

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

This document describes the **Joint Honours Degree programmes in History, Politics and International Relations**. For Joint and Combined Honours Degree programmes, please also refer to the equivalent document(s) for the other subject(s). This specification is valid for new entrants from **September 2017**.

The Joint Degree's principal aim is to allow students to pursue the study of both Politics and International Relations alongside that of History, placing these subjects in an international historical context as well as achieving an understanding of historical developments enhanced by the insights provided through the study of Politics and International Relations and its more significant theoretical frameworks. In meeting this principal aim the programme also:

- Provides a systematic understanding and knowledge of Politics and International Relations theory and institutions in an historical context;
- Encourages a critical awareness of current problems at the international level, in terms of both their contemporary complexities and their historical bases;
- Provides theoretical insights and methodological techniques relevant to the development and interpretation of knowledge in History, Politics and International Relations and to the evaluation of current research and scholarship in the fields;
- Fosters an independent learning ability for continued intellectual development;
- Provides an opportunity for students to obtain an undergraduate qualification in History, Politics and International Relations.

The programme is normally delivered in three stages, each of which comprises one year of full-time study during which the student must follow courses to the value of four units (one unit is equivalent to 30 national credits). The programme comprises 'mandatory' disciplinary courses, including a compulsory stage one common to all degree programmes in the departments, and 'optional' specialist courses, with an extended essay in the final stage. Whilst the development of disciplinary-specific skills are emphasised in the mandatory courses, the specialist options provide focused opportunities to examine the application of these skills. Moreover, the multi-disciplinary common first year, and the opportunity to take courses offered in complementary disciplines gives a heightened appreciation of disciplinary distinctiveness.

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This document provides a summary of the main features of the programme(s), and of the outcomes which a student might reasonably be expected to achieve if full advantage is taken of the learning opportunities provided. Further information is contained in the College prospectus, the College Regulations and in various handbooks issued to students upon arrival. Whilst Royal Holloway keeps all its information for prospective applicants and students under review, programmes and the availability of individual courses are necessarily subject to change at

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any time, and prospective applicants are therefore advised to seek confirmation of any factors which might affect their decision to follow a specific programme. In turn, Royal Holloway will inform applicants and students as soon as is practicable of any substantial changes which might affect their studies.

Learning outcomes

Teaching and learning on the programme are closely informed by the active research of staff. In general terms, the programmes provide opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate the following learning outcomes:

Knowledge and Understanding

- Extensive knowledge and critical understanding of recent and current developments in the fields of History, Politics and International Relations, and of the issues and controversies associated with these developments.
- A sound knowledge of the theories, techniques and concepts used to further our understanding of the issues, processes and phenomena associated with the fields of History, Politics and International Relations.
- A critical understanding of data relating to the fields of History, Politics and International Relations and of the results of analysis based thereon.

Skills and other attributes

The Programme is designed to allow students to acquire competence in the following range of discipline-specific and transferable (denoted with an asterisk*) skills:

- Assess the merits of theories, models and explanations in History, Politics and International Relations and situate them in a wider disciplinary context;
- Apply the concepts and methods used in History, Politics and International Relations to the analysis of the international political system and its institutions;
- Analyse qualitative and quantitative data relating to the fields of History, Politics and International Relations;
- Evaluate current research and scholarship in the field, and evaluate and, where appropriate, develop critiques of the methodologies employed by historians and International Relations scholars;
- Gather, organise and deploy evidence, data and information from a variety of sources, and assess their nature and value;
- Carry out an independent investigation of an international political and/or historical topic or issue and produce a coherent written account;
- Communicate complex ideas and present arguments and complex information in a clear and concise manner in writing;*
- Analyse and interpret complex issues, and develop reasoned arguments and make sound, critical judgements in the absence of complete data;*
- Use literature, internet and database searches to gain necessary information;*
- Develop the intellectual autonomy and self-direction needed for independent investigation of intellectual problems, taking responsibility for one's learning, and developing habits of reflection on that learning;*
- Exercise of initiative and personal responsibility;*
- Ability to take decisions in complex and uncertain situations;*
- The ability to work autonomously and collaboratively with other;*
- Self-awareness and self-management of research;*
- Awareness of one's responsibility as a local, national and international citizen;*
- Ability to learn independently and to take advantage of life-learning;*
- Skills of oral presentation.*

** transferable skills*

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Teaching and Learning

Teaching and learning on the programme draws on the methods and concepts used to investigate international political phenomena and to conduct historical scholarship. It is also very strongly informed by the current research interests of the teaching staff from the two departments contributing courses to the programme. This is particularly the case with the 2nd and 3rd Year options, all of which are offered by staff based on their own individual research interests (fully consistent with the College's approach to research-led teaching).

