Faculty/School of Humanities and Social Sciences

Department of Politics, Languages and International Studies

UG Handbook

2023/24

**BSc (Hons) International Politics &
Modern Languages**

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

September 2023

Contents

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 your Director of Studies.

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

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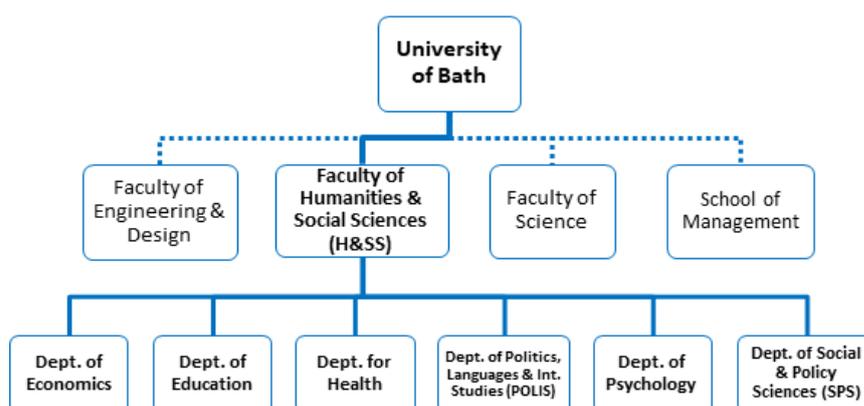
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Key Contact Information

Contact	Title	Tel Ext.	Email	Room No.	Contact With…
Dr Ivan Gololobov	Director of Studies (Y1)	5588	ig310@bath.ac.uk	1WN 2.05	Course Queries
Dr George Newth	Director of Studies (Y2)	4661	ghn20@bath.ac.uk	1WN 2.36	Course Queries
Dr Fran Amery	Director of Studies (Ys 3&4)	5534	fca24@bath.ac.uk	1WN 4.31	Course Queries
Mrs Harriet Smith/ Mrs Carrie Watson	Placements Officers	7762	Lan37@bath.ac.uk	1W 3.06	Placement Queries
Mrs Rachel McBride	Programmes Administrator	5154	polis-ug-admin@bath.ac.uk	1WN 3.02	Administrative Queries
Ms Alice Forty	Programmes Administrator	5154	polis-ug-admin@bath.ac.uk	1WN 3.02	Administrative Queries
Ms Katie Hillier	Programmes Officer	3368	polis-ug-admin@bath.ac.uk	1WN 3.02	Administrative Queries

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 at hard 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.

Urgent Enquiries

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**.

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

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Your personal tutor will be in contact during welcome week to arrange your first meeting.

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.

Once a year, the External Examiners will provide a written report. University staff, including the Head of Department and Director of Studies, will look at these reports and a response will be made to the External Examiner's comments. External Examiner reports and responses are made available to students. Staff/Student Liaison Committees (SSLCs) also discuss External Examiner reports as part of routine monitoring activity.

The External Examiner(s) for your programme are listed on the 'External Examiners' document on the Polis Virtual Undergraduate Hub.

It is not appropriate for students to make direct contact with External Examiners. If you are dissatisfied with the process or outcome of an assessment and are considering whether to raise this either informally or formally, the sections of this Handbook on **Academic Appeals** and **Dissatisfaction with a University Service or Facility** (**Complaints)** give some more information about the University's procedures for student complaints and academic appeals. The University's mechanisms for student representation are designed to enable students to engage with the quality management process through which the University considers and responds to External Examiners' comments and suggestions.

The External Examiner(s) for your programme are listed on the 'External Examiners' document on the Polis Virtual Undergraduate Hub.

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 contact the member of staff concerned so that they are aware that you will not be attending their class. If you are or are likely to be ill for more than three days, please email your Director of Studies. Where you have a planned absence to undergo medical or surgical procedures that requires time off for more than three days, you can apply for a leave of absence from your Director of Studies. Your department can arrange in advance for time off study and may be able to consider other options.

Change in Circumstances

It is important to ensure that the University holds your correct, up-to-date, personal and academic details within SAMIS, the University's student records database. If you change your address – either your semester-time or home address – please update your details via SAMIS or by contacting the PoLIS administration team.

