



Department of
International Politics

Undergraduate studies in

International Relations and Politics

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Important information

The programme information published in this brochure was correct at time of going to print (October 2024) and may be subject to change. Prospective students are advised to check the definitive programme information, including entry requirements, that is available on our website before making an application, to ensure that the programme meets their needs.

Welcome

Welcome to the world's first Department of International Politics.

The study of International Politics is indispensable for understanding a rapidly changing world. In a time of political and ideological uncertainty, social and economic transformation and increasingly diverse forms of conflict and violence, everyone has a stake in how these crucial global challenges are confronted. The Department's teaching and research remain true to its founding ideals:

- to seek greater security, peace and justice in a disordered world.

A vibrant student community, working together with a dedicated staff of leading researchers and teachers, provides a dynamic environment in which to study international politics across all levels from the local to the global. As a student in the department you will be well placed to gain a deep, diverse understanding of these challenges and how we can manage them in the coming decades.

You will explore the big questions and concepts of our time, such as the changing distribution of power, conflict, security, democracy, populism and authoritarianism, climate change, inequality and sustainable development, ethics, gender and human rights.

Our learning environment welcomes staff and students from all over the world, creating a lively interactive community that makes a vital contribution to the department's innovative research that underpins new developments in the discipline. We are renowned for providing excellence in teaching and research, and the department is ranked top in the UK for Satisfaction with teaching for the subject of Politics (The Guardian University League

Table 2023). Aberystwyth University is ranked Top in Wales and 2nd in the UK for Student Experience and Top in Wales and 3rd in the UK for Teaching Quality (Good University Guide, The Times and Sunday Times 2024.

Our degree schemes provide an outstanding education and excellent preparation for a successful career. Some of our graduates embark on politics-related professions such as those found in the civil service, local and national government, international organisations, non-profit and NGO sectors, and the armed forces. Other graduates pursue positions in journalism, the financial sector, the legal profession, business, and teaching.

So if you are interested in exploring the challenges facing international politics, do come and study it in the home of the discipline.

Everybody in the Department of International Politics looks forward to welcoming you into our lively community of students and staff.

Alistair Shepherd
Head of Department



Our courses

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International Relations

BA (Hons) | 142L | 3 years

International politics is entering a turbulent and fascinating era. The global order is being reshaped by the emergence both of new issues, such as climate change, and new actors, especially from the Global South, who are contesting established structures of power.

In studying International Relations at Aberystwyth, you will engage in debates about the key issues and most significant challenges in international politics in the 21st century. You will study the concepts, practices and histories that are central to international politics and explore the ways in which all these factors are undergoing radical transformation.

You will benefit from:


- studying at the world's first department of International Politics founded in 1919
- a wide range of optional modules to allow you to explore diverse aspects of international relations
- participating in our renowned 'Crisis Games' - a three-day role-playing exercise in political, economic and diplomatic manoeuvres which will develop your negotiation and communication, critical thinking, teamwork and problem-solving skills
- taking part in our prestigious Parliamentary Placement Scheme, which enables you to gain valuable experience working alongside an MP (House of Commons, Westminster) or an MS (Welsh Senedd, Cardiff) for a period of four to six weeks during the summer.

Employability

Employability is embedded within all our courses. Our degrees provide a solid foundation for a wide array of careers across a range of sectors. In a rapidly shifting global economy, our graduates are adaptable and able to draw on a range of transferable skills, ensuring that they are always in demand. Our graduates have been successful in securing roles in: the development sector; local and national politics; the Civil Service; Government research; social research; the third sector, such as with NGOs; international organisations; and journalism, for example.

Key Facts

 **Typical offer:**
UCAS tariff points: 120-96
IB: 30-26

 **Assessment weighting:** Typically 100% coursework, or 50% coursework and 50% exams

Module list

Below is an indicative list of modules that you may study on this course.

