

The University of Edinburgh

**Politics & International
Relations**



International Relations

1st Year

Student Handbook

2018/2019

This booklet has been prepared for students embarking upon their first year of Single or Combined Honours Degrees in International Relations. 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.

International Relations is one of two 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).

International Relations can be taken in combination with a number of other subjects. This booklet is aimed at students taking single honours and those taking International Relations and International Law, or International Relations with Quantitative Methods as these are two of the four combined degrees administered by the PIR subject area. 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 Andrea Birdsall (Room 4.25, tel: 0131 650 6974, email: dugt@ed.ac.uk) or the Student Support Officer (SSO), Mrs. Natalie Stroud (Room 1.02, tel: 0131 651 3896; email: Natalie.Stroud@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: Natalie.Stroud@ed.ac.uk

CONTENTS

I WELCOME TO FIRST YEAR INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS	5
Welcome from Head of Subject.....	5
Key contacts for 1st year.....	6
International Relations Student Support Officer	6
Your Personal Tutor (PT)	6
PIR Director of Undergraduate Teaching.....	6
Communications	6
Data Protection	7
E-mail Protocol and Social Media	7
Using social media	8
II DEGREE REQUIREMENTS AND COURSES	8
Degree Requirements and Compulsory courses.....	8
Choosing your courses	9
Compulsory Courses in 1 st Year International Relations.....	9
Engagement and attendance monitoring.....	11
Student contract	11
Choosing courses for the following academic year	11
Degree transfers	12
Experiencing a junior honours year abroad.....	12
Invitation to PIR Seminars.....	12
III SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES AND LEARNING ADJUSTMENTS.....	13
Special circumstances	13
Student disability and learning adjustments	13
IV ASSESSMENT, COURSEWORK AND EXAMS.....	15
Common marking scheme	15
Course work submissions and penalties.....	15
Late Submission of Assessed Coursework	15
Extensions	16
Word count penalties	16
Courses with examinations	17
Academic misconduct and plagiarism	17
V FEEDBACK	18
Feedback	18

Return of assessed coursework	18
Return of examination feedback	18
Assessment of Presentations or Participation in Tutorials	19
VI EXAM BOARDS, DEGREE CLASSIFICATION AND RELEASE OF RESULTS	19
Board of Examiners and Release of Results	19
VII STUDENT REPRESENTATION AND SOCIETIES.....	19
Student representation and student voice.....	19
Student Societies	20
Edinburgh Political Union (Formerly the PIR Society).....	20
VIII ADVICE AND SUPPORT.....	21
Dignity and respect	21
Subject area advice and support.....	21
Personal Tutor.....	21
Student Support Officer	22
Peer Support	22
Interruption of Studies and Withdrawing from your Studies	23
Authorised Interruption of Studies.....	23
Withdrawing from your studies	24
University Advice and Support.....	24
Institute for Academic Development (IAD).....	24
The University student services A-Z.....	24
Student Wellbeing	24
Counselling Service	24
Health and Safety.....	25
IX CAREERS	25
X APPEALS	26
Student complaint procedure.....	26
APPENDIX 1. Tier 4 and Student Engagement	27

I WELCOME TO FIRST YEAR INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Welcome from Head of Subject

Welcome to first year in Politics & International Relations (PIR)! You've just joined one of the largest, most diverse and vibrant subject areas in the University. This year we'll make sure you receive a foundation in core ideas and concepts linked to PIR. But you'll also have the opportunity to meet an amazing group of other students, build your study and life skills, and take advantage of a vast range of PIR-linked activities.

To help you on your journey we've got lots of support described in this handbook. A Personal Tutor (academic member of staff) can give you academic advice. We've got two of the most friendly, knowledgeable Student Support Officers on campus: Natalie Stroud and Clay Young. And, since some of the best advice for students comes from students themselves, we've also got a peer support system called PIRPALS. They'll be in contact through your first semester course (IPIR) to tell you more. Together these academic staff, support staff and fellow students will make up your PIR learning community.

My main tip as Head of Politics and IR is: get involved!

Part of what makes our learning community so lively is the array of activities and debates linked to core issues in Politics and IR. Inside this handbook you'll find a list of organisations and societies open to you as a PIR student. We run a lively series of events throughout the year, including our [Transatlantic Seminar Series](#), as well as one-off public lectures. Attend and ask questions. Our vibrant student society (the Edinburgh Political Union) will offer lots of talks, debates and social events.

