

International Relations BA (Hons)

COURSE DETAILS

- A level requirements: [AAB](#)
- UCAS code: L240
- Study mode: Full-time
- Length: 3 years

KEY DATES

- Apply by: [29 January 2025](#)
- Starts: 22 September 2025

Course overview

Studying International Relations brings a focus on power, authority, citizenship, conflict and cooperation in the world around us, it is an opportunity to engage with politics on an international scale and to think deeply about the changing world.

INTRODUCTION

Current international trends are interpreted in a historical perspective yet with a view to future directions and likely developments. Politics affects all our lives and with a deeper understanding you can join in conversations that address key issues.

You will have the opportunity to learn from internationally recognised scholars and to hear about their cutting edge research examining a wide range of aspects of international relations. You will explore political ideas, systems and processes, learn to question and to challenge, how to collect data, develop knowledge, construct arguments and communicate your findings in different ways.

WHAT YOU'LL LEARN

- Key features of international relations and politics
- Ability to investigate and analyse questions of international concern
- Critical evaluation of political events, ideas and institutions using a variety of methodologies and approaches
- Principles of academic writing and speaking
- Opportunity to undertake a work placement

- Application of the academic study of politics to questions of public concern and the ability to communicate with both specialist and non-specialist audiences
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Course content

Discover what you'll learn, what you'll study, and how you'll be taught and assessed.

YEAR ONE

In year one you will take Foundations in politics and Foundations in international politics, Comparative Politics and a study skills module Studying Politics Successfully: Skills and Methods that will aid you in developing all the tools you need to study International Relations effectively throughout your degree programme. You will also have the option to take either British Politics or Political Theory modules and a final 30 credits to study courses elsewhere in the University such as languages which can be an excellent companion to an International Relations degree.

Students take 30 credits of required modules and 30 credits of optional modules in each semester.

Students must take **either** POLI101 and POLI102 **or** POLI105. POLI105 is a 'year-long' module and represents 15 credits in each semester.

COMPULSORY MODULES

COMPARATIVE POLITICS (POLI107)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 2

How does politics function in a globalised world? What explains cross-country and cross-time differences in political institutions, behaviour and outcomes?

This module provides an introduction to Comparative Politics by focusing on key concepts and contemporary issues affecting democracies, hybrid regimes and (to a lesser extent) authoritarian regimes across the world. It introduces students to basic debates around the democracy, its causes and consequences, the crisis of the nation state, institutional configurations and their effects, political parties, nationalism and regional integration. The module also introduces the idea of the comparative method and how to apply it to the study of different countries. Teaching is based on a combination of theoretical and empirical perspectives, using case-studies as illustration throughout the module.

FOUNDATIONS IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS (POLI104)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 2

This module provides an introduction to the main schools of thought and key issues in the field of International Relations (IR). It starts by offering an outline of these schools of thought and introduces students to important thinkers and theories within them. It then moves on to applying and comparing and contrasting different theories to a range of important contemporary issues, from the persistence of war to the environment. It concludes with a discussion of possible futures.

FOUNDATIONS IN POLITICS (POLI109)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 1

This module provides students with a critical introduction to a number of political concepts such as power, the state, legitimacy of sovereignty and gender through engaging with political thinkers such as Weber, Dahl, Tilly, Hooks and Rousseau. It also aims to establish a grounding in a number of areas that will benefit the students in the academic study of politics. For example, essay writing, debating in seminars, and an introduction to academic research. In so doing the module develops on the skills gained at A-level to ensure students are fully prepared for degree level study in Politics. Principally this will be accomplished through interactive lectures and seminars, as well as detailed feedback on their assessments. This module provides students with the tools they require to master different forms of assessment and course work. It also lays the foundations for the development of research confident students by making them active learners with a responsibility for their own academic study.

STUDYING POLITICS SUCCESSFULLY: SKILLS AND METHODS (POLI103)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 1

This module will equip you with the core skills that you need to be successful on a politics degree. These include skills like: Critical thinking, public speaking, choosing sources, making a convincing argument, academic essay writing, qualitative and quantitative research, and referencing. Many of these skills are expected at university – and are essential to a high grade – yet are not necessarily taught elsewhere. This module plugs that gap and ensures that you are confident and prepared for the different kinds of work that lie ahead.

OPTIONAL MODULES

BRITISH POLITICS 1 (POLI101)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 1

The module is designed to introduce key elements of British Politics in terms of political parties, voting behaviour and elections, ideologies and key aspects such as gender and media.

POWER, BELIEF AND IDENTITY: MEDIEVAL AND EARLY MODERN WORLDS, C. 500–1600 CE (HIST115)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 1

This module covers a period of crucial significance for European history, including interactions between Europe and other parts of the world in the premodern period. Much of it will be unfamiliar to many of you, but, we hope, will be all the more interesting for that reason. At its broadest, this module covers more than a millennium, from the rise of Christianity to the European arrival in and settlement of the Americas. We start with the origins of Christianity in the eastern Mediterranean, before moving on to the fall of the Roman Empire and the rise of Islam. In Europe, we chronicle the rise of post-Roman kingdoms, the settlements of Vikings in Europe and more distant locations, the launching and objectives of the crusades. In light of the expansion of the papacy, we assess the emergence of new forms of spirituality and heresy, political conflicts between nascent states, and the impact of the Reformation and Catholic Reformation on other parts of the world. Underlying these events are some continuous themes, such as the foundation of the Christian Church, the development and evolution of notions of holiness, and the effect of religious belief on methods of education, ideas of difference and deviance, and responses to natural disasters. Another theme that runs through the module is to assess how gender mores affected the experiences of and possibilities for individuals who lived in these periods. Course content also looks at the practice of, and ideology behind, political activity and war. We aim to give you an appreciation of world views and of methods of representation based on the mental horizons possible in the age before modern technology.

