

# POLITICS & INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Undergraduate Studies

# Welcome



There has never been a more urgent time to understand politics. With everything going on in the world, global politics is at a particularly volatile and uncertain moment. At Royal Holloway, we and our students use cutting-edge tools to get underneath how power works today: Why do democracies sometimes fail? How can we address pressing

public policy issues to do with the environment and global health? What are our rights, and how do we defend them? How are AI and new technologies reshaping war, peace, and surveillance? Can we trust our political institutions, and what can be done to make them work better?

Here, we think the point of a degree is to help students come to their own view on these questions. We are a diverse department, but small enough that we can help our students find out about what they want to study. We have a broad curriculum with a range of options, meaning that you can tailor your studies to fit your own interests. As a student here, you'll enjoy a supportive learning environment and be taught by internationally recognised experts in their fields.

## Dr Kaat Smets

Head of Department

# 2nd in the UK for research overall

(THE, REF Institutions ranked by subject, 2022)



## Modules on offer include Parliamentary studies and Politics in Action



## Contact details

### Course enquiries

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### Connect with us

 [@rhulpirp](https://www.instagram.com/rhulpirp)

[royalholloway.ac.uk/politicsandir](https://royalholloway.ac.uk/politicsandir)

# Politics and International Relations at Royal Holloway

We are a dynamic, research-led teaching department with a curriculum that includes specialist modules across the whole range of the discipline. At Royal Holloway you'll have the opportunity to study topics such as:

- Politics in action
- Parliamentary studies
- Peace and justice after conflict
- Revolution and counterrevolution
- US foreign policy
- European politics
- American politics
- Politics outside the West
- British politics
- Contemporary political theory
- International political economy
- War and security
- Political communication
- Public policy
- Gender and politics
- Environmental politics
- International development
- Defence and security
- Social justice
- Middle East politics
- Elections and voting behaviour
- Global health policy
- African politics
- Freedom of expression
- Latin American politics
- Racial injustice
- Narrative in world politics
- Critical theory
- Visual politics



"I encourage students to think critically about the big themes of international politics: war, peace, global justice, the climate crisis. Our classes empower students to not only understand the complexities of international relations, but also to develop practical skills and become agents of change."

**Dr Daniela Lai**  
Senior Lecturer in International Relations

# Choosing your degree

You can study a variety of single, joint and combined honours courses, allowing you to study politics and international relations alongside other subject areas.

Your first year consists of a common core of four year-long modules taken by students on the BA Politics, BA International Relations, and BA Politics & International Relations degrees. These provide you with the foundation on which you can specialise in your next years of study. Students on Combined Honours or Joint Honours degrees will take one or two of our first year modules.

Modules become more specialised in the second and third years and your freedom to shape your course increases as well. The third year programme comprises research-led modules on subjects that reflect the research specialisms of our staff.

With the exception of the BSc Economics, Politics and International Relations, all our courses include a compulsory final year dissertation, written on a topic of your choice and developed through independent research working one-to-one with an academic supervisor. Single and Joint Honours students are also eligible for our final year work-placement module, 'Politics in Action'.

For details of current module options and our entry requirements, please see our website.

## DEGREES

	UCAS code
BA International Relations	LF50
BA Politics	L200
BA Politics and International Relations	L290
<b>POLITICS AS A MAJOR SUBJECT</b>	
BA Politics with Philosophy	L2V5
<b>JOINT DEGREES</b>	
BSc Economics, Politics and International Relations	LL12
BA History, Politics and International Relations	VLN1
BA Politics, International Relations & Modern Languages (French)	LR21
BA Politics, International Relations & Modern Languages (German)	LR22
BA Politics, International Relations & Modern Languages (Italian)	LR23
BA Politics, International Relations & Modern Languages (Spanish)	LR24
BA Politics and International Relations & Philosophy	LV25
BA Politics, Philosophy & Economics (PPE)	LOV0
<b>POLITICS OR INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AS A MINOR SUBJECT</b>	
BSc (Econ) Economics with Political Studies	L1L2
BA Modern Languages with International Relations	R9L2
BA Music with Political Studies	W3L2
BA Philosophy with International Relations	V5L2
BA Philosophy with Politics	V5L9
LLB Law with Politics*	M1L2
LLB Law with International Relations*	MF50

\*Available with a Year in Industry

# Studying here

## Departmental support

Studying here, you'll be assigned a personal advisor from among our academics who will provide you with extra academic support and guidance throughout your studies.

## Study abroad opportunities and optional placement year

Undergraduate students on most degrees have the opportunity to apply for study abroad, either by going abroad in the second year of their three year degree or by changing to a four year degree 'with an International Year' and going abroad in their third year. The Study Abroad programme greatly broadens students' horizons and cultural understandings. Students can study at one of the many universities with which we have exchange agreements.