To keep track of what is going on in the wider PIR community (including staff and society events) check out our website, [facebook page](#) and twitter feed @EdinburghPIR. Or look out for our [PIR Undergraduate Newsletter](#) to discover what your fellow students and PIR staff are up to, and what opportunities and tips can help you make the most of your time here.

Finally, please feel free to come see me if you've got ideas or questions. I'm in room 3.08 CMB, or you may find me in our fab Ground Café (ground floor CMB) which is a study and social space for everyone to use. You'll find it's a core meeting point for our PIR community.

All good wishes,



Professor Luke March,
Head of Politics and International Relations
School of Social and Political Science, Chrystal Macmillan Building 3.08
University of Edinburgh, Direct tel: +44 (0)131 650 4241, l.march@ed.ac.uk

Key contacts for 1st year

International Relations Student Support Officer

If you are an International Relations, an International Relations and International Law (IR&IL), or an International Relations with Quantitative Methods (IR/QM) student, your main support contact is: Natalie Stroud, +44 (0)131 651 3896, Natalie.Stroud@ed.ac.uk, Room 1.02.

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, special circumstances and many more.

My office is room 1.02 in the Chrystal MacMillan Building and is usually open 9-5pm Monday to Friday. 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.

Natalie

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.

IR&IL students can also contact law.sso@ed.ac.uk, the SSO Law team if they have questions pertaining to Law courses and regulations.

PIR Director of Undergraduate Teaching

For information regarding rules, regulation, progression and other academic matters, contact DUGT Dr Andrea Birdsall. Room 4.25 CMB, 0131 650 6974), 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

Data Protection

Under Data Protection Law, personal data includes all recorded information about a living, identifiable individual. Students using personal data as part of their studies must comply with the responsibilities as outlined in the linked guidance. Before using personal data as part of their studies students must become familiar with the linked guidance, discuss implications with their supervisor and seek appropriate ethics approval. They must also obtain consent from the data subjects to take part in the studies. Failure to comply with the responsibilities is an offence against University discipline, and could lead to a breach of Data Protection Law. A data protection breach can cause distress to the people the information is about, and can harm relationships with research partners, stakeholders, and funding organisations. In severe circumstances the University could be sued, fined up to £20,000,000, and experience reputational damage.

For full guidance please see <https://www.ed.ac.uk/records-management/guidance/data-protection/dpforstudents>

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

Degree Requirements and Compulsory courses

If you are single honours International Relations, you are required to take and pass Introduction to Politics and International Relations (IPIR) and International Law in the first semester, and Political Thinkers in the second semester. You take 60 credits of other optional courses.

Please see the Degree Regulations and Programme Specifications (DRPS) for more detail:

<http://www.drps.ed.ac.uk/current/dpt/utintre.htm>

If you are IR and IL, you are required to take and pass Introduction to Politics and International Relations (IPIR), Political Thinkers, International Law Ordinary, and International Law Ordinary 2. You take 40 credits of other optional courses. Please see the Degree Regulations and Programme Specifications (DRPS) for more detail:

<http://www.drps.ed.ac.uk/current/dpt/utmahirila1f.htm>

If you are IR and Quants, you are required to take and pass Introduction to Politics and International Relations (IPIR), Political Thinkers, Mathematics for Social Science and Introduction to Statistics for Social Science. You take 40 credits of other optional courses. Please see the Degree Regulations and Programme Specifications (DRPS) for more detail:

<http://www.drps.ed.ac.uk/current/dpt/utmahinrqm1f.htm>

Students on combined degrees please note the required course requirements differ according to each degree curricula; students should check their specific degree programme requirements at: http://www.drps.ed.ac.uk/current/dpt/drps_sps.htm

Choosing your courses

Information on selecting your courses will be included in your welcome pack and can also be found on our webpages [here](#). Once you have been signed up to courses, you should meet with your Personal Tutor who will confirm your attendance and complete your matriculation.

Compulsory Courses in 1st Year International Relations

Introduction to Politics and International Relations

Introduction to Politics and International Relations introduces conceptual material relevant to both politics and international relations students, such as the state, sovereignty, legitimacy, democracy, and power, together with relevant examples.

This course is only available to students taking either single honours or joint honours degrees involving Politics or International Relations. All other students must take Politics in a Changing World: An Introduction for non-specialists.

Political Thinkers

The course aims to introduce students to some historical writers whose thoughts on politics - international or domestic - have become recognised by theorists as canonical in the western tradition, or whose work is becoming increasingly recognised within a broader, non-Eurocentric canon.

