



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH
School of Social
& Political Science

Politics & International Relations
2018 – 2019

Research Design in Politics & IR

PLIT 10106

Semester 1, Year 3

Key Information

Course Organiser

Dr. Corina (Cora) Lacatus - Email: C.Lacatus@ed.ac.uk
Room no. 4.12, 15A George Square, Chrystal Macmillan Building
Guidance & Feedback Hours: Thursday 15:00 – 17:00

Lecturing team

Dr. Sara Dorman, Dr. Stephen Hill
Prof. Ailsa Henderson, Dr. Corina Lacatus
Dr. Mihaela Mihai, Dr. Andrew Neal, Dr. Patrick Theiner

Location

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Lecture Theatre C

Course Tutors

Cristina Calo, Nataliya Muzyka, Patricia Rodi,
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Course Secretary

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Undergraduate Teaching Office

Assessment (summative)

Interview 20%;
Data collection & research design 50%;
Exam 30%

Aims and Objectives

The aim of the course is to equip students with skills necessary to understand, critically assess and undertake the research design process. We seek to explore current approaches to social science research, showing how Politics and IR has evolved as a discipline, and the contemporary debates about social and political research. We seek to support students in developing their own research skills, while also ensuring that they understand the issues that shape our discipline.

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Learning Outcomes

Students will gain a good grasp of the behavioural assumptions in social science research, and knowledge of a range of data collection methods (and how to assess the appropriateness of each), as well as the steps within a successful research project design. More specifically students will learn how to choose a topic, formulate a research question and hypotheses, select cases, navigate measurement issues, and undertake data collection. By the end of the course students will be able to design, undertake and write up the results of their own research project.

Teaching Methods

The course uses 90-minute sessions a week and a one hour tutorial. Tutorials begin during week 2. Please check the attached schedule.

As a number of tutorials take place prior to the week's lecture (e.g. you have a Tuesday tutorial and a Thursday lecture), the course has been designed so that each week's lecture the material covered will be familiar to you (Please see more details about readings and planning for your week in the Weekly Schedule section below). Tutorials have been carefully developed in tandem with lectures and will complement them. Tutorials have been planned in a such a manner that they will help you apply and deepen your understanding of materials addressed by both the lecture taking place in the prior week and during the week when the tutorial takes place. Tutorials are designed to help you see how research designs are "applied" in practice, by examining and discussing selected articles which use particular research designs. In addition, tutorials give you practical experience of the tasks that you will be asked to complete for assessment. It is therefore important that you attend all the tutorials and classes if you wish to do well on this course.

This course focuses more on *thinking*, *reflecting* and *doing*, and the required texts assigned for each week will help you achieve this. Please complete readings before class (i.e. tutorial or lecture, whichever comes first for you). The recommended and further reading sections are there to guide you in preparing your assignments and for the exam.

Our goal is to equip you to become researchers, which means being able to design and plan your own research – most immediately in your dissertation – but also to equip you for your careers in which you may need to deploy these skills or critique others' use of them. We will also focus on the skills required to effectively write-up and disseminate your research. The skills you develop here will aid you in your essays, and your development as a social scientist.

Summative Assessment

Assessment	Word count limit Do not exceed the word limit or penalties will be applied	Weighting	Submission date	Return of feedback
Interview assignment	1,000 words max (excluding bibliography)	20%	Thursday 25 th October 12 (noon)	15 th November
Data collection project & project research design	3,000 words; 3,500 for group projects (see details below)	50%	Thursday 29th November 12 (noon)	20 th December
Exam	NA	30%	Exam dates are set by Student Administration. Exam diet information can be found at: http://www.ed.ac.uk/student-administration/exams/exam-diets Students are responsible for knowing the time, date and location of their exams.	Dates will be published closer to the time Please also see Exam feedback information in appendix 2

Note: All coursework is submitted electronically through ELMA. Please read the School Policies and Coursework Submission Procedures which you will find [here](#).

Summative Assignment 1: Interview and reflection

Conduct an interview on one of the six suggested topic included in the list below, which are broadly relevant to Politics and/or IR. These topics are intentionally broad, so you can identify a more specific area of interest and motivating research question within your broader topic of interest. The assignment itself consists of four main components:

Part 1: Once you have selected one of the topics and before you embark on the interview itself, formulate a broader question about an issue within topic of interest about which you would like to learn more through the interview. This question will motivate your interview and should ideally be a 'why' question.

