Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

Department of Politics, Languages and International Studies

PGT Handbook

2024/25

MA International Security (MAIS)

MA International Relations (MAIR)

MA Gender and Politics (MAGAP)

This handbook is available online or in alternative formats. Please contact politics-pg-admin@bath.ac.uk if required.

[12 September 2024]

[PGTAR VERSION]

Contents

Purpose and scope

Your handbook for academic year 2024/25 comprises the following three documents which should be read alongside each other:

1. [University information](#)
2. **Department handbook (this document)**
3. Your course specification

All three of these documents were made available to you at the beginning of the academic year and/or the start of your studies. You are expected to familiarise yourself with the contents.

This handbook includes important information about the Department and your course that you should be aware of whilst studying here.

This handbook is available online and can be provided in alternative formats. Please contact politics-pg-admin@bath.ac.uk.

The content of this handbook is accurate at the time of publication 12 September 2024 but information contained within may sometimes be subject to change after this handbook has been issued. You will be informed of any changes and issued with a revised version, if there are any material changes to the information in this handbook.

Please note that links to further information are embedded in the title of each section or in applicable text.

The Department

Welcome from Head of Department

Welcome to the Department of Politics, Languages and International Studies.

We are very proud of our courses, the quality of our teaching and the enthusiasm and passion of our staff. We are also proud of the cutting-edge research that our staff are doing that directly feeds into our teaching. We hope that you will enjoy learning about new things, developing your skills, knowledge and critical analysis and feel inspired by the course. Hopefully you time at Bath will not only be a positive and memorable experience but also a launchpad for you into a career that you enjoy and makes a difference to the world.

The transition into postgraduate University life is exciting, but we know that it can be daunting at times and there can be some unexpected challenges along the way. The University offers a wide range of support services which are detailed in this brochure and which you can also find out about from the course team, your Academic Advisor and the Students' Union. Please do reach out to these sources of support if you have any concerns about your studies, University life or anything else.

University is a lot more than your studies, so we encourage you to get involved in some of the vast range of sporting, cultural, political and community activities that the University and the Students' Union offer to make the very best of your student experience. Through your course and these activities, we hope you meet a wide variety of new and inspiring friends and colleagues who shape your thinking, contribute to your development and help and support you along the journey to graduation.

We wish you all the best for your course and hope that your time at the University of Bath is rewarding, enjoyable and memorable.

Peter Lambert
Head of Department

Introduction to the Department

Your course is delivered by the Department of Politics, Languages & International Studies within the Faculty of Humanities & Social Sciences (HSS). The Faculty is one of three Faculties and one School in the University and comprises six academic Departments: Economics, Education, Health, Politics, Languages & International Studies, Psychology and Social & Policy Sciences.
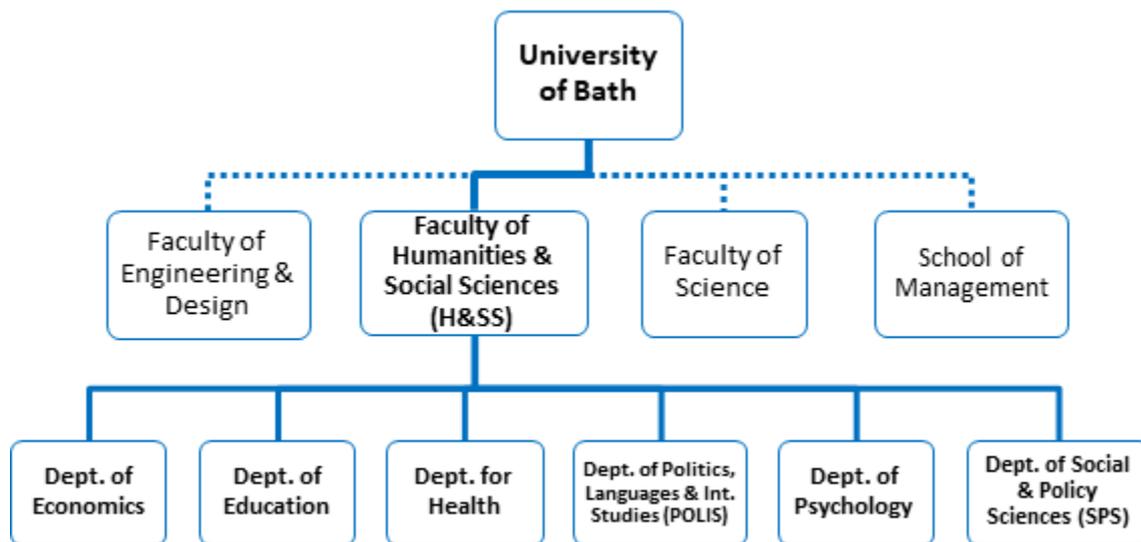
Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught (Masters) courses are delivered by academic staff in departments, with administrative support provided by the Taught Programmes Team. If your administrator is unavailable, then please speak to any of our other administrators listed on HSS Taught Programmes Team webpage, all of whom will be very happy to help you. If you have any problems, then please contact one of the Programmes Officers or Managers. Emails are managed via shared mailboxes to deal with enquiries from students and academic staff and these are regularly monitored by designated members of the team. You can contact the administration office for your course by email at politics-pg-admin@bath.ac.uk.

