

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

Name, title and level of final qualification(s)	BA Global Politics and International Relations (Level 6)
Name and title of any exit qualification(s)	Cert HE Politics and International Studies Dip HE in Global Politics and International Relations
Is the programme offered with a Foundation Year	Yes
Awarding Body	University of London
Teaching Institution(s)	Birkbeck, University of London
Home school/other teaching departments	School of Social Sciences
Location of delivery	Central London
Language of delivery and assessment	English
Mode of study, length of study and normal start month	Full-time (3 years) / Part-time (4 years) / Full-time with Foundation Year (4 years) Part-time with Foundation Year (6 years) September
Professional, statutory or regulatory body	Not Applicable
QAA subject benchmark group(s) Higher Education Credit Framework for England	Politics and International Relations
UCAS code	L291, L292
Birkbeck Course Code	UUBAGLPR_C (3 years full-time) UBAGLPIR_C (4 years part-time) UUBFGLPR_C (4 year full-time with FY) UBFGLPIR_C (6 years part-time with FY)
HECoS Code	100489
Start date of programme	PT – pre 2008/09, FT – 2012/13
Date of programme approval	pre 2008/09
Date of last programme amendment approval	May 2023
Valid for academic entry year	2025-26
Date of last revision to document	04/06/2025

Admissions requirements

We welcome applicants without traditional entry qualifications as we base decisions on our own assessment of qualifications, knowledge and previous work experience. We may waive formal entry requirements based on judgement of academic potential.

UCAS tariff: 112 points. The UCAS tariff score is applicable to you if you have recently studied a qualification that has a UCAS tariff equivalence. UCAS provides a [tariff calculator](#) for you to work out what your qualification is worth within the UCAS tariff.

BA Global Politics and International Relations: Students who have recently taken A-level qualifications will require BBC at A-Level (or UCAS tariff points 112). Students who fail to achieve these grades may still be considered for entry if they demonstrate the required level of intellectual commitment and potential. Birkbeck welcomes applicants without traditional entry qualifications as we base decisions on our own assessment of qualifications, knowledge and previous work experience. We may waive formal entry requirements or consider alternative qualifications based on judgement of academic potential.

BA Global Politics and International Relations with Foundation Year: This programme is designed for people who can demonstrate the ability and motivation to complete the BA Global Politics and International Relations but who do not currently meet the entry criteria for direct entrance onto the degree. Applicants will often be invited for interview to discuss their interests and future plans, and to assess their needs and aptitudes. For those students who already have Level 3 qualifications the expectation is that they will have qualifications equivalent to 48 UCAS tariff points. Given that students on the foundation year will be enrolled on degree programmes, applicants will be offered a place only if there is significant evidence to suggest they have the ability to complete the full degree.

Course aims

BA Global Politics and International Relations: This programme aims to provide students with the main theoretical, conceptual and empirical skills required for understanding and explaining contemporary global politics and international relations. Its compulsory modules focus on: the history of the state and the international system, the contemporary international political and economic system, the major theories of global politics and international relations, and the relationship between war and global social relations. In line with the interdisciplinary nature of the Department of Politics, the programme draws on a wide range of resources from political theory and philosophy, political science, and the traditions of political and historical sociology.

BA Global Politics and International Relations with Foundation Year: For the BA Global Politics and International Relations with Foundation Year programme, the purpose of the Foundation Year is to prepare students for successful completion of their undergraduate degree. The Foundation Year (one-year FT or two years PT) provides students the opportunity to explore their interests and build on their study skills, and on successful completion of the Foundation Year, students may progress onto year one of the PT or FT programmes. The curriculum for the 'with foundation year' programme after the completion of the foundation year modules is the same as the full-time or part-time BA programme. Students who successfully complete the versions of the degree programme 'with foundation year' are awarded the same final degree title as students on the full-time or part-time degree routes.

Course structure

Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credit	Comp Core/ Option	Likely teaching term(s)
Full-time - 3 years					
Year 1					
4	SSPO017S4	Foundations of Social and Political Science	30	Comp	T1-3
4	SSPO265S4	Transformations in Modern Politics: Democracy, Conflict and Globalisation	30	Comp	T1
4	SSP011854	Introduction to Global Politics	30	Comp	T3
4		Option	30	Option	T2
Year 2					
5	SSPO151S5	Governing by Numbers	30	Comp	T1-3
5	SSPO270S5	International Relations and Foreign Policy	30	Comp	T1
5		Option	30	Option	T2
5		Option	30	Option	T3
Year 3					
6	SSPO220S6	Doing Political and Social Research	30	Comp	T1
6	POSO004S6	War and Modern Society	30	Comp	T2
6		Option	30	Option	T1, 2 or 3
6		Option OR	30	Option	T3
6	SSPO012S6	Dissertation BA Global Politics and International Relations	30	Option	T1-3
Part-time - 4 years					
Year 1					
4	SSPO017S4	Foundations of Social and Political Science	30	Comp	T1-3
4	SSPO265S4	Transformations in Modern Politics: Democracy, Conflict and Globalisation	30	Comp	T1
4	SSP011854	Introduction to Global Politics	30	Comp	T3
Year 2					
5	SSPO151S5	Governing by Numbers	30	Comp	T1-3
4		Option	30	Option	T1, 2 OR 3*
5		Option	30	Option	T1, 2 OR 3*
*NOTE: PT students may take a maximum of 30 credits of option modules in a single term					
Year 3					
5	SSPO270S5	International Relations and Foreign Policy	30	Comp	T1
5		Option	30	Option	T2 or T3*
6		Option	30	Option	T2 or T3*
*NOTE: PT students may take a maximum of 30 credits of option modules in a single term					
Year 4					
6	SSPO220S6	Doing Political and Social Research	30	Comp	T1

