

Programme Specification: Undergraduate

For Academic Year 2024/25

1. Course Summary

Names of programme and award title(s)	BSc (Hons) Social and Political Sciences BSc (Hons) Social and Political Sciences with International Year (See Annex for details) BSc (Hons) Social and Political Sciences with Work Placement Year (See Annex for details)
Award type	Single Honours
Mode of study	Full-time
Framework of Higher Education Qualification (FHEQ) level of final award	Level 6
Normal length of the programme	3 years; 4 years with either the International Year or Placement Year between years 2 and 3
Maximum period of registration	The normal length as specified above plus 3 years
Location of study	Keele Campus
Accreditation (if applicable)	None
Regulator	Office for Students (OfS)
Tuition Fees	<p>UK students:</p> <p>Fee for 2024/25 is £9,250*</p> <p>International students:</p> <p>Fee for 2024/25 is £19,500**</p> <p>The fee for the international year abroad is calculated at 15% of the standard year fee</p> <p>The fee for the work placement year is calculated at 20% of the standard year fee</p>

Please note this document applies to Level 6 (Year 3) students in 2026/27

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.

* These fees are regulated by Government. We reserve the right to increase fees in subsequent years of study in response to changes in government policy and/or changes to the law. If permitted by such change in policy or law, we may increase your fees by an inflationary amount or such other measure as required by government policy or the law. Please refer to the accompanying Student Terms & Conditions. Further information on fees can be found at <http://www.keele.ac.uk/studentfunding/tuitionfees/>

** These fees are for new students. 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

2. What is a Single Honours programme?

The Single Honours programme described in this document allows you to focus more or less exclusively on this subject. In keeping with Keele's commitment to breadth in the curriculum, the programme also gives you the opportunity to take some modules in other disciplines and in modern foreign languages as part of a 360-credit Honours degree. Thus it enables you to gain, and be able to demonstrate, a distinctive range of graduate attributes.

3. Overview of the Programme

We are living in a period of profound social and political change and many of the old certainties that suggested what society should look like, what social life means, how we should run our political systems, and even what we mean when we talk about politics, have been shattered. The aim of this programme is to think through the range of problems facing our rapidly changing world with a view to exploring potential social and political solutions and ways forward in the future.

In the wake of the coronavirus pandemic, which has forced us to question many of our taken for granted understandings about social life, work, and the way we live together, traditional political thinking has been upended as politicians have been forced to improvise in order to maintain some kind of social and economic order. While those previously in favour of free markets have engaged in unprecedented economic bail-outs that we might normally associate with socialist forms of government, liberal politicians have been forced into forms of social restrictions (lockdowns) that would have been unthinkable before anybody had heard of the coronavirus.

However, the current social and political shifts we are living through are not only about coronavirus and can be traced back much further to the early years of the 21st century when it first became apparent that processes of globalisation were not only positive, but could also cause serious social and political problems. Following 9 / 11 and the emergence of global terrorism, governments suddenly became aware that the great freedoms brought about by globalisation needed to be tempered by a new concern with security and control of movement. Later in the first decade of the 21st century, this new understanding of the need to exert social and political control over movement extended to the problem of economy. The global economic crash of 2008 brought with it a wave of austerity policies and the idea that globalisation was necessarily a social and political good seemed questionable to many people.

Indeed, it is possible to argue that the popular vote to take Britain out of the European Union and the election of President Trump in America came about in response to deep suspicion about the idea of globalisation, global trade, and the free movement of people. Of course, at the same time that populist leaders rose to power in America, Britain, Brazil and other countries, China has continued to exert its influence across the globe, suggesting a very different model of society and politics to what is thought normal in the West. Many commentators are now speculating about the end of centuries old western ideas of what society should look like and how the political system should operate.

Casting a long shadow over all of this change is, of course, the problem of climate change and a recognition of the unsustainability of the capitalist social and political system. Despite everything else that has happened since the end of the 20th century, most now realise that we cannot continue to live in high-consumption societies and must rethink our social, political, and economic system from the bottom up. The enormous shock caused by the coronavirus has simply made this need to change feel even more urgent. But how can we manage this change? How can we think differently and step outside of our taken for granted assumptions about the ways in which society and politics should work?

The key purpose of Social and Political Sciences at Keele is to engage with the enormous transformations taking place in society and politics in order to try to think through ways forward into a sustainable, inclusive future. The current uncertainty about the social and political future has led to the emergence of new forms of post-truth and conspiratorial politics, which make it extremely difficult for people to make reasonable decisions about their lives. In this context, one of the key purposes of the Social and Political Sciences programme is to equip students with the rigorous methodological, theoretical, and analytic skills that underpin the social and political sciences in order to identify real world problems, collect information about them, and produce analyses designed to suggest workable solutions moving forward into an uncertain future.

Given the uncertain situation of the contemporary world in the middle of a period of enormous transformation, the skills taught on the Social and Political Sciences programme will be essential for students concerned with equipping themselves for employment in a rapidly changing world, but also vital for people who want to contribute to social and political transformation for the better.

