



International Relations  
Undergraduate Degrees  
2025

# International Relations at Lancaster



**We live in an increasingly globalised world: one in which trade, politics and collaboration takes place across international borders. Studying International Relations at Lancaster will develop your ability to think in global terms – and to understand the nature of the political, economic and environmental challenges that confront us in the twenty-first century.**

**in the UK for Research Power**  
*Research Excellence Framework (2021)*

At Lancaster, our research-led environment will underpin your learning, giving you the chance to explore the complex interactions between key states and non-state actors with experts specialising in different regions of the world.

We offer an exciting atmosphere to think critically about how conflict and cooperation is influenced by issues of power, law, diplomacy, religion and economics. By working closely with our academics, you'll develop the ability to analyse international events, conduct research, and apply that knowledge effectively.

Whatever your goals, studying International Relations at Lancaster will equip you to think clearly about the international dimensions of the issues you'll confront in your future. You'll have the opportunity, via work-based learning on our Richardson Institute Internship Programme, or a Placement Year, to gain experience which will prepare you for your career and to develop skills that will make you more employable. You may also have the opportunity to travel abroad, visiting countries you could be studying as part of your degree, either for short-term visits or for a full year on a study abroad degree.

Many of our students choose to combine the study of International Relations with Politics, and many with other subjects such as History or Economics. We hope that this booklet provides useful material to inform your own choice, but if you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact us.



# Your degree

## BA (Hons) International Relations

### Year 1

In your first year, you will be introduced to the methods and theoretical approaches involved in the study of International Relations in higher education, and the challenges that confront states and international organisations in an increasingly global world. You will take one core module and two optional modules.

#### Core Module

##### International Relations: Theory and Practice

We will introduce you to central aspects of the discipline of International Relations, providing a firm grounding in the major concepts and debates necessary to understand the modern world of international politics. You will learn about: the dominant features and power relations of the contemporary global system; the nature of sovereignty and security, their expression and limitations; the real-world problems confronting the international community today.

#### Areas of study typically include:

- + **International Relations Theory:** the study of how relations between states can and should be viewed and theorised, Realism, Liberalism, Constructivism and Feminism.
- + **International Institutions and Law:** the international organisations, customs, and rules that govern inter-state relationships.
- + **Global Politics and Belief:** the study of how religious and ideological belief can shape international politics and the relation of states.
- + **International Crises:** the study of pressing issues confronting the international community, such as environmental collapse, technological advance, the rise of non-state actors, and terrorism.
- + **International Relations and the Domestic:** the study of how the domestic agendas can shape and influence international politics.

Because of the increasing interdependence of the national and global, domestic politics and international relations can no longer be properly understood in isolation from one another.

To ensure the best possible foundation for a degree in International Relations, in first year, we strongly recommend you also take Politics in the Modern World.

#### Recommended Module

##### Politics in the Modern World

This module introduces you to key themes in the study of modern politics, and allows you to gain critical insight into the nature and use of political power in the contemporary world. You will learn about: the foundations of the modern nation-state, and the ways in which our institutions can reflect or fail to meet the ideals of liberal democracy; the behaviour of individuals and groups in political contexts; the workings of national constitutions and international organisations; the interaction of global events and domestic agendas.

#### Areas of study typically include:

- + **Political Theory:** the study of the scope, nature, and justification of state authority, and the history of political thought.
- + **Comparative Politics:** the study of the various institutions of the nation-state, in a comparative context.
- + **Ideologies:** the study of political ideologies such as (neo-)liberalism, (neo-)conservatism, socialism, and fascism, their cohesiveness and social/political function.
- + **Political Behaviour:** the study of the ways in which agents and groups engage with politics in the age of mass and social media.
- + **Politics in a Global World:** the influence of global movements and events on domestic and international politics.

#### Minor Module

You will select a third module to complement your studies in International Relations, potentially from among the following subjects:

Criminology, History, Economics, Sociology, Philosophy, Gender Studies.

The choices available will be subject to any timetabling restrictions or entry prerequisites.

