Transform your future.
Let's start by saying something about who we are, and what we stand for.

Part of a University founded on penny donations by the people of Sheffield, we’ve grown to be one of the highest-rated departments for the study of politics in the UK – without losing sight of those original values. Every year we offer a warm welcome to the very best students from all over the world: students with ambition, enquiring minds, and a real passion for the study of politics.

Study here for an experience you’ll treasure – an experience that sets you up for life and transforms your future. You’ll learn alongside academics who lead the world in their areas of specialism, with expertise spanning the whole field of politics and international relations. You’ll be a global citizen – a member of a diverse international community here in Sheffield, with opportunities to experience studying or working in another country. You’ll take up the best opportunities, experiences and skills for a bright and rewarding career.

Most of all, your time at university is an intellectual journey. It’s also a time when you’ll make friends for life and learn more about yourself. That’s why it’s so important to choose the right path for you. In this brochure we’re going to show you what makes our Department shine, and how you can join us.
Six reasons to choose Politics at Sheffield.

Choose a truly outstanding department.
We’re a top-ranking department for the research and study of politics. We’ve been ranked in the top three in every one of the UK’s national research assessments since 2001. And what makes us special is that the cutting-edge research conducted by our academics directly informs what you’ll learn as a student.

Choose a friendly and inclusive place to study.
Academically, we aim to be the best. But it’s just as important to give you a warm welcome. Our diverse University welcomes students from over 120 different countries, of all ages and from all backgrounds, and the Department of Politics truly reflects this diversity.
We’re an inclusive learning community, where leading academic staff teach students at all levels – and quite often our students will teach our staff a thing or two! Outside of formal classes, there are lots of things going on. The Students’ Union has over 300 clubs and societies for all interests – including our student-run Politics Society, which puts on a packed programme of social (and educational) events. As a Department we regularly organise seminars, speakers and networking events for students to get involved in.

Choose a unique city.
Sheffield is exciting and lively, with everything you’d expect from England’s fourth biggest city (not to mention, the UK’s best Students’ Union.) It’s also one of the safest cities in which you can study, and the people of Sheffield warmly welcome the student community. We should mention the cheap cost of living too – 25% lower than in London.
Add in Sheffield’s reputation as the greenest city in England, well-deserved with the parks and woodlands nestled throughout the city and the Peak District National Park on its doorstep, and this is a city with something for everyone.

Choose a degree that opens doors.
We’ve got a network that reaches across the globe. Our students take work placements in the UK Parliament, the US Congress and the European Union, as well as with leading businesses and charities. You can also choose to take a study placement at another of the world’s leading universities, including partners across Europe, North America, Australia and Asia.
Back in Sheffield you can meet the leading politicians of all political hues, business people and academics from across the world who regularly visit the Department.

Choose a course that’s perfect for you.
We know there will have been an event or experience that sparked your own interest in politics – because we started the same way. We’ve designed our eleven degree courses and broad range of module choices so that you can pursue that interest, taking the opportunity to become an expert in your chosen subject as well having the chance to learn about topics and events that may be entirely unfamiliar.
Alongside this, you can choose to add a year’s placement in work or abroad, learn a language, explore volunteering opportunities, develop your career plans, or learn how to set up a business – you have the flexibility to make your course your own.

Choose a bright future.
You want to do something exciting and meaningful with your life. You might know exactly what that is, or may still be making your mind up. Exciting and meaningful are what we specialise in. Our graduates have gone on to amazing careers in all sorts of fields. You can be confident that a degree with us will set you up for a bright future.
In studying Security Studies you ask questions like this, and many more besides. You consider what happens to politics when nations feel that they face threats to their security. How do governments respond – and how should they respond? How do members of the public behave when they feel scared?

In today’s world it’s not only invading armies or terrorist groups that threaten our security; researchers of contemporary Security Studies consider issues like disease pandemics, migration, and environmental catastrophe – not to mention the implications of new technologies for our cyber security.

Members of the Department carry out cutting-edge research on topics including the ethics of intelligence agencies’ work, the nature of terrorism, and responses to global health crises.

The ticking time bomb scenario – how would you respond?

