

UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS
SCHOOL OF POLITICS AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

UNDERGRADUATE ADMISSIONS POLICY
2019

This document outlines the School of Politics and International Studies (POLIS) Admissions Policy for 2019 entry. It supports the admissions principles and policies of the University of Leeds, as outlined in the [University of Leeds Undergraduate Admissions Policy](#) and should be considered alongside this document. This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis.

The School of Politics and International Studies (POLIS) Admissions Policy applies to the following programmes:

Single Honours

- **BA Politics** (L200) (*from which it is possible to transfer to BA Politics (International) / BA Politics (Industrial) or BA Politics and Parliamentary Studies*)*
- **BA International Relations** (L254) (*from which it is possible to transfer to BA International Relations (International) or BA International Relations (Industrial)*)*
- **BA International Development** (L920) (*from which it is possible to transfer to BA International Development (International) or BA International Development (Industrial) and to BA International Development (Period Abroad) (from which it is possible to transfer to BA International Development (Period Abroad) (International) or BA International Development (Period Abroad) (Industrial)*)*

NB: it is also possible to transfer from any of the above courses to a BA Politics/International Relations/International Development *with Quantitative Research Methods*

Joint Honours

- **BA Economics and Politics** (LL12) (*from which it is possible to transfer to BA Economics and Politics (International) or BA Economics and Politics (Industrial)*)

* These courses are available part time, see section 3.15 for information about how to apply.

1. Principles

The School of Politics and International Studies (POLIS) ensures that the selection process provides equal consideration for applicants who apply by the relevant closing date. All selection decisions are made on the basis of merit and the ability of each applicant to meet the academic and non-academic criteria for admission to the relevant programme of study.

2. Selection principles

The School of Politics and International Studies (POLIS) will treat all applicants fairly and not discriminate unlawfully on grounds of their age; disability; gender; gender identity; pregnancy or maternity status; race; religion or belief; or sexual orientation.

3. Application process

3.1 UCAS process

All full time undergraduate applications must be made through the online Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (www.ucas.com) by 15th January.

With the exception of **BA Economics and Politics (LL12)**, the School of Politics and International Studies (POLIS) might accept applications after the initial UCAS closing date, however it is recommended that the applicant contact us prior to making an application to check. The School of Politics and International Studies (POLIS) does participate in the UCAS Extra scheme.

3.2 Access to Leeds and Realising Opportunities scheme

We are committed to identifying all applicants who have the potential to succeed at the University of Leeds. Applicants who meet two or more of the following criteria are eligible to apply for the Access to Leeds scheme:

- From a household with an annual income of £25,000 or below OR in receipt of 16-19 Bursary Fund or Discretionary Learner Support with income threshold of £25,000, OR in receipt of free school meals during their GCSE studies
- In the first generation of their immediate family to apply to higher education
- Attends, or has attended, a school which achieved less than the national average Attainment 8 score at GCSE
- Only option is to attend a local university
- Studies disrupted by circumstances in their personal, social or domestic lives
- Live in a geographical area with low levels of progression onto higher education
- Living or grew up in public care.

Access to Leeds applicants receive special consideration from admissions tutors and those who receive an offer are given an alternative offer alongside their standard offer.

The alternative offer will be conditional upon successfully completing the Access to Leeds module and making the University of Leeds their firm choice as well as:

- a reduction of two A Level grades (across two of three A levels, if taken),
- OR
- an equivalent reduction where alternative qualifications are offered.

(Any specific subjects required for a course will still be included in any offer made and may not receive a reduction)

Access to Leeds students are eligible for an Access to Leeds offer if they meet the University's GCSE matriculation standard and, for courses which require particular subject skills, have gained at least a GCSE grade C/4 (or equivalent) in the requested subject area, although many applicants to highly selective courses present with higher than the minimum GCSE requirements. Please see the [Access to Leeds webpage](#) for more information.

