



UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

Department of Politics and
International Studies

PhD Course Handbook
Politics and International Studies
October 2024



Picture by Taif Alkhudary

Director of the PhD programme: Professor Duncan Bell
Room 126, Alison Richard Building,
Tel: (7)67254, Email: dsab2@cam.ac.uk

PhD Administrator: Ms Hayley Askew
Room 142, Alison Richard Building,
Tel: (7)64619, Email: phdadmin@polis.cam.ac.uk or ha446@cam.ac.uk PhD

Fieldwork Photography Competition



Picture by Abii Tah Chunging Bih



Picture by Katie Mann

The photographs displayed on the front cover of this handbook and above are the winning entries from the PhD fieldwork photography competition. During Easter Term POLIS run a Photography Competition to showcase the best images our PhD students have taken whilst out on their fieldwork.

Winners in the 2023-24 competition were:

1st prize – Taif Alkhudary, PhD Candidate, Politics and International Studies

“An Ahwari family cook Saih bread and grilled fish in the Hawizah marshes in Missan province in an area yet to be appropriated for oil extraction.” Iraq.

2nd prize – Abii-Tah Chunging Bih – PhD candidate, Politics and International Studies.

“A pair of youthful refugee friends enthralled with a seamstress featured on a world refugee day poster. The children help one another read and understand the caption and giggle while sharing their ambitions. I was moved by this modest display of the camaraderie and refugee-led humanitarianism that remains the last line of defence for many at the settlement after the UNHCR's discontinuation of cash-based interventions.” Ukende Refugee Settlement, Ogoja, Nigeria.

3rd prize – Katie Mann, PhD candidate, Politics and International Studies.

“A man pushing a fruit cart around the corner from Colombia's Agency for Reincorporation and Normalization (ARN). The normalcy of this man selling fruit in Bogotá stood in stark contrast with the challenges ARN staff had just conveyed about FARC ex-combatants reintegrating into society in rural areas following decades of civil war.” Bogotá, Colombia.

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Notes about the handbook

This short introductory document is intended to ease your way into the Cambridge system. It is entirely informal. For formal guidance addressing, in particular, University procedures, examinations and such, please turn to the relevant official documentation and regulations issued by the University. This includes the useful and authoritative *Board of Postgraduate Studies Code of Practice for Research Degrees and Certificates of Post Postgraduate Studies*. No attempt has been made to reproduce the contents of that Code of Practice here as candidates can consult it at:

<http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/students/studentregistry/current/Postgraduate/policy/quality/cop/>

Similarly, this handbook does not restate the formal advice offered by the Student Registry on the format of your eventual PhD thesis, including its presentation, printing, binding, etc, and on the PhD examination.

We also recommend that you have a look on the Cambridge Students website if you have any further queries regarding your time at Cambridge that are not covered in this handbook: <https://www.cambridgestudents.cam.ac.uk/>

Code of Practice for research students

Please take time to read the information and save the link for reference later during your studies.

The Code of Practice sets out the University's guidelines for those courses examined by scrutiny of an extended research dissertation and an oral examination only.

The relevant Code of Practice for a particular course will be that published in the year that the student commenced his/her studies for a Postgraduate course or programme.

<https://www.cambridgestudents.cam.ac.uk/grad-code-of-practice/code-practice-research-students>

Emergency Contacts

Please see information on [Emergency Contacts](#) for whom to contact in an emergency if you have immediate concerns about your wellbeing or mental health.

Important Dates for 2024-25

Date	Event
8 October	Michaelmas Term begins
8 October	Induction Day 10am-6pm PhD Director talk 10am-11.30am S2 Guest speakers/refreshments -11.30am-5pm SG1/SG2 Drinks reception 5pm-6pm Atrium ARB
8 October	Postgraduate group photograph – ARB ground floor 12pm
9 October	Drinks reception 6-7.30pmpm Christ's College, Lloyd room
10 October	All CaRM bookings go live at 12 noon
14 October	History of Political Thought class for first-year PhD students in History and POLIS – Optional (2.30-4.30) Room 138
15 October	PhD Methodology Seminar (Room 138, 10-12 pm)
22 October	PhD coffee social Atrium ARB (12.00-1.30pm)
22 October	PhD Methodology Seminar (Room 138, 10-12 pm)
28 October	History of Political Thought class for first-year PhD students in History and POLIS – Optional (2.30-4.30) Room 138
29 October	PhD Methodology Seminar (Room 138, 10-12 pm)
2 November	Second- and third-year students' deadline for submitting Ethics and Risk applications
3 November	PhD Methodology Seminar (Room 138, 10-12 pm)
10 November	PhD Methodology Seminar (Room 138, 10-12 pm)
11 November	History of Political Thought class for first-year PhD students in History and POLIS – Optional (2.30-4.30) Room 138
17 November	PhD Methodology Seminar (Room 138, 10-12 pm)
17 November	Deadline for fieldwork funding – issued in December/January
19 November	PhD Coffee get together (Atrium, 12-1.30 pm)
25 November	History of Political Thought class for first-year PhD students in History and POLIS – Optional (1.00-3.00) Room 138
29 November (by this date)	1 st year students should meet with Supervisor to discuss their revised research proposal (from their application for admission)
26 November	PhD Methodology Seminar (Room 138, 10-12 pm)
TBC	Social event – led by student representatives
6 December	Michaelmas Term ends
21 January	Lent Term begins
21 January	Professional Development Module – Conferences (Seminar 1) 11.30am-1.00pm Room 119 ARB
24 January	1 st year students to submit revised research proposal to Supervisor

27 January	History of Political Thought class for first-year PhD students in History and POLIS – Optional (2.30-4.30) Room 138
4 February	Professional Development Module- Publishing (Seminar 2) 11.30am-1.00pm Room 119 ARB
10 February	History of Political Thought class for first-year PhD students in History and POLIS – Optional (2.30-4.30) Room 138
15 February	Second- and third-year students' deadline for submitting Ethics and Risk applications
18 February	Professional Development Module – Career Trajectories: Academic Job Applications (Seminar 3) 11.30am-1.00pm Room 119 ARB
4 March	Professional Development Module – Career Trajectories: 'Beyond' Academia (Seminar 4) 11.30am-1.00pm Room 119 ARB
18 March	Professional Development Module –Teaching and Pedagogy (Seminar 5) 11.30am-1.00pm Room 119 ARB
24 February	History of Political Thought class for first-year PhD students in History and POLIS – Optional (2.30-4.30) Room 119
TBC	PhD Social event – led by student representatives
10 March	History of Political Thought class for first-year PhD students in History and POLIS – Optional (2.30-4.30) Room 119
21 March	1 st Year Students pre-assessment review with Supervisor and Advisor
21 March	Lent Term ends
29 April	Easter Term begins
29 April- 20 June	2 nd & 3 rd Year Assessments take place
13 May	1st Years submit Assessment documents to Advisor and Assessor (inc draft ERF papers)
17 May	Fieldwork funding deadline for students -issued in June/July
23 May	Second- and third-year students' deadline for submitting Ethics and Risk applications
Late May TBC	PhD student symposium room
30 May	1 st year Registration Exercises should take place by this date
30 May	1 st year students to submit final papers to ERF (via online portal)
TBC	Postgraduate social event – organised by the student reps
20 June	Deadline for PhD fieldwork Photography competition
20 June	Easter Term ends

Head of Department

Welcome to the Department of Politics and International Studies (POLIS) at the University of Cambridge. We hope you will have a rewarding time here both intellectually and personally. POLIS prides itself on being an intellectually open and dynamic academic environment with a strong tradition of interdisciplinary study where academics and students embody a wide variety of research interests. Within POLIS there are a number of centres and institutes that make it the most intellectually diverse department in the University: African Studies, Development Studies, Latin American Studies, South Asian Studies, Gender Studies, Governance and Human Rights, the Bennett Institute for Public Policy and the YouGov Centre for Public Opinion and Policy Research. This is a fascinating and challenging time to be studying politics and we hope that you will benefit from what we offer as a department. You will notice the many public events, seminars and lectures taking place in the Alison Richard Building (ARB) throughout the year and we hope you will take advantage of these during your time here.

Arriving in a new academic environment can be a bewildering experience, but we will try to help you feel at home. The academics will ensure that you understand the nature of the work required and to this end please do set up a meeting with your Supervisor as soon as possible. Your Supervisor will help you to plan the best way forward with your research. Our administrative staff are dedicated to helping you to get to know how things work and to help you understand what is expected of you, including the important deadlines. POLIS runs a wide variety of courses (8 Masters' and 4 PhD programmes and 2 joint undergraduate Triposes), so please be understanding of the demands placed on our staff. Aside from the academics working as directors of the various degree programmes, there are student representatives who can also convey to us any concerns that you might have. You will all be members of a College and your Colleges will be able to help you adjust and adapt during your time in Cambridge.