Lectures are structured around the varying answers to the question 'What is Politics?' given exemplary form by the specified thinkers. Their responses are examined through the themes/problems/tensions associated with their work. So, each lecture answers the question through the themes/contrasts etc raised or addressed by the thinker(s) in question.

The content of the course is innovative in two respects: first, it conceives of political thought as a unified discipline encompassing thinking pertinent to both politics and international

relations; second, along with the standard thinkers traditionally examined in such courses it introduces a number of female or non-western thinkers.

International Law Ordinary

This course develops knowledge and understanding of (i) the international legal system; (ii) the main institutions which contribute to the development and application of international law; and (iii) the legal rules, principles and processes which govern key areas of inter-state activity.

Compulsory courses for International Relations and International Law

International Law Ordinary 2

This course develops knowledge and understanding of (i) the international legal system; (ii) the main institutions which contribute to the development and application of international law; and (iii) the legal rules, principles and processes which govern key areas of inter-state activity. Topics covered include Dispute Settlement, International Organisations, State Responsibility, Human Rights and other issue areas of international law.

Compulsory courses for International Relations with Quantitative Methods

Mathematics for Social Science

This course aims to provide students in the with Quantitative Methods programmes with the mathematical foundations, which will allow them to fully explore advanced methods, as well as gain a full understanding of the mathematic principles behind the basic methods. Throughout the course, the application of mathematics to social science research problems will be emphasised.

Introduction to Statistics for Social Science

This course is the introduction to common quantitative techniques and software used in the social sciences. It is designed to meet the needs of students in the with Quantitative Methods degree programmes in SPS, and to provide them with a broad range of basic concepts and methods, which they will later use as the basis for intermediate and advanced quantitative techniques. The course is aimed at students who also study Sociology, Social Policy, Politics, and International Relations. As such, it will contain examples and applications relevant for all these disciplines. The course, with slight modifications, will be taught both as a first year option for students in the with Quantitative Methods degree programmes, and as a conversion course, aimed to bring students who have finished their first year to the level

required to transfer to one of these degree programmes at the end of their first year of studies.

Engagement and attendance monitoring

In accordance with the University general degree regulations you are expected to attend all teaching and assessment events associated with all courses that you are enrolled on. The College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences undertakes routine monitoring of attendance at tutorials and seminars for all students enrolled on courses delivered by Schools within our College. We undertake monitoring of attendance and engagement to enable us to identify where individual students may be experiencing difficulties and to ensure that timely and appropriate intervention can be delivered to provide support and guidance. We also undertake monitoring for sponsored students specifically to meet our obligations to the UKVI. If you miss one or more of your tutorials and/or seminars you may be contacted by your local Student Support Team and be asked to provide an explanation for your absence.

All data is gathered and stored in line with the University policies and guidance on data handling and you can view the privacy statement at:

<https://www.ed.ac.uk/student-systems/use-of-data/policies-and-regulations/privacy-statement>

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>

Choosing courses for the following academic year

Course pre-selection will open at the end of the semester 2 exam period. At this time, returning students will receive an email inviting them to pre-select their courses to allow for allocations over the summer period. The link below will take you to the pre-selection section of our website, where you will find the relevant information closer to the time. We strongly advise you submit your pre-selection choices by the deadline stated to ensure you have the best chance of receiving your preferred choice of course.

http://www.sps.ed.ac.uk/undergrad/current_students/returning_student_information/course_pre-selection

Degree transfers

Students thinking about changing their degree programme can find relevant information here:

http://www.sps.ed.ac.uk/undergrad/current_students/student_support_and_community/changing_degree_programme

Experiencing a junior honours year abroad

To apply to study for a year abroad, students must have gained 120 credits in their first year and should have no marks lower than a C in any of their courses. Application takes place in Semester 1 of the second year, so only first year results will be taken into consideration. Full details of the selection criteria can be found at <http://www.ed.ac.uk/international-office/exchanges/application>. Students interested should also read the information at: <http://www.ed.ac.uk/international-office/exchanges>

Students who take their junior year abroad must successfully complete a full course load at the host university in order to progress into the subsequent year of their degree. A transcript of results will have to be returned to the International Office. Full details on this can be found at: <http://www.ed.ac.uk/global/exchanges/before-you-go/academic-matters>

Students who spend their junior year abroad will have their degree classification calculated solely on the basis of their 4th year marks. For further details please see regulation 52 of the Taught assessment Regulations at <http://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/policies-regulations/regulations/assessment>.

