

Programme Specification

BA International Relations and Economics

For students entering Part 1 in September 2027

UCAS Code: LL21

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This document sets out key information about your Programme and forms part of your Terms and Conditions with the University of Reading.

Awarding Institution	University of Reading
Teaching Institution	University of Reading
Length of Programme	3 years
Length of Programme with placement/year abroad	BA International Relations and Economics (with Year Abroad) - 4 years (internal transfer only) BA International Relations and Economics with Placement Year - 4 years (UCAS Code: LL22)
Accreditation	N/A
QAA Subject Benchmarking Group	Politics and International Relations; Economics

Programme information and content

This programme provides you with the tools to understand and assess how political and economic processes shape our lives on a global scale. As a student of international relations and economics, you will learn to analyse major societal and policy challenges from diverse perspectives, drawing on ideas and techniques from both disciplines.

You will study the dynamics of international politics, exploring the major threats to global order and the institutions that seek to address these challenges. Throughout the programme you will connect the academic study of international relations to contemporary issues, such as climate change and war. You will learn to think critically and independently about a wide range of political ideas, organisations, and events: from the role of NATO, to terrorism and nuclear weapons.

On the economics side you will master the core principles of microeconomics and macroeconomics, and the key mathematical and statistical tools used by economists. As you move through the programme, you will have the chance to develop your interests through optional modules, including topics at the intersection of politics and economics, such as the economics of social policy and public economics.

Interactive small group teaching is central to all stages of the programme. Through discussion and debate, you will deepen your understanding and gain an appreciation of the complex and contested nature of political and economic problems.

The programme will equip you with a broad set of transferable skills known to be particularly valuable in modern job markets. You will learn how to interpret and analyse

data and evidence from diverse sources, to develop persuasive arguments, and to communicate them effectively. The knowledge and skills you gain will prepare you for a wide range of roles within the commercial and charitable sectors, government, and civil service, as well as for a future career as a professional economist.	
Part 1:	At Part 1, you will study central concepts and theories in international relations. You will have the opportunity to apply your knowledge to major global issues, such as climate change and war. You will also be introduced to the basic underpinnings of modern macroeconomics and microeconomics, and to statistics and mathematics as used in economics.
Part 2:	At Part 2, you will build on the foundations established at Part 1, extending and deepening your understanding of global order. You will receive skills-based training to enable you to evaluate existing research in international relations, and to conduct original research. In Economics, you will enhance your knowledge of microeconomics and macroeconomics to intermediate level. You will also have the opportunity to pursue your interests, by selecting optional modules offered by both departments.
Placement/Study abroad year:	Students on a four-year programme will undertake a professional placement or study abroad year between Parts 2 and 3. Study abroad students will follow several courses at one of our partner institutions. You may take courses that deepen your understanding of subjects you have already studied, or extend your knowledge into new areas that are relevant to your personal or career goals. Placement students will undertake an approved role related to their programme of study. A placement will provide you with the opportunity to apply the knowledge gained in your first two years of study, as well as to develop your skills in a professional context.
Part 3:	At Part 3, you will tailor the degree to your own interests: choosing from a wide range of research-led modules that reflect the expertise of our members of staff. You will also complete a dissertation in international relations and/or economics, working under the guidance of a dedicated individual supervisor.

Programme Learning Outcomes - BA International Relations and Economics

During the course of the Programme, you will have the opportunity to develop a range of skills, knowledge and attributes (known as learning outcomes) For this programme, these are:

	Learning outcomes
1	Describe and analyse global political processes and institutions.
2	Think critically and independently about historical and contemporary challenges in international relations and economics, and identify potential solutions to questions of public and policy concern.

3	Understand and apply qualitative and quantitative data relating to international politics.
4	Critically understand the fundamental concepts and tools of microeconomics and macroeconomics.
5	Apply the most frequently used mathematical techniques in economics, and basic statistical techniques for data analysis.
6	Independently formulate a research question in international relations or economics and, under supervision, use appropriate methods to address it.
7	Gather and synthesise complex information from a wide range of primary and secondary data sources.
8	Effectively communicate their knowledge to a range of audiences and in a variety of formats, including in writing and orally.
9	Articulate reasoned and persuasive arguments in support of their views.
10	Productively collaborate with others to achieve defined goals.
11	Effectively plan and manage their own time to prioritise and complete a series of tasks.
12	Analyse and present data and evidence using a range of information and communication technologies.

