

## **PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION**

### **Course Record Information**

Name and level of final & intermediate Awards	BA (Hons) International Relations BA International Relations Diploma of HE in International Relations Certificate of HE in International Relations
Awarding Body	University of Westminster
Location of Delivery	Regent Site
Mode of Study	Full Time
UW Course Code	BPOLPRM
JACS Code	L250
UCAS Code	L250
QAA Subject Benchmarking Group	Politics and International Relations
Professional Body Accreditation	N/A
Date of initial course approval/ last review	November 2008
Date of Programme Specification	August 2013

### **Admissions Requirements**

Normally, three A Levels (A2) at grades BBB or two A Levels (A2) at grades AB; plus English GCSE grade C or above. Other Curriculum 2000 combinations will be considered on an individual basis. A variety of non-standard vocational, professional and other qualifications may be acceptable with evidence of capacity both to benefit from and to pass this course.

Non native speakers of English will normally be required to have an overall IELTS score of 6 points (or equivalent), including a score of 6 in reading and writing skills.

### **Aims of the course**

The BA International Relations enables you to develop a comprehensive understanding of the evolution of the international system, and to relate this to contemporary developments in international relations. It provides a theoretical framework for understanding the international system and the distribution of power at the global, regional and national levels.

You will focus particularly on the changing dynamics of international security and the challenges of state building within contemporary international relations. This course is linked to the internationally renowned Security and International Relations research programme in the Department of Politics and International Relations.

The BA International Relations is hosted by the Department of Politics and International Relations. The Department of Politics and International Relations is a centre of excellence for the study of Politics, International Relations and Development Studies. Hosting the internationally renowned Centre for the Study of Democracy, there is a longstanding tradition of innovative research and high quality research-led teaching. Being in the heart of London, we regularly invite leading intellectuals, policy-makers and officials for our well-established series of seminars, public lectures and conferences.

With excellent links to employers, this course offers you the opportunity to advance your knowledge of international relations in an applied setting. Our graduates go on to develop careers in various sectors, including the Civil Service, NGOs, international organisations such as the EU or UN, policy and research, teaching, journalism and politics

The BA International Relations reflects the University's mission statement to shape the future of professional life by "being a diverse, vibrant and inspirational learning environment". To this end the course's primary aims are:

- To introduce students to the broad field of International Relations, its basic concepts, theories and methods;
- To understand the global character of international politics, informed by both theoretical and historical perspectives of the international system;
- To identify the changing geopolitical dimensions of international order and locate these within specific regional constellations;
- To engage in philosophical and empirical analysis of the dynamics of conflict, violence and intervention in the international system, with particular emphasis on challenges arising from the post-Cold War environment;
- To produce political researchers who understand the importance of research methodology and analytical frameworks in researching international politics.

### **Employment and Further Study Opportunities**

With excellent links to employers, this course offers you the opportunity to advance your knowledge of international relations in an applied setting. Our graduates go on to develop careers in various sectors, including the Civil Service, NGOs, international organisations such as the EU or UN, policy and research, teaching, journalism and politics.

Students are encouraged to develop career management skills as part of their degree; this includes researching possible careers, conducting a skills audit, choosing appropriate modules to support their future intentions, and

identifying ways of filling any skills gaps through additional training. Information literacy is at the heart of our core skills provision and you will work closely with academic and library support staff to develop research skills as part of your training in International Relations.

In their second year, students are encouraged to take an internship module (1POL598). This requires them to find a suitable placement in a profession related to international relations such as an MP's constituency or parliamentary office, or working for an NGO or at a foreign embassy. Our location in central London gives us an unparalleled opportunity to secure a learning placement for our students.

We recognise that studying International Relations requires a global outlook. For this reason, the University provides opportunities for students to learn or continue to study modern languages throughout their degree as a Westminster free choice module at each level of study.

The Career Development Centre provides lists of job vacancies and voluntary work opportunities at the university (such as working as a student ambassador or working in the library), and provides individual information and support (students find this invaluable). Students can continue to use the careers' service for up to three years after they graduate.

## **Learning Outcomes**

### **Knowledge and Understanding of the Subject**

#### **Level 4**

By the end of the first year, typical students are expected to have:

- Identified the primary characteristics of International Relations as a scholarly discipline, informed by key theories and political concepts.
- Acquired an understanding of the differing accounts of the international system and the historical dimensions of global order.
- Identified the role of political culture and power in shaping our perceptions of political order within International Relations, understood through different regional, theoretical and cultural frameworks.
- Developed an awareness of the importance of information literacy and library skills for studying and researching International Relations.
- Appreciation for the value of critical thinking in assessing the diverse range of scholarly traditions within International Relations.

