

## Programme specification

### SOAS, University of London

The following information forms the programme specification at SOAS, University of London. It gives definitive information relating to a programme of study and is written for a public audience, particularly prospective and current students. It is also used for other purposes such as initial programme approval, and is therefore produced at the start of the programme development process. Once approved, it forms the base-line information for all statements relating to the programme and is updated as approved amendments are made.

#### CORE INFORMATION

Programme title	BA Politics and x
Final award	BA Joint Honours
Intermediate awards	N/A
Mode of attendance	Full Time
UCAS code	<p>African Studies TL52</p> <p>BA/POLAF bAraLT26</p> <p>BA/PLOA Burm ese+</p> <p>BA/POLBU Chinese+ L</p> <p>BA/POLCH</p> <p>BA/POLDVS Econom</p> <p>BA/POLEC Geogra</p> <p>BA/POLGE Georg ian L</p> <p>BA/POLGN Hausa+ LTF</p> <p>BA/POLHA Hebrew + L</p> <p>BA/POLHE Hindi+ LT2J</p> <p>BA/POLHN History LV 2</p> <p>BA/POLH Indones</p> <p>BA/POLI Japanese LT22</p> <p>BA/POLJ Korean+ LTF</p> <p>BA/POLKO Law LM 21</p> <p>BA/POLLW Linguist</p> <p>BA/LGPOL Nepali+ LT</p> <p>BA/POLNE Persian LT G</p> <p>BA/POLP Sc</p> <p>BA/SAPOL</p> <p>BA/SASPOL</p> <p>TLH2 BA/POLSEA</p> <p>LV26 BA/SRPOL Sw ah</p> <p>BA/SWOL Thai+ TL32</p> <p>BA/THPOL Turkish+ L</p> <p>BA/TUPOL V ietnam</p> <p>BA/VPOL</p>
Professional body accreditation	N/A
Date specification created/updated	January 2014

#### WHY CHOOSE THIS PROGRAMME?

Why study at SOAS?	SOAS is unique as the only higher education institution in the UK specialising
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	<p>in the study of Africa, Asia and the Middle East. The School also has the largest concentration of specialist faculty concerned with the study of these areas at any university in the world. SOAS is consistently ranked among the top higher education institutions in the UK and the world and it also offers a friendly, vibrant environment for students in a diverse and close-knit community.</p>
What is special about this programme?	<p>The BA Politics Joint Honours degree at SOAS is unique in two respects. First, it combines a broad-based training in the discipline of politics and international relations with a strong grounding in the politics of Asia, Africa and the Middle East. Second, our degree offers students an unrivalled range of options to choose from for their second subject. The study of Politics and International Relations can be combined with a wide range of social science and humanities subjects, or with the study of languages and regions of Asia, Africa, and the Middle East only available at SOAS.</p> <p>The Politics department offers courses at multiple levels in all the major sub-disciplines in politics: Political Theory, Comparative Politics, Political Sociology, Political Economy and International Relations. It also offers several courses in the politics of Asia (China, Taiwan, South Asia, South East Asia), as well as the Middle East and Africa.</p> <p>SOAS offers the widest range of options on the languages and cultures of Asia, Africa and the Middle East at both introductory and advanced levels. Students have an unparalleled range of options from which to select their second subject of study. In addition to languages and regions of Asia, Middle East and Africa, these include Anthropology, History, Law, Development Studies, Economics, Study of Religions.</p> <p>The BA Politics degree is taught by an international group of scholars who are</p>