First year:

- Exploring the International: Central Concepts and Core Skills *
- Behind the Headlines *

Second year:

- International Relations: Perspectives and Debates *

Final year:


- Dissertation *

Optional modules you may select to develop your specialist interests include:

- International Politics and the Nuclear Age
- Justice Order and Human Rights
- Economic Diplomacy and Leadership
- Fear, Cooperation and Trust in World Politics
- The Middle East in the 20th Century
- The Making of National Security Policy
- Trade Wars and the Liberal Order
- Women and Global Development
- Climate Change and International Politics in the Anthropocene
- Capitalism and International Politics

For more details on the optional modules available, see the current list on our website, or contact us.

* also available partially or entirely through the medium of Welsh.

 **Also available:**
642L Integrated year in industry
242L Integrated year studying abroad
F42L Integrated foundation year

International Relations and Military History

BA (Hons) | H2VL | 3 years

The International Relations and Military History degree enables you to study warfare as it has developed since the time of Napoleon, reflecting changes in society and technology. You will consider how and why the nature of war has evolved, from nations in arms through the age of total war to wars of choice, and how technology has changed war, from steam through nuclear power to computers and nano-technology.

The International Relations and Military History degree will enable you to engage with key debates about the changing character of war and its impact on civilian populations, as well as on the variety of ways that scholars interpret military history. You will analyse militaries and military operations from a variety of perspectives, such as the role of leadership, the significance of strategic thought and the lessons that can be learned from battles and wars. You will also reflect on the relationship of wars and militaries with political institutions, economic issues and ideologies such as nationalism.

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Module list

Below is an indicative list of modules that you may study on this course.

First year:

- Exploring the International: Central Concepts and Core Skills *
- The Making of the Modern World: War, Peace and Revolution since 1789

Second year:

- Warfare after Waterloo: Military History 1815-1918.

Final year:

- Dissertation *

Optional modules you may select to develop your specialist interests include:

- Arab-Israeli Wars
- A Century of Conflict: Global Warfare from 1918-2018
- Military History Campaign Study
- War Crimes
- The British Army's Image in Battle, from the Crimea to the Present
- The Second World War in Europe

For more details on the optional modules available, see the current list on our website, or contact us.

* also available partially or entirely through the medium of Welsh.



Politics

BA (Hons) | L203 | 3 years

Studying Politics at Aberystwyth will develop your understanding of political regimes and systems, political actors and governments, and processes of political decision-making. You will learn about key political concepts and how they are contested in contemporary politics: power, democracy, freedom, inequality, rights, citizenship, representation and legitimacy.

The modules that you take will introduce you to current political debates such as the future of the UK after Brexit, dilemmas of modern migration, the rise of populist nationalism, and the future of democracy.

The exploration of different political forces and relationships will draw on examples from the practice of politics in different parts of the world, so you can develop your knowledge of politics in the UK, Europe, North and Latin America, Russia and Asia.

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Key Facts

 **Typical offer:**
UCAS tariff points: 120-96
IB: 30-26

 **Assessment weighting:** Typically 100% coursework, or 50% coursework and 50% exams

Module list

Below is an indicative list of modules that you may study on this course.

First year:

- Exploring the International: Central Concepts and Core Skills *
- Politics in the 21st Century *

Second year:

- People and Power: Understanding Comparative Politics Today *

Final year:

- Dissertation *

Optional modules you may select to develop your specialist interests include:

- UK Politics Today: A Union Under Strain? *
- Nationalism in Theory and Practice *
- Gender and Sexuality in the Americas
- Politics in Russia
- The European Union: politics, policies, problems
- Politics in Diverse Societies *

For more details on the optional modules available, see the current list on our website, or contact us.

* also available partially or entirely through the medium of Welsh.

Politics and International Relations

BA (Hons) | L248 | 3 years

On this course, you will examine the political landscape past and present, learning about key political concepts such as power, democracy, freedom, inequality, rights, citizenship, representation and legitimacy, and how these are contested in contemporary politics.

The degree in Politics and International Relations at Aberystwyth explores different political systems and global institutions. You will learn about the driving forces behind political, economic and socio-cultural changes across the world, and explore the challenges facing the international system, such as globalisation, international security, the environment, inequality, global health, conflict and post-conflict environments.

Throughout the course, you will explore different arguments, rival theories and alternative explanations, thereby building up the analytical skills that are important in the workplace.

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Key Facts

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UCAS tariff points: 120-96
IB: 30-26

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Below is an indicative list of modules that you may study on this course.

First year:

- Exploring the International: Central Concepts and Core Skills *
- Politics in the 21st Century *
- Behind the Headlines *

Second year:

- International Relations: Perspectives and Debates *
- People and Power: Understanding Comparative Politics Today *

Final year:

- Dissertation *

Optional modules you may select to develop your specialist interests include:

- War, Strategy and Intelligence
- The Making of the Modern World: War, Peace and Revolution since 1789
- A War on the Mind: Propaganda and Secret Intelligence From the Great War to the 21st Century
- International Politics and Global Development
- Trade Wars and the Liberal Order
- Justice, Order, Human Rights
- The Second World War in Europe
- Nationalism in Theory and Practice *

For more details on the optional modules available, see the current list on our website, or contact us.

* also available partially or entirely through the medium of Welsh.

Intelligence and International Security

BA (Hons) | L253 | 3 years

In an increasingly interconnected, contested and complex world, international actors face a range of security challenges. These include inter- and intra-state conflict, international terrorism, cyber threats, nuclear proliferation, global health pandemics, transnational crime, population displacement, natural disasters and climate change. You will draw on ideas from strategic, intelligence and security studies to understand and analyse these challenges from different perspectives and explore innovative and holistic responses to them.

You will explore the complexities of how intelligence is gathered and assessed before it is disseminated to decision-makers and examine how this process and its products influence responses to security threats. You will also evaluate the importance of information, secrecy, and surveillance while considering the ethical, moral and legal implications that arise from engaging in intelligence activities through historical case studies.

You will benefit from:

- participating in our renowned 'Crisis Games' - a three-day role-playing exercise in political, economic and diplomatic manoeuvres which will develop your negotiation and communication, critical thinking, teamwork and problem-solving skills
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Key Facts



Typical offer:
UCAS tariff points: 120-96
IB: 30-28



Assessment weighting: Typically 100% coursework, or 50% coursework and 50% exams

Module list

Below is an indicative list of modules that you may study on this course.

First year:

- Exploring the International: Central Concepts and Core Skills *
- War, Strategy and Intelligence

Second year:

- Strategy, Intelligence and Security in International Politics

Final year:

- Dissertation *

Optional modules you may select to develop your specialist interests include:

- NATO: From Cold War to Hybrid War
- The Making of National Security Policy
- European Security in the 21st Century
- Propaganda and Secret Intelligence
- Russian Intelligence from Lenin to Putin
- Terrorism and Counter Terrorism

For more details on the optional modules available, see the current list on our website, or contact us.

* also available partially or entirely through the medium of Welsh.

Joint Honours

Subject	Available with...	Joint Honours
International Relations	Drama and Theatre	42WL
	Economics	21LL
	French	1FRL
	German	22LR
	History	1FVL
	Law	21LM
	Spanish	4FRL
Politics	Welsh	5FQL
	Economics	LL13



Studying through the medium of Welsh

It is also possible to study modules through the medium of Welsh on any of our other degree schemes.

Our commitment is to ensure that students have the option of studying at least 80 credits a year through the medium of Welsh. In practice, this means that four of the six modules that students are expected to complete each year can be studied through the medium of Welsh. We also ensure that all Welsh speaking students are allocated a personal tutor and dissertation tutor who can speak the language.

Students are welcome to opt for the Welsh-medium versions of modules every time, if that is their wish. However, it is also possible to be flexible and vary the medium of study from module to module. There is also flexibility in the language that can be used when completing assessed work. Students have the option of presenting their work through the medium of Welsh or English, regardless of the

module's medium of instruction. These teaching arrangements mean that our Welsh-medium provision is open to students from a different range of Welsh language backgrounds.

Many of our degree courses are eligible for Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol undergraduate scholarships. There are two different types of scholarship: the Main Scholarships are open to students who commit to studying at least 80 credits (ie 4 modules) through the medium of Welsh each year, while the Incentive Scholarships are open to students who commit to studying at least 40 credits (i.e. 2 modules) through the medium of Welsh each year. For more information about these scholarships and for a list of the eligible degree schemes please see the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol website: www.colegcymraeg.ac.uk/en



Research

The Department of International Politics at Aberystwyth is renowned not only for its teaching but also for its research activities. We are a leading research department in the UK and globally. Aber Interpol is well known around the globe as a place where exciting new insights into national, international and global challenges are developed.

From analyses of humanitarian intervention to the future of EU security, from the study of new forms of global harm to imagining new planetary politics, from the study of military history to the study of the latest challenges in nuclear proliferation and intelligence gathering, from analyses of the role of Britain in a changing world to understanding the role of Wales in the world, our world-leading research expertise has been at the forefront of developing new thinking and new policy practices.

This cutting-edge research expertise at Aberystwyth influences the teaching at the department. We encourage our staff to teach on the latest research findings in their varied fields of expertise and students thus benefit directly from the latest research developments.

In addition to this, important new research is also produced by our students! Students graduating from our PhD programme, for example, have won numerous national and international prizes for their research theses. Undergraduate students and Masters students too contribute to research intensity at Aberystwyth through their own research work on their dissertations and participation in research seminars and events.

In sum, our department is a vibrant environment in which to study and explore new ideas. Each year we host talks by world-leading experts and opinion formers which students, staff as well as local citizens regularly attend. And we host a number of exciting research centres, such as the Centre for the International Politics of Knowledge, the David Davies Memorial Institute, and the Planetary Challenges and Politics Centre.

At Aber Interpol you will be at the centre of the latest thinking, exploring and testing of new ideas on international politics!



Parliamentary and Welsh Senedd Placement Scheme

The House of Commons/Welsh Senedd Placement Scheme provides an exceptional opportunity for some second year students to obtain insight into the practice of politics.

There are limited places, so students apply and attend a departmental interview. We select students who have proven that they are enthusiastic and passionate about the business of politics, can work hard and diligently under pressure, who have good interpersonal skills and who are capable of adapting quickly to working in this very different environment.

Successful applicants are placed with an MP (House of Commons, Westminster) or an MS (Welsh Senedd, Cardiff) for a period of typically 4-6 weeks. Work undertaken may involve drafting reports and speeches, drafting press releases, working with Parliamentary committees, research projects, and assisting with constituency casework. Students have also been involved in election campaigning and responding to various political events. Departmental funding is available to help with costs.

The Senedd

Crisis Games Simulations

The Department of International Politics was the first university in the UK to use crisis simulations to connect classroom learning with the real-world complexities of international politics. The Crisis Simulations are held at least once a year, often at locations away from Aberystwyth, and are among the most popular activities in the Department.

A crisis game is a political role-playing exercise or simulation. Students are given a crisis 'scenario' and allocated to one of several teams representing: national leaders, government departments, transnational corporations, NGOs, international organisations, paramilitary groups and media organisations. These teams simulate, as realistically as possible, the interactions of the participants in an international crisis. The aim of the exercise is to provide insight into the complexities of national and international politics and a greater appreciation of the difficulties faced by decision-makers when confronted with an international crisis.

During the course of the simulation students learn about aspects of international politics that cannot be taught in lectures and seminars and foster non-academic skills. They provide a more direct

perspective on the decision-making processes under the pressures of a crisis situation.

Finally, the crisis games help you to develop and improve career-oriented skills such as project management, diplomacy and negotiation; team-building and leadership, information management, problem-solving, public speaking, presentation, communication and media skills.

In recent years, the Crisis Games have been based on the humanitarian crises in Darfur, North Korea's nuclear weapons, Syrian civil war, US Presidential Elections, the Northern Ireland peace process, war between Russia and Georgia, NATO Operations in Afghanistan, environmental politics of the Arctic, and the UK's decision to leave the EU.



Student societies and events

International Politics Society: Organising an array of academic and political activities, debates, social events, formal dinners and other events. The International Politics Society (IPS) at Aberystwyth are a group of students with a keen interest in, and diverse views on, local, national and international affairs.