#### **Level 5**

By the end of the second year, typical students are expected to have:

- Detailed understanding of the contemporary agenda of international security and the key issues that have dominated International Relations in the post-Cold War era.

- Developed an awareness of the key traditions in International Relations Theory and an ability to differentiate between specific thinkers and debates within these traditions.
- An ability to critically identify the geopolitical dimensions of International Relations and key events into a broad narrative on post-Cold War politics.
- An appreciation for the regional dynamics of International Relations, with specific focus on the politics, society and culture of the Middle East.
- An appreciation of the role of social science methodologies and political research skills in the research process, having produced a feasible dissertation research proposal for Level 6 study.

## **Level 6**

By the end of the third year, typical students are expected to have:

- Identified the primary characteristics of sovereignty as a primary concept in International relations and linked these to the changing frontiers of intervention in global politics.
- An understanding of the ethical dimensions of International Relations and the role of ethical discourse in addressing global political problems.
- An advanced ability to apply International Relations theory to 'real world' events and to think creatively about the applied dimensions of the discipline.
- The ability to critically interrogate key concepts in International relations and identify the contribution of theoretical perspectives for understanding the disciplinary framework of international politics.
- An ability to conduct their own political research, whether qualitative or quantitative, informed by appropriate research methodologies and theoretical frameworks.

## **Generic Intellectual Skills**

### **Level 4**

By the end of the first year, typical students are expected to have:

- The ability to discuss contemporary issues in International Relations.
- An understanding of the nature of International Relations as an academic discipline.
- An understanding of the key theoretical perspectives within International Relations and ability to compare theories.
- An understanding of the range of research skills required in studying International Relations.
- The ability to identify appropriate sources for assignments and use information with integrity, including full knowledge of academic referencing.
- The ability to identify a range of research materials, including identifying, evaluating and selecting from a range of sources.

## **Level 5**

By the end of the second year, typical students are expected to have:

- The ability to apply theory to historical and geopolitical constellations within international politics.
- The ability to critique prevailing perspectives on International Relations and engage with critical perspectives.
- The ability to think independently about the history of international security and discuss contemporary developments in international security, supported by relevant theoretical knowledge.
- The ability to understand the regional dimensions of international political, especially as it relates to politics, society and culture of the Middle East.
- The ability to select and justify appropriate methodological and analytical approaches, relevant theories, and techniques for different types of political research within International Relations.
- An appreciation of the role of social science methodologies and political research skills in the research process, having produced a feasible dissertation research proposal for Level 6 study.

## **Level 6**

By the end of the third year, typical students are expected to have:

- A critical understanding of foundational concepts within global politics and an ability to think imaginatively about their placement within the discipline of International Relations.
- An in-depth understanding of the origins and nature of sovereignty within International Relations, informed by recent developments in international security and the politics of humanitarian intervention.
- An ability to think critically about the role of 'ethics' within International Relations, applying ethical theories to real world challenges.
- An ability to conduct political research and produce a student-led dissertation of 10,000 words.

## **Personal Transferable Skills**

By the end of the first year, typical students are expected to have:

### **Level 4**

- The ability to organise their workloads effectively.
- The ability to discuss political ideas and concepts in small groups.
- The ability to undertake short and medium term research projects.
- Fluency in word processing and Internet skills.

- The ability to locate and retrieve information electronically, with full knowledge of the range of scholarly resources available from the University of Westminster library.
- The ability to organise and present research material.
- The ability to communicate ideas clearly in written and spoken form.
- The ability to work as a team.

## **Level 5**

By the end of the second year, typical students are expected to have:

- The ability to engage analytically with given information.
- The ability to develop career management skills and identify areas for further skills development.
- The ability to formulate independent research questions and plan a programme of scholarly research.

## **Level 6**

By the end of the third year, typical students are expected to have:

- The ability to undertake a long-term research project
- An advanced ability to organise their workload.
- The ability to work in partnership with academic staff on producing a dissertation.
- The ability to formulate and demonstrate an independent analytical perspective.

## **Teaching, Learning and Assessment Methods**

### **Teaching**

The Department of Politics and International Relations is committed to research-led teaching. Modules in IR will be delivered by research-active academics with particular expertise in the modules they teach. Each module is structured around a lecture and seminar; the lectures are designed to introduce students to each topic and provide a balanced and comprehensive overview; the seminars are student-led and provide a forum in which the student is encouraged to discuss the previous lecture and analyse in an informed way the issues under discussion.