You can make changes to the data that we hold about your identity including your name, gender, title, and the pronouns you use. Please refer to Important Links and Information in this Handbook.

If you develop or if there is a change to your disability, impairment, long-term health condition or specific learning difficulty, please get in touch with our Disability Service for advice on the support you may be entitled to.

If you are considering suspending your studies, transferring from one programme to another, or withdrawing from your programme, please discuss your situation with your Director of Studies. They will be able to advise you on an appropriate course of action.

The financial implications of withdrawing from the University or suspending your studies can be significant. The Student Money Advice Team in Student Support and Safeguarding and the Student Finance Office will be able to advise you on the implications for fees in your situation and on how to suspend any student funding you are receiving.

If you are an international student holding a Student visa, you should consult the advisers in the Student Immigration Service about the implications of suspending or withdrawing from your programme.

You will need to register any change of academic circumstance, including a change of optional units, with the University. Please speak to your Department or Faculty/School administration who will advise you on how to do this.

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. Many of your lectures will be recorded; however, this is subject to the discretion of individual members of staff and we cannot guarantee that all lectures will be recorded. Recorded lectures can be accessed via https://uniofbath.cloud.panopto.eu/Panopto/Pages/Home.aspx. Please contact the individual lecturer concerned if you have questions about access to recordings of their lectures. Seminars will not be recorded.

Your teaching on campus and any Live Online Interactive Learning (LOIL) sessions you may have will show in your timetable. Links to LOIL sessions can also be accessed through the relevant unit page on the University's online learning environment, Moodle.

When you start your units, you will be able to access associated online material at a time that suits your schedule.

MyTimetable updates regularly, so should there be a change to your timetable, it will be reflected in MyTimetable.

If you have any questions about your timetable please contact your Director of Studies.

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.

Placements and Placement Support

The University is committed to enhancing students' vocational outcomes and learning experiences by supporting placements. We have a dedicated placements team to support and guide you through the process of applying for, securing and successfully completing a placement.

You can contact the Placements team at politics-placements@bath.ac.uk. Your placement tutor will be allocated to you at the start of the placement year. You can find further information about the placements team on the following webpage: https://www.bath.ac.uk/teams/faculty-of-humanities-social-sciences-placements-team/

If you have any queries or concerns then please contact the placements team. For some placements, there is a requirement for a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check and you should liaise with the placement support team for further guidance.

You can find the University Placement Handbook on Moodle: this contains generic advice and information for whilst you are on placement. You will receive programme specific information directly from your Department and can find more information by contacting the politics placements team at politics-placements@bath.ac.uk.

All placement students are visited at least once (either in person or virtually) durin their placement year.

A re-induction activity will be conducted to welcome you back from placement and update you on any changes that may have occurred at the University during your time away.

The Placement Year is a formal part of the programme and a tuition fee will be payable, which covers our costs in helping you find a placement and in monitoring your progress. All placement arrangements must be officially approved by the University. The period of placement must be of at least 30 weeks duration. The award of a degree "with placement" will be dependent upon satisfactory performance and completion of the placement, and the submission of a placement report during your final year at the University. This is submitted by mid August at the end of your placement year. The Placement Year is not assessed and does not count towards your final degree classification but is recorded on your transcript (Students taking part in the Department student exchange scheme are assessed at their host universities which will issue a transcript of their marks, but this does not count towards the degree).

Usually, placements involve paid work in the public or private sector, though it is possible to undertake voluntary work if you can finance it. The jobs

undertaken by students on placement are at a junior professional/management level. They are given responsibility appropriate to their age and experience and are fully supported and supervised. Many major employers run placement schemes and many provide in-house training, particularly in IT. Some also help with finding accommodation. Though always welcome, a high salary is not necessarily an indicator of a high quality placement!

There are many advantages to doing a placement:

- Improved employability after graduation. Employers are increasingly looking for experience as well as a qualification.
- Knowledge of a particular industry or profession and career insight for potential graduate employment.
- Development of transferable skills useful in the workplace, such as teamwork, personal organisation, time management, ability to work professionally under pressure, and problem solving.
- Experience of the job-hunting process. Students become skilled in writing CVs and letters of application and they also gain confidence at interview.
- Employers sometimes offer students the chance of a permanent job after they graduate.
- Students find placements provide valuable experience to draw upon when resuming their studies in year four.