NORTHERN IRELAND BEFORE THE 'TROUBLES': FROM PARTITION TO CIVIL RIGHTS AND ARMALITES (IRIS107)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 1

This module enables students to understand the historical background to the development of the Troubles in Northern Ireland with reference to the underlying political, social, economic, cultural and religious context. It gives an overview of the main events and underlying causes of the outbreak of violent conflict in the late 1960s and examines the motives of main participating elements including the Northern Ireland and British governments, extra-parliamentary and political movements.

WARFARE, POLITICS, AND SOCIETY IN THE GREEK WORLD, 510–323 B.C. (CLAH104)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 1

This module introduces the history and society of the ancient Greek world, from the liberation of Athens from tyranny in the late sixth century BC through to the death of Alexander the Great in 323 BC. The module offers students a foundation of knowledge in the history of events, as well as exploring a range of aspects of Greek society and culture, including the Greek 'way of war', sexuality and religion. It also introduces a range of sources for the study of ancient history, especially the two great Greek historywriters, Herodotus and Thucydides.

BRITISH POLITICS II (POLI102)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 2

This introductory politics module focuses on the distribution of power in Britain and the nature of the British state. It outlines the traditional conception of the British political system as the 'Westminster Model' and considers the implications of this model for how democracy is conceived and how political power is mobilised, in whose interests and with what consequences, primarily in the UK but also in former British colonies and dependencies. The module examines the various component parts of the British political system including the Prime Minister and Cabinet, Parliament, the judiciary, the civil service, regional and local government and devolved institutions, from both a constitutional and political-sociological perspective. It also assesses the emerging impact of Brexit on the UK political system and for the distribution of political power within it, including consideration of the role of 'imperialist imaginaries' in shaping discussion of the UK's post-Brexit future. The module assumes no prior knowledge of the British political system or the particular issues under consideration.

IRELAND'S BATTLE FOR IDEAS (IRIS114)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 2

This module aims to explore the various ideas that have contributed to the development of modern Ireland. It will explain how these ideas have interacted with one another and how they have shaped political debates and brought about social change.

MODERN BRITAIN: DEMOCRACY, WAR, AND MODERNITY (HIST116)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 2

This module provides students with an introduction to modern British history. It broadens their existing understanding by first considering factors of a general importance in the development of modern Britain, and then looking at particular events and themes. In this way, students will be given a grasp both of broad themes in British history – such as demographics, political units, ideologies and social change – and of the specific way history unfolded at key moments and turning points.

UNDERSTANDING MODERN EUROPE (HIST117)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 2

This module provides students with an introduction to modern continental European history. It broadens their understanding by first considering factors of a general importance in the development of modern Europe, and then looking at particular events and countries. In this way, students will be given a grasp both of broad themes in European history – such as demographics, political units, ideologies and social change – and of the specific way history unfolded in certain times and places.

INTRODUCTION TO POLITICAL THEORY (POLI105)

Credits: 30 / Semester: whole session

This module introduces some of the key concepts, theories and debates in contemporary political theory. We will explore questions such as: how should we define liberty? Is equality always desirable? What does a 'just society' look like? What does it mean to be a liberal, anarchist, Marxist or feminist? In order to address these and other questions we will explore the ideas of several political, moral and legal philosophers. In doing so, we will also practice the skills for constructing, communicating and critiquing philosophical arguments, including their implications for laws, institutions and society.

Programme details and modules listed are illustrative only and subject to change.

YEAR TWO

In year two you will select from a pool of modules including International organisations, International political economy, Security in a globalised world, Foreign analysis and world politics, and Politics of international Human Rights as well as having the choice of a wide variety of modules that deal with the international political sphere. These include, but are not limited to American politics and society, Regimes and their consequences, and Gender and Feminist politics: core concepts and theories.

Students take 60 credits of optional modules in each semester.

Students must take 45 credits of specifically International Relations modules across the year (POLI225/POLI231/POLI251/POLI203/POLI209)

POLI200 is subject to an appropriate placement being sourced. Students cannot register directly for this module.

OPTIONAL MODULES

INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS (POLI225)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 1

The international system has no central authority that makes and enforces laws, yet it is not totally anarchic. A large number of international organisations allows states to co-operate in areas as diverse as the economy, international security, or the protection of the environment. The aim of this module is to enable students to systematically study international organisations. We focus on key questions: How do international organisations become (and remain) legitimate? Are they independent from their member-states? What inequalities and hierarchies do they transform or reproduce? Through a series of empirical examples – such as the United Nations, the WTO, the World Bank – students will be able to systematically analyse the role and functions of international organisations in global politics.

SECURITY IN A GLOBALISED WORLD (POLI231)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 1

Understanding security in international relations and how it is challenged by contemporary globalisation.

UK GENERAL ELECTIONS AND REFERENDUMS SINCE 1945 (POLI204)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 1

This module introduces students to the study of elections and voting behaviour. It uses post-war British elections and referendums as the focal point for introducing key political science debates about voting and party competition and as a context for analysing political change in Britain. In place of seminars, students attend required data lab sessions, in which they are taught quantitative skills (e.g. t-test, Chi-Square test, statistical correlation, linear regression) through the analysis of key election datasets (e.g. vote shares, opinion polls, election surveys, candidate spending) in guided PC sessions. These sessions involve the use of both Excel and SPSS software and students will need to be confident in their ability to undertake basic mathematical procedures and to learn introductory statistical methods.

COMPARATIVE POLITICS OF THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA (POLI215)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 1

After years of authoritarian stasis, the tectonic plates of Middle East politics began to shift with the "Arab Spring" of 2011. Much media analysis reduces political explanation of the region's politics to a single variable (Islam) or its impact on Europe (refugees, terrorism). This module will provide students with the tools to analyse the region's politics in its richness. Students will critically engage with key concepts and debates in the study of Middle East comparative politics. These include the role of oil and the "rentier-state", democratisation and authoritarian resilience, and the role of religion in politics.

DEVOLUTION IN THE UK (POLI227)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 1

The module examines devolution in Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and within England. How did it come about? How has it changed politics in each country? How have political parties responded and what are the key devolved issues in each country?