It is important to us that you enjoy your time in POLIS and find it as fulfilling as possible academically. Best of luck with your research, and warmest wishes.

Professor Jude Browne
Head of Department

Introduction to the Department

POLIS provides a focus for politics at the University of Cambridge as one of four departments in the [Faculty of Human, Social and Political Science](#). We have close links with many other Departments and Faculties at Cambridge including History; Sociology; Psychology; Law; Asian and Middle Eastern Studies; and Social Anthropology allowing our students access to a diverse range of subjects and to explore individual interests.

In addition to the world class teaching and research within politics and international studies, the Department includes ten [Centres](#) which lead the historical and contemporary study of public policy, gender, political thought, the global south, geopolitics, development studies, governance and human rights.

Being ranked among the best in the world allows us to attract the most outstanding students and staff and to create an atmosphere of excellence in learning and research. Nearly 600 undergraduates and more than 350 graduate students from over 30 countries are currently enrolled in programmes at POLIS, creating a vibrant community in an exceptional environment in which to learn and examine all aspects of the political discipline.

The Department supervises PhD students covering a wide variety of topics, including:

- Foreign policy analysis
- Security and strategic studies
- War and conflict
- Peace-making, conflict transformation, state-building
- Human rights and governance
- International political economy
- International trade and development
- International organization
- Global/international politics (Anglo-America, Europe, China, S.E. Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Middle East.)
- International law (rights of peoples, ethnic conflict regulation, use of force, environment)
- Aspects of migration, diaspora and political identity
- Political theory and its history
- International relations theory
- European integration, history, politics, policies
- International history and the history of geopolitics
- Political parties, democratisation

Given this diversity of interests and activities among the teaching staff and the research students, we are confident that you will find your time in Cambridge very rewarding, and that you will form life-long connections while here. Moreover, you will soon become aware of activities outside of the Department in cognate disciplines, be it human geography, law, history, philosophy, sociology, social anthropology, economics, or some of the Centres focusing on

regions such as Africa, Latin America and South East Asia, and gender and development studies. We hope that you will make full use of this breadth of expertise.

Introduction to the PhD Programme

Students should submit their thesis for examination by viva during their 4th year if not before.

The full-time PhD course runs for a minimum of nine terms for research (three years) and up to a maximum of twelve terms (four years).

The part-time programme runs for a minimum of fifteen terms (research) and a maximum of twenty-one terms (seven years).

Candidates must submit within this given timeframe unless they can invoke truly exceptional grounds (for instance a medical emergency) to justify deferring submission. In other exceptional cases, it may be possible to intermit (interrupt) the studies for a period, in which case the clock stops ticking in relation to the maximum period to submission.

Candidates who exceed the maximum period of study will be removed from the register and you will no longer be recorded as a student of the University of Cambridge. This will mean that you will no longer be entitled to supervision or to use any University or College resources, including your university email address. Students may apply to be reinstated once they can demonstrate that they are ready to submit the thesis.

Full-time candidates on the course are expected to devote themselves fully to their studies. Full-time students must spend at least three terms resident in Cambridge. For a term to be 'kept' a student has to reside in Cambridge for a minimum number of nights (59 for the Michaelmas and Lent Terms and 52 for the Easter Term). These nights must be between the dates specified in the text under ['From the Statutes and Ordinances of the University of Cambridge'](#) (not the dates in the table of term dates).

Part time students are required to attend Cambridge and undergo formal supervision with their supervisor at a frequency agreed between the Supervisor and student and determined by the nature of the research project. In general, we would expect part time students to be resident in Cambridge for around 45 days per year, spread throughout the year, for supervision and training.

Full-time post Postgraduate students are expected to live within 10 miles of the centre of Cambridge while carrying out research in the University. Full time students who have good reason to live further away must apply formally for permission to [reside outside the University's precincts](#) (via their CamSIS self-service) and have the agreement of their Supervisor that this will not impair their ability to study and to attend the University as required, and the consent of their College.

Part-time students have no residence requirement and therefore do not need permission to reside outside Cambridge. Under certain circumstances, it is possible to spend time away from Cambridge to pursue research.

To work away from Cambridge for two weeks or longer, you will need to obtain leave from the Student Registry. **Such leave will only be granted after you have successfully passed your first-year registration exercise and after the ERF committee have given approval (See section on page 18).** While working away, students are required to keep in contact with their Supervisor and provide them with regular reports.

In the first year, there is a focus on training in research methods and transferrable skills. Throughout the programme, POLIS also organises a range of seminars and other events, allowing candidates to benefit from presentations covering a number of areas relevant to their work, to present their own work, and to prepare to enter the job market. The essence of the Cambridge experience remains, however, the work with the PhD Supervisor.

Each candidate is assigned a Principal Supervisor. The Supervisor will help develop the thesis project through discussion and the review of draft materials presented by the candidate. **At the beginning of the year the candidate and the Supervisor should agree the frequency of their meetings.** All students are also assigned a Postgraduate Advisor, who further supports the work of the candidate in examinations at the end of every academic year. Ordinarily, the Postgraduate Advisor will offer an additional perspective to the candidate; please note that Postgraduate Advisors will not review or comment upon your ongoing work in the same manner or frequency as your Supervisor. The role of the Postgraduate Advisor is to provide confidential advice and guidance to the student, the Department recommends that students meet with their Postgraduate Advisor at least twice per year. **It is the responsibility of the student to contact the Postgraduate Advisor and arrange these meetings.** In the case of a Supervisor's illness or leave from the university, the Postgraduate Advisor may be called upon to cover for the candidate's Supervisor.

Candidates on the PhD programme are not at first registered for the degree, as they have to pass a registration exercise towards the end of the first academic year of study. For full time student this is usually the third term and for part time students the fifth term. This exercise is conducted by the Postgraduate Advisor and an additional assessor, either drawn from within the department or from outside. The registration exercise aims to ensure that the candidate's project is viable, that an appropriate methodology is being applied, and that the candidate is capable of carrying the project through successfully within the specified timeline.

In addition to the research and writing, and the methodology and skills training, the programme offers access to a wide range of educational, cultural and social opportunities throughout the University. We very much hope that you will make use of these.

Bodies Involved in Administering the PhD

The University and College system is a rather complex organisation. However, in practice it operates reasonably flexibly. You will find the administrative staff at POLIS helpful and willing to support you. However, you too need to take responsibility for your progress. This includes submitting the relevant forms and documents in accordance with the stipulated deadlines. The University operates an electronic self-service system via CamSIS. There you will find most of the relevant forms, covering for instance leave to work away, intermission, and other issues. The programme also has its own resources page on [Moodle](#), where reading lists, digital copies of funding application forms and yearly assessment documentation can be found. The submission of the final thesis is made on the course Moodle page. You will be added to this resource page once Michaelmas Term has commenced.

The Degree itself is administered under the guidance and control of the Postgraduate Committee. The University Postgraduate Committee gives final approval to degrees and monitors the implementation of high standards of conduct and performance. Below the Postgraduate Committee operates the POLIS Degree Committee. That Committee exercises responsibility in relation to all matters connected with the eventual awarding of degrees, including appointment of examiners, review of examiners' reports, etc.

The day-to-day operation of the programme is supervised by the Director of the POLIS PhD programme, whilst the administration of the PhD programme is managed by the PhD Course Administrator Ms Hayley Askew. The first point of contact with the department for queries or concerns, after your supervisor, should be to Professor Bell for academic matters or Ms Askew for administration matters.

There is a Director of Postgraduate Education, Professor Peter Sloman, and a Deputy Director of Postgraduate Education, Professor Adam Branch, who oversee all the Postgraduate programmes across POLIS. The Postgraduate Education Committee (PEC) within the Department oversees PhD matters at department level and meet approximately once a month in term time. The PEC is chaired by Professor Adam Branch. The PEC secretary is the department's MPhil Politics and international studies administrator. The student representatives are expected to attend the PEC unreserved meetings.

All PhD candidates will also be members of a college as well as part of the department. The College offers you a place to be among students and academics from other disciplines, it provides a centre for your social life and cultural activities, and it arranges for your pastoral care. For example, if you fall ill, or meet with other difficulties during your time at Cambridge, you should immediately inform the College Postgraduate Tutor. The College will offer you support, and it may also represent your case in relation to the University or the Department should that become necessary.

It is impossible to exaggerate the importance of addressing issues that concern you at an early stage. If you are unwell, feel isolated or lost in the course, do not wait until the problem has deepened. In addition to the College Tutor, the

University offers a [counselling service](#) and [wellbeing service](#), to help you get back on track and maintain a healthy environment. Moreover, you will wish to maintain close contact with your academic Supervisor throughout. If there are any problems relating to the course, you are also very welcome to meet with the PhD Director Professor Duncan Bell, the PhD course administrator Ms Hayley Askew, Director of Postgraduate Education Professor Peter Sloman.

Training and Seminars

The PhD programme offers a programme of support for the development of your research methods and approaches and your professional skills set. This extends over all our period of research in Cambridge, although the bulk of the activity is concentrated prior to registration.

There are **three main components to the compulsory training** offered in the first year. Attendance of these forms part of the first year registration exercise.

1. A general course in 'Methods and Approaches' run internally by POLIS. These are run every week in Michaelmas term (2 hours).
2. Specific methodology training modules, usually offered via the Cambridge Research Methods (CaRM). [How to Book - CaRM \(cam.ac.uk\)](http://cam.ac.uk)
3. Professionalisation seminars: organised by the PhD director and administrator. These are held in Lent term

At the beginning of study all PhD candidates should download their **progress log**; a digital copy is provided on the [POLIS PhD Intranet](#). This log is designed to help you and your supervisor keep track of the various training and research activities – both mandatory and voluntary – undertaken during the course of the PhD. Students should use it to record the various courses (and other academic activities) they have attended or been involved with. **The completed log must be sent to the PhD course administrator prior to the Registration exercise.**

Year 1 (Part time years 1-2)

There are two main components to the training offered in the first year: (1) A general course in 'Methods and Approaches' and (2) specific methodology training modules, offered by Cambridge Research Methods (CaRM).

Methods and Approaches and Skills Training in Politics and International Studies

This course is run by the Department. Attendance is **compulsory** for all new PhD students in POLIS. Part time students would be expected to attend all compulsory weekly sessions held in the first term of the first year.

Whatever kind of project you are embarking on, it is important to be familiar with the main methodological and philosophical questions that underpin research in the contemporary social sciences. All forms of academic research are grounded

in assumptions about the nature of knowledge, the kind of world we inhabit, and the purposes of scholarly inquiry. In this course you will explore some of the ways in which these issues can be understood. It is intended to complement the programme offered by Cambridge Research Methods (CaRM) by providing an introduction to some key topics in the philosophy of academic enquiry.

The seminars will be convened by **Professor Duncan Bell**. By the end of the course, students should be conversant with some of the main epistemological and methodological issues arising in the study of politics and international studies. Although the focus will be on work produced in political studies, the course will also examine scholarship from philosophy, history, anthropology, and sociology.

A seminar will be held every week throughout the Michaelmas Term, every Tuesday from 15th October to 3rd December from 10am-12pm. The seminars will be held in room 138 in ARB.

Cambridge Research Methods (CaRM) training (formerly the Social Sciences Research Methods Programme (SSRMP))

In order to meet the need for specific methods training, students are required to take 8 hours of modules from Cambridge Research Methods (CaRM). Students may choose from a range of modules on statistics, advanced statistics and qualitative methods. The timetable is available from the CaRM website: www.researchmethods.group.cam.ac.uk.

It is the student's responsibility to book their place on the courses they want to take using the online booking system on this website.

Alternative modules

If there are students whose specific needs cannot be met by the CaRM modules, and if a more appropriate option is available in another Department in the University, we may consider substituting one of these courses for a CaRM option. For students of Political Theory, there is the option to register on the History of the History of Political Thought research training classes instead, providing your supervisor gives approval. These classes are taught by Dr Chris Brooke and Dr Chris Meckstroth. [About the Seminar | Cambridge Centre for Political Thought](#)

Language training may be substitutable for one of the CaRM modules when the student, with the support of their supervisor, can demonstrate that the relevant language is directly needed for the doctoral research, and that the training will take them to the required level of proficiency. **All substitutions of CaRM modules for other courses need to be approved in advance by the Director of the PhD programme.**

Professional Development Seminars

These seminars will address a range of professionalisation skills and experiences: academic conference, publishing, teaching and job applications within and beyond academia. **This series is compulsory for 1st year POLIS PhD students (year 1-2 part time students) but is also open to those in other years who wish to attend.** These seminars will take place in Lent term, every other Tuesday from 11.30am-1.00pm.

Risk Assessment training

The training provided in the link below is aimed at students to help them produce a comprehensive risk assessment which will then be reviewed by the ERF Committee.

N.B. First year PhD students are required to do this training as part of their programme. This must be completed prior to the First Year Registration exercise and confirmation of completion must be added to your Student Progress Log.

<https://www.safeguarding.admin.cam.ac.uk/risk-assessment-training-video>

There is also a [guidance document](#) with lots of information and links to also assist in this process.

Another good source for further guidance on risk is the [Good Practice Guide by the Social Research Association](#).

Years 2 and 3 (part time years 2-5)

There are no compulsory training requirements in second or third year, to allow students to engage with their research and conduct field research. However, students are encouraged to remain actively involved in departmental activities, such as attending research seminars and presenting at the POLIS PhD annual Symposium. Students should record the various courses (and other academic activities) they have attended or been involved with on their Progress Log.

Transferable Skills

The University is involved in a Postgraduate Research Development Programme which offers training courses on teaching and transferable skills. The courses offered can be viewed and booked online: [CamRDF](#)

In addition, the University has a Personal and Professional Development resource which also offers training courses: [PPD](#)

Additional opportunities will be emailed directly to students, so be sure to continually check your inbox on a regular basis as a lot of seminars and workshops outside of the department will have only a certain number of spaces.

PhD Practice Job Talks

Entering the job market can be a source of apprehension, especially as competition for academic jobs becomes fiercer by the year. In order to ensure that those PhD students who are applying for academic jobs (postdocs, lectureships, teaching fellowships etc.) are best prepared, the Department has a scheme which allows all interested students the chance to hold a practice job talk, shortly before a scheduled job interview.

PhD Seminar series

Previous PhD students have convened 5/6 separate seminars as part of this series. The seminars have been selected competitively each year by POLIS PhD student representatives and the Director. A budget is available for each seminar group to spend on typical workshop expenses such as biscuits and coffee and travel and accommodation cost (including if required the opportunity to invite one prestigious external speaker per year). The aim is to invite non-POLIS speakers from faculties across Cambridge as well as from other universities. The seminar conveners will be responsible for organising how the money is spent and to make all the arrangements for the seminars working closely with the PhD administrator who will oversee the budget. These seminars are led by the POLIS PhD reps. These seminars are reliant on PhD Reps being appointed.

PhD Symposium

This is one day event organised by PhD student representatives designed to provide current PhD students with the opportunity to present their work in an informal setting. The day consists of short presentations given by PhD students on a paper or chapter of their thesis followed by comments and questions from the audience. Panels are typically chaired by members of staff and Supervisors are particularly encouraged to attend. This event provides an opportunity for first year PhD students to receive informal feedback on their work before they have to submit their first-year report. The symposium is usually scheduled to take place in late May 2025. Date to be confirmed. The Symposium is reliant on PhD reps being appointed.

The Assessment Process

Candidates are required to undergo an annual assessment process. This is meant to ensure that progress continues steadily and is externally monitored.

First Assessment: Registration

The assessment period for registration is due around their 9th month of study or the part-time equivalent, in Easter Term. The assessment is designed to ensure that students are progressing satisfactorily and to address any problems with progress or the research project at a relatively early stage. The assessment will be carried out by the Postgraduate Advisor and an appointed Assessor. The Primary Supervisor should only be in attendance by special request.

Full time students

1st year students should meet with their supervisor towards the end of Michaelmas term to discuss their revised research proposal (from their application for admission) You are also expected to discuss your fieldwork plans with your supervisor prior to submitting any papers. Having reviewed their submitted proposal, candidates are expected to submit this to their supervisor at the start of Lent term.

Supervisors will arrange a **Pre-Assessment meeting** with the Postgraduate advisor and candidate in order to discuss the proposal's feasibility, framework and timeline to completion, during Lent term (**10th-14th March 2025**), and address preparations for the First Year Assessment

By **29th April 2025** candidates must submit to their supervisor

- a progress essay of up to 10,000 words.
- a section of the thesis of up to 10,000 words (this is not however a requirement and is optional).
- progress log, signed by their primary Supervisor, in order to show the methods training (and any other relevant activities) they have undertaken. The progress log also needs to be sent to the PhD administrator (phdadmin@polis.cam.ac.uk).
- a timeline for the remainder of their research. This must include when and in what order the candidate intends to proceed with research.
- a first draft of your applications for Fieldwork, Risk Assessment and Ethics, as part of the materials you submit for the registration exercise. If you are planning on conducting fieldwork in 2024 early 2025.