6	POSO004S6	War and Modern Society	30	Comp	T2
6		Option	30	Option	T3
6	SSPO012S6	OR Dissertation BA Global Politics and International Relations	30	Option	T1-3
Full-time with Foundation Year - 4 years					
Foundation Year (Year 0)					
3	CASE002S3	Fundamentals of Study	30	Core	T1
3	CASE001S3	Breaking Boundaries of Knowledge	30	Core	T2-3
3	SSSS001S3	Crossing Borders	30	Core	T1
3	SSSS002S3	Contemporary Global Issues: Approaches in Social Science, History and Philosophy OR Level 4 language module	30	Option	T2-3
Year 1					
4	SSPO017S4	Foundations of Social and Political Science	30	Comp	T1-3
4	SSPO265S4	Transformations in Modern Politics: Democracy, Conflict and Globalisation	30	Comp	T1
4	SSP011854	Introduction to Global Politics	30	Comp	T3
4		Option	30	Option	T2
Year 2					
5	SSPO151S5	Governing by Numbers	30	Comp	T1-3
5	SSPO270S5	International Relations and Foreign Policy	30	Comp	T1
5		Option	30	Option	T2
5		Option	30	Option	T3
Year 3					
6	SSPO220S6	Doing Political and Social Research	30	Comp	T1
6	POSO004S6	War and Modern Society	30	Comp	T2
6		Option	30	Option	T1, 2 or 3
6		Option	30	Option	T3
6	SSPO012S6	OR Dissertation BA Global Politics and International Relations	30	Option	T1-3
Part-time with Foundation Year - 6 years					
Foundation Year (Year 0a)					
3	CASE002S3	Fundamentals of Study	30	Core	T1
3	CASE001S3	Breaking Boundaries of Knowledge	30	Core	T2-3
Foundation Year (Year 0b)					
3	SSSS001S3	Crossing Borders	30	Core	T1
3	SSSS002S3	Contemporary Global Issues: Approaches in Social Science, History and Philosophy OR Level 4 language module	30	Option	T2-3
Year 1					
4	SSPO017S4	Foundations of Social and Political Science	30	Comp	T1-3

4	SSPO265S4	Transformations in Modern Politics: Democracy, Conflict and Globalisation	30	Comp	T1
4	SSP011854	Introduction to Global Politics	30	Comp	T3
Year 2					
5	SSPO151S5	Governing by Numbers	30	Comp	T1-3
4		Option	30	Option	T1, 2 OR 3*
5		Option	30	Option	T1, 2 OR 3*
*NOTE: PT students may take a maximum of 30 credits of option modules in a single term					
Year 3					
5	SSPO270S5	International Relations and Foreign Policy	30	Comp	T1
5		Option	30	Option	T2 or T3*
6		Option	30	Option	T2 or T3*
*NOTE: PT students may take a maximum of 30 credits of option modules in a single term					
Year 4					
6	SSPO220S6	Doing Political and Social Research	30	Comp	T1
6	POSO004S6	War and Modern Society	30	Comp	T2
6		Option OR	30	Option	T3
6	SSPO012S6	Dissertation BA Global Politics and International Relations	30	Option	T1-3
Indicative options					
4	FFPO956S4	Comparative Government	30	Comp	T2
5	POSO003S	Contemporary British Politics	30	Comp	T2
5	POSO029S5	Introduction to International Political Economy	30	Option	T2
5	SSPO272S5	Digital Politics	30	Option	T3
6	POSO013S6	Social and Political Theory	30	Comp	T2
6	SSPO122S6	Parliamentary Studies	30	Option	T1
6	POSO036S6	Politics and the Middle East	30	Option	T3

Note: options may also be taken from other departments in the college.

Core: Module must be taken and passed by student
 Compulsory: Module must be taken but can be considered for compensated credit (see CAS regulations paragraph 24)
 Option: Student can choose to take this module

How you will learn

Your learning and teaching is organised to help you meet the learning outcomes (below) of the course. As a student, we expect you to be an active learner and to take responsibility for your learning, engaging with all of the material and sessions arranged for you.

Each course is divided into modules. You will find information on the virtual learning site (Moodle, see Academic Support below) about each of your modules, what to expect, the work you need to prepare, links to reading lists, information about how and when you will be assessed.

Your learning for this course will be organised around the activities outlined below.