Part 2: Identify one key interview partner, with knowledge of the issue you have selected. You can carry out an elite interview, with a person that is an 'expert' on the issue (e.g. a local councillor, a party official, a social movement leader, social scientist expert on the topic), or a 'grassroots' interview with a research partner who is not an expert but who has extensive direct experience of your issue of interest (e.g. shop owner directly impacted on by the economic crisis, asylum seeker, etc.). If you decide to interview someone who is a friend, family member or colleague, you will need to justify why their knowledge/experience of the issue of interest is relevant, illuminating or innovative (e.g. how do they meet the above criteria for selecting interview partners).

Part 3: Write an 'interview guide', consisting of no fewer than 8 but no more than 12 questions (with or without probing questions) that elaborate on: (1) different aspects of the main question/issue of interest you articulated in Part 1; and (2) on a number of factors that can explain the answer that the interview partner will offer in response to your broader research question.

Part 4: Write up a short (1000 words) reflection on this experience. This should include the following elements:

1. The motivating question for and the main issue to be explored by the interview.
2. One sentence describing very briefly the interview partner. You can maintain their anonymity, but you should mention the position/role that s/he holds that makes their knowledge of the research question relevant.
3. Summarise the findings of your interview in a reflective manner. Reflect upon the choices that you made (your chosen subject, interview questions, location), and how this has shaped your understanding of the particular 'event'. In addition, you should address how you would do things differently next time, and how your positionality may have affected the interviewee and the interview.

When you submit your interview reflection, please also submit your completed **ethics form** (using the form on Learn) and a **signed consent form** (to be provided) from your interview subject.

Topics:

1. Brexit
2. The economic crisis (the most recent one or another one from the past)
3. The rise of the political far right
4. Inequality
5. Climate change
6. Migration

Due: Thursday 25th October 2018 12 noon

Assessment Criteria

- Has a relevant topic been identified for the interview?
- Is the interview discussed clearly and effectively?
- Have ethical considerations been taken into account and handled appropriately?
- Has the researchers' positionality been considered?
- Is the reflection appropriately presented in terms of: correct referencing (if used) and quoting; spelling, grammar and style?

Word Count Penalties:

- Your reflection should be 1000 words (excluding bibliography). Essays above 1000 words will be penalised using the Ordinary level criterion of 1 mark for every 20 words over length: anything between 1001 and 1020 words will lose one mark, between 1021 and 1040 two marks, and so on.
- 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.

Summative Assignment 2: Data collection project & research design

Every project must be based on some form of data collection. You must identify a relevant research question, problematic or hypothesis. This has to be informed by the literature, which has perhaps not explore this question so far or has addressed it from particular angles (and perhaps not considered other angles), and may further develop on (but cannot be identical to) the material discussed in Assignment 1. The project may also serve as the basis of the Honours dissertation, although this is not necessary.

Your project report should have five main elements, with the following headings:

- **Introduction** (including a statement of the problem/issue, the research question and the main elements of the research)
- **Literature review** (brief review of relevant research, of at least 12-15 academic sources; identify a 'gap' worth exploring)
- **Methodology** (make explicit your methodological choices and explain why you have selected one method/type of data/approach as appropriate to answer your research question)
- **Findings/Analysis** (summarise the findings and discuss them)
- **Conclusion** (explain what this project's main contribution is to existing research on this topic and why it is important as well as its limitations and ways in which future research could build on it)

As this is an essay for a Research Design course we expect you to be explicit and discuss in detail the methodological choices that you have made (the instruments used, the validity and reliability of different measures).

Students must undertake data collection and discuss the results. You should not use multiple forms of data collection or mixed methods.

If you plan to develop a project on the basis of secondary quantitative data, please let your tutor and course convenor know. We would be happy to provide additional guidance.

Your collected data should be one of the following:

- A content analysis of at least 7 documents;
- A discourse analysis of at least 7 documents;
- Semi-structured interviews with at least 5 people;
- Existing data set based on secondary survey data you have identified;
- Ethnographic or participatory observation of an event lasting 2-3 hours.

Every project involving human subjects (e.g. surveys, interviews, focus groups, experiments, observations) must also be ethically approved by the course convenor.

The final report word limit is 3000 words.