## Year 2

**In your second year, you will examine more advanced theories of international interaction by studying the recommended module: International Relations, Security and Sustainability. You will also begin to develop expertise in particular regional dimensions of the subject by choosing from a range of geographically-focused modules.**

**You will study optional International Relations modules such as:**

- + China's International Relations
- + Comparative Politics of the Gulf
- + Exploring Global Religions
- + International Relations and Politics of the Asia Pacific
- + International Political Economy
- + International Relations, Security and Sustainability
- + Peace Studies in Action
- + Peace Studies in the Middle East
- + Politics of Development
- + Politics and History of the Middle East
- + Research Methods in Politics
- + Russian (Inter)National Politics
- + State and Economy
- + War and Geopolitics

**You may wish to complement International Relations modules with optional Politics modules, such as:**

- + Asian Political Culture
- + Environmental Politics
- + European Union Politics
- + International Relations and Politics of the Asia Pacific
- + Issues in Contemporary Political Philosophy
- + Modern Political Thought: Equality and Community
- + Philosophical Questions in the Study of Politics and Economics
- + Politics of Ireland
- + Politics of Race
- + Power in British Politics
- + Public Policy
- + The Ethics of Politics and Knowledge
- + The Government and Politics of the United States
- + The Power of the Past: Religion and Politics in South Asia
- + The Politics and Philosophy of Higher Education

You can read module descriptions online at: [www.lancaster.ac.uk/study](http://www.lancaster.ac.uk/study)



## Meet Avery

Something I love about studying at Lancaster is the great support I have received from many of my lecturers and academic advisors, and the wide range of modules available to choose from. I am particularly interested in the legacies of colonialism in contemporary political issues, and I have been given the opportunity to explore that with programs, such as Decolonising Lancaster, and the range of modules they offer.

With the university's rich history in social movements, I have been able to engage in action to express my views and to advocate in issues that I care about.

I love helping out people who need it most, which is why I have joined some volunteering societies, such as Students Taking Action for Refugees (STAR) society. We have done a wide range of activities, such as running stalls at fairs within the Lancaster-Morecambe area and going offsite to distribute clothes, or food.

**Avery De Vera**

BA (Hons) International Relations (Placement Year)

# Final Year

At final year level, we offer specialist modules on the international politics of various regions in the world, as well as various sub-disciplines of International Relations, such as International Relations Theory, Security Studies, and International Political Economy. Other options available include the interdisciplinary study of religion, philosophy, and technology and their relevance to the study of global change.

You can choose optional modules from a selection, such as:

- + Africa and Global Politics
- + Britain in the World
- + China in the Modern World
- + Contemporary Issues in the Middle East
- + Defence and Strategic Studies
- + Decolonisation: Race and Empire
- + Political Economy of the Global South
- + Politics of Global Danger
- + Philosophies of War and Conflict
- + The Governance of Global Capitalism
- + Understanding External Intervention in Violent Conflicts
- + United States Foreign Policy
- + War and Communication

## Dissertation

You will have the opportunity to undertake a dissertation; this is a sustained investigation on an international relations subject that interests you. This develops your employability and research skills, as well as your ability to work independently, with input from an academic supervisor. We offer the option to complete a dissertation with external collaboration (for example, via our Richardson Institute internship programme) to enhance your ability to reflect on the impact of academic work.

## Placement Year and Study Abroad Degrees

Placement year and study abroad students spend year 3 away from campus. In your final year, you will return to Lancaster to study and will select optional modules such as those listed above.

## Teaching and assessment

In Year 1, you will typically have 6 hours of lectures and 3-4 hours of seminars per week. In year 2 and final year, this will change to 3-4 hours of lectures per week depending on your module choices. In addition to this, you will study independently, prepare for your seminar discussions, and produce assessed pieces of work as directed by your tutors. There is assessed coursework and exams throughout all years. For most modules, exams count for 60% of your mark, coursework for 40%. First year marks do not contribute to your final degree classification.

## Joint degree students

For joint and triple major students, you will study core and optional modules in your second and third subjects in approximately equal weightings through all years of study.

Find out more online:

[www.lancaster.ac.uk/study](http://www.lancaster.ac.uk/study)



# Your global experience

Lancaster is a truly international university, with students and staff from over 100 different countries and partner institutions around the world. Your global experience is about living and learning with people from different cultures whether through your course, your College or your Students' Union.

## Study abroad

Grow in independence and confidence while immersing yourself in a new culture and way of learning. At Lancaster, we offer 4-year study abroad degrees where you spend your third year studying at one of our international partner universities. Current partners include institutions in Australia, Canada, Hong Kong, the Netherlands and the USA. Living in another country and studying your subjects from a different perspective offers considerable benefits both in terms of your understanding of the subject and your preparation for life after university.

## Vacation travel

Alternatively, there are usually shorter options in the summer vacation to destinations such as China, Germany, Ghana, Malaysia and Switzerland. These programmes include meeting local students and businesses as well as some academic study and cultural discovery.