A government minister faces the nightmare scenario: trying to protect the public from a credible terrorist threat. If you were that minister, what would you do? The clock on a hidden time bomb is ticking and you have a suspect in custody. Do you negotiate? Do you resort to torture? And if you did, would you be willing to trust the information you were given?

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Over the next few pages we’re going to give you a taste of the research that’s taking place here in Sheffield, research you’ll be plunged into when you study here.

The study of politics covers more than you might think. In fact it’s startling how diverse the range of topics and approaches is. The very definition of ‘politics’ is hotly disputed, and what constitutes politics is a core question you’ll tackle during your degree. But to get us started, maybe we can sum it up like this: politics is about who or what has power over whom or what, and how it’s used.

In this sense, politics is present in every aspect of human life – from global political institutions right down to personal relationships. Let’s take a look at some examples.
Take to the ballot box – or take to the streets?

Political participation is puzzling. In democratic countries throughout the world turnout in elections has fallen. People are turning away from the ballot box and away from established political parties. Yet at the same time, citizens are increasingly engaged with new forms of participation such as online petitions and campaigns, and on many occasions in recent years we have seen massive street demonstrations that have been organised against government policies. Meanwhile the business of government goes on.

Researching Political Participation you ask questions about what these changing forms of participation mean for governments and the governed.

On the one hand, our researchers study these new ways in which citizens engage in politics. On the other, we have a number of specialists who study how the formal institutions of government work, and where power actually lies.

Would you wear those jeans if you knew who made them?

Many industries are dangerous. Many have low pay. But in some, the workers aren’t working there by choice. It might shock you, but many people across the world endure forced labour in the present day. The research conducted by our academics suggests this doesn’t take place on the margins: twenty-first century slavery is an integral part of global supply chains – the supply chains that may deliver the coffee that you drink and the jeans that you wear.

Research on forced labour is part of the study of Political Economy. In this area of research you study the interplays between political power and economic power.

Our political economists study a huge range of subjects – from the banking crash of 2007-8 and the subsequent austerity policies of governments across Europe, to the wellbeing of people in rural Bangladesh.
Melting glaciers, drought and tropical storms. As the dangers of climate change become increasingly apparent, so do the calls for climate justice. But what does that mean?

Justice is sometimes defined as ‘who owes what to whom’. So, who owes what to whom regarding the effects of climate change? Should those states which emit the most fossil fuels bear the greatest burdens, or should it be those in the richest states? And just what obligations do wealthy countries have? To reduce their own emissions? To pay for cleaner technologies abroad? To accept ‘climate refugees’ from other states?

In *Political Theory* you ask fundamental questions about how we should be governed, exploring such issues as how political power can be justified, the best form of our political institutions, and the rights and obligations of individuals and nations.

Our academics research questions about justice, human rights, animal rights, the ethics of war and peace, and whether we should be realistic or idealistic when it comes to thinking about politics.

**Who is responsible for solving the climate change crisis?**

**Can you make war to make peace?**

When conflict breaks out, other countries and organisations like the United Nations are sometimes prepared to intervene in an attempt to bring about peace. But when should intervention take place? Should foreign powers intervene directly – or work through local forces, a strategy the international community has shifted towards? Saying that – what do we even mean when we refer to an ‘international community’?

Questions about how politics operates between, across and above nation-states form the study of *International Relations*: one of the major branches of political studies.

Our academics have conducted research on institutions like the European Union and the United Nations, the proliferation of nuclear weapons, and the organisations responding to migration and climate change. They have also conducted important work on what it means to study International Relations, how we should define the field, and what theories and methodologies should be used.
Now choose your perfect course.

It's a big decision, and you want to get it just right. That's why we offer a wide range of eleven degree courses, with a great choice of modules and options to add a year of employment or international experience. Our teaching covers the whole range of political studies outlined over the last few pages, and during your time at Sheffield you'll be given plenty of scope to pursue your own interests. So now we want to tell you a bit more about what you do on our degrees. We're going to give more details about the different courses on offer, a flavour of what it's like to study here, and more information about the exciting opportunities to gain the global and career experience that guarantees a bright future.
Single Degrees

These three degrees allow you to specialise in the areas of politics, international relations and security studies.

