

**REGULATIONS FOR THE DEGREE OF  
MASTER OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION (INTERNATIONAL)  
(IMPA)**

*(See also General Regulations)*

Any publication based on work approved for a higher degree should contain a reference to the effect that the work was submitted to the University of Hong Kong for the award of the degree.

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**Admission requirements**

IMPA 1. To be eligible for admission to the courses leading to the degree of Master of Public Administration (International) a candidate

- (a) shall comply with the General Regulations;
- (b) shall hold
  - (i) a Bachelor's degree with honours of this University; or
  - (ii) another qualification of equivalent standard from this University or from another University or comparable institution accepted for this purpose; and
- (c) shall satisfy the examiners in a qualifying examination if required.

IMPA 1A. A candidate who does not hold a Bachelor's degree with honours of this University or another qualification of equivalent standard may in exceptional circumstances be permitted to register if he demonstrates adequate preparation for studies at this level and satisfies the examiners in a qualifying examination.

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**Qualifying examination**

- IMPA 2. (a) A qualifying examination may be set to test the candidate's formal academic ability or his ability to follow the courses of study prescribed. It shall consist of one or more written papers or their equivalent.
- (b) A candidate who is required to satisfy the examiners in a qualifying examination shall not be permitted to register until he has satisfied the examiners in the examination.
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**Award of degree**

IMPA 3. To be eligible for the award of the degree of Master of Public Administration (International) a candidate

- (a) shall comply with General Regulations; and
  - (b) shall complete the curriculum and satisfy the examiners in accordance with the regulations set out below.
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**Length of curriculum**

IMPA 4. The curriculum shall extend over two academic years of part-time study and shall include written examinations held in accordance with the regulations and syllabuses set out below.

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**Completion of curriculum**

IMPA 5. To complete the curriculum, a candidate

- (a) shall follow courses of instruction and complete satisfactorily all prescribed written work; and

- (b) shall satisfy the examiners in all prescribed courses and in any prescribed form of examination.
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### **Examinations**

IMPA 6. An assessment of the candidate's coursework during his studies may be taken into account in determining the candidate's result in each written examination paper; or, where so prescribed in the syllabuses, may constitute the examination of one or more courses.

IMPA 7. A candidate who has failed to satisfy the examiners at his first attempt in not more than half of the number of courses to be examined, whether by means of written examination papers or coursework assessment, during any of the academic years of study, may be permitted

- (a) to present himself for re-examination in the course or courses of failure, with or without repeating any part of the curriculum; or
- (b) to repeat a year of the curriculum and present himself for examination in the courses prescribed for the repeated year.

IMPA 8. A candidate who is unable because of his illness to be present for one or more papers in any written examination may apply for permission to present himself at a supplementary examination to be held before the beginning of the following academic year. Any such application shall be made on the form prescribed within two weeks of the first day of the candidate's absence from the examination.

IMPA 9. A candidate who

- (a) is not permitted to present himself for re-examination in any written paper or any course examined by means of coursework assessment in which he has failed to satisfy the examiners and is not permitted to repeat a year of the curriculum under Regulation IMPA 7; or
- (b) has failed to satisfy the examiners in any written paper or any course examined by means of coursework assessment at a second attempt;

may be required to discontinue his studies.

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### **Examination results**

IMPA 10. At the conclusion of the examination, a pass list shall be published. A candidate who has shown exceptional merit at the whole examination may be awarded a mark of distinction, and this mark shall be recorded in the candidate's degree diploma.

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## **SYLLABUSES FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION (INTERNATIONAL)**

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### **A. PURPOSE AND PROGRAMME STRUCTURE**

The degree is designed primarily for employees in the public and nonprofit sectors who wish to extend their academic knowledge in the field of public administration. It is offered on a part-time basis over two academic years. The examination will consist of eight courses. In the first year of study, a candidate must satisfy the examiners in four compulsory courses, including Human resource management, Public administration: scope and issues, Public policy: issues and approaches, and Public management reform. In the second year of study, a candidate must satisfy the examiners in four elective courses.

## Compulsory Courses:

IMPA7001	Human resource management
IMPA7002	Public administration: scope and issues
IMPA7003	Public policy: issues and approaches
IMPA7004	Public management reform

## Elective Courses:

IMPA8001	Bureaucracy and the public
IMPA8002	Ethics and public affairs
IMPA8003	Financial management
IMPA8004	Government and law
IMPA8005	Government and the economy
IMPA8006	Policy-making in China
IMPA8008	Public administration in China
IMPA8009	Policy design and analysis
IMPA8010	The state and urban policy
IMPA8011	A selected topic in public policy
IMPA8014	NGOs and governance
IMPA8018	Management information systems
IMPA8020	Administrative research and programme evaluation
IMPA8021	International political economy
IMPA8022	Comparative political economy
IMPA8023	Political economy of Northeast Asia
IMPA8024	Strategic management of organizations
IMPA8025	Technological progress and innovation management
IMPA8026	Policy problems in China
IMPA8027	Comparative public administration reform
IMPA8028	Organization theory and management

The courses listed above will not necessarily be offered every year; from time to time, depending on the exigencies of staffing, additional courses may be offered while the above courses may be offered in different years of study. Candidates should consult the Department to find out which courses are being offered in any one year.

