The University of Edinburgh
Politics & International Relations

Politics
4th Year

Student Handbook
2016/2017
This booklet has been prepared for students embarking upon their fourth year of Single or Combined Honours Degrees in Politics. It includes information on the aims, structure and requirements of the degree; the general rules governing assessment and examinations; useful information about the many extracurricular activities and facilities available to International Relations students, and contact details when seeking advice, support, or further information on postgraduate study and other careers.

Politics is one of three single honours degrees offered by the Politics and International Relations (PIR) subject group. The subject group is part of the School of Social and Political Science (SSPS).

Politics can be taken in combination with Economic and Social History or with Quantitative Methods. This booklet is aimed at students on these two combined degrees as well as those taking single honours. These booklets are not intended as replacements for the official publications of the University such as the University Degree Regulations and Programmes of Study.

Comments or queries regarding this handbook should be addressed to the PIR Director of Undergraduate Teaching, Dr Sara Dorman (Room 4.08 tel: 0131 650 4239), email: dugt@ed.ac.uk or the Subject Secretary & Student Support Officer (SSO), Ms. Irena Coubrough (Room 1.05, tel: 0131 651 3896; email: (Irena.Coubrough@ed.ac.uk), School of Social and Political Science, Chrystal Macmillan Building, 15A George Square.

If you require this document or any of the internal University of Edinburgh online resources mentioned in this document in an alternative format please email: Irena.Coubrough@ed.ac.uk
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I WELCOME TO FOURTH YEAR POLITICS

Welcome from Head of Subject
Congratulations on your entry to your final year in Politics & International Relations (PIR). This is an important year for your dissertation as well as for your career trajectory.

Last year’s graduates have moved on to a range of exciting opportunities, including internships at the UN and WHO, employment in the UK civil service fast stream, traineeships at media outlets such as the BBC, various international consulting and professional services firms (such as Deloitte, Ernst and Young, Price Waterhouse Coopers) as well as various UK and international banks.

In PIR we believe that the curriculum should stretch students, should be offered by active researchers and should track recent developments in world events, in academic literature and in research methodology. We’ve update our course offerings a lot in recent years to ensure that the curriculum offers new themes and ideas. This year we have three new honours options running: Critical Theory and Cinema, Democracy in Divided Societies, and the seminar-run Contemporary Issues in Political Science which will focus on the US presidential elections. My colleagues and I look forward to working with you on these and our existing courses as well as serving as your supervisors for your dissertations this year.

We run a lively series of events throughout the year, including our long established Transatlantic Seminar Series as well as one-off public lectures throughout the year. We are always delighted to see undergraduate students at these and other events. We are also keen to have staff attend any student events that you organise. If you would like us to advertise these please do let me know. To keep track of what is going on in the wider PIR community (including staff and PIR society events) please check out our website, facebook page and twitter feed @EdinburghPIR

Although I have had a chance to get to know a good many of you as your PT or lecturer I have still to meet a fair number of you. If you ever feel that there is something that we could be doing better in PIR or if you just want to pop by please do contact me by email (ailsa.henderson@ed.ac.uk) or in person. I’m in room 3.10 CMB

Last, we are delighted that the café, study and social space for everyone to use on the ground floor of CMB proved so popular. We hope you’ll continue to find it a handy place to meet with other PIR staff and students.

All good wishes,

Ailsa

Professor Ailsa Henderson

Head of Politics and International Relations
Key contacts for fourth year

POLITICS subject area secretary and SSO
If you are a Politics, Politics and Economic and Social History (PESH) or a Politics with Quantitative Methods (POLI/QM) student, your main support contact is: Irena Coubrough, Irena.Coubrough@ed.ac.uk, Tel: 0131 651 3896 Room 1.05

Welcome message from your SSO:
As your Student Support Officer, I am here to help you through your exciting, interesting and sometimes stressful University journey. The student experience is extremely important to us here at the University of Edinburgh, as we aim for a consistent quality of provision, while also helping you to monitor your progress and performance. I am here to offer help and advice on a range of different matters including personal support, academic guidance, special circumstances and many more.

My office is room 1.05 in the Chrystal MacMillan Building and is usually open 9-5pm Monday to Friday, but you can make appointments out with these times on weekdays if necessary. If I am not available, please contact the other SSOs, who will be happy to help.

Feel free to contact me with any queries. We look forward to meeting you soon and hope you have a great start to the semester.

Irena

Your Personal Tutor (PT)
Your PT will be a key point of contact for you this year, able to support you with advice on any academic matter, from course selection, to understanding the feedback you receive on your work, to general advice about studying.

For more on the roles of PT and SSO, see section VII below on advice and support.

PESH students can also contact the Student Support team in History if they have questions pertaining to Economic and Social History courses and regulations: hca-sso@ed.ac.uk

PIR Director of Undergraduate Teaching
For information regarding rules, regulation, progression and other academic matters, contact
DUGT Sara Dorman Room 4.08, 0131 650 4239, dugt@ed.ac.uk

Communications
Email is the official method of communication for all students. When you join the University you are given a University of Edinburgh email account and address. Students must access and manage this account regularly as it is assumed that students have opened and acted on these
communications. Failure by students to do so will not be considered an acceptable excuse for student actions or inactions or as a grounds for appeal.

Students can set up an auto-forward on their University email account to ensure that all official University communications are received. Guidance on how to do this and the full policy can be viewed at http://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/contacting_students_by_email.pdf

E-mail Protocol and Social Media

E-mail is essential to our work at the University. We all rely on it to get the information we need and to communicate with other members of the University community. Used properly, it makes us more efficient and better at what we do. Since e-mail is so important, PIR has agreed a short protocol on what we consider good practice. It applies to all PIR-Student e-mail correspondence, whether with academic or administrative staff.