A year abroad is an integral part of the BA Politics, International Relations & Modern Languages programme. Students are expected to spend their third year in a European country appropriate to their main language — students who have taken two languages may divide the year between the two countries — and have the opportunities to study at one of our partner universities and/or pursue an approved work placement.

You will also have the opportunity to take an additional Placement Year, which can be spent studying abroad, working, carrying out voluntary work or a combination of all three.

## Research events

Students are welcome to be part of the department's weekly research seminar, which includes internal and external speakers presenting advanced research on topics across the discipline, as well as the many workshops, conferences, public lectures, and roundtable debates organised by our research centres. Our research centres include the Global Politics and Development Centre, the Centre for European Politics and our Gender Institute.

## Facilities

The Department is based right in the centre of campus and you'll be taught in a variety of locations across the University.

Our library in the Davison Building offers a wide variety of spaces for individual and group study. Student Services and the Careers & Employability Service are also based in the building, along with the Union Shop. In addition to on-campus library facilities, students have borrowing privileges and full remote access to all the electronic resources available from the University of London's Senate House Library, which houses some 14 million items.





# Student life

## A diverse student body

The department is diverse, with undergraduate students from all over the world and an international cohort of postgraduate and research students.

## Student societies

Every student in the department is invited to become a member of the Politics and International Relations Society (PIRSoc), one of the most active student societies on campus. PIRSoc organises a variety of social events, debates, international trips and visiting-speaker talks. The society also organises one of the most successful National Model

UN (NMUN) teams in the world, each year recruiting students from all departments to compete in the NMUN conference in New York. Royal Holloway's students have won many individual and delegation awards, including Outstanding or Distinguished Delegation Awards, making them one of the most successful teams at these events.

Students in the department also spearheaded the creation of a Diplomatic Society (DipSoc). It organises debates, visiting speaker events, and trips to London embassies and other institutions such as NATO headquarters in Brussels. It has also sent teams to Model UN competitions in the UK, Europe and Harvard University in the USA.



"I really enjoyed studying Politics at Royal Holloway. The smaller class sizes really help. In debates you get to hear everybody, and you get to be heard. You have a voice, and you don't feel overlooked.

Everyone is so friendly, and the academics go above and beyond to help you and ensure you gain the maximum benefit from your degree here."

**Jack**

BA Politics and  
International Relations



National Model United Nations delegation

## Your future career

Our courses embed a wide range of important transferable skills that enable our students to approach problems rigorously, analytically, and critically, and to communicate clearly in both speech and writing. Our graduates leave with skills and knowledge that not only make them attractive to employers in a broad spectrum of careers, but prepare them for further advanced study.

We work with the College's dedicated Careers Service to enhance our students' employability and prepare them for the choices ahead.

Volunteering is one of the best extra-curricular activities you can take part in at University, whether you want to develop your own skills, try out future career paths, meet likeminded people or make a genuine difference in the local community.

We also stay well-connected with many of our graduates and have an extensive network of alumni. Many of them return to Royal Holloway for alumni events and offer valuable career advice to current students.

Our graduates work in a range of careers including public affairs, political organisations, journalism, international development, law and charities.

Roles include Ministry of Justice Fast Stream, political analyst at merchant banks, Foreign Office Fast Stream and graduate entry into a wide array of large companies.

**Our graduates have found work for the House of Commons, Unilever, the Ministry of Defence, Amazon, Nestle, Ipsos MORI and MPs' offices**



"I had the opportunity to apply for a placement in a Member of Parliament's office through the Politics in Action module so thought I'd give it a go and succeeded. The role is so varied, one minute I could be drafting parliamentary questions and next, sitting in meetings with stakeholders.

At university we're grappling with new topics every week, conducting research for essays, writing those essays - all these things create transferable skills that are the responsibilities in many jobs."

**Chloe**

BA Politics and International Relations graduate

This brochure was produced in May 2025 and information was correct at that time. Please make sure you check our website or contact us directly for the very latest information if you are considering an application.



## ROYAL HOLLOWAY, UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

- Learn from world-leading experts
- Highly ranked for student satisfaction
- Beautiful campus in a safe location
- Vibrant and active community
- Award-winning careers service

### Visit us to find out more

Our Open Days are a great way to get a feel for life at Royal Holloway. Look around the campus, meet our students and staff, and find out more about studying and living here.

Find out more and register to attend at  
**[Royalholloway.ac.uk/opendays](https://royalholloway.ac.uk/opendays)**

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