4. Aims of the programme

The broad aims of the programme are to enable you to:

- Understand the nature and significance of political and social life
- Acquire knowledge and understanding in key areas of social and political theory and analysis
- Understand and use concepts, approaches, and methods in the social and political sciences
- Understand the contested nature and problematic character of inquiry in social and political sciences
- Develop the capacity to think critically and independently and mobilise theoretical materials to support this mode of thought
- Relate the academic study of social and political issues to matters of public concern
- Relate academic theory to social and political behaviour and policy issues
- Develop a range of cognitive and communication skills relevant to intellectual, vocational, and personal development
- Communicate social and political explanations to diverse audiences through written and oral modes of presentation
- Develop analytic, learning, and communication skills that may be employed in a variety of different real world contexts

5. What you will learn

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

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

Subject knowledge and understanding

Successful students will be able to:

- Demonstrate knowledge of key ideas in the history of the social and political sciences and be able to apply these ideas beyond their original context
- Apply concepts, theories, and methods used in the study of the social and political sciences to the analysis of social and political ideas, institutions, issues and practices
- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of different social and political systems, the nature and distribution of power in them, and the social, economic, historical and cultural contexts within which they operate, and the relationships between them
- Demonstrate knowledge of social and political theory and be able to mobilise these ideas to analyse substantive problems in the field
- Evaluate different interpretations of social and political issues and events using theoretical sources material
- Understand key concepts from a range of theoretical approaches to the study of society and politics, appreciating the relative strengths and weaknesses of those different approaches
- Think critically in evaluating different interpretations of social and political ideas, institutions, events and issues
- Develop the ability to conduct and report on their own research using relevant concepts, suitable methods of investigation and appropriate techniques of scholarship
- Develop the personal and inter-personal skills necessary to find a fulfilling and rewarding career and become an informed and active citizens with a continuing interest in social and political issues

Subject specific skills

Successful students will be able to:

- Employ a social and political imagination to explain private events in terms of public situations and develop critical social and political accounts of everyday life concerns.
- Collect, select, and organise evidence, data and information from a variety of secondary and primary sources
- Interpret, analyse, and deploy that evidence, data and information in written and oral presentations
- Construct reasoned argument, synthesise relevant information, and exercise critical judgement in a variety of written and oral modes of presentation
- Identify, investigate, analyse, formulate, and advocate solutions to problems to social and political issues
- Report, interpret, and analyse raw data and communicate findings in written and oral form.

Key or transferable skills (including employability skills)

Successful students will be able to:

- Think critically about problems and develop theoretical models with a view to proposing imaginative

solutions

- Understand problems from a range of different perspectives and recognise the importance of negotiation in proposing potential solutions
- Communicate effectively and fluently in speech and writing
- Use communication and information technology, including audio-visual technology, for the retrieval and presentation of information, including, where appropriate, statistical or numerical information
- Work independently, demonstrating initiative, self-organisation and time management, to become a mature, independent learner
- Collaborate with others to achieve common goals
- Pursue research projects across a range of issues using methods grounded in the social and political sciences

Keele Graduate Attributes

The Keele Graduate Attributes are the qualities (skills, values and mindsets) which you will have the opportunity to develop during your time at Keele through both the formal curriculum and also through co- and extra-curricular activities (e.g., work experience, and engagement with the wider University community such as acting as ambassadors, volunteering, peer mentoring, student representation, membership and leadership of clubs and societies). Our Graduate Attributes consist of four themes: **academic expertise, professional skills, personal effectiveness, and social, environmental and ethical responsibility**. You will have opportunities to engage actively with the range of attributes throughout your time at Keele: through your academic studies, through self-assessing your own strengths, weaknesses, and development needs, and by setting personal development goals. You will have opportunities to discuss your progress in developing graduate attributes with, for example, Academic Mentors, to prepare for your future career and lives beyond Keele.

6. How is the programme taught?

Learning and teaching methods used on the programme vary according to the subject matter and level of the module. They include the following:

- Traditional lectures: where the lecturer provides students with a framework for reading and independent study. Most lecturers employ presentation software such as MS PowerPoint, while sometimes also making use of video and audio presentations. Lectures allow students to gain a systematic understanding both of key theoretical approaches in the social and political sciences and of fundamental concepts employed in studying the subject.
- Tutorials and seminars: where key issues can be discussed in more depth. Students are expected to play a full part in, and occasionally to lead, these discussions, either individually, or as part of a small team. Some tutorials and seminars involve presentations (from individual students or students working in small teams). Seminars and tutorials provide opportunities for students to ask questions about, and suggest answers to, problems encountered in the study of the social and political sciences and to present their own ideas.
- Learning Pods; where students in larger classes have the opportunity to work together in smaller groups, interact with the lecturer and reflect on their own learning.
- Workshops: here, we encourage students to reflect on their own learning and take responsibility for its development by addressing areas of difficulty, perhaps by discussing them with their fellow students or by getting additional help from staff.
- Independent study: based on directed reading from text books, research monographs, academic journals, official government publications, the print media and appropriate sources deployed on the web. When combined with lectures, independent study is an integral part of developing proper understanding of key concepts, approaches, and debates in the field.
- Web-based learning: Using the University's virtual learning environment (KLE). The KLE gives students easy access to a wide range of resources and research tools to assist their studies, and can be used as a platform for online discussions, quizzes and blogs.
- Dissertations: the dissertation double module in Social and Political Sciences provides students the opportunity to receive training in designing a research project, developing an appropriate methodology and method, collecting and analysing data, and then implementing this design independently. Undertaking a research dissertation with the supervision and support of experienced and active researchers from our staff group allows students to formulate relevant research questions and devise a feasible and ethically sound strategy for answering them.

Apart from these formal activities, students are also provided with regular opportunities to talk through particular areas of difficulty, and any special learning needs they may have, with their Academic Mentors or module lecturers on a one-to-one basis.