The risk assessment should acknowledge the FCDO advice for the country you are visiting and their intended control measures (a few examples from the FCDO for the USA are hurricanes, terror attacks, violent crime etc.) [Foreign travel advice - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice). More information about Ethics, Risk and Fieldwork can be found on the POLIS web page

By **13th May 2025** candidates should submit all materials to their Postgraduate Advisor and Assessor including all Ethics, Risk and Leave to Work Away applications via email, (unless a hard copy is requested), additionally a copy should be sent to the PhD administrator. The assessments should then take place no later than **30th May 2025**.

Part time students - timeline

- End of Lent Term year 1 (week 8) part time students should meet with their Supervisor to discuss their revised research proposal.
- End of Easter Term year 1 (week 7) part time students are expected to submit their revised research proposal to their Supervisors.
- End of Easter Term year 1 (week 8) Supervisors should arrange a Pre – assessment meeting with the Supervisor, postgraduate Advisor and the candidate
- End of Michaelmas Term year 2 (week 8) part time students submit to their Supervisor a progress essay of up to 10,000 words, and they may also add a section of the thesis of up to 10,000 words. Candidates are also expected to submit their progress log, signed by their primary Supervisor, in order to show the methods training (and any other relevant activities) they have undertaken.
- End of Lent Term year 2 (week 8) part time students submit all materials to the Postgraduate Advisor and Assessor
- First Year Registration assessments should then take place in Lent year (year 2) weeks 6-8.

The progress essay should:

- clearly identify the research question and establish its relevance.
- offer a survey of the literature.
- identify the method to be pursued.
- address the selection of case-studies, where appropriate.
- consider the availability of materials.
- give an overview of the expected structure of the thesis.
- summarize the expected progression of the analysis in the main chapters.
- consider any problems or risks likely to be encountered during the work.
- Footnotes are included in the 10,000-word limit.

In relation to the methodology training:

- There is no formal assessment of the compulsory Methods and Approaches course (as outlined on page 13).
- Many of the CaRM courses (page 14) are assessed and the results of these, if known, should be entered in the progress log before it is submitted for the registration assessment.
- Some CaRM and non-CaRM options are not formally assessed. You are still expected to enter these courses in the progress log as a way of identifying the relevance of it for your research.

Ethics and Risk

Students intending to travel for fieldwork trips should include any relevant draft ethics and risk applications in the submission for their first-year registration exercise (papers will be made available by the course administrator in Lent term – draft applications should not be submitted via the ERF online application portal).

If research plans change after registration and you require new or amended applications, then these can be submitted in later years in the normal way via the online portal.

If the thesis research raises none of these issues, the student will need to submit an Ethical Confirmation form verifying this.

For more detailed information on this (including guidance on the circumstances in which certain applications are necessary and application forms), see the section on the POLIS website dedicated to these issues.
<https://www.polis.cam.ac.uk/ethics-risk-and-fieldwork-erf>

The Assessment

The registration assessment usually takes between one and two hours. It consists of a short presentation by the candidate, of the aims and methods of the study, and the hypothesis/research question or anticipated argument(s). In the subsequent discussion, the assessors must satisfy themselves that the project of the candidate is relevant and viable, offering the prospect of original discovery. They also review the methodology, including where relevant the choice of case studies, and consider the knowledge of the candidate of the relevant literature.

In addition to the material submitted by the candidates, the assessors shall satisfy themselves that the candidate **has participated successfully in the methodology and skills training elements of the course, as evidenced through the candidate's log**. Moreover, in relation to part-time candidates, they shall not approve registration unless the candidate has kept the agreed first year schedule of times in Cambridge.

There are five possible outcomes from the 1st Year Registration Exercise:

- i) That you are registered without corrections
- ii) That you are registered submit to minor corrections (2-4 weeks)
- iii) That the student is not registered until substantial corrections are made (timeframe to be agreed between assessors)
- iv) That you should not be registered until substantial corrections are made (timeframe to be agreed between your assessors)
- v) That you should revise and resubmit for another assessment the following term.

If the assessor and advisor do not agree on registration after the second registration meeting, the case will then be referred to the PEC, which may make a recommendation to the Degree Committee to award the Certificate of Postgraduate Study.

The outcome of your registration remains **provisional** until the Postgraduate Education Committee (PEC) approves your assessment paperwork.

In the case of recommendation iv, the assessment shall be attended by the Director of the PhD Programme or the Chair of the PEC and may also be attended by the Supervisor if requested. If the second assessment succeeds, the candidate shall be registered in the ordinary way.

When corrections are requested, the assessors shall supply the candidate with a written report stating their concerns, to be communicated to the candidate for discussion with the Supervisor. The aim of the report is to assist the candidate in addressing the concerns of the assessors in the revised submission. The student is expected to submit to the assessors by email, the revised submission within the given timeframe. The PhD Administrator (phdadmin@polis.cam.ac.uk) should also be copied into the email. Once these revisions have been approved, then the candidate will be formally registered for the PhD.

If the assessors do not agree on registration after the second registration meeting, the candidate shall not be registered. The case will then be referred to the PEC, which may make a recommendation to the Degree Committee to award the Certificate of Diligent Study.

Annual Reviews

Following the first-year registration students are not assessed again until the Viva Voce at the end of the PhD programme. However, 2nd and 3rd year students do undertake an annual review in Easter Term with their supervisor and postgraduate advisor.

Second Year Review

Your Supervisor and Postgraduate Advisor will conduct the second year review. It will normally take place during Easter Term for full time students and Michaelmas term of the 4th year for part time students. The candidate will submit a short report on progress, difficulties and achievements since the registration assessment, and a chapter or other substantive part of the thesis of **no more than 10,000 words**. The completed Progress Log must also be submitted to the PhD administrator at this time.

Third Year Review

Towards the end of the third year for full time students and Easter Term of the 6th year for part time students, the candidate, Supervisor and Advisor shall meet together to consider the likelihood of timely submission and, where necessary, steps that can be taken to ensure submission before the end of the fourth year. The candidate should submit a chapter or other substantive part of the thesis of **no more than 10,000 words** and timetable of remaining work to submission. Where the Supervisors have doubts about timely submission, they shall report these in writing to the PhD Administrator who will inform the Secretary of the PEC. Additional steps may then be taken, including further discussions with the candidate and his or her college Tutor.

Ethical Approval, Risk Assessment and 'leave To Work Away'

Thesis research can raise various ethical and risk issues. In this context, 'ethical issues' refers to sensitivities and risks related to human participants and data involved in the research, while 'risk' concerns any dangers and challenges to the researcher themselves. The Department takes these issues seriously, and students should consider them carefully and discuss them with their supervisor.

- Ethical Approval - When research involves human participants or involves private data, then an 'ethical approval' application needs to be submitted.
- Risk - When research is conducted outside the direct University of Cambridge context (for more than one day at a time) or involves potential risk to the researcher (e.g. from participating in online interviews or forums), then a 'risk assessment' application needs to be submitted. (select the form associated with the most appropriate level of risk).
- LTWA - In cases, when a trip is expected to last for 14 days or more, a 'leave to work away' application will also be necessary. This includes trips for fieldwork, conference attendance and for 'writing up' in the 4th year of study. To work away from Cambridge, you will need to obtain leave from the Student Registry. **Such leave will only be granted after you have successfully passed your first-year registration exercise and after the ERF committee have given approval**
- If the thesis research raises none of these issues, the student will need to submit an Ethical Confirmation form verifying this.

Students intending to travel for fieldwork trips should include any relevant draft ethics and risk applications in the submission for their first-year registration exercise. These should be submitted in Easter term of their first year (full time). **If research plans change after and require new or further applications, then these can be submitted in later years.**

For more detailed information on this (including guidance on the circumstances in which certain applications are necessary and application forms), see the section on the POLIS website dedicated to these issues. <https://www.polis.cam.ac.uk/ethics-risk-and-fieldwork-erf>

First year PhD candidates should submit all draft Ethics, Risk and Leave to Work Away applications to their Postgraduate Advisor and Assessor by **13th May 2025** for trips scheduled for Michaelmas Term 2025 or Lent Term 2026. These should have previously been approved by the student's Supervisor.

Students cannot apply to Leave to Work Away until they have completed the first-year registration. However, if they wish to carry out a small amount of exploratory fieldwork during the first year, they should complete the ethics and risk assessment forms and submit them to ERF by 2 November 2024 or 15 February 2025. **Any exploratory fieldwork should not prevent students**

from attending the Methods and Approaches seminar or professionalisation sessions and should not involve travel away from Cambridge for more than two weeks.

