

Programme Specification

Award and title: MA International Politics and Security

<i>School:</i>	Humanities
<i>Subject area:</i>	Politics and International Relations
<i>Entry from academic year:</i>	2026-27
<i>in the month(s) of</i>	September
<i>Awarding institution:</i>	York St John University
<i>Teaching institution:</i>	York St John University
<i>Delivery location:</i>	York
<i>Programme/s accredited by:</i>	
<i>Exit awards:</i>	Postgraduate Certificate International Politics and Security Postgraduate Diploma International Politics and Security
<i>UCAS code / GTTR / other:</i>	
<i>Joint Honours combinations:</i>	
<i>QAA subject benchmark statement(s):</i>	
<i>Mode/s of study:</i>	Postgraduate periods of study ¹ for full time / part time
<i>Language of study:</i>	English
<i>Paired with Foundation Year</i>	No
<i>Study abroad opportunities:</i>	No
<i>Opt-in YSJU Placement Year opportunity:</i>	No

Introduction and special features

The MA International Politics and Security (IPS) is aimed at attracting both home and international postgraduate students, who want to advance their knowledge about the complex changing nature of politics, power, war, security, culture, gender, and inequality in the contemporary world. The unprecedented challenges of the twenty first century have made the study of international politics more important than ever since the establishment of the Discipline of International Relations (IR) in 1919. The MA IPS recognises the need to adopt a gGlobal IR perspective when tackling the pressing issues facing contemporary states and societies, ranging from new security challenges in a multi-polar world, diplomacy, culture, women, religion, and peacebuilding, to the environment and public health. The interdisciplinary nature of the programme is also designed to appeal to current and future policy-makers and professionals in governmental, non-governmental and third-party sector, as well as those interested in pursuing work at the intersection of politics and security within their local, national, and international organisations.

The programme has a critical analysis, problem-solving and multidisciplinary approach, supporting you to think through complex issues and develop a global outlook, being able to engage inclusively with diverse perspectives in international politics and new security challenges. Through the MA IPS programme, you will engage with subjects ranging from IR theories, international security, culture, religion, environmental policy, geography, and regional studies.

The programme is designed to support your progression to completion of a Dissertation that focuses on an international politics and security topic of your choosing. The compulsory module explores the key concepts, theories, and methods in international relations to enhance your skills in research methods, culminating in a research proposal for your dissertation. You will take three other taught modules to develop the breadth and depth of your knowledge, enabling you to further contextualise your project and consider it from different perspectives. Through completion of your Dissertation you will be able to demonstrate the ability to combine theoretical and empirical research to address real world political challenges and provide new insights into key academic debates in your chosen topic area.

The MA International Politics and Security is offered by the School of Humanities and aligns with the University's Centre for Religion in Society and the Institute for Social Justice. As a postgraduate student you will be invited to research seminars and events that take place within your period of study. The programme is taught by a team of internationally recognised researchers who have experience of a variety of relevant research approaches and methods, working in local, national, and international contexts. Guest speakers from external organisations concerned with responding to international politics and security issues provide policy perspectives from relevant fields. On completion of the programme, should you wish to pursue your studies to doctoral level, potential research degree supervisors are available within the staff team, giving you opportunity to continue your studies within the University.

The 2026 Vision, values and ethos of York St John University closely align with the MA International politics and security, committed to a fairer, more equal, and sustainable future globally. You will be specifically guided through a critical evaluation of power relations, global and regional politics, and international justice structures, associated state and non-state actors and the practical impact on the international society of the twenty first century.

Special features:

- Develop critical understanding of new security challenges in domestic and international politics, including UK, US, and the Middle East.
- Explore multidisciplinary perspectives from across Politics, International Relations, Geography and Religious Studies;
- Practice applying IR theories and methods for understanding and explaining in the complexity of international politics and security;
- Engage with real world issues to develop an independent research project through your Dissertation, with potential to have an impact.

Admissions criteria

You must meet the University's general entry criteria for [postgraduate](#) study. In addition, you must have:

- An honours degree with a classification of 2.2 or above, or an equivalent qualification

If your first language is not English, you need to take an IELTS test, or an equivalent qualification accepted by the University (see <https://www.yorks.ac.uk/international/how-to-apply/english-language-requirements/>).

If you do not have traditional qualifications, you may be eligible for entry on the basis of [Recognition of prior learning \(RPL\)](#). We also consider applications for entry with advanced standing.

