



UNIVERSITY OF
LIVERPOOL

MA

Political Science and International Relations

Study mode

Full-time

Part-time

Duration

12 months

24 months

Apply by: **11 September 2026**

Starts on: **28 September 2026**

Join us at our Postgraduate Open Events

Meet us on campus or online in March 2026 to find out more about master's degrees and research opportunities at Liverpool.

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About this course

The Political Science and International Relations MA provides training in research methods, the application of political concepts and theories, and develops an advanced understanding of politics and political science. Your employability is enhanced through skills training, alongside the chance to gain advanced work experience through our *Advanced Placement Scheme* that places students with an employer to work on a project.

Introduction

The MA offers a range of optional modules that enables you to specialise or generalise in key areas of political studies including *British Politics*, *International Relations*, and *Comparative Politics*. The MA also provides comprehensive methods training to equip you with the skills required for doctoral research, or a wide range of careers in fields such as journalism, business, the Civil Service, central government, local government, charities, and education.

If you are interested in applying for this MA, or if you have any questions whilst undertaking your programme of study, please do not hesitate to contact the Programme Lead.

Who is this course for?

This course is designed for graduates with a Bachelor's in Politics/International Relations or a broadly related discipline who want to advance their understanding of politics and political science.

What you'll learn

- Political science research methods
- Advanced work experience from the opportunity to participate in the *Advanced Placement Scheme* with placements available in areas such as: local government, national charities and trade unions
- Application of political concepts and theories
- An advanced understanding of politics and political science
- The ability to write a political science dissertation at postgraduate level.

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Course content

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

Standard pathway

On the standard Political Science and International Relations pathway, students take the compulsory module *Political Science Research Methods* and then can choose from a selection of optional modules in semester one and a selection of optional modules in semester two.

Students on this programme have the option to take a **Contemporary Europe pathway**, which involves different compulsory and optional modules. Please select *Contemporary Europe pathway* for information on this pathway.

Modules

Compulsory modules	Credits
<u>POLITICAL SCIENCE RESEARCH METHODS (POLI530)</u>	15
Optional modules	Credits
<u>EUROPEAN NATION-STATE AND POLITICS OF NATIONALISM (POLI502)</u>	15
<u>MODERN SLAVERY, FORCED LABOUR AND HUMAN RIGHTS (POLI521)</u>	15
<u>ADVANCED TOPICS IN ELECTORAL RESEARCH (POLI518)</u>	15
<u>BIG DATA AND SOCIETY: FOUNDATIONS, POLITICS, AND POLICY B (COMM752)</u>	15
<u>MEDIA AND POLITICS: THEORIES AND CASES B (COMM765)</u>	15

Optional modules	Credits
<u>WAR WRITING (ENGL488)</u>	30
<u>POLITICS OF THE ENVIRONMENT (ENVS525)</u>	15
<u>IDENTITY, POWER AND SOCIETY: CONTEMPORARY CRITICAL THEORY AND DISCOURSE (HLAC505)</u>	15
<u>COMPARATIVE PEACE PROCESSES (POLI133)</u>	15
<u>PROBLEMS IN POLITICAL THEORY (POLI352)</u>	15
<u>POLITICS IN ACTION ADVANCED PLACEMENT SCHEME (POLI500)</u>	15
<u>EUROPE AND THE WORLD (POLI501)</u>	15
<u>QUANTITATIVE METHODS AND WORLD POLITICS (POLI510)</u>	15
<u>BREXIT AND BEYOND (POLI522)</u>	15
<u>ANTI-COLONIAL LEGACIES IN INTERNATIONAL POLITICS (POLI526)</u>	15
<u>GLOBAL JOURNALISM AND POLITICS (COMM748)</u>	15
<u>MEDIA AND POLITICS: ECONOMY AND SOCIETY B (COMM763)</u>	15
<u>BUSINESS AND THE ENVIRONMENT (ENVS470)</u>	15
<u>LITERATURE, SLAVERY AND EMPIRE (ENGL750)</u>	15
<u>INTERNATIONAL RECORD KEEPING (HIST561)</u>	15

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

Contemporary Europe pathway

Students taking the **Contemporary Europe pathway** will take 30 credits of required modules and 30 credits of optional modules in semester one.

