A good critical grasp of sustainable development is key to students' ability to grapple with complex social, economic and environmental issues facing many places in the future.

The module aims to develop a critical understanding of the different interpretations of the concept of sustainable development. It explores a range of debates surrounding sustainability and development, the objectives of the Shari'ah, and how these acts as drivers and/or frame sustainable development in different contexts. The module also critically examines the enabling and constraining factors (economic, social, religious/cultural, political, and environmental factors) that frame sustainable development policies, objectives and strategies/approaches (e.g. approaches for promoting sustainable development related to good governance, advocacy, policy change and service delivery – e.g. for poverty reduction, minimising inequality in society and maintaining good condition of the environment and natural resources).

#### **Assessment:**

**Component 1:** 60% One Assignment of 3,000 words;

**Component 2:** 40% A closed-book written exam lasting for two hours

### **Sustainability Governance and Democracy**

Literature suggests that effective political institutions, good governance, and democracy politics, can provide an enabling environment for sustainable development. This unit critically explores the development of political systems and governance/regulatory institutions in the Muslim world and the extent to which these provide an enabling/constraining environment for sustainable development. It evaluates the concepts and models of democracy and good governance and the Shar'iah perspective on these.

The unit draws on the body of classical writings on the political and governance systems in Islam and the role governments play (*siyasa shari'ya*), and the legacy systems left by European governments in some countries after colonial rule, to develop a critical understanding of the contemporary debates and challenges facing sustainable development professionals working under a range of political systems and regulatory institutions in the Muslim world. This analysis would enable a deeper understanding of the political, cultural and regulatory impediments that hinder the development of the Muslim nation states.

#### **Assessment:**

**Component 1:** 75% One Assignment (Briefing Report) of 3,500 words;

**Component 2:** 25% Individual Presentation of 10 minutes + 5 minutes Q&A.

### **Civic Institutions and Sustainable Development**

This unit provides an opportunity to students to critically reflect on the role of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and civil society more generally in Muslim countries, in both framing and implementing effective sustainable-development policies and programmes at local and international levels. The unit explores the role of civil society organisations such as charities, religious institutions (mosques), and community, education, environmental and women's organisations, in sustainable development. It critically examines the extent to which civil society organisations in Muslim countries contribute to localizing sustainable development goals (SDGs), awakening the intellectual and social competence of the masses, acting as a voice for the discriminated and poorest, acting as watchdog, and challenging public policies and programmes that hinder sustainable development.



**Assessment:**

**Component 1:** 50% Group Poster Presentation of 15 mins and a written commentary of 2,000 words;

**Component 2:** 50% Individual Briefing Report of 3,000 words.

**Theoretical and Practical Entrepreneurship in Islam**

This module examines the sources, concepts, and principles defined by Islamic ontology, everyday practice of businesses and management can be different; and therefore, this section draws upon the 'normative' and 'positive' discussion on management issues in Islamic and everyday life of Muslim societies. Examples of entrepreneurship from the Muslim world, which incorporate cultural and religious elements will be presented and discussed. In particular, the module develops a critical insight into the combined tool of entrepreneurship, social entrepreneurship and Islamic finance, to reduce poverty, empower people and contribute to sustainable development.

**Assessment:**

**Component 1:** 75% Project report exploring a microfinance issue and offering recommendations (maximum 3,500 words);

**Component 2:** 25% Group presentations on a business start-up idea based on microfinance in the context of a developing country (20 minutes followed by Q&A).

**Development Policy and Application**

This unit explores the complexities, constraints and debates surrounding the development policy process. It examines the process of making, implementing and/or evaluating development policy. It also explores the politics surrounding development policy; the competing interests trying to influence the agenda and design of development solutions; how different political forces, ideas, religious values, and ideologies, policy instruments and institutional pressures, interact to shape the way in which policies are formulated, implemented and evaluated. Students will develop a critical understanding of how the policy process works; the role that diverse economic, political and religious interests, and Islamic values and *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah* (objectives) can play in influencing and directing development policy agendas and solutions. They will gain knowledge of policy-making and skills in making, analysing and influencing development policy. In addition, they will critically examine the challenge of addressing policy controversies, exploring different accounts of the policy cycle, and why policies succeed or fail.

**Assessment:**

**Component 1:** 50% Group Poster Presentation of 20 mins and a written commentary of 2,000 words;

**Component 2:** 50% Individual Briefing Report of 3,000 words.

## **Sustainability and Ethics**

This unit provides a critical understanding of the debates around social responsibility (and corporate social responsibility) and sustainable development. It explores the economic, social, environmental and governance (ESG) dimensions of sustainability and their potential impacts for responsible financial investment and accounting.