### **Learning**

The primary aim of the University of Westminster is to promote 'student-centred, active learning'. To this end the Department of Politics and International Relations seeks to encourage students to demonstrate their initiative and pursue their own intellectual goals to the greatest extent possible.

Teaching in the Department of Politics and International Relations makes full use of lecturers' own research interests: this is 'research-led teaching'. This term refers to initiatives designed to bring the research and teaching functions of the university closer together with the aim of enhancing students' learning.

Your learning is also enriched by your own research. Your research sources will include academic journals, books, and electronic media linked to Blackboard: these develop your skills through 'blended learning'. The first year requires you to make a significant shift in your approach to education: the goal is for you to become more aware of your learning strategies and the value placed on independent learning.

The BA International Relations encourages students to question the world in which they live and acquire an understanding of all the different theoretical approaches within International Relations. Students will be advised to critically engage with all perspectives and to utilise those that they feel have the greatest validity. The study of International Relations requires both a philosophical and empirical understanding of international politics and presents students with a number of diverse areas of study. Students will be encouraged to tailor this degree to their own research interests and demonstrate their independent analytical ability throughout the three levels.

### **Assessment**

Assessment offers a way of measuring whether the learning outcomes of a module have been achieved and to what standard. Assessment is also crucial to student motivation; effective and timely feedback is a key aspect of the assessment strategy in the Department of Politics and International Relations (DPIR). There are appropriate assessments at each level and in each module. Our external examiners applaud the original and diverse range of assessments that we offer. All feedback is provided electronically through our online marking system in Blackboard.

Exams in Level 4 modules will normally require three questions to be addressed; at Levels 5 and 6 two questions, as students should be able to develop fuller answers in their second and third years. With regard to coursework, in the Level 4 modules 'Introduction to Political Theory' and 'Introduction to Key Concepts and Issues in International Relations', students are required to write a critical review of a political concept and of a journal article, respectively. These exercises are designed to give students the confidence to use sources other than textbooks. In 'Comparative Politics' (also at Level 4) you are required to complete a research task using comparative analysis. At Level 5 you practice more advanced research and analytical skills. For example, in Theories of International Relations you are required to engage with classic texts in IR theory and develop skills of critical exegesis. In the Level 6 module Sovereignty and Intervention After the Cold War, students will produce a case study which develops a policy led response to issues of intervention in contemporary international politics.

While assessments may take a range of forms, essays remain very important. Essays test your ability to research and answer the question, marshal arguments and develop academic literacy (including appropriate referencing conventions). Other assessments include presentations, research proposals, reports, and PowerPoint presentations with supporting statements. Presentations test group work and communication skills. Students may initially feel less confident producing assignments which are not standard essays. However, with detailed guidance and appropriate support (including use of previous examples), they come to welcome the opportunities to do more creative assignments, analysing primary documents such as political manifestos, government bills and media reports). At Level 5, in 'Geopolitics', students will be required to formulate their own policy question and present this as a poster. This encourages student to develop job-ready skills and enhance their employability profile. The research proposal completed in the Political Research module at Level 5 provides an outline of the dissertation to be completed at Level 6. The dissertation, which represents the culmination of your studies, is based on your own research.

### **Course Structure**

This section shows the core and option modules available as part of the course, and their credit value. Full-time undergraduate students study 120 credits per year. In the first year students in BA International Relations will complete three 30-credit year-long (two-semester) core modules as well as two option modules, one of which can be a Westminster 'free elective' module. The three core modules ensure that students gain an understanding of political theory, comparative Politics and International Politics/Relations.

#### **Credit Level 4**

<b>Code</b>	<b>Title Value</b>	<b>Status</b>	
1POL415	An Introduction to Political Theory	Core	30
SPIR401	Comparative Politics	Core	30
1INR410	Introduction to Key Concepts and Issues in International Relations	Core	30

#### **Optional modules at Level 4:**

<b>Code</b>	<b>Title Value</b>	<b>Status</b>	
1EPO411	Immigration: the European Experience	Option	15
1INR411	Globalization, Power and International Governance	Option	15
SPIR402	International Relations and the Global Economy	Option	15
SPIR404	Global Environmental Politics	Option	15
SDEV411	Introduction to the Politics of Developing Countries	Option	15
SPIR404	Revolutions and Political Change	Option	15

Students may also choose one 15-credit 'free elective' module from outside the Department of Politics and International Relations.

#### **Credit Level 5**

Students in their second year may – subject to academic approval – choose one Level 6 module in the second semester.

