

Programme Specification: Post Graduate Taught

For students starting in Academic Year 2023/24

1. Course Summary

Names of programme and award title(s)	MA/MRes Politics and International Relations With pathways in: - Global Security - International Relations - Politics - US Politics
Award type	Taught Masters
Mode of study	Full-time Part-time
Framework of Higher Education Qualification (FHEQ) level of final award	Level 7
Normal length of the programme	One-year full time / two years part time
Maximum period of registration	The normal length as specified above plus 3 years
Location of study	Keele Campus
Accreditation (if applicable)	Not applicable
Regulator	Office for Students (OfS)
Tuition Fees	UK students: Full-time fee for 2023/24 is £8,900 Part-time fee for 2023/24 is £4,900* International students: Fee for 2023/24 is £17,700**

How this information might change: Please read the important information at <http://www.keele.ac.uk/student-agreement/>. This explains how and why we may need to make changes to the information provided in this document and to help you understand how we will communicate with you if this happens.

* We reserve the right to increase fees in subsequent years of study by an inflationary amount. Please refer to the accompanying Student Terms & Conditions for full details. Further information on fees can be found at <http://www.keele.ac.uk/studentfunding/tuitionfees/>

2. Overview of the Programme

The MA/MRes in Politics and International Relations provides students with an intensive period of study in which they can engage in advanced-level analysis, both theoretical and empirical, of the issues and debates connected to their chosen pathway (Global Security, International Relations, Politics, and US Politics), gain a thorough

grounding in the philosophical, conceptual and methodological foundations of Politics and International Relations, and develop their own independent research and study skills.

The programme uses a pathway structure that i) ensures that students receive the required in-depth grounding in the core principles of the disciplines of Politics and International Relations and in the research methods and skills needed to conduct independent study in these subject areas at M-level, and ii) allows students to select modules that are of most interest to them and thereby develop an individual specialism in certain aspects of the disciplines.

All modules on the programme are taught by research specialists who have high levels of expertise in their subject, and a track record of delivering their teaching in innovative and engaging ways. The teaching takes place primarily in seminar format. This encourages debate and interaction, fosters collective academic enquiry, and enables students to increase their knowledge base and develop their analytical and critical thinking skills. The assessments on the programme are diverse, once again allowing students to develop a range of skills, and to address and assess issues of political and international concern in a variety of different ways.

This degree is offered either as a Master of Arts (MA) or a Masters of Research (MRes). Both have similar overall aims, but the MRes route includes a higher component of dedicated research training, thereby catering to students who wish to go on and pursue future research, be it in academia (e.g. through a PhD) or in research-intensive employment. Students on the MRes also complete a slightly longer dissertation than those on the MA.

Students on the programme will graduate with a strong understanding of how to apply concepts, theories, and evidence-gathering strategies to issues of national and global concern. They will also have gained a broader and deeper knowledge of the complex political and international challenges that face us in the Twenty First century. And they will have developed the analytical and practical research skills needed to deploy their expertise and abilities in their future careers. This will equip them for a range of careers, be it in the UK or further afield, including those in local and national government; the civil, diplomatic or security services; international organizations; non-governmental organizations and civil society groups; public affairs; and all manner of policy making jobs.

3. Aims of the programme

The broad aims of the programme are:

- To provide students with an intensive period of study in which they will engage in advanced-level analysis, both theoretical and empirical, of the issues and debates connected to their chosen pathway (Global Security, International Relations, Politics, and US Politics)
- To provide students with a thorough grounding in the philosophical, conceptual, and methodological foundations of the disciplines of Politics and International Relations
- To enable students to develop a specialism in their chosen area of Politics and International Relations
- To provide students with the skills needed to apply theories and concepts to key themes and debates in Politics and International Relations
- To provide students with advanced methods and skills needed to critically evaluate and analyse key themes and debates in Politics and International Relations
- To provide students with a thorough and rigorous grounding in research methods and skills necessary to conduct independent study in the disciplines of Politics and International Relations
- To enable students to conduct an independent research project in their chosen area of Politics and International Relations
- To provide students with a course of advanced level study that will enable them to develop their own time management, independent working, and written and oral communication skills, as well as enhance their cooperative active learning and group work skills.

4. What you will learn

The intended learning outcomes of the programme (what students should know, understand and be able to do by the end of the programme), can be described under the following headings:

- a) Subject knowledge and understanding
- b) Subject specific skills
- c) Key or transferable skills (including employability skills)

a) Subject knowledge and understanding

Successful students will be able to:

- Demonstrate a critical understanding of the philosophical, theoretical, conceptual, and methodological foundations of the disciplines of Politics and International Relations
- Demonstrate an advanced and critical understanding of the issues, debates, and themes central to the study of Politics and International Relations
- Demonstrate an advanced, rigorous understanding of research methodologies relevant to the fields of

b) Subject specific skills

Successful students will be able to:

- Apply core theoretical, conceptual, and analytical frameworks to the study of Politics and International Relations, and to real-world problems in these fields
- Apply advanced knowledge, methods and skills to critically evaluate and analyse key themes and debates in Politics and International Relations, and the evidence and arguments upon which these themes and debates are based
- Apply key research strategies, methods, and skills (including the gathering of evidence) to undertake independent research work in the fields of Politics and International Relations

c) Key or transferable skills (including employability skills)

Successful students will be able to:

- Demonstrate advanced level written and oral communication skills
- Demonstrate individual organisational and time management capabilities
- Demonstrate cooperative learning skills and group work skills
- Systematically evaluate complex issues, including by critically assessing evidence and data to reach sound and accurate conclusions and judgements

Keele Graduate Attributes

Engagement with this programme will enable students to further develop their intellectual, professional, and personal capabilities. At Keele, we call these our ten Graduate Attributes and they include independent thinking, synthesizing information, creative problem solving, communicating clearly, and appreciating the social, environmental and global implications of one's studies and activities. Our educational programme and learning environment are designed to help students to become well-rounded postgraduates, capable of making a positive and valued contribution in a complex and rapidly changing world, whichever spheres of life they engage in after their studies are completed.

Further information about the Keele Graduate Attributes can be found here: <http://www.keele.ac.uk/journey/>

5. How is the programme taught?

The MA/MRes programme is delivered through a combination of:

- In-depth lectures, sharing tutors' subject and research expertise with students, and, where appropriate, encouraging students to discuss approaches and issues
- Seminar discussions in which students share, discuss, and evaluate ideas, in ways structured or facilitated by tutors
- Group and individual presentations in which students put forward arguments and ideas
- An independent study project (dissertation), guided and supported by a supervisor with subject appropriate expertise
- Guided reading lists to advise the students' independent learning and assist them in preparing their assessments
- A range of electronic resources (accessed through the Keele Learning Environment) to further support students in their preparation for class and their independent study

Together these learning and teaching methods provide a structure for:

- The critical analysis of theories, concepts, and empirical evidence, and of the core issues and debates in the disciplines of Politics and International Relations
- The development of research methods and skills required to conduct independent study in the disciplines of Politics and International Relations
- Students to conduct their own independent study project (dissertation) in their chosen area of Politics and International Relations
- The development of advanced level study skills, including time management, independent working, written and oral communication skills, and cooperative active learning and group work skills
- The development of a mutually supportive working atmosphere and peer network

In addition to these formal activities and resources, students are also provided with regular opportunities to talk to or contact their module tutors and/or their Academic Mentors with any questions about their studies, any concerns or difficulties they may be facing, or any special learning needs they may have.

6. Teaching Staff

All the current teaching staff in SPGS with expertise in the fields of Politics and International Relations are available to contribute to teaching on the MA/MRes programme, as either convenors of, or contributors to,

compulsory modules and/or optional modules, or as prospective supervisors for the students' individual dissertations.

The current staff group has extensive experience of teaching at undergraduate and postgraduate levels, and at conducting supervision at Masters and PhD level in universities in the UK, continental Europe and North America. All of the current teaching staff contributing to the MA/MRes programme have completed training as part of their induction to university teaching. 80% of them are members or associates of the Higher Education Academy and/or have a formal teaching qualification.

The University will attempt to minimise changes to our core teaching teams. However, delivery of the programme depends on having a sufficient number of staff with the relevant expertise to ensure that the programme is taught to the appropriate academic standard. Staff turnover, for example where key members of staff leave, fall ill, or go on research leave, may result in changes to the programme's content. The University will endeavour to ensure that any impact on students is limited if such changes occur.

7. What is the structure of the programme?

Credits

Both the MA and the MRes in Politics and International Relations require 180 credits. This is made up of 120 credits from taught modules, and 60 credits from the dissertation.

Full-time and part-time registration

Both the MA and the MRes are offered as either full-time degrees, or part-time degrees.

Students who are registered on a part-time basis should take 60 credits from taught modules in their first year, and 60 credits from taught modules in their second year. Any variation in this balance must be authorized by the Programme Director. Part-time students undertake their 60-credit dissertation in the second year of study, and submit this at the same time as the cohort of students in that second year.

Entry points

There will normally be two entry points: September and January. September-start students will take the semesters in this order: Autumn, Spring, and Summer. January-start students will take the semesters in this order: Spring, Summer, and Autumn.

Structure of programme and modules

The Masters of Arts (MA) in Politics and International Relations (all pathways) is structured as follows:

- 2 compulsory taught modules (each of 15 credits), totalling 30 credits
- 1 pathway specific module (see below), totalling 15 credits
- 5 optional modules (each of 15 credits), totalling 75 credits
- A 15,000-word dissertation (60 credits), on a topic that falls within the remit of the chosen pathway.

For **full-time** students the structure of the MA programme is as follows:

	Autumn Semester	Spring Semester	Summer
Compulsory modules	PIR-40095: Research in Action (15 credits) PIR-40144: Advanced Approaches to Politics and International Relations (15 credits)		PIR-40105 Dissertation (60 credits)
Pathway specific and optional modules	2 modules from the list below* (2 x 15 credits)	4 modules from the list below* (4 x 15 credits)	
* Over the course of the whole programme, students must take at least one module that is labelled as pathway specific (see below).			

