



University of
BRISTOL

Undergraduate Politics and International Relations



Faculty of Social Sciences
and Law



Attending the University of Bristol was a life-changing experience. It was an opportunity to meet with other like-minded students which has helped me develop a professional network in my career. Bristol is all about developing vision and direction, and being encouraged to think and to explore new ideas. I gained a greater understanding of myself and what I wanted to go on to achieve as well as a solid platform from which to develop professionally.

Julian

BSc Politics 2005

Manager of the Leader's Office for the London Borough of Havering



Why study politics and international relations at Bristol?

Few subjects are as directly engaged with the big issues. To study politics and international relations is to study power, who exercises it, and for whom. It drives us to think about how society should be organised, and how communities and states interact. Politics affects everyone's lives, and is a fascinating and important subject to study. At Bristol you will study not only the politics of individual countries and governments, but also the relationships between countries, communities, and individuals. As a student at a world-leading institution dedicated to exploring the nature of power and justice, you will become familiar with many different views and methods, and learn to analyse and evaluate them.

Our politics courses are acknowledged to be amongst the best in the UK, attaining a score of 23 out of 24 in the most recent Quality Assurance Agency review. In the 2008 Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) 75% of our work was judged to be of international quality.

Staff research interests and expertise are at the cutting edge of the discipline in a variety of studies, including international relations, European politics, gender, international development, British politics, and international security.

93%

of students agree that the course is intellectually stimulating (National Student Survey 2013)



What will I study?

Single Honours courses

BSc Politics and International Relations, three years	L200
BSc Politics with Quantitative Research Methods, three years	L202
MSci Politics with Quantitative Research Methods, four years	L203

Joint Honours courses

BSc Economics and Politics, three years	LL12
BSc Philosophy and Politics, three years	VL52
BA Politics and French, four years	RL12
BA Politics and German, four years	RL22
BA Politics and Italian, four years	RL32
BA Politics and Portuguese, four years	RL52
BA Politics and Russian, four years	RL72
BSc Politics and Sociology, four years	LL23
BA Politics and Spanish, four years	RL42
BSc Social Policy and Politics, three years	LL42

All of our courses include a mix of the following subjects:

- Political theory – the major ideas that shape how we think about politics.
- Comparative and national politics – the study of government in the UK and other parts of the world, including Europe, Asia, Africa and the US.

- International relations – the study of politics at a global level, including international security, international development and international organisation.
- Approaches and methods – different ways of researching politics and international relations, leading to a piece of independent research in the form of a 10,000 word dissertation (mandatory for Single Honours Politics and International Relations students, optional for Joint Honours students).

Year one

Our first-year units are suitable both for those who have already studied some politics and for those who have not. Our core (mandatory) units comprise Political Concepts, Introduction to International Relations, Comparative Government and Politics, and Approaches to the Study of Political Science. These provide an introduction to key issues in politics, including concepts such as power, the state, freedom and citizenship; political institutions and practice in a range of different countries; theories and controversies in international relations; and how we go about researching and studying the 'political'.

Single Honours Politics and International Relations students will also be able to choose 'open' units

from other schools within the Faculty of Social Sciences and Law, as well as from geography and historical studies. Joint Honours students will generally take additional mandatory units from their joint degree school.

Year two

The second year introduces you to the major subfields of the discipline (political theory, world politics, and political systems). Options include units such as: The Politics of Sub-Saharan Africa; Contemporary Political Theory; Politics and Policy Making in the UK; US Democracy and Government; Co-operation and Integration in Europe; History of Political Thought; Rational Choice; East Asian Politics.

Joint Honours students will divide their options between those from politics and those available in their joint school.

Year three

The final year offers a wide choice from a changing menu of more specialist units to cater for most academic preferences, including: States and Markets; the Military in Everyday Life; Political Protest in the US and UK; Genocide; the Politics of the European Union; Contemporary British Parliament; the Rise of New Labour; Peace

Building; Politics of Contemporary India; the Politics of Gender; and Critical Security Studies.

Single Honours students will write a 10,000-word dissertation, which provides the opportunity to concentrate on a single topic of special interest. Joint Honours students can choose to take the dissertation as an option.

Teaching methods

In the first two years, teaching is by seminar (about ten students) and lecture (56-120 students). In the final year, teaching in most units is by seminar (with a maximum of 18 students). In the first- and second- years seminars are one hour in duration and lectures two hours. Third-year seminars are just under three hours long. We use a variety of teaching methods including formal lectures, seminars, student presentations, formal debates, role plays and field visits.



What are my career prospects?

A degree from the University of Bristol is highly valued by employers. Our graduates enter employment across a wide variety of careers, including the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, international non-governmental organisations (such as OXFAM), finance, law, the media, education and research, and public and voluntary sector work.

You will learn good work habits by operating in a deadline-driven environment and having to manage competing demands. You will enhance your IT, communication, learning and interpersonal skills and you will develop your ability to make critical and incisive judgements and reach evaluative conclusions.

90%

of graduates are in work or further study within six months of graduating*

*Destination of Leavers from Higher Education survey 2011/12



Making your application

Entrance requirements

Typical offer for BSc Politics and International Relations

Please visit bristol.ac.uk/ug15-politics for Joint Honours and other qualifications

A-levels AAA (contextual offer AAB[†]) including an essay-based subject

IB Diploma 37 points overall (contextual offer 35[†]) with 6, 6, 6 at Higher level including an essay-based subject

Access Pass Access to HE Diploma with at least 30 credits at Distinction and 15 credits at Merit, including an essay-based subject

English Language Profile E*

GCSEs no specific subjects required

Selection UCAS or Common Application

Part-time study Not available

Deferred entry Welcomed

*For details of English language profiles please visit bristol.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/language-requirements

†For information on contextual offers please visit bristol.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/apply/#typical-contextual-offers

In addition to predicted or achieved A-level grades, we pay close attention to the personal statement and reference. We are looking for signs of individual engagement with the 'political' as well as empirical evidence of a commitment to the subject that goes beyond the A-level (or equivalent) syllabus. Successful applicants tend to be those who demonstrate independent, critical engagement with the themes and controversies that underpin the discipline.

If you are applying for a Joint Honours course, your statement should address both elements of your proposed degree course. Strong applications will also generally be bolstered by a range of additional activities that might broadly be described as 'political'. These might include involvement with a political party, local council, activist group or campaign.

Further information

School of Sociology, Politics and International Relations: bristol.ac.uk/spais



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