These learning and teaching methods enable students to achieve the learning outcomes of the programme in a variety of ways. For example:

Students are able to demonstrate the subject knowledge and understanding, subject specific skills, and key transferable skills through a wide range of forms of assessment including:

- Essays: the word count is usually associated with the year (Level) of instruction;
- Examinations: these may include multiple choice as well as short answer/essay responses;
- Module-specific assessed work such as a data analysis exercise or blog;
- In-class tests;
- Oral Presentations;
- MS PowerPoint Presentations;
- Individual projects;
- Small group projects;
- Dissertations.

7. Teaching Staff

The permanent teaching staff of the Social and Political Sciences Programme consists of a number of Professors, Senior Lecturers and Lecturers. All current members of staff have doctorates in Sociology, Politics, or closely related disciplines, such as Anthropology. Moreover, a significant number of the group have professionally accredited teaching qualifications. The majority of members of the teaching staff are research active and publish books and articles on international presses and in international journals. The teaching group also has extensive experience of teaching at undergraduate and postgraduate level at universities in the UK, Europe, and Japan.

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.

8. What is the structure of the Programme?

The academic year runs from September to June and is divided into two semesters. The number of weeks of teaching will vary from programme to programme, but you can generally expect to attend scheduled teaching sessions between the end of September and mid-December, and from mid-January to the end of April. Our degree courses are organised into modules. Each module is usually a self-contained unit of study and each is usually assessed separately with the award of credits on the basis of 1 credit = 10 hours of student effort. An outline of the structure of the programme is provided in the tables below.

There are two types of module delivered as part of your programme. They are:

- Compulsory modules - a module that you are required to study on this course;
- Optional modules - these allow you some limited choice of what to study from a list of modules.

Global Challenge Pathways

This programme includes the option for you to take a Global Challenge Pathway. These modules offer you an exciting opportunity to work with students and staff from different disciplines to explore topical global issues such as power and conflict, health inequalities, climate change, generative AI, social justice, global citizenship, and enterprise from different perspectives.

Global Challenge Pathways can either be taken as one 15-credit module at Levels 4, 5 and 6, or one 15-credit module at Levels 5 and 6. For more information about our Global Challenge Pathways please visit: <https://www.keele.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/globalchallengepathways/>

Modern Languages or Certificate in TESOL

Alternatively, you could choose to study modules with the University Language Centre. The Language Centre offers three pathways; The Language Specialist, The Language Taster, and The Trinity Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Language (TESOL). Language Centre modules are available separately for students at Levels 4 and 5. At Level 6 they are included within the Global Challenge Pathways.

If you choose the Language Specialist pathway, you will automatically be enrolled on a Semester 2 Modern Language module as a continuation of your language of choice. Undertaking a Modern Languages module in Semester 2 is compulsory if you wish to continue to the Language Specialist Global Challenge Pathway the following academic year.

For more information about Language Centre option modules available to you please visit the following webpages.

For Level 4 and 5 students please visit: <https://www.keele.ac.uk/study/languagecentre/languagecentreoptions/>

For Level 6 students please visit: <https://www.keele.ac.uk/students/academiclife/global-challenge-pathways/>

For further information on the content of modules currently offered, please visit:
<https://www.keele.ac.uk/recordsandexams/modulecatalogue/>

A summary of the credit requirements per year is as follows.

Year	Compulsory	Optional	
		Min	Max
Level 6	0	120	120

Module Lists

Level 6

Optional modules	Module Code	Credits	Period
The American South: US Summer School (Level 6)	LIB-30004	15	Semester 0
'Eyes on the Prize': The Struggle for Civil Rights in America	HIS-30157	15	Semester 1
The Extreme Right in Western Europe	PIR-30119	15	Semester 1
Environmental Political Economy	PIR-30156	15	Semester 1
Parliamentary Studies	PIR-30160	15	Semester 1
Sociology of Parenting and Early Childhood	SOC-30030	15	Semester 1
Sex, Death, Desire: Psychoanalysis in Social Context	SOC-30034	15	Semester 1
Dissertation in Politics and IR - ISP	PIR-30130	30	Semester 1-2
Dissertation - ISP	SOC-30028	30	Semester 1-2
Work Placement for Social Sciences Final Year Students	SSC-30003	15	Semester 1-2
Contemporary Democratic Theory	PIR-30150	15	Semester 2
The Rise of China	PIR-30162	15	Semester 2
Feminist Interventions: Theorising the Political	PIR-30166	15	Semester 2
Streets, Skyscrapers, and Slums: The City in Social, Cultural, and Historical Context	SOC-30025	15	Semester 2

Level 6 Module Rules

Students must take only ONE ISP (Dissertation) module and must choose either SOC-30028 OR PIR-30130.

Students who passed SSC-20001 cannot take SSC-30003 Work Placement for Social Sciences Final Year Students.

Students who passed LIB-20012 The American South: US Summer School (Level 5) cannot take the level six version of this module, LIB-30004.

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.

Level 6

At the end of Level 6 (Year 3) students should be able to:

Subject Knowledge and Understanding	
Learning Outcome	Module in which this is delivered
Demonstrate systematic understandings of key aspects of social and political life using the tradition of social and political thought	Dissertation in Politics and IR - ISP - PIR-30130 Dissertation - ISP - SOC-30028 This learning outcome is also met by all option modules at Level 6.
Demonstrate knowledge of advanced social and political theory and ability to apply theoretical ideas creatively beyond their original context	Dissertation in Politics and IR - ISP - PIR-30130 Dissertation - ISP - SOC-30028 This learning outcome is also met by all option modules at Level 6.
Demonstrate knowledge of complex social and political theory and identify possible directions for future theoretical and empirical research in the social and political sciences	Dissertation in Politics and IR - ISP - PIR-30130 Dissertation - ISP - SOC-30028 This learning outcome is also met by all option modules at Level 6.
Demonstrate the ability to apply knowledge of concepts, theories and methods used in the study of the social and political sciences to the analysis of political ideas, institutions, issues and practices	Dissertation in Politics and IR - ISP - PIR-30130 Dissertation - ISP - SOC-30028 This learning outcome is also met by all option modules at Level 6.
Demonstrate in-depth knowledge and understanding of different political systems, the nature and distribution of power in them; the social, economic, historical and cultural contexts within which they operate, and the relationships between them	Dissertation in Politics and IR - ISP - PIR-30130 Dissertation - ISP - SOC-30028 This learning outcome is also met by all option modules at Level 6.

Subject Specific Skills	
Learning Outcome	Module in which this is delivered
Demonstrate independence in defining problems and developing their expertise in interpreting and evaluating research within the particular areas of the social and political sciences	Dissertation in Politics and IR - ISP - PIR-30130 Dissertation - ISP - SOC-30028 This learning outcome is also met by all options modules at Level 6.
Weigh the relative merits of competing theoretical explanations and draw conclusions on the basis of reasoned argumentation	Dissertation in Politics and IR - ISP - PIR-30130 Dissertation - ISP - SOC-30028 This learning outcome is also met by all option modules at Level 6.
Evaluate the increasing complexity of social and political knowledge and demonstrate the ability to apply ideas in an appropriate manner that recognises the contingency of theoretical explanation	Dissertation in Politics and IR - ISP - PIR-30130 Dissertation - ISP - SOC-30028 This learning outcome is also met by all option modules at Level 6.
Critically assess the relative merits of a range of social and political theories and recognise the contingency of explanation within the social and political sciences	Dissertation in Politics and IR - ISP - PIR-30130 Dissertation - ISP - SOC-30028 This learning outcome is also met by all option modules at Level 6.
Critically evaluate primary source material, synthesise arguments, and present discussions in written form	Dissertation in Politics and IR - ISP - PIR-30130 Dissertation - ISP - SOC-30028 This learning outcome is also met by all option modules at Level 6.

Key or Transferable Skills (graduate attributes)	
Learning Outcome	Module in which this is delivered
Construct a range of strategies and methods for answering research questions and testing hypothesis	Dissertation in Politics and IR - ISP - PIR-30130 Dissertation - ISP - SOC-30028 This learning outcome is also met by all option modules at Level 6.
Locate, review and evaluate literature on a particular research topic and an appropriate theoretical framework	Dissertation in Politics and IR - ISP - PIR-30130 Dissertation - ISP - SOC-30028 This learning outcome is also met by all option modules at Level 6.
Use ethical guidelines in the design and execution of research	Dissertation in Politics and IR - ISP - PIR-30130 Dissertation - ISP - SOC-30028 This learning outcome is also met by all option modules at Level 6.

9. Final and intermediate awards

Credits required for each level of academic award are as follows:

Honours Degree		You will require at least 120 credits at levels 4, 5 and 6
BSc (Hons) Social and Political Sciences	360 credits	You must accumulate at least 270 credits in your main subject (out of 360 credits overall), with at least 90 credits in each of the three years of study, to graduate with a named single honours degree in this subject.
Diploma in Higher Education	240 credits	You will require at least 120 credits at level 4 or higher and at least 120 credits at level 5 or higher
Certificate in Higher Education	120 credits	You will require at least 120 credits at level 4 or higher

International Year option: in addition to the above students must pass a module covering the international year in order to graduate with a named degree including the 'international year' wording. Students who do not complete, or fail the international year, will be transferred to the three-year version of the programme.

Work Placement Year option: in addition to the above students must pass a non-credit bearing module covering the work placement year in order to graduate with a named degree including the 'with Work Placement Year' wording. Students who do not complete, or fail the work placement year, will be transferred to the three-year version of the programme.

10. How is the Programme Assessed?

The wide variety of assessment methods used on this programme at Keele reflects the broad range of knowledge and skills that are developed as you progress through the degree programme. Teaching staff pay particular attention to specifying clear assessment criteria and providing timely, regular and constructive feedback that helps to clarify things you did not understand and helps you to improve your performance. The following list is representative of the variety of assessment methods used on your programme:

- Essays provide students with the opportunity to formulate arguments and develop ideas using evidence obtained from library research or other valid sources. As such, the essay assessment enables students to develop their research skills, which involve the ability to sort legitimate from illegitimate source materials, and other academic conventions, such as citation and referencing.
- Unseen examinations test students' knowledge of a particular subject, their understanding of ideas and theories, their ability to mobilise theories and concepts beyond the first context, and centrally their ability to

formulate a coherent argument in a limited amount time.

- Reports enable students to learn how to organise and distil information into a clear and coherent written format and consequently develop their employability skills in this area.
- Reflexive Reports require students to write a reflexive account of their experience of a module explaining the content of lectures, seminar discussions, and their own personal and academic development. The purpose of this assessment is to encourage students to reflect on their own experiences in order to become more successful learners able to think about their own progress, strengths, and weaknesses.
- Reviews and Critiques of other scholars' work test students' ability to identify and summarise the key points of a text and to evaluate the quality of arguments and the evidence used to support them.
- Book Reviews test students' ability to summarise the key points of scholarly work and evaluate the arguments of particular authors in light of the tradition of work in the social and political sciences.
- The Research Proposal requires students to develop an independent research project and think through theoretical problems surrounding methodology and practical concerns relating to, for example, availability of sample, financial restrictions, and time limits. Again, this form of assessment is key to the development of independent research skills and a portfolio of employability skills.
- Oral Presentations assess students' subject knowledge and understanding. They may also test their ability to work effectively as members of a team, to communicate what they know orally and visually, and to reflect on these processes as part of their own personal development.
- Posters enable students to present material in visual form on the basis that it is important that students have the capacity to make use of visual aids to communicate ideas. The poster format enables students to synthesise visual and written material to analyse a particular area of social and political study.
- The Dissertation allows students to undertake a significant piece of their own research under supervision by a research-active member of staff and make use of their theoretical and practical learning on the programme to formulate this significant piece of work.

Marks are awarded for summative assessments designed to assess your achievement of learning outcomes. You will also be assessed formatively to enable you to monitor your own progress and to assist staff in identifying and addressing any specific learning needs. Feedback, including guidance on how you can improve the quality of your work, is also provided on all summative assessments within three working weeks of submission, unless there are compelling circumstances that make this impossible, and more informally in the course of tutorial and seminar discussions.

11. Contact Time and Expected Workload

This contact time measure is intended to provide you with an indication of the type of activity you are likely to undertake during this programme. The data is compiled based on module choices and learning patterns of students on similar programmes in previous years. Every effort is made to ensure this data is a realistic representation of what you are likely to experience, but changes to programmes, teaching methods and assessment methods mean this data is representative and not specific.

Undergraduate courses at Keele contain an element of module choice; therefore, individual students will experience a different mix of contact time and assessment types dependent upon their own individual choice of modules. The figures below are an example of activities that a student may expect on your chosen course by year stage of study. Contact time includes scheduled activities such as: lecture, seminar, tutorial, project supervision, demonstration, practical classes and labs, supervised time in labs/workshop, fieldwork and external visits. The figures are based on 1,200 hours of student effort each year for full-time students.

Activity

	Scheduled learning and teaching activities	Guided independent Study	Placements
Year 1 (Level 4)	30.9%	69.1%	0%
Year 2 (Level 5)	31.8%	68.2%	0%
Year 3 (Level 6)	20.1%	79.9%	0%

12. Accreditation

This programme does not have accreditation from an external body.

13. 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'.

14. 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/>

Applicants who are not currently undertaking any formal study or who have been out of formal education for more than 3 years and are not qualified to A-level or BTEC standard may be offered entry to the University's Foundation Year Programme.

Applicants for whom English is not a first language must provide evidence of a recognised qualification in English language. The minimum score for entry to the Programme is Academic IELTS 6.0 or equivalent.

English for Academic Purposes

Please note: All new international students entering the university will provide a sample of Academic English during their registration. Using this sample, the Language Centre may allocate you to an English language module which will become compulsory. This will replace any GCP modules. *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.

English Language Modules at Level 4:

- Business - ENL-90003 Academic English for Business Students (Part 1); ENL-90004 Academic English for Business Students (2)
- Science - ENL-90013 Academic English for Science Students
- General - ENL-90006 English for Academic Purposes 2; ENL-90001 English for Academic Purposes 3; ENL-90002 English for Academic Purposes 4

English Language Modules at Level 5:

- Business - ENL-90003 Academic English for Business Students (Part 1); ENL-90004 Academic English for Business Students (2)
- Science - ENL-90013 Academic English for Science Students
- General - ENL-90006 English for Academic Purposes 2; ENL-90001 English for Academic Purposes 3; ENL-90002 English for Academic Purposes 4

English Language Modules at Level 6:

- Business - ENL-90003 Academic English for Business Students (Part 1); ENL-90004 Academic English for Business Students (2); ENL-90005 Advanced Business English Communication
- Science - ENL-90013 Academic English for Science Students
- General - ENL-90006 English for Academic Purposes 2; ENL-90001 English for Academic Purposes 3; ENL-90002 English for Academic Purposes 4

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/>

15. How are students supported on the programme?

Support for student learning on the Programme is provided in the following ways:

- Module and seminar group leaders are responsible for providing support for learning on the modules and in the seminar groups for which they are responsible. They also give individual feedback on in-course assessments and more general feedback on examinations.
- Every student is allocated to an Academic Mentor who is responsible for reviewing and advising on students' academic progress.
- The University has a team of life and learning developers based in Student Services who are responsible for supporting students and enhancing their ability to access the curriculum and everything else that the University has to offer throughout their time at Keele.
- Academic Mentors also act as a first point of contact for students on non-academic issues which may affect their learning and can refer students on to Student Services for additional help in relation to health, disability, welfare, finance and careers.

- The International Student Support section in the Student Services Centre provides specialist help and advice to international students on visa and immigration matters, information about working and assistance with any personal or academic issues that might arise during their time at Keele.
- All members of teaching staff on the Social and Political Sciences programme are available to see students during weekly office hours and at other times by appointment.

16. Learning Resources

- Social and Political Sciences is taught in teaching rooms equipped with computers, internet access and whiteboards or projection equipment.
- Rooms may be arranged either in traditional lecture format or more informally to allow students to work together in small groups. The learning resources available to students on the Programme include:
- The extensive collection of social and political sciences materials relevant to undergraduate study held in the University Library. These materials include books, journals and government publications. Much of this material is also accessible online to Keele students from anywhere in the world with a University username and password.
- The Keele Learning Environment (KLE) which provides easy access to a wide range of learning resources including lecture notes, digitised readings electronic materials available in a repository maintained by the University Library and other resources - video, audio and text-based - accessible from external providers via the internet.
- All modules have electronic resource lists generated using Talis Aspire, a software package that allows students to access online journal articles, digitised readings, websites and other resources by clicking on links in a single document.
- Students for whom English is not their first language are offered language classes, facilities and services by the University's Language Centre. In addition to credit-bearing modules on English for Academic Study, students also have access to one-to-one tutorials for individual help and advice, and to a wealth of resources for self-study and practice.