Various teaching and learning methods are used on the degree. Most teaching takes place in lectures and seminars, employing a variety of methods such as small group work, student presentations, debates, guest speakers and so on. Other forms of teaching are used where appropriate, including field-trips, the use of film, etc. In line with other teaching in the Department, extensive use is made of audio-visual facilities and web-based learning tools such as Moodle.

How we will assess you

The course will use a variety of assessment methods. Assessment is used to enhance your learning rather than simply to test it. For most of the modules associated with this course, your assessment will be through the following types of assessment.

A mix of assessment strategies is used. Level 4 modules employ a combination of short essays and in-class tests. Assessment at levels 5 and 6 is through coursework (essays), small-scale assessment tests (for example, quizzes, seminar logs etc.) and examinations. Where essays are used, they are compulsory. Written feedback on essays is provided within three weeks of submission, and students have the opportunity to clarify any feedback by contacting their lecturers and seminar leaders.

Learning outcomes (what you can expect to achieve)

'Learning outcomes' indicate what you should be able to know or do at the end of your course. Providing them helps you to understand what your teachers will expect and also the learning requirements upon which you will be assessed.

On successful completion of the foundation year programme you will be able to:

- Articulate at a foundational level key concepts in some of the disciplines offered in Social Science, History and Philosophy.
- Undertake academic reading, writing, research and assessment skills appropriate to the study of those disciplines
- Understand other key learning skills required for university-level study and know of how to access support at Birkbeck to develop these.

On successful completion of the programme you will be able to:

- understand and employ the main concepts and theories used in the analysis of global politics, globalisation and international relations;
- critically examine arguments concerning the nature of the 'global' and the 'international' and the relationship between the two;
- understand the major transformations that have taken place in the international political and economic system in the modern period, and evaluate various explanations of these transformations;
- understand and critically assess the relationship between the state and the international system, as well as the role played by war in international politics;
- demonstrate a clear awareness of the importance of the relationship between theory and empirical evidence in the study of politics;
- demonstrate proficiency in the employment of key analytical skills in the study of politics; and
- use the skills developed in the programme for vocational and personal purposes, and potentially in further academic study.

Careers and further study

You will find Global Politics and International Relations graduates in the following kinds of roles:

- research positions in universities and other public and private research bodies;
- jobs in central and local government, trades unions, political parties, NGOs and international organisations;
- (political) journalism;
- political/civic activism;
- political consultancy; and
- teaching in secondary education.

Birkbeck's BA Global Politics and International Relations graduates will complete with a set of valuable attributes, for example:

- The ability to work as part of a team
- High-level oral and written communication skills in English
- Research skills
- Skills in evaluating and assessing types of information
- The ability to present yourself and an argument

Birkbeck offers a range of careers support to its students. You can find out more on [the careers pages of our website](#).

Academic regulations and course management

Birkbeck's academic regulations are contained in its [Common Award Scheme Regulations](#) and Policies published by year of application on the Birkbeck website.

You will have access to a course handbook on Moodle and this will outline how your course is managed, including who to contact if you have any questions about your module or course.

Support for your study

Your learning at Birkbeck is supported by your teaching team and other resources and people in the College there to help you with your study. Birkbeck uses a virtual learning environment called Moodle and each course has a dedicated Moodle page and there are further Moodle sites for each of your modules. This will include your course handbook.

Birkbeck will introduce you to the Library and IT support, how to access materials online, including using Moodle, and provide you with an orientation which includes an online Moodle module to guide you through all of the support available. You will also be allocated a personal tutor and provided with information about learning support offered within your School and by the College.

[Please check our website for more information about student support services](#). This covers the whole of your time as a student with us including learning support and support for your wellbeing.

Quality and standards at Birkbeck

Birkbeck's courses are subject to our quality assurance procedures. This means that new courses must follow our design principles and meet the requirements of our academic regulations. Each new course or module is subject to a course approval process where the proposal is scrutinised by subject specialists, quality professionals and external representatives

to ensure that it will offer an excellent student experience and meet the expectation of regulatory and other professional bodies.

You will be invited to participate in an online survey for each module you take. We take these surveys seriously and they are considered by the course team to develop both modules and the overall courses. Please take the time to complete any surveys you are sent as a student.

We conduct an annual process of reviewing our portfolio of courses which analyses student achievement, equality data and includes an action plan for each department to identify ongoing enhancements to our education, including changes made as a result of student feedback.

Our periodic review process is a regular check (usually every four years) on the courses by department with a specialist team including students.

Each course will have an external examiner associated with it who produces an annual report and any recommendations. Students can read the most recent external examiner reports on the course Moodle pages. Our courses are all subject to Birkbeck Baseline Standards for our Moodle module information. This supports the accessibility of our education including expectations of what information is provided online for students.

The information in this programme specification has been approved by the College's Academic Board and every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information it contains.

Programme specifications are reviewed periodically. If any changes are made to courses, including core and/or compulsory modules, the relevant department is required to provide a revised programme specification. Students will be notified of any changes via Moodle.

Further information about specifications and an archive of programme specifications for the College's courses is [available online](#).

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