PIR aims to:

• respond to e-mails within 3 working days during the teaching semester. All full-time academic members of staff have periods of teaching/ marking/fieldwork when they are away from the office and unable to access email. They also have designated ‘Research Days’ when they are expected to remain email free. All PIR staff must travel to attend conferences, workshops, events, etc. We may therefore only have sporadic access to e-mail while away. On the occasions when PIR staff and faculty are away, students can expect to receive an ‘out-of-office’ reply explaining how and when we can be reached on any urgent matter, and (if appropriate) who can help you in our absence;
• communicate in a tone that connotes respect and professionalism and
• treat student e-mail correspondence to PIR as confidential (and not to be forwarded to other colleagues) if students clearly signal that as a preference.

PIR expects students to:

• check their university e-mail account regularly and also use this email address in all communications with the university;
• respond to e-mails within 3 working days, and sooner than that if we are asking students to supply information;
• check available documentation and relevant web-sites for answers BEFORE sending us an email;
• address e-mails to the appropriate recipient only, and to show diligence in determining who the appropriate member of staff is;
• communicate in e-mail as if writing us a letter.

Using social media

While there are many cautionary tales about the use of social media and the 'digital footprint', there are also many positives to engaging with it. There have been many examples recently of students and graduates using social media to network and, in some cases, find employment. Social media allows easy exchange of information and ideas and can provide a powerful platform for discussion - all of which is within the control of the account owner. Do
not be afraid to engage with debate but do remember that what goes on the internet stays on the internet – you need to remember that a future employer may discover things about you that you would prefer to keep private.

The University provides helpful advice and workshops relating to managing your digital footprint. You can find out more about this here: http://www.ed.ac.uk/institute-academic-development/about-us/projects/digital-footprint

We expect you to be courteous in your postings and to not make personal or hurtful comments about other students or staff. You should ensure your comments are lawful, ie are consistent with legislatively protected areas of equality and diversity, and do not constitute a disciplinary offence under the University’s code, which include offensive behaviour (in writing as well as actual) and bringing the University into disrepute.

II DEGREE REQUIREMENTS AND COURSES

Expectations of Senior Honours
As you now know, Honours years typically involve the chance to study your chosen topics in more depth, with a step level change in difficulty and expectation, and the expectation that you engage more critically with the literature and develop a stronger voice in your written work. We have introduced more of what we call ‘Honours Seminars’ this year: small, staff-taught, seminar style courses, where fourth years are given priority places. We hope you find them a rewarding complement to some of our longer-established and popular Honours options.

As you will also know, Honours courses in PIR now tend to have multiple modes of assessment (e.g. essays; presentations; group presentations; tutorial participation; policy or parliamentary briefs and/or exams or coursework only). We see this as an important part of enhancing your learning experience, skills and employability. Course guides provide information on essay topics; word length and any further course specific requirements for written work. Further information about how different components are assessed, and how feedback is provided, can be found in the relevant sections below. The skills learnt through Fundamentals should have helped prepare you for this range of assessments, but do make use of your Course Organiser/tutor, and Personal Tutor for advice and guidance if need be.

It is important in your Senior Honours year to enhance your career prospects both through working as hard as you can in your courses, but in exploiting the extra-curricular opportunities the subject area, School and University offers. Our PIR-specific, 4th year only Careers Events to enable you to network with alumni and employers, find out how to get on the ladder, get tips from those working in the profession and partake in some wine and mingling with those ‘in the know!’ You will also want to ensure you are building your enhanced transcript through recording your extra-curricular activities and successes: http://www.ed.ac.uk/student-administration/order-documents/transcripts/ Some of you may be able to gain
recognition for your extra-curricular activities through the Edinburgh Award: http://www.employability.ed.ac.uk/Student/EdinburghAward/

Degree Requirements and Compulsory courses
For the MA (Honours) Politics degree, students in their fourth year must take and pass the 40 credit Dissertation in Politics and take another 80 credits which can be picked from the list of PIR optional honours courses.

Please see Degree Regulations and Programme Specifications (DRPS) for more detail: http://www.drps.ed.ac.uk/16-17/dpt/utpoltc.htm

For the MA (Honours) Politics Economic and Social History degree, students must take and pass the Dissertation in either Politics or History. They should take a further 40 credits on PIR courses, and a further 40 in ESH.

Please see Degree Regulations and Programme Specifications (DRPS) for more detail: http://www.drps.ed.ac.uk/16-17/dpt/utpoles.htm

For the MA (Honours) Politics with Quantitative Methods, students in their fourth year must take and pass the Dissertation in Politics. Students must ensure that they have at least 60 credits of QM and no more than 80 credits of QM. They should take Statistical Modelling if they have not done so in year 3. The QM options for 2016/7 are Researching Contemporary Britain; Advanced Social Network Analysis; and Multilevel Modelling.

Please see Degree Regulations and Programme Specifications (DRPS) for more detail: http://www.drps.ed.ac.uk/16-17/dpt/utmahpolqm1f.htm

Politics (single honours and combined) students returning from a JYA should ensure that they take any required courses that they could not find a replacement for whilst abroad. They can remind themselves of their obligations on the webpages on JYA here

Compulsory Courses in 4th Year Politics

Dissertation in POLITICS

In writing your dissertation, you will draw upon all the skills you have been developing since you started studying IR – reading critically, analysing arguments, collecting data, and writing effectively. The dissertation requires you to develop your own research question, focusing on a topic of interest to you. You will need to set your own deadlines for writing drafts and meeting with your supervisor. See your supervisor as a resource: their job is not to tell you what to do, or to say ‘that’s good enough’ but to help you make your work better – by helping
you focus your question, locate the best sources, and draft more effective chapters. Make sure you schedule appointments or attend office hours. The point of sending a supervisor a draft chapter is for them to suggest ways for you to improve it. There is no point in submitting a draft to them, unless you make time to consider their suggested changes. Writing a dissertation is a big challenge for many students, but it can also be very rewarding, if you put in the time and effort!