Politics

A degree in Politics allows you to take a comprehensive overview of the subject. You’ll be introduced to a wide range of topics from political theory through to international relations. On this course, you will learn how to apply the concepts, theories and methods used in the study of politics to the analysis of political ideas, institutions and practices. As your degree progresses, you can choose whether to work across all the research areas outlined earlier in this brochure, combining the insights they offer, or to develop a specialism in a particular approach to the study of politics.

International Relations and Politics

Taking a degree in International Relations and Politics provides you with a strong grounding in the core skills of political analysis and political theory, whilst emphasising the international dimensions of the study of politics. On this course you will explore many of the key theories of international relations, applying them to issues such as international trade or migration, alongside a flexible choice of module options. This course is perfect if you already know that this is the area of political studies that really motivates you.

International Politics and Security Studies

This degree also gives you that strong set of core skills in political analysis, alongside a deeper understanding of issues around peace, conflict and security. You’ll learn about the origins and evolution of the international political and security system and its institutions. You’ll also explore contemporary security challenges, interpreted broadly to include issues such as terrorism, disease pandemics, environmental security, and population movement. You’ll have the chance to conduct your own research on those issues of security that most interest you, as well as the flexibility to take optional modules from other areas of politics alongside your specialism in International Politics and Security Studies.

Dual Degrees

We offer eight degrees jointly with other departments in the University, giving you the flexibility to develop detailed knowledge and skills in two major subjects.

Economics and Politics

Studying economics alongside politics is a natural combination. The study of politics gives you a greater appreciation of the context for governments and policy-makers, and your studies in the Department of Economics will give you a special understanding of economic dynamics. These range from macroeconomics (the big picture) to microeconomics (the actions of individual economic actors); and from the specialist study of the monetary system to that of health, education, or labour.

History and Politics

This degree combination equips you with the skills to flourish as both a historian and as a political analyst, and enables you develop your knowledge of critical historical events and themes. You’ll develop expertise at working with historical sources and thinking about how we study the past, and then apply this to the exciting and expansive range of periods researched by the experts in the Department of History. You might want to complement your study of politics with a deeper understanding of modern political history, or contrast it with the study of societies in the ancient or medieval world.

Politics and Philosophy

This degree enables you to spend time in the Department of Philosophy, engaging with a wide range of moral, theoretical and philosophical issues that complement your political studies. You can study more political philosophy, and learn more about the thought of major figures such as Plato, Kant and Hegel; as well as pursuing the key areas of philosophy including ethics, philosophy of mind, theory of knowledge, metaphysics, and logic. You might want to focus on political theory during your time in the Department of Politics, or take modules where you can apply the insights from Philosophy to real-world cases.

Politics and Sociology

This degree lets you study in the Department of Sociological Studies alongside your study of politics. The sociological perspective emphasises the need to understand how individual attitudes, beliefs and life chances follow wider patterns, how people’s personal experience relates to wider structural forces and social processes. Sociologists are especially interested in social change, and how the forces of modernity such as globalisation and the information revolution affect people’s everyday lives.

Study Politics alongside a language –

French and Politics
German and Politics
Hispanic Studies and Politics
Russian and Politics

These four degree courses give you the opportunity to study politics alongside a modern foreign language. Each degree runs for four years, with a year built in to give you a placement abroad. If you want to research the politics of a particular area of the world, there’s somewhere you want to go and live or work, or you simply love learning languages and being exposed to fresh perspectives, these are the degrees for you. The partner departments have strong specialisms in the culture and history of their specialist countries, letting you gain a deeper knowledge and understanding.

Study Politics alongside a major subjects.

This course enables you to study politics alongside one of the major subjects. These degrees give you a placement abroad. If you want to research the politics of a particular area of the world, there’s somewhere you want to go and live or work, or you simply love learning languages and being exposed to fresh perspectives, these are the degrees for you. The partner departments have strong specialisms in the culture and history of their specialist countries, letting you gain a deeper knowledge and understanding.