	<p>highly regarded experts in their fields. Most have long-standing and direct involvement with countries in Asia, Africa or the Middle East and knowledge of one or more of the languages of their regions of interest. The unrivalled diversity of our staff and students makes for an exciting and unique learning experience.</p>
Who would it suit?	<p>The degree is suited to those with a keen intellectual interest in the study of politics and international relations. It trains students to come to grips with global political issues such as imperialism, multiculturalism, poverty, development, international organizations, conflict, revolution, security, and migration.</p> <p>Our degree also prepares you for an international career related to Asia, Africa, and the Middle East. Our graduates have pursued a wide range of careers. These include diplomatic services and civil services in several countries, international development and aid agencies, NGOs and charities, print and broadcasting journalism, teaching, think-tanks and risk assessment consultancies.</p> <p>A substantial number of our students go on to do postgraduate work in politics and international relations. This degree opens up many exciting career paths and offers strong career prospects.</p>
Programme structure	<p>The degree programme consists of four course units each year. Students have the opportunity to choose from a wide range of disciplinary units (eg. Political Theory, International Relations, Comparative Political Sociology, the Politics of Development) as well as regional units (eg. politics of China, Taiwan, South Asia, South East Asia, Middle East, and Africa). In addition, students have the option of taking 'open' courses offered by any other SOAS department.</p>

	<p>A minimum of FIVE course units in Politics are required to qualify for a joint degree.</p> <p>Our units or courses assume no previous disciplinary or regional knowledge. These are taught through lectures and tutorial seminars. Each course typically involves weekly lectures of 1 hour each and weekly tutorials of 1 hour each.</p>
Assessment summary	<p>The BA Politics Joint Honours degree is assessed through a combination of short essays, examinations, extended essays and dissertations (Independent Study Projects).</p> <p>Assessment for politics courses varies between a 20/80 balance between coursework essays and final written exam, and 100% coursework essays. Extended essays (5000 words) and Independent Study Projects (10,000 words) allow students to focus in depth on issues of particular interest to them.</p>

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## ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

SOAS has general minimum entrance requirements for registration for an undergraduate degree and these can be viewed at (<http://www.soas.ac.uk/admissions/ug/entryreq/>)

- **A Levels:** AAA
- **IB:** 38 (7/6/6)
- **BTEC:** DDD
- **Scottish Highers:** AAAAA
- **Scottish Advanced Highers:** AAA
- **Irish LC:** 360 points from 5 Higher level subjects at grade C1 or above
- **Advanced Placement:** 4 5 5 (Two semesters - UCAS Group A) plus US HSGD with GPA 3.0
- **Euro Bacc:** 85%
- **French Bacc:** 15/20
- **German Abitur:** 1.5
- **Italy DES:** 85/100
- **Austria Mat:** 1.5
- **Polish Mat:** 80%

## **PROGRAMME AIMS**

What will this programme give the student an opportunity to achieve?

- To provide a solid background in the basic concepts, theories and methods in the study of politics and international relations, and in the study of the second discipline, region or language.
- The use of empirical evidence from Asia and Africa will illustrate the applicability and limitations of the aforementioned concepts, theories and methods beyond the North American and European confines from which these are largely derived.
- Those combining Politics with another social science will be able to compare and contrast the analytical tools of cognate disciplines. Those combining Politics with a humanities or regional subject will be able to compare and contrast the analytical tools of Politics with historical-cultural type interpretations, or develop knowledge of the cultures of Asia, Africa and/or the Middle East. Those combining Politics with language study will acquire working knowledge of the relevant language and awareness of its cultural context.
- To prepare students for postgraduate study and professional employment.

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## **PROGRAMME LEARNING OUTCOMES**

What will the student learn?

Upon completion of this programme, the student should be able to:

### **Knowledge**

- Demonstrate basic knowledge of concepts, theories, and methods in the disciplines of politics and international relations.
- Demonstrate advanced knowledge of some contemporary debates in politics and/or international relations relating to Asia, Africa and/or the Middle East.
- Develop knowledge of political processes in one or more regions in Asia, Africa, or the Middle East that challenges commonly held views about major political issues including the student's own previous assumptions.
- Assess the relevance of mainstream approaches for the analysis of politics of Asia, Africa, or the Middle East.
- Compare and contrast the study of the politics and international relations of Asia and Africa with a second discipline.