Travel Insurance

Please note: University Business Travel Insurance cover is provided by the insurer Allianz. Cover is not automatic; travellers must **apply on a trip by trip basis** on the TravelCert platform, once their risk assessment has been approved by ERF. [Travel Insurance | Insurance](#)

Risk Assessment training and further information

Fieldwork Training

All first year PhD students will be required to watch a 1-hour online risk assessment safety video on the universities safeguarding web pages. This is aimed at students embarking on fieldwork and was produced by Safer Edge, a travel risk company. The training is aimed at students to help them to produce a comprehensive risk assessment which will then be reviewed by the department. You will be unable to start your field work without the department's approval. The link for this is found below;

<https://www.safeguarding.admin.cam.ac.uk/risk-assessment-training-video>

This training must be completed prior to the First Year Registration exercise and confirmation of completion must be added to your Student Progress Log.

GDPR Compliance

All researchers conducting studies with human participants must ensure that their participant information documents are compliant with the new GDPR legislation. In-depth details [Data Protection](#) and [Research Integrity](#)

If you are unsure of whether your participant information sheet will be sufficient, please include a link to direct your participants to the [University's standard GDPR policy for research participants](#). This will provide a basic level of compliance, but please ensure that you have read the statement too and can provide all of the information mentioned.

We also strongly advise that you personalise and include the following additional Privacy Notice template with your participant information sheet- [GDPR Privacy Template](#).

Transcribing Interviews

PhD students are **not** normally required to transcribe interviews conducted whilst on research. If you are unsure whether or not your research would require transcription, please check with your supervisor.

Working on the Thesis

The process of working on the thesis will differ from candidate to candidate, depending on their project, their preferences and the style of supervision adopted. However, in general, it is expected that the first year will be devoted not only to completing the methodological skills set of the candidates, but also to the development of a detailed and well thought through thesis outline. In particular, at the outset, you should devote some time to considering how you will be making an original contribution to the field through your work.

The Student Registry advises that a thesis must be a connected account of your research written by yourself. Before recommending the award of the PhD Degree the examiners must satisfy themselves that the thesis:

- 1) is clearly written;
- 2) takes due account of previously published work on the subject;
- 3) represents a significant contribution to learning, for example through the discovery of new knowledge, the connection of previously unrelated facts, the development of new theory, or the revision of older views.

POLIS PhDs should take the form of a thesis of up to 80,000 words, including footnotes. The word limit includes appendices but excludes the bibliography. Discursive footnotes are generally discouraged, and under no circumstances should footnotes be used to include material that would normally be in the main text. Statistical tables should be counted as 150 words per table. Only under exceptional circumstances, and after prior application, will the Degree Committee allow a student to exceed these limits.

A candidate must submit, with the thesis, a statement signed by her or himself attesting to the length of the thesis. Any thesis that exceeds the limit will be referred back to candidate for revision before being forwarded to the examiners.

(as set out by the Degree Committee)

<https://www.cambridgestudents.cam.ac.uk/exams/students/postgraduate-exam-information/writing-submitting-and-examination/phd-edd-msc-mlitt/word-limits#POLIS>

It is perfectly acceptable for a thesis to consist of a number of papers (which may or may not have been published), with an introduction and conclusion which explain how they fit together as a thesis, but the examiners will expect to evaluate the thesis as a single piece of work, written by the student, which makes a significant contribution to learning on a specific topic. Candidates

should be particularly cautious about drawing on material from papers which they have co-authored: in these cases, they should make clear the nature of their own contribution and the input they have received from other scholars.

As was noted above, this brief introduction does not reproduce the University's detailed guidance on style, citations, printing, etc [here](#).

Please submit your thesis to the POLIS Degree Committee electronically via the Course Moodle page. You will not be required to send anything to Student Registry and you do not need to send anything to the Degree Committee directly, please submit your thesis in Pdf format through the course Moodle page [Course: PhD in Politics and International Studies \(cam.ac.uk\)](#)

Information about the establishment of an electronic PhD thesis submission scheme can be found at:

<http://www.cambridgestudents.cam.ac.uk/your-course/examinations/Postgraduate-exam-information/submitting-and-examination/phd-msc-mlitt/submit>

Plagiarism

Even at an early stage the danger of plagiarising should be kept in mind when writing a thesis. You will be expected to have a solid grasp of existing publications relevant to the thesis topic, but the work that you submit must be your own, and the contribution of others fully acknowledged. It is crucially important to maintain a clear distinction between your own ideas and views derived from the published literature or presented by others in seminars. If you present as your own ideas which are in fact drawn from the work of others, you run the risk of being penalised by the examiners, as well as being disciplined by the University.

The University wide statement on plagiarism, from which this guidance is taken, can be found at the following link:

[What is academic misconduct? | Plagiarism and Academic Misconduct \(cam.ac.uk\)](#)

Please also see the following webpage relating to good academic practice and plagiarism:

<http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/univ/plagiarism/>

Work Balance

In the past, work on the PhD has been an isolating and lonely experience for some. However, this need not be the case. You should develop over your first year a close academic relationship with your supervisor, meeting them frequently and regularly during term, and perhaps somewhat less frequently out of term. In addition, the various seminars, training sessions, and other cohort and department events should give you the chance to integrate with your fellow students on the course, and other members of the academic staff. Moreover,

you should ensure that you have enough time to participate in some of the cultural and social offerings, especially those provided by your college.

Working while you study

Research students undertaking a course of more than 12 months may undertake paid work up to a maximum of **ten hours per week** with the approval of both their Supervisor and College Tutor. The work undertaken should be either academic-related, related to a student's professional or career development or outreach work undertaken on behalf of the University. Academic related work may include supervising undergraduates, invigilating examinations, working in a University / College library or demonstrating in a laboratory. Students may work for more than one employer (e.g their Department and their College) but must ensure that:

- the total number of hours worked per week does not exceed 10
- they do not rely on such work to generate essential income for their studies
- if in receipt of funding, should check that the terms and conditions of their funding permits them to undertake work

Students who wish to teach should undergo basic instruction. The university offers training both through departments and centrally.

Postgraduate Research Students holiday allowance.

The vacation dates used by undergraduate and taught master's students do not apply to postgraduate research students who study throughout the academic year (1st October - 30th September). Students may take breaks for holidays, up to a maximum of **eight weeks a year**, at times agreed with their supervisor but such periods should not be used for the purpose of undertaking work.

PhD Study Areas in the Department, Access to ARB, printing and business cards

PhD Study Spaces.

There are three rooms which are dedicated POLIS PhD student spaces in the Alison Richard Building.

Room 101 and **room 129** (room 129 desks situated to the right of room only) are open to all POLIS PhD students and operates on a first come, first served basis. This is a hot desk area, and desks cannot be reserved. Room 129 is a quiet space, and we ask that everyone respects this condition.

Please ensure that you take your personal belongings away with you at the end of your session.

Room 115 is a reserved space in which students who are writing up can apply for a desk on which to work. The space is exclusively reserved for 3rd and 4th

year students. Spaces are allocated once a term, following a call for requests by the PhD Administrator. Desks are available for a maximum of three terms. In order to apply you will need to email a case to Ms Askew, explaining why you need the space, spaces will then be allocated to the successful applicants.

The Mond Building -Additionally, there are 41 desk spaces (allocated for an academic year) and 16 hot desking spaces available for PhD students registered in institutions within the School of Humanities and Social Sciences. These are situated in a large, shared office in the Mond Building on the New Museums Site. [Mond Building: Map of the University of Cambridge](#)
Nominations of interest will be sought prior to the start of the academic year.

Access to the Alison Richard Building

PhD students have 24 hours access to ARB, 7 days a week (excluding public holidays). **To gain access to the building you will be required to take your university id card to the reception desk in ARB and ask them to give you access to the first-floor corridors.** Please wait until mid-October to do this, so that the facilities team have access to your details.

Printing

New students are allocated a £50 credit print allowance in Michaelmas term. Printing and photocopying credits are allocated by HSPS IT. This will automatically be added to your account when you are admitted onto the course. You can print, copy and scan documents using the University's DS-Print enabled multi-function devices (MFDs) in many Colleges and Departments.

Many printers should be wired into the POLIS_FindMe printer network whereby printing is released by use of ID card. This is beneficial from a security aspect for sensitive documents you might be printing, so they don't come out of the printer and get read by someone else before you get there. You can also scan straight to your email from the printer once you have tapped your card to sign into the printer.