For more information see

http://www.sps.ed.ac.uk/undergrad/subject_and_programme_specific_information/pir/honours/studying_abroad

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. We also promote these and other events on our Facebook page and via our twitter account: @EdinburghPIR

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 their Student Support Officer. Students can also seek advice and support from Natalie Stroud (Natalie.Stroud@ed.ac.uk) who is the Student Support Officer for International Relations.

The full guidance on Special Circumstances can be found at <https://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/students/assessment/special-circumstances/procedure>

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 studies, you can discuss these with the Disability Service, your Student Support Officer or Personal Tutor who will advise on the appropriate procedures.

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.

1. Course outlines and reading lists shall be made available at least 4 weeks before the start of the course.
2. Reading lists shall indicate priority and/or relevance.
3. 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.)
4. Key technical words and/or formulae shall be provided to students at least 24 hours in advance of the class.
5. Students shall be notified by email of changes to arrangements/ announcements such as changes to courses/room changes/cancellations.
6. Students shall be permitted to audio record lectures, tutorials and supervision sessions using their own equipment for their own personal learning*
7. 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 https://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/accessible_and_inclusive_learning_policy.pdf

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 John Harries (sps.depdugp@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/markings_descriptors

Course work submissions and penalties

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

ELMA: Submission and Return of Coursework

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 within 15 working days of submission (except where the submission is a final year dissertation). You will not receive a paper copy of your marked course work or feedback.

For details of how to submit your course work to ELMA, please see our webpages [here](#).

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: http://www.sps.ed.ac.uk/undergrad/current_students/teaching_and_learning/assessment_and_regulations/extension_requests

- Extensions are granted for 7 calendar days.
- Extension requests must be submitted before the coursework deadline has passed.
- 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

Your course handbook will specify the word length of your assessments. All coursework submitted by students must state the word count on the front page. All courses in the School have a standard penalty for going over the word length; if you are taking courses from other Schools, check with them what their penalties are.

If you go over the word length, you will receive a 5 mark penalty. These 5 marks will be deducted, regardless of how much you have exceeded the word count (whether it is by 5 words or by 500!). In exceptional circumstances, a Course Organizer may decide that, instead of a 5 marks penalty, any text beyond the word limit will be excluded from the assignment and be marked only on the text up to the word limit.

In most cases, appendices and bibliography are not included in the word count whilst in-text references, tables, charts, graphs and footnotes are counted. Make sure you know what is and what is not included in the word count. Again, check the course handbook for this information and if you are unsure, contact the Course Organiser to check.

You will not be penalised for submitting work below the word limit. However, you should note that shorter essays are unlikely to achieve the required depth and that this will be reflected in your mark.

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 18/19 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. Turnitin 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/arts-humanities-soc-sci/taught-students/student-conduct/academic-misconduct>

If you have any questions about academic Misconduct and plagiarism, or would like some advice, please speak to your Personal Tutor in the first instance.

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.

VII STUDENT REPRESENTATION AND SOCIETIES

Student representation and student voice

General Student Representative Structure

Staff members at the University of Edinburgh work closely with student representatives. Edinburgh University Students' Association 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.

Programme Representatives for our School

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.

Schools share students' emails with their programme 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

Please see our webpages [here](#) for more information on:

- how to become a Programme Representative and what is involved
- the names of our Programme and School Representatives
- dates and minutes from our Staff Student Liaison Committee meetings

Course evaluations

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. For more details on how we gather and use your feedback to enhance courses and the quality of our degree programmes, the University Student Partnership Agreement and student representation, please see our Student Voice Policy at <https://www.ed.ac.uk/students/academic-life/student-voice>

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/>

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 Mayor of London, *Boris Johnson*.

If you'd like more information, or are generally interested please visit our [website](#), join our [Facebook page](#), 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](#) 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](#) 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/studying/undergraduate/student-life/academic/tutor>

During Semester 1, Year 1 students will have an individual meeting with their personal tutor (PT) in week 0 (Welcome Week). It will be introductory and will ensure you are aware of the responsibilities and opportunities available under the PT system. You will have a second individual meeting in Semester 2, which will typically take place mid-way through the semester and will be used to review academic progress, and for preliminary discussions around course options for the following academic year. You will have at least two further opportunities to meet with your PT across the year, either individually or in a group setting.

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.