<b>Code</b>	<b>Title Value</b>	<b>Status</b>	
SPIR511	Theories of International Relations 15	Core	
SPIR513	International Security 15	Core	
SPIR512	Geopolitics 15	Core	

SIR514	Introduction to the Politics of the Middle East 15	Core
SPIR515	Political Research 15	Core

**Optional modules in Politics at Level 5:**

<b>Code</b>	<b>Title Value</b>	<b>Status</b>	
1POL507	Democracy in America	Option	15
1POL508	Gender, Politics and the State	Option	15
1POL598	Politics and International Relations Internship module	Option	15
1EPO509	European Foreign Policy	Option	15
SPIR504	Governing the European Union	Option	15
SPIR506	Russia and Eastern Europe: The Politics of Transition 15	Option	
1DEV520	International Political Economy	Option	15
SDEV511	Political Economy of Development	Option	15
SDEV525	Oil, Globalisation and Development in the Middle East and Central Asia	Option	15
1INR521	Foreign Policy Analysis	Option	15
1FRE568*	Modernity and the French Republican Tradition	Option	15
1SPA568*	Populism, Dictatorship and Democracy In Latin America from Peron to Chavez	Option	15
SPIR509	Democratic Innovations in Practice	Option	15
SPIR513	International Security	Option	15
SPIR511	Theories of International Relations	Option	15
SPIR507	Western Political Thought	Option	15
SPIR512	Geopolitics	Option	15

SPIR516	Political Gaming and Simulations	Option	15
SPIR514	Introduction to the Politics of the Middle East	Option	15
SPIR508	Questioning Rights	Option	15
SPIR510	State and Society	Option	15

### **Credit Level 6**

<b>Code</b>	<b>Title Value</b>	<b>Status</b>	
SINR600	Sovereignty and Intervention after the Cold War 15	Core	
1INR620	Ethics and International Relations 15	Core	
1POL699	Dissertation 30	Core	

### **Optional modules in Politics at Level 6:**

<b>Code</b>	<b>Title Value</b>	<b>Status</b>	
1POL620	Applied British Politics	Option	15
1POL678	Diplomacy and International Relations	Option	15
1POL682	Political Analysis: Mind, Knowledge and Reality	Option	15
1POL683	American Power in the 21 <sup>st</sup> Century	Option	15
1POL684	Politics and Media Freedom	Option	15
SINR600	Sovereignty and Intervention after the Cold War	Option	15
1INR620	Ethics and International Relations	Option	15
SPIR601	Power, Freedom and Justice: Explorations in Political Subjectivity	Option	15
SPIR602	Citizenship and Democratic Politics	Option	15
SPIR605	Themes in the Global Politics of Energy	Option	15
SPIR606	International Statebuilding: From Government		

15	to Governance	Option	
SPiR610 15	Humanitarian Intervention and International Relations	Option	
SPiR611	European Security	Option	15
SPiR612 15	Protest, Politics and the State: Social Movements Today	Option	
1DEV610 15	Development in the Era of Globalisation	Option	
SDEV610 15	Globalisation, States and NGO's in Developing Countries	Option	
1SPA672* 15	US-Latin American Relations, From Monroe to the Present	Option	
1CHI671 15	China and the World: From Mao Zedong to Hu Jintao	Option	
SPiR613 15	Postcolonial: India and China	Option	
SPiR614 15	Issues and Debates in the Middle East Politics	Option	
SPiR616 15	Political Psychology: New Perspectives on Organisations	Option	

\* Modules marked with an asterisk are offered by the Department of Modern and Applied Languages.

### Academic Regulations

**SEE APPENDIX 2 for LEVELS 4 AND 5 STUDENTS**

**SEE APPENDIX 3 for LEVEL 6 STUDENTS**

### Support for Students

On arrival, an induction programme will introduce students to the staff responsible for the course, the site on which they will be studying, the Library and IT facilities, and to the Registry Office Administration. Students are

allocated a personal tutor who can provide advice and guidance on academic matters.

Learning support includes the Library which, across its four sites, holds printed collections of 356,000 printed books, 29,000 print and e-journal, over 45,000 electronic resources (databases, e-journals, e-books). Access to all services is facilitated through Library Search, a new online service.

There are over 3,500 computers spread over the four University sites available for students' use. The University uses a Virtual Learning Environment called Blackboard where students can access course materials and communicate with staff and other students via message boards.

At University level, Student Services provides advice and guidance on accommodation, financial and legal matters, personal counselling, health and disability matters, and careers. The chaplaincy provides multi-faith guidance. The International Education Office provides particular support for international students. The University of Westminster Students' Union also provides a range of facilities to support all students during their time at the University.