Many collect information on which to base their final dissertation. In most cases, a work placement will involve you signing a contract of employment, which we expect you to honour. Contracts will often be for a full twelve months. A placement tutor, who will monitor your progress and, will be allocated to you at the beginning of the placement period. During the year we will require you complete regular written reports; immediately after your placement we will also ask you to make a poster presentation to other students on your experiences.

Students who wish to change from a three year to a four-year degree programme (with placement) should contact the Director of Studies. Students with loans need to notify their funding authority of any change.

The Selection Procedure for Work Placements

Planning for the Placement Year begins in Semester 2 of Year 1 when the Placements Officers present lectures on employability and placement opportunities. In addition, at the beginning of Year 2 sessions are run which prepare students for the selection process. These sessions allow students to create professional CVs and understand about the application process, including writing cover letters and interview techniques. Placements will be advertised to students from September onwards. There is, however, strong competition for jobs and so, to be sure of success, students also need to be

active in searching for placements for themselves. Some employers visit the campus to give presentations and students are strongly encouraged to attend. Interviews are either conducted on the employers' premises or virtually. For many employers, recruitment goes on throughout the year, but most placements are arranged between September and June, and the Placements team supports the student's placement search.

For more detailed information please refer to the Placements Moodle page: http://moodle.bath.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=30562.

Study Abroad and support

Some students who have appropriate language skills will be able to apply to study abroad through the Department Student exchange scheme. Please note that these places are extremely limited and priority will be given to students on language degree programmes. We hope in the longer term to set up a number of exchange arrangements with universities which teach in the medium of English.

If you have queries or any COVID-related concerns, then please contact your Director of Studies.

Please also note that foreign visas may be required for work and studying 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. Furthermore, international placements are subject to passport and visa restrictions.

Work Placements Overseas

The Placements Officer and the Careers Service can provide some information for students who wish to work overseas. However, this is largely a student - driven activity and finding placements is best secured via a student's own personal contacts. There are limited placements offered in continental Europe and priority will be given to students on language degree programmes.

Further Study

Should you wish to continue studying with the University of Bath, there are plenty of exciting postgraduate Politics and International Studies opportunities available. This allows you to 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 links below:

For Taught Postgraduate Courses (PGT): Master's degrees in politics and international studies (bath.ac.uk)

For Postgraduate Courses by Research (PGR): Politics, Languages and International Studies MPhil and PhD | University of Bath

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 university level it is important 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.

This can be a tricky skill to master, however, there is plenty of support available to help you.

The University of Bath have published their own referencing guide designed to support those who are new to academic writing to cite their 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/.

Do also reach out to your personal tutor for any queries you might have about Research Ethics, Academic Integrity or Referencing.

Academic Integrity

Everyone who registers for an award at the University, including visiting students and doctoral students, is required to undertake the Academic Integrity Training (AIT) module and satisfactorily complete a test of understanding a short time after entry onto their course. This course is taken via the university's online learning platform Moodle. This is intended to provide you with a common minimum baseline of skills and knowledge of good educational and academic practice as part of our research and learning community. The training and test will help you to prepare your assignments honestly and ethically, and to avoid inadvertent assessment offences, particularly plagiarism. "Learning outcomes" outlines the learning objectives for the course.

All students will be unable to progress beyond the next progression point in their studies until they pass the University's Academic Integrity Test. The test has a pass mark of 85% but you can take the test as many times as you need to.

Instructions for the completion of the AIT will be given to you during your induction. For any questions relating to the AIT please contact your Director of Studies.

Plagiarism

When you submit your assessment, you will be expected to make a declaration that the work is your own and, where you have re-used your own work and/or used other sources of information, that you have referenced the material appropriately. The University uses a plagiarism detection service (currently Ouriginal), which searches the web and databases of reference material and content submitted by other students, to identify duplicated text.