Due: Thursday 29th November 12 noon

Assessment criteria for data collection

The following are the criteria through which the project will be marked. They should be read concurrently with the marking descriptors.

- Has a relevant research question, problematic or hypothesis been identified and specified effectively?
- Does the review move beyond telling us about the topic and tell us how academic authors have explored and debated the topic?
- Does the review use a logical and effective pattern of argument to explore the literature?
- Have appropriate methodological choices been made, reflected upon and justified?
- Where appropriate, has the researcher's positionality been considered?
- Have ethical considerations been taken into account and handled appropriately?
- Has the validity of different measures been appropriately assessed and reflected upon?
- Has the reliability of different measures been appropriately assessed and reflected upon?
- Is the report appropriately presented in terms of: correct referencing and quoting; spelling, grammar and style?
- If tables or charts are used to present data are they well set out, clear and effective?
- Is the presentation and analysis of the data appropriate and clearly presented?

Word Count Penalties:

The final report word limit is 3000 words. 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.

Please refer to the assessment and submission procedure information on our webpages which you will find [Appendix 2](#).

Formative Assignment: YouTube ethnography

Living and learning alongside people in other cultures or communities as an attempt to understand a community and its culture is at the very core of ethnographic research. Where ethnographers seek to understand and describe practices in different communities, so can students. Researchers in the fields of Politics and International Relations often employ one or more of the methods in ethnographers' toolbox. Depending on the research question and the topic of interest, ethnographic fieldwork usually involves to varying degrees observation, interviewing informants, note-taking, making maps, collecting life histories, charting kinship, keeping a field journal, etc. Sometimes, ethnographers can also make use of videotaping to collect and present their research. This assignment has been designed for you to use YouTube in order to learn more about the representation and interpretation of politics in different communities in the United Kingdom and around the world. Ultimately, this kind of learning can help you become a more insightful, patient and introspective researcher.

You and your other colleagues part of your group are to create a YouTube video ethnography of one aspect of the culture of a community around, which you select as your community of interest. First, please meet as a group and decide on: (1) a community of interest to all of you that is broadly relevant for understanding contemporary political issues (for instance, political scientists; refugees living in Edinburgh, etc.); (2) decide on a research question or a set of questions that help you to explore the political dimension(s) of everyday life in the community you have selected (for instance, how international/domestic law helps or hinders the integration of refugees in the United Kingdom). Before you begin the project, take a look on YouTube and see what other people have created on the topic.

Give your project a title and, at the start of the video, include the title of the project, the team members, and the research question(s) that your visual ethnography is exploring. Your video should be no longer than five minutes and should be uploaded to YouTube. Please use your mobile phones for recording video. No significant editing of the video is required, although the video should convey clearly your message. While your video may be humorous, keep in mind that this will be a public representation and interpretation of one aspect of the local culture.

In order to upload your video, you will need a YouTube account. You can get your free account at www.youtube.com. You can find answers to all of your YouTube questions by following the *Help* link on the homepage. Also, consider reading over one of the many sites that offer tips for making high quality YouTube videos, such as www.videomaker.com/youtube/.

You and your partners will be given **10 minutes to present your video clip** during the tutorial in week 4. After showing all video clips, allow time for a brief discussion of approaches to representing and interpreting the communities captured by the ethnographic video.

By the deadline, **Monday 8th October 2018 (8:30am)**, please send a one-page paper to your tutor, via email, including a very brief description of the community you have selected, as well as the research question(s) and the link to the video.

Below are a number of different examples of videos relying on ethnographic research (explicitly or implicitly) for answering a range of varied research questions, which may be of help to you, as you consider different visual formats for your video.

Deadline: Monday 8th October 2018 (8:30am)

A Day in the Life of a Political Science Major
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=crUpONY8J8U>

Now I Belong: A Video Ethnography of Adult Literacy Students:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1hnfOQSoLIM>

How the UK public really felt about Brexit
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9aRChOqIdEA>

Life in a Syrian refugee camp | BBC Newsbeat
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KQpdsNqn_jI

Scottish Times: English view of Scottish independence
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_4jIbpmvOog

The Scots really hate the English
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tO7YxtlTKRY>

Attendance

Attendance and participation in the lectures and discussion are essential for developing an understanding of the topics. Tutors will keep a record of individual attendance in weekly tutorials.