You will need to install DS-Print software first [Printing, copying and scanning | IT Help and Support \(cam.ac.uk\)](#)

Help and usage support For any other problem associated with using these printers or MFDs please consult the [UIS Service Desk](#) in person, by phone on 01223 334681 or by email to servicedesk@uis.cam.ac.uk

For more information printing, copying and scanning please go to the university IT Help and Support webpage <https://help.uis.cam.ac.uk/service/printing>

For local printer queries contact HSPS IT Helpdesk
(helpdesk@hsps.cam.ac.uk)

Business Cards

All PhD students in SHSS have the option to order University-branded business cards. These may be used only for the duration of the period of registration as a student.

The University-branded business cards should be ordered using the form on the Reprographics website at <https://www.em.admin.cam.ac.uk/what-we-do/estate-operations/workplace-services/reprographics/everyday-printing>

Please note that students are responsible for bearing the cost of these cards. Payment is due on collection in cash or by card.

Library

POLIS is served by the Seeley Historical Library: [Seeley Library | Faculty of History University of Cambridge](#)
seeley@cam.ac.uk This is currently under renovation and will be moved to a temporary location in the main UL.

Cambridge University Library is situated close to the Alison Richard Building:
[Cambridge University Library |](#)

The Haddon Library houses books about Anthropology and Archaeology. The collections, services and classes focus on [Anthropology](#), [Archaeology](#) and the [HSPS Tripos](#), but all members of the university are welcome to borrow books and work in the library.

The Marshall Library supports teaching and research in both the [Faculty of Economics](#) and in the [Centre of Development Studies](#).

All libraries have study space available; this is in addition to space that individual colleges also offer.

Preparing to Submit, Submission and the Viva

Intention to Submit Form

Between the end of the 9th and 12th terms to the PhD students should submit their thesis. The 4th year of the PhD (6th/7th year Part time), is referred to as the 'Writing up Period'. You must complete an Intention to Submit Form and submit this to the course administrator. This form can be downloaded from the course [Moodle page](#) or the POLIS webpage and will start the administration for the viva process. This is for internal information so that department is aware that you are on track to submit. By submitting the

Intention to Submit form, your formal submission deadline on Camsis is not affected.

Alongside this completed form, you must also attach a copy of your thesis abstract, which includes your name, and the title of your thesis. The abstract should be a concise summary of your thesis, covering the major points, content and scope of your argument, the theoretical framework or scholarly point of departure, as well as the methodology, and type of evidentiary basis. It should be able to stand alone.

You are asked to submit this form 2-3 months before you intend to submit your thesis. Forms may be sent out to 4th year students at the beginning of each academic year. [Submitting your PhD Thesis | Department of Politics and International Studies \(POLIS\) \(cam.ac.uk\)](#)

Appointment of Examiners

As you approach submission, you and your supervisor will need to consider the appointment of examiners for your viva. It is important to think about this in plenty of time before you are due to submit your thesis, as your examiners will need to be approved by both the Postgraduate Education Committee and Degree Committee. Please be aware that committees do not meet outside of term dates (except for one early summer meeting of the Degree Committee).

The PhD administrator will send a copy of the appointment form to your supervisor. Once you have submitted your Intention to Submit form, you will need to provide a one page final abstract of your thesis to be submitted for approval with the appointment form (if not submitted already).

The oral examination will normally take place in-person in Cambridge, under certain circumstances students may choose to be examined remotely by video conference. You should inform your Degree Committee of your preference when you notify them of your intention to submit. Please also make your supervisor aware of your preference as it may affect the choice of available Examiners. Travel expenses rates/restrictions apply for in-person vivas (including limits on non-European international travel).

In-person oral examination: Students who are overseas and returning to Cambridge for their viva should contact the International Student Office for visa advice if their student visa has expired or will be expiring soon.

Submission Procedure

In order to be examined you will be required to submit your thesis to the POLIS Degree Committee electronically via the course Moodle page. Please submit your thesis in Pdf format through the course Moodle page, [Moodle: Log in to the site \(cam.ac.uk\)](#). Please **also email** phdadmin@polis.cam.ac.uk to confirm that you have made your submission. If you have any questions, please email the PhD administrator.

Information about word limits and requirements can be found here [Word limits and requirements of your Degree Committee | Cambridge students](#)

Please visit the Student Registry website for an up to date list of the other documents that also need to be submitted with your thesis.
<http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/students/studentregistry/exams/submission/phd/submitting.html>

The internal examiner will contact you directly to arrange the viva.

The Viva

Following submission of your thesis, your examiners will agree a date for the viva. There are no formal rules for the length of the viva but you can expect it to last between 90 minutes and three hours. During the viva you will be expected to defend your work and clarify any issues raised, while the examiners assess your knowledge of your field and the originality of your work. The most common result is to receive corrections after the viva, the process of which the PhD administrator can explain to you individually following the viva.

Post-viva approval process

Following your viva, the reports written by your examiners will be reviewed by the POLIS Degree Committee. Please be aware that this process can be slow and is reliant on the pre-set meeting dates. **Please also be aware that these meetings do not take place during the summer vacation and viva reports will be approved at the first Michaelmas term meetings.** If you need to provide evidence of completing your Viva for funding providers or future employers, ask your PhD Administrator for a stamped headed letter. Remember that the viva outcome is still provisional until committee approval has been given, and some funders will only accept final approval as evidence of a pass.

Once your viva reports have been approved you will receive the formal recommendation made by your examiners and the full reports from the University Postgraduate Committee. You will be provided with information regarding your deadline to submit your corrections to the examiners if necessary. Any corrections must be approved by the examiners directly.

Please note you will need to submit a final hard bound thesis and upload an electronic version to the university repository Appollo following your viva. Please visit the Cambridge Students webpage for up to date instructions.
[Submitting your hardbound thesis \(final thesis submission\) | Cambridge students](#)

[Appollo :: How-to deposit \(cam.ac.uk\)](#)

Please note that you will not actually receive the degree until it has been conferred on you, either in person or in your absence, at a Congregation of the Regent House. You should therefore get in touch as soon as possible, after confirmation of receipt of your final thesis, with the Praelector of your College to arrange for this to be done. Your degree certificate will be issued only after the degree has been conferred.

POLIS FUNDS

The POLIS PhD Fund

Polis runs a PhD Fund which is used to award grants to PhD students on a competitive basis for either **conferences or fieldwork**. Applications for conference funding or applications for fieldwork – of up to £500 – can only be made once you have passed your registration exercise. Students can either apply once for the full amount of £500 or make smaller separate applications. The receipts for your expenses must be presented to the PhD administrator for processing together with a redacted bank statement.

Before you apply it is important that you read the terms of the fund carefully to make sure that you are eligible. The fieldwork grant can also be used to pay for student status letters and business cards, should students need them when abroad on research. The relevant information and the application forms can be found on the POLIS website at the following address:

<http://www.polis.cam.ac.uk/Postgraduates/CurrPhD/phd-fund>

The POLIS Postgraduate Hardship Fund

The department also provides a hardship fund of up to £300 to assist Postgraduate students in cases of acute hardship resulting from unforeseen circumstances, for example essential travel because of family illness or bereavement or funds needed to complete studies. More information can be found on the POLIS website at the following address:

<http://www.polis.cam.ac.uk/Postgraduates/CurrPhD/department-of-polis-hardship-fund-operating-guidlines>

A University Financial Assistance fund is also available, further details of which can be found here: <http://www.cambridgestudents.cam.ac.uk/fees-and-funding/financial-hardship-support-access-funds/hardship-funding>

Cambridge Colleges each offer their own funding schemes, and students should liaise with their college tutors regarding these schemes first before applying for the University hardship fund.

Fieldwork Fund

In addition to the POLIS PhD Fund, Fieldwork Funding is available to registered PhD students who are undertaking fieldwork as part of their course. This funding is given to the Department by the HSPS School, and the Department awards funds to students based on the applications it receives. Fieldwork Funding is intended as a way to assist students with their fieldwork expenses, within the terms set out below.

There are two funding rounds run each calendar year for fieldwork trips:

- Round one – for trips taking place in July - January. The deadline for this application is 17 May.
- Round two – for trips taking place in January - July. The deadline for this application is 10 November.

Fieldwork Funding is not a “fees refund”. The fund is not able to cover the full cost of fees and/or maintenance during periods of fieldwork, and students should not make applications on this basis.

Please note that funding will be capped (usually between £2000-£4000). Students may apply for larger amounts, and these will be considered in a case by case basis.