DEMOCRATISATION AND POLITICAL CHANGE (POLI235)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 1

This module examines struggles for democracy across history from a comparative perspective. It challenges students to reflect on why a particular variety of democracy, representative government (or 'polyarchy'), has become one of the dominant political systems in the modern world. It explores the circumstances under which dictatorship gives way to representative government, and the conditions under which representative systems have the best chance of surviving. We will examine the prospects for democracy in the global South, especially Southeast Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa, asking whether other regions will follow the examples of democratisation in Europe and North and South America and investigating ongoing barriers to democratic consolidation. The course focuses on three major approaches to questions of democratisation—modernisation theory, the social forces tradition, and transition theory—which provide rival frameworks for exploring global trends and country cases.

BRITISH PARTY POLITICS (POLI239)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 1

This module aims to develop students' knowledge of British political parties and the party system within which they operate. It explores questions and issues surrounding party structure and organisation, electoral strategy, party ideology and the socio-historical contexts which lead to the rise of certain types of parties rather than others.

POLITICS OF INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS (POLI251)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 1

This module focuses on the concept, institutionalization, and politics of human rights in international politics. It will provide an overview of the philosophical foundations and debates on human rights. Students will learn about the history and development of human rights in international politics. The module will explore how policies, institutions, and actors aim to improve human rights regionally and globally. It will critically assess the efforts to promote and protect human rights in international politics. At the same time, the module will look at human rights in various regions in the world, as well as issues including war crimes, genocide, torture, environmental rights, women and children's rights and others.

POLITICAL COMMUNICATION AND PUBLIC SPEAKING (POLI252)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 1

This is the first module offered to second year undergraduate students to examine the process of political speech and its impact upon the quality of democratic discourse. The module will scrutinise the kind of audiences political figures face, issues of freedom of speech, the development of authentic political rhetoric, the advancement of ideological perspectives, the impact of political manipulation through concepts such as 'fake news', and also the process of delivering political speeches.

GENDER AND FEMINIST POLITICS: CORE CONCEPTS AND THEORIES (POLI257)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 1

This module will introduce core concepts in contemporary gender politics –including feminist theoretical understandings of nation, state, family and the market. Gender and feminist politics will be explored more deeply by engaging with intersecting identities and current theories of the concept ‘woman’. Concepts will be illustrated with real world, contemporary case studies (for example, gender based violence and reproductive rights) and also consider non-traditional forms of political engagement including activist organising. The module will encourage students to critically engage with topics through popular culture, media sources, films, books and podcasts and reflection on their own experience. Research, critical thinking and presentation skills will be developed through coursework assessment.

THE POLITICS OF 'RACE' AND MARGINALISATION (POLI265)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 1

This module is designed to introduce second year undergraduates to issues surrounding racialization in comparative politics. It will locate ‘race’ as an enduring feature of access to power and look at critical race theory in relation to national (UK) and international politics. This module will enable students to develop critical thinking skills about the construction of ‘race’ and ethnicity and how this construction affects certain marginalised communities and precipitates particular modes of democratic engagement and disengagement, participation and resistance and privilege and disadvantage.

As of March 2022, this course was awarded a Fulbright Global Challenges Teaching Award (GCTA). The GCTA requires that a Liverpool class be adapted for co-teaching with a US counterpart as part of a virtual exchange. For 2022, POLI265 will be a COIL class. Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) refers to a learning and teaching paradigm aimed at developing cross-cultural awareness through shared learning environments. This means that those who participate in this class will be now co-taught by journalism and creative media Professor George Daniels of the University of Alabama. They will now collaborate with and learn alongside an American cohort of students. The module will also now incorporate Professor Daniel’s expertise on race, gender, and media.

POLITICS OF THE PAST IN THE ANCIENT WORLD (CLAH200)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 1

This module examines politics in the ancient world via narratives about the past (or 'history'), and at the same time evaluates the role of history in politics. Moving from the Near East to Greece and then Rome, students learn about key political events (for example the battle of Marathon and the Jewish revolt), political phenomena (for example Persian kingship, Athenian imperialism, and Roman expansion), and influential persons (for example Pericles, Augustus and Boudica). In the process they become familiar with the different ways of telling history in antiquity: not only through written history ('historiography') but also poetic and theatrical performances, philosophical writings, biographical studies, public buildings and monuments and public ceremonies, such as the Roman funeral. While grappling with these different types of history, students develop understanding of the structures, strategies, debates and anxieties that characterized politics in the ancient world. And they recognize that in the ancient world, as today, to represent the past was to participate in politics.

'DOES THE NATION MATTER?'; THE BASQUES' WILL TO PERSIST IN THE GLOBAL CULTURE (HISP218)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 1

The Basque language is the axis of a long-standing culture that came to feel at risk around the late 19th century. The Basque nation has since embarked on a fight for survival that has largely contributed to transform the Basque Country into an open, modern, and dynamic society. But contemporary Basque society is characterised by its conflicting identities, Basque and Spanish being the most noted of them. This module will analyse the most relevant areas of that conflict from a cultural, historical, and anthropological perspective. It will also offer a taste of contemporary Basque arts and the identity play between the local and the global in which they are inscribed. This is not a theoretical module. It is practical through and through. But by means of studying contemporary Basque society and culture students are invited to reflect about the concept of identity, both its importance to all of us and its striking fragility, and the way all that is linked to their own experience of nationality.

POLITICS IN ACTION (POLI200)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 2

This module provides an opportunity for students to gain credit from experience acquired in a placement, usually off campus, and outside their immediate academic context, in a setting that matches their academic and possible career/industry interests. During this placement students will have the chance to develop materials and/or undertake tasks within a practical or vocational context; to apply academic knowledge from their degree, and to develop their personal and employability skills within a working environment. Students will also be encouraged to critically reflect on their time on their placement, and tie their experiences into a broader theoretical understanding of what constitutes 'politics'.

