



**UNIVERSITY OF
PORTSMOUTH**

COURSE SPECIFICATION

BA (Hons) International Relations and Politics

COURSE SPECIFICATION

Course Title	BA (Hons) International Relations and Politics BA (Hons) International Relations and Politics with Foundation Year
Final Award	BA (Hons)
Exit Awards	CertHE, DipHE, Ordinary
Course Code / UCAS code (if applicable)	U0694PYC / L250 U3656PYC / L251
Mode of study	Full Time
Mode of delivery	Campus, Sandwich (Optional)
Normal length of course	3 years, 4 years with placement, 4 years with foundation year, 5 years with foundation year and placement
Cohort(s) to which this course specification applies	From September 2025 intake onwards
Awarding Body	University of Portsmouth
Teaching Institution	University of Portsmouth
Faculty	Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences
School/Department/Subject Group	School of Area Studies, Sociology, History, Politics and Literature
School/Department/Subject Group webpage	https://www.port.ac.uk/about-us/structure-and-governance/organisational-structure/our-academic-structure/faculty-of-humanities-and-social-sciences/school-of-area-studies-sociology-history-politics-and-literature
Course webpage including entry criteria	https://www.port.ac.uk/study/courses/undergraduate/ba-hons-international-relations-and-politics
Professional and/or Statutory Regulatory Body accreditations	None
Quality Assurance Agency Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) Level	Level 3, 4 ,5, 6

This course specification provides a summary of the main features of the course, identifies the aims and learning outcomes of the course, the teaching, learning and assessment methods used by teaching staff, and the reference points used to inform the curriculum.

This information is therefore useful to potential students to help them choose the right course of study, to current students on the course and to staff teaching and administering the course.

Further detailed information on the individual modules within the course may be found in the relevant module descriptors and the Course Handbook provided to students on enrolment.

Please refer to the [Course and Module Catalogue](#) for further information on the course structure and modules.

Educational aims of the course

- With Foundation Year - To prepare students to an appropriate standard for entry into the course at Level 4.
- To enable students to develop a sound knowledge and understanding of international relations and Politics
- To enable students to understand and apply key concepts, approaches and critiques within the field of International Relations and Politics and to develop an appreciation for its contested nature
- To enable students to develop knowledge of historical and contemporary international relations and politics and to encourage critical thinking about a range of (international) political phenomena (including events, issues, change, values, ideas and institutions) in a global context
- To equip students with the necessary transferable skills for lifelong learning and graduate employment in the context of changing labour markets.
- To provide a framework for students to follow a flexible, coherent programme of study, allowing them to develop specialist interests and knowledge in their main subject and in a minor subject via a Pathway.
- To provide students with the skills and the knowledge required to maximise career and postgraduate study opportunities
- To provide an opportunity for students to gain experience and skills relevant to employment or further study within the Politics and International Relations subject area by choosing relevant work placement and/or study abroad options.

Course Learning Outcomes and Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategies

The [Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education \(QAA\)](#) sets out a national framework of qualification levels, and the associated standards of achievement are found in their [Framework for Higher Education Qualifications](#) document.

The Course Learning Outcomes for this course are outlined in the tables below.

A. Knowledge and understanding of:			
LO number	Learning outcome	Learning and Teaching methods	Assessment methods
A1	The world's division into multiple polities, drawing on the study of anarchy, security, economy, globalisation and the extent of - and explanations for - conflict and cooperation between states.	These are developed through a combination of lectures, seminars, tutorials, workshops, student and tutor led sessions, skills, discussion and knowledge-based classes, simulation exercises. Methods vary based on the topics being covered	Essays, exams, reports, portfolios, dissertation, presentations, infographics, projects, reports, seminar performance, briefing papers, creating documentaries and blog posts, group and individual work
A2	The relations between human beings and their socio-political and ecological environments at local, national and global levels in both historical and contemporary settings.		
A3	Power relations, how power is used to create and reproduce patterns of privilege and in/exclusion, and how these structures and patterns are resisted and challenged.		
A4	The concepts, theories and methods to the analysis of (international) political ideas, actors, institutions and behaviour.		
A5	Key themes and concepts in Politics and International Relations to explore and discover the complex, controversial and contested nature of the field.		