Where practical, all summative assessment is submitted to this service to check for similarities as an initial indicator of whether work has been plagiarised and an assessment offence committed.

Submission of Your Assessment to the Plagiarism Detection Service - Data Protection Statement

The Plagiarism Detection Service complies with European Data Protection legislation. When you registered with the University, you gave it permission to process your personal data for a variety of legitimate purposes. This includes allowing the University to disclose such data to third parties for purposes relating to your studies. The University, at its sole discretion, may submit the work of any student to the Plagiarism Detection Service (in accordance with Regulation 15.3e) and may make, or authorise third parties to make, copies of any such work for the purposes of:

1. assessment of the work
2. comparison with databases of earlier work or previously available works to confirm the work is original

3. addition to databases of works used to ensure that future works submitted at this institution and others do not contain content from the work submitted.

The University will not make any more copies of your work than are necessary, and will only retain these for so long as remains necessary, for these purposes.

Please note that, if at any time the University submits any of your work to the Plagiarism Detection Service, the service will be provided with, and will retain, certain personal data relating to you – for example, your name, email address, programme details and the work submitted. Such data may be transferred by the Plagiarism Detection Service to countries worldwide (some of which may not be governed by EU data legislation) in order for the work to be checked and an originality report generated in accordance with the proper workings of the Plagiarism Detection Service. Personal data is retained indefinitely by the Plagiarism Detection Service upon submission of work. You may ask for your personal data to be removed by contacting the University's Data Protection Officer.

Penalties for Assessment Offences

Academic misconduct can be described as 'the use of unfair means in any examination or assessment procedure'. Any student who is found to have used unfair means and therefore committed an assessment offence will be penalised. Potential types of assessment offence include plagiarism, self-plagiarism, collusion or unauthorised collaboration, contract cheating (including impersonation), fabrication or falsification, or breaching of examination regulations. Penalties for assessment offences depend upon the severity of the offence but may include failure of the assessment, unit or part of a degree, with no provision for reassessment or retrieval of that failure. Severe cases of academic misconduct, for example, contract cheating could lead to an Inquiry Hearing or disciplinary proceedings. Claims of inadvertence or ignorance will not be accepted as a basis for mitigation of a penalty.

If you are accused of an assessment offence, the Students' Union's welfare services are available to support you. You have the right to appeal against the outcome of the investigation.

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

Most units taught in the Department are assessed by a combination of either coursework and examination or coursework and final essay, giving at least two opportunities for feedback on performance.

At the end of each semester, the assessments will be aggregated to give you an overall mark out of 100 for each unit. Coursework can take a variety of forms, however, the most common forms of coursework are seminar presentations and essays.

Not all the assignments you are given may "count" in terms of how you are assessed. Those which do are referred to as assessed coursework. We undertake to make very clear to you what is assessed and what is not, but if you are in any doubt you should ask the teacher concerned.

The way in which each individual unit is assessed will be explained to you at the start of the academic semester by the unit convenor and will be stated in writing in the unit guide or on the Moodle page.

 A summary is also given in the relevant entry in the Unit Catalogue. If you are in any doubt about what "counts" (and how much it counts for) please ask your unit convenor.

In first year core units, you will receive guidance on how to prepare for essays and exams. You will also receive guidance on how to prepare for seminar presentations in the first or second year, depending on your programme and choice of units.

Assignment Briefs, Word Counts and Deadlines

Assignment briefs, word counts and deadlines for coursework will be confirmed by the convenor responsible for each unit. You will be able to find this information on the Moodle page for each unit and in the unit handbook or by following this link.

6.10 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*

6.11 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]*

Wordcounts

Coursework tasks will normally have a word limit or word range. This, and the penalty for non-compliance, will be confirmed when you receive an assignment. If you do not observe the given word range or limit for the coursework task, for example if you exceed the word limit, then a penalty will be applied. The penalty that would apply should be stated in writing when the assignment task is distributed. You should take note of what is included when calculating the total word count (e.g. whether or not contents pages, appendices, footnotes, bibliographies and other elements that are not part of the main text are included). You should check with your Director of Studies if you have questions about word counts and penalties. Word limits are normally indicated on the unit handout. Work submitted should be within 10% of this figure: this includes quotations, footnotes and references, but not the bibliography. The ability to keep to the limit is one of the criteria taken into account in assessment and overlength work will be penalised: markers will stop reading once the limit is exceeded by 10%. In language assignments the number of words specified should be regarded as a minimum: work which is under-length will be penalised pro rata.