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 (EUSA) and the University have been widely developing the Peer Support Project across the University since 2012. Further information can be viewed on the EUSA web site at <https://www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/getinvolved/peer-support/>



PIR has a wonderful peer-assisted learning scheme, PIRPALS, and we hope that you take full advantage of it. PIRPALS student leaders will attend tutorials of your first year compulsory courses, IPIR and Political Thinkers, so you can ask any questions you may have might not want to ask staff! They will also be running study sessions which will give you the chance to discuss topics from your first year courses, any questions you have about studying more generally. PIRPALS student leaders are a selection of 2nd, 3rd and 4th year PIR students who have been through it all already, so are well prepared to facilitate discussion and help you out where needed. You will be told the time of the sessions in your first few weeks at Edinburgh. PIRPALS is a great way to get to know other students on your course, improve your grades, and gain confidence in your university career – so come along!

<https://www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/organisation/PIRPALS/>

As a related initiative, EUSA 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/

Interruption of Studies and Withdrawing from your Studies

Authorised Interruption of Studies

A student experiencing difficulties in their personal circumstances which make them unable to study may apply for an interruption of study. During an interruption, a student pauses their study at the University, usually for a year or a semester in the case of taught students, and restarts at the same point following the period of interruption.

Applying for an interruption of study may have implications on your student funding and fees, as well as visa implications. If you are thinking of taking an interruption of study, or would like on this, speak with your SSO or PT as soon as possible so they can advise you through this process.

Withdrawing from your studies

If for any reason you would like to withdraw from your studies, please speak with your Personal Tutor or SSO who will be able to advise you through this processes. Any students looking to withdraw must complete a 'Withdrawal from Studies form' and submit this to their SSO. You can access the withdraw form at

https://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/withdrawal_form_student.pdf

Please note that until you have withdrawn official from your programme of study, you will still be liable for fees.

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>

Student Wellbeing

As with all transitions in life, applying to and studying at university can be both exciting and challenging – whether it is your first time at university or you are returning to higher education, and whether you have a pre-existing mental health condition or not, it is important to look after yourself. University can be busy and stressful at times, this can in turn cause our state of wellbeing to fluctuate. We all have strategies for coping with ups and downs in life and it is important to continue using and revising these skills, to help support and maintain your wellbeing which is crucial to allow you to experience a positive and happy university journey. We provide a range of evidence-based resources, workshops and support which are available to you and can enable you to cope with the ups and downs of university life. These are provided by a number of different services, including the Centre for Sport and Exercise, Chaplaincy, Counselling Service and the Edinburgh University Students' Association." For further information please see <https://www.ed.ac.uk/students/health-and-wellbeing>

Counselling Service

For information on the university's Student Counselling Service please go to <http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/student-counselling>

Health and Safety

The University has a duty, so far as reasonably practicable, to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all employees and students while at work, and the safety of all authorised visitors and members of the public entering the precincts of the University. The University Health and Safety Policy is issued upon the authority of the University Court and contains the Health and Safety Policy statement and summary of the organisation and arrangements of health and safety within the University. The successful implementation of the University Policy requires the support and co-operation of all employees and students - no person shall intentionally interfere with, or misuse anything provided by the University in the interest of health, safety or welfare. The University Health and Safety Policy is supported by a Framework document published in two parts on the Organisation and Arrangements of health and safety within the University. Individuals are required to comply with any procedures or arrangements formulated under the authority of this Policy. Any questions or problems about matters of health and safety can be taken up initially with the School Safety Adviser. Further guidance on health and safety matters can be found on the Health and Safety Department website at <http://www.ed.ac.uk/healthsafety> including contact details for all professional staff within the corporate Health and Safety Department.

For further details on our Schools' Health and Safety Advisor, policy, fire procedures and a link to the University's Health and Safety policy, please see our webpages at http://www.sps.ed.ac.uk/about/our_policies/health_and_safety

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.

X APPEALS

If you are considering lodging an appeal, it is important that you act promptly. EUSA have some helpful information on the appeals process and you can read this at <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>

Strict timescale apply with appeals so it is important that you act promptly.

Time Scales for Appeals against Academic Decisions for Undergraduate Students	
Year of study	Appeal timescale
Final Year	within 30 working days of the result being issued
All others	within 10 working days of the result being issued

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>

Students can also view the University wide policies and regulations at <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 “Rights, responsibilities and restrictions” section at www.ed.ac.uk/global/immigration

More information or advice about your Tier 4 immigration status can be obtained by contacting the International Student Advisory Service, Email: visahelp@ed.ac.uk