17. Other Learning Opportunities

Study abroad (semester)

Students on the programme have the potential opportunity to spend a semester abroad in their second year studying at one of Keele's international partner universities. Please note that students cannot take both a Global Challenge Pathway (GCP) and the semester abroad option.

Exactly which countries are available depends on the student's choice of degree subjects. An indicative list of countries is on the website (<http://www.keele.ac.uk/studyabroad/partneruniversities/>); however this does not guarantee the availability of study in a specific country as this is subject to the University's application process for studying abroad.

No additional tuition fees are payable for a single semester studying abroad but students do have to bear the costs of travelling to and from their destination university, accommodation, food and personal costs. Depending on the destination they are studying at additional costs may include visas, study permits, residence permits, and compulsory health checks. Students should expect the total costs of studying abroad to be greater than if they study in the UK, information is made available from the Global Education Team throughout the process, as costs will vary depending on destination.

Whilst students are studying abroad any Student Finance eligibility will continue, where applicable students may be eligible for specific travel or disability grants. Students who meet external eligibility criteria may be eligible for grants as part of this programme. Students studying outside of this programme may be eligible for income dependent bursaries at Keele. Students travel on a comprehensive Keele University insurance plan, for which there are currently no additional charges. Some governments and/or universities require additional compulsory health coverage plans; costs for this will be advised during the application process.

Study Abroad (International Year)

A summary of the International Year, which is a potential option for students after completion of year 2 (Level 5), is provided in the Annex for the International Year.

18. Additional Costs

Students who conduct fieldwork trips in the local area adjacent to Keele campus may incur public transport and/or parking costs, but these are not anticipated to be extensive. Students who elect to take and gain places on our work-based placement modules at Level 5 and 6 may be expected to pay travel costs (usually one day weekly) to their placement. Distances vary and indicative distances range from 10 miles from Keele Campus to

40 miles (maximum). Opportunities are available to students, subject to availability and based on the number of partner agencies who offer such places, for work-based placements. Allocation for places is competitive, based on academic performance and selective application process. This usually involves the submission of an application and an interview process involving the host partners and administered by the programme.

Students who take one of our optional Work Placement modules, or our Work Placement year, may need to apply for a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check, if they plan to work with particular organisations, for example, schools and charities. The current costs for a DBS check are detailed on the additional costs webpage: <https://www.keele.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/tuitionfeesandfunding/undergraduatetuitionfees/additionalcosts>

Students who take our optional USA 4-week summer school module may expect to pay an estimated maximum total cost (after taking into account Turing scheme funding) of £820 for Widening Access students; £1675 for other students.

As to be expected there will be additional costs for inter-library loans and potential overdue library fines, print and graduation.

19. 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 National Student Survey (NSS), 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 in all three years of 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/>

20. The principles of programme design

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. QAA Subject Benchmark Statements: Sociology (2019) https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/subject-benchmark-statements/subject-benchmark-statement-sociology.pdf?sfvrsn=6ee2cb81_4 and Politics and International Relations (2019) https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/subject-benchmark-statements/subject-benchmark-statement-politics-and-international-relations.pdf?sfvrsn=73e2cb81_5

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

21. Annex - International Year

Social and Political Sciences with International Year

International Year Programme

Students registered for this Single Honours programme may either be admitted for or apply to transfer during their period of study at Level 5 to the International Year option. Students accepted onto this option will have an extra year of study (the International Year) at an international partner institution after they have completed Year 2 (Level 5) at Keele.

Students who successfully complete both the second year (Level 5) and the International Year will be permitted to progress to Level 6. Students who fail to satisfy the examiners in respect of the International Year will normally revert to the standard programme and progress to Level 6 on that basis. The failure will be recorded on the student's final transcript.

Study at Level 4, Level 5 and Level 6 will be as per the main body of this document. The additional detail contained in this annex will pertain solely to students registered for the International Year option.

International Year Programme Aims

In addition to the programme aims specified in the main body of this document, the international year programme of study aims to provide students with:

1. Personal development as a student and a researcher with an appreciation of the international dimension of their subject
2. Experience of a different culture, academically, professionally and socially

Entry Requirements for the International Year

Students may apply to the 4-year programme during Level 5. Admission to the International Year is subject to successful application, interview and references from appropriate staff.

The criteria to be applied are:

- Academic Performance- an average of 55% across all modules in Semester 1 at Level 5 is normally required. Places on the International Year are then conditional on achieving an average mark of 55% across all Level 5 modules. Students with up to 15 credits of re-assessment who meet the 55% requirement may progress to the International Year. Where no Semester 1 marks have been awarded performance in 1st year marks and ongoing 2nd year assessments are taken into account.
- General Aptitude (to be demonstrated by application for study abroad, interview during the 2nd semester of year 2 (Level 5), and by recommendation of the student's Academic Mentor, 1st and 2nd year tutors and programme director)

Students may not register for both an International Year and a Placement Year.

