

Politics

UCAS Code: Combined Honours only (please see website for details)

Duration: 3 years | Full-time | Hope Park | 2025/2026

Placement year opportunities available



Course Overview

Politics affects all of us. It is central to human life and human affairs. It is fundamental to how we organise and govern ourselves as a community and to how we resolve conflicts. The decisions we make as political communities, who makes them and how, have consequences for how we live, from questions of war and peace, the distribution of wealth, our rights, freedoms, responsibilities, our access to education, transport and health care.

In this rapidly changing world, new challenges are constantly arising – from climate change to new technologies, from identity politics to Brexit and the Covid-19 pandemic - and the study of politics needs to respond. At Liverpool Hope, therefore, we seek to engage with politics and political issues in the real world as they evolve and change over time. In doing so, we actively encourage free and open debate and discussion amongst our students, encouraging a stronger awareness and appreciation of different points of view.

On this programme of study, you will explore key ideas, institutions and politics in an international, national and local context. You will be taught by staff who are experts in their fields, who will teach you to engage with political research and develop the capacity to be an independent, critically-minded scholar. The course also aims to equip you with transferable skills to take into the world of work.

Entry Requirements

This course follows the standard University entry requirements. Please see the website for further information.

Fees and Additional Costs

The tuition fees for 2025/2026 are £9,535 for full-time undergraduate courses.

On top of tuition fees, you also need to buy key textbooks, which we estimate to cost around £100. During your studies, there are a number of optional fieldtrips in Britain and Europe. You will be given plenty of notice about the cost of these trips.

You will also need to consider the cost of your accommodation each year whilst you study at university.

Visit our accommodation webpages for further details about our Halls of Residence: www.hope.ac.uk/halls

Applicants will need access to a computer if course delivery is switched to online. The University has a laptop lending service if remote study is necessary.



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Politics Curriculum

Year One

Introduction to Politics

Your first year provides you with the knowledge of the key sub disciplines that underpin a study of Politics.

In the first year, you will be given in-depth introductions to:

- Key Concepts and Debates in Politics and Political Analysis
- Key Political Institutions, Ideas and Political Actors
- Understanding of the Features of Political Systems and Political Practice in the UK, Europe, the United States and beyond

The key themes of the first year course are as follows:

- Key Ideas in Politics: what are the different ways in which politics is studied?
- Key Institutions in Politics: including constitutions, legislatures, the executive. How do key institutions work and relate to one another?
- Key Actors in Politics: including parties, interest groups, the public and the media. How has political organisation and participation changed?
- International Organisations: including the United Nations and NATO. What is their role and importance in the world today?
- Political Ideologies: we examine the most influential 'classic' political ideologies from conservatism to communism and discuss their relevance, their differences and similarities and their implications.
- Foundations of Democracy: what are the ideas and history behind modern liberal democracies?
- Challenges to Democracy: from authoritarianism and so-called 'illiberal democracy' to political violence and terrorism, we consider the key challenges faced by democracy and whether they can be overcome.

In your first year, lectures, will provide you with detailed introductions to these topics and you will explore and debate them through participation in seminar activities. Tutorials, which are special small-size classes that allow you to get to know your fellow students and the staff more quickly, will be an opportunity to discuss specific questions in depth.

Skills for Study and Research

A key theme in our first year is developing skills and techniques needed for successful undergraduate study to help ensure that you reach your full potential. In our weekly 'Big Issues and Bright Ideas' class, we address a key

issue of the week, based on the topics covered in the course (above), and also give you important study advice, tips and support for assignments.

Year Two

Explorations in Democracy

The course will be structured around three main topics, broadly based on exploring democracies in more depth, engaging in case studies and applying the ideas covered in the first year to real life case studies. As part of your studies, you will conduct critical evaluations of British, American and European democracy.

British Politics and Democracy

In this course, you will look at key institutions and organisations of the British political system and how they function, as well as major issues in British politics today, including where does power really lie in our system of government?

Democracy in the USA

This element discusses American democracy and the US Constitutional Framework, the electoral process and voting behaviour before looking at key election case studies from the 21st Century. Consideration is given to the controversies of minority presidents, the election of Barack Obama, and the issues surrounding the Trump election issues of 2016 and 2020.

European Democracy

This element compares and contrasts the different styles of democracy across the European continent. Through select themes such as parliaments, welfare-states, electoral systems and voting behaviour, students are introduced to the diverse and unique expressions of democracy in countries from Ireland to Russia.

Year Three

Advanced Studies in Politics

Your third year provides the opportunity for you to explore in depth some of the key prominent and controversial areas of politics and political theory.

Politics in the United States

Lectures will examine in depth the evolution of American politics through the lens of core institutions and contemporary issues.

Governance and Decision-Making in the European Union

In this lecture series, we explore the unorthodox system of EU governance and its diverse decision-making practices.

Power and Politics

In this course, you will explore the changing political landscape through the lens of the concept of power. You are introduced to key debates and concepts in the analysis of power in political contexts, and are invited

to use them to analyse where power lies in contemporary politics, the changing shape of political organisation and activism, the impact of technology, how the state works and more besides.

Dissertations and Research Projects

You will do either a 10,000 word dissertation in conjunction with your other subject, or a 5,000 words special study. You will receive guidance and individual support from an assigned tutor in the creation and completion of this work.

COURSE STRUCTURE

You can take this course in combination with another subject of your choice, or as part of our Politics and International Relations single honours programme. Teaching on this programme is structured into lectures, interactive and student-led seminars and tutorials which in your first year typically have no more than 10 students. Regular study skills classes are also provided in the first year to support you in your transition into Higher Education.

For the Politics part of your Combined Honours degree, in your first and second years of study there are 6 teaching hours each week, which reduces to 5 hours in the third year. In your final year you will engage in additional independent study on your chosen dissertation area.. Overall, you should expect to spend an average of 40 hours per week devoted to your studies, including taught hours, independent work and group work where relevant.

ASSESSMENT AND FEEDBACK

Assessments are varied and consist of a formal exams, and a range of written coursework assignments. In your final year, you will complete a special study or dissertation.

In your first year, feedback is provided verbally to tutorial groups where possible in 1-2-1 meetings, to emphasise points of general relevance, areas of strength and weakness in the written assessments. Should you require it, your tutor's 'drop-in' office hours are an opportunity to gain verbal feedback and discuss your work privately.



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