The department has incorporated digital spaces as part of teaching and learning. Students will have access to a course Moodle page to communicate with staff and students. The page contains important information related to your course. For students studying in PGT Politics courses, we have also set up a Teams page to facilitate communications.

In general, if you wish to arrange a meeting with a member of staff then please email in advance to organise a suitable time, unless the staff member has notified you of alternative office hours.

Please refer to the department website for more information.

Departmental information including course teams

[Please find more information on PoLIS academic and teaching staff and their contact details](#).

Academic Advisor (formerly known as Personal Tutor)

When you join the University, you are assigned an academic staff member as an Academic Advisor. They will act as a personalised point of contact throughout your time here, supporting your transition, and your academic and personal development. It is important to respond to communications and requests from your Academic Advisor, and to attend scheduled meetings.

Your Academic Advisor should arrange to meet with you on three occasions during your first semester and offer at least one meeting per semester on an ongoing basis for the remainder of your studies. Your Academic Advisor can provide information and guidance about:

- your transition into the University community and your academic studies
- unit choices, placement opportunities and future career plans
- sources of support with any personal matters or situations involving your health and wellbeing that may be impacting your studies
- providing you with a reference for work experience, internships, further studies, or career

Contact information

Director of Studies for PGT Politics courses

Dr. Milena Romano – mr438@bath.ac.uk

Please contact your Director of Studies for academic issues such as changes to your study arrangements or to discuss teaching and learning.

Director of Teaching

Dr. Mattia Cacciatori – mc789@bath.ac.uk

Programmes Administrator

politics-pg-admin@bath.ac.uk

Please contact your Programmes Administrator for day-to-day queries such as timetabling issues, Moodle access and unit selections.

The Administrative team

In addition to your Director of Studies and Academic Advisor the Administrative Team are on hand to support you and act as a central point of contact. The team can be found in the PoLIS and Health Hub at 1WN 3.02 and are there to share information and provide signposting.

In-Person Administrative Support

During Welcome Week and the first two weeks of both Semester 1 and 2, the Taught Programmes Team hub office is open from Monday to Friday between 9am and 4pm for in-person enquiries. For all other weeks of the year, the opening hours are from 10am- 4pm.

Please use our hatch for student enquiries. We are currently operating 'hybrid working' in the team which means that we will work some of our time on campus in the office and some of it from home each week.

Remote Administrative Support

You can contact us using our shared mailboxes with your enquiries. We are happy to take your calls on Teams if you would like to talk to us, however we may not be able to answer immediately if, for example, we are in a meeting. You can use our shared mailboxes to email us and book in a time when we can call you back.

Urgent Enquiries

If your enquiry is urgent, we advise sending an email to the relevant shared mailbox politics-pg-admin@bath.ac.uk which will be monitored **between 9am and 5pm from Monday to Friday**.

External Examiners

External Examiners are appointed for a course or set of courses and are important in assuring academic quality and standards. Please note that it is not appropriate for students to contact an External Examiner directly. If you have any queries or concerns, please contact your Director of Studies in the first instance.

The External Examiners for PGT Politics courses are:

Dr. Ryerson Christie, School of Sociology, Politics and International Studies, University of Bristol

Dr. Filippo Costa Buranelli, School of International Relations, University of St Andrews

The University's expectations of students

University regulations

When you registered with the University you agreed to abide by the Regulations for Students. These are important documents which set out the roles and responsibilities of both you as a student and the University. **You are expected to familiarise yourself with these.**

Attendance expectations

You are expected to be in attendance and participate in all scheduled learning and teaching activities required by your course. If you require a leave of absence from the University for any reason, please contact:

Director of Studies for PGT Politics courses, Dr. Milena Romano, mr438@bath.ac.uk

If you are ill, or think that you are likely to be ill, for more than three days, please get in touch with the above-named contact within three days of becoming ill.