For the terms of the application and how to apply, please refer to the POLIS website:

[Fieldwork Funding | Department of Politics and International Studies \(POLIS\) \(cam.ac.uk\)](https://www.polis.cam.ac.uk/about-us/fieldwork-funding)

POLIS Carers Fund

The ‘POLIS Carers Fund’ is available to all POLIS staff and Postgraduate students. The primary use of the fund will be to provide financial support, up to the value of £250, to cover caring costs whilst at conferences, seminars and during busy periods of the academic year.

In order to be eligible for the fund you must meet the below criteria:

- The applicant must be a current member of staff or Postgraduate student
- The applicant must check and confirm the event does not provide free childcare.
- Applicants are asked to acknowledge this funding in any presentations, or other documentation.

If you would like to apply to the fund, please complete the attached application form, and submit the document signed, with all relevant receipts to the Departmental Administrator.

If you have any further questions regarding POLIS’ Carers Fund please have a look on our website: <https://www.polis.cam.ac.uk/about-us/polis-carers-fund>
Or contact the Department Administrator administrator@polis.cam.ac.uk

Other Departmental Activities

The Department offers a wide range of scholarly activities connected with its remit, at which PhD students are very welcome. These include assorted seminar series, lectures, workshops, conferences, and other events. Moreover, the Masters and PhD students have taken on the responsibility of organizing a

number of important activities, including the *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* (CRIA) (<https://www.cria.polis.cam.ac.uk/>)

POLIS Research Groups

POLIS organises various research groups, each convened by a member of the academic staff (often with the assistance of an advanced PhD student). They exist to foster collaboration between staff and students working in similar research areas. Students whose work falls under the remit of the research groups are encouraged to join them and attend the relevant events.

The Bennett Institute for Public Policy (BIPP)

Co-Directors: Professor Diane Coyle and Professor Mike Kenny

The Bennett Institute for Public Policy's goal is to rethink public policy in an era of turbulence and inequality. The research connects the world-leading work in technology and science at Cambridge with the economic and political dimensions of policymaking. The Institute is committed to outstanding teaching, policy engagement, and to devising sustainable and long-lasting solutions. [Bennett Institute for Public Policy at the University of Cambridge](#)

The Centre for Governance and Human Rights (CGHR)

Co-Directors: Dr Sharath Srinivasan and Dr Ella McPherson

Within Cambridge, CGHR brings together wide-ranging expertise from within POLIS and across the University to build a core network of scholars, including graduate researchers. The Centre benefits from the ideas and involvement of a range of academics with expertise in regional politics (Africa, the Middle East, Asia and Latin America), human rights, comparative law, international studies, security studies, anthropology, geography, international development, history and political thought. <https://www.cghr.polis.cam.ac.uk/>

POLIS Seminars

POLIS offers a rich menu of seminars covering a very wide range of topics. You are strongly encouraged to regularly attend those that are directly relevant to your own research. But it is also good academic practice to learn about other scholarly areas, and the seminars provide an excellent opportunity to do this. Listings for seminar programmes, including those of all Centres associated with POLIS are available on the POLIS website. Please check the timetables for seminars, as the scheduling information listed in this document may change. The details can be found at:

<http://www.talks.cam.ac.uk/show/index/21736>

You may also benefit from attending research seminars in other departments in the university. Visit <http://www.talks.cam.ac.uk/> for a list of talks across the university but this list is not exhaustive and it is therefore best to visit the websites of the relevant departments and research centres at the beginning of each term to check and see if any of their talks are of interest.

Cambridge Centre of Political Thought

Directors: Prof. Richard Bourke (History), Prof. Duncan Bell (Politics and International Studies), Prof. Annabel Brett (History), Prof. Duncan Kelly (Politics and International Studies)

This is run jointly by POLIS and the History Department. This centre offers activities such as seminars, lectures and conferences. Cambridge is a world-leading centre for the study of the history of political thought. [Cambridge Centre for Political Thought |](#)

Political Thought and Intellectual History Seminars

The Political Thought and Intellectual History Seminars are the official research seminars of the Political Thought and Intellectual History Subject Group of the Faculty of History. They are also an integral part of the History Faculty's PhD programme in Political Thought and Intellectual History and the Inter-Faculty M.Phil in Political Thought and Intellectual History which is co-sponsored by the Faculty of History, the Faculty of Classics and POLIS. The purpose of the seminar series is to present frontline research in the History of Political Thought and related disciplines by senior scholars within and outside Cambridge, as well as by younger academics, post-doctoral research fellows and advanced Postgraduate students. Details can be found at:

<http://www.polthought.cam.ac.uk/seminar>

Contemporary Political Thought Seminar

Convenors: Convenors: Prof Clare Chambers (MT) / Dr Sarah Fine (LT) (Philosophy), and Prof Duncan Bell (POLIS)

This seminar is jointly organised by POLIS and the Faculty of Philosophy, complementing the Political Thought and Intellectual History seminars. Speakers present a paper of about 45 minutes, followed by a Q&A session. A full list of speakers can be found on the web site and an email requesting interest will be sent out in Michaelmas term [Political Philosophy | Faculty of Philosophy \(cam.ac.uk\)](#)

Centre of Latin American Studies Seminars

Please check details on the website:

<http://www.latin-american.cam.ac.uk/clas-open-seminar>

We also run many lunch time seminars, details of which can be found here:

<http://www.latin-american.cam.ac.uk/latest-news-and-events>

You can also sign up to the CLAS mailing list by contacting the CLAS administrator at admin@latin-american.cam.ac.uk

YouGov-Cambridge Centre for Public Opinion Research

The YouGov-Cambridge Centre for Public Opinion Research is a joint research centre run by YouGov and POLIS, which promotes in-depth collaboration between pollsters and academic experts. Alongside research and events, the Centre contributes to teaching at the University and provides several postgraduate scholarships each year.

This listing of seminars is not exhaustive. Please refer to the 'Seminars' page on the POLIS website for further information about departmental seminars, as well as listings for other seminars in the university.

Other Academic Opportunities

Cambridge Review of International Affairs

The *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* is a peer-reviewed international relations, law and political economy journal, edited under the auspices of the Centre of International Studies, University of Cambridge. It is published four times a year by Routledge (Taylor & Francis) and is circulated to more than 5,000 libraries world-wide.

The journal promotes scholarly debate through its main format of thematic sections of about four or five papers debating theoretical, empirical and/or methodological questions. It also publishes individual articles or essays, and book reviews. To promote debate between theory and practice, leading practitioners of international affairs are invited to provide practical insights.

The *Cambridge Review* is entirely run by Postgraduate students, giving them unique opportunities to engage with leading scholars and practitioners and to acquire academic publishing experience. The diversity, multi-disciplinarity and experience of the student body contribute strongly to the dynamism of the journal.

At the beginning of each academic year, the editorial team organise a meeting for those interested in learning about how you can get involved with the journal (PhD students are especially encouraged). If you are unable to make it at the scheduled time for the induction event, but would like to find out more about the

journal, please visit <https://www.cria.polis.cam.ac.uk/> or email one of the editors and arrange to meet one of the team during their office hours.

Please note that any application to be part of the CRIA team will need to be approved by your supervisor.

Language Teaching

While it is unrealistic to expect to develop advanced language skills *ab initio* within the tight schedule of the PhD, it is certainly possible to acquire a reasonable reading knowledge in some languages or to move forward from moderate competence to the standard needed to conduct interviews. The University Language Centre is open to all Cambridge students and staff, and enquiries should be directed to the Centre: enquiries@langcen.cam.ac.uk. The Centre of Latin American Studies may be able to offer additional information or assistance in relation to Portuguese, Spanish, and indigenous languages of the Americas to those working on Latin American research topics. It may occasionally also be possible to take advantage of academic reading classes in various languages, run through the History Faculty. If these are felt necessary, you should discuss them with your supervisor.

Outreach Opportunities

All PhDs students have the opportunity to take part in Outreach programmes and events at POLIS. Often these events involve Open Days, speaking at schools, taking part in the Sutton Trusts Summer School & hosting masterclasses. These events are usually organised for prospective undergraduate students in the summer months. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact ugradadmin@polis.cam.ac.uk

Undergraduate Supervisions

2nd, 3rd and 4th Year PhD students have the opportunity to take part in undergraduate supervisions. Each year in Easter term PhD students will be invited to supervise a list of the confirmed papers for the following academic year.

