

Study Politics and International Relations at Cambridge



www.polis.cam.ac.uk



What is Politics and International Relations?

Politics and International Relations is about the world in which we live collectively and the ways in which it became what it is today and continues to change. It considers the choices that political actors – from governments to citizens to international institutions – make and the structures and constraints under which they make them. It examines how political thinkers have tried to understand the world as it is, and imagine how it might be.

Human, Social and Political Sciences Tripos

About the course:

In the first year students can spend up to 50 per cent of their time on Politics and International Relations. In the second and third years, students, if they wish, can concentrate exclusively on Politics and International Relations. Students in the second and third-years can also do joint Politics and Sociology or Politics and Social Anthropology. The course in Politics and International Relations at Cambridge aims to understand the political and international worlds as part of a single whole. It draws together analysis of contemporary politics and the historical development of political thinking.



Course structure:

First year

Students interested in Politics and International Relations will take papers on:

- Introduction to Politics
- Introduction to International Relations.

Students take a further two papers chosen from a list of optional papers including:

- Sociology
- Social Anthropology
- Biological Anthropology
- Archaeology
- Psychology

Second year

- A paper in the History of Political Thought (either the Greeks up to 1700 or the 18th and 19th centuries)
- International Organisation and Global Governance
- Comparative Politics
- Either an essay paper in Politics and International Relations or a paper from another department

It is also possible to take a joint track in either Politics and Sociology or Politics and Social Anthropology, where two papers are taken in

each subject. For more information on these options please visit our website.

Third year

- One general paper in Politics and International Relations.
- An optional 10,000-word dissertation on any topic OR a paper in Politics or International Relations.
- Two more papers chosen from a long list of options including: a paper in political thought, the politics of a particular region such as the Middle East, Europe, East Asia and Africa, a paper on the politics of the international economy, a paper on the politics of conflict and peacebuilding. Alternatively students can opt to take papers from other subjects, such as Sociology and Social Anthropology.

If students have chosen the joint track they take two papers in Politics and two in the other subject or replace one of these papers with a dissertation.

Key Facts

- There are no specific subject requirements to study HSPS, and Politics and International Relations within it.
- The standard offer is A*AA at A Level

History and Politics Tripos

About the course:

History and Politics at Cambridge is an exciting new Honours degree which will run for the first time in 2017. It offers subjects from our highly-regarded History and Politics and International Relations courses, together with bespoke papers which will allow students to explore the space between the two disciplines. In the first year, students will look at the foundations of modern politics and international relations, study a period of modern British or European history in detail, and take our unique Evidence and Argument paper, which will introduce a range of methods and approaches from across the two disciplines.



Course structure:

First year

Students studying History and Politics take four papers in the first year:

- Evidence and Argument
- Analysis of Politics
- International Relations
- A paper in British Political History (1688-1886 or since 1880) or European History (1715-1890 or since 1890)

Second year

- A paper in the History of Political Thought (either covering the period from the Greeks up to 1700 or the 18th and 19th centuries)
- A paper on either Comparative Politics or International Relations
- A further History paper, covering World History, American History, or British Social and Economic History
- A long essay paper, a historical project, or a paper on Statistics and Methods

Third year

- A paper in General Themes and Issues, which considers general issues in history and politics and the relationship between the two disciplines

- Three other papers from a wide range of options:

- History Specified Subjects, which currently include papers on the transformation of the Roman world, modern India and the American experience in Vietnam, 1941-75.
- Specialised papers in Politics and International Relations, for instance on the politics of a particular region such as Europe or the Middle East, the politics of gender, or the politics of conflict and peacebuilding
- Further papers in the History of Political Thought
- A 10-15,000-word research dissertation

Key Facts

- You do not need to have studied Politics or International Relations before, though some colleges require A Level/IB Higher Level History or at least one essay-based subject
- The standard offer is A*AA at A Level or 40-41 IB points, with 776 at Higher Level
- 40 places are available for 2017 entry

Teaching

One of the main strengths of the Politics and International Relations course at Cambridge is the quality of the teaching. At Cambridge you will be learning from the best in the field. The Department of POLIS is a medium-sized department with about 30 academics with a huge range of specialisms. With both HSPS and History and Politics, students have the opportunity to take papers from other departments which means you will have the chance to access an even wider pool of world-class academics.

For each paper within the course, lectures, classes or seminars are provided. In addition to this there are supervisions, for which students write essays which they discuss usually in groups of two or three with a supervisor. This is a wonderful opportunity for students to receive feedback on their work and discuss the problems and ideas raised by the lectures and further reading.

Facilities

The facilities in Cambridge are first rate. The Department has a state-of-the-art new building on the Sidgwick site, next to the Grade II listed History Faculty building. All students have access to the University Library which, as a copyright library, has over eight million books and a wealth of e-resources. In addition to this, students have access to College libraries and specialist Faculty libraries.

The Department makes use of online learning platforms where lecture handouts, reading lists and other electronic resources are hosted. Cambridge provides students with plenty of opportunities outside of their course; for example, students can improve their language skills at the Language Centre or join one of a wealth of sports and social clubs.

After Cambridge

Students who take this degree will have acquired a range of skills that are attractive to employers. They learn to evaluate and discriminate between types of evidence; to cope with large amounts of information; to work independently and with others; and to present arguments clearly and persuasively.

Recent graduates who have studied Politics and International Relations have gone on to careers in the media, law, public administration, finance, diplomacy, teaching, international organisations and the charity sector.