Applicants already participating in the Realising Opportunities scheme receive the same additional consideration and alternative offer as Access to Leeds applicants.

Applicants who do not meet the standard entry criteria for an offer but are Access to Leeds eligible will be considered for an offer that is “Access to Leeds only” and require successful completion of the Access to Leeds module in order to have their place confirmed. Such applicants must meet the University’s GCSE matriculation standard and, for courses which require particular subject skills, have gained at least GCSE grade C/4 (or equivalent) in the requested subject area.

The Access to Leeds scheme is not appropriate for applicants who already hold a Higher Education qualification or those taking an Access to Higher Education or foundation qualification.

3.3 Deferred applications/ Gap-Year

The School of Politics and International Studies (POLIS) will accept applications for deferred entry. We welcome applications from applicants who are intending to undertake a Gap Year. We encourage such applicants to make use of the personal statement section of the UCAS application form to explain their reasons for taking a Gap Year.

Applicants who wish to defer following the submission of their application may be required to do so prior to the confirmation of a place. Please check the relevant faculty/school policy for details. For offer holders whose first language is not English, English language qualifications must also be valid at the revised start date.

Applicants may normally apply for deferred entry for one academic year only. If an applicant wishes to defer again, they must reapply and contact the Academic School.

3.4 Re-sits/ Re-applications

The School of Politics and International Studies (POLIS) will accept applications from applicants who have re-submitted applications and/or re-sat examinations.

Applicants who wish to reapply should contact the **School of Politics and International Studies** prior to making an application. Any decision on the eligibility of applicants who have previously held an offer of a place but failed to achieve the academic conditions at first attempt is an academic judgement. Such candidates should be aware that no guarantee can be given that another offer will be made, and that the conditions of any future offer may differ to those of the original.

3.5 Early Examinations

The School of Politics and International Studies (POLIS) recognises that some applicants may have studied a more flexible curriculum, where they have been able to progress through their educational development at an appropriate rate according to their ability, this may be as early GCSEs or A-levels (or equivalent) across three years.

Typically we would expect applicants to have completed three A-levels (or equivalent) in one sitting. If this has not been the case, then we advise the school provides further information as to reasons for this within the academic reference section of the UCAS form.

3.6 AS Levels

We recognise that some A-level students will no longer sit AS levels. This group will not be disadvantaged in the decision making process at Leeds.

3.7 Internal transfers

The School of Politics and International Studies will accept applications from applicants who wish to transfer internally from other programmes at the University of Leeds, providing places are available. Applicants are required to submit a personal statement, a reference from their current school and a note of their student ID number. There is no requirement to complete the current year of study and the entry requirements remain the same.

3.8 External transfers

The School of Politics and International Studies (POLIS) will accept applications from applicants who wish to transfer onto one of our courses from other institutions, providing places are available. Applicants are expected to meet the standard academic entry requirements.

3.9 Advanced Entry

The School of Politics and International Studies (POLIS) will accept applications from applicants who are seeking entry to the second year. All applications must be made through UCAS (insert deadlines). To be eligible the applicant must demonstrate:

- The first year entry requirements have been met
- Learning outcomes of year 1 of the relevant programme against which advanced standing is sought have been met
- Achieve a minimum 60% average in the first year study

Judgements on equivalence are made by the Admissions Tutor. Entry onto Level 3 of the School of Politics and International Studies (POLIS) is not permitted.

Further details of the University's policy can be found [on our webpage](#).

3.10 Former students of the University

The University of Leeds welcomes applications from candidates who have previously studied at this institution. Where appropriate, such candidates may be able to apply for Advanced Entry (see 3.9 above).

Candidates who have been withdrawn from their earlier studies due to academic failure may apply for re-entry to the University, but not to the same or a closely related programme of

study, i.e. where over half of the compulsory modules are identical. Candidates who previously left the University due to non-academic reasons e.g. ill health, financial reasons, will not be subject to this condition.