Programme aim(s)

1. To facilitate students' exploration of international politics and security from multi-disciplinary perspectives across the humanities and social sciences;
2. To provide students' in-depth knowledge of international political theories and security studies, systems, institutions and actors, issues and debates, the interconnectedness of these and their impact on our lives;
3. To develop students' independent research skills and resilience in being able to set, plan and work to achieve goals, and deal positively with national and international challenges;
4. To support students to develop a passion for learning and developing, fostered through subject matter, independent research skills;
5. To provide a supportive learning environment, developing a vibrant and diverse postgraduate community within the YSJ.

Programme learning outcomes

Upon successful completion of the programme students will be able to:

Level 7

- 7.1 Demonstrate a systematic understanding of concepts and theoretical frameworks relevant to the intersection of international politics, security studies and cognate fields of study.
- 7.2 Apply academic knowledge, concepts, and theories to critically analyse the complexity of international politics, contemporary security challenges and associated issues, with local, national, and regional implications.
- 7.3 Engage with a current theoretical and/or empirical issue related to the intersection of international politics and security, and apply an appropriate research methodology to produce new knowledge in relation to this issue.
- 7.4 Demonstrate advanced communication skills designed to address diverse stakeholders/audiences in a range of formats.
- 7.5 Demonstrate independent research skills to analyse data and engage with and utilise a range of media in a responsible and appropriate way.

Programme structure

Code	Level	Term	Title	Credits	Module status	
					Compulsory (C) or optional (O)	non-compensable (NC) or compensable (X)
IRL7001M	7	1	Theory and Methods in International Relations	30	C	X
You must choose one 1 optional 30 credit module in term 1 and 2 optional 30 credit modules in term 2						
IRL7002M	7	1 or 2	New Security Challenges in a Multi-Polar World	30	O	X
IRL7003M	7	1 or 2	Culture, Women, and International Politics	30	O	X
IRL7004M	7	1 or 2	Diplomacy in the United Nations	30	O	X
IRL7005M	7	1 or 2	Emerging Issues in International Relations	30	O	X
REL7018M	7	1 or 2	Religion and Peacebuilding	30	O	X
GEO7004M	7	2	Environmental Policy	30	O	X
IRL7006M	7	2-3	Dissertation	60	C	NC

Please note that not all options may be available every year as they depend on student demand and staff availability.

Any modules that must be passed for progression or award are indicated in the table above as non-compensable. A non-compensable module is one that must be passed at the relevant level (with a mark of 50) to progress.

Learning, teaching and assessment

Throughout the programme you are expected to take an active role in your learning, critically engaging with taught input and using the structure provided by modules and assessments to pursue your own interests and develop your own specialist knowledge. Staff on the programme take the role of facilitators, encouraging you to think both about and beyond your own academic reading, knowledge, and spheres of reference. You will be encouraged to share your insights and experiences through in-class dialogue, thus contributing to a collaborative learning environment.

The MA IPS programme is structured to equip you with the knowledge and skills to develop advanced critical thinking and analysis skills as they engage consistently and exclusively with high quality academic literature and primary source material and are encouraged to reflect on argument, evidence, and cross-disciplinary debates. The 30-credit modules will incorporate seminars and workshops, with a mix of staff-led and student-led activities. You are expected to engage in independent study alongside these, to further your understanding and tailor your learning to the issues that particularly interest you. Individual tutorial support is an integral part of the learning experience, helping you identify your individual study needs and supporting your personal academic development. The 60-credit Dissertation is an independent project, for which you will have one-to-one support from a supervisor. This project requires you to develop your independent research skills, encouraging you to apply your knowledge and methods to your chosen empirical or theoretical subject.

Throughout the programme you will be supported to acquire and develop key skills appropriate to taught postgraduate study. This includes self-reflection and self-management; time management; independent learning; constructive use of feedback; and capacities for life-long learning.

You will encounter a variety of assessment types, that align with the aims of the programme and purpose of each module and support the development of an appropriate range of skills. Examples of assessment types across the programme include a research proposal, essay, and policy briefing, as well as the Dissertation.

Formative activities (that give you feedback on the development of your ideas, plans or work) during taught modules and tutorials will support you as you work towards the summative assessments. This is likely to incorporate a combination of tutor feedback, peer feedback and self-assessed feedback. You will receive feedback from tutors on all summative assessments.

Progression and graduation requirements

The University's [general regulations for](#) postgraduate awards apply to this programme.

Any modules that must be passed for progression or award are indicated in the Programme Structure section as non-compensable.

Internal and external reference points

This programme specification was formulated with reference to:

- [University mission and values](#)
- [University 2026 Strategy](#)
- [QAA subject benchmark statements](#)
- [Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications](#)
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Date written / revised: August 2022/September 2022

Programme originally approved: