Royal Holloway, University of London
Course specification for an undergraduate award
BA Politics and International Relations and Philosophy (LV25)

Section 1 – Introduction to your course

This course specification is a formal document, which provides a summary of the main features of your course and the learning outcomes that you might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if you take full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. Further information is contained in the University prospectus, and in various handbooks, all of which you will be able to access online. Alternatively, further information on the University's academic regulations and polices can be found here. Further information on the University's Admissions Policy can be found here.

Your degree course in Politics and International Relations and Philosophy is delivered in three stages, each of which comprises one year of full-time study during which you must follow modules to the value of 120 credits.

For Joint courses, 60 credits each year are taken from a list of approved philosophy modules, which includes both those validated specifically for philosophy courses and those offered by other departments that help realise the courses' aims. Each year 60 credits are taken from the cognate disciplinary area.

Through a balance of compulsory mandatory modules and options, the courses instantiate a progressive structure wherein you acquire both an increasing knowledge and understanding of philosophy and a deepening awareness of how that both extends and is in turn extended by your combined subject of study. This dual-aspect progression and your growing intellectual independence is reflected in the requirement, at stage three, that you complete a dissertation, either in philosophy or in Politics and International Relations.

For joint and combined honours courses, please refer to the course specification for your secondary department's corresponding single honours course for further information on educational aims, and learning outcomes

While Royal Holloway keeps all the information made available under review, courses and the availability of individual modules, especially optional modules are necessarily subject to change at any time, and you are therefore advised to seek confirmation of any factors which might affect your decision to follow a specific course. In turn, Royal Holloway will inform you as soon as is practicable of any significant changes which might affect your studies.

The following is a brief description for some of the most important terminology for understanding the content of this document:

Degree course – May also be referred to as 'degree programme' or simply 'programme', these terms refer to the qualification you will be awarded upon successful completion of your studies.
Module – May also be referred to as 'course', this refers to the individual units you will study each year to complete your degree course. Undergraduate degrees at Royal Holloway comprise a combination of modules in multiples of 15 credits to the value of 120 credits per year. On some degree courses a certain number of optional modules must be passed for a particular degree title.

Section 2 – Course details			
Date of specification update	October 2024	Location of study	Egham Campus
Course award and title	BA Politics and International Relations and Philosophy	Level of study	Undergraduate
Course code	2413	UCAS code	LV25
Year of entry	2026/27		
Awarding body	Royal Holloway, University of London		
Department or school	Politics, International Relations and Philosophy	Other departments or schools involved in teaching the course	N/A
Mode(s) of attendance	Full-time	Duration of the course	3 years
Accrediting Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body requirement(s)	N/A		
Link to Coursefinder for further information:	https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/studying-here/	For queries on admissions:	https://royalholloway.ac.uk/applicationquery

Section 3 – Degree course structure					
3.1 Mandatory module information **The following table summarises the mandatory modules which students must take in each year of study**					
Year	**Module code**	**Module title**	**Credits**	**FHEQ level**	**Module status** **(Mandatory Condonable MC or** **Mandatory Non-Condonable MNC**
1	PR1520	Politics and International Relations: Classic Readings in Politics and International Relations	30	4	MC
1	PY1002	Philosophy: Introduction to Modern Philosophy	15	4	MC
1	PY1101	Philosophy: Problems of Knowledge	15	4	MNC
1	PY1202	Philosophical Methods	15	4	MC
1	PY1203	Issues in Ethics	15	4	MC

This table sets out the most important information for the mandatory modules on your degree course. These modules are central to achieving your learning outcomes, so they are compulsory, and all students on your degree course will be required to take them. You will be automatically registered for these modules each year. Mandatory modules fall into two categories: 'condonable' or 'non-condonable'.

In the case of mandatory 'non-condonable' (MNC) modules, you must pass the module before you can proceed to the next year of your course, or to successfully graduate with a particular degree title. In the case of mandatory 'condonable' (MC) modules, these must be taken but you can still progress or graduate even if you do not pass them. Please note that although Royal Holloway will keep changes to a minimum, changes to your degree course may be made where reasonable and necessary due to unexpected events. For example: where requirements of relevant Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Bodies have changed and course requirements must change accordingly, or where changes are deemed necessary on the basis of student feedback and/or the advice of external advisors, to enhance academic provision.

3.2 Optional modules

In addition to mandatory modules, there will be a number of optional modules available during the course of your degree. Although Royal Holloway will keep changes to a minimum, new options may be offered or existing ones may be withdrawn. For example, where reasonable and necessary due to unexpected events, where requirements of relevant Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs) have changed and course requirements must change accordingly, or where changes are deemed necessary on the basis of student feedback

and/or the advice of External Advisors, to enhance academic provision. There may be additional requirements around option selection; please contact the Department for further information.

In your **first year**, in addition to your mandatory modules, you take the mandatory PY-coded modules listed in 3.1 above **and** choose one module from the following:
PR1400 Introduction to Politics and Government (30 credits)
PR1500 Introduction to International Relations (30 credits).

In your **second year**, you choose 60 credits from available Departmental Stage Two modules in Politics and International Relations, **at least 30 credits** of which must be from the following:
PR2440 International Relations Theory (30 credits)
PR2490 Contemporary Political Theory (30 credits)
PR2560 Modern Political Thought (30 credits)
PLUS

For **Philosophy**, in **Second Year**, students must take 60 credits of Stage 2 optional modules, choosing **at least** 30 credits from the following options basket:

PY2001 Kant (15 credits)
PY2002 Mind and World (15 credits)
PY2005 Philosophy and the Arts (15 credits)
PY2202 Empiricism and Rationalism (15 credits)
PY2900 Race, Gender and Queer Philosophy (15 credits)

In your **third year**, you must take:
Either
PY3001 Dissertation (30 credits) and choose options equal to the value of 30 credits from available Stage Three Philosophy modules
plus
Options equal to the value of 60 credits from available Stage Three modules in Politics and International Relations

Or
PR3000 Dissertation (30 credits) plus options equal to the value of 30 credits from the list of available Stage Three modules in Politics and International Relations
plus
Options equal to the value of 60 credits from available Stage Three Philosophy modules.

Section 4 - Progressing through each year of your degree course

For further information on the progression and award requirements for your degree, please refer to Royal Holloway's Academic Regulations.

Progression throughout the year/s is monitored through performance in summative or formative coursework assignments. Please note that if you hold a Student Visa and you choose to leave (or are required to leave because of non-progression) or complete early (before the course end date stated on your CAS), then this will be reported to UKVI.

All first year students on single, joint or combined honours courses offered all or in part by the School of Humanities, School of Performing and Digital Arts, or department of Politics, International Relations and Philosophy 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%. 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 Academic Taught Regulations but fail to pass the Moodle-based Academic Integrity module will not be permitted to progress into their second year of academic study.

All second year students on single, joint or combined honours courses for which the Department of Politics and International Relations is the lead department are also required to undertake and pass a short 'reflecting on feedback' exercise in order to progress into the final year of study. Students undertaking this exercise will be supported by their personal tutor and will be marked on a pass/fail basis. Students who fail the exercise will have an opportunity to resubmit. Students who meet the requirements for progression as stipulated in the Academic Taught Regulations but fail to pass the Moodle-based Academic Integrity module will not be permitted to progress into their second year of academic study.

Courses including an International Year
You must take modules 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 the Department. The marks achieved are converted into equivalent University marks and count as a thirteenth unit. This will contribute 20% to the final stage three marks.

Section 5 – Educational aims of the course

The aims of this course are:

- to provide a systematic understanding and knowledge of political theory and institutions in both a domestic and international context
- to encourage critical awareness of current political problems at national and international levels
- to provide theoretical insights and methodological techniques relevant to the development and interpretation of knowledge in Politics and International Relations and to the evaluation of current research and scholarship in the field
- to foster an independent learning ability for continued intellectual development
- to develop a friendly, stimulating, and supportive academic environment that encourages you to strive to achieve your potential in philosophy
- to inculcate an active sense of the interplay between the intellectual-historical and ahistorical dimensions of philosophical inquiry
- to provide the conceptual tools with which you can deepen your intellectual engagement with your combined subject
- to present philosophy's significance both for one's self-understanding and for one's critical engagement with issues of public importance
- to prepare you to engage critically with the work of contemporary philosophers
- to enable you to develop independent critical thinking and judgement by taking progressive responsibility for your own learning, concluding the process in the final year through the production of an extended piece of writing.

Section 6 - Course learning outcomes

In general terms, the courses provide opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate the following learning outcomes. (*Categories – Knowledge and understanding (K), Skills and other attributes (S), and Transferable skills (*))*

Theme	Course learning outcome	Level 4	Level 5	Level 6
Knowledge and understanding	Demonstrate understanding of developments in political science, International Relations, and Philosophy.	Demonstrate introductory knowledge of Politics, International Relations, and Philosophy.	Demonstrate knowledge of Politics, International Relations, and Philosophy.	Apply demonstrable knowledge of Politics, International Relations, or Philosophy.
	Demonstrate principal theories of Politics, International Relations and Philosophy.	Demonstrate a knowledge of classical theories in Politics, International Relations, and Philosophy.	Demonstrate growth of theoretical knowledge of Politics and International Relations.	Apply advanced theoretical or comparative knowledge of Politics, International Relations, and Philosophy.
	Demonstrate an understanding of research in Politics, International Relations, and Philosophy.	Demonstrate a basic knowledge of research in Politics, International Relations, and Philosophy.	Demonstrate a more advanced knowledge of research in Politics, International Relations, and Philosophy.	Apply advanced knowledge of research methods in Politics, International Relations, or Philosophy through a research dissertation.
Application of theories	Apply theories in Politics, International Relations, or Philosophy to new cases.	Apply theory at an introductory level in Politics, International Relations, and Philosophy.	Analyse advanced theory in Politics, International Relations, or Philosophy.	Apply theory at the highest level for an understanding of new cases in Politics, International Relations, and Philosophy.
	Using theory, assess the merits of new developments in Politics, international affairs, or Philosophy.	Assess current problems in Politics, International Relations, and Philosophy in a theoretical context.	Apply theory to context in Politics, International Relations, or Philosophy.	Use of theory at the highest level for analysing new developments in the study of Politics, International Relations, or Philosophy.
Knowledge of Methods	Gather, process, interpret and communicate a range of data in Politics or International Relations.	Gather and process basic materials and data in Politics and International Relations.	Gather and process more advanced materials and data in Politics and International Relations.	Gather, process, interpret and communicate materials and data at the highest level for analysing developments in political or international affairs.

	Gather, process, and deploy evidence from a variety of sources, assessing its nature and value for Philosophy.	Gather and process basic materials in Philosophy.	Gather and process more advanced materials in Philosophy.	Gather, process, interpret and communicate materials at the highest level for analysing developments in Philosophy.
Skills for learning	Gain skills to explore novel questions in Politics, International Relations, or Philosophy.	Communicate analysis of materials at a basic level in Politics, International Relations, or Philosophy.	Communicate analysis of data at a more advance level in Politics or International Relations.	Gather, process, interpret, apply, and communicate a range of data at an advanced level in Politics or International Relations.
	To take responsibility for one's own learning in Politics, International Relations, or Philosophy.	Improve independent learning in Politics, International Relations, and Philosophy.	Gaining more advanced academic study skills in Politics or International Relations.	Achieving skills for analysis and writing at the highest level in Politics or International Relations.
	Learn how to work collaboratively with others or autonomously.	Learning independence of study in Politics, International Relations, or Philosophy.	Improving independence of study in Politics or International Relations.	Mastering independence of study in Politics or International Relations.
Transferrable professional skills	Recognise current issues in Politics, International Relations, and Philosophy that are of use in public service, the media, the voluntary sector or NGOs.	Learning to recognise political, international, or philosophical questions of importance.	Enhancing capacity to analyse political and international questions of importance that can be deployed in the workplace.	Mastering the capacity to analyse political and international questions of importance of use in public service, the media, the voluntary sector, or NGOs.
	Learn to write analytical work on current issues in Politics, international affairs, or Philosophy	Development of writing skills in political and international affairs, and in matters of Philosophy.	Enhancing the capacity to write analytical work on Politics or international affairs.	Mastering the capacity to write analytical work based on research in Politics or international affairs.
	Deploy theoretical or methods-based skills in the workplace.	Development of thinking about theory.	Enhancing the understanding of theory and methods for application in the workplace.	Successful deployment of theoretical or methods-based skills in the workplace.