Communications and Feedback

You are strongly encouraged to use email for routine communication with lecturers and tutors. We shall also use email to communicate with you, e.g., to assign readings for the second hour of each class. All students are provided with email addresses on the university system, if you are not sure of your address, which is based on your matric number, check your EUCLID database entry using the Student Portal.

This is the ONLY email address we shall use to communicate with you. Please note that we will NOT use 'private' email addresses such as yahoo or hotmail; it is therefore essential that you check your university email regularly, preferably each day.

Readings and Resource List

The course readings can all be found on the Resource List, which is accessed through the Learn page. Our main textbook is: **Halperin and Heath, *Political Research Methods and Practical Skills* OUP 2nd edition (2017)**. The earlier edition (2012) may also be used, but the most recent edition will be available in the library. Chapter and page references in course documentation will be to the 5th edition.

The reading list is organised by week, with required, recommended and further readings. There are also sections that stretch across the entire course, giving links to data sets, recent controversies that relate to research design, and relevant news items.

Additional resources

On Learn, I have set up a couple of course pages intended to be both resources aiding you in your research and a place for collaborative work, should you find of interest. On the course Learn page, you can find a long list of statistical databases, grouped by category, intended for students who plan to use secondary data in their research projects. Other resources, which can help with your own research, will continue to go up on the course page. It goes without saying that you are very welcome to use and contribute to both resources!

Weekly Schedule

The course is organised in three main parts, as indicated below. Lectures and tutorials have been carefully developed in tandem and in such a manner that you will be able to follow everything, even if your tutorial is scheduled earlier in the week than the lecture.

The readings included in this schedule are essential for your learning, so you can understand the lectures and be able to participate actively in tutorials as well as complete assignments. Please note that the complete reading list, including extensive links of resources and recommended readings, is available on Learn.

Please make sure that you complete all readings for this course before the tutorial and/or your lecture, whichever one comes first in your weekly schedule! This is the best way to be prepared for the course and learn the most from it.

PART A: INTRODUCING THE FUNDAMENTALS AND SETTING THE STAGE		
Week 1	Lecture (Dr Lacatus)	Deadlines
17-21 Sept	Introduction Re: What is research design? How do we 'do' research design?	
	Logistics & structure of the course Re: presenting details about the lectures and general structure of the course	
	Tutorial No tutorial in week 1	
	Required readings Halperin & Heath (2012), <i>Research Design</i> , Chapter 6, pp. 147-166 Maggetti et al. (2012) <i>Designing Research in the Social Sciences</i> , pp. 13-16 De Vaus, David A. (2001) <i>Research Design in Social Research</i> , Chapters 1 and 2, Part 1, pp. 1-33	
Week 2	Lecture (Dr Lacatus)	Deadlines
24-28 Sept	The design of a PIR research project: Re: the elements of a research project Why do ontology and epistemology matter?	
	Main concepts of research design linked to methods Re: types of data, case selection, quality, operationalisation; and a note on ethics	

	<p>Tutorial Re: main elements of a PIR research project in practice; ethics forms; prepare for the group video ethnography assignment</p> <p>Required readings Halperin, S. & Heath, O. (2012), <i>Research Design</i>, Chapter 4 (pp. 81-109) and Chapter 7 (pp. 168-186)</p> <p>Chenail, R. J. (2011) "Ten Steps for Conceptualizing and Conducting Qualitative Research Studies in a Pragmatically Curious Manner", <i>The Qualitative Report</i>, Vol 16, No 6, pp. 1713-1730</p> <p>David, M. and Sutton, C. (2013) Ethical Issues in the Decision to Research, in "Social Research, The Basics", pp. 17-21</p> <p>UK Data Service (2018) "Show me the data: research reproducibility for qualitative methods", Presentation available at: https://www.ukdataservice.ac.uk/news-and-events/eventsitem/?id=5358</p>	
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PART B: SELECTED TYPES OF RESEARCH DESIGNS FOR PIR RESEARCH

