

Politics & International Relations BA (Hons)*

UCAS Code: L201 | Duration: 3 years | Full-time | Hope Park | 2026/2027

Placement year opportunities available



Course Overview

The Politics and International Relations course mixes the study of political ideas with how countries engage on the world stage. It looks at important global issues like globalisation, climate change, and security. It also considers the people and groups working to tackle these problems.

This dynamic programme emphasises the international and global dimensions of politics. Students discuss modern challenges like terrorism, pandemics, and environmental issues. They engage in active debates, which helps them understand different viewpoints.

You will study key political ideas, institutions, and issues at international, national, and local levels. Expert staff guide students in political research, critical thinking, and the development of transferable skills for the workplace.

Learning goes beyond the classroom. It includes field trips to local, regional, and national places. Guest lectures and the Practitioners in Politics series also enhance learning. This series features MPs, the Mayor of Liverpool, and the Merseyside Commissioner for Crime and Policing. Opportunities also exist for study abroad through exchange programmes and visits to overseas development projects via the University's Global Hope initiative.

Entry Requirements

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

**Subject to approval*

Fees and Additional Costs

The tuition fees for 2026/2027 are £9,790 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.



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Politics & International Relations BA (Hons) Curriculum

Year One

Foundations in Politics (30 credits)

This module introduces key ideas, concepts, and debates in political analysis. Themes include: key ideas in politics, political ideologies, and development of modern liberal democracies from ancient Greece to contemporary systems of representation.

Politics: Issues, Institutions, and Actors (30 credits)

This module examines political systems, institutions, and key actors. Themes include: key institutions in politics, key actors, international organisations and challenges to democracy.

Foundations in International Relations (30 credits)

This module introduces essential IR concepts, terms, and theories. Students explore the origins of power and diplomacy, the State and Nation, the differences between power and influence, and dimensions of security.

Global Issues, Institutions, and Actors (30 credits)

Students examine contemporary global challenges, including environmental issues, food security, poverty, migration, conflict, terrorism, and transnational organised crime.

Year Two

EU Governance and Decisionmaking (15 credits)

The EU governance and decision-making module explores the roles of EU supranational institutions (European Commission and European Parliament), and EU intergovernmental institutions (European Council and Council of the EU) in public policy making. EU institutions are responsible for making policies which impact some 450 million peoples across the Union.

British Politics and Government (15 credits)

This module examines some of the key issues and challenges facing British politics and democracy. It addresses key institutions and organisations of the British political system – including Parliament, parties and the executive – considers how they function, evaluates their effectiveness and explores relevant key issues.

Theories and Analysis of International Relations (30 credits)

This module builds on the theoretical foundations introduced in the first year, examining key approaches to International Relations.

Comparative Democracy: Europe and the USA (30 credits)

This module compares and contrasts issues of democracy in the United States and in Europe. It looks at different democratic traditions, voting systems and the strengths and weaknesses of democratic practice on each continent.

British Foreign Policy (15 credits)

Examine the UK's international identity and foreign policy in relation to key global regions and countries. Analyse directions and challenges including security, trade, development, and environmental policy, amongst others.

EU Foreign Policy (15 credits)

Explore the origins and development of EU foreign policy, assessing strengths and challenges across security, trade, environmental, normative, and integration dimensions.

US Foreign Policy (15 credits)

This module considers the theoretical underpinnings of US foreign policy, the reasons for national expansion and some of the challenges that face the United States in its global ambitions.

Year Three

Advanced Studies in Politics and International Relations

Politics in the United States

Examines the evolution of American politics through 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: Examine the role of non-state actors and civil society in shaping global politics.

Dynamics of conflict and peace: Explore theoretical and practical aspects of contemporary conflicts, peacemaking, peacekeeping, and peacebuilding.

Research element (International Relations)

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

Dissertation

Complete a 10,000-word dissertation in Politics and International Relations. Receive individual tutor guidance while conducting independent research on a topic of personal interest, applying theory to real-world issues.

COURSE STRUCTURE

Teaching on this degree is structured into lectures, interactive and student-led seminars and tutorials which in your first year typically have 10-15 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. Students are also expected to dedicate additional time to independent study and group work, averaging around 40 hours per week in total.

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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