

# PO135-15 Exploring International Security

**26/27**

**Department**

Politics & International Studies

**Level**

Undergraduate Level 1

**Module leader**

Veronica Barfucci

**Credit value**

15

**Module duration**

10 weeks

**Assessment**

100% coursework

**Study location**

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

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## Description

### Introductory description

PO135: Exploring International Security introduces students to the study of security in world politics. The module examines how security threats are identified, interpreted, governed, and contested across a range of contemporary issues. Rather than treating security as a fixed or self-evident concept, it asks how different actors define insecurity, whose security is prioritised, and what political consequences follow from particular security practices.

The module is designed as an introduction to key debates in International Security. It combines conceptual foundations with research-led engagement with contemporary cases. Topics vary from year to year in order to reflect current developments in world politics and the research expertise available within the Department. Indicative themes may include war and intervention, counter-terrorism and counter-extremism, environmental security, border security and migration, far-right extremism, everyday and vernacular security, gender and political violence, and regional or great-power security strategies.

By the end of the module, students will have been introduced to the analytical tools required to study security critically and empirically. They will be encouraged to move beyond common-sense understandings of threat and to evaluate how security is produced through institutions, ideas, practices, technologies, and historical contexts.

## Module aims

The module aims to introduce students to the study of International Security as a major field within Politics and International Studies. It is designed to give students a broad understanding of how security has been conceptualised, practised, and contested in contemporary world politics.

The module aims to enable students to:

- understand major concepts, approaches, and debates in International Security;
- analyse contemporary security issues using appropriate theoretical and empirical tools;
- evaluate how different actors construct, prioritise, and respond to security threats;
- connect security practices to wider questions of power, legitimacy, inequality, violence, and governance;
- develop the foundations required for more advanced study in International Security, International Relations, and related areas of political analysis.

The module also aims to expose students to research-led teaching within the Department. Its content may change each year to reflect contemporary security developments and staff research expertise, while retaining a coherent focus on the core question of how security is understood and practised in world politics.

## Outline syllabus

This is an indicative module outline only to give an indication of the sort of topics that may be covered. Actual sessions held may differ.

The precise content of the module may vary from year to year in order to reflect contemporary developments in International Security and research-led teaching within the Department. Indicative topics may include:

1. Introduction to International Security: concepts, cases, and controversies
2. War, intervention, and the politics of international order
3. Grand strategy, regional security, and great-power politics
4. Environmental security and climate-related insecurity
5. Terrorism, counter-terrorism, and counter-extremism
6. Reading week
7. Far-right extremism, radicalisation, and political violence
8. Everyday, vernacular, and human security
9. Borders, migration, and the politics of insecurity
10. Gender, violence, and participation in armed conflict

## Learning outcomes

By the end of the module, students should be able to:

- Demonstrate a basic understanding of how international relations and international security (IR/IS) contributes to the study of politics as a whole.
- Demonstrate a basic knowledge of different approaches to the study of IR/IS, including a

critical awareness of ideational approaches and the role of ideas in global society.

- Be able to relate scholarly literature theorising IR/IS and actual contemporary political developments including very topical events.
- Be able to make informed comparisons of various strengths and weaknesses of different IR/IS approaches.

## Indicative reading list

[Reading lists can be found in Talis](#)

## Subject specific skills

TBC

## Transferable skills

Written communication skills

Oral communication skills

Problem-solving skills

Skills in the use of information technology

Skills of interpretation and the critical analysis of primary and secondary sources

Awareness and sensitivity to diversity (in terms of people, cultures) and the ability to understand unfamiliar ideas and ways of thinking

the ability to digest, retain and apply complex information and ideas

Ability to conduct research and reference their work appropriately

Time management skills and the ability to meet deadlines

The ability to reflect critically on the extent and limitations of how and what they have learned, discovered and understood

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## Study

### Study time

Type	Required
Lectures	9 sessions of 1 hour (6%)
Seminars	9 sessions of 1 hour (6%)
Private study	132 hours (88%)
Total	150 hours

### Private study description

TBC

## Costs

No further costs have been identified for this module.

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## Assessment

You must pass all assessment components to pass the module.

Students can register for this module without taking any assessment.

### Assessment group A3

	Weighting	Study time	Eligible for self-certification
<b>Assessment component</b>			
Assessed Essay A 2,500-word essay.	100%		Yes (extension)

Reassessment component is the same

### Feedback on assessment

Essay feedback will be returned within 20 working days of essay submission

Formative and summative feedback will be provided in accordance with standard PAIS practice.

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## Availability

### Courses

This module is Optional for:

- Year 1 of UECA-LM1D Undergraduate Economics, Politics and International Studies
- Year 1 of UPOA-M102 Undergraduate Global Politics (with Integrated Year Abroad at Brussels School of Governance, VUB)
- Year 1 of UPHA-V7ML Undergraduate Philosophy, Politics and Economics
- Year 1 of UPOA-M100 Undergraduate Politics
- Year 1 of UPOA-M164 Undergraduate Politics, International Studies and German
- Year 1 of UPOA-M162 Undergraduate Politics, International Studies and Quantitative Methods

This module is Unusual option for:

- Year 1 of UPHA-V7ML Undergraduate Philosophy, Politics and Economics

This module is Core option list B for:

- Year 1 of UPHA-V5L2 Undergraduate Philosophy and Politics

This module is Option list A for:

- Year 1 of UPHA-V7ML Undergraduate Philosophy, Politics and Economics
- Year 1 of UPOA-M100 Undergraduate Politics
- Year 1 of UPOA-M16A Undergraduate Politics and International Studies
- Year 1 of UPOA-M164 Undergraduate Politics, International Studies and German

This module is Option list B for:

- USOA-L301 BA in Sociology
  - Year 1 of L305 Sociology with Specialism in Cultural Studies
  - Year 1 of L303 Sociology with Specialism in Gender Studies
  - Year 1 of L304 Sociology with Specialism in Research Methods
  - Year 1 of L302 Sociology with Specialism in Social Policy