You should by now already have downloaded your Dissertation Handbook and have the key dates and marking procedures to hand. If not please do so ASAP!

Global Justice and Citizenship [for Politics students returning from JYA who couldn’t find a suitable replacement]

This course examines concepts central to political debate (such as justice, rights, freedom, obligation, and the ‘good society’) and investigates how political philosophers use these in trying to justify basic principles governing the activities of the state. We also consider how such principles might be justified and applied in contexts beyond the state. The literature studied is chiefly recent or contemporary and our focus is on current debates, including those on global distributive justice and cosmopolitan citizenship. A central concern throughout the course is distinguishing normative from explanatory or descriptive claims, of recognizing when an argument depends on empirical presuppositions, and of appreciating the basic logical structure of arguments.

Approaches to Politics and International Relations [for Politics students returning from JYA who couldn’t find a suitable replacement]

What does doing politics and international relations involve? And how can the various approaches in the field help us to make sense of political processes, conflicts and events that take place around the world? This course will provide students with an understanding of the development of the discipline of political science, and it will introduce them to the major fields in politics and IR. The aims are both historical (examining the major stages in the evolution of the discipline of political science, beginning with the behavioural big bang and ending with post-positivist theory) and substantive (considering the self-understanding of the modern political scientist).

By the end of the course, students will know a lot more about what political science is about, and what political scientists do. Students will also be ready to think about developing their own research and comprehension of the political world (including essays and dissertations) that builds upon the main theoretical and methodological approaches in the field.
Honours Courses in IR

The courses offered by PIR for IR students this year are listed below. You are able to take one 20 credit course from other subject areas within the College of Humanities and Social Sciences – please see DRPS for details. You may be able to take a 40 credit course if, for example, it fits well with your degree, dissertation, or career interests. This requires the written permission of DUGT, Sara Dorman, at dugt@ed.ac.uk.

PLIT10021  War and Justice
PLIT10036  Politics of the Middle East
SSIP10001  Contemporary Feminist Debates
PLIT10075  Global Politics Of Sex And Gender
PLIT10080  Comparing Scottish Devolution
PLIT10018  International Political Economy
PLIT10062  EU as Global Actor
PLIT10063  Human Rights in International Relations
PLIT10093  Political Work
PLIT10095  International Politics of Money
PLIT10096  Democracy & its Discontents
PLIT10094  Global Security
PLIT10060  Approaches to Politics and International Relations
PLIT10106  Research Design in Politics and International Relations
SSIP10027  Statistical Modelling
PLIT10107  Contemporary Issues in Political Theory
SSIP10026  Social and Political Science in Practice
PLIT10090  African Politics: Theories and Debates
PLIT10100  Public Policy: Agenda-Setting
PLIT10104  Contemporary Issues in Political Science
PLIT10098  Public participation in democracy and governance
PLIT10099  Democracy in Divided Societies
PLIT10091  Parliamentary Studies
PLIT10089  Political Islam
PLIT10108  Critical Theory and Cinema
4th year students only

PLIT10101  Neuropolitics
PLIT10103  British Government
SSPS10028  Researching Contemporary Britain using Longitudinal Data
SSPS10029  Analysing Social Networks with Statistics
SSPS10024  Multi-Level Modelling in Social Science

Engagement and attendance monitoring
The University expects all students to attend all their University classes, lectures and tutorials etc., whether or not these are described as “compulsory” by the School. Students are expected to participate fully in the requirements of all courses, including submitting assignments, contributing to tutorials and workshops or laboratories, attending meetings with Personal Tutors and sitting examinations.

Attendance will be monitored by the School as part of our more general monitoring of student progress. Keeping attendance helps alert staff to any additional pastoral or academic support needs students might require. Staff can then provide advice, guidance or support in a timely and useful manner.

UK legislation relating to Points-Based Immigration requires all universities to monitor the attendance and engagement of their international students. Students on a Tier 4 visa must read Appendix 1 of this document.

Student contract
Successful study at University stems from a partnership between students and staff, and the University is committed to providing you with a learning environment and student services which enable you to fulfil your potential. The procedures underpinning this partnership, along with the Terms and Conditions of Admissions, form the contract between you and the University in relation to your studies at the University. Details of this contract can be viewed at: http://www.ed.ac.uk/staff-students/students/academic-life/contract

Invitation to PIR Seminars
PIR runs research seminar series with presentations by both visiting speakers and in-house staff/postgraduates. These usually take place at 1pm on Wednesdays (though this may vary). The topics covered by the speakers are not necessarily related to those explored in your
courses, but they may often be of considerable interest and value to students, who are very welcome to attend. Information about seminars in PIR, SSPS and other departments is posted on our notice boards and on the PIR and SPSS websites. Click here for further details.

The weekly Transatlantic Seminar takes place most Fridays between 13:00 – 14:30. It is designed to promote informed discussion of current issues and research on American and European relations, economy, and society and (especially) transatlantic relations. All are welcome to attend!

III SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES AND LEARNING ADJUSTMENTS

Special circumstances
A student experiencing serious disruption to their studies, their coursework or exams due to medical or other unforeseen circumstances may submit a Special Circumstances form with supporting medical evidence, completed in consultation with your Personal Tutor or with the International Relations Student Support Officer, Natalie Stroud (Natalie.Stroud@ed.ac.uk).