For **part-time** students the structure of the MA programme is as follows:

	Autumn Semester	Spring Semester	Summer
YEAR 1			
Compulsory modules	PIR-40095: Research in Action (15 credits) PIR-40144: Advanced Approaches to Politics and International Relations (15 credits)		
Pathway specific and optional modules		2 modules from the list below* (2 x 15 credits)	
YEAR 2			
Compulsory modules	PIR-40105 Dissertation (60 credits)		
Pathway specific and optional modules	2 modules from the list below* (2 x 15 credits)	2 modules from the list below* (2 x 15 credits)	
* Over the course of the whole programme, students must take at least one module that is labelled as pathway specific (see below).			

The Masters of Research (MRes) in Politics and International Relations (all pathways) is structured as follows:

- 2 compulsory modules (each of 15 credits), totalling 30 credits
- EITHER Quantitative Research and Data Analysis OR Qualitative Research Methods (15 credits each)
- 1 pathway specific module (see below), totalling 15 credits
- 4 optional modules (each of 15 credits), totalling 60 credits
- A 15,000-20,000-word dissertation (60 credits), on a topic that falls within the remit of the chosen pathway.

For **full-time** students the structure of the MRes programme is as follows:

	Autumn Semester	Spring Semester	Summer
Compulsory modules	PIR-40095: Research in Action (15 credits) PIR-40144: Advanced Approaches to Politics and International Relations (15 credits)	EITHER GRT-40020: Quantitative Research and Data Analysis (15 credits) OR GRT-40021: Qualitative Research Methods (15 credits)	PIR-40140: Dissertation (60 credits)
Pathway specific and optional modules	2 modules from the list below* (2 x 15 credits)	3 modules from the list below* (3 x 15 credits)	
* Over the course of the whole programme, students must take at least one module that is labelled as pathway specific (see below).			

For **part-time** students the structure of the MRes programme is as follows:

	Autumn Semester	Spring Semester	Summer
YEAR 1			
Compulsory modules	PIR-40095: Research in Action (15 credits) PIR-40144: Advanced Approaches to Politics and International Relations (15 credits)	EITHER GRT-40020: Quantitative Research and Data Analysis (15 credits) OR GRT-40021: Qualitative Research Methods (15 credits)	
Pathway specific and optional modules		1 module from the list below* (1 x 15 credits)	
YEAR 2			
Compulsory modules	PIR-40140 Dissertation (60 credits)		
Pathway specific and optional modules	2 modules from the list below* (2 x 15 credits)	2 modules from the list below* (2 x 15 credits)	
* Over the course of the whole programme, students must take at least one module that is labelled as pathway specific (see below).			

Compulsory modules

PIR-40095: Research in Action (15 credits) - Semester 1. This module offers an advanced introduction to research design and evidence gathering in Politics and International Relations, and an opportunity for students to design and conduct their own small-scale practical research project based on a topic of their own choosing. This module is key to the development of the students' research skills.

PIR-40144: Advanced Approaches to Politics and International Relations (15 credits) - Semester 1. This module provides students with a foundation in the mainstream philosophies and approaches to studying Politics and International Relations. It examines how scholars have approached the issues of what to study and how to study, and the ways in which these issues are bound up with historical and current power structures within the world.

Students on the MRes must also take one of:

EITHER: *GRT-40020: Quantitative Research and Data Analysis* (15 credits) - Semester 2. This module delivers an introduction to the practices of quantitative social research, while also examining core principles.

OR: *GRT-40021: Qualitative Research Methods* (15 credits) - Semester 2. This module provides an introduction to qualitative social research by examining the kinds of work qualitative social researchers engage in, the questions they ask, the tools they use, and the impacts and benefits of qualitative research.

PIR-40105: Masters Dissertation in Politics and IR (MA) (60 credits). Students on the MA write a dissertation of 15,000 words.

PIR-40140: Masters Dissertation in Politics and IR (MRes) (60 credits) Students on the MRes write a dissertation of 15,000 to 20,000 words.

In order to graduate with a degree in the chosen pathway, students must undertake a dissertation on a topic that falls within the subject remit of that pathway (at the discretion of the Programme Director). For example, a student taking the pathway in Global Security must undertake a dissertation on a topic considered to fall under the disciplinary and academic boundaries of Global Security.

Pathway specific modules

Over the course of their studies, students on both the MA and MRes must take at least one module that is labelled as pathway specific. This ensures that students receive teaching on the theories, concepts, issues, and debates that are core to their chosen pathway, and that they can develop their knowledge and expertise of the Politics and International Relations of their chosen pathway.

