



Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

**Department of Politics, Languages and
International Studies UG Handbook
2023/24**

BA (Hons) Modern Languages

This handbook is available online or in alternative formats. Please contact your Director of Studies if required.

September 2023

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Purpose and scope

Your handbook for academic year 2023/24 comprises the following three documents which should be read alongside each other:

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

These documents were made available to you as pdf files at the beginning of the academic year. You are expected to familiarise yourself with the contents.

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

This handbook is available in alternative formats. Please contact ug-polis-admin@bath.ac.uk for assistance.

The content of this handbook is accurate at the time of publication [*September 2023*] 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 are embedded in the title of each section or in applicable text.

The Department

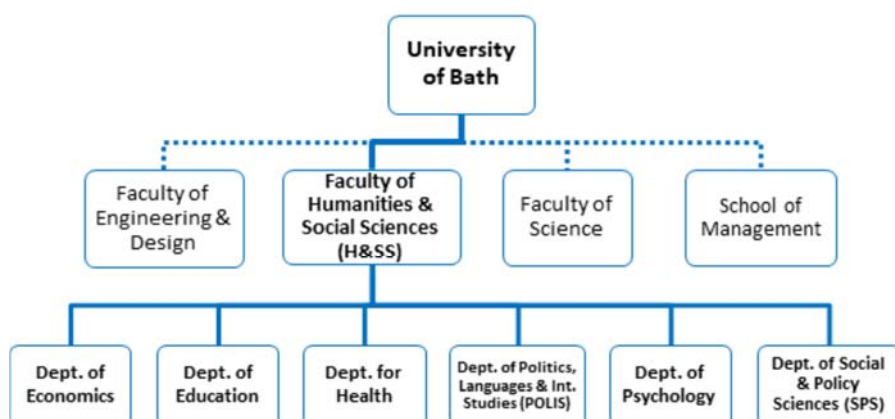
Introduction to the Department

Your programme 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 Politics, Psychology and Social & Policy Sciences.

Undergraduate programmes 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 the Taught Programmes page [here](#), 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 programme by email at polis-ug-admin@bath.ac.uk.

Throughout your time at Bath you may need academic, course, pastoral or administrative support. Your Director of Studies is responsible for the day-to-day management of your course and will be your key contact for academic and pastoral concerns. You will also be assigned a Personal Tutor who is there to support your academic and personal

development.



Head of Department Welcome Message

It is a pleasure to welcome you to PoLIS. You are joining PoLIS at a very exciting time. Our revamped programmes have undergone a curriculum transformation and you'll benefit from some innovations designed to make the transition to University smoother and support you in your studies. Some of the changes include the creation of skills units where you'll not only learn what you need to succeed in your assessment, but you'll reflect and question prevailing conventions and understandings of knowledge. You'll also benefit from more streamlined assessments and units that incorporate our expertise. This is not the only change happening in PoLIS, a few months ago, we launched our new Centre for the Study of Violence, and six new research groups on Future Politics, Gender, Politics & Society; Reactionary Politics, International Relations, Democracy & Contention, Memory Politics & Culture, which showcase our staff's research expertise. At PoLIS we are committed to research-led teaching and to high standards in teaching and research, and you'll be taught by experts in the field you are studying.

Starting university can feel a bit daunting at times. There is plenty of support available to you for both academic and non-academic matters. My academic advice to you is to try to keep up to date with your lectures, seminars, activities, and recommended readings. If you do a little every week it is much easier to have everything ready by the essay and assignment deadlines and avoid last minute stress. Please make full use of all the possibilities for contact that we have provided: come to all your campus classes, even if some are not at the best time, join in any additional online classes, and make use of staff's office hours. Classes are also a great way to socialise and meet new people at University. In this Handbook you'll find all the relevant links to University services designated to support you with everything from health to finances to careers advice, as well as the key contacts within PoLIS who are here to support you.

Remember to let us, and especially your personal tutors, know how you are getting on throughout the year. I have no doubt that together we'll make a success of this new academic year, and that with your enthusiasm, and a little work every week you'll do very

well. Of course, university life is about more than your studies, so I'd also like to encourage you to take advantage of some of the activities that the Student Union, societies and sports clubs have been working on all summer. I wish you all a productive and exciting year.

Maria Garcia

Head of Department (Dept of Politics, Languages & International Studies)

Departmental information including course teams

The Administrative Team

In addition to your Director of Studies and Personal Tutor 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.

We ask that students do not enter the office unless you are invited in. 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. If your enquiry is urgent, we advise sending an email to the relevant shared mailbox at polis-ug-admin@bath.ac.uk which will be monitored **between 9am and 5pm from Monday to Friday**.

Key Contact information

Name	Title	Tel.	Email	Room no.
Dr Maria Garcia	Head of Department	01225 385020	mg716@bath.ac.uk	1WN 2.23
Dr Karoline von Oppen	Deputy Head of Department & Director of Teaching	01225 386334	mlskvo@bath.ac.uk	1WN 2.29
Astrid Forsyth	Director of Studies (Yr 1 & 2)	01225 383849	af204@bath.ac.uk	1WN 2.21
Dr Mariana Bonnouvrier	Director of Studies (Yr 3 & 4)	01225 384764	mb2994@bath.ac.uk	1WN 3.26

Laura Nicholson	Placements Officer	01225 387539	polis-placements@bath.ac.uk	1W 3.06
Rachel McBride	Programmes Administrator	01225 385154	Polis-ug-admin@bath.ac.uk	1WN 3.02
Alice Forty	Programmes Administrator	TBC	Polis-ug-admin@bath.ac.uk	1WN 3.02
Lauren Jones	Programmes Administrator	01225 386471	Polis-ug-admin@bath.ac.uk	1WN 3.02
Katie Hillier	Programmes Officer	01225 383368	Polis-ug-admin@bath.ac.uk	1WN 3.02

Departmental information including course teams

Please refer to the [department website](#) where you will find up to date information on the academic and teaching staff in PoLIS as well as details for each undergraduate course.

Personal tutoring

When you join the University, you are assigned a Personal Tutor who is a member of academic staff. They will act as a personalised point of contact within your department, supporting your academic and personal development.

Your Tutor 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. This includes when away on placement or study year abroad. Your Personal Tutor 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
- providing you with a reference for work experience, internships, your placement, further studies, or career

Your Personal Tutor will contact you to set up an initial meeting on the Thursday of Welcome Week and from then on, they will invite you to meet regularly throughout the year. It is important that you answer their emails, update and meet them regularly. The Personal Tutor's role is to support your academic and personal development through a personalised point of contact with the University, as well as facilitating your transition into the academic life.

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.

Name	Course	Home Institution
Ms Mandy Q. Poetzsch	Modern Languages (German)	University of Bristol
Dr E A Wren-Owens	Modern Languages (Italian)	University of Cardiff
Dr James Rann	Modern Languages (Russian)	University of Glasgow
Dr Craig Neville	Modern Languages (Spanish)	University College, Cork
Karine Chevalier	Modern Languages (French)	Roehampton University, London
Dr Wenxuan Li	Modern Languages (Mandarin)	University of Central Lancashire

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 are ill or are likely to be ill for more than three days, please contact your Lecturers by email to inform them of your absence in their class. You should inform your Personal Tutor and Director of Studies in the event of a prolonged illness.

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](#)

Your Lecturers will upload most of the material used in class on a weekly basis (PowerPoint slides, links to external resources...). These will be available on the Moodle page dedicated to the relevant Unit. Some Lectures are recorded and available via Panopto but language seminars are not usually recorded. Please consult the [University's Lecture Capture Policy](#) for more information.

Option choices

If your course has option choice, 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.

Study Abroad, Placements and support

The third year of the course is spent abroad on an individual programme approved in advance by us. Exactly how and where you spend the year is largely up to you, but we will give you advice and make sure that your plans are appropriate to the degree programme.

You will almost certainly have to choose between a) studying in overseas universities or language centres; b) teaching English as an assistant in a school or college; c) working abroad. Study abroad is normally in the form of half-year or whole-year places at our partners in the Department student exchange scheme. We will help you to apply to overseas universities or study centres. Please note that students who wish to teach English aren't nominated by Placements or the Department to various schemes. Student will usually apply to teach English with the British Council and they are responsible for submitting their application. Support on the application process will be provided by the Department and Placements but we don't nominate the students. We will help you arrange work placements but cannot guarantee to provide one.

Planning for the Year Abroad begins at the start of the second year: you will be briefed on the opportunities available in relevant countries and given detailed handouts. The Department has Year Abroad Officers for each language and a Work Placements Officer whose contact details are in the Department Guide. They, along with your personal tutor, will help you draw up a programme. Towards the end of the second year there are final briefings, at which the Year Abroad Booklet is distributed along with information relevant to particular countries.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you understand the Year Abroad requirements and have arranged placements or study which meet these requirements. If you change your Year Abroad arrangements without our approval, we will suspend your registration. We will also require you to provide information on your learning experience when you return.

The Year Abroad is assessed and counts towards your final degree classification. Students taking part in a Department student exchange scheme are assessed at their host universities. (Students spending only one semester on a Department student exchange must also write a 3000-word Year Abroad Essay in their target language.) Everyone else is required to write a Special Study while they are abroad; this is a 5000 word essay in the language of the country in which you are staying. The Special Study may be on any topic: we will advise you on choice and assign you a supervisor at the end of your second year.

During the Year Abroad you will be expected to complete two Reflection Reports which help you to structure your placement/study objectives and personal development.

Re-induction meetings will be held at the start of the final year to welcome you back from your Year Abroad and update you on any changes that may have occurred at the University during your time away.

The Year Abroad is an essential part of the degree programme and it is not possible for anyone to be exempted from it. If your Year Abroad is very substantially disrupted by illness or other problems you may have to repeat it.

Please also note that foreign visas may now be required for work and study abroad and entitlements and arrangements will vary from country to country: see the Year Abroad sections on the PoLIS Virtual Undergraduate Hub for more advice. Whilst support will be provided to students, it is students' responsibility to apply for an obtain the relevant visa in order to undertake the activity abroad.

You will receive more detailed information on the Year Abroad Study exchanges and placements in the form of a Year Abroad Booklet in second year as access to a Year Abroad Hub online. Please see the PoLIS Virtual Undergraduate Moodle page [here](#) for further information.

Role	Name	Email
Director of Studies (Y1 & 2)	Astrid Forsyth	af204@bath.ac.uk
Director of Studies (Y3 &4)	Dr Mariana Bonnouvrier	mb2994@bath.ac.uk
Department Exchange and Apprenticeships Director	Dr Steve Wharton	s.wharton@bath.ac.uk
Placements Officer	Laura Nicholson	polis-placements@bath.ac.uk
Chinese Year Abroad Officer	Xu Lin	xl2318@bath.ac.uk
French Year Abroad Officer	Dr Sandra Daroczi	sd2016@bath.ac.uk
German Year Abroad Officer	Dr Elisabeth Attlmayr	ea420@bath.ac.uk
Italian Year Abroad Officer	Dr Elena Minelli	e.a.minelli@bath.ac.uk
Spanish Year Abroad Officer	Dr Leire Barrera-Medrano	lbm25@bath.ac.uk

Further study

Should you wish to continue studying with the University of Bath, our department offers a range of postgraduate master's degrees. We offer MA and MRes degrees where you can focus on topics that interest you and build your skills around your future career ambitions.

You can browse our range of postgraduate courses and find the right one for you by clicking the link [here](#).

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](#)

Assessment

[Assessment Regulations](#)

The Undergraduate Assessment Regulations (UGAR) 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 Undergraduate Assessment Regulations, you will find this information in your course specification. **You are expected to familiarise yourself with these regulations.**

Calculating your degree outcome

Your degree result is based on the calculation of your Overall Course Average (OCA) based on the stages of your course. The contribution of each stage is set out in the Programme and Unit Catalogues.

Supplementary assessment

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

Supplementary assessment takes place during the summer (August) and you can find information on the supplementary assessment period in the [University's academic year chart](#). You will be expected to return to Bath to sit any in-person supplementary exams.

Exit awards – CertHE and DiplHE

If you leave the University early, without completing your course, you may be eligible for a generic exit award, either a Certificate of Higher Education (CertHE) or a Diploma of Higher Education (DiplHE).

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.

Additional Information

You will find [further information and guidance on assessment arrangements](#) on our website. This includes a link to the [University's Academic Integrity Training and Test](#). **No student will be able 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.

Coursework

[Assignment briefs, word counts and deadlines](#)

Submission deadlines for each unit will be provided within the unit outline and displayed on the unit Moodle page. Assignments are due at 3pm on the date of the deadline unless otherwise specified. For information on extensions and late submissions, please see "Late Submission of Coursework" below. The university is committed to anonymous marking, and the Department of PoLIS is practicing anonymous submissions where practical (presentations, oral exams 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 'Assignment Submission Procedure' on the [PoLIS Virtual Undergraduate Hub](#) 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.

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. Markers may stop reading/marking your work at the point it exceeds the word/page limit. You should check with your Director of Studies if you have questions about word counts and penalties.

[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 from your Director of Studies by logging into [SAMIS](#). Please be aware that an extension request needs to be submitted BEFORE the deadline. Only under exceptional circumstances will requests after the deadline be considered.

[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. [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](#)

There are three formal assessment periods during which examinations 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 on such processes, and their purpose, on our website](#).

During your course, you will receive feedback on your assessed work. This feedback may take different forms, depending on the subject and type of assessment. You will be informed of the timing and nature of the feedback you will receive on each assessment, including whether the piece of work itself will be returned to you. For exam-type assessment, you may receive general feedback relevant to all who took the assessment rather than individual feedback. You can discuss feedback you receive on assessments alongside your performance and progress in your studies at meetings with your Personal Tutor.

Your course

[Programme 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, the structure of the course, as well as regulations for meeting the requirements for exit awards and any agreed exemptions from the undergraduate assessment regulations (UGAR). You are expected to be familiar with your course specification document and its contents.