Student Support

Students will be supported whilst on the International Year via the following methods:

- Phone or Skype conversations with Study Abroad tutor, in line with recommended Academic Mentoring meeting points.
- Support from the University's Global Education Team

Learning Outcomes

In addition to the learning outcomes specified in the main text of the Programme Specification, students who complete a Keele undergraduate programme with International Year will be able to:

1. Describe, discuss and reflect upon the cultural and international differences and similarities of different learning environments;
2. Discuss the benefits and challenges of global citizenship and internationalisation;
3. Explain how their perspective on their academic discipline has been influenced by locating it within an international setting.

In addition, students who complete the International Year with the Social and Political Sciences will be able to:

- Describe, discuss and reflect upon the cultural and international differences and similarities of different learning environments;
- Discuss the benefits and challenges of global citizenship and internationalisation;
- Explain how their perspective on their academic discipline has been influenced by locating it within an international setting.
- Integrate, apply and develop enhanced principles relating to political analysis;
- Recognise, describe and explain cultural phenomena across national boundaries and reflect critically upon problems relating to contemporary politics, society and culture.

These learning outcomes will all be assessed by the submission of a satisfactory individual learning agreement, the successful completion of assessments at the partner institution and the submission of the reflective portfolio element of the international year module.

Regulations

Students registered for the International Year are subject to the programme-specific regulations (if any) and the University regulations. In addition, during the International Year, the following regulations will apply:

Students undertaking the International Year must complete 120 credits, which must comprise *at least 40%* in the student's discipline area.

This may impact on your choice of modules to study, for example you will have to choose certain modules to ensure you have the discipline specific credits required.

Students are barred from studying any module with significant overlap to the Level 6 modules they will study on their return. Significant overlap with Level 5 modules previously studied should also be avoided.

Additional costs for the International Year

Tuition fees for students on the International Year will be charged at 15% of the annual tuition fees for that year of study, as set out in Section 1. The International Year can be included in your Student Finance allocation, to find out more about your personal eligibility see: www.gov.uk

Students will have to bear the costs of travelling to and from their destination university, accommodation, food and personal costs. Depending on the destination they are studying at additional costs may include visas, study permits, residence permits, and compulsory health checks. Students should expect the total costs of studying abroad be greater than if they study in the UK, information is made available from the Global Education Team throughout the process, as costs will vary depending on destination.

Students who meet external eligibility criteria may be eligible for grants as part of this programme. Students studying outside of this programme may be eligible income dependent bursaries at Keele.

Students travel on a comprehensive Keele University insurance plan, for which there are currently no additional charges. Some Governments and/or universities require additional compulsory health coverage plans; costs for this will be advised during the application process.

22. Annex - Work Placement Year

Social and Political Sciences Work Placement Year

Work Placement Year summary

Students registered for this programme may either be admitted for or apply to transfer during their studies to the 'with Work Placement Year' option (NB: for Combined Honours students the rules relating to the work placement year in the subject where the placement is organised are to be followed). Students accepted onto this programme will have an extra year of study (the Work Placement Year) with a relevant placement provider after they have completed Year 2 (Level 5) at Keele.

Students who successfully complete both the second year (Level 5) and the Work Placement Year will be permitted to progress to Level 6. Students who fail to satisfactorily complete the Work Placement Year will normally revert to the 3-year programme and progress to Level 6 on that basis. The failure will be recorded on the student's final transcript.

Study at Level 4, Level 5 and Level 6 will be as per the main body of this document. The additional detail contained in this annex will pertain solely to students registered for the Work Placement Year option.

Work Placement Year Programme Aims

In addition to the programme aims specified in the main body of this document, the Work Placement Year aims to provide students with:

1. The opportunity to carry out a long-term, placement-based learning experience between Years 2 and 3 of their degree programme
2. Enhanced employability
3. The opportunity to develop and consolidate the knowledge and skills they have gained during the course of their studies at Level 4 and 5.
4. A professional CV and portfolio that they can use when applying for employment

Entry Requirements for the Work Placement Year

Admission to the Work Placement Year is subject to successful application, interview and references from appropriate staff. Students have the opportunity to apply directly for the 4-year 'with work placement year' degree programme, or to transfer onto the 4-year programme at the end of Year-1 and in Year-2 at the end of Semester 1. Students who are initially registered for the 4-year degree programme may transfer onto the 3-year degree programme at any point in time, prior to undertaking the year-long work placement. Students who fail to pass the work placement year, and those who fail to meet the minimum requirements of the work placement year module, (* or equivalent, work placement), will be automatically transferred onto the 3-year degree programme.

* We recommend where possible students undertake a placement of between 9 - 12 months on a full-time basis to maximize academic and personal growth. However, the Work Placement Year mandates a minimum of 24 weeks in duration, ideally on a full-time basis, but no less than 21 hours per week. This enables those undertaking an unpaid placement to work on a part-time basis alongside.

To undertake the Placement Year, it is normally required that students must have achieved an average of 50% across all modules in Semester One at Level 5. Places on the Placement Year are then conditional on achieving an average mark of 50% across all Level 5 modules.

Students with up to 15 credits of reassessment who meet the 50% requirement may progress to the Placement Year. Where no Semester One marks have been awarded, performance in Level 4 modules and ongoing Level 5 assessments are taken into account.

Students may not register for both an International Year and a Work Placement Year.

Student Support

Students will be supported whilst on the Work Placement Year via the following methods:

- Regular contact between the student and a named member of staff who will be assigned to the student as their University supervisor. The University supervisor will be in regular contact with the student throughout the year, and be on hand to provide advice (pastoral or academic) and liaise with the Placement supervisor on the student's behalf if required.
- Two formal contacts with the student during the placement year: the University supervisor will visit (or conduct a telephone / video call tutorial) the student in their placement organisation at around the 5 weeks after the placement has commenced, and then visit again (or conduct a telephone/video call tutorial) at around 15 weeks into the placement.
- Monthly supervision sessions will take place with the placement supervisor (or his/her nominee) throughout the duration of the placement.