The full guidance on Special Circumstances can be found at http://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/policies-regulations/student-support

Student disability and learning adjustments
Students with a disability (including those with specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia), should get in touch with the Student Disability Service as soon as possible. Details as well as information on what support the Student Disability Service can offer can be found at: http://www.ed.ac.uk/student-disability-service

An advisor will be happy to meet with you. The advisor can discuss possible learning support which may include adjustments and specific examination arrangements. The Student Disability Advisor can assist you with an application for Disabled Students' Allowance, give you information about available technology and personal assistance such as note takers, proof readers or dyslexia tutors, and prepare a Learning Profile for your School which outlines recommended adjustments.

Students will be expected to provide the Student Disability Office Service with evidence of their disability - either a letter from a GP or specialist, or evidence of specific learning difficulty. Details of what is acceptable evidence can be found on the SDS web pages: http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/student-disability-service/new-students/evidence

For dyslexia or dyspraxia this evidence must be a recent Chartered Educational Psychologist's assessment. If you do not have this evidence, the Disability Office can put you in touch with an independent Educational Psychologist.

The School welcomes students with disabilities and is working to make all its courses as accessible as possible. If you have a disability which means that you may require adjustments to be made to ensure access to lectures, tutorials or exams, or any other aspect of your
In 2013, the University implemented an Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy, which states that the adjustments in the section below will be “mainstreamed”. This means that the following provisions should be available to ALL students, regardless of whether or not they have a schedule of adjustments/learning profile.

- Course outlines and reading lists shall be made available at least 4 weeks before the start of the course.
- Reading lists shall indicate priority and/or relevance.
- Lecture outlines or PowerPoint presentation slides for lectures/seminars shall be made available to students at least 24 hours in advance of the class. (Note for many courses a brief lecture outline is already provided in the course guide.)
- Key technical words and/or formulae shall be provided to students at least 24 hours in advance of the class.
- Students shall be notified by email of changes to arrangements/announcements such as changes to courses/room changes/cancellations.
- Students shall be permitted to audio record lectures, tutorials and supervision sessions using their own equipment for their own personal learning*
- All teaching staff shall ensure that microphones are worn and used in all lectures regardless of the perceived need to wear them.

*Teaching staff have the right to insist that recording stops if sensitive or confidential information is discussed. In these cases reasons should be made clear to students.

Full details on the Mainstreaming learning adjustments can be found at http://www.ed.ac.uk/student-disability-service/staff/mainstreaming-learning-adjustments

Each School has a Coordinator of Adjustments. In SPS the Coordinator of Adjustments is the Student Experience Officer, Sue Renton. With your agreement, your Learning Profile will be electronically circulated to the Coordinator of Adjustments, who then approves some or all of its recommendations and produces an Adjustment Schedule. This is then electronically circulated to those concerned with the administration of your courses (Course Organisers and Course Secretaries), your Personal Tutor, and yourself.

Note: Learning adjustments referring to the need for some students to occasionally submit coursework late does not, according to the Student Disability Service’s guidelines, ‘guarantee’ an extension or waiver. Students should not assume an automatic right to extra time and should instead follow the extension or LPW procedures listed below.

If a student is allowed extra time on an exam, this adjustment is coordinated between the Student Disability Service and the University’s central Student Administration.
Further information on examination adjustments can be found at: http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/student-administration/exams/adjustments

Any non-standard support adjustments not covered by routine procedures can be arranged through the intervention of the Coordinator of Adjustments, Sue.Renton@ed.ac.uk, with support from the Deputy Director of the Undergraduate School, Dr Steve Kirkwood - S.Kirkwood@ed.ac.uk

IV ASSESSMENT, COURSEWORK AND EXAMS

Common marking scheme
The marking criteria for coursework, exams and dissertations have been established to guide both staff and students about what is normally expected of work receiving a particular grade. This information can be viewed at http://www.sps.ed.ac.uk/undergrad/current_students/teaching_and_learning/assessment_and_regulations/marking_descriptors

Coursework submissions and penalties
Make sure you read and understand all the information about how to submit coursework and what penalties may be applied. You will find all this information in the section below.

Coursework is submitted online using our electronic submission system, ELMA. You will not be required to submit a paper copy of your work.

Marked coursework, grades and feedback will be returned to you via ELMA. You will not receive a paper copy of your marked coursework or feedback.

For details of how to submit your coursework to ELMA, please see our webpages here. There is a 5 mark incorrect submission penalty, so read the guidance carefully and follow it to avoid receiving this.

Incorrect Submission Penalty
When a piece of coursework is submitted to our Electronic Submission System (ELMA) that does not comply with our submission guidance (wrong format, incorrect document, no cover sheet etc.) a penalty of 5 marks will be applied to students' work.

Information about this penalty as well as all other penalties that may be applied to your coursework can be must read at http://www.sps.ed.ac.uk/undergrad/current_students/teaching_and_learning/assessment_and_regulations/coursework_penalties
Late Submission of Assessed Coursework

Managing deadlines is a basic life-skill. Timely submission of all assessed items (coursework, essays, project reports, etc.) is a vitally important responsibility at all stages in your university career. Unexcused lateness can put at risk your prospects of progressing to the next stage of your degree and in your honours years, can damage your final degree grade.

If you miss the submission deadline for any piece of assessed work, 5 marks will be deducted for each calendar day that work is late, up to a maximum of seven calendar days (35 marks). Thereafter, a mark of zero will be recorded. There is no grace period for lateness and penalties begin to apply immediately following the deadline. For example, if the deadline is Tuesday at 12 noon, work submitted at any point after 12 noon will be marked as one day late, work submitted at any point after 12 noon on Wednesday will be marked as two days late, and so on.

Failure to submit an item of assessed work will result in a mark of zero, with potentially very serious consequences for your overall degree class, or no degree at all. It is therefore always in your interest to submit work, even if very late.

Extensions

If you have good reason for not meeting a coursework deadline, you may request an extension. Before you request an extension, make sure you read all the guidance on our webpages and take note of the key points below. You will also be able to access the online extension request form through our webpages.

- Extensions are granted for 7 calendar days.
- Extension requests must be submitted no later than 24 hours before the coursework deadline.
- If you miss the deadline for requesting an extension for a valid reason, you should submit your coursework as soon as you are able, and apply for Special Circumstances to disregard penalties. You should also contact your Student Support Officer or Personal Tutor and make them aware of your situation.
- If you have a valid reason and require more than 7 days, then you should submit your coursework as soon as you are able, and apply for Special Circumstances to disregard penalties for late submission. You should also contact your Student Support Officer or Personal Tutor and make them aware of your situation.
- If you have a Learning Profile from the Disability Service allowing you potential for flexibility over deadlines, you must still make an extension request for this to be taken into account.
Word count penalties
The penalty for excessive word length in coursework is one mark deducted for each additional 20 words over the limit. If the limit is 1500 words then anything between 1501 and 1520 words will lose one point, and so on.

Students should check each individual course guide carefully for guidance on what is and what is not included in the word count.

Courses with examinations
If your course features a centrally arranged exam, the exam times will be scheduled by Student Administration services. You can view the dates of the examination diets for 16/17 at

http://www.ed.ac.uk/student-administration/exams/exam-diets

Closer to the exam diet, Student Administration services will announce the precise dates and times of individual course examinations. Students are responsible for checking the dates and times of their exams and this can be done through the examinations web pages at

http://www.ed.ac.uk/student-administration/exams

Revision sessions and/or advice on the examinations for each course may sometimes be provided; check with individual course conveners or course guides. Copies of past examination papers are available through the University Library (see this link). Normally, examinations are two hours long, and require two questions to be answered (but, again, check with course conveners for exact details). Examination scripts are anonymised and each candidate is identified by their examination number only (which is found on your matriculation card). Examination papers are marked anonymously moderated by at least one other member of staff and the marks agreed internally. Marks and, where appropriate, scripts and coursework are then sent to the External Examiners. The External Examiners check, approve and, sometimes, amend these marks. The same process applies to the marking of dissertations.

Academic misconduct and plagiarism
Material you submit for assessment, such as essays, must be your own work. You can, and should, draw upon published work, ideas from lectures and class discussions, and (if appropriate) even upon discussions with other students, but you must always make clear that you are doing so. Passing off anyone else’s work (including another student’s work or material from the Web or a published author) as your own is plagiarism and will be punished severely. When you upload your work to ELMA you will be asked to check a box to confirm the work is your own. All submissions will be run through ‘Turnitin’, our plagiarism detection software. Turnitn compares every essay to a constantly-updated database which highlights all plagiarised work. Assessed work that contains plagiarised material will be awarded a mark of zero, and serious cases of plagiarism will also be reported to the College Academic Misconduct officer.

All forms of academic misconduct are regarded as an offence and are punishable under the University’s Code of Student Conduct. The University has a network of School and College
Academic Misconduct Officers (SAMOS/CAMOS) who are responsible for investigating suspected cases at School or College level, and for determining appropriate penalties. Students should ensure they read and understand the academic misconduct procedures and these can be viewed at http://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/staff/discipline/academic-misconduct

Also see the School’s ‘What is plagiarism and how to avoid it’ page.

V FEEDBACK

Feedback
Politics and IR has had extensive discussions within the subject group, as well as within the School of Social and Political Science (SSPS), about how we can meet our aspirations to deliver the highest quality feedback, assessment and learning environment to our students.

One important step is to ensure that all of our staff and students are fully informed of our procedures. We thus provide below a summary of measures in place.

Feedback takes many forms including:

- detailed feedback sheets for coursework
- written or verbal feedback on tutorial presentations and performance
- general and individualised feedback on exams, including opportunities to view and discuss exam performance
- ongoing opportunities for informal feedback and discussion with teaching staff during Guidance and Feedback hours

Our online information on feedback and assessment has been vastly expanded and centralized. It contains guidance on ‘writing essays’, ‘making the most of feedback’ ‘study involvement and representation’, special circumstances, etc. The same web-page provides information on the latest developments in assessment and feedback. You can view these pages at: http://www.sps.ed.ac.uk/undergrad/current_students/teaching_and_learning/on_being_a_student/feedback

Return of assessed coursework
Coursework feedback is marked, monitored and returned to students within 15 working days.

Assessed Coursework: Essays (or similar) will be returned electronically through ELMA within 15 working days of their deadlines with a mark and written feedback outlining the strengths and weaknesses of the work and also highlighting how students can improve their next piece of assessment. (Note dissertations or projects, which are significantly longer and are all double-marked, will take longer than 15 days to mark, and return)
All PIR coursework marking is monitored and moderated by a second member of PIR staff to ensure consistency and fairness.

**Return of examination feedback**

General feedback on the exam (noting overall strengths and weaknesses) will be provided on LEARN for all courses with an examination. General feedback will be uploaded to the relevant course LEARN page within 24 hours of the date that marks for the course are returned to students.

Students will also receive individual feedback on their exam. The relevant Course Secretary will contact you with details of how and when you can view your individual exam feedback.

**Assessment of Presentations or Participation in Tutorials**

Some PIR courses assess presentations or tutorial participation. They do so in a number of ways (see further individual course guides). PIR follows the general School ‘best practice’ guidelines. Marks will be for assessed performance rather than attendance alone; course convenors assessing tutorial participation will offer basic guidance to students and assessors on the performance assessment criteria used. Feedback on presentations or tutorial participation will be provided at the end of semester via a feedback form which will include comments as well as a mark.

**VI EXAM BOARDS, DEGREE CLASSIFICATION AND RELEASE OF RESULTS**

**Board of Examiners and Release of Results**

All marks for examinations and assessed coursework are provisional until confirmed by the Board of Examiners. Results will be communicated to students via the EUCLID student view. An automated email will be sent to your University email account when your course result is available.

*How Degrees Are Classified*

Honours degrees will be classified according to the mean mark, except where the mark falls on an 8 or a 9 (e.g. 58, 59), which will be regarded as 'borderline'. In such borderline cases, if 50% or more of the marks are in the class above, the student's degree will fall into that higher class.

The mean mark will be based on final overall grades (i.e. derived from all assessed work in each course) for all University of Edinburgh courses taken across your 3rd and 4th year. **Students who spend their junior year abroad have their degree calculated solely on the basis of 4th year marks.** The mean takes account of different course weightings, so the grade you receive for a 40 credit course such as a dissertation or Project will be counted twice.
The overall mean of all course grades is not rounded up or down. For example, if your final mean grade is 57.9 then you will be awarded a 2:2. If however your mean grade is "borderline" before rounding (58.00%-59.99%) then the resolution described above is applied. Essentially, this means that if at least half of your final course grades fall into the category above the borderline, then you will be awarded the higher class of degree. For example, if your mean mark is 59 but you have achieved a grade 60 or above in at least six 20 credit courses, you would be awarded a 2:1. Note that if the mean does not fall into the borderline category then the overall profile of your marks is not considered.

All marks gained throughout 4th year are subject to confirmation and amendment at the final board of examiners at which your final degree will be determined. The examination board may also take into consideration any adverse personal circumstances affecting your 4th year studies when determining your final degree.

For further details please see regulation 52 of the Taught assessment Regulations. You can access the regulations at http://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/policies-regulations/regulations/assessment

Prizes
There are two prizes available for fourth year students. The D.P. Heatley Prize for Excellence in Politics for best overall performance in PIR Honours courses, and the Russell Keat Dissertation Prize for the best Dissertation in Politics or IR. The winners are chosen at the PIR June Exam Board, announced to the students shortly afterwards, and awarded at June Graduation.

Graduation
Graduation Ceremonies take place in winter and in summer. Dates for 2017 will be added closer to the time along with guidance on what you need to do to register. Graduation information and FQA’s can be found at http://www.ed.ac.uk/student-administration/graduations

VII STUDENT REPRESENTATION AND SOCIETIES.

Student representation
Staff members at the University of Edinburgh work closely with student representatives. Edinburgh University Students' Association (EUSA) coordinates student representation and provides training and support for student representatives across the University. The role of student representatives ("Reps") is to listen to you to identify areas for improvement, suggest solutions, and ensure that your views inform strategic decisions within the subject area, School and University. The aim is to build a stronger academic community and improve your student life.
Schools share students’ emails with their student representatives as a matter of course; any student wishing to opt out from this should tell the School’s Teaching Office. Full details as well as the guidance the school follows regarding sharing student emails can be viewed at [http://www.sps.ed.ac.uk/undergrad/current_students/student_support_and_community/student_involvement/student_email_data_sharing](http://www.sps.ed.ac.uk/undergrad/current_students/student_support_and_community/student_involvement/student_email_data_sharing).

Your School Representatives (Convenors) can be found at [https://www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/representation/your_school/socialpoliticalsci/](https://www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/representation/your_school/socialpoliticalsci/)

In SPS we take students’ views into account when making decisions on how our courses and programmes are designed and run. Regular meetings are held involving students and course organisers as well as tutors and secretarial staff. At the end of each Semester, you will be asked to complete a course evaluation questionnaire covering all aspects of the course and your studies.

Student representatives from each Undergraduate year are selected during the first few weeks of Semester. These representatives will attend the Staff-Student Liaison committee meeting to represent and report back to their class. Representatives will also be appointed to sit on the School’s Undergraduate Board of Studies and Undergraduate Teaching Committee. The student representatives may canvass views of those they represent and report back to them. As throughout the University, however, students are excluded from discussion of ‘reserved business’ items, e.g. those involving confidential matters affecting individual students and staff.

One of the most important forum for student representation is the Staff-Student Liaison Committee consisting of student representatives and the Director of UG Teaching. This provides an opportunity for more informal discussion of matters affecting UG students.

**National Student Survey (NSS)**

As a 4th year student you’ll be invited to take National Student Survey (NSS) in Spring 2017. This survey asks a range of questions gauging your view on issues linked to teaching and the student experience. The NSS is taken very seriously by our subject area, School and University. It provides us with a picture of what students see as working well, and not so well. The scores shape in fundamental ways the subject area’s, School’s and University’s global ranking in overall major league tables which in turn helps shape the reputation of your University and subject degree.

In the past, we have scored well on categories such as quality of teaching and overall satisfaction, but less well on others such as feedback and assessment or personal development. We have sought to address these lower levels through a host of measures outlined in this handbook (e.g. prompter feedback with a specific return date, more detailed feedback and assessment criteria, individualised exam feedback, stronger pastoral support and student society support, more community building measures, skills workshops). Our scores have improved, but we are very keen to raise them further.

We have some of the finest, award winning PIR lecturers and students in the country and beyond; we’ve got excellent, innovative and varied courses, extra-curricular activities, as well
as extremely developed learning and career resources. We want staff and students to work together to make sure the student experience here reflects that excellence, so if you have suggestions, ideas or concerns linked to the student experience we want to hear them. Please use your 4th year IR Reps and SPS Reps, or contact the Director of UG teaching or SSOs.

**Student Societies**

Politics and IR has its own student society: the Edinburgh Political Union, details below. There are many other societies which will no doubt be of interest to PIR students, such as the model UN society, the EU society, People and Planet, Amnesty International, the societies linked to various political parties, and so on.