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Lectures
Lectures are large classes where you listen to an academic and can ask questions. In lectures you will be introduced to new concepts, ideas and theories, as well as gaining a huge amount of new knowledge.

Independent Study
Alongside the taught part of your course you’ll have plenty of time for independent study – reading important books, analysing critical documents and compiling fresh evidence to justify your arguments.

Seminars
Seminars are smaller classes led by an academic tutor where you have the chance to delve deep into the topic under inspection. Here you will get the opportunity to explore, debate and challenge ideas: to try out your own and to test other people’s.

Transform your future. Research-led teaching.
We call what we do research-led teaching – we make sure that our outstanding research directly informs what you study and learn as a student.

Our academics are passionate about their subjects, and equally passionate about communicating them to their students. Because of the close link between our research and our teaching you’ll often find staff in the department teaching today about the issues they were researching yesterday – and will be publishing a new book on next year. This means that our students are working at the cutting edge of the discipline, thinking and learning about the big debates and the big problems in politics right now.

Supervision
Many of our students find individual supervision one of the most rewarding ways to learn. Final year dissertations and projects are all taught one-on-one, with an expert in your chosen field supporting you through the process of devising, designing and carrying out your own research project on the issues that fascinate you.

Modular
Your degree is modular, meaning you study several different topics each year. Some of these modules will be specific to your degree, and some will be optional depending on your interests.

We offer a wide range of modules, spanning the whole range of politics and international relations. The modules we offer may change from year to year – this is so they’re kept up-to-date with the very latest research and with real political events. There will always be a great choice of things you’ll want to study and that are relevant to your degree. You can view our current modules on our website, at www.sheffield.ac.uk/politics/study/undergraduate/modules.

Political Analysis
Throughout your degree we teach you the essential skills to analyse politics. These are also important transferable skills that will set you up for a bright career – from working as a team on projects, to conducting statistical analysis through specialist software, and designing a website.

Drop in Sessions
In addition, we provide you with all the support you need to flourish as a scholar. Every member of staff has weekly drop-in hours, where you’ll always have the chance to talk through your ideas, to get advice, and to ask questions.
When you come to Sheffield, you’re joining a global community. That’s so important because in today’s world, you might end up living and working far from your home country.

“I always wanted to use my degree in politics to travel - doing so has proved extremely advantageous. I’ve been in Australia during election season and experienced an election first-hand. Studying aboard has broadened my horizons, influencing both my dissertation and my future career goals. It’s a great opportunity that Sheffield offers!”

Jack

We also provide some unique opportunities for you to gain global experience.

The Global Leadership Initiative gives students the chance to attend major international conferences and publish their reports back when they get back.

“I gained such a real insight into the world of policy making by attending the G7 summit in Germany. We were the only students there – and it was incredible to have our policy analysis published by the Global Policy journal. I am forever grateful to the academics who created the Global Leadership Initiative!”

Mihaela

There’s the exciting opportunity to learn a new language, either as part of your degree or alongside it. Our Languages for All programme gives you the chance to learn a new language or enhance existing language skills. This includes a wide range of European languages, including Italian, Portuguese, Russian and Czech; as well as languages you may never have had a chance to study before, such as Japanese, Mandarin, Korean and Arabic.

“I want a career in international politics, so languages are essential! I chose to learn French, because it’s a working language of the UN and the EU, as well as many international aid organisations – just think of Médecins Sans Frontières. It also means I can read the UN’s French news centre, and listen to EU politicians like Jean-Claude Juncker during my studies.”

Evelyn

On most of our courses you can apply to study for part of your degree abroad, at one of our partner universities.

The University’s two schemes, Study Abroad and Erasmus+, give you opportunities across Europe, Australia, Canada, East Asia and the USA.

You also have the opportunity to upgrade to a Degree with International Experience on most degrees. This gives you an extra year in the middle of your degree to take a placement – studying, working, or teaching – abroad. You don’t have to decide now – you can take up the option once you’re here.
Transform your future.
Experience for a bright career.

We know that the way to make the best start as a graduate is to already have valuable transferable skills and employment experience. That’s why, alongside your academic study, we give you the opportunities to leave Sheffield with the very best employment experience.