CRITICAL APPROACHES TO TRANSNATIONAL SECURITY (POLI203)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 2

This module is introduced to increase the variety of modules offered to second-year BA students. With increasing student numbers and diversity of students in terms of their programme choices and their interests, this module offers a degree of specialisation and deepening of understanding of transnational security and the ways in which state and non-state actors (especially in the Global South) are responding to 'new' security challenges. The focus on the Global South aims at challenging dominant framings of regions such as Africa, Asia and Latin America as sources of insecurities that lack agency on transnational security issues. This module builds student's understanding and knowledge of the processes and the politics of securitisation, crucial for understanding international peace and security in the context of shifts in global power distribution.

ASPECTS OF MEDIA AND POLITICS (POLI208)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 2

The module covers the media's relationship to politics, with a particular (but not exclusive) focus on Britain. It touches on the political, economic, moral and legal contexts in which journalists cover politics, and looks at how subsequent coverage relates to citizen's attitudes and to democratic politics. The module deals with a range of key topics, such as 'the economy', 'climate change' and 'Europe'. Students should, as a result, get a rounded appreciation of the media's role in contemporary society and politics. The module is delivered via a standard lecture and tutorial format.

INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL ECONOMY (POLI209)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 2

International (or Global) Political Economy (IPE/GPE) is a sub-discipline of International Relations. This module examines the interplay between politics and economics and the way this relationship is influenced by domestic and international forces. It examines the social underpinnings of economic transactions, the political frameworks that shape economic activity at national, regional and global levels, and the economic imperatives that impinge upon political decision-makers. During the module, you will be introduced to influential perspectives, theories and ideas that have been advanced to explain and anticipate events and developments in political economy. The module covers the most important issue-areas in international political economy and examines recent developments, including the global financial crisis of 2008, challenges to the western liberal order, and the impact of the ecological crisis on global political economy. Firms, individuals, markets, societies, social classes, and states are all important elements of IPE. Theories differ in the way they deal with these elements and the relative significance they accord to each of them. The tension between the elements, resulting in cooperation and conflict, is a major feature in the theory and practice of IPE.

BRITISH POLITICAL IDEOLOGIES (POLI237)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 2

This module analyses the major ideologies in British politics and explores how ideas have brought about change in British politics and society since 1945.

PUBLIC ETHICS (POLI260)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 2

This module explores the ethical dilemmas that arise in some of the most controversial public policy debates. We will explore questions such as: should people have the right to euthanasia? Should we ban pornography? Should the consumption of, or testing on, animals be banned? Should we criminally punish people for taking recreational drugs? Are reparations morally justified? We will explore these questions by critically assessing the arguments of political, moral and legal philosophers, and evaluate the implications of their arguments for policy making.

POLITICAL ECONOMIES OF GLOBALISATION (ENVS264)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 2

This module introduces students to the study of globalisation in the early 21st century. In the 19th and 20th centuries there were big debates between those who think things work best when people are left to decide how they want to live and get what they need by trading with each other, and those who wanted a communist society where people get what they need and contribute what they can to the common good. Of course it did not work out that way, and now for many people free markets, or neoliberalism is the only serious game in town. The course examines those debates before moving on to examine case studies of how they have worked out in practice.

ROME IN THE LATE REPUBLIC (CLAH268)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 2

This module is about politics, about policies, political institutions, and the political culture of Rome in the Late Republic. It does not only trace the deterioration of political consensus amongst the senate aristocracy and the rise of powerful individuals like Marius, Sulla, Pompey, or Caesar but also aims to explore the wider cultural context within which politics unfolds.

THE GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC: POLITICS, CULTURE, MEMORY (GRMN220)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 2

The module offers students an in-depth examination of key themes in the cultural, social and political history of the German Democratic Republic (GDR) from 1949–1990, as well questions of memory after 1990. It explores key milestones in the history and politics of the GDR (e.g. the uprisings of 17 June 1953, the building of the Berlin Wall and the demonstrations of 1989), as well as central themes within society and culture, such as gender, youth and cultural policy. Each theme will be examined through a range of texts, films and other primary and secondary resources, in order to develop a detailed knowledge and understanding of the meaning and significance of life and culture in the GDR and its relevance for contemporary eastern Germany.

DECOLONIAL PERSPECTIVES ON ITALY, AFRICA AND THE MEDITERRANEAN (ITAL225)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 2

The module develops a decolonial approach to the history of Italy, Africa and the Mediterranean, focusing on trajectories of colonialism and migration to and from Italy, from the age of the empires to the present. Adopting a decolonial perspective on the history of the Italian empire, its languages and cultures, the module examines some of the cultural and geopolitical tensions that shape ideas of heritage, citizenship and belonging between Italy and Africa. Exploring the making of individual and collective memories through a variety of media and languages, the module develops a language-sensitive approach to the study of history, memory and culture in the 21st century.

GLOBAL NEWS, MEDIA AND WAR (COMM213)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 1

The media are now central to any discussion of contemporary war and conflict while global news reporting is supposedly in decline. How can we understand the interplay between global news, media and war in the context of rapidly evolving communication technologies and journalistic practices? This module explores the broader context of global news focusing on media in different parts of the world and the way they report on global issues. It considers the professional practice of foreign reporting and the challenges that notions of ethics, objectivity and attachment present for journalists. Then it engages with both the responses of states, including the use of media management and persuasion, and those of audiences who are often conflicted in reaction to distant conflict. The module concludes with an investigation of specific wars of recent years and a look at the future of reporting war and beyond.

Programme details and modules listed are illustrative only and subject to change.

YEAR THREE

In year three modules are available on Identity in contemporary international politics; World politics and the world economy, Comparative peace processes and Africa–China relations in

a changing global order. You can also choose from a range of modules that don't have an explicit international dimension.

Students take 60 credits of optional modules in each semester.

POLI342, POLI343 and POLI354 are subject to a suitable placement being sourced. Students cannot register directly onto these modules.

There is an application process for POLI342 and POLI343. Students accepted onto POLI342 module take POLI401 (Dissertation). Students cannot take both POLI342 and POLI343.