If you’ve not already gotten involved in a student society, now might be the time to start! For a full list, see [https://www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/activities/societies/](https://www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/activities/societies/)

**Edinburgh Political Union (Formerly the PIR Society)**

Want to get more involved in ‘Politics’ or ‘IR’? Got an idea for an article, or just a casual thought you’d like to discuss? The Edinburgh Political Union is one of the oldest student-run societies in Edinburgh - and the perfect way to get involved.

This year we are running a huge number of events, ranging from academic talks, to socials, to panel debates and the annual SSPS Ball. We also publish *Leviathan*, the University of Edinburgh’s official, student-run, journal of politics and international relations. Past speakers at our events have included NATO Secretary-General, Anders Fogh Rasmussen, former ambassador to the UN, Lord Hannay of Chiswick, former Prime Minister, Gordon Brown and current Mayor of London, Boris Johnson.

If you’d like more information, or are generally interested please visit our [website](https://edinburghpolitics@gmail.com), join our [Facebook page](https://www.facebook.com), or drop us an email at edinburghpolitics@gmail.com

**The Edinburgh University Model United Nations Society (EdMUN)**

PIR students might also be interested in the University’s Model United Nations Society (EdMUN). Check their [website](https://edinburghpolitics@gmail.com) to find out more about what they do, where and when they hold meetings and which conferences they attend.

**EU Society**

The EU Society is a great way of engaging further with a variety of EU-related issues as well as meeting people who work for EU institutions in Scotland. Click [here](https://edinburghpolitics@gmail.com) for the Society’s webpage or email eusocietyedinburgh@gmail.com.

**VIII ADVICE AND SUPPORT**
Dignity and respect
As part of the University’s efforts to offer as supportive learning environment as possible, it is developing a framework on Dignity and Respect which will underline the University’s commitment to create a culture where all staff and students are treated with respect and feel safe and fulfilled within the university community. To view the full policy, go to http://www.ed.ac.uk/equality-diversity/innovation-development

Subject area advice and support

Personal Tutor
Your Personal Tutor will be a member of staff familiar with your general area of study and the expectations of academic work in your discipline. He/she is there to support your academic studies, or direct you to any other support you might need during your time at the university.

In particular, your personal tutor will help you reflect on your academic progress and achievements. They can offer advice on how your courses fit together, how you might make the most of feedback you receive; how to make the most of your time at university by taking part in extracurricular academic activities; they can also offer advice on postgraduate study, internships, relevant activities and events and more

You will get the most out of your support by working in partnership with your Personal Tutor. It is a two-way process. Preparing and writing notes for your meeting with your Personal Tutor will help you get the most out of your discussions. You can use the notes facility in the Personal tutor channel on MyEd which is specifically designed for this.

More detail on all aspects of the personal tutoring system, including each Schools Personal Tutoring Statement from across the university, can be found at http://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/personal-tutor

As a continuing undergraduate student, you will have an individual meeting with your Personal Tutor in week 0 (Welcome Week) or week 1. In preparation for this meeting, you should reflect on your main achievements and challenges in your studies thus far. The meeting will be used to discuss those reflections, discuss coursework feedback and marks, and direct you to additional support and opportunities available.

As a year 3 or year 4 student, you should contact your Personal Tutor to request further meetings as required.

Your personal tutor may contact you via your university e-mail account to arrange or notify you of meetings. You are responsible for checking and responding to meeting requests, and for attending meetings. You may also request additional meetings with your personal tutor by contacting them via email or using the meeting request function in MyEd.

If you are not on campus (e.g. studying abroad for a period, or on placement, or studying an online degree) then your meetings may take place by telephone, live internet call, or a web conferencing application. Email exchanges are not considered to be meetings unless they take
place within a pre-agreed timeframe to enable you to have a “conversation” (e.g. if you are overseas and emailing within a 24-36 hour period to take account of time differences).

**Student Support Officer**
Your Student Support Officer can act as a first point of contact if you wish to discuss an issue relating to your studies. Your Student Support Officer plays a major role in providing pastoral support and advice on procedures.

Student Support Officers can also deal with routine issues, such as course changes in the first two weeks of a semester, and assisting with completing Special Circumstances forms, without you needing to arrange a meeting with your Personal Tutor.

If there are any circumstances affecting your studies that you would like to discuss with someone other than your Personal Tutor, your Student Support Officer is there to help. It is important that you keep us informed of any issues you feel may impact your studies, so please do not hesitate to get in touch.

**Peer Support**
Peer Support in the context of the University means a student with more experience sharing their knowledge, skills, abilities and expertise with a new or less experienced student. Peer Support may focus around advancing your academic work, providing opportunities to socialise with other students within your School or offering additional support to ensure your wellbeing while at University. Edinburgh University Students' Association and the University have been widely developing the Peer Support Project across the University since 2012. Further information can be viewed on the Edinburgh University Students' Association’s web site at [https://www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/getinvolved/peer-support/](https://www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/getinvolved/peer-support/)

In PIR, we have established a PIR-PALS scheme. 3rd and 4th year PIR students join first year tutorials to offer support and also hold more formal sessions throughout semester on a variety of topics from essay writing to making the most of university life. We advertise for honours students to apply to be PIRPALS student leaders in March/April so if you would like to take part in the scheme in your fourth year, watch out for the emails.

As a related initiative, Edinburgh University Students' Association offers a peer proofreading scheme for non-native English Speakers. It opens in October. Guidelines can be found at [https://www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/support_and_advice/the_advice_place/academic/peerproofreading/](https://www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/support_and_advice/the_advice_place/academic/peerproofreading/)

**University Advice and Support**
Institute for Academic Development (IAD)

The Institute for Academic Development can help you to develop effective learning techniques. You can access resources and guidance on, for example, how to study effectively, write assignments and revise for your exams. These resources are available at any time by using LearnBetter, a self-enrol course on Learn. Learn is the University's main virtual learning environment (VLE).