Section 7 - Teaching, learning and assessment

Teaching and learning on your course is closely informed by the active research of staff, particularly in the areas of Politics and International Relations and Philosophy. In general terms, the course provides an opportunity for you to develop and demonstrate the learning outcomes detailed herein.

Teaching, learning and assessment methods sub serve the course aims by recognising your expanding knowledge and command of correlated skills as you progress from stage 1 to stage 3 and both acknowledging and encouraging your increased intellectual independence. Consequently, at stage 1 and 2 the primary method of teaching is to combine lectures, which are used to map out a conceptual area and help orientate you in it, with small-group seminars where you are able to test your developing understanding through presentations and discussion and focussed learning tasks (précis, timed analysis, etc.). These formative modes are supplemented with summative essays and examinations. From stage 2 onwards the emphasis on independent learning arising from your growing knowledge, and your desire to follow your interests is reflected in more specialised modules for which a formal distinction between lecture and seminar is no longer entirely appropriate. Here the shift in formative assessment is towards presentations of work-in-progress and one-to-one advice on essay planning at both the conceptual and structural level. Full details of the assessments for individual modules can be obtained from the Department of Philosophy and the Department of Politics and International Relations.

Contact hours come in various forms and may take the form of time spent with a member of staff in a lecture or seminar with other students. Contact hours may also be laboratory or, studio-based sessions, project supervision with a member of staff, or discussion through a virtual learning environment (VLE). These contact hours may be with a lecturer or teaching assistant, but they may also be with a technician, or specialist support staff.

The way in which each module on your degree course is assessed will also vary. Assessments designated as 'summative' will receive a mark which will count towards your overall mark for the module, and potentially your degree classification, depending on your year of study. On successful completion of the module you will gain the credits listed.

More detailed information on modules, including teaching and learning methods, and methods of assessment, can be found via the online Royal Holloway Curriculum Catalogue. The accuracy of the information contained in this document is reviewed regularly by the university, and may also be checked routinely by external agencies.

Section 8 – Additional costs

There are no single associated costs greater than £50 per item on this course.

These estimated costs relate to studying this particular degree course at Royal Holloway. General costs such as accommodation, food, books and other learning materials and printing etc., have not been included, but further information is available on our website.

Section 9 – Indicators of quality and standards	
QAA Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) Level	4-6
Your course is designed in accordance with the FHEQ to ensure your qualification is awarded on the basis of nationally established standards of achievement, for both outcomes and attainment. The qualification descriptors within the FHEQ set out the generic outcomes and attributes expected for the award of individual qualifications. The qualification descriptors contained in the FHEQ exemplify the outcomes and attributes expected of learning that results in the award of higher education qualifications. These outcomes represent the integration of various learning experiences resulting from designated and coherent courses of study.	
QAA Subject benchmark statement(s)	http://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code/subject-benchmark-statements
Subject benchmark statements provide a means for the academic community to describe the nature and characteristics of courses in a specific subject or subject area. They also represent general expectations about standards for the award of qualifications at a given level in terms of the attributes and capabilities that those possessing qualifications should have demonstrated.	

Section 10– Intermediate exit awards (where available)		
You may be eligible for an intermediate exit award if you complete part of the course as detailed in this document. Any additional criteria (e.g. mandatory modules, credit requirements) for intermediate awards is outlined in the sections below.		
Award	Criteria	Awarding body
Diploma in Higher Education (DipHE)	Pass in 210 credits of which at least 90 must be at or above FHEQ Level 4 and at least 120 of which must be at or above FHEQ Level 5	Royal Holloway and Bedford New College
Certificate in Higher Education (CertHE)	Pass in 120 credits of which at least 90 must be at or above FHEQ Level 4	Royal Holloway and Bedford New College