Week 3	Lecture (Dr Mihai)	Deadlines
1-5 Oct	<p>Theory for PIR research Re: theory as integral part of social scientific research</p> <p>Theoretical research Re: theoretical scholarship as a type of PIR research with specific design considerations</p> <hr/> <p>Tutorial Re: theories and their application; video voted 'best' by students in each tutorial is shown and discussed in class.</p> <p>Required readings Halperin, S. & Heath, O. (2012), <i>Research Design</i>, Chapter 5 (pp. 111-144)</p> <p>John S. Dryzek, Bonnie Honig, and Anne Phillips, "Introduction" <i>The Oxford Handbook of Political Theory</i> Edited by John S. Dryzek, Bonnie Honig, and Anne Phillips</p> <p>Butler, Judith, "Precariousness and Grievability—When Is Life Grievable?", available for free here: https://www.versobooks.com/blogs/2339-judith-butler-preciousness-and-grievability-when-is-life-grievable</p> <p>Friedman, S. and Steinberg, S. (1989) "Writing and Thinking in the Social Sciences", <i>Rhetorical Strategies</i>, pp. 36-51)</p>	

Week 4	Lecture (Dr Dorman)	Assignments & deadlines
8-12 Oct	<p>Interviews, field research and research design Re: research designs for studies using interviews</p> <p>Interviews as data Re: the design of an interview; the process of interviewing; interviews as data to be analysed</p> <p>Tutorial Re: the joys and challenges of research interviewing;</p> <p>Required readings Halperin, S. & Heath, O. (2012), <i>Research Design</i>, Chapter 12 (pp. 285-311) and Chapter 13 (pp. 313-333)</p> <p>Werning Rivera, S. et al. (2002) "Interviewing Political Elites: Lessons from Russia", <i>PS: Political Science and Politics</i>, Vol. 35, No 4, pp. 683-688</p> <p>Woliver, L. (2002) "Ethical Dilemmas in Personal Interviewing", <i>PS: Political Science and Politics</i>, Vol. 35, No. 4, pp. 677-678</p> <p>Loefgren, K. (2013) <i>Qualitative analysis of interview data: A Step-by-Step Guide</i>, Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DRL4PF2u9XA</p>	<p>Formative: Video ethnography & presentation</p> <p>Due: Mon 8th Oct (8:30am)</p> <p>Maximum five minutes (no penalty for shorter duration) of footage/audio material on a question selected by students as a group. If your YouTube ethnography requires</p>

Week 5	Lecture (Dr Neal)	Deadlines
15-19 Oct	<p>Critical PIR research Re: critical approaches to PIR research; gender and race through a normative lens</p> <p>Data Re: Can/Do critical approaches use data?</p> <p>Tutorial Re: critical approaches to PIR; preparing your research interview</p> <p>Required readings Holland, E. (2012) "To Think and See Differently": Popular Geopolitics, Graphic Narrative, and Joe Sacco's "Chechen War, Chechen Women", <i>Geopolitics</i>, 17:1, Vol. 14, No. 1, pp. 105-129</p> <p>Cocca, C. (2014) "Negotiating the Third Wave of Feminism in 'Wonder Woman'", <i>PS: Political Science and Politics</i>, Vol. 47, No.1, pp. 98-103</p> <p>[Background reading for above article: Costello, M. and Worcester, K. (2014), "Introduction", <i>PS: Political Science and Politics</i>, Vol. 47, No. 1, pp. 85-89]</p>	<p>Formative: Ethics forms for interview project assignment due in tutorial session</p> <p>Formative: Interview motivating question and brief interview guide to be discussed in tutorial session</p>

Week 6	Lecture (Dr Lacatus)	Deadlines
22-26 Oct	<p>Discourse analysis & content analysis Re: differences and similarities between discourse and content analyses; discourse and content as relevant for PIR research</p> <p>Textual & Internet data Re: having fun and doing research with text; social media/Twitter analysis</p>	<p>Summative: Interview assignment</p> <p>Due: Thu 25th October (12 noon)</p>
	<p>Tutorial Re: working with text as data; fun with word clouds</p> <p>Required readings Halperin, S. & Heath, O. (2012), <i>Research Design</i>, Chapter 14 (pp. 335-359)</p> <p>Hawkins, K. and Rovira Kaltwasser, C. (2018) "Measuring populist discourse in the United States and beyond", <i>Nature: Human Behaviour</i>, Vol. 2, April 2018 (pp. 241-242)</p> <p>Shim, D. (2017) "Sketching Geopolitics: Comics and the Case of the Cheonan Sinking", <i>International Political Sociology</i>, Vol. 11 (pp. 398-417)</p>	

