

**Kingston
University**
London



Politics BA(Hons)

joint honours

■ FACULTY OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

www.kingston.ac.uk/politics



Politics BA(Hons)

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Studying politics helps to develop your knowledge and understanding of power and government in our society and throughout the world. A focus on the interaction of people, ideas and institutions provides the basis for understanding how values are allocated and resources distributed at many levels, from the local through to the national, regional and global. Politics is about who gets what, when, how, why and where, and raises related questions of power, justice, human rights, order, conflict, legitimacy, accountability, obligation, sovereignty, decision-making and governance.

Our programme

Kingston's joint honours in Politics will enable you to develop a critical understanding of the political issues that affect societies across the world. The modules cover the different branches of politics, which include area studies, cultural politics, international politics, human rights, political theory and political sociology.

Politics at Kingston offers a radical and critical questioning of the assumptions upon which political beliefs are based, whether it is about the ideal polity, the best way to live or the correct analysis of political reality. You will consider questions such as:

- Why is recreational drug use illegal?
- What is the difference between a freedom fighter and a terrorist?
- Why do people vote for racist parties?
- Is abortion wrong?
- Why is the Third World in debt?
- Why did the Holocaust happen?
- Why do we hear so much about women's rights

and so little about men's rights?

- Why are world leaders finding it so difficult to agree policies to slow climate change?
- Why has our Government used vast sums of public money to rescue leading banks?
- Why should this mean we must cut public spending on health and education?

These are just a few of the complex questions you will encounter while studying politics at Kingston. Our aim is to help you build up the skills and knowledge to develop your own answers and responses to these big questions.

Teaching, assessment and support

The course is taught through a mixture of lectures, seminars and workshops, and there is a strong emphasis on debate and discussion throughout. You will be assessed in a number of different ways, including portfolios of reflections on your work, presentations, essays and examinations. By the end of the degree you will have a sound knowledge and understanding of the subject and be fully equipped with a range of analytical skills.

Politics is a discursive subject and we want you to gain confidence and understanding in developing and articulating your own opinions and views on political life. To do this well, we recommend that you read around the subject regularly to help provide a solid foundation for these ideas. As politics is often fast moving, with events unfolding on a day-to-day basis, there is an expectation that students bring an awareness of current events to the classroom.

A degree is a major commitment, and we work hard to provide you with the help you will need to succeed. Compared with other universities, we provide high levels of contact with academic staff in terms of class contact time and in our office hours – we will be introducing a personal tutor system in 2012–2013 to provide a consistent source and advice throughout your university career.

From our induction programme in your first year, to support with dissertations and choosing your future direction in your final period at University, you will have access to learning support and guidance to ensure that, whatever your educational background, you achieve your full potential.

Careers

This course will enable you to develop your writing, oral and presentation skills – all key skills that are in demand in the modern job market. Employers are also looking for graduates with language skills. Our degree course enables you to learn a new language or continue studying a language you might already be familiar with.

Although Politics is not always recognised as a 'vocational' degree, it provides an excellent basis for a variety of careers. Our graduates go into a diverse array of professions, including law, politics, accountancy, finance, management and marketing, as well as teaching, journalism, the civil service and television research. Over the past few years, a large number of our students have gone on to take specialist studies leading to a masters qualification, such as Chinese Politics, Latin American Politics, Development Studies, Conflict Studies and Business Administration (MBA).

What do our graduates do?

Angela Budd graduated in 2001. After a brief internship she was employed as parliamentary researcher to local MP Edward Davey. "I loved my time at Kingston," Angela says. "The content of the course was brilliant. The modular system enabled me to adapt the course to suit my own particular interests, and the choice of courses available [were] diverse and thought-provoking. My time at Kingston was invaluable, and I remain on good terms with many of the staff. I am still involved on a professional level, as the University is a major part of my boss's constituency, and I enjoy keeping up to date on how the department has developed since I left."

Richard Eyre graduated from Kingston in 2006 and is now working for Croydon Council Services (Asylum Seekers Team). Richard says: "For me, to study politics is to study life! From the subjects offered, I was able to gain an insight into the mechanics of the modern world and learn about the fragility of human existence and interactions. Having discovered the personal benefits of helping people, I am now pursuing a career with the social services, which is thoroughly inspiring. It's satisfying to know that I am helping to improve people's lives."

Why study Politics at Kingston University? What makes us different?

- Our academic staff are all active researchers and experts in their field, and regularly participate in major international conferences and publish their research in a variety of arenas. Our focus on research-informed teaching ensures that new insights gained from our recent research are integrated into our teaching, providing you with a truly cutting-edge learning experience.
- You will receive high levels of support and guidance and enjoy direct contact from our internationally diverse and relatively young team, all of whom are passionate about teaching and improving the student experience, with a particular focus on innovative approaches to teaching.
- Lectures and seminars are regularly supplemented with visiting guest speakers – MPs, MEPS, local government representatives, think-tank policy specialists, campaigners and activists. Visiting speakers provide an excellent opportunity to learn about the 'real world' of politics and make contacts for future careers.
- Kingston's location on the outskirts of London and its excellent transport links into the city means that you can study in the safe, pleasant and less hectic surroundings of Kingston and Surbiton but can travel into Central London – the centre of political life in the UK – in just 25 minutes by train. There is a wide variety of lectures, workshops, talks and political events held in London throughout the year, and students are encouraged to participate in these and learn beyond the classroom.
- With graduate employment increasingly challenging, our Work Placement module offers you the opportunity to gain real-world work experience for credit. The module provides the framework and support necessary for expanding your skills and improving your employability.
- Our Study Abroad programme gives you the option of studying abroad in your second year. This popular programme enables students to study at a university in Continental Europe, Australia or the United States for either a half or a full academic year.
- This joint honours subject enables you to combine your study of politics with a complementary subject, expanding your intellectual horizons and boosting your employability (see overleaf).

What you will study

Examples of the modules currently offered are shown below. The number of modules taken each year and the choices available will vary depending on whether you study Politics as a major, half or minor field (joint honours). The module list varies from year to year as the course structure is reviewed and refined.

Year 1

This year provides a foundation of knowledge and skills for your subsequent years of study. There is a strong focus in the first year on the development of the study skills necessary for success in your degree and on supporting you in your transition into higher education.

Studying Politics

This module introduces different perspectives in the study of politics. It will focus on a significant, contemporary theme, such as globalisation or political power and authority. You will develop critical and analytical skills in reading and reflecting on the diverse arguments of a variety of writers. This module also helps to manage your transition to higher education and to develop some of the core academic skills that you will need.

UK Government and Politics

This module aims to introduce you to key issues in British government and politics. The module covers: a post-war consensus; the institutional framework – parliament, core executive, civil service, local, regional and subnational government; the European Union; electoral systems; political socialisation and culture; voting behaviour; political parties (organisation, finance and ideology); pressure groups; and issues in UK politics – Northern Ireland, gender, race, economic policy, defence strategy, industrial relations, privatisation.

Heroes and Villains

This module examines key figures in the discussion on human rights, both for their positive and negative impact. How have Adolf Hitler, Albert Speer, Nelson Mandela, Steve Biko, Martin Luther King, Anne Frank and Primo Levi influenced the way we think about human rights and the way we understand human wrongs?

Introduction to International Relations

This module will introduce you to the key concepts associated with the study of international politics. It looks at how recent history has influenced the ways in which we understand the world. You will be encouraged to critically examine the key debates on the state, the international system, violence, global ethics and international law.

Year 2

Having gained an introductory understanding of politics in Year 1, you can begin to specialise in areas that particularly interest you in Year 2. There is also the opportunity to take part in a work placement module or to study abroad during your second year.

Second-year modules include:

- Nationalism
- Apocalypse Now: International Politics Goes to the Movies
- The Holocaust
- Politics Work Placement
- Terrorism in the Contemporary World
- International Relations Theory
- International Organisations
- Theories of Justice
- Comparative European Politics
- Contemporary Balkan Politics
- Introduction to Middle Eastern Politics
- Introduction to Contemporary African Politics
- Introduction to Latin American Countries

Year 3

Year 3 allows for greater levels of specialisation, and builds on the themes encountered in Years 1 and 2. You will carry out a dissertation on a topic of your choice, supervised by a member of the course team with associated research interests. To help prepare for this, you will receive research skills training to introduce you to the key research methods and help support the design of your personal project.

Third-year modules include:

- Research Skills
- Human Rights and Armed Conflict
- Crimes of the Powerful
- Fascism & the Post War Extreme Right
- Contemporary European Protest Movements
- A Change is Gonna Come: Politics and Popular Music
- Politics of Conflict
- Marxist Political Thought
- Gender & Politics
- Issues in Political Philosophy
- Party Politics in European States
- Contemporary Russian Politics
- Themes in Latin American Politics
- Politics of Nationalism in the Contemporary Middle East

Languages, Work Placements and Studying Abroad

Kingston Language Scheme

All students may substitute one of the subject modules in their first year for a language module from the Kingston Language Scheme (KLS), providing a unique opportunity to incorporate a language into your programme of studies. We offer modules in Arabic, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Mandarin (Chinese) and Spanish. You can learn a new language from the beginning or continue with the study of a language you have previously learned. Each module is credit-rated and will count towards your degree. If your first language is not English, we offer an English Language module in Year 1, which is designed to assist you with language difficulties.

Work placement

Kingston Politics students have the opportunity to take a work placement module for credit in Year 2. This allows students to gain valuable work experience and improve their graduate employment prospects while still completing their degree in three years. Students are supported by a member of staff to help ensure that they optimise their experience and skills development.