Applications from candidates who have been permanently excluded (expelled) from the University for disciplinary reasons, those who have been excluded under the Referred Student Procedure or for reasons of misconduct or fitness to train in a professionally-regulated discipline will be rejected. Applicants should contact the school for further information.

3.11 Joint Honours applications

The University of Leeds offers the most varied selection of two-subject degrees in the country. For the current range of Joint Honours programmes offered within the School of Politics and International Studies (POLIS) please refer to the [School's webpage](#) for further information and entry requirements.

3.12 Extended degree programmes

Where applicants do not have the formal qualifications for immediate entry to a degree course, progression may be possible through one of the University's extended degree programmes with foundation year. Please see Appendix A of the University of Leeds undergraduate admissions policy, or the [Lifelong Learning Centre website](#) for details.

Progression from BA Social Science (L301) Foundation Degree

Students that complete level 0 of this programme are considered as internal applicants and do not need to complete a UCAS application. The standard offer for School of POLIS programmes is a Pass with 60% overall.

3.13 International/ Overseas students

Teaching, assessment and student support will take place in English, unless otherwise stated. For this reason the University and the Schools must be confident that candidates have the proficiency in English language necessary to succeed on the chosen programme of study and that they meet the UKVI minimum requirements to obtain a Tier 4 visa.

All applications from international students are considered in line with our standard entrance requirements, (typically expressed as GCE A-level qualifications) and we would expect predicted grades to be of an equivalent level. Proof of English Language proficiency will be required and minimum levels and approved tests for the School of Politics and International Studies (POLIS) are detailed below:

- A grade C or 4 in GCSE English Language or equivalent qualification
- IELTS: 6.5, with no less than 6.0 in each component.
- TOEFL (internet-based test): 92 with not less than 21 in listening, 21 in reading, 23 in speaking and 22 in writing.

All applicants require a minimum level of English in order to meet our matriculation standards. Applicants for whom English is not their first language may require an additional English language qualification to gain entry to the University of Leeds and will be made an offer which is conditional on successful completion of one of the approved tests, or alternatively one of the University of Leeds pre-session English language courses. A list of applicants who are not required to undertake further English language tests can be found on our [Language Centre website](#)

Certain qualifications, e.g. IELTS, have a 2 year validity period and must be valid at the commencement of studies. Information for international applicants can be found on the University of [Leeds International Students webpages](#) and our [international equivalency requirements webpage](#).

Overseas applicants and applicants from non-EU countries should note that student visa regulations will not normally allow study on a part-time basis.

3.14 Mature applicants

Mature students, those who will be over 21 at the point of entry, wishing to study on a full-time basis should apply using standard UCAS procedure (See [section 3.1](#)). Applicants are assessed on the basis of their UCAS form, as detailed in [section 4](#). An interview and/or piece of assessed written work/test may also be offered as part of the entry process.

Support is available through the Lifelong Learning Centre (LLC) and includes pre-entry advice, guidance and preparatory programmes for adults, developing academic skills before entry and information on a range of issues relevant to such applicants. For further details, contact: lifelonglearning@leeds.ac.uk, phone 0113 343 3212 or see www.llc.leeds.ac.uk.

3.15 Part-time applicants

The School of Politics and International Studies (POLIS) offers [some programmes](#) on a part-time basis. Applications for part-time undergraduate study should be made directly to the Lifelong Learning Centre rather than through UCAS.

Support is available through the Lifelong Learning Centre (LLC) and includes pre-entry advice, guidance and preparatory programmes for adults, developing academic skills before entry and information on a range of issues relevant to such applicants. For further details, contact: lifelonglearning@leeds.ac.uk, phone 0113 343 3212 or see www.llc.leeds.ac.uk.

3.16 Age and Safeguarding

The University recognises someone's young age (if under 18) or safeguarding position may need to be taken into account. For full details of the University policy please see the University [Safeguarding Policy](#).