You may also be able to attend a summer school at one of our many overseas partner universities.

Find out more:

[www.lancaster.ac.uk/your-global-experience](http://www.lancaster.ac.uk/your-global-experience)

*Destinations are given as a guide only as the availability of places at overseas partners may vary year to year.*



# Your future career

**Our specialist internship schemes and placement year options support you in developing careers-focused skills and relevant work experience so you graduate with a strong CV and clear ambition.**

## Internships

The department is home to the Richardson Institute, which undertakes cutting-edge peace and conflict research. Typically, the Institute offers over 60 internships per year to our students to undertake research projects for external organisations.

You can also apply for internships as part of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences Internship Scheme. Roles range from marketing and comms to research and policy work at national and local SMEs, a range of departments at Lancaster University and third sector organisations.

## Placements

The majority of our degrees are also available as placement year degrees. With specialised support, you will apply for a professional, paid work placement in Year 3 and return to Lancaster to complete your degree in Year 4. Find out more: [www.lancaster.ac.uk/placement-year](http://www.lancaster.ac.uk/placement-year)

## Graduate destinations

An International Relations degree provides you with knowledge and transferable skills relevant to a range of different careers. We will help you determine your direction and support you in getting there. We do this by offering subject-specific support from academic tutors and specialist careers advisers.

Employers look for clear thinking, broad vision, independence, the capacity to locate and analyse problems and exercise judgement in their solution. It is also very useful to be able to present information lucidly and argue effectively for favoured courses of action. Our graduates find that their analytical and organisational skills, plus their ability to achieve insights into problems, are greatly valued by employers in many areas, including:

- + Civil and Diplomatic Services
- + Politics and Government
- + International Charities and Non-Government Organisations
- + Teaching and Education
- + International Finance and Banking
- + Journalism and Media
- + Business, Management and Consultancy













## Careers service

We offer life-long careers support for our students. Our career advisers are available to support you with subject-specific careers guidance, as well as application and interview practice. You can take part in the Lancaster Award, which is a formal recognition of extra-curricular activity that enhances your employability, for example volunteer work, training and attending careers workshops.

Find out more: [www.lancaster.ac.uk/careers](http://www.lancaster.ac.uk/careers)



# Degrees and entry requirements

|  |   |          |         |      |     |
|--|---|----------|---------|------|-----|
| International Relations                          |   | BA Hons  | 3 years | 6T99 | ABB |
| Politics and International Relations             |   | BA Hons  | 3 years | L250 | ABB |
| Economics, Politics and International Relations  |    | BA Hons  | 3 years | LL22 | AAB |
| Global Religions and International Relations     |   | BA Hons  | 3 years | VL01 | ABB |
| History and International Relations              |   | BA Hons  | 3 years | VL12 | AAB |
| Peace Studies and International Relations        |   | BA Hons  | 3 years | LL92 | ABB |
| Politics, International Relations and Management |    | BSc Hons | 3 years | LN30 | ABB |

 Study abroad available  Placement year available

Visit our website for more information on degree options, scholarships and entry requirements (such as BTECs).

[www.lancaster.ac.uk](http://www.lancaster.ac.uk)

## Get in touch

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Philosophy and Religion (PPR)  
Lancaster University,  
Lancaster, LA1 4YL

[www.lancaster.ac.uk/ppr](http://www.lancaster.ac.uk/ppr)

Message a student: [www.lancaster.ac.uk/chat](https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/chat)

E: [study-ppr@lancaster.ac.uk](mailto:study-ppr@lancaster.ac.uk)

 @PPRLancaster



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## Important information

The information in this publication relates primarily to 2025–26 entry to the University and every effort has been taken to ensure the information is correct at the time of printing (June 2024). The University will use all reasonable effort to deliver the courses as described but the University reserves the right to make changes after going to print. In exceptional circumstances that are beyond the University's reasonable control (Force Majeure Events), we may need to amend the programmes and provision advertised. However, in this event, the University will take reasonable steps to minimise the disruption to your studies. You are advised to consult our website at: [www.lancaster.ac.uk/study](http://www.lancaster.ac.uk/study) for up-to-date information before you submit your application. More information on limits to the University's liability can be found in the Student Contract at: [www.lancaster.ac.uk/terms](http://www.lancaster.ac.uk/terms). Further legal information may be found at: [www.lancaster.ac.uk/compliance/legalnotice](http://www.lancaster.ac.uk/compliance/legalnotice)

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