

SCHOOL OF GLOBAL STUDIES

# International Relations

US  
UNIVERSITY  
OF SUSSEX

International Relations at Sussex enables you to explain and understand the world as a whole.

How and why is the world becoming increasingly integrated, and to whose benefit?

Which historical reasons for human conflict and insecurity are still with us today?

Are human rights and justice possible in a world made up of states?

How significant is the role of non-governmental organisations, transnational companies and other non-state actors?

## What makes Sussex special?

### INNOVATIVE APPROACH

International Relations at Sussex is open, progressive, interdisciplinary and highly critical in its approach to teaching and learning. This is what makes studying with us such a unique experience. As one of the longest established International Relations departments in the UK (established in 1965), and one of the largest specialist IR departments in Europe, we have a reputation for pioneering radical and innovative approaches to the subject that challenge the mainstream.

As an International Relations student at Sussex, you won't just learn about international institutions; you will be guided to go back to first principles and explore what the international system is, has been and could be. You will have the opportunity to formulate opinions, find your voice and be heard. You will undertake modules that have been designed and taught by world renowned academics to give you a wide intellectual foundation, combining perspectives from history, theory, political economy and security studies to help you develop your understanding of the world today.

### INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

You will be exposed to ideas that are at the cutting edge of the discipline, by our faculty members, based on their own active research. Based around our research centres in Conflict and Security, Global Political Economy, International Theory, and Rights and Justice, our research spans the globe. Our leading reputation means we attract high-profile speakers to provide guest lectures and keynote-speaker events that you can attend, helping to shape them with your own questions and perspective. In the past, these have included senior figures from NATO and the European Council on International Relations. As an IR student, you would benefit from our membership of Chatham House, the UK's largest international affairs think-tank. International Relations trains you to be intellectually curious, and culturally agile. Our staff and students come from a broad range of countries, so your studies will be an international experience in every sense.



## What you will learn

### YEAR 1

The first year of the course introduces you to the academic study of International Relations, outlining the distinct characteristics of IR as a scholarly discipline. It opens up a critical analysis of historical texts written by authors such as Aquinas, Hobbes, Kant, Machiavelli and Marx, and asks what relevance these authors have had in establishing the discipline of International Relations. Can these authors be interpreted in order to provide a radical critique of contemporary international thought and practice? A module on 'The Local and the Global' encourages you to connect your everyday local life to global politics. You also cover the historical development of international relations, with particular emphasis on the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Finally, a variety of contemporary issues are examined, including the environment, free trade, human rights, social movements and war.

### YEAR 2

In the second year, you build your degree to suit your own interests, by choosing to specialise in areas such as Development, Foreign Policy, Globalisation and/or Security.

### YEAR 3

The third year is the most flexible of all, when we provide you with a wide range of choice based on the specialist research interests of our teaching faculty. This wide and cutting-edge range is a direct benefit of studying at one of Europe's largest specialist IR departments.



## Shaping your degree



### CUSTOMISE YOUR COURSE

You can study International Relations as a single honours degree or as part of a joint honours degree. In a joint degree, you spend half your time studying International Relations, and half your time studying another subject. In a single honours degree, you specialise in International Relations, and either you take a number of different elective modules from across the university, or you can do a structured 'pathway', for at least two years, in a single area of study. For example, you could do a pathway in Climate Change, Gender Studies, a Language (e.g. Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Spanish), Middle East Studies, or Human Rights. For a full list of pathways, see: [sussex.ac.uk/study/ug/sussexchoice](https://sussex.ac.uk/study/ug/sussexchoice)

**“What I really like about my course is the critical thinking aspect that is constantly being put to students. We’re almost forced to always keep an open mind and look at both sides before reaching a decision.”**

**HANNAH SVANBERG  
BA INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND  
INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

## Your student experience



You will learn from academics whose passion will help to inspire yours. Our research goes further than books; it underpins our teaching too. You won't just read leading global research: you will debate it with the academics who write it, right from the start of your degree. You will be allocated an experienced member of the teaching team who will be your Academic Advisor and support you through your journey.

Dedicated study skills sessions are incorporated directly into Year 1 teaching, to help you to succeed. You will benefit from many excellent facilities on campus. These include the impressive University Library, the Global Studies Resource Centre, access to The Keep (a new historical resource archive), plus the rich artistic and cultural resources available in Brighton, London and the southeast of England. You will be welcomed into an active International Relations student society, which organises regular social and academic events, as well as fieldtrips across Europe. Our international student body helps you to see and experience things from different cultural perspectives, and provides you with the opportunity to build friendships and connections across the globe.