The School of Politics and International Studies (POLIS) does not currently have any age restrictions attached to any of our programmes.

3.17 Disabled applicants

The School of Politics and International Studies (POLIS) welcomes applications from disabled people¹. The University will make appropriate adjustments, with the aim of ensuring that disabled applicants have full and equal access to our admissions procedures and courses. Information about disability is not used when considering academic eligibility for the chosen programme of study. It is reviewed in order to identify the potential study-related support requirements, and the eligibility for disability-related support funding, so that the University can ensure the applicant is supported effectively on the course.

Applicants are invited to indicate their disability status on their application form and we strongly encourage applicants to declare any disability. The University will always aim to make appropriate adjustments for disabled applicants. However, applicants who choose not to declare their disability should be aware that it may be more difficult, or in rare cases impossible, to make the appropriate adjustments. Disabled applicants are also advised to contact the University's Disability Services team (part of the University's Student Education Service) once an application has been submitted through UCAS, to discuss any support requirements they may have in relation to the programme for which they have applied. Disability Services can be contacted at disability@leeds.ac.uk.

If any applicant feels that their disability has meant that they have faced exceptional circumstances which should be taken into account by the University when considering their application, they should refer to section 4.11 of the [University's Undergraduate admissions policy](#)

The admissions process is covered by the University's Policy on Equality and Inclusion which is available from the [University's Equality Policy Unit](#).

3.18 Applicants with a health-related issue or other mitigating circumstances

The University of Leeds [Undergraduate Admissions Policy](#) details our policy concerning applicants with a health related issue or additional support needs. The School sees health-related issues² as being distinct from disability-related issues, although, of course, in some cases, a disabled applicant may also have a health-related issue.

If a candidate feels that any disability, prior ill-health –or personal circumstances other than ill-health (for example, bereavement or other difficult home or family circumstances) –may have affected their **previous** education, or may have affected the grades they received in past examinations, then they are welcome to contact the School to discuss this further. All formal requests for mitigating circumstances to be taken into account in the admissions process should be supported by a full declaration about the nature of the circumstances.

¹ The University is committed to the social model of disability and in line with the definition under the Equality Act 2010 defines a disabled person as someone with a physical or mental impairment which is long-term (lasting 12 months or more) and which has a substantial impact on that person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. The definition of disability includes long-term medical conditions such as cancer, HIV/AIDS and MS (in each case from the point of diagnosis) and may include epilepsy, diabetes, Chronic Fatigue Syndrome/ME amongst others.

² Which are not classed as a "disability".

Where these circumstances are affecting or have affected **current** studies the correct course of action would be to notify the relevant exam board of the circumstances. Whilst the applicant is welcome to notify (via a verified statement) the relevant admissions office of the circumstances, the University will assume that the relevant exam board will take the circumstances into consideration and any mitigating circumstances have been taken into account in the final grades. These final grades are what will be used when making a decision.

3.19 Guidance for trans applicants

Applicants who do not wish to disclose their trans status to the faculty/school admissions team for a programme of study but require their status to be changed should contact the Taught Admissions Office taught-admissions@leeds.ac.uk and the team will be able to support the applicant through the process. The University will be required to carry out identity checks as part of the registration process, and/or taught admissions staff may be required to advise the relevant Faculty Admissions Manager of a status change in order to facilitate removal of any previous documentation, however these will be undertaken confidentially and with sensitivity. Full guidance to support trans staff and students can be found on [Equality Policy Unit website](#).

3.20 Support of applicants who are pregnant

In line with the University policy on support for students who are pregnant or have young children (available from [the Equality Policy Unit website](#)), applicants who are pregnant are advised to inform their Admissions Tutor at an early stage. This is so that consideration can be given to appropriate support being available from the start of their programme of study.

3.21 Criminal convictions

The University has a policy statement on students with criminal records. This Policy includes applicants seeking admission. It should be noted that if an applicant is required to disclose a criminal offence and fails to do so this will generally be considered a very serious matter and is likely to lead to their application being rejected or, if they have registered as a student, to their registration at the University being revoked. Having a prior criminal record will not necessarily prevent an applicant from being offered a place; this may depend, for example, on the nature, timing and relevance of the criminal offence in question. The University may request further information about the nature or context of an applicant's criminal record.

Where indicated in the prospectus or on the University's website, specific programmes may involve regular access to children and/or vulnerable adults, and applicants may be required to undertake with satisfactory results, certain checks with the Disclosure and Barring Service. The University will send further instructions as part of the admissions process where this is the case.

Section 4: Admissions Requirements

4.1 Admissions intake

Details are given below of the typical annual intake through UCAS for each programme within the School. The figure given is for home students, including mature students and those from the European Union. International fee-paying students are considered separately and are not included in these figures.

Programme	Places	Applications
BA Politics	61	670
BA International Relations	57	610
BA International Development	27	275
BA Economics and Politics	18	210

4.2 Competition for places

Programmes within the School of Politics and International Studies (POLIS) are generally very popular and we receive in excess of 1760 for the 163 places available.

4.3 Selection process

All applications must be made online through the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (www.ucas.com). Academic grades normally form only one part of the final decision and the following sections give examples of how applicants may demonstrate that they have the skills, knowledge and attributes that we believe will enable them to become successful students on our degree programmes.

The selection criteria will be applied ensuring that we treat all students fairly and not discriminate unlawfully on grounds of their age; disability; gender; gender identity; pregnancy or maternity status; race; religion or belief; or sexual orientation.

The admissions process is covered by the University's Policy on Equality and Inclusion which is available from the [Equality Policy Unit website](#).

4.4 Academic entrance requirements

The School of Politics and International Studies (POLIS) welcomes applications from applicants studying a range of Level 3 equivalent qualifications where students have the potential to succeed on their chosen degree course.

Please see the [School's webpage](#) for the programme list of entry requirements and accepted qualifications. The School of Politics and International Studies (POLIS) sets its entry requirements to ensure success on its programmes. For this reason requirements may differ between programmes and to the minimum/guideline qualification equivalencies set out in Appendix A of the University Admissions Policy.

We recognise the value, effort and enthusiasm applicants make in the Extended Project and may include it as part of an alternative conditional offer.

Entrance requirements may be reviewed and amended at the end of an admissions cycle based on the performance of the previous year's cohort.

The School of Politics and International Studies (POLIS) does not accept Level 2 Functional Skills English in lieu of GCSE English.

4.5 Personal statement advice

The personal statement of the UCAS form helps us to assess the nature of the applicant's interest in the academic subject and is an important part of the selection process. Accurate spelling and grammar are of paramount importance. It is essential that applicants take this opportunity to demonstrate their enthusiasm and aptitude for the academic subject. We wish to hear about:

- Interest in and commitment to the subject
- Social and cultural awareness
- Responsibility
- Non-academic interests and activities

4.6 Interviews

Interviews do not form part of our standard admissions process, however, in some cases, non-standard applicants may be invited for an interview.

Some applicants (for example, disabled applicants, applicants who are pregnant, etc.) will require adjustments at interview (for example, a sign-language interpreter or an adjustment to an audition process) to provide them with full and equal access to the process. The School is responsible for making reasonable adjustments where possible. The University's Disability Services team should be consulted for further advice or information regarding disability related adjustments (email disability@leeds.ac.uk) and the Equality Policy Unit for advice on other adjustments (email equality@leeds.ac.uk).

Section 5: Offers

Offers are made on the basis of merit and the ability of each applicant to meet the academic and non-academic criteria for admission to the relevant programme of study. Offers are made based on the information supplied on the UCAS form and performance at interview where applicable (see section above). The University of Leeds [Undergraduate Admissions Policy](#) gives further detail on the type of offers that are made.