A final mark for each course will be determined by taking into consideration the student's coursework performance which will account for up to 40-60% of the final mark except where specified otherwise.

**B. SYLLABUSES****IMPA7001 Human resource management**

The course examines the policies and practices of HRM in the public sector from a comparative perspective. Specific topics include: staffing, training and development, performance management, and staff relations in the Hong Kong government. The course also considers recent HRM developments in the public sector in China, Hong Kong, and overseas.

**IMPA7002 Public administration: scope and issues**

This course provides an introduction to the study of public administration in the modern state. It does this by focusing on the interdependent and changing nature of the state, market and civil society. Various perspectives are adopted concerning work arrangements, legal-structural configurations, and policy dynamics. These perspectives have both historical and present significance. They are supported with reference to relevant ideas and theories, as well as to actual developments in China, Hong Kong and elsewhere.

**IMPA7003 Public policy: issues and approaches**

This course introduces students to the study of public policy by reviewing the main theoretical approaches in the field and examining key policy issues in China and Hong Kong. The course has three main components. First, we will discuss the basic concepts in the analysis of the policy process and the political and institutional contexts of policy making. Second, we will analyze the major theoretical approaches to the study of policy making, policy implementation and evaluation. Finally, we will choose several important policy issues in China and Hong Kong as case studies.

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**IMPA7004 Public management reform**

Over the last 10-15 years, established systems of public management have been subject to widespread and often quite radical reform. This has involved the adoption of various strategies of decentralisation, corporatisation and privatisation, resulting in numerous mixes of public and private activity in which partnerships, contracts and other means of forging relationships are of considerable significance. Such strategies have far-reaching consequences for the governance of modern society. They are examined in this course from an international and comparative perspective.

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**IMPA8001 Bureaucracy and the public**

Government is an instrument of the public for acting collectively. In the age of New Public Management, however, the distinctiveness and the identity of the “public” seem to have been largely lost. This course seeks to (1) “rediscover the public” in public administration by evaluating the plausible conceptions of the public in relation to the bureaucracy as, for example, customers, constituents, rational choosers of public services, and citizens; and (2) consider institutional design to strengthen collective capacities for achieving public purposes through public administration.

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**IMPA8002 Ethics and public affairs**

This course focuses on the normative aspects of public policy and public administration. Using concepts and arguments which are mainly derived from moral philosophy, the course examines the ethical justifications for, and the moral implications of, the policy choices and conduct of public officials. The analysis is divided into two parts. The first part deals with the ethical basis of public policies. The second part is a study of public service morality. Instead of providing straightforward prescriptive answers, the course aims at highlighting the moral complexities of modern political and administrative life.

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**IMPA8003 Financial management**

This course examines the nature, processes, causes and effects of budgeting as a fiscal instrument to enhance economic growth, as a mechanism for the allocation of scarce resources, and as a management tool for executive planning and financial control.

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**IMPA8004 Government and law**

This course examines selected aspects of the provinces, processes and products of constitutional, statutory and contractual decision-making in government. Topics include: the nature and significance of constitutional and political structures, rights and obligations; the means by which statutes and ordinances are created and interpreted; the exercise of legal power in the form of a right to impose requirements, levy fees, determine entitlements, and enter into contracts; and the need for decisions and action to be subject to various forms of review.

**IMPA8005 Government and the economy**

The course surveys the objectives pursued by government in managing the economy, the means employed in pursuit of those objectives, and theories concerning government's economic behaviour.

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**IMPA8006 Policy-making in China**

This course examines the public policy-making system and the policy dynamics in contemporary China. Aside from studying the initiation, formulation, and implementation phases of the policy process, the course also explores the special features of policy-making in specific issue areas, such as industry, agriculture, fiscal management, regional development and foreign economic policy.

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**IMPA8008 Public administration in China**

This course examines the context of public administration in contemporary China; party and state institutions; public personnel management; and the formulation and implementation of public policy. Assessment: 100% coursework.

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**IMPA8009 Policy design and analysis**

This course has two focal points. The first is on policy design and, in particular, on the relevance and application of institutional analysis to the design of policy options. A basic assumption is that policy analysis is largely a matter of problem-solving; therefore, the design of problem-solving mechanisms and procedures affects the extent to which problems are coped with. The other focus of the course is on various tools and techniques of policy determination and evaluation.

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**IMPA8010 The state and urban policy**

This course focuses on the role of the state in the urban environment. Theories of the state and specific social planning issues are discussed, as are the social, political and economic constraints on the formulation and implementation of urban policy. Assessment: 100% coursework.