### **Intellectual (thinking) skills**

- Analyse academic materials to identify their key arguments and underlying assumptions.
- Evaluate arguments and empirical evidence drawn from a variety of intellectual perspectives in a critical and balanced manner, with due regard to their strengths and limitations.
- Construct arguments drawing upon analyses of politics and international relations relating to Asia, Africa and/or the Middle East.
- Exercise independence of thought, including a willingness to challenge own previous assumptions about various issues. Engage in debates about current political controversies.

**Subject-based practical skills**

- Collect and synthesise information from a range of library and internet sources.
- Structure and communicate ideas effectively both orally and in writing
- Assess the validity of different approaches to a topic. Make judgments in contexts of conflicting evidence
- For students who combine Politics with a language, to comprehend, and communicate in the relevant language through speech and writing.

**Transferable skills**

- Work independently and manage schedules.
- Explain and evaluate complex ideas and situations
- Work effectively under time constraints
- Work productively in and contribute to groups.

**PROGRAMME STRUCTURE AND REQUIREMENTS FOR GAINING AN AWARD**

How will the student's study be structured? How will they achieve an award?

**Structure, duration and requirements for gaining an award**

SOAS has standard requirements relating to the structure and duration of undergraduate programmes and for the award and classification of these programmes.

Details can be found at <http://www.soas.ac.uk/registry/degreetregulations/>

**Programme structure diagram**

Below is a structure diagram for this programme.

Level	Year of study	Course code	Course title	Credit	Status	Notes
4	1	New Course	Introduction to Comparative Politics	30	Compulsory Core	
AND						
4	1	143400086	Introduction to Political Analysis	30		Note: required for a joint BA Politics and International Relations
OR						
4	1	153400001	Introduction to Political Theory	30		
Remaining courses to be taken from second subject area						
ONE OF THE FOLLOWING DISCIPLINARY UNITS						
5	2	153400067	Comparative Political Sociology of Asia and Africa	30		
5	2	153400054	Political Theory	30		
5	2	153400042	Politics of	30		

			Development			
AND ONE OF THE REGIONAL UNITS						
5	2	153400071	Government and Politics of China	30		
5	2	153400020	Government and Politics of South Asia	30		
5	2	153400060	Government and Politics of the Middle East	30		
5	2	153400022	Southeast Asian Government and Politics	30		
5	2	153400064	The State and Politics in Africa	30		
5	2	153400072	Taiwan's Political and Economic Development	30		
ONE TO THREE UNITS FROM THE FOLLOWING						
6	3	153400067	Comparative Political Sociology of Asia and Africa	30		
6	3	153400014	International Politics	30		
6	3	153400054	Political Theory	30		
6	3	153400042	Politics of Development	30		
6	3	153400067	Comparative Political Sociology of Asia and Africa	30		
6	3	153400054	Political Theory	30		
6	3	153400071	Government and Politics of China	30		
6	3	153400020	Government and Politics of South Asia	30		
6	3	153400060	Government and Politics of the Middle East	30		
6	3	153400022	Southeast Asian Government and Politics	30		
6	3	153400064	The State and Politics in Africa	30		
6	3	153400072	Taiwan's Political and Economic Development	30		
6	3	153400075	Politics of Culture	15		
6	3	153400074	Politics of Gender	15		

6	3	153400076	Issues in Turkish Politics	15		
6	3	153400065	Islam and Democracy	30		
6	3	153400057	Nationalism, Ethnicity and State in Asia and Africa	30		
6	3	153400053	Independent Study Project	30		Prerequisite: Overall mark of 2:1 or above in Year Two. Students CANNOT take both an ISP and 2 Extended Essays
6	3	153400058	Extended Essay A	15		
6	3	153400061	Extended Essay B	15		
AND/OR ANY COURSE AVAILABLE TO YEAR THREE STUDENTS, AN OPEN OPTION						

*The availability of optional/elective courses may vary in a given academic session due to factors such as staff absence and student numbers. For an up to date list of courses running in a given academic session please refer to the degree structures as listed on the SOAS website for the degree programmes taught by each Department.*

## TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT

What methods will be used to achieve the learning outcomes?