5.1 Confirmation

Each offer is specific to an applicant's individual qualifications and circumstances. Applicants must typically meet the conditions set by the University by 31 August of the application year

unless otherwise stated in the prescribed course or professional body requirements, even if the offer is deferred for entry to the following application year.

5.2 Course start date and arrival

The course start date is indicated clearly in the offer letter alongside the period of study and applicants must ensure that they are able to attend their course from this date. The University reserves the right to refuse admission to those offer holders who arrive after this date. Should there be any possibility of a delay to arrival, offer holders should seek advice from the appropriate School admissions office before travelling.

5.3 Re-marks

The School of Politics and International Studies (POLIS) may not be able to confirm a place in the upcoming academic cycle following an improved final grade after a re-mark, however applicants may be offered a deferred place or asked to reapply.

5.4 Deferred applicants

Where a deferred applicant does not meet the conditions of their offer they may not have their place confirmed.

5.5 Unsuccessful applications

Due to the volume of applications received we may have to reject students who already hold or are predicted lower than the typical academic entry requirement, and also many students who meet the non-academic requirements. The UCAS forms of applicants who are unsuccessful in gaining a place on their chosen programme may be passed to the admissions tutors for other courses in which the applicant may be interested.

5.6 Feedback

Unsuccessful applicants may wish to request feedback on the reason for the outcome of their application. All requests for feedback must be made in writing or via email to the relevant **Student Education Admissions Officer** and signed by the applicant or from the email address listed on their UCAS form. Generally where applicants request feedback on why they have not been admitted, feedback will be given.

5.7 Complaints

The School of Politics and International Studies (POLIS) will consider all applications fairly and effectively in line with the procedures outlined in this document and the University of Leeds **Undergraduate Admissions Policy**.

Applicants who wish to challenge a decision to reject their application should write to Professor Jason Ralph, Head of School of POLIS, j.d.ralph@leeds.ac.uk tel: 01133434429, detailing the nature of their complaint. The complaint must typically be made within 14 days

of the decision. Full details of the complaints procedure can be found in the University of Leeds [Undergraduate Admissions Policy](#).

Section 6: Opportunities to visit

6.1 University open days

The University of Leeds Undergraduate Open Days are usually held in June, September and October and are designed for prospective applicants rather than those who have already been made an offer. Details can be found on our [open day webpage](#).

6.2 Offer Holder days

All applicants to whom we have made offers are invited to attend a School of Politics and International Studies (POLIS) applicant visit day. Attendance is not compulsory and does not form part of the selection process. The purpose of the offer holder day is to enable applicants to familiarise themselves with the department and the programme of study in order that they are able to make an informed choice about whether or not to accept their offer. Unless the applicant is specifically informed in advance, they will not be required to undertake an interview as part of this visit.

Section 7: Scholarships & funding

The University of Leeds currently offers a wide range of scholarships and bursaries that provide funding for students to undertake undergraduate study at the University. Further details can be found on our [webpages](#).

Section 8: Contact details

8.1 General pre-application enquiries

For general enquiries and information relating to courses and admission to the University of Leeds, applicants should contact the Course Enquiries Office

Admissions Enquiries,
University of Leeds,
Leeds,
LS2 9JT
Telephone - +44 (0) 113 343 2336
Email - study@leeds.ac.uk
Web - www.leeds.ac.uk/undergraduate

8.2 Post-application enquiries

Admissions enquiries specific to the School of Politics and International Studies (POLIS) should be directed to

UK/EU applications

Julie Fisher
Senior Student Education Officer (Admissions)
Faculty Admissions Office
Beech Grove House
University of Leeds
Leeds, LS2 9JT

Tel: 0113 343 5049
Email – ugpolis@leeds.ac.uk

International applications

Student Education Officer (Admissions)
Faculty Admissions Office
Beech Grove House
University of Leeds
Leeds, LS2 9JT

Email: ugintessl@leeds.ac.uk

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S Haines 26/04/2018
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