Being a product of Islamic normative values, Islamic finance, by definition, is expected to essentialise and endogenize ESG in its operations of socially responsible finance (SRF) and socially responsible investment (SRI) in conformity with the objectives of the *Sharī'ah (al-maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah)*. The unit critically evaluates the influence of ESG issues inherent in the objectives of Islam (*Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah*) on shaping responsible Islamic finance operations, and how they can be employed with traditional financial metrics to assess the risks and opportunities of investment decisions.

### **Assessment:**

**Component 1:** 50% One written essay of 3,000 words;

**Component 2:** 50% A Group Presentation of 20 mins.

## **1.6 ASSESSMENT**

In line with the College's Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy and the aims of the programme, students are provided with opportunities to develop the skills needed to become independent life-long learners and critical thinkers, who are able to challenge assumptions and engage with evidence and practice in informed ways. Students are supported through a student-centred, student-led, evidence-based and research-informed approach to learning.

The programme will employ the 'Learning Paradigm' – i.e. stressing the need to generate learning, rather than the traditional 'Instructional Paradigm', which emphasises the delivery of content. The 'Learning Paradigm' empowers learners, who are recognised as discoverers of knowledge and gives the construction of discovered knowledge greater prominence. Consequently, discussions, problem-solving, active enquiry, research, reflection, student-led seminars, and experiential learning will be emphasised in the programme, facilitated by tutors.

There is a wide range of resources available for students' learning, including on-line materials for each unit on the VLE, web-based information and the online learning resources provided by the library. Unit information will direct students to specific sources, but there is an expectation, particularly at SQA level 11, that students will research their own sources in order to enhance their achievement of the learning outcomes for the programme. In line with a student-centred and student-led approach, students are encouraged to value other programme members as a key resource to access peer support, in addition to tutor support, enabling them to theorise and articulate their understanding through seminar participation and discussion.

## 1.7 EXTENSIONS

Student Administration will be responsible for recording any extensions which have been approved. Students must complete the Extension Request form which is available within the Student Resources section of the website [www.almcollege.ac.uk/assessment/](http://www.almcollege.ac.uk/assessment/)

The College aims to ensure fair and equal treatment in the assessment of all students and that no student is unjustly denied or unfairly granted the benefits of continuous assessment. Please consult the Summative Assessment Policy for more details. <https://www.almcollege.ac.uk/policies-documents/>

The College is aware that its aim of securing fair and equal treatment in the assessment of all students is ultimately inextricable from disability-related issues and is, therefore, anxious to ensure that proper provision/reasonable adjustment is always made. You can help the College to achieve this aim by communicating any relevant information to Student Administration [studentadmin@almcollege.ac.uk](mailto:studentadmin@almcollege.ac.uk)

## 1.8 GRADING CRITERIA

Each unit will be assessed individually. You must meet all of the minimum evidence requirements as defined in the learning outcomes. The successful achievements, approved by the Academic Standards Committee, will count in determining progression and contribute to the award.

Under no circumstances shall any candidate be permitted to submit themselves for assessment in any element more than twice. In the case of a candidate failing to complete a prescribed element of assessment on time, permission for a second assessment will only be granted if the failure is on account of illness or other good cause. The result of that assessment will contribute towards progression and award. The passing rate should be not less than 50% of each element of assessments.

## 1.9 READING LIST

Thomsen, J., Stieper, B., and Lodahl, B. (Eds) (2017) Annotated bibliography on Religion and Development, DCA act alliance: Copenhagen K. [<http://www.religion-and-development.nl/documents/publications/annotated%20bibibliography.pdf>]

Adams WM (2009) Green Development: Environment and Sustainability in a Developing World, 3rd edition. Routledge, Oxon.

Ahmed, H. and Iqbal, M. (eds.) (2006). Poverty in Muslim Countries and the New International Economic Order, Palgrave Macmillan.

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Bethnall, J. (2009) The Charitable Crescent: Politics of Aid in the Muslim World London: I.B. Tauris Ltd. Second Ed.

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Giri, A. K., van Harskamp, A., & Salemink, O. (Eds.). (2004). The development of religion, the religion of development. Eburon: Delft.

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Walker et al. (2019) Sustainable Development Goals: Harnessing Business to Achieve the SDGs Through Finance, Technology and Law Reform. United Kingdom: Wiley.

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<https://ysrinfo.files.wordpress.com/2012/06/an-introduction-to-sustainable-development.pdf>

Mehmet, O. (1990). Islamic Identity and Development: Studies of the Islamic Periphery, Routledge.

Sachs, J. (2015). The age of sustainable development. Columbia University.