Students on the **Contemporary Europe pathway** will take 15 credits of required modules and 45 credits of optional modules in semester two.

Modules

Compulsory modules	Credits
<u>POLITICAL SCIENCE RESEARCH METHODS (POLI530)</u>	15
<u>EUROPEAN NATION-STATE AND POLITICS OF NATIONALISM (POLI502)</u>	15
<u>EUROPE AND THE WORLD (POLI501)</u>	15
Optional modules	Credits
<u>ADVANCED TOPICS IN ELECTORAL RESEARCH (POLI518)</u>	15
<u>MODERN SLAVERY, FORCED LABOUR AND HUMAN RIGHTS (POLI521)</u>	15
<u>WAR WRITING (ENGL488)</u>	30
<u>POLITICS OF THE ENVIRONMENT (ENVS525)</u>	15
<u>IDENTITY, POWER AND SOCIETY: CONTEMPORARY CRITICAL THEORY AND DISCOURSE (HLAC505)</u>	15
<u>COMPARATIVE PEACE PROCESSES (POLI133)</u>	15
<u>INTERNATIONAL INTERVENTION (POLI321)</u>	15

Optional modules	Credits
<u>PROBLEMS IN POLITICAL THEORY (POLI352)</u>	15
<u>POLITICS IN ACTION ADVANCED PLACEMENT SCHEME (POLI500)</u>	15
<u>QUANTITATIVE METHODS AND WORLD POLITICS (POLI510)</u>	15
<u>BREXIT AND BEYOND (POLI522)</u>	15
<u>ANTI-COLONIAL LEGACIES IN INTERNATIONAL POLITICS (POLI526)</u>	15
<u>LITERATURE, SLAVERY AND EMPIRE (ENGL750)</u>	15
<u>BUSINESS AND THE ENVIRONMENT (ENVS470)</u>	15
<u>INTERNATIONAL RECORD KEEPING (HIST561)</u>	15

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

Summer Period

In both pathway options, the compulsory Political Science Dissertation (60 credits) is completed during the Summer vacation period.

Modules

Compulsory modules	Credits
<u>POLITICAL SCIENCE DISSERTATION (POLI531)</u>	60

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

Teaching and assessment

How you'll learn

The modules on the programme are delivered using combinations of lectures, seminars, workshops, personal tutorials, and group tutorials. These are held on the main campus, with timetabled sessions for you to attend. On average, each module would have 2-hours face-to-face teaching per week. For those undertaking the Advanced Placement Scheme, personal sessions are held with the Placement Scheme Director.

How you're assessed

Students undertake a range of authentic assessments such as policy documents, presentations, reports, reflective logs, amongst others. These are included alongside essays and online examinations (depending on which optional modules students select). Students also undertake a 60-credit dissertation, which is undertaken in the second and summer semesters for submission in September.

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.

The Liverpool Curriculum framework sets out our distinctive approach to education. Our teaching staff support our students to develop academic knowledge, skills, and understanding alongside our **graduate attributes**:

- Digital fluency
- Confidence
- Global citizenship

Our curriculum is characterised by the three **Liverpool Hallmarks**:

- Research-connected teaching
- Active learning
- Authentic assessment

All this is underpinned by our core value of **inclusivity** and commitment to providing a curriculum that is accessible to all students.

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Careers and employability

Student career development is a major interest for the department and we actively encourage you to integrate career planning into your academic studies. The programme offers students the chance to discuss and develop their career options by working to secure placements and other activities that maximize employment potential.

The programme's *Advanced Placement Scheme* involves you working within an organisation on a set project in its entirety, enhancing your project management skills. Previous placements have been based in various departments within The Liverpool Combined Authority, Communications within Liverpool City Council, Trade Unions and National Charities.

The MA delivers ideal training if you are interested in an academic career in doctoral research. The MA also provides a solid foundation if you are interested in exploring a career in education, media, third sector industries, the Civil Service, central/local government, or business.

If you have a professional background in any of these (or other relevant) areas, the MA provides you with the opportunity for continuing professional development, whilst enabling you to bring your experiences to the cohort which will further enrich the programme.

