

Politics & International Relations BA (Hons)

UCAS Code: L201 | Duration: 3 years | Full-time | Hope Park | 2025/2026

Placement year opportunities available



Course Overview

The Politics and International Relations degree brings together the broader study of politics and political ideas with the question of how states interact with each other on the global stage. It evaluates the key questions related to transnational issues such as globalisation and the environment and the actors engaged in them.

Politics and International Relations is a very dynamic subject, which places a special emphasis on the international and global dimension of politics. In an ever changing world, new challenges are constantly arising – from climate change and pandemics, to terrorism and security – and we therefore seek to engage with live issues in the world as they evolve and change over time. We actively encourage debate and discussion amongst our students, encouraging a stronger awareness and appreciation of different opinions and points of view.

In doing so, you explore the key ideas, institutions and issues that can help us to understand politics in an international, national and local context. You will be taught by staff who are experts in their field, who will teach you to engage with political research and develop the capacity to be an independent, critically-minded scholar and equip you with transferable skills to take into the world of work.

And study does not just take place in the classroom and the library. We also organise fieldtrips to relevant local, regional and national institutions as well as organising events with guest speakers and practitioners.

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.

As well as tuition fees, you also need to purchase core textbooks, which we estimate to be around £200. There are also a number of optional national and international fieldtrips throughout your studies, you will be told about the cost of these trips with plenty of notice.

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.



**LIVERPOOL
HOPE
UNIVERSITY**

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Politics & International Relations BA (Hons) Curriculum

Year One

Introduction to Politics

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

- Key Ideas in Politics
- Key Institutions in Politics
- Key Actors in Politics
- International Organisations
- Political Ideologies
- Foundations of Democracy
- Challenges to Democracy

Introduction to International Relations

Year one of International Relations consists of a series of dimensions of learning:

- Foundational Concepts
- Key Developments and Actors
- Global Issues in International Relations
- Academic skills

Year Two

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.

European Democracy

This element compares and contrasts the different styles of democracy across the European continent.

Theories and Analysis of International Relations

This builds and expands on the first year and includes mainstream (i.e. liberal and realist perspectives), middle ground (i.e. Constructivism, English School) and critical (e.g. Marxism, Dependency Theory, Post-Structuralism, Critical Theory, Feminism, Green theory, Post-Developmentalism).

EU Foreign Policy

Explores the origins and developments of EU Foreign Policy and assesses its strengths and challenges including security, trade, environmental, normative, and integration dimensions, among others.

UK Foreign Policy

Explores UK's international identity and foreign policy in relation to key regions/countries in the world.

Year Three

Advanced Studies in Politics and International Relations

Politics in the United States

Examines the evolution of American politics through key issues and major policy challenges including changing demographics, gun control and the death penalty.

The Imperial Presidency

This considers the development of the presidency as a central institution in American politics and foreign policy from Franklin Roosevelt's reinvention of the office in the 1930s to the present day.

Governance and Decision-Making in the European Union

This lecture series explores the unorthodox system of EU governance and its diverse decision-making practices.

Power and Politics

Through discussion and case studies explores the changing political landscape using the concept of power.

Bottom-up international Politics: questions the role of non-state actors and civil society in international politics.

Dynamics of conflict and peace: reflects on theoretical underpinnings and developments around contemporary conflicts and notions of peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding.

Research element (International Relations)

Research classes prepare students for their final year long essay in International Relations.

Dissertation

In the main, this is an autonomous project, but you will receive guidance and feedback about its evolution as the academic year progresses.

COURSE STRUCTURE

Teaching on this degree is structured into lectures, interactive and student-led seminars and tutorials which in your first year typically have 10 students. Regular study skills classes are also provided in the first year to support you in your transition into Higher Education.

In your first year of study, there are 12 teaching hours each week, which reduces to approximately 10 teaching hours each week in your second and third years. On top of teaching hours, you are also expected to spend a number of hours studying independently each week, as well as studying in groups to prepare for any group assessments you may have. 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 formal exams, and a range of written coursework assignments. In your final year, you will complete a special study or dissertation in an area of your choice, giving you an opportunity to specialise in a field of your own personal interest.

You will be given constructive written feedback that not only explains the strengths and weaknesses of the particular piece of work but which also makes clear what must be improved in future work. Feedback is provided verbally to the whole year group where possible, to emphasise points of general relevance.



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