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If you have any questions about courses, applications or student life at Bristol, please contact the Enquiries Team.

Photography

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Politics and International Relations



Undergraduate study



Courses

Single Honours

BSc Politics and International Relations

three years L200

BSc Politics and International Relations with Study Abroad

four years L201

BSc Politics with Quantitative Research Methods

three years L202

BSc Politics with Quantitative Research Methods with Study Abroad

four years L204

MSci Politics with Quantitative Research Methods

four years L203

Joint Honours

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

BA Politics and Spanish

four years RL42

BSc Economics and Politics

three years LL12

BSc Economics and Politics with Study Abroad

four years LL14

BSc Philosophy and Politics

three years VL52

BSc Politics and Sociology

three years LL23

BSc Social Policy and Politics

three years LL42

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, for whom, how it is unequally distributed, and with what consequences. It drives us to think about how society should be organised and how communities and states interact. Politics affects everyone's lives, and everyone and everything is political. It 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 individuals, communities and countries. As a student at a world-leading institution, in a department dedicated to exploring the nature of power and justice, you will become familiar with many different views and methods. You will learn to analyse and evaluate them, developing important critical and creative thinking skills in the process.

Our politics courses are acknowledged to be among the best in the country; our BSc Politics and International Relations degree was rated fourth in the UK for politics in the *Guardian* University Guide 2019.

Staff research interests and expertise are at the cutting edge of the discipline in a variety of areas, including international relations, international security, European politics, gender, political philosophy (analytic and continental), international development, international organisations, environmental politics, and US and British politics.

Q-Step programme

The University of Bristol is part of the £19.5 million Q-Step programme, designed to promote a step change in quantitative social science training. Funded by the Nuffield Foundation, ESRC and HEFCE, the University of Bristol Q-Step Centre is part of a national network of 15 centres in the UK working to address the shortage of social science graduates with quantitative skills.

We offer a unique set of three- and four-year degree programmes that combine core disciplinary learning with enhanced quantitative skills training focusing on applied data analysis relevant to research in the social sciences. Look for course titles that include 'with Quantitative Research Methods' in this leaflet and find out more at: bristol.ac.uk/qstep.

'Politics and Sociology is a fantastic course with such a range of units, giving you the opportunity to focus on the areas you are fascinated with. The support from University staff is excellent.'

Eva (BSc Politics and Sociology)

What will you study?

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

- World politics and international relations – the study of politics at a global level, including international security, international development and international organisation;
- Comparative and national politics – the study of governments and political cultures in the UK and other parts of the world, including Europe, Asia, Africa and the US;
- Political theory – the major ideas that shape how we think about politics;
- 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 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 units currently comprise Thinking Politically, Issues in World Politics, Politics of the Global South, Political Concepts, Theories of International Relations, and Comparative Government and Politics.

These provide an introduction to key issues in politics, including concepts such as power, the state, democracy, freedom and citizenship; political institutions and practice in a range of different countries; theories and controversies in international relations; and how we go about studying and researching the 'political'. Joint honours students take three of these units along with three from their joint degree school.

Year two

The second year introduces students to the major subfields of the discipline: political theory, international relations, and comparative and national politics. Options have previously included units such as:

- The Politics of Sub-Saharan Africa
- Contemporary Political Theory
- Politics and Policymaking in the UK
- US Democracy and Government
- Green Political Theory
- Co-operation and Integration in Europe
- History of Western 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. Unit options currently include:

- States and Markets
- Feminisms, Gender and International Relations
- The Holocaust: History and Legacy
- The Politics of the European Union
- Contemporary British Parliament
- The Politics of the Contemporary Labour Party
- US Foreign Policy
- Peace Building Theory and Practice
- Populism and Politics in India
- Politics of the Environment
- Popular Culture and World Politics
- 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 (usually ten to 15 students) and lecture (50 to 250 students). In the final year, teaching in most units is by seminar, typically with a maximum of around 18 students. In the first and second years, each unit has two hours of lectures and a one-hour seminar per week. In the third year, seminars are usually two to three hours long; two-hour seminars are accompanied by a one-hour lecture. Other teaching methods include student presentations, formal debates, role plays and field visits.

The School of Sociology, Politics and International Studies is based on Priory Road, at the heart of our Clifton campus.



'The teachers within the academic schools make you feel part of them, and not just as a visitor. Bristol has encouraged me to foster my interests and curate my future.'

William (BSc Politics and International Relations with Study Abroad)

Careers and graduate destinations

The University of Bristol has one of the best employment records in the UK. We are rated sixth in the UK in the QS Graduate Employability Rankings 2019 and are the second most targeted university by top UK graduate employers (High Fliers Research, 2019). 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, and international non-governmental organisations such as Oxfam, as well as careers in law, the media, education, research, and public and voluntary sector work.

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

85 per cent of BSc Politics and International Relations students were in work or further study six months after graduation.

Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education survey, graduates from 2016/17



Graduate employers

RBS
Accenture
European Policy Institute
FCO
MHP Communications



Career destinations

Analyst
Management Consultant
Research Intern
Civil Servant
Account Executive

Source: Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education survey 2016/17. Find out more at bristol.ac.uk/careers/be-inspired.

Making your application

Visit bristol.ac.uk/ug20-politics for more information about our courses, including joint honours.

Typical offer for BSc Politics and International Relations

A-levels AAA (contextual ABB) including an essay-based subject.

IB Diploma 36 points overall (contextual 32) with 18 at Higher Level (contextual 16), including 6 at Higher Level (contextual 5) in an essay-based subject.

Our contextual offer is a grade reduction of up to two grades below the standard entry requirements, made to applicants from under-represented groups. Find out more at bristol.ac.uk/contextual-offers.

GCSEs No specific subjects required.

Selection process UCAS.

For other accepted qualifications, a list of essay-based subjects and for our English language requirements, visit bristol.ac.uk/ug20-politics.

Further information

Find out more about the School of Sociology, Politics and International Studies: bristol.ac.uk/spais.

This information is correct at the time of printing (May 2019), but we recommend you check the University website for the latest information: bristol.ac.uk/ug20-politics.



Read more about how we support you when you are here:

bristol.ac.uk/students