You will be expected to engage in learning activities to achieve these Programme learning outcomes. Assessment of your modules will reflect these learning outcomes and test how far you have met the requirements for your degree.

To pass the Programme, you will be required to meet the progression or accreditation and award criteria set out below.

In addition to the learning outcomes stated above if you are on a placement or study abroad programme you will have the opportunity to develop the following learning outcome:

Additional Learning outcomes
Study Abroad By the end of the Study Abroad Programme, students will have adapted to international study contexts in order to achieve the required academic outcomes determined by the host institution. Placement By the end of the Placement Year Programme, students will have explored and developed their professional experience, skills and knowledge, contributing significantly towards their continuous learning and career prospects as graduates.

Module information
Each part comprises 120 credits, allocated across a range of compulsory and optional modules as shown below. Compulsory modules are listed.

Part 1 Modules:

Module	Name	Credits	Level
EC140	Principles of Economics 1	20	4
EC141	Principles of Economics 2	20	4
EC143	Quantitative Methods and Data Analysis	20	4
PO1IRE	International Relations	20	4
PO1PCC	Politics of Climate Change	20	4
PO1WAR	War and Warfare	20	4

All students will take a preparatory module in core skills required for transition to undergraduate study.

In addition, students on the 4 year with placement year programme will take a preparatory module providing placement training.

Part 2 Modules:

Module	Name	Credits	Level
EC201	Intermediate Microeconomics	20	5
EC202	Intermediate Macroeconomics	20	5
PO2GLO	Global Order	20	5
PO2SOP	The Study of Politics	20	5

The remaining credits will be made up of optional modules available in the Department of Politics and International Relations and the Department of Economics.

Students must select 20 optional credits available in the Department of Economics and 20 optional credits available in the Department of Politics and International Relations.

All students will take a further preparatory core skills module. This module is designed to support your successful transition to more advanced study at Part 2 and beyond.

In addition, students on the 4 year with placement year programme will take a preparatory module providing placement training.

Modules during a placement year or study year (if applicable):

Module	Name	Credits	Level
PO2PPY	Professional Placement Year	120	5
PO2SAY	Study Abroad Year	120	5

Students who enrol on or transfer to a 4-year programme will take one 120 credit module: Professional Placement Year (PO2PPY) or Study Abroad Year (PO2SAY). The placement or study abroad year should not normally be shorter than nine months full-time.

If you take a year-long placement or study abroad, Part 3 as described below may be subject to variation.

Part 3 Modules:

Students must select one 40 credit dissertation module in either Politics or Economics (PO3DIP or EC3DSI).

Student must select 40 further credits of optional modules available in the Department of Politics and International Relations.

Student must select 40 further credits of optional modules available in the Department of Economics.

Placement opportunities

Placements:

You may be provided with the opportunity to undertake a credit-bearing placement as part of your programme. This will form all or part of an optional module. You will be required to find and secure a placement opportunity, with the support of the University.

Study Abroad:

You may be provided with the opportunity to undertake a Study Abroad placement during your programme. This is subject to you meeting academic conditions detailed in the Programme Handbook, including obtaining the relevant permissions from your School, and the availability of a suitable Study Abroad placement. If you undertake a Study Abroad placement, further arrangements will be discussed and agreed with you.

Optional modules:

The optional modules available can vary from year to year. An indicative list of the range of optional modules for your programme can be found online in the Course Catalogue. Details of optional modules for each part, including any additional costs associated with the optional modules, will be made available to you prior to the beginning of the Part in which they are to be taken and you will be given an opportunity to express interest in the optional modules that you would like to take. Entry to optional modules will be at the discretion of the University and subject to availability and may be subject to pre-requisites, such as completion of another module. Although the University tries to ensure you are able to take the optional modules in which you have expressed interest this cannot be guaranteed.

Teaching and learning delivery:

You will be taught primarily through a combination of lectures and seminars. Small-group teaching is central to each stage of the programme – enabling you to develop your knowledge through discussion and group exercises. At Part 1, small-group teaching is supported by larger lectures. Lectures will introduce you to a topic and provide a framework to enable you to engage successfully with seminar activities. At Parts 2 and 3, there is less reliance on large lectures, with modules typically including more and longer seminars. Students are also introduced to other forms of teaching such as PC labs, simulation exercises and practical activities.

Elements of your programme will be delivered via digital technology.