Studying abroad

You can also strengthen your language expertise by studying abroad during Year 2. We have links with universities in France, Spain, Hungary and Germany; and Politics and International Relations students regularly spend either one semester or their full second year in one of these partner institutions. Should you wish to study in America or Australia, we also have exchange arrangements with universities in these countries.

Centre for Academic Skills and Employability (CASE)

CASE offers students from the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences one-to-one help with their studies, supporting both undergraduate and postgraduate students with:

- researching and presenting;
- structuring and editing traditional academic writing;
- structuring and editing multimedia texts;
- referencing; and
- music theory.

CASE provides a range of resources to enhance employability, including help with writing CVs, application forms and preparing you for interviews. Results show that students who use the Centre are significantly more likely to complete their degree. As they are better equipped to act on feedback, they also tend to do better in their studies.



Want to know more?
www.kingston.ac.uk/politics

Politics staff

The Politics team has a wide variety of views, perspectives and research interests, with specialisms in different areas of the discipline. This enables us to offer a broad range of modules based on personal research interests, ensuring that our teaching is topical and well-informed.

Dr Orna Almog specialises in international relations of the Middle East: the history and politics of Arab–Israeli conflict, Israeli foreign policy, conflict resolution and international mediation in the Middle East.

Dr Simon Choat specialises in political theory: in particular, modern European philosophy. He is especially interested in Marx and Marxism and French philosophy since 1960, including Althusser, Foucault and Derrida.

Dr Radu Cinpoes specialises in the politics of nationalism and identity. His teaching and research interests include ethnicity and conflict, European politics, transition from communism, human rights and migration.

Dr Paul Dixon specialises in researching conflict. In particular, he specialises on the Northern Ireland conflict, theories of conflict management and counterinsurgency strategy.

Dr Elizabeth Evans specialises in feminist theory, UK politics and political parties, with particular reference to theories of representation and democracy.

Dr Jonathan Gilmore specialises in international relations and security studies. His recent research investigated the links between human rights and violent conflict, with specific reference to the question of whether military force can or should be used to protect human rights.

Dr Andrew Higginbottom specialises in Latin America.

Professor François Nectoux's research interests include the French economy, French politics, French sociocultural studies, European social policies, European media and cultural policies, international relations and international aspects of the environment.

Dr Hannah Miller lectures in human rights, international relations and politics. Her research examines the meaning and protection of human rights, with a focus on forms of human rights activism.

Dr Robin Pettitt is an expert on political parties and political marketing.

Dr Sam Raphael specialises in international security and human rights. His research expertise covers US foreign policy, terrorism, energy security, counterinsurgency, the arms trade and extraordinary rendition.

Mike Roberts specialises in social movements, and popular music and political films. His research interests include black music/black nationalism and the politics of Bob Dylan.

Dr Robin Redhead researches human rights in world politics. She is interested in how indigenous people contest their rights against colonial powers, and how human rights activists campaign on behalf of the oppressed.

Supportive community

Our working relationship with our students has always been strong. Kingston's politics students are part of a close knit and supportive community. They are a diverse group, bringing different perspectives, experiences and ideas to the study of politics and international relations.

"Our emphasis on teaching subjects relevant to the world today, and producing graduates able to make a positive contribution to that world, makes the educational experience on offer in our Faculty at Kingston unique among universities in the United Kingdom."

Professor Martin McQuillan
Dean of Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

Entry requirements

Typical offer

- Points: 240–360 points, depending on combination
- Units: to include two A-levels or equivalent
- Subjects: General Studies accepted as one of three A-levels
- Key Skills: points accepted in tariff
- Plus GCSE: Mathematics and English Language and Literature (grade A–C preferred)

Further requirements for combinations

Please see the course webpage for details.

International students

All non-UK applicants must meet our English language requirements. For this course it is IELTS of 6.5 overall, with special conditions for students who require a Tier-4 student visa. Please make sure you read our full guidance about English language requirements on our course webpage, which includes details of other qualifications we'll consider.

Other entry routes

- Access course
- International applicants and mature applicants with relevant qualifications are welcomed.

Joint honours combinations

You can study Politics as a major, half or minor field in combination with:

- Business
- Creative Writing
- Criminology
- Design
- Drama
- Applied Economics
- English Language & Communication
- English Literature
- Environmental Studies
- French
- History
- History of Art, Design & Film
- Human Geography
- Journalism
- Law
- Media & Cultural Studies
- Psychology
- Sociology
- Spanish
- Television & New Broadcasting Media

UCAS codes

For UCAS codes, please see the course webpage.

Open days

Several open days are held each year. Please contact the admissions office or visit the University website for more details.
www.kingston.ac.uk/opendays

Contact details

Course enquiries

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Disability and Dyslexia Support Services

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F: +44 (0)20 8417 4443
www.kingston.ac.uk/disability-and-dyslexia

International Office

T: +44 (0)20 8417 3411
www.kingston.ac.uk/international