B. Cognitive (Intellectual or Thinking) skills, able to:			
LO number	Learning outcome	Learning and Teaching methods	Assessment methods
B1	Plan, execute and present an independent piece of work, in which qualities such as time management, problem solving and independence are evident, as well as interpretation and evaluation of the quality of evidence.	These outcomes are developed primarily through seminars, tutorials, workshops, student and tutor-led sessions, skills, discussion and knowledge-based classes, and simulation exercises. Methods vary based on the topics being covered	Essays, exams, reports, portfolios, dissertation, presentations, infographics, projects, reports, seminar performance, briefing papers, creating documentaries and blog posts, group and individual work
B2	Construct reasoned argument, synthesising relevant information and exercising critical judgement		
B3	Understand and apply the principles of ethical research as well as demonstrate appropriate behaviour and academic practice.		
B4	Identify, investigate and solve problems through lateral thinking to develop solutions, thinking creatively in both practical and theoretical contexts		
B5	Recognise and reflect on feedback to critically analyse and improve their work		

C. Practical (Professional or Subject) skills, able to:			
LO number	Learning outcome	Learning and Teaching methods	Assessment methods
C1	Identify, interpret and apply appropriate methods of data collection and analysis (both qualitative and quantitative)	These outcomes are developed primarily through lectures, seminars, tutorials, workshops, student and tutor led sessions, skills, discussion and knowledge-based classes, simulation exercises. Methods vary based on the topics being covered	Essays, exams, reports, portfolios, dissertation, presentations, infographics, projects, reports, seminar performance, briefing papers, creating documentaries and blog posts, group and individual work
C2	Demonstrate a familiarity and engage critically with key concepts relating to Politics and International Relations, such as power, and explore the contested nature of knowledge and understanding, analysing the strengths and weaknesses of different approaches.		
C3	Engage critically with Politics and International Relations, including normative and positive foundations of (international) political ideas; the vocabulary of (global) political debate; the structure and operation of different political systems; the social, economic, historical and cultural contexts of political behaviour; and the factors accounting for political change.		
C4	Demonstrate an awareness of relevant theoretical and empirical perspectives and the ability to identify and apply them through an analysis of the contested nature of (international) political understanding.		
C5	Review and critically assess the literature on a topic in order to engage with contending debates, concepts and empirical findings in the field		

D. Transferrable (Graduate and Employability) skills, able to:			
LO number	Learning outcome	Learning and Teaching methods	Assessment methods
D1	Interpret, analyse, apply and present numerical, textual and other forms of data.	These outcomes are developed primarily through seminars, tutorials, workshops, student and tutor-led sessions, skills, discussion and knowledge-based classes, and simulation exercises. Methods vary based on the topics being covered	Essays, exams, reports, portfolios, dissertation, presentations, infographics, projects, reports, seminar performance, briefing papers, creating documentaries and blog posts, group and individual work
D2	Effectively communicate through a variety of formats, and to different audiences; create and produce information and media in an innovative manner.		
D3	Collaborate with others to achieve common goals.		
D4	Evaluate the accuracy and reliability of sources, and use that knowledge to appropriately discuss and apply evidence.		
D5	Manage their own learning and projects effectively in a timely and critical fashion while working individually and collectively and critically reflect on their own learning.		

Academic Regulations

The current University of Portsmouth [Academic Regulations: Examination & Assessment Regulations](#) will apply to this course. Approved course exemptions can be found [here](#)

Support for Student Learning

The University of Portsmouth provides a comprehensive range of support services for students throughout their course, details of which are available at the [MyPort](#) student portal.

In addition to these University support services this course also provides support within the School from the Senior Tutor, Learning Development Tutors and Personal Tutorial system.

Evaluation and Enhancement of Standards and Quality in Learning and Teaching

The University of Portsmouth undertakes comprehensive monitoring, review and evaluation of courses within clearly assigned staff responsibilities. Student feedback is a key feature in these evaluations, as represented in our [Policy for Listening to and Responding to the Student Voice](#) where you can also find further information.

Reference Points

The course and outcomes have been developed taking account of:

- [University of Portsmouth Curriculum Framework Specification](#)
- [University of Portsmouth Vision](#)
- [Office for Students Conditions of Registration](#)
- [University of Portsmouth Code of Practice for Work-based and Placement Learning](#)
- [Quality Assurance Agency UK Quality Code for Higher Education](#)
- [Quality Assurance Agency Qualification Characteristic Statements](#)
- [Quality Assurance Agency Subject Benchmark Statement for Politics and International Relations](#)
- [Quality Assurance Agency Framework for Higher Education Qualifications](#)
- Vocational and professional experience, scholarship and research expertise of the University of Portsmouth's academic members of staff

Changes to your course / modules

The University of Portsmouth has checked the information provided in this Course Specification and will endeavour to deliver this course in keeping with this Course Specification. However, changes to the course may sometimes be required arising from annual monitoring, student feedback, and the review and update of modules and courses.

Where this activity leads to significant changes to modules and courses there will be prior consultation with students and others, wherever possible, and the University of Portsmouth will take all reasonable steps to minimise disruption to students.

It is also possible that the University of Portsmouth may not be able to offer a module or course for reasons outside of its control, for example, due to the absence of a member of staff or low student registration numbers. Where this is the case, the University of Portsmouth will endeavour to inform applicants and students as soon as possible, and where appropriate, will facilitate the transfer of affected students to another suitable course.

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Document Details	
CSD Template date	<i>January 2025</i>
Author	<i>David Norman</i>
Date of production and version number	<i>January 2025 v1</i>
Date of update and version number	<i>January 2025 v1</i>
Minimum student registration numbers	