We give you the skills to stand out. Our innovative teaching gives you the skills modern employers are looking for, especially through our core Political Analysis modules. We make sure you’ll have experience including team-work with people from a range of academic backgrounds, important IT skills such as developing websites and using specialist research software, and public presentation skills. You’ll also learn how to make practical use of statistics to provide and analyse evidence to make strong and coherent arguments.

Another option is to take your course as a Degree with Employment Experience. This lets you add an extra placement year in the middle of your degree. You might want to do something directly relevant to your studies – perhaps working in Parliament – or find a placement in another sector where you want to build a career. You don’t have to decide now – you can take up the option once you’re here.

In your final year you can also choose to write a Work-Based Learning Dissertation. This special option gives you the chance to work closely with an outside organisation to conduct research that they really need. It’s a great thing to put on your CV—proving you can apply your Politics degree in a real work-place setting. Previous examples include advising a UK housing association on the impact of welfare changes and working with a US multi-national company to lobby the EU.

The University also offers a range of employment and enterprise modules that you can take as part of your degree. With our expert Careers Service, you can opt to study more about graduate employment, and about enterprise, entrepreneurship and innovation.

So when we say the best employment experience – we mean it. Taking a degree at Sheffield will transform your future – preparing you so you’ll stand out when you start your career.

Joanne

“I’ll soon be joining the Business Intelligence team at JustEat, after working at a market research company specialising in higher education. It was my studies at Sheffield that gave me a real interest in quantitative research. I chose to write a Dissertation in Political Analysis, for which I received the YouGov prize – I was really pleased to get this recognition for my specialism in statistics. Being able to analyse and communicate data has been instrumental to my career.”

Anna

“As part of my Degree with Employment Experience, I completed a placement year with a leading management, engineering and development consultancy. As a result of my placement, I was offered a graduate position as a socio-economic researcher working for the same company, in the Economic and Social Development team. It’s because of the skills, experience and connections I gained on my degree at Sheffield that I got my career off to a flying start.”

Joe

“At Sheffield I gained a broad understanding into how things in the real world might actually fit together, coupled with sharp skills of enquiry. My career’s been with YouGov – the UK’s most-quoted research company. I was a founding director in 2000 and after a variety of senior positions - including two and half years in Baghdad as Director of YouGov’s operation in Iraq – I’m now leading the Political and Social Research team. My advice for university? Be prepared, be different, be resilient – but most importantly: do it all.”
Your next steps

So that’s us: the Department of Politics at the University of Sheffield. We hope you’ve got to know us better through this brochure.

If you want to visit us

We run two types of Open Day: University Open Days between June and October; you will be invited to one of our Department Open Days in February or March. If you can’t make an Open Day, you can arrange an Individual Visit. Find out more at:

www.sheffield.ac.uk/politics/study/undergraduate/visit

If you want more information

We said earlier that it’s a big decision choosing your degree course. We hope this brochure’s got you interested, intrigued and inspired – but you probably have a few more questions. You can find out even more about our courses online at:

www.sheffield.ac.uk/politics/study/undergraduate

If you want to apply

If Sheffield sounds like the place for you, then start your application. You should apply through the Universities and Colleges Admission Service, UCAS. We accept a wide range of UK and international qualifications, and full details – including entrance requirements and tuition fees – are on our website. Find out more at:

www.sheffield.ac.uk/politics/study/undergraduate/apply

If you want to get in touch

If there’s anything else you’d like to ask – please get in touch!
Katie Hunter, Undergraduate Recruitment and Admissions Officer, is your main point of contact. You can get in touch with Katie by email on katie.hunter@sheffield.ac.uk or by phone on +44 (0)114 222 1641.

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Twitter.com/shefunipolitics

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While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information in this prospectus, the University can accept no responsibility for any errors or omissions. The content of our courses is reviewed annually to make sure it’s up-to-date and relevant. This is in response to discoveries through our world-leading research; funding changes; professional accreditation requirements; student or employer feedback; outcomes of reviews; and variations in staff or student numbers. Changes may be made to modules, courses, entry requirements and fees between the date of publication and the start of your course.

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