The pathway specific modules are shown below, in the list of optional modules by the appropriate suffix. Modules that are pathway specific to the Global Security pathway are labelled [GS]; those that are pathway specific to the International Relations pathway are labelled [IR]; those that are pathway specific to the Politics pathway are labelled [Pols]; and those that are pathway specific to the US Politics pathway are labelled [US Pols].

If they so wish, students can select more than one module that is labelled as specific to their chosen pathway. The only requirement is that they select at least one module that is labelled as specific to their chosen pathway. Equally, students can select modules labelled specific to another pathway if they so wish, again, just as long as they select at least one module that is labelled as specific to their chosen pathway.

Optional modules (including pathway specific modules)

Note that the precise list of modules may vary in any given year, depending on availability.

Autumn Semester (Semester 1)	Pathway specific
<i>PIR-40088: The Theory of Global Security</i> (15 credits). This module explores the main theoretical traditions through which security has been understood and examines contemporary problems of security and development.	GS IR
<i>PIR-40093: The Changing International Agenda</i> (15 credits). This module offers an in-depth critical assessment of the development, change and nature of the international system.	IR US Pols
<i>PIR-40106: Dimensions of Environmental Politics</i> (15 credits). This module provides students with an advanced overview of key concepts, debates, processes and discourses that concern the political and international dynamics of the environment.	
<i>PIR-40152: International Development: Environment and Conflict</i> (15 credits). This module provides an advanced level study of core theories and approaches to international development, focusing particularly on the relationships between international development, environmental change, and conflict.	GS
<i>PIR-40156: The International Politics of War and Memory</i> (15 credits). This module examines why war happens, and how the politics of war memory influence and shape contemporary politics.	US Pols
<i>PIR-40158: The Global Politics of Islam</i> (15 credits). This module addresses the international challenges of the politics of Islam.	
<i>LAW-40047: Equality, Discrimination and Minorities</i> (15 credits). This module provides an in-depth examination of particular inequalities of international human rights policy and practices, and an advanced level study of conceptual and normative aspects of ethics, equality and the non-discrimination paradigm.	
<i>LAW-40048: Foundations of Human Rights</i> (15 credits). This module provides an advanced level understanding of the development of concepts of human rights and examines the contemporary political sociology of human rights, covering a range of issues and topics.	
<i>SOC-40014: Philosophy of the Social Sciences</i> (15 credits). This module provides an advanced introduction to the philosophy of the social sciences and philosophical debates around methodology and methodological approaches to research. It includes a discussion of topics such as naturalism, falsification theory, paradigm shifts, the interpretive tradition, critical theory, and structuralism.	
Spring Semester (Semester 2)	Pathway specific
<i>PIR-40096: Comparative European Politics</i> (15 credits). Informed by classic and contemporary theoretical and empirical approaches to comparative politics, this module considers the nature and role of fundamental political structures in Europe (including electoral systems, political parties, executives and legislatures), and explores the ways in which these structures, and the actors within them, interact.	Pols

<p><i>PIR-40119: Race and Justice: Civil Rights in the US</i> (15 credits). Despite the successes of the 1960s civil rights movement, discrimination is still a top issue in the US. This module examines how discrimination, inequality and civil rights have been navigated and negotiated in the US from the second half of the twentieth century.</p>	<p>Pols US Pols</p>
<p><i>PIR-40128: Maritime Security</i> (15 credits). This module offers an advanced introduction to the field of maritime security, exploring the intellectual and practical history of the field and the legal and political concepts undergirding it, and building awareness and knowledge about the sea and its politics.</p>	
<p><i>PIR-40136: International Diplomacy</i> (15 credits). This module offers an advanced level and innovative exploration of the theories and practices underpinning international diplomacy, and considers the varied settings in which diplomacy takes place.</p>	<p>IR</p>
<p><i>PIR-40138: Crises, Conflict, and Diplomacy</i> (15 credits). This module explores the management of crisis in world politics, looking at real-world examples of how states use diplomacy to avoid conflict, and why and how they succeed or fail.</p>	
<p><i>PIR-40162: Politics and Security Dynamics in the Middle East</i> (15 credits). This module explores the seminal importance of the Middle East to stability and instability in global politics, and to the politics of the region. It considers regional, sub-regional, and transnational factors and processes that influence political transformations and security concerns in this area, and how they connect with local, national, and global players and developments.</p>	
<p><i>PIR-40142: The Geopolitics of Nationalism and Populism</i> (15 credits). This module offers an exploration of the relationships between nationalism/populism and security from a geopolitical perspective. It focuses on theoretical approaches and case studies relating to various historical and contemporary issues such as war and peace, self-determination, national-populism, and foreign policy.</p>	
<p><i>PIR-40146: Post-conflict Development: Cases and Approaches</i> (15 credits). This module offers an in-depth exploration of how states can rebuild after conflict, focusing on real-world examples of development.</p>	<p>GS</p>
<p><i>PIR-40160: The EU and the UK after Brexit: Challenges and Opportunities</i> (15 credits). This module focuses on the politics, economics and societal impacts of Brexit at the EU and UK level. It offers a sophisticated examination of the theoretical perspectives of European integration, explores the context of Brexit in the UK and the EU, and considers the future UK-EU trading relationship.</p>	
<p><i>LAW-40043: International Environmental Law</i> (15 credits). This module offers a critical perspective on the development of international environmental law, providing grounding in the legal norms, institutions, and processes of the field, and exploring current environmental global issues such as biodiversity loss, trade and environment, food security and climate change through specific treaty regimes.</p>	
<p><i>LAW-40046: Human Rights and Global Politics</i> (15 credits). This module explores evolving political and legal strategies to advance human rights in a global political framework, examining global civil society and the expansion and role of transnational human rights.</p>	<p>Pols</p>
<p><i>LAW-40058: International Refugee Law</i> (15 credits). This module provides an advanced level overview of key issues in international migration.</p>	
<p><i>GRT-40020: Quantitative Research and Data Analysis</i> (15 credits). This module delivers an introduction to the practices of quantitative social research, while also examining core principles.</p> <p>[For MRes students, this module can either be taken as a compulsory module, or as an option if GRT-40021 is chosen as the compulsory module]</p>	
<p><i>GRT-40021: Qualitative Research Methods</i> (15 credits). This module provides an introduction to qualitative social research by examining the kinds of work qualitative social researchers engage in, the questions they ask, the tools they use, and the impacts and benefits of qualitative research.</p> <p>[For MRes students, this module can either be taken as a compulsory module, or as an option if GRT-40020 is chosen as the compulsory module]</p>	
<p>Across the whole programme</p>	