## **Reference Points for the Course**

### **Internal**

The design of this course has been informed by the university's mission statement, widening student participation, university policies on skills and teaching, and learning and assessment policies, as well as by school and departmental policies. The University's Skills Policy (2001) includes two elements: higher education (HE) and career management skills and personal development planning, both of which must be incorporated into course programmes (Whitlock, 2001). The Westminster Exchange (<http://www.wmin.ac.uk/page-19440>) provides professional development opportunities and publications and improves teaching and learning.

Most of your lecturers – permanent staff and visiting lecturers – are based in the Department of Politics and International Relations. The BA International Relations closely reflects the specialist interests and research activity of the staff team in the areas of intervention and statebuilding, theories of security, post-colonial international relations and global change, energy security, and foreign policy and diplomacy. The International Relations degree reflects the links with the Security and International Relations programme, the Centre for the Study of Democracy, and the Governance and Sustainability programme, all located in the Department. Researchers and PhD students from this Centre are encouraged to develop their pedagogical skills through participation as seminar leaders or dissertation supervisors to ensure that their research activity is fed back into teaching at undergraduate level.

### **External**

The Dearing Report (1992) followed by the White Paper, *The Future of Higher Education*, published in 2003, significantly overhauled government policy. Together these gave rise to two key policy objectives: widening participation and employability, as expressed through Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCHE) and Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) initiatives. The University's Teaching and Learning Policy (1998) and Skills Policy (2001) were responses to these initiatives; they are reflected in the University's statement 'Educating for Professional Life'. The Disability Equality Duty requires us to comply with the Disability Rights Commission code of practice for Post-16 Education and the Equality Challenge Unit to promote equality and diversity in HE.

The QAA's 2007 Politics and International Relations benchmarks were used in the revalidation of the course in 2008. These benchmarks provide detailed guidance and standards regarding subject knowledge, skills, teaching/learning, and assessment; they inform the current programme.

## **Quality Management and Enhancement**

### **Course Management**

The BA International Relations is managed by the Course Leader, Dr Thomas Moore (Room 515 Wells St; tel: 020 7911 5000, ext 68920; email: [T.Moore1@wmin.ac.uk](mailto:T.Moore1@wmin.ac.uk)) in the Department of Politics and International Relations. The Department also offers a BA (Hons) Politics and a BA (Hons) Politics and International Relations. The Department has 25 permanent members of staff and 6 Visiting Lecturers.

The Department has one away-day per year to identify and address ways of improving the design and delivery of its courses. Staff in the Department undergo annual appraisal and observation of their teaching by their colleagues. Staff in the Department attend events organised by the Academic Standards and the Teaching and Learning Groups that address aspects of teaching, learning and assessment.

### **Course Approval, Monitoring and Review**

The course was initially approved by a University Validation Panel in 2008. The Panel included internal peers from the University and external subject specialists from academia and industry to ensure the comparability of the course to those offered in other universities and relevance to employers. Periodic course reviews help to ensure that the curriculum is up-to-date and that the skills gained on the course continue to be relevant to employers.

The course is monitored each year by the School to ensure that it is running effectively and that issues that might affect the student experience have been appropriately addressed. Staff consider the outcomes from each course committee, evidence of student progression and achievement, and the reports from external examiners in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the course. The Academic Standards Group audits this process; the outcomes of the

audit are reported to the Academic Council of the University, which has overall responsibility for the maintenance of quality and standards in the University.

### **Student Involvement in Quality Assurance and Enhancement**

Student feedback is important to the University; student comment is taken seriously. One formal feedback mechanism is the course committee. Student representatives will be elected to sit on the committee to represent the views of their peer group. The University and the Students' Union work together to provide a full induction to the role of the course committee.

Students are asked to complete a questionnaire at the end of each module. The feedback from this will inform the module leader about the effectiveness of the module and highlight areas that could be improved. Students meet Review Panels when the periodic review of the course is conducted to provide oral feedback about the course. Student meetings are also held annually with representatives of the Academic Standards Group as part of the annual monitoring process.

### **For more information about this course:**

- Contact Dr Thomas Moore, BA International Relations Course Leader, Room 515 Wells St; tel: 020 7911 5000, ext 68920; email: [T.Moore1@westminster.ac.uk](mailto:T.Moore1@westminster.ac.uk))
- Course Enquiries Team, tel: +44 (0)20 7915 5511; [course-enquiries@westminster.ac.uk](mailto:course-enquiries@westminster.ac.uk)

Please note – This programme specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the course and the learning outcomes that a student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if s/he takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. This specification should be read in conjunction with module handbooks which provide more detailed information on the specific learning outcomes, content, teaching, learning and assessment methods for each module.