



Politics and International Relations

Undergraduate Student Profiles

Hear from our students

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I have always dreamt of doing something big in my life, like working in politics, journalism or for NGOs to create tangible change. The idea of combining literary skills with International Relations study seems like an ideal basis for any of those fields, while not limiting me in my career choices.

I consider Professor Alcobia-Murphy's course about Trauma Literature, EL35UT, a vital part of my studies at Aberdeen. Studying political atrocities and massacres in the 20th century, being exposed to Holocaust and 9/11 literature as well as learning about Palestinian, Bosnian, and Indonesian genocide through literature was unmissable for my development as an anti-colonialist and feminist young student. Besides that, the International Relations courses IR3020, African Security, and PI4573, Political Islam, posed a refreshing and essential step beyond Western-centric International Relations academia. Both of these courses offered me the possibility to expand my horizons by redefining national security, statehood and terrorism and studying the workings of global structures from African, Middle Eastern and Islamist perspectives.

Communication with the University of Aberdeen's teaching and administrative staff has been always a pleasure, from day one. At my Erasmus university, I would sometimes wait days or weeks for a reply - in Aberdeen, it happens most often that my queries are answered the same or the next day, which creates a supportive learning environment and makes me feel cared for and supported by university staff.



Anasuya Virmani

MA English and International Relations

Hear from our students

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As a young man I was always interested to learn about human rights and power dynamics between states and non-state actors. I wanted to learn and develop my understanding about this interplay and its impact on individuals and communities.

This course has taught me analytical, research, and interpersonal skills (communications, social skills, time management, and team-work) The highlight of my course work was to learn and engage in individual and group work. This provided me insight into how to engage with like-minded peers in a collaborative way. This helped me during my studies as well as in my current professional life by broadening my understanding and insights on many levels.

During my final year at the university, I had an opportunity to do a Summer Diversity Internship at the UK Civil Service where I was deployed at the Department for Work and Pensions. This internship provided me insight into how to put my theoretical knowledge in a practical way. I was able to learn and reflect on my development areas which provided me the clarity needed to choose a civil service career after my studies.

After my graduation, I joined the Scottish Government and I have been part of the Diversity and Inclusion team to improve corporate policies with an aim to achieve Scottish Government diversity targets. In 2020, I joined the Covid-19 Directorate of the Scottish Government. I provide support the Covid-19 vaccine roll out programme in Scotland.



Shahid Khan

MA Politics and International Relations

Hear from our students

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I was initially accepted to study Legal Studies and IR, which was not the right fit for me. After a couple of weeks, I changed my programme to History and IR. This lasted for one term. Then, I finally settled on German and IR. I decided based on the belief that another European language would be beneficial alongside my main academic focus – international relations. Four and a half years later, I couldn't be happier to have made that choice.

In International Relations, students have a rich catalogue of courses. Through lectures, tutorials, readings and assignments, undergraduates gain a very solid theoretical basis. My favourite course, however, was more practical: Researching in the 21st Century. I loved this junior honours course because we learned how to analyse quantitative data using IBM SPSS. From experience, I can confirm that potential employers value the ability to work with the platform highly. I would especially recommend having a look at classes taught by Dr Samantha May and Dr Malcolm Harvey. They are not only immensely engaging lecturers but also magnificent in their approach to students.

I have developed effective verbal and written communication, particularly the ability to translate complex concepts to a broad audience. I was also taught to pick out the essential points while reading a text to summarise, synthesise and critically analyse information and data from various sources. By effectively adopting this skill, I moved to the next step of forming an argument and finding possible solutions to problems.



Ivan Kanev

MA German and International Relations