Interstate Journal of International Affairs is an undergraduate-run academic journal. It focuses on issues of international and current affairs, and it aims to allow students an opportunity to comment on and analyse world affairs in depth alongside contributions by academics and practitioners in the field. The journal allows students to develop their writing style for different audiences, publish work and become involved in the editing and managing of a publication. Today, Interstate publishes twice a year online and in print, and the journal is available at the Welsh Senedd.

Student Diversity Group: The aim of the group is to promote understanding and celebrate diversity in the Department including in relation to gender, neurodiversity, religion, race and sexuality. It relates to the department's emphasis on promoting an inclusive and respectful community. The group decides on its themes on an annual basis and has organised events such as a film night.

Student profile

Sarah Lehmkuehler

My name is Sarah Lehmkuehler, originally from Bochum in Germany, and I graduated with a BA in International Politics and History. When I was deciding which university to go to, I first picked Aberystwyth due to it having a good reputation and being by the sea. It was not my first choice from the universities I had selected, but that changed once I came to Aber for an applicant visiting day. The friendliness of students and staff instantly made me feel right at home, and the sample lecture was exciting and informative. Having much preferred this experience to other open days I went to, I made Aber my first choice and have not regretted it since. The same feeling of community I got during my visiting day has been a constant throughout my three years in Aber, making settling in easy.

This does not only apply to the student community, but also to the department, as lecturers are always willing to help out with any questions a student could have about their modules and assignments – especially the dissertation.

Teaching in the large range of modules on offer has been of a constantly high quality and very engaging, especially in seminars, which give more room for discussion. Modules I would definitely recommend are for example "Spies at War", "Russian Intelligence from Lenin to Putin" and "NATO: From Cold War to Hybrid War", as all of them are not only taught well, but in a way that sparks the student's curiosity and makes you want to learn more about the topic in your own time.



However, studying in Aber means much more than just staying within your department. With a wide range of clubs and societies on offer, there is a community for everyone and many friendships waiting to be made. Having been part of the Basketball Team for all of my time here and having coached them for two years now, a personal highlight of my time here was definitely this year's Varsity against Bangor Uni – to see the community come together and cheer your team on is simply an amazing feeling.

After my graduation I will be leaving Aber and gaining some new experiences while studying for a Master's Degree elsewhere, however with the range of expertise on offer in the department I might very well return to study for a PhD afterwards!

Global opportunities

Aberystwyth's Global Opportunities team offer an exciting range of options for you to go overseas as part of your degree: from short courses and volunteering opportunities in the summer, to a full semester or year abroad studying your chosen subject at one of our partner universities.

The University also offers a number of courses which include an integrated year studying abroad, enabling you to study at one of our European or international partner universities for one or two semesters during your third year, returning to Aberystwyth for your final year and graduation.

Reports have shown that students who study abroad are more attractive to employers and earn more than their peers. Take advantage of the opportunity of a lifetime while improving your critical skills by choosing to study abroad.



Hong Kong



Spain



Finland



Australia



The application process

1 Apply through UCAS.com

Check the UCAS deadline on UCAS.com. Aberystwyth University institution code: A40.

TOP TIP: You'll be given a 10-digit UCAS ID number. Keep this to hand as you'll be asked for it many times.

2 The University will consider your application

TOP TIP: Use UCAS Hub to keep an eye on your application. At Aberystwyth we aim to make a decision within seven days.

3 The offer will show on UCAS Hub

The University's decision will show on UCAS Hub - if you've been made an offer, it will tell you what grades you need to achieve to secure your place.

4 Decide where to go

Once you've received all your offers, you'll need to decide which university you want to go to, within a set time. This is when you'll need to note which universities will be your Firm and Insurance choices.

5 Accommodation

Once you've chosen your Firm/Insurance choice you'll be invited to apply for accommodation.

6 Results day

UCAS Hub will tell you whether your place is confirmed at your Firm choice. If you don't get the grades you'd hoped for, you may want to consider entering Clearing.

7 Start packing!

Remember to keep an eye on your emails for information about arrival and welcome activities.

Department of International Politics,
Aberystwyth University,
Penglais,
Aberystwyth, SY23 3FE

+44 (0)1970 62 1537

interpol@aber.ac.uk

/InterpolAber

/interpolaber

/interpolaber

@InterpolAber

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