## Your flexible course structure

You choose from a range of options that enable you to focus on your particular area of interest. Each term you will be able to select from modules as indicated in the table below, in addition to electives or a pathway from across the university and/or modules from your other joint subject. To give you the best experience of study, we continually review and update our module list. For a comprehensive list and description of modules visit [go.sussex.ac.uk/ir](http://go.sussex.ac.uk/ir) Listings may be subject to change.

### YEAR 1

#### AUTUMN

##### Core for Single and Joint

Introduction to International Relations

Rise of the Modern International Order

##### Single only

Powers and Regions

##### Elective/Pathway

IR Elective: Global Issues  
OR module from another department

#### SPRING

##### Core for Single and Joint

Classical Political Theory and IR  
Short 20th Century and Beyond

##### Single only

Local and The Global

##### Elective/Pathway

IR Elective: Global Politics of the Environment  
OR module from another department

### YEAR 2

#### AUTUMN

##### Core for Single and Joint

Contemporary International Theory

Introduction to International Political Economy

##### Single only

War in International Politics

##### Elective/Pathway

IR Elective: Business in World Politics  
OR module from another department

#### SPRING

##### Single choose three, Joint two

Politics of Foreign Policy

Globalisation and Global Governance

Security and Insecurity

Development and the State

##### Single only

##### Elective/Pathway

IR Elective: Gender: Rethinking Politics  
OR module from another department

### YEAR 3

#### AUTUMN/SPRING

##### No core, all optional

##### Single choose four (two per term), Joint two (one per term)

Capitalism and Geopolitics

Dirty Wars: Conflict and Military Intervention

Development and Geopolitics in East Asia

Ethics in Global Politics

Global Resistance: Subjects and Practices

International Relations of the Modern Middle East

Marxism and IR

Mercenaries, Gangs and Terrorists

Political Economy of the Environment

Political Economy of Latin American Development

Religions in Global Politics

Sex and Death in World Politics

The Arms Trade in International Politics

The Politics of International Trade

The Politics of Terror

The Reign of Rights in Global Politics

The United States in the World  
What is War?

## Study or work abroad



We recognise that our students are keen to develop a truly global approach to their studies. Your ambitions are supported by the range of study opportunities open to you. The University of Sussex maintains student exchange links with almost 100 universities in Europe, Asia, Australia and Latin America and more than 40 universities in North America. Studying abroad is a fantastic opportunity to experience different cultures, see the world from a new perspective and investigate your studies first-hand. Many students can combine study abroad with taking a relevant language, at Sussex, before travelling. This will be of huge benefit to you in understanding International Relations and will enhance your skills, your CV and employment prospects. The University also encourages and supports a range of work placements: ranging from informal summer placements to full-year structured ones.

**“One of the reasons I chose Sussex was because of its immensely diverse student population. Discussing concepts and issues with people of so many different backgrounds and perspectives has added depth and awareness to my thinking.”**

**AKASHA LIGERTWOOD  
BA INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**

## After your degree



### CAREERS

Our graduates go on to a variety of careers in leading international organisations, international non-governmental organisations and the global media. These have included leading organisations such as Action Against Hunger, the World Bank and the United Nations. Recent graduate posts have included: Consulate Official, British Embassy; Team Coordinator, Red Cross; Fundraising Manager, Child Reach International. Some of our students choose to undertake postgraduate study in the UK or internationally.

### LIFELONG SKILLS

With this degree, you will gain the ability to analyse complex information, to reason clearly, to judge evidence, to evaluate theories and to produce clearly structured critical arguments. You will build practical skills to help in your future career, including report writing, presentation skills, constructing policy briefs, managing independent research, and accessing and interpreting international data. These skills, coupled with an in-depth understanding of International Relations, will load you with transferable skills and put you in a strong position to get a great job (in a wide range of public and private sectors) after graduating or, if you choose, to continue into further study.



The School of Global Studies, which houses the departments of Anthropology, Geography, International Development and International Relations, provides one of the UK's most focused centres of expertise for understanding how the world is changing. It offers a broad range of perspectives on global issues, and staff and students who are actively engaged with a wide range of international and local partners, contributing a distinctive perspective on global affairs.

CONTACT US

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