Career options are wide and extensive, including working in:

- National and international political organisations
 - Mental health charities
 - Non-governmental organisations
 - Media
 - Education
 - Armed forces
 - Civil service
 - Political parties
 - Corporate organisations
 - Financial sector
 - Doctoral research.
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Career support from day one to graduation and beyond

Career planning

From education to employment

Networking events

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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 – £12,500

Part-time place, per year – £6,250

International fees

Full-time place, per year – £28,000

Part-time place, per year – £14,000

Tuition fees are for the academic year 2026/27.

Tuition fees cover the cost of your teaching and assessment, operating facilities such as libraries, IT equipment, and access to academic and personal support.

- You can pay your tuition fees in instalments.
- All or part of your tuition fees can be funded by external sponsorship.
- International applicants who accept an offer of a place will need to pay a tuition fee deposit.

If you're a UK national, or have settled status in the UK, you may be eligible to apply for a Postgraduate Loan worth up to £12,167 to help with course fees and living costs. **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.

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Entry requirements

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

Postgraduate entry requirements

We accept a 2:2 honours degree from a UK university, or an equivalent academic qualification from a similar non-UK institution. This degree should be in Politics, International Relations studies (or a closely related subject e.g. Classics, History, Philosophy, Sociology, English, Modern Languages).

International qualifications

Select your country or region to view specific entry requirements.

If you hold a bachelor's degree or equivalent, but don't meet our entry requirements, a Pre-Master's can help you gain a place. This specialist preparation course for postgraduate study is offered on campus at the [**University of Liverpool International College**](#), in partnership with Kaplan International Pathways. Although there's no direct Pre-Master's route to this MA, completing a Pre-Master's pathway can guarantee you a place on many other postgraduate courses at The University of Liverpool.

English language requirements

You'll need to demonstrate competence in the use of English language, unless you're from a [majority English speaking country](#).

We accept a variety of [international language tests](#) and [country-specific qualifications](#).

International applicants who do not meet the minimum required standard of English language can complete one of our [Pre-Sessional English courses](#) to achieve the required level.

IELTS

6.5 overall, with no component below 6.0

TOEFL iBT

If you took a TOEFL test on or before 20 January 2026, you'll need 88 overall, with minimum scores of listening 19, writing 19, reading 19 and speaking 20. If you took a TOEFL test from 21 January 2026 onwards, when a new scoring system was introduced, you'll need 4.5 overall, with 4 or above in all components. TOEFL Home Edition not accepted.

Duolingo English Test

125 overall, with writing not less than 125, speaking and reading not less than 115, and listening not below 110. For academic year 2025/26 only, we will also accept the production, literacy, comprehension and conversation score set: 120 overall, with no component below 105.

Pearson PTE Academic

61 overall, with no component below 59

LanguageCert Academic

70 overall, with no skill below 65

PSI Skills for English

B2 Pass with Merit in all bands

INDIA Standard XII

National Curriculum (CBSE/ISC) – 75% and above in English. Accepted State Boards – 80% and above in English.

WAEC

C6 or above

Pre-sessional English

Do you need to complete a Pre-sessional English course to meet the English language requirements for this course?

The length of Pre-sessional English course you'll need to take depends on your current level of English language ability.

Pre-sessional English in detail

If you don't meet our English language requirements, we can use your most recent IELTS score, or [the equivalent score in selected other English language tests](#), to determine the length of Pre-sessional English course you require.

Use the table below to check the course length you're likely to require for your current English language ability and see whether the course is available on campus or online.

Your most recent IELTS score	Pre-sessional English course length	On campus or online
6.0 overall, with writing at 6.0 and no component below 5.5	6 weeks	On campus or online
5.5 overall, with writing at 5.5 and no component below 5.0	10 weeks	On campus or online
5.5 overall, with no more than one component at 5.0	12 weeks	Online
5.5 overall, with no component below 5.0	20 weeks	On campus
5.0 overall, with no more than one component at 4.5	30 weeks	On campus
4.5 overall, with no more than one component at 4.0	40 weeks	On campus

If you've completed an alternative English language test to IELTS, we may be able to use this to assess your English language ability and determine the Pre-sessional English course length you require.

Please see our guide to [Pre-sessional English entry requirements](#) for IELTS 6.5 overall, with no component below 6.0, for further details.

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