Students can also choose to take one modern foreign language module over the course of their programme, including Mandarin Chinese, French, German, Japanese, Russian or Spanish. Modules are offered at various levels, ranging from absolute beginners, to intermediate, to advanced level. The Language Unit will undertake an assessment of students' proficiency, based on their existing language qualifications and skills, and place them in the appropriate module. Only one foreign language module (15 credits) can be taken as part of the MA or MRes programme.

International students whose first language is not English can also choose to take a module in Postgraduate English as an Academic Practice. The Language Unit will undertake a diagnostic language assessment to determine which module (ENL-40001 or ENL-40004 or ENL-40002) would be most suitable for the student. Only one Postgraduate English as an Academic Practice module (15 credits) can be taken as part of the MA or MRes programme.

Module Lists

Level 7

Compulsory modules	Module Code	Credits	Period
Research in Action	PIR-40095	15	Semester 1
Advanced Approaches to Politics and International Relations	PIR-40144	15	Semester 1
Masters Dissertation in Politics and International Relations	PIR-40105	60	Semester 2-3
Masters (MRes) Dissertation in Politics and International Relations	PIR-40140	60	Semester 2-3

Optional modules	Module Code	Credits	Period
Academic English for Postgraduate Students 1	ENL-40001	15	Semester 1
Equality, Discrimination, Minorities	LAW-40047	15	Semester 1
Foundations of Human Rights	LAW-40048	15	Semester 1
The Theory of Global Security	PIR-40088	15	Semester 1
The Changing International Agenda	PIR-40093	15	Semester 1
Dimensions of Environmental Politics	PIR-40106	15	Semester 1
International Development: Environment and Conflict	PIR-40152	15	Semester 1
The international politics of war and memory	PIR-40156	15	Semester 1
Islam and Global Politics	PIR-40158	15	Semester 1
Philosophy of the Social Sciences	SOC-40014	15	Semester 1
Academic English for Postgraduate Students 2	ENL-40002	15	Semester 1-2
Academic English for Postgraduate Students 1-B	ENL-40004	15	Semester 2
Quantitative Research and Data Analysis	GRT-40020	15	Semester 2
Qualitative Research Methods	GRT-40021	15	Semester 2
International Environmental Law	LAW-40043	15	Semester 2
Human Rights and Global Politics	LAW-40046	15	Semester 2
International Refugee Law	LAW-40058	15	Semester 2
Comparative European Politics	PIR-40096	15	Semester 2
Race and Justice: Civil Rights in the U.S.	PIR-40119	15	Semester 2
Maritime Security	PIR-40128	15	Semester 2
International Diplomacy	PIR-40136	15	Semester 2
Crises, Conflict and Diplomacy	PIR-40138	15	Semester 2
The geopolitics of nationalism and populism	PIR-40142	15	Semester 2
Post-conflict Development: Cases and Approaches	PIR-40146	15	Semester 2
Politics and security dynamics in the Middle East	PIR-40162	15	Semester 2

Level 7 Module Rules

- Students may take ANY modern foreign language (French, Spanish, German, Russian, Japanese, Mandarin Chinese), at the selected level
- Students on the MRes must take either GRT-40020 or GRT-40021
- Students must select at least one module that is labelled as pathway specific over course of the programme (see above).
- Students on the MA take PIR-40105 Masters dissertation in politics and international relations
- Students on the MRes take PIR-40140 Masters (MRes) dissertation in politics and international relations

Learning Outcomes

The table below sets out what students learn in the programme and the modules in which that learning takes place. Details of how learning outcomes are assessed through these modules can be found in module specifications.

Subject Knowledge and Understanding	
Learning Outcome	Module in which this is delivered
Demonstrate systematic knowledge of, and critically evaluate, advanced scholarship and recent research in theories, themes, issues, and debates pertaining to the study of Politics and International Relations, much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of the academic disciplines	All modules (except foreign languages and academic English)
Demonstrate systematic knowledge of, and critically evaluate, the methodologies and techniques applicable to research and advanced scholarship in the academic disciplines of Politics and International Relations	All modules (except foreign languages and academic English)
Demonstrate practical understanding of how established techniques of research are used to create and interpret knowledge in the disciplines of Politics and International Relations	All modules (except foreign languages and academic English)
Demonstrate advanced level knowledge and understanding of a modern foreign language, at appropriate level, or English skills for academic practice at postgraduate level	Foreign languages module, or English as an Academic Practice module.

Subject Specific Skills	
Learning Outcome	Module in which this is delivered
Demonstrate originality in the application of knowledge, and practical understanding of how established techniques of research are used to create and interpret knowledge in the disciplines of Politics and International Relations	All modules (except foreign languages and academic English)
Systematically and creatively assess the relationships between methods of and approaches to knowledge generation and the interpretations of that knowledge in the disciplines of Politics and International Relations	All modules (except foreign languages and academic English)
Critically evaluate evidence and data in the disciplines of Politics and International Relations to reach sound and accurate judgements	All modules (except foreign languages and academic English)
Demonstrate self-direction and originality in employing strategies to address problems, issues, theories, and/or debates in the academic disciplines of Politics and International Relations	All modules (except foreign languages and academic English)
Demonstrate systematic knowledge of, and creatively, independently, and systematically apply, relevant research methods to a topic and question(s) in the field of Politics and International Relations	PIR-40095: Research in Action PIR-40144: Advanced Approaches PIR-40105/40140: Dissertation
Demonstrate systematic understanding of, and awareness of how to apply, specific research methodologies, techniques and skills to issues and debates in Politics and International Relations	PIR-40095: Research in Action PIR-40144: Advanced Approaches PIR-40105/40140: Dissertation
Systematically apply research or methodological skills and knowledge in order further to advance knowledge of a chosen research area in the fields of Politics and International Relations	PIR-40105/40140: Dissertation

Intellectual skills	
Learning Outcome	Module in which this is delivered
Demonstrate originality and creativity in the application and interpretation of knowledge	All modules (except foreign languages and academic English)
Demonstrate systematic understanding of how to apply research methods to examine problems and questions of political and social concern	All modules (except foreign languages and academic English)
Demonstrate self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems, using research techniques to plan and implement tasks at an advanced level	All modules (except foreign languages and academic English)

Key or Transferable Skills (graduate attributes)	
Learning Outcome	Module in which this is delivered
Communicate appropriately through the use of higher-level writing skills, aimed at specialist and non-specialist audiences, with appropriate use of academic referencing	All modules
Communicate appropriately, convincingly and fluently, in oral presentation	All pathway specific and optional modules, where appropriate
Systematically evaluate complex issues and critically evaluate evidence and data to reach sound and accurate conclusions and judgements	All modules (except foreign languages and academic English)
Demonstrate self-direction and originality in employing strategies to address social and political problems, issues, and debates	All modules (except foreign languages and academic English)
Demonstrate systematic improvement in skills in a modern foreign language; or improvement in skills for using English for academic practices, where appropriate.	Foreign languages module, or English as an Academic Practice module.

8. Final and intermediate awards

MA in Politics and International Relations (Named Pathway)

To be awarded an MA in Politics and International Relations (named pathway) students must accumulate 120 credits of taught modules (comprised of: the two compulsory modules (Research in Action, and Advanced Approaches to Politics and International Relations - each 15 credits); one pathway specific module (15 credits); and five optional modules, each of 15 credits), and complete the 15,000-word dissertation (PIR40105 - 60 credits).

The name of the final award is determined by a) the student haven taken at least one module labelled as specific to their chosen pathway, and b) the topic of the dissertation. To be awarded a degree in the chosen pathway, students must undertake a dissertation on a topic that falls within the subject remit of that pathway (at the discretion of the Programme Director). For example, to be awarded an MA in Politics and International Relations (Global Security), a student must undertake a dissertation on a topic considered to fall under the disciplinary and academic boundaries of Global Security.

MRes in Politics and International Relations (Named Pathway)

To be awarded an MRes in Politics and International Relations (named pathway) students must accumulate 120 credits of taught modules (comprised of: the two compulsory modules (Research in Action, and Advanced Approaches to Politics and International Relations - each 15 credits); either GRT-40020: Quantitative Research and Data Analysis or GRT-40021: Qualitative Research Methods (15 credits each); one pathway specific module (15 credits); and four optional modules, each of 15 credits), and complete the 15,000-20,000-word dissertation (PIR-40140 - 60 credits).

The name of the final award is determined by a) the student haven taken at least one module labelled as specific to their chosen pathway, and b) the topic of the dissertation. To be awarded a degree in the chosen pathway,

students must undertake a dissertation on a topic that falls within the subject remit of that pathway (at the discretion of the Programme Director). For example, to be awarded an MRes in Politics and International Relations (Global Security), a student must undertake a dissertation on a topic considered to fall under the disciplinary and academic boundaries of Global Security.

Postgraduate Diploma in Politics and International Relations

A student can be awarded a Postgraduate Diploma if they successfully accumulate 120 credits. This is achieved by gaining credits from taught modules. Dissertation credits are excluded from the award of a Postgraduate Diploma.

Postgraduate Certificate in Politics and International Relations

A student can be awarded a Postgraduate Certificate if they successfully accumulate 60 credits. This is achieved by gaining credits from any combination of taught modules - be they compulsory, pathway specific or optional modules. Dissertation credits are excluded from the award of a Postgraduate Certificate.

9. How is the Programme Assessed?

This programme makes use of a wide variety of assessment methods. This reflects the broad range of knowledge and skills that students develop as they progress through their degree programme. The following list is representative of the variety of assessment methods used on the programme:

- Essays
- Commentaries on an analytical or methodological approach
- Reflective research reports
- Reports on a case study
- Briefing papers
- Reviews of diplomatic act/performance
- Individual or group oral presentations
- Podcasts
- Dissertation

In module documents (including on the KLE) and in class time, teaching staff pay particular attention to explaining the assessments used on each module, and to specifying clear assessment criteria. In addition, students may contact or meet with individual staff to discuss questions or areas of concern.

Assignments assess the students' understanding of the module content, as well as their analytical abilities, including their capacity to evaluate particular debates, material and/or evidence. Written assessments enable an assessment of the students' written communication skills, while oral presentations and podcasts allow for an assessment of their spoken communication skills. Reflective research reports and the dissertation facilitate assessment of the students' ability to select, apply and evaluate appropriate research designs and methods to any chosen topic of study.

Feedback is given on all assessments in a timely manner - within three working weeks of submission, unless there are compelling circumstances that make this impossible. Feedback is constructive and includes guidance on how students can improve the quality of their work.

Students are also supported in the preparation of their dissertation through a formative assessment. In the spring they will attend a number of workshops on dissertation research (as part of the dissertation module PIR-40105 (MA students) and PIR-41040 (MRes students)), and in the last of these they will be asked to deliver a short oral presentation on their proposed dissertation. Then they will be asked to write a research proposal for their dissertation, which is formatively assessed, and for which they will receive written feedback from their dissertation supervisor.

The workshops, oral presentation, and formatively assessed research proposal together contribute to the guidance that students receive as they develop their independent research dissertation. Further guidance is received from dissertation supervisors. The dissertation is then assessed on the basis of the student's demonstration of their ability to select an appropriate research topic and research question, demonstrate wide and critical understanding of the scholarship in their field, critically apply an appropriate research design and methodology, employ a relevant research method as appropriate, and critically evaluate evidence, to go on to reach sound independent judgements based on their evaluations.

10. Accreditation

This programme does not have accreditation from an external body.

11. University Regulations

The University Regulations form the framework for learning, teaching and assessment and other aspects of the

student experience. Further information about the University Regulations can be found at:
<http://www.keele.ac.uk/student-agreement/>

If this programme has any exemptions, variations or additions to the University Regulations these will be detailed in an Annex at the end of this document titled 'Programme-specific regulations'.

12. What are the typical admission requirements for the Programme?

See the relevant course page on the website for the admission requirements relevant to this programme:
<https://www.keele.ac.uk/study/>

English for Academic Purposes

Please note: All new international students entering the university will sit a diagnostic language assessment. Using this assessment, the Language Centre may allocate you to an English language module which will become compulsory. *NB:* students can take an EAP module only with the approval of the English Language Programme Director and are not able to take any other Language modules in the same academic year.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is considered on a case-by-case basis and those interested should contact the Programme Director.

The University's guidelines on this can be found here:

<https://www.keele.ac.uk/qa/programmesandmodules/recognitionofpriorlearning/>

13. How are students supported on the programme?

Each student on the programme is allocated a member of the programme team as an Academic Mentor. Regular meetings are arranged for the student to meet with their Mentor, normally face to face, to review overall progress and to discuss any academic issues of concern. Extra meetings can be scheduled at the request of the student or the Mentor, as needed.

Students may also contact or meet with their module tutors to discuss the intellectual content of the module, and/or to ask questions or seek advice on assessments.

Students receive written feedback from their module tutors on their assessed work. They may also contact or meet with these tutors should they like to discuss this feedback in more detail, and/or meet with their Academic Mentor to do so.

The programme also organizes its own Staff-Student Voice Committee, in which staff and student representatives can discuss any issues of concern.