Learning Outcomes

In addition to the learning outcomes specified in the main text of the Programme Specification, students who complete the 'with Work Placement Year' option will be able to:

1. Understand the variety of ways in which skills developed during the study of Social Sciences can be deployed in non-academic contexts
2. Assess their own strengths and weaknesses in an employment context through a SWOT analysis, design learning outcomes, and reflect on their own progress throughout the module
3. Articulate their placement experiences effectively and critically reflect on their enhanced skill set in front of an audience
4. Understand the aims and priorities, as well as the strengths and possible limitations, of an external organisation and complete tasks as directed
5. Reflect on and critically evaluate their learning from the work placement, showing evidence that they have researched their sector and evaluated the effectiveness of their activities with this in mind

These learning outcomes will be assessed through the non-credit bearing Work Placement Year module SOC-30051 which involves:

1. Supporting students in locating and securing a relevant work placement in any workplace where the research, analytical, and communication skills as a developed part of a Social, Political and Global Studies degree can be used
2. Students completing a SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) at the beginning of the placement, reflecting on their employability skills in terms of their assessment of sector skill demands. This will be used to create Intended Placement Outcomes and contribute to Continuing Professional Development. The action plan will be negotiated and agreed by the student, module convenor and employer.
3. Students creating a professional CV and portfolio that can be used when seeking employment after graduation
4. Students completing a 15-20 minute presentation in June/July, critically reflecting on the activities/projects they have completed so far, and the skills they have learned/developed. The audience will primarily be other students on this module, to ensure shared experiences and to create connections in preparation for returning to Keele for third year (Level 6)
5. Students developing a heightened awareness of the various ways in which their knowledge and skills can be utilised in real-world situations

Regulations

Students registered for the 'with Work Placement Year' option are subject to programme-specific regulations (if any) and the University regulations. In addition, during the Work Placement Year, the following regulations will apply:

- Students undertaking the Work Placement Year must successfully complete the zero-credit rated 'Work Placement Year' module (SOC-30051)
- In order to ensure a high quality placement experience, each placement agency will sign up to a placement contract (analogous to a service level agreement).
- Once a student has been accepted by a placement organisation, the student will make a pre-placement visit and a member of staff identified within the placement contract will be assigned as the placement supervisor. The placement supervisor will be responsible for ensuring that the placement experience meets the agreed contract agreed with the University.
- The placement student will also sign up an agreement outlining his/her responsibilities in relation to the requirements of each organisation.

Students will be expected to behave professionally in terms of:

(i) conforming to the work practices of the organisation; and

(ii) remembering that they are representatives of the University and their actions will reflect on the School and have an impact on that organisation's willingness (or otherwise) to remain engaged with the placement.

Additional costs for the Work Placement Year

Tuition fees for students on the Work Placement Year will be charged at 20% of the annual tuition fees for that year of study, as set out in Section 1. The Work Placement Year can be included in your Student Finance allocation; to find out more about your personal eligibility see: www.gov.uk

Students will have to bear the costs of travelling to and from their placement provider, accommodation, food and personal costs. Depending on the placement provider additional costs may include parking permits, travel and transport, suitable clothing, DBS checks, and compulsory health checks.

A small stipend may be available to students from the placement provider during the placement but this will need to be explored on a placement-by-placement basis as some organisations, such as charities, may not have any extra money available. Students should budget with the assumption that their placement will be unpaid.

Eligibility for student finance will depend on the type of placement and whether it is paid or not. If it is paid, this is likely to affect student finance eligibility, however if it is voluntary and therefore unpaid, should not affect student finance eligibility. Students are required to confirm eligibility with their student finance provider.

International students who require a Tier 4 visa should check with the Immigration Compliance team prior to commencing any type of paid placement to ensure that they are not contravening their visa requirements.

Version History

This document

Date Approved: 07 May 2026

What's Changed

PIR-30162 The Rise of China added as SEM2 optional module; correction to HIS-30157

Previous documents

Version No	Year	Owner	Date Approved	Summary of and rationale for changes
1.5	2024/25	EMMA HEAD	08 April 2026	Minor revisions to include optional modules running in 26-27
1.4	2024/25	EMMA HEAD	08 August 2025	Optional module changes: PIR-30117 removed.
1.3	2024/25	EMMA HEAD	05 August 2025	Optional module changes: added HIS-30157 instead of PIR-30038.
1.2	2024/25	EMMA HEAD	09 July 2025	Optional module changes: SOC-20056 replaced with MDS-20042; PIR-30147 replaced with HIS-30163; PIR-30158 replaced with PIR-30038; SOC-30035 replaced with SOC-30034; SOC-30042 replaced with HIS-30183.
1.1	2024/25	EMMA HEAD	27 March 2025	L5 and L6 modules
1	2024/25	REBECCA LEACH	31 May 2024	
1.1	2023/24	JONATHAN PARKER	22 August 2023	Withdrawal of modules due to low sign-up (PIR-20079 Power to the People, PIR-30152 Britain and War since 1945)
1	2023/24	BRIAN DOHERTY	09 February 2023	
1.2	2022/23	BRIAN DOHERTY		
1.1	2022/23	EDWARD MCCAULEY	04 August 2022	Removal of optional module SOC-20036
1	2022/23	MARK FEATHERSTONE	28 January 2022	
1	2021/22	MARK FEATHERSTONE	11 February 2021	