The scheduled teaching and learning activity hours and amount of technology enhanced learning activity for your programme will depend upon your module combination. In addition, you will undertake some self-scheduled teaching and learning activities, designed by and/or involving staff, which give some flexibility for you to choose when to complete them. You will also be expected to undertake guided independent study. Information about module study hours including contact hours and the amount of independent study which a student is normally expected to undertake for a module is indicated in the relevant module description.

Accreditation details

N/A

Assessment

The programme will be assessed through a combination of written examinations, coursework (including class tests) and presentations. Assessments are designed to develop your transferable skills, as well as to test subject knowledge. Further information is contained in the individual module descriptions.

Progression

Part 1

To achieve a threshold performance at Part 1, a student will normally be required to:

- (i) Obtain an overall weighted average of 40% over 120 credits taken in Part 1; and
- (ii) Obtain a mark of at least 40% in individual modules amounting to not less than 80 credits taken in Part 1; and
- (iii) Obtain marks of at least 30% in modules amounting to 120 credits. (A Fail in a Pass/Fail module will be treated as not meeting the minimum threshold requirement for progression or classification. Pass/fail modules are excluded from weighted average calculations but must be passed to avoid failure of the Part or degree.)

In order to progress from Part 1 to Part 2, a student must achieve a threshold performance.

The achievement of a threshold performance at Part 1 qualifies a student for a Certificate of Higher Education if they leave the University before completing the subsequent Part.

Students considering transferring to another programme should seek guidance from their designated Support Centre in the first instance.

Part 2

To achieve a threshold performance at Part 2, a student shall normally be required to:

- (i) Obtain a weighted average of 40% over 120 credits taken in Part 2; and
- (ii) Obtain marks of at least 40% in individual modules amounting to at least 80 credits taken in Part 2; and
- (iii) Obtain marks of at least 30% in individual modules amounting to at least 120

credits. (A Fail in a Pass/Fail module will be treated as not meeting the minimum threshold requirement for progression or classification. Pass/fail modules are excluded from weighted average calculations but must be passed to avoid failure of the Part or degree.)

In order to progress from Part 2 to Part 3, a student must achieve a threshold performance.

The achievement of a threshold performance at Part 2 qualifies a student for a Diploma of Higher Education if they leave the University before completing the subsequent Part.

Professional/placement year

Students are required to pass the professional placement year/study abroad year in order to progress on the programme which incorporates the professional placement year/study abroad year. Students who fail the professional placement year/study abroad year transfer to the non-placement year version of the programme.

Classification

Bachelors' degrees

The University's honours classification scheme is based on the following:

Mark Interpretation

70% - 100% First class

60% - 69% Upper Second class

50% - 59% Lower Second class

40% - 49% Third class

35% - 39% Below Honours Standard

0% - 34% Fail

The weighting of the Parts/Years in the calculation of the degree classification is:

Three year programmes:

Part 2: one-third

Part 3: two-thirds

Four year programmes, including study abroad / placement year:

Part 2: one-third

Study abroad/Placement year: not included in the classification

Part 3: two-thirds

Details of the classification method is given in detail in the [Assessment Handbook](#) under:

- Section 17: Awards (Bachelor's), or
- Section 18: Awards (Integrated Master's programmes). Students who do not progress to Part 4 of the Integrated Master's will normally be subject to the method detailed under Section 17: Awards (Bachelor's)

Please note that there may be a specific version of the above for your year of entry.

Additional costs of the programme

You will incur some additional costs during your programme of study. A wide range of resources to support your learning, including textbooks and electronic resources, are available through the library. For some modules, we will recommend that you purchase a copy of the textbook, and there may be other books/resources which it would be convenient for you to buy. We recommend that you budget £300 per year for purchasing books.

Some optional modules may involve additional costs for fieldtrips or travel to work placements. You will be advised of these costs before you enrol on the module.

Costs are indicative and may vary according to optional modules chosen and are subject to inflation and other price fluctuations. Estimates were calculated in 2026.

Students may consider purchasing a laptop to help support their learning. Information on recommended device specifications can be found on the [DTS Student Hub](#).

For further information about your Programme please refer to the Programme Handbook and the relevant module descriptions, which are available at <http://www.reading.ac.uk/module/>. The Programme Handbook and the relevant module descriptions do not form part of your Terms and Conditions with the University of Reading.

BA International Relations and Economics for students entering Part 1 in session 2027/28
2 July 2026

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