If you do not observe the given word range or limit for the coursework task, for example if you exceed the word limit, then a penalty will be applied. The penalty that would apply should be stated in writing when the assignment task is distributed. You should take note of what is included when calculating the total word count (e.g. whether or not contents pages, appendices, footnotes, bibliographies and other elements that are not part of the main text are included).

You should check with your Director of Studies if you have questions about word counts and penalties.

Word limits are normally indicated on the unit handout. Work submitted should be within 10% of this figure: this includes quotations, footnotes and references, but not the bibliography. The ability to keep to the limit is one of the criteria considered in assessment work that exceeds the word limit will be

penalised: markers will stop reading once the limit is exceeded by 10%. In language assignments the number of words specified should be regarded as a minimum: work which is under-length will be penalised pro rata.

Deadlines

Submission deadlines for each unit will be provided within the unit outline, and displayed on the 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.

Coursework Extensions

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 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. Your Director of Studies may grant you an extension to the specified submission date. You can request an extension by logging into [SAMIS](#). Please be aware that an extension request needs to be submitted BEFORE the 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. [There are penalties for submitting work after the specified deadline](#).

If there are valid circumstances preventing you from meeting a deadline, your Director of Studies may grant you an extension to the specified submission date. You can request an extension 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.

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. Further information can be found under the 'Assessment Information' section on the PoLIS Virtual Undergraduate Hub.

Assessment Processes

Assessment and marking processes at the University are designed to ensure that assessment of your work is fair and consistent, and that academic standards are appropriate and comparable between the University and other higher education institutions. This is achieved in several ways.

Marking: Assessments you will complete during your programme are marked according to:

- *marking criteria (or assessment criteria)* - these are the knowledge, understanding and skills that students should demonstrate in the assessment. They are based on the learning outcomes being assessed
- *marking schemes* - these are detailed descriptions of how specific numbers of marks should be assigned against individual components of an answer within the assessment task
- *grade descriptors* - these are descriptions of the levels of achievement required in order to get a result within a given band of marks (e.g. 70% or more).

Anonymous marking: The University has adopted a principle of anonymous marking in order to protect students and staff from bias, and the perception of bias, in the marking process. It applies to all assessment where practicable. It is not possible to mark all coursework anonymously as in some types of assessment the student can be easily identified by the marker (e.g. presentations, group work, laboratory work) or it might not be practical, or in

the student interest, to do so. You will be informed when your coursework is to be marked anonymously.

Moderation: Both the setting and the marking of assessments are independently checked through a process known as moderation to ensure that questions test the learning outcomes and are set at the right standard, and that marking is consistent and fair.

Moderation is conducted by internal and external examiners.

Boards of Examiners: Assessment decision-making at the University is the responsibility of Boards of Examiners established at three levels: assessment outcomes go first to *Boards of Examiners for Units*, then *Boards of Examiners for Programmes*, then finally to *Boards of Studies*. Boards of Studies confirm decisions relating to student progression, re-assessment, and the final award. **The assessment marks you are given initially by markers are therefore provisional up until the point when they have been confirmed by the Board of Studies (BoS) for your programme.** An official release date is set when your confirmed results will be made available to you via SAMIS (the University's student records system). An academic appeal can only be made in relation to a confirmed result (see the section in this Handbook on **Academic Appeals**).

Scaling: All marks for a unit are reviewed at a meeting of a Board of Examiners for Units which will verify that the assessment process has been conducted appropriately and that the marks are an accurate reflection of the standards achieved. A Board of Examiners can decide to recommend a change to the provisional marks, based on evidence that there was a problem with the assessment which means the initial marks do not reflect the standards achieved by students. This adjustment is known as scaling and under these circumstances the marks of all affected students will be changed.

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.

The PoLIS Undergraduate Programme & Unit Catalogues 2023/4 can be accessed on the [University of Bath website](#).

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.