Week 7	Lecture (Prof Henderson)	Deadlines
30 Oct- 2 Nov	<p>Survey Re: the research design of projects relying on survey data</p> <p>Surveys as data Re: the design of a survey, sampling,</p>	
	<p>Tutorial Re: discuss surveys for election polling; begin work toward the final research design/data collection project</p> <p>Required readings Halperin, S. & Heath, O. (2012), <i>Research Design</i>, Chapter 11 (pp. 261-284)</p> <p>Hobolt, Sara B., "The Brexit Vote: a divided nation, a divided continent", <i>JEPP</i> 23(9), 2016</p>	

PART 3: THINKING OF YOUR DISSERTATION IN TERMS OF RESEARCH DESIGN		
Week 8	Lecture (Dr Dorman)	Deadlines
5-9 Nov	<p>Academic writing in PIR: literature reviews Re: finding relevant existing scholarship and reviewing it; situating the dissertation in existing scholarship</p> <p>Critiquing and making a contribution to scholarship</p>	<p>Formative: Select a PIR topic of interest for you and explore the main types of approaches and</p>

	Re: analysing the ‘state of the art’ and seeking to make a contribution to it	themes in the existing literature; identify a gap! Due: Annotated bibliography due in tutorial today
	<p>Tutorial Re: prep for final project – discuss research questions</p> <p>Required reading: Halperin, S. & Heath, O. (2012), <i>Research Design</i>, Chapter 4 (review pp. 102-107)</p> <p>Ridley, D. (2012) <i>The Literature Review: a Step-by-Step Guide for Students</i>, Sage</p>	

Week 9	Lecture (Dr Hill & Dr Theiner)	Deadlines
12-16 Nov	<p>Dissertation preparation session</p> <p>Re: how to think of your dissertation as a type of research design; the structure of the dissertation; main requirements and best strategies to meet them.</p> <p>Tutorial Re: How to begin and develop your own research project in PIR? Applied session.</p> <p>Readings UK Data Service (2018) “Dissertations and Their Data: Promoting Research Integrity in Undergraduate Projects”, Available at: https://www.ukdataservice.ac.uk/media/622144/dissertations_and_their_data_promoting_research_integrity.pdf</p>	<p>Formative: Research question for final project</p> <p>Due: Research question to be ready for discussion in this week’s tutorial</p>

Week 10	Lecture (Dr Lacatus)	Deadlines
19-23 Nov	<p>Summing up & looking toward the future Re: Tying all the pieces of the puzzle together</p> <p>Research design and ‘real life’ Re: What can you do with what you’ve learned, in the real life outside the university?</p> <p>Tutorial Re: Applied, hands-on session, focused on the research design/data collection project</p> <p>There are no required readings for this session. Please check the course Learn page for suggested readings.</p>	<p>Formative: Draft outlines of final project</p> <p>Due: Outline of research design to be ready for discussion in this week’s tutorial</p>

Week 11

No teaching

Summative: Data collection & research design assignment

Due: Thu 29th November (12 noon)

Appendix 1 – General Information

Students with Disabilities

The School welcomes disabled students with disabilities (including those with specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia) and is working to make all its courses as accessible as possible. If you have a disability special needs 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 your Student Support Officer or Personal Tutor who will advise on the appropriate procedures.

You can also contact the Student Disability Service, based on the University of Edinburgh, Third Floor, Main Library, You can find their details as well as information on all of the support they can offer at: <http://www.ed.ac.uk/student-disability-service>

Learning Resources for Undergraduates

The Study Development Team at the Institute for Academic Development (IAD) provides resources and workshops aimed at helping all students to enhance their learning skills and develop effective study techniques. Resources and workshops cover a range of topics, such as managing your own learning, reading, note-making, essay and report writing, exam preparation and exam techniques.

The study development resources are housed on 'LearnBetter' (undergraduate), part of Learn, the University's virtual learning environment. Follow the link from the IAD Study Development web page to enrol: www.ed.ac.uk/iad/undergraduates

Workshops are interactive: they will give you the chance to take part in activities, have discussions, exchange strategies, share ideas and ask questions. They are 90 minutes long and held on Wednesday afternoons at 1.30pm or 3.30pm. The schedule is available from the IAD Undergraduate web page (see above).