The main methods used to develop knowledge and understanding are: formal lectures by academic staff, tutorials and seminar discussions based on a combination of staff led sessions and student participation (including presentations). There is also guided independent research and study for the 3rd Year Dissertation.

Assessment will be by a combination of assessed coursework and examination as indicated in individual Course Specifications. Full details of the assessments for individual courses can be obtained from the [Department of History](#) and the [Department of Politics and International Relations](#).

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Details of the programme structure

Please note that the list of options offered is subject to change and not all courses run each year. A full list of courses for the current academic year can be obtained from the [Department of History](#) and the [Department of Politics and International Relations](#).

Stage One

Students must take the following **mandatory** courses:

PR1400 Introduction to Politics and Government (1 unit)

PR1500 Introduction to International Relations (1 unit)

HS1002 History and Meanings (0.5 unit)

HS1005 Public History (0.5 unit)

and one Gateway Course to the value of at least one full unit.

Stage Two

Students must take the following **mandatory** course:

HS2300 Independent Essay (0.5 unit, term two)

Students also take **either** three Group 1 half unit courses (two in term 1 and one in term 2) **or** one Group 1 half unit course (term 1) and one Group 2 course (both terms) in History

Students must also take a further two full units from a list of options available from both European Studies and Politics and International Relations.

Stage Three

Students follow one of two pathways, depending on whether they decide to write their dissertation in History or in Politics and International Relations:

Pathway A (History dissertation)

Students take one History Group 3 course (two units, comprising taught course (one unit) and 10,000 word dissertation (one unit)).

Students also take two final year courses in Politics and International Relations (one unit each).

Pathway B (Politics and International Relations dissertation)

Students take one Group 3 course (taught course only, one unit) and one Group 2 course (one unit) in History.

Students also take one final year course in Politics and International Relations (one unit) and the Politics and International Relations freestanding dissertation (one unit).

History, Politics and International Relations with an International Year (4 years)

Stage one:

As Stage one, listed above.

Stage two:

As Stage two, listed above.

Stage three, part 1 - Extra-curricular year: **

Students must take courses at an overseas university nominated through the Erasmus or Student Exchange Programmes. The equivalent of a full academic load at the overseas university must be taken. The courses to be taken overseas are to be agreed with the Tutor for International Studies in History. The marks achieved are converted into equivalent College marks and count as a thirteenth unit, HS3400. This will contribute 20% to the final stage three marks.

Stage three, part 2 – Final year in the History Department:

As Stage three, listed above. These courses will contribute 80% to the final stage three marks.

**Students commencing stage three, part 1 on this four year programme will not be permitted to transfer back to one of the three year programmes offered by the Department of History. The Department will give consideration in the case of extreme hardship, documented by extenuating circumstances and supporting material, as it normally would, should a student not be able to complete their year abroad.

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Progression and award requirements

The progression and award requirements are essentially the same across all Honours Degree programmes at Royal Holloway as outlined in the College's Undergraduate Regulations. Students must pass units to the value of at least three units on each stage of the programme. Failing marks of 30 – 39% can normally be condoned in up to 30 credits across stages 1 and 2. In the final stage failing marks in up to 30 credits can normally be condoned. However, on some programmes there may be a requirement to pass specific courses in order to progress to the next stage or to qualify for a particular degree title and this will put restrictions on courses in which failing marks can be condoned (see programme structure above for details). Additionally there are requirements on the number of courses that must be passed in order to qualify for particular joint or combined Honours degrees.