### Knowledge

- Basic knowledge of concepts, theories and methods in politics and international relations is to be attained through Year One core course lectures and tutorial presentations and discussions. It is assessed through coursework essays and unseen examinations. Joint honours students will also study corresponding core courses from their second discipline.
- Advanced knowledge of some contemporary debates in politics and/or international relations is to be achieved through lectures, tutorial discussions and oral presentations in Years Two - Three DISCIPLINARY courses. It is assessed through coursework essays, unseen examinations, extended essays and ISPs.
- Knowledge of political processes in one or more regions among Asia, Africa, or the Middle East is to be developed through lectures, tutorial discussions, oral presentations in Years Two -Three REGIONAL courses, as well as corresponding courses in the second subject. It is assessed through coursework essays, unseen examinations, extended essays and ISPs.
- Evaluation of the relevance of mainstream approaches for the analysis of politics of Asia, Africa, or the Middle East is to be taught through lectures,



tutorial discussions, and questions set for presentations, essays, and exams in Years One - Three Politics courses. It is assessed through coursework essays, unseen examinations, extended essays and ISPs.

#### **Intellectual (thinking) skills**

- Teaching: Learning outcomes will be achieved through attendance of lectures, independent reading of required literature, analysis and synthesis of materials in tutorial presentations, discussions, and assessed work.
- Assessment: Through unseen examinations, essay assignments, extended essays, and ISPs.

#### **Subject-based practical skills**

- Teaching: Learning outcomes will be achieved through course readings; lectures and post-lecture questions; oral presentations and classroom discussions; essays and ISPs; questions set for presentations and essays, in the expectation that students will fulfil the requirements for reading and writing for their courses. For students who combine Politics with language study, the ability to comprehend, and communicate in the relevant language will be fostered in the language courses.
- Assessment: Through essay assignments, extended essays, unseen examinations, and ISPs.

#### **Transferable skills**

- Teaching: Learning outcomes will be achieved through independent reading and writing for coursework; contributions to tutorial presentations and regular classroom discussions; and through the opportunity to choose of topics and frame questions for extended essays and ISPs.
- Assessment: Through essay assignments, oral presentations, unseen examinations, ISPs.

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### **REFERENCE POINTS**

What has been the basis for the design of this programme?

1. School learning and teaching strategy
2. Staff research
3. QAA framework for higher education qualifications
4. Student feedback

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### **QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ENHANCEMENT**

SOAS has internal procedures to assure the quality of provision to be offered to students and to enhance the quality in the light of experience following delivery, taking into account the input of external experts and students. The procedures are set out in the School's Quality Assurance Handbook and can be viewed at (<http://www.soas.ac.uk/add/qualityassurance/quality-assurance-handbook/>).

SOAS is also subject to periodic external review from bodies such as the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education and relevant professional and statutory regulatory bodies.

The procedures described in the Quality Assurance Handbook are in place to provide a high quality student experience for those choosing to study at SOAS, and student input and evaluation of their experiences is greatly valued. Students make an input to the ongoing development of their programmes, and the environment in which they operate, in a number of ways, including:

- formal student evaluation as part of the annual programme review;
- student representation on School committees at various levels (through the Students' Union) where many relevant issues are discussed;

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## **FURTHER INFORMATION**

Add in links to other relevant information, both internal and external, including:

- [SOAS Vision and Strategy Statement](#);
- [Undergraduate](#) and [Postgraduate](#) Handbooks;
- *Departmental handbooks*;
- [Quality Assurance Handbook](#);
- [UCAS website](#);
- [QAA website](#);