Learning and Teaching delivery

Timetables

Using [MyTimetable](), you can access your personal timetable and download it into an electronic calendar. MyTimetable updates regularly, so should there be a change to your timetable, it will be reflected.

Any ad hoc changes to your teaching schedule will be conveyed to you via the Announcement forums on Moodle and /or relayed by email using course and unit mailing lists.

Learning resources, Moodle, and recorded lectures

We use virtual learning environment called Moodle. It is the main platform for organizing the study material and delivery. Moodle lists all the units of study and provides access to other supportive sessions, such as [PGT Politics course Moodle page](). Students will find all important information and links on Moodle: unit outlines, readings and other study material, recorded lectures (if applicable) and links to other online teaching, discussion fora, contact on unit convenors and teachers, unit-specific schedules, and submission points to upload their assignments.

Option choices

If your course has option choices, then information about [how and when to choose your optional units]() can be found online. If applicable, you will receive an email notification at the relevant point in the year when online unit selection is available. If you want to discuss your option choices, please contact your Director of Studies.

Research ethics

The University has a wide range of resources available to you to help you understand the importance of academic integrity and how you can enhance your academic writing and practice. When writing at postgraduate level it is crucial to ensure that your work is referenced correctly and that you make clear reference to the resources that you have read and cited throughout your work.

The University of Bath have published their own referencing guide designed to support academic writing and citing work correctly. This can be found online at: [https://library.bath.ac.uk/referencing]().

Further support can be found at the Skills Centre who provide academic skills support and enhancement to all students at the university. In order to attend a skills masterclass, access academic writing support or find self-access online academic skills resources contact the Skills Centre at: [https://www.bath.ac.uk/professional-services/academic-skills/]().

The Departmental Research Ethics Officer is Dr. Jorge Marco ([jm2308@bath.ac.uk]()).

Student Representation

Mechanisms for student representation are designed to enable you to be an active partner in continually improving your learning and teaching experience. The main ways in which your feedback will be sought will be through:

- Staff/Student Liaison Committees (SSLCs) ([Academic and Faculty Reps](#))
- surveys and evaluations
- [the Students' Union](#)

Student representatives for PGT Politics SSLC will be elected in October in the online election organised by the SU. More information about nominations and elections are available at the [SU webpage](#). PGT Politics SSLC will have four meetings during the academic year, usually two in each semester.

Assessment

Assessment Regulations

The [Postgraduate Taught Assessment Regulations](#) (PGTAR) set out the rules for your course including: how the University governs your outcomes; progression requirements and what happens if you fail; award eligibility and how your classification is calculated. If your course has **any exemptions** to the Postgraduate Taught Assessment Regulations, you will find this information in your course specification. **You are expected to familiarise yourself with these.**

Supplementary assessment

Supplementary assessment describes the type of assessment you will be expected to undertake either to retrieve failure in a unit's main assessment or in the case of deferred assessment.

More information on the timing of supplementary assessment is provided in PGTAR. Supplementary assessment may be held during the summer (August). You may be required to return to Bath to sit any in-person supplementary exams during the August supplementary assessment period.

Exit awards

If you leave the University early, without completing your course, you may be eligible for an exit award. You will find information on these awards in your course specification.

Switching courses

If you are considering transferring to a different course, where this would be permitted, you should speak to your Director of Studies in the first instance. In certain circumstances you may be able to or may be required to transfer onto a specific alternative course, known as a Designated Alternative Course (DAC) if you have not met the criteria to remain on your current course of study.

Academic Registry have also published [further information and guidance on assessment arrangements](#). This also includes a link to the [University's Academic Integrity Training and Test](#). **All students will be unable to progress beyond the next progression point in their studies until they pass the test.** The test has a pass mark of 85% but you can take the test as many times as you need to.

[Individual Mitigating Circumstances](#) (IMCs)

We acknowledge that you may experience circumstances that disrupt your assessment attempt or performance. Submitting an IMC claim allows you to report any conditions which prevented you from taking assessment or significantly impaired your performance. If accepted an IMC recognises that your assessment was affected.

You are expected to familiarise yourself with the information available about IMCs including the process for submission, the evidence requirements, how claims are considered and what can (and cannot) happen if a claim is accepted as valid.

[Marking and Feedback](#)

Postgraduate Taught Generic Assessment Criteria

This Faculty-level generic assessment criteria is used by academic staff when designing assessment tasks. It shows the standards of work expected for work submitted as part of postgraduate taught courses that use the Postgraduate Taught Assessment Regulations (PGTAR) for the 2024/25 academic year. Academic staff can use these generic criteria to create specific, contextualised criteria for student-facing material. [Learn more about the PGT generic assessment criteria](#).

Coursework

Assignment briefs, word counts and deadlines

Students will normally receive the following information about an assessment task:
- its weighting in calculating the mark for the unit
- the assessment criteria, and any grade criteria relevant to the subject
- the timing, nature, and extent of feedback they can expect and whether this is to be accompanied by the return of assessed work

Students will receive clear and accurate information which sets out the expectations of the assessment task(s). This will normally include:

- the requirements of the assessment task(s)
- the word limit/range, and the penalty for non-compliance. If a penalty policy is not stated in writing the University default policy will apply
- any specific requirements of professional, regulatory, or statutory bodies
- any special presentation or referencing preferences/requirements
- the date for submission of the work
- the dates when any further detailed information about the individual task(s) will be communicated and how they will be communicated
- for in-class tests, information on the conditions under which the test will be conducted (e.g., open-book) or other specific requirements
- whether the work is to be submitted anonymously

Coursework tasks will normally have a word limit or word range. This, and the penalty for not adhering to this, will be confirmed when you receive an assignment. Markers may stop reading/marking your work at the point it exceeds the word/page limit.

The PoLIS Department applies the University policy regarding Word Counts and Penalties (QA16. 10. Coursework word counts and penalties for exceeding a word count https://www.bath.ac.uk/publications/qa16-assessment-marking-and-feedback/attachments/qa16-assessment-marking-and-feedback.pdf).

> *"10.1 Written coursework tasks should normally have a word limit or a word range and require students to declare a word count with their submitted work.*
>
> *10.2 Where a word limit or word range applies then the penalty for non-compliance with the word limit or word range should be clearly stated in writing when the assignment task is distributed.*
>
> *10.3 Where a policy on penalising non-compliance with word limits and word ranges is not stated in accordance with 10.2 then the following will apply:*
>
> *• the marker(s) will stop reading the work once the student has exceeded a word limit (or the upper figure of a word range) by 10%. If a student writes substantially less than the word limit (or less than the lower figure of a word range) they risk not maximising their potential mark;*
>
> *• for the purpose of calculating the word count, footnotes are included, whereas contents pages, executive summaries, tables, figures, appendices and reference lists/bibliographies are excluded.*
>
> *10.4 Word count penalty policies should be consistently applied as stated."*

Submission deadlines for each unit will be provided within the unit outline and displayed on the unit Moodle page. Assignments are due at 3:00pm on the date of the deadline unless otherwise specified. The university is committed to anonymous marking, and the Department of PoLIS is practicing anonymous submissions where practical (presentations and dissertations will remain some of the exceptions). Where applicable, the process of submission of anonymised work will be as follows:

Essays must be submitted by the due date electronically via Moodle. Please refer to the 'Assessment Submission Procedure' on PGT Politics course Moodle page for details on how to submit your assignment. You must retain an electronic copy of every piece of coursework you submit. This is in case of loss.

Coursework extensions

If you find you are facing circumstances that are preventing you from submitting on time, you can request an extension to your deadline before the work is due. Short extensions are often granted but occasionally there may be a better measure to support you depending on your individual circumstances and the type of assessment. You will need to give a brief explanation of how your circumstances are impacting on your ability to complete on time. Extension requests require evidence to confirm what has happened and when.

You can request an extension in SAMIS under "Student Tasks", more information is available on your course Moodle page. Please be aware that an extension request needs to be submitted before the original deadline.

Late submission of coursework

To ensure fairness to all students, you will be expected to hand in all assessed coursework and dissertations/projects by a specified date and time, and there are penalties for submitting work after the specified deadline. **If you are experiencing difficulties completing work on time, please seek help before the deadline.**

Examinations and essay deadlines

There are three formal assessment periods during which examinations and final essay deadlines take place, January, May and June, and August.

Marking and feedback

We have in place processes to ensure that assessment is conducted and marked in a fair and rigorous manner which upholds the academic standards of the University. You can find further information about such processes, and their purpose, on our website.

The marking criteria for PGT Politics units will be shared with students in due course. All marks will be provisional until approved by the Board of Studies.

Your course

Course and Unit Catalogue

This is where you will find details about individual units for the current academic year. The catalogues also provide links to the relevant assessment regulations.

Course Specification

Course Specifications set out important key information about your course, including the award title, the intended learning outcomes, and the structure of the course, as well as regulations for meeting the requirements for any exit awards, and any agreed exemptions from your Assessment Regulations. You are expected to be familiar with this document and its contents.