All first year students on single joint or combined honours programmes offered all or in part by departments or schools in the Faculty of Arts & Social Science are required to pass a Moodle-based writing skills quiz in order to progress into the second year of study. The pass mark for the test is 60%. Certificates of Distinction are awarded to students who achieve at least 80% in the quiz. Students may attempt the quiz as often as they wish with no penalties or capping. Students who meet the requirements for progression as stipulated in the [College's Undergraduate Regulations](#) (Section: Conditions for progression to the next stage) but fail to pass the Moodlebased quiz will not be permitted to progress into their second year of academic study at the College.

Students are considered for the award and classified on the basis of a weighted average. This is calculated from marks gained in courses taken in stages two and three, and gives twice the weighting to marks gained in stage three. The College's Undergraduate Regulations include full details on progression and award requirements for all undergraduate programmes offered by the College.

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Student support and guidance

- Personal Advisers: All students are allocated a personal adviser in each department who meets with them in the induction week and then regularly through the programme. The tutor's role is to advise on academic, pastoral and welfare issues.
- All tutors and academic staff, including the Head of Department, are available for consultation at advertised office hours.
- The Departmental Academic Coordinator provides guidance and advice on a range of academic, administrative, pastoral and welfare matters.
- The Department operates an 'open door' policy such that any member of staff may be consulted by students.
- Induction programme to the Department and College for orientation at the start of the first year.
- Detailed and comprehensive Departmental Student Handbook.
- The Departmental Staff/Student Committee acts as a channel of communication between staff and students.
- Extensive supporting material and learning resources available from the College libraries. In addition students also have access to a wide range of resources available through other University of London libraries.
- College Careers and Employability Service and Departmental Careers and Employability Tutor.
- Access to all College and University support services, including Student Counselling Service, Health Centre and the Disability and Dyslexia Services for students with disabilities and Specific Learning Difficulties.

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Admission requirements

Details of the Department's typical offer for each programme of study is available on the [Course Finder](#) web page. However, the Department also has flexibility in its admissions and offers policy and strongly encourages applications from non-standard applicants. Students whose first language is not English may also be asked for a qualification in English Language at an appropriate level. For further guidance it may be helpful to contact the [Recruitment and Partnerships Office](#).

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Further learning and career opportunities

The programmes provide a firm foundation for postgraduate study and research, and some of the more successful graduates can expect to go on to postgraduate programmes in both Royal Holloway and elsewhere. The programmes also provide graduates with a range of intellectual, personal and social skills that are transferable to a wide variety of employment opportunities. Careers which will especially suit International Relations and History graduates include work in the civil service, local government, public and private sector management, political research and lobbying, teaching, and journalism and the media. Students on the programmes are able to take full advantage of the resources available at the College [Careers & Employability Service](#).

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Indicators of quality and standards

Royal Holloway's position as one of the UK's leading research-intensive institutions was confirmed by the results of the most recent Research Excellence Framework (REF 2014) conducted by the Higher Education Funding Council (HEFCE). The scoring system for the REF 2014 measures research quality in four categories, with the top score of 4* indicating quality that is world-leading and of the highest standards in terms of originality, significance and rigour and 3* indicating research that is internationally excellent. 81% of the College's research profile was deemed to be within the 4* or 3* categories, an increase of over 20% since 2008. This result placed Royal Holloway 31st overall in the UK for 4* and 3* research and 33rd based on an overall Grade Point Average (GPA) score.

The Department of History is ranked 26th in the UK for research of 4* standard and 38th for 3* and 4* research.

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List of programmes

The programme is taught entirely by staff at Royal Holloway, University of London, and leads to awards of the University of London. The programme in History, Politics and International Relations is not subject to accreditation by a professional body. The QAA subject benchmark statements in History and in International Relations describe the general features which one might expect from Honours Degree programmes in these subjects, and can therefore be used as a point of reference when reading this document (see www.qaa.ac.uk). UCAS codes are given in parentheses (see www.ucas.ac.uk).

Joint Honours Degree programme in History, Politics and International Relations

BA History, Politics and International Relations (VL12)

BA History, Politics and International Relations with an International Year (Banner code 2656)

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