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**IMPA8011 A selected topic in public policy**

This course concentrates on advanced topics in public policy and is offered from time to time as resources permit.

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**IMPA8014 NGOs and governance**

This course examines the relationships between and among the state, the market and civil society with particular reference to the work of those not-for-profit organizations and associations which are normally referred to as NGOs. It focuses on the legal-structural dimensions of NGOs and the ways in which they operate in the production, provision, ownership, regulation and facilitation of various goods and services. It recognizes that the activities of NGOs are frequently central to the formulation, implementation and evaluation of public policies in both domestic and international arenas.

**IMPA8018      Management information systems**

The course examines key principles and practices of information systems and a range of analytical approaches concerning the needs of modern management. Topics include: the organizational foundations of information systems and the management of information resources; different types of computer-based information systems and decision support tools; and research opportunities and analytical potential in e-management and e-governance.

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**IMPA8020      Administrative research and programme evaluation**

The purpose of this course is to provide an overview of methods of social inquiry employed in pursuing research projects in academic – including at dissertation level – and policy settings. Both the conceptual and empirical dimensions of the subject are explored. On the empirical side, considerable attention is accorded to qualitative methods which feature prominently in administrative research. The policy-related component is focused on methods of public programme evaluation commonly relied upon to determine the need for government intervention and its effectiveness.

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**IMPA8021      International political economy**

The course provides an overview of the field of international political economy. The aim is to help students understand the interaction between political and economic systems, forces and actors, at international level. The course asks two main questions: first, how do states, social forces and various kinds of institutions affect the flow of economic resources across national boundaries? Second, how do economic forces constrain the behaviour of political actors at international level? More specifically, this course deals with the politics of international economic cooperation.

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**IMPA8022      Comparative political economy**

This is an introductory course to the field of comparative political economy. The central focus is government-business relations, in particular, how the relations differ across countries. The first part of the course introduces the history of government-business relations since the rise of capitalism. More specific topics include the great economic transformation in Europe, late development, and different paths of modernisation. The second part of the course is an overview of the theories of comparative political economy, including statism, neoclassical political economy, social-coalition approach, and historical and rational-choice institutionalism. The final part of the course compares models of government-business relations in association with three forms of state, i.e. the welfare state, the developmental state, and the post-communist transitional state.

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**IMPA8023      Political economy of Northeast Asia**

The course examines the history and development of political-economic interactions in Northeast Asia, especially such interactions in Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan. The course has four main sections. The first section is a general introduction to Japan, South Korea and Taiwan. The second section discusses the origins of the political-economic system in Northeast Asia. Issues include the Meiji Restoration, the rise of developmental state in Japan, Japanese and American hegemonies, and geopolitical competitions in Northeast Asia. The third section of the course reviews the post-WWII history of Northeast Asia, which focuses on how the so-called “East Asian miracles” were created, while the final section examines the current problems in Northeast, including Japan’s economic stagnation, the Asian financial crisis, and the decline of developmental states.

**IMPA8024 Strategic management of organizations**

This course is aimed to provide MPA students with a framework of managing complex organizations from strategic perspectives. It introduces concepts, approaches and tools in strategy with their applications to the administrative practices of both public organizations and business organizations in comparison. The course contains three parts: generic strategic thinking, fundamental issues in business management, and in public organizations.

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**IMPA8025 Technological progress and innovation management**

This course is aimed to enable MPA students to understand characteristics of advances in technology and science and their impact on economic growth and competition of firms. It provides a framework based on economic theories of technological progress for thinking about policy issues and innovation management strategies.

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**IMPA8026 Policy problems in China**

This course will choose a set of key policy problems in contemporary China for in-depth investigation. The analytical focus is on the nature of policy problems, the process of problem definition and agenda setting, as well as the interactions among bureaucratic actors, institutional contexts and societal input in the policy process.

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**IMPA8027 Comparative public administration reform**

Reform of public administration in many countries is increasingly becoming an important instrument for achieving policy goals. Different countries, however, take different approaches to reforming their public sectors. A comparative analysis of reform directions allows us a better understanding of governance systems internationally. The course will examine the institutional arrangements and relational factors between civil service, politicians, and civil society in a selected number of countries.

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**IMPA8028 Organization theory and management**

This course will examine the fundamental theories of (i) organizational behaviors; (ii) organizational structures; (iii) decision making processes; and (iv) organizational management with particular emphasis on public organizations. The objectives of this course include (i) how each theory explains and predicts the behavior of organizations and individuals; (ii) how organizational structures and processes affect organizational effectiveness; (iii) how organizations interact with their environments in the course of generating decisions that influence political, economic, and social outcomes; and (iv) how organizations can improve their managerial performance. To substantiate the validity of theories, emphasis is placed on the application of theory to various organizational settings including public and nonprofit organizations, and the local, state and federal levels of bureaucracies. At the end of the course, students will have obtained the ability to develop critical perspectives on the modus operandi of organizations and to formulate problem-solving mechanisms under complex decision-making situations.