Workshops are open to all undergraduates but you need to book in advance, using the MyEd booking system. Each workshop opens for booking two weeks before the date of the workshop itself. If you book and then cannot attend, please cancel in advance through MyEd so that another student can have your place. (To be fair to all students, anyone who persistently books on workshops and fails to attend may be barred from signing up for future events).

Study Development Advisors are also available for an individual consultation if you have specific questions about your own approach to studying, working more effectively, strategies for improving your learning and your academic work. Please note, however, that Study Development Advisors are not subject specialists so they cannot comment on the content of your work. They also do not check or proof read students' work.

Students can book a study skills consultation <https://www.ed.ac.uk/institute-academic-development/undergraduate/services/quick-consultations>

Academic English support can also be accessed at <https://www.ed.ac.uk/english-language-teaching>

Discussing Sensitive Topics

The discipline of Politics addresses a number of topics that some might find sensitive or, in some cases, distressing. You should read this Course Guide carefully and if there are any topics that you may feel distressed by you should seek advice from the course convenor and/or your Personal Tutor.

For more general issues you may consider seeking the advice of the Student Counselling Service, <http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/student-counselling>

Honours Tutorial Allocation

For this course you will have been automatically assigned to a tutorial group and this group will appear on your personalised timetable at the beginning of week 1. This allocation is done using Student Allocator software which randomly assigns you to a suitable tutorial group based on your lecture timetable. It is important you attend the group on your personalised timetable, attending a different group will mean that you will not appear on the register making your attendance difficult to track which could lead to further difficulties for you.

Guidance on how to view your personal timetable can be found at <https://www.ed.ac.uk/student-administration/timetabling/personalised-timetables>

Requesting a group change

If you are unable to attend the tutorial group you have been assigned, you can request a change via the '[Group Change Request](#)' form.

You can access the Group Change request form via the Timetabling webpages here <https://www.ed.ac.uk/student-administration/timetabling/personalised-timetables>

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>

External Examiner

The External Examiner for the Politics in International Relations Honours programme is: TBC

Appendix 2 - Course Work Submission and Penalties

Penalties that can be applied to your work and how to avoid them.

Below is a list of penalties that can be applied to your course work and these are listed below. Students **must** read the full description on each of these at: http://www.sps.ed.ac.uk/undergrad/current_students/teaching_and_learning/assessment_and_regulations/coursework_penalties

Make sure you are aware of each of these penalties and know how to avoid them. Students are responsible for taking the time to read guidance and for ensuring their coursework submissions comply with guidance.

- **Lateness Penalty**

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.

- **Word Count Penalty**

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

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.

ELMA: Submission and Return of Coursework

Please note that all submissions to ELMA should be formatted as a Word document (doc or.docx.). If you are permitted or required to submit in a different format, this will be detailed in your course handbook.

Any submission that is not in word format will be converted by the Undergraduate Teaching Office into word where possible. By submitting in any format other than word, you are accepting this process and the possibility that errors may occur during conversion. The UTO will do everything possible to ensure the integrity of any document converted but to avoid issue, please submit in Word format as requested.

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 have read all the guidance on our [webpages](#) and take note of the key points below. You will also be able to access the online extension request form through our [webpages](#).

- Extensions are granted for 7 calendar days.
- 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 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 valid reason and require an extension of more than 7 calendar days, 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.

Exam Feedback and Viewing Exam Scripts

General exam feedback will be provided for all courses with an examination. General feedback will be uploaded to the relevant course learn page within 24 hours of the overall marks for the course being returned to Students.

Students who sit the exam will also receive individual feedback. The relevant Course Secretary will contact students to let them know when this is available and how to access it.

If students wish to view their scripts for any reason, they must contact the relevant Course Secretary via email to arrange this.

Plagiarism Guidance for Students: Avoiding Plagiarism

Material you submit for assessment, such as your 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 against 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. In either case, the actions taken will be noted permanently on the student's record. **For further details on plagiarism see the Academic Services' website:**

<http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/academic-services/students/undergraduate/discipline/plagiarism>

Data Protection Guidance for Students

In most circumstances, students are responsible for ensuring that their work with information about living, identifiable individuals complies with the requirements of the Data Protection Act. The document, *Personal Data Processed by Students*, provides an explanation of why this is the case. It can be found, with advice on data protection compliance and ethical best practice in the handling of information about living, identifiable individuals, on the Records Management section of the University website at:

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