POLI339 is a 'year-long' module and represents 15 credits in each semester. There is an application process for this module. Students cannot register directly onto this module

POLI401 is a 'year-long' module and represents 15 credits in each semester.

OPTIONAL MODULES

CONTEMPORARY PARLIAMENTARY STUDIES (POLI304)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 1

This module aims to provide students with an overall introduction to the UK Parliament and, in particular, to how its role has changed over time. It will provide students with key knowledge and understanding of the institution and of how it has changed. We will examine how the institution is organised, who MPs and Peers are and how they perform their representative role. We will then focus on key roles such as law-making and scrutiny and accountability, where we will explore in particular the role of Select Committees and of questions to the government. We will also consider how Parliament relates to outside actors such as the public, government and pressure groups. Throughout our enquiry we will identify the role played by tradition in Parliament, as well as outlining paths for reform. The module has been developed in conjunction with the Parliamentary Outreach Service of the UK Parliament and includes guest talks by parliamentary officials and Clerks. Whilst the module introduces students to the key literature and theories on Parliament, it also has a very practical insight. It is therefore particularly suitable for those students considering a possible career in public relations, lobbying, journalism, as well as in parliament itself or party politics.

The module's assessment has a strong practical component. It is composed of two reports, each actively encouraging the use of resources from Parliament and each putting students in a real life scenario.

THE MEDIA, THE INTERNET AND POLITICAL SCIENCE (POLI319)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 1

The module will cover a range of contemporary mass media and their role in the power structures of British society. Students should achieve an understanding of the mechanisms by which power is (or is not) exerted through and by the mass media; which models of power distribution are most plausible in this context; and which case studies best exemplify the mechanism at work (including mediation of protest; political mobilisation via the web; public relations and spin practices; and the phone hacking affair). The module will be delivered via lectures and workshops, and will be assessed by exam, short essay and a student's performance in a presentation undertaken in a group alongside other students.

COMPARATIVE ELECTORAL BEHAVIOUR (POLI322)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 1

This module discusses classic and current topics of electoral politics from a comparative perspective. It adopts a heterodox approach to electoral behaviour, simultaneously covering rational, socio-structural and psychological explanations. Sessions are structured thematically, with cases of specific countries and parties being used as illustration. Among the themes covered by the module are class voting, cultural values, issues and economic voting, partisanship, leader and candidate evaluations, and the impact of gender, religion, ethnic background, ethno-national identity and age on voters' behaviour in advanced capitalist democracies and beyond. The module will also cover electoral support for nonmainstream parties, including the radical left, the radical right and Green parties.

The focus of the module is both theoretical and empirical. Each week, a new topic is introduced in a lecture and then explored further by analysing real survey data during the PC sessions using the statistical package SPSS. Quantitative training is provided as part of the module and covers different types of univariate and bivariate analysis. Previous statistical training is not a requirement.

The module is highly recommended for students interested in elections and voters and comparative politics, as well as those who have taken modules with a focus on data analysis in the past.

FROM THE IRA TO ISIS: UNDERSTANDING POLITICAL VIOLENCE IN THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD (POLI324)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 1

This module aims to acquaint students with terrorism and counter-terrorism in today's world. It starts by examining key concepts, theories, and history and then moves on to looking at a range of issues that have been the subject of particular debate, such as whether terrorism works, whether there are regularities in how campaigns end, and the necessity and contributions of literature on 'Critical Terrorism Studies'. The module concludes by looking at whether we are at the end of the religious wave of terrorism and what we might expect to occur next.

LABOUR THINKERS (POLI326)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 1

This module analyses the ideology of the Labour Party historically through discussions of the ideas of key thinkers from the 1920s to the present day.

CONSERVATIVE THINKERS (POLI327)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 1

This module analyses the ideology of the Conservative Party historically through discussions of the ideas of key thinkers from the 1930s to the present day.

EU AS AN INTERNATIONAL ACTOR (POLI328)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 1

This module explores the role of the EU as an international actor in the sphere of foreign policy, international relations, and security and defence. It analyses the historical development of EU foreign policy and its various dimensions, the main institutions and players involved, but also the different roles the EU assumes when acting internationally, and how it relates to regional and global partners. The module delves into some critical questions about the nature of the EU- whether it actually is an actor capable of making a distinct foreign policy- and whether any policy-making at EU level, particularly in matters of security and defence, is legitimate. This module can build on previous knowledge about EU history and integration or can provide new and specialised knowledge about this organisation's foreign policy.

STRATEGIC STUDIES IN CONFLICTS AND TERRORISM (POLI347)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 1

Conflicts, terrorism and wars have plagued human societies since their inception: which factors are likely to explain their occurrence and duration of wars? How are civil wars different from inter-state and ethnic conflicts? Who is more likely to become a terrorist? How does the public react to terrorist attacks? How do states respond to terror? This course examines a number of theoretical and empirical debates in the study of conflict and terrorism. We will investigate how empirical analyses can help settling some debates while others remain still open. By the end of this module, students are expected to (1) develop an understanding of the major explanations for conflicts and terrorism and critically discuss their strengths and shortcomings (2) interpret the findings advanced by the empirical literature against or in line with the discussed theoretical predictions (and students' own pre-theoretical intuitions) (3) get exposed to the data and techniques employed by empirical scholarship to investigate conflict and terrorism.

LOCAL PLACEMENT SCHEME (POLI343)

Credits: 45 / Semester: semester 1

The Local Placement Scheme allows students to work full time in a local political setting (MP, local authority etc). Students must apply. The Scheme is competitive and only successful applicants will be placed.

THE PUZZLE OF CIVIL WAR (POLI353)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 1

Please note: this is a theory and method heavy course and the application of both will be a mandatory requirement for the assignment(s). Students should be prepared to devote considerable time to familiarize themselves with methods and theory.

Civil war is the most common form of armed conflict today. While around thirty interstate wars have been fought since World War II, over one hundred civil wars have been recorded. Scholars have long focused their attention on civil conflict, producing a large body of literature on different aspects of civil war, e.g. exploring onset, duration, strategies, outcomes and termination, the formation of rebel groups, and the various forms of intervention in civil war. The module will introduce students to this body of research.

Substantially, the module is divided into four parts. The first part provides an introduction to the study of civil war and an extensive methods discussion. The latter will emphasize concepts and measurement, causal assessment, and case selection. In the second part of the module, we will look at civil war onset. War is a costly and risky endeavor, and rebels face particularly steep odds going up against states that are typically far more powerful. Why do they occur? The third part explores the dynamics in civil wars. Why do parties target civilians? When do civil wars spill over? The fourth part looks at the end of wars and termination of conflict. Why do some civil wars last longer than others? Why do some end in a negotiated settlement while others do not? Does outside intervention facilitate the termination of civil wars and prevent their recurrence?

POLITICS OF PARTICIPATION AND CIVIC SPACE (POLI354)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 1

This module will begin with theories of social movement and collective action and then examine different types of collective action as well as their nature, role and impact. This module will then focus on civil society, its actors and their relations with other actors such as funders and public institutions. The module will draw on examples from different periods, countries, and areas of activity and bring theory and empirical cases together. The module will include compulsory placement in a civil society organization.

POSTCOLONIAL GEOGRAPHIES (ENVS334)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 1

Whilst for many people, colonialism has ended, we live in a world where the effects of colonialism are still visible. Many academics have taken a critical perspective on these continued legacies, and this field of thought is now broadly known as 'postcolonialism'. This module explores the social, political and cultural effects and legacies of colonialism as they occur in particular contexts.

The module is divided into two sections, one exploring the theoretical ideas of postcolonialism, the other looking at how thinking postcolonially helps us to understand the world.

You will be assessed through two pieces of coursework, one a theoretically driven essay on a student-chosen topic, and one, focused on authentic assessment, which analyses the postcolonial aspects of contemporary culture (e.g. a film, book or museum).

BUILDING BETTER WORLDS (ENVS387)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 1

Humans have constructed visions of a better world throughout history: in fact, social movement scholars argue that the history of humanity is the history of this struggle. Certain forms of protest have existed throughout time: taking up arms to fight for what you believe in, or to defend a way of life. Some forms of resistance date back centuries: the revolt, the uprising, the rebellion, the strike, the march, the petition, sabotage, etc. More recently, social movements have used social networks and media to create what some argue are new forms of protest. This course surveys how geographers and others have theorised protest, resistance and other strategies for change through a range of approaches and case studies.

POLITICS OF THE ENVIRONMENT (ENVS325)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 1

Increasingly recognition of the environmental threats that we all face means that responding to this crisis affects the decisions we all make at a variety of different scales. This module explores the extent to which environmental concerns are taken into account in various decision-making processes involving the public (government), private and third sectors at a variety of different scales, global, European, national and local. The module is assessed by an essay and an open-book exam, which provides students with significant choice to explore those parts of the module they find most interesting.

CONTEMPORARY LATIN AMERICAN POLITICS (LATI307)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 1

This module will introduce students to debates about democracy in Latin American during and after the Cold War, including the breakdown of democratic regimes and democratisation. By examining the changing relationship between the state, civil society and citizens since the mid-twentieth century, we cover various aspects of the democratisation process in the region, including theoretical explanations. In the first half of the module, we examine the influence of the Cold War on Latin American politics, including the Cuban Revolution, US-Latin American relations, and the emergence of military regime. This is followed by an examination of the 'transitions to democracy', including topics such as transitional justice, human rights, and the memory and legacy of dictatorship. We finish by studying some of the challenges confronting Latin America societies today and the prospects for democracy.

MEDIA AND HUMAN RIGHTS (COMM317)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 1

The module studies human rights through the lens of the media in order to critically understand the changing nature of human rights' representation and the role media play in representing and responding to critical human rights issues. It explores the interconnections between media and human rights focusing on media and human rights theory, policy and practice and exploring both historical developments and contemporary issues. In particular, the implications of the global media in the current information age for a range of key human rights' issues are analysed. Among the issues that will be reviewed are terrorism and war on terror, freedom of speech, human trafficking, asylum and immigration, torture and genocide, humanitarian intervention.

FRONTIERS OF ETHICS (PHIL302)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 1

This module familiarises students with some of the main theories and arguments in debates about issues that raise problems for traditional ethics. These include the treatment of disability, the issue of humanitarian intervention and other matters of global concern, such as international justice, and issues raised by what some call the 'environmental crisis'. The module is taught by lecture (1 hour per week) and seminar (1 hour per week). Assessment is via a 3,500 word essay (comprising 90% of the module mark) due in the January assessment period. Students will have the opportunity to receive formative feedback on a draft essay plan towards the end of the autumn term. Students will also give one 10-15 minute seminar presentation that provides the remaining 10% of the module mark.

IMMIGRATION AND THE STATE (POLI302)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 2

This module unravels why and how immigration, and the 'crisis' that surrounds it, has become ever more central to political debates. Students will learn how to assess and use theories and apply to case study material relating to a range of countries, but there will be particular focus on receiving states – mainly the UK and the US and selected European countries. The module explores how the topic of immigration connects with some of the deepest political questions which face contemporary democracies including human rights, citizenship, identity, globalisation and nationalism. It is through the international movement of persons that the edges – and limits – of the state (both territorial and conceptual) are rendered visible. The approach is to analyse state responses to immigration as a lens to critique the nature of liberal democracy and the contemporary nation-state. The module maintains a clear focus by locating the very wide range of debates that exist over immigration within a theoretically-informed perspective on policymaking and liberal democratic states as political systems.

AFRICA-CHINA RELATIONS IN A CHANGING GLOBAL ORDER (POLI305)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 1

This third year module examines how burgeoning economic, political and security relations between Africa and China are contributing to changes in the global order. Challenging framings of states in Africa as 'system ineffectual', inconsequential to global politics, and lacking material and ideational capabilities to structure their foreign relations, the module, through critical IR theories, examines how these states', the rise of China and the dynamics in China-Africa relations are impacting, shaping and reframing the norms and practices of development and global security governance.

PUBLIC POLICY: AN ADVANCED INTRODUCTION (POLI310)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 2

This module explores the theories, ideas and concepts that underpin the development of contemporary public policies.

POLITICS OF DEVELOPMENT (POLI314)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 2

What are the institutional prerequisites of economic development? Global development institutions such as the World Bank or UNDP have proposed the concept of "good governance" as an answer to this question. This module critically engages with this concept by juxtaposing it with various historical institutionalist accounts of the state, including the East Asian developmental state, Africa's failed states, and the Middle Eastern rentier state. Students engage with key debates about the role of the state, democracy, corruption and the "resource curse" in economic development.

INTERNATIONAL INTERVENTION (POLI321)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 2

This module examines the different ways in which states intervene in the domestic affairs of other states or territories such as humanitarian intervention, invasion, annexation, peacekeeping, and colonial interventions. It explores how intervention has changed and developed historically, especially during and after the Cold War. It analyses whether state-practice has out-run the rules and norms that guide international state behaviour, particularly the legal framework of the United Nations and other relevant bodies of international law.

THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF RHETORIC IN BRITISH POLITICS (POLI323)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 2

This is the first substantive module in the UK to examine the rhetoric of British political parties at Undergraduate level. It roots its theories and methods in the classical schools of rhetorical analysis, alongside developing a more contemporary understanding of discourse analysis. This module will enable students to think critically about the political message, how it is constructed, and delivered to a range of audiences.

IDENTITY IN CONTEMPORARY INTERNATIONAL POLITICS (POLI332)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 2

The principal aim of this module is to analyse the political significance of national and ethnic identity in international politics. This involves the examination of the interrelationship between national identity, territory, sovereignty and democracy within the nation-state from historical and ideological perspectives, and in the context of current political developments. Module deals with cultural diversity, the role of the nation-state in international system, ethnic conflict, migration, diasporas, neo-nationalism and the European Union.

COMPARATIVE PEACE PROCESSES (POLI336)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 2

The module begins with an analysis of the validity of comparative approaches to the study of the politics of peace, before moving to a series of individual case studies. These include Northern Ireland, Bosnia, the Middle East and the Basque Region.

PARLIAMENTARY PLACEMENT SCHEME (POLI342)

Credits: 45 / Semester: semester 2

The Parliamentary Placement Scheme allows students to work full time in Parliament. Students must apply. The Scheme is competitive and only successful applicants will be placed.

MEDIA, POLITICS AND CLIMATE CHANGE (POLI345)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 2

The module will look at the manner in which a range of media engage with climate change and energy security, and the political and social implications that follow. Students should achieve an understanding the context of coverage (including the science, the surrounding political environment, and journalistic practice). They should also be able to understand the principal features of coverage (and their impact), and the political implications that follow. The module will be delivered via lectures, workshop-tutorials, and online tutorials. It will be assessed by exam, short essay and a student's performance in a presentation undertaken in a group alongside other students.

POLITICS AND THE BRAIN (POLI346)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 1

POLI346 is an interdisciplinary module in political psychology that combines basic statistical concepts and data analysis with SPSS with substantive content on biological, physiological, psychological, communication related, and health-related aspects of political behaviour. This is a challenging module that exposes students to high quality, to cross-disciplinary research largely based on quantitative methods, and to statistical inference. This means that the practical part of the module is divided between seminars and data lab sessions. In their assessments, students: engage in the hypothesis generation process; are tested on their understanding of data analysis and interpretation of findings based on quantitative research and substantive content; analyse data and produce a research note or short article, following the structure of short articles published in the leading journal *American Political Science Review* (including background, hypotheses, data, results and conclusions).

RACE, RACISM AND CIVILISATION IN WORLD POLITICS (POLI348)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 2

Race and civilisation are fundamental concepts through which societies have organised the international order and imagined the hierarchies that exist between them. As such, racism and civilisationism have had a crucial influence on international politics and practices, and are still used to sustain global inequalities. In this module, students will explore how the ideas of race and civilisation have enabled a variety of practices of violence, exploitation and domination in global politics. They will also explore how some actors have fought against racism and civilisationism, and which of these strategies have proved successful.

GENDER AND GLOBAL POLITICS (POLI349)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 2

This module provides alternative perspectives on global politics, drawing on feminist theory and gender analysis, with a focus on conflict and peace, and the implications for global politics and International Relations (IR). The module will engage with theoretical concerns (how are women affected differently by conflict and peace, how do we engage feminist methodologies) to practical concerns (conflict, security, participation, sexual violence, human rights). Theories and concepts will be illustrated with relevant global case studies and examples. The module aims to encourage engaged, critical reflection on feminist approaches to our understanding of issues in world politics.

RELIGION, FREEDOM AND EQUALITY (POLI350)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 2

Should there be a wall of separation between the institutions of religion, politics and law? Should politicians, public officials and citizens refrain from appealing to religious beliefs when debating laws and policies? Should religious citizens be entitled to special rights, such as exemptions for Kosher and Halal animal slaughter or doctors who do not wish to provide abortion services? On this module we'll explore these and many other moral questions from the perspective of analytical political theory. To do so, we'll examine how the freedom and equality of religious and nonreligious citizens should be balanced, and what are the policy implications our moral arguments.