The IAD also runs a series of workshops throughout the year on study skills topics. You can sign up via MyEd, the University’s web portal and the IAD website. You can also arrange to receive one-to-one study advice by making an appointment. You can view further details about this at http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/institute-academic-development/undergraduate/overview

The University student services A-Z

This provides a list of services on offer. You can view the list at http://www.ed.ac.uk/staff-students/students/student-services

Health and Wellbeing

These webpages provide information that will guide you to self-help and supportive services offered by the University and our associated partners: http://www.ed.ac.uk/staff-students/students/health

Counselling Service

For information on the university’s Student counselling service please go to http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/student-counselling

IX CAREERS

The Careers Office provides a rich variety of opportunities, guidance and advice.

Maybe you are already considering moving into employment, undertaking further study, finding an internship, travelling, volunteering, starting your own business or something else entirely. You might have some firm ideas at this point or no ideas whatsoever.

Making informed decisions about your future takes time and effort but your Careers Service can support you through the process. Their activities cover:

- Full range of talks and workshops - look out for the range of careers fairs - from the ‘Third Day: More than Profit’ fair to graduate recruitment fairs, virtual fairs and post graduate fairs
- Campus visits from a wide range of employers
- Information on 1000+ careers online and in our centre
- Daily (during semester time) standard appointments for quick queries: book
through MyCareerHub

- Quick careers coaching at Chrystal Macmillan Building: book through MyCareerHub
- Individual guidance interviews - impartial, confidential discussions which focus on you
- Feedback on CVs, applications and personal statements
- Practice interviews - a chance to practise your skills and get feedback
- MyCareerHub database of semester-time, vacation time, one-off, voluntary and graduate vacancies in the UK and overseas
- Talks on postgraduate study,
- Information on the destinations of previous graduates

For more details see: www.ed.ac.uk/careers and MyCareerHub or visit the centre on the third floor of the Main Library Building.

**Asking academic staff to be your referee**

Academic staff are usually more than happy to write references for students – their tutees, or those they have come to know through teaching. A good reference takes a long time to write, however, so please be courteous when asking a member of staff to write one for you. It is a good idea to provide them with as much information as possible about what you are applying for and why, the procedure for submitting the reference, and any deadlines. If you keep your CV and HEAR up to date, they can be useful to send to academic staff in order to help them write the reference, along with application forms and personal statements, if appropriate.

**X APPEALS**

If you are considering lodging an appeal, it is important that you act promptly. Edinburgh University Students’ Association have some helpful information on the appeals process and you can read this at [http://www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/adviceplace/academic/appeals/](http://www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/adviceplace/academic/appeals/)

Students should note that the appeal process cannot be used to challenge academic judgment i.e. a judgment made about a matter where only the opinion of an academic expert will suffice. A student cannot submit an appeal simply because they believe that they deserve a better mark or different outcome.

There are specific and fairly narrow grounds under which an appeal may be submitted. These are set out in the relevant university Student Appeal Regulations which can be viewed at [http://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/studentappealregulations.pdf](http://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/studentappealregulations.pdf)
Strict timescale apply with appeals so it is important that you act promptly.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year of study</th>
<th>Appeal timescale</th>
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<tr>
<td>Final Year</td>
<td>within 30 working days of the result being issued</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All others</td>
<td>within 10 working days of the result being issued</td>
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**Student complaint procedure**

Students who have a complaint should view the complaint handling procedure. The complaint procedure is designed to ensure that complaints are properly investigated and are given careful and fair consideration. [http://www.ed.ac.uk/university-secretary-group/complaint-handling-procedure/procedure](http://www.ed.ac.uk/university-secretary-group/complaint-handling-procedure/procedure)

Students can also view the University wide policies and regulations at [http://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/policies-regulations](http://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/policies-regulations)

**APPENDIX 1. Tier 4 and Student Engagement**

As a Tier 4 student, the University of Edinburgh is the sponsor of your UK visa. The University has a number of legal responsibilities, including monitoring your attendance on your programme and reporting to the Home Office when:

- you suspend your studies, transfer or withdraw from a programme, or complete your studies significantly early;

- you fail to register/enrol at the start of your programme or at the two additional registration sessions each year with no explanation;

- You are repeatedly absent or are absent for an extended period and are excluded from the programme due to non-attendance. This includes missing Tier 4 census points without due reason. The University must maintain a record of your attendance and the Home Office can ask to see this or request information about it at any time;

As a student with a Tier 4 visa sponsored by the University of Edinburgh, the terms of your visa require you to, (amongst others):

- Ensure you have a correct and valid visa for studying at the University of Edinburgh, which, if a Tier 4 visa, requires that it is a visa sponsored by the University of Edinburgh;
• Attend all of your University classes, lectures, tutorials, etc where required. This includes participating in the requirements of your course including submitting assignments, attending meetings with tutors and attending examinations. If you cannot attend due to illness, for example, you must inform your School. This includes attending Tier 4 Census sessions when required throughout the academic session.

• Make sure that your contact details, including your address and contact numbers are up to date in your student record.

• Make satisfactory progress on your chosen programme of study

• Observe the general conditions of a Tier 4 General student visa in the UK, including studying on the programme for which your visa was issued, not overstaying the validity of your visa and complying with the work restrictions of the visa.

Please note that any email relating to your Tier 4 sponsorship, including census dates and times will be sent to your University email address - you should therefore check this regularly.

Further details on the terms and conditions of your Tier 4 visa can be found in the “Downloads” section at www.ed.ac.uk/immigration

More information or advice about your Tier 4 immigration status can be obtained by contacting the International Student Advisory Service, located at the International Office, 33 Buccleuch Place, Edinburgh EH8 9JS
Email: immigration@ed.ac.uk