If you have any further questions, please contact the undergraduate administration team ugradadmin@polis.cam.ac.uk

The Lisa Smirl PhD Prize

The Department offers a prize of £200 for the best PhD completed in the previous academic year. The Prize is named in memory of Lisa Smirl, who gained her PhD in the Department in 2010 but who sadly died of cancer in February 2013. At the end of the academic year, Supervisors are asked to

nominate students who they believe are worthy of the prize. [The Lisa Smirl PhD Prize | Department of Politics and International Studies \(POLIS\) \(cam.ac.uk\)](#)

Equality and Diversity

The University of Cambridge is committed in its pursuit of academic excellence to equality of opportunity and to a proactive and inclusive approach to equality, which supports and encourages all under-represented groups, promotes an inclusive culture, and values diversity. <https://www.equality.admin.cam.ac.uk/> The **EDI Committee** considers matters pertaining to equality, diversity and inclusion across the Department and is chaired by a University Teaching Officer (Professor Sharath Srinivasan in 2024-25). The Committee comprises a range of academic and administrative staff and student representatives from throughout POLIS. The Department operates a particularly strict policy on sexual harassment, and in relation to racism, xenophobia and discrimination.

The **Athena SWAN Self-Assessment Team** promotes gender equality and diversity within the Department of Politics and International Relations, with a specific focus on advancing through the various levels of Athena SWAN awards. The Team shall work towards achieving Athena SWAN awards for the Department and support the Department's contributions to the University of Cambridge's broader Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) initiatives

If you wish to bring any matters concerning equality, inclusion, diversity, accessibility or wellbeing to the EDI committee's attention, please contact the secretary, Dr Rosanna Hunt on DTA@polis.cam.ac.uk.

Student Representation, Feedback and Complaints

Towards the end of Michaelmas term, you will be invited to elect student representative from among the participants in the PhD programme. Their terms typically run from January-December, and their task is to represent your comments, interests and wishes to the relevant department officers (typically the PhD Directors). The representatives will also represent students on the appropriate committees within the department and participate in their deliberations and organise events.

The Department also solicits feedback by way of questionnaires. These are available to first year students when they register for the PhD and for final year students when they submit their thesis. You are strongly encouraged to participate in the survey, to allow us to further improve our support, activities and communications.

If there are other issues you wish to raise, you are always welcome to contact the relevant officer of the Department. In addition, please note that Professor Peter Sloman (DOPE - postgraduate) and Professor Giovanni Mantilla (DUGE - undergraduate) are the department's Responsible Officers
pjs93@cam.ac.uk; gm633@cam.ac.uk.

Information regarding the university's complaints procedure can be found at the following address:

www.studentcomplaints.admin.cam.ac.uk/student-complaints - student complaints procedure

www.studentcomplaints.admin.cam.ac.uk/examination-reviews - exam review procedure

The University's resources on harassment and misconduct, and its reporting mechanisms, are available through the Breaking the Silence site [Breaking the silence - preventing harassment and sexual misconduct | \(cam.ac.uk\)](http://www.cam.ac.uk/breaking-the-silence)

The Student Union has elected representatives and a support service which may serve as a further information resource. <https://www.cambridgesu.co.uk/>

Student buddy system - Chat with our students below or read their blogs [Chat with us | Postgraduate Study \(cam.ac.uk\)](http://www.cam.ac.uk/chat-with-us)

University Childcare Office

The Childcare Office oversees the facilities and assistance offered to university staff and students with children. The University has four day nurseries that students can apply for places at: West Cambridge Nursery, Eddington Nursery, Edwinstowe Nursery and the Chris Abell Nursery

The Childcare Office operates an Information Service, which aims to support families of the University community. The service offers information on family related issues including childcare, schooling, health care, financial support and local community resources. [Childcare Office | \(cam.ac.uk\)](http://www.cam.ac.uk/childcare-office)

For further information on eligibility for the University Workplace Nurseries, see the [application process](#). You can contact the Childcare Office on 01223 765305 or email childcareservices@admin.cam.ac.uk

Student Wellbeing

The University has extensive and varied resources to support the wellbeing of students, including provisions for counselling, support for mental and physical health, disability support, and networks for connection and solidarity. These are accessible via the University Health and Wellbeing site for students <https://www.studentwellbeing.admin.cam.ac.uk/>

Your college acts as the primary source of your pastoral care and also has a dedicated Welfare Officer; please see their website for the resources they can provide.

The Student's Union also offers a range of ways to connect with other students, including to varied networks of students, resources, activities and events, support and guides to the University and the city.

You may approach Hayley your course administrator in total confidence with any concerns you have regarding mental health and/or wellbeing while studying at Cambridge. The role of the administrator is not to act as a counsellor, but to direct students to wellbeing and mental health resources within the University, and to facilitate communication where necessary.

If you have any questions about the above, please contact Hayley.

Accessibility and Students with Disabilities

If you have a disability or long-term health condition, or believe you may have one, the Accessibility and Disability Resource Centre (ADRC) is an excellent resource offering a range of services including specialist mentoring and study skills. For further information see disability.admin.cam.ac.uk.

The ADRC can appoint you a disability support contact who can advise the department on appropriate reasonable adjustments to help you get the best out of your studies.

The ADRC can support you in investigating possible SpLDs (Specific Learning Difficulties including ADHD) and applying for additional funding to pay for adjustments for a range of long-term physical and mental health conditions, sensory difficulties, autism spectrum conditions and Specific Learning Difficulties.

Emergency Contacts

Please see information on [Emergency Contacts](#) for whom to contact in an emergency if you have immediate concerns about your wellbeing or mental health.

Important Faculty Contacts

Position	Name	CRSid	Room	Phone
Head of Department	Professor Jude Browne	jmb63	105	
PA to the Head of Department	Chloe Brown	hod-pa@polis.cam.ac.uk	141	(7)67261
Director of the PhD Programme	Professor Duncan Bell	dsab2	126	(7)67249

Director of Postgraduate Education (DOPE)	Professor Peter Sloman	pjs93	108	(7)67245
Director of Undergraduate Education (DUGE)	Dr Giovanni Mantilla	gm633	135	(3)34644
PhD Methodology and Skills Training Coordinator	Professor Duncan Bell	dsab2	126	(7)67249
Chair of the Postgraduate Studies Committee and deputy DOPE	Professor Adam Branch	arb209	330	(7)69328
Business and Operations Manager	Helen Reynolds	BOM@polis.cam.ac.uk	139	7)67228
Department Teaching Administrator	Dr Rosie Hunt	DTA@polis.cam.ac.uk	140	(7)67252
PhD Programme Administrator	Hayley Askew	ha446	142	(7)64619
MPhil International Relations and Politics Administrator	Zixuan Liu	zl592	142	(7)67112
MPhil Public Policy Administrator	Rebecca King	rpk29	140	(7)67236
Postgraduate/ Administrative Assistant	Susannah Tadman	St955	142	(7)67252
Undergraduate Administrator and Outreach coordinator	Rosalie Vanderpant	rv352	142	(7)67235
Undergraduate/ Administrative Assistant	vacant	ugradadmin@polis.cam.ac.uk	142	(7)67255

MSt Programme Administrator	Richard Williams	rsw28	142	(7)67235
MSt Administrative Assistant	Karolina Ledesma- Herrera	kl563	Work from Home	Teams
Responsible Officers	Professor Peter Sloman	cb632	108	(7)67245
	Dr Giovanni Mantilla	gm633	135	(3)34644
POLIS Disability Liaison Officer (DLO)	Hayley Askew	ha446	142	(7)64619
Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) secretary	Rosie Hunt	rh649	140	(7)67252
Communications Coordinator	Diana Mason	dm980	141	(7)67246

Committee Dates

TERMS	Postgraduate Education Committee
Michaelmas 2024	16 October 20 November
Lent 2025	29 January 26 February
Easter 2025	7 May 4 June

TERMS	POLIS Degree Committee
Michaelmas 2024	10 October 14 November 05 December
Lent 2025	23 January 20 February 20 March
Easter 2025	01 May

	29 May 10 July
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*Subject to change

TERMS	Ethics, Risk, Fieldwork Committee
Michaelmas 2024	26 November
Lent 2025	13 March
Easter 2025	26 June

Terms	PhD Fieldwork Funding Committee
Michaelmas 2024	18 November
Easter 2025	5 June

Safety Notice

Department Safety Officer

Rebecca King (tel: (7)67236 room 142, POLIS Admin Office

First Aid

Ms Rebecca Leam – Bennett Institute

Any member of the Facilities Management/Reception Team

Fire Manager

Zixuan Liu (7)67112 room 140, POLIS Admin Office

Fire Evacuation Procedure

The fire alarm will be tested weekly on Tuesdays between 8am and 9am. In the event of a fire practice or a genuine fire, the fire alarm will ring continuously. You must leave the building immediately, without stopping to collect any of your belongings.

The fire assembly point is next to the Raised Faculty Building on the Sidgwick Site.