POLITICAL BROADCASTING (RADIO) (POLI339)

Credits: 30 / Semester: whole session

This module will involve students producing and presenting a weekly politics and current affairs programme (The Politics Hour). Over the course of a full academic year, students will work in programme teams to plan and present regular one hour broadcasts and linked web and social media content. Within each team, students will rotate key roles (as researchers, reporters, presenters, producers, editors and social media managers). There will be no formal teaching. Instead, students will 'learn by doing' by participating in weekly editorial meeting, in the production of each show and in structured peer feedback and self reflection exercises. The learning process aims to replicate a 'real world' broadcasting environment and this approach will be reflected in the use of 'authentic' assessment tasks. Students will be required to produce a range of audio and written outputs and will also be assessed, in part, on their ability to work successfully in teams. Reflective learning will also require students to engage in ongoing review of professional, mainstream radio broadcasts and to undertake recommended reading to support the development of their broadcasting skills. The module will be particularly suited to students keen to pursue a career in political journalism. However, it will furnish all participants with a wide-range of transferable skills designed to enhance their employability, including communication, team-working and problem-solving skills, by facilitating the application of academic subject knowledge gained on the degree programme as a whole in a 'real world' and 'real time' context.

DISSERTATION (POLI401)

Credits: 30 / Semester: whole session

This module involves students researching and producing a 8,000 to 10,000 word dissertation. It helps develop key skills such as autonomy, in-depth analysis and research design.

Students are responsible for formulating their own research question and are encouraged to maintain a close relationship with their supervisor who will provide guidance and support throughout the module.

Programme details and modules listed are illustrative only and subject to change.

CHOOSING THIS SUBJECT AS A COMBINED DEGREE

You will explore international political ideas, systems and processes and learn how to collect data, develop knowledge and construct arguments.

HOW YOU'LL LEARN

Research-connected teaching is initiated in the first year with introductions to quantitative, qualitative, theoretical, and critical methodologies, which are then embedded in second- and third-year modules so that students can evaluate and apply the methodologies to construct their own analyses. Though our lectures are interactive, our seminars, workshops, computer lab sessions, dissertations, and placements form the core of our active learning approach.

HOW YOU'RE ASSESSED

We use a rich variety of assessment methods to develop students' various skills. Essays, exams, and presentations enable to students to practice core academic writing and speaking skills, while innovative assessments such as blog posts, reflective logs, group projects, podcasts, radio broadcasts and speeches expand our authentic assessment, enabling students to deploy transferable skills in various formats. Digital fluency is also developed in different ways, including sourcing relevant material, using online learning platforms and tools, producing audio and visual materials, word processing and statistical analysis.

LIVERPOOL HALLMARKS

We have a distinctive approach to education, the Liverpool Curriculum Framework, which focuses on research-connected teaching, active learning, and authentic assessment to ensure our students graduate as digitally fluent and confident global citizens.

Careers and employability

An International Relations degree from the University of Liverpool offers you the chance to develop a variety of transferrable skills, such as critical thinking, problem solving, written and verbal communication, teamwork, confidence and digital fluency.

Our graduates progress to a range of careers including local government, political parties, NGOs, charities and human rights organisations, civil and diplomatic services, market research, media and communications and public relations.

Previous employers include:

- Dell
- Pricewaterhouse Coopers
- The National Trust
- The British Council
- The Independent.

80% OF POLITICS STUDENTS ARE IN WORK AND/OR FURTHER STUDY 15 MONTHS AFTER GRADUATION.

Discover Uni, 2018-19.

Fees and funding

Your tuition fees, funding your studies, and other costs to consider.

TUITION FEES

UK fees (applies to Channel Islands, Isle of Man and Republic of Ireland)	
Full-time place, per year	£9,250
Year in industry fee	£1,850
Year abroad fee	£1,385

International fees	
Full-time place, per year	£22,400
Year abroad fee	£11,200

Fees shown are for the academic year 2024/25. Please note that the Year Abroad fee also applies to the Year in China.

Tuition fees cover the cost of your teaching and assessment, operating facilities such as libraries, IT equipment, and access to academic and personal support. [Learn more about paying for your studies.](#)

ADDITIONAL COSTS

We understand that budgeting for your time at university is important, and we want to make sure you understand any course-related costs that are not covered by your tuition fee. This could include buying a laptop, books, or stationery.

Find out more about the [additional study costs](#) that may apply to this course.

SCHOLARSHIPS AND BURSARIES

We offer a range of scholarships and bursaries to provide tuition fee discounts and help with living expenses while at university.

Check out our [Liverpool Bursary](#), worth up to £2,000 per year for eligible UK students. Or for international students, our [Undergraduate Global Advancement Scholarship](#) offers a tuition fee discount of up to £5,000 for eligible international students starting an undergraduate degree from September 2024.

[Discover our full range of undergraduate scholarships and bursaries](#)

Entry requirements

The qualifications and exam results you'll need to apply for this course.

Your qualification	Requirements About our typical entry requirements
A levels	AAB Applicants with the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) are eligible for a reduction in grade requirements. For this course, the offer is ABB with A in the EPQ. You may automatically qualify for reduced entry requirements through our contextual offers scheme .
GCSE	4/C in English and 4/C in Mathematics
BTEC Level 3 National Extended Diploma	Applications encouraged. BTEC applications are encouraged. We evaluate each BTEC application on its merits.
International Baccalaureate	35 points no less than category 4
Irish Leaving Certificate	H1, H1, H2, H2, H2, H3
Scottish Higher/Advanced Higher	AAB in Advanced Highers, combinations of Advanced Highers and Scottish Highers are welcome
Welsh Baccalaureate Advanced	Accepted at Grade A plus AB at A Level
Access	Pass Access diploma with 45 Level 3 credits graded at

Your qualification	Requirements About our typical entry requirements
	Distinction.
International qualifications	Many countries have a different education system to that of the UK, meaning your qualifications may not meet our entry requirements. Completing your Foundation Certificate, such as that offered by the University of Liverpool International College , means you're guaranteed a place on your chosen course.

ALTERNATIVE ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

- If your qualification isn't listed here, or you're taking a combination of qualifications, [contact us](#) for advice
- Aged 20+ and without formal qualifications? The one-year [Go Higher diploma](#) qualifies you to apply for University of Liverpool arts, humanities and social sciences programmes
- [Applications from mature students](#) are welcome.

THE ORIGINAL

REDBRICK