The University's Language Centre offers a range of services to students whose first language is not English, including language classes (both credit-bearing and non-credit-bearing), and one-to-one tutorials that offer individual language support with assignments.

The Keele Institute for Innovation and Teaching Excellence (KIITE) also offers one-to-one support to help students develop their academic practice, be it in academic reading, critical thinking, academic writing, or presentation skills. This is delivered through Write Direction, a service which students can book online at their convenience.

The School of Social, Political and Global Studies (SPGS) also runs a series of workshops aimed specifically at supporting PGT students. These include a workshop on good academic practice (with guidance on quoting, paraphrasing, and referencing), on services to support students, and on the development of career and future plans.

SPGS also facilitates sessions with our subject librarian to enhance student skills in identifying and accessing relevant reading resources, source material and data.

Students also have the opportunity to use the resources of Keele Careers to find out more about the kinds of career opportunities open to them, to receive guidance on how to apply for specific jobs, and to receive advice on how to prepare for job applications or interviews. Keele Careers runs workshops on a range of topics, and also provides one-to-one sessions for individually focussed support.

14. Learning Resources

The main body of the programme is delivered through self-study materials, which comprise mainly traditional text-based resources (especially academic books and journal articles) available in the library, either in hard copy or electronically (through e-books and e-journals).

In addition, a range of electronic learning resources are available for students to access through each module's KLE page. This includes digitized readings, links to useful websites (such as those of international organizations,

government bodies, or useful datasets), links to relevant news articles, and other material.

All module KLE pages also include study skills resources, to further enhance the support that students may draw on. These resources include an online tutorial called StudyWrite, which provides guidance on a variety of topics such as note-taking, referencing, and avoiding plagiarism.

15. Other Learning Opportunities

Each academic year, SPGS organises a series of research seminars at which researchers (both from within the School, and from other universities) present their work. Students are encouraged to attend in order to learn about cutting-edge research being conducted in a range of areas in Politics and International Relations, as well as in cognate disciplines.

Students also have the opportunity to attend public talks offered by the School and the University. These include SPGS's Spotlight in International Relations series where notable alumni come back to Keele to talk about what they have gone on to do; the renowned Keele World Affairs lectures, and Keele Institute of Liberal Arts Grand Challenges lectures, both of which attract big-name speakers.

16. Additional Costs

As to be expected there will be additional costs for inter-library loans and potential overdue library fines, print and graduation. We do not anticipate any further costs for this programme.

17. Quality management and enhancement

The quality and standards of learning in this programme are subject to a continuous process of monitoring, review and enhancement.

- The School Education Committee is responsible for reviewing and monitoring quality management and enhancement procedures and activities across the School.
- Individual modules and the programme as a whole are reviewed and enhanced every year in the annual programme review which takes place at the end of the academic year.
- The programmes are run in accordance with the University's Quality Assurance procedures and are subject to periodic reviews under the Revalidation process.

Student evaluation of, and feedback on, the quality of learning on every module takes place every year using a variety of different methods:

- The results of student evaluations of all modules are reported to module leaders and reviewed by the Programme Committee as part of annual programme review.
- Findings related to the programme from the annual Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES), and from regular surveys of the student experience conducted by the University, are subjected to careful analysis and a planned response at programme and School level.
- Feedback received from representatives of students on the programme is considered and acted on at regular meetings of the Student Staff Voice Committee.

The University appoints senior members of academic staff from other universities to act as external examiners on all programmes. They are responsible for:

- Approving examination questions
- Confirming all marks which contribute to a student's degree
- Reviewing and giving advice on the structure and content of the programme and assessment procedures

Information about current external examiner(s) can be found here:

<http://www.keele.ac.uk/qa/externalexaminers/currentexternalexaminers/>

18. The principles of programme design

The MA/MRes Programme in Politics and International Relations is designed to complement the University's Learning and Teaching assessment strategies, extending the University's emphasis on interdisciplinarity and internationalisation, and on real-world applications of theoretical problems, in the postgraduate curriculum.

The programme's structure reflects the University's commitment to providing flexible learning environments for recent graduates seeking to develop their subject specific and their transferable skills, to students with professional experience, and to students from a variety of backgrounds, international or domestic, with the aptitude or intention to enter professional service.

It aims to develop varied skills and capacities in a dynamic learning environment, using multi-media resources and drawing on significant research and teaching expertise, in a manner that complies with the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications.

The programme described in this document has been drawn up with reference to, and in accordance with the guidance set out in, the following documents:

a. UK Quality Code for Higher Education, Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education:

<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code>

b. Keele University Regulations and Guidance for Students and Staff: <http://www.keele.ac.uk/regulations>

Version History

This document

Date Approved: 19 September 2023

What's Changed

Removal of FRE-90007 to include a general note that students may take ANY modern foreign language (French, Spanish, German, Russian, Japanese, Mandarin Chinese), at the selected level

Previous documents

Version No	Year	Owner	Date Approved	Summary of and rationale for changes
1	2023/24	LIZ CARTER	17 July 2023	July 2023 - addition of one new module: PIR-40162