



immerse  
EDUCATION

# International Relations

SYLLABUS OVERVIEW

16-18 YEARS OLD

INSPIRING MINDS SINCE  
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IMMERSE EDUCATION

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## About the Programme

The aim of these introductory programmes is to provide participants with academically challenging content in a classroom environment based on the university style of learning. Through academic sessions, the programmes also offer young students unique and valuable insights into what it would be like to study their chosen subject at an advanced level.

This Syllabus Overview provides a summary of the topics and subject areas that participants can encounter during their studies with Immerse. It has been carefully created by our expert tutors who are members of faculty at world-leading universities, and who have experience in teaching undergraduate students.

## Academic Sessions

The academic sessions at Immerse are arranged into modules to enable participants to explore a broad range of topics over the course of their programme. The modules included in this syllabus overview are indicative but not prescriptive.

Tutors are encouraged to include their own specialisms and also focus on any particular areas of interest expressed by participants within the class. They may choose to provide further detail on a specific topic, or they may include new material and information that builds on the knowledge already developed during the programme.





## Personal Project

Each programme includes an element of individual work, generally termed the 'Personal Project'. This can take many forms but is commonly an essay or presentation delivered on the final day of the programme. Participants will receive feedback on this work which may also be mentioned in the participant evaluation which is provided in writing by the tutor once the programmes have ended.



## Preparatory work

Some tutors may ask participants to complete some preparatory work, such as reading or a series of exercises in advance of the programme. Participants are strongly encouraged to complete this work since it will be included in the opening sessions of the programme. Any preparatory tasks will be provided in advance of the programme directly to the participant.

## Academic Difficulty

As all of our programmes are designed to provide a unique introduction to advanced material, the syllabus will be academically challenging at times.

This is something to be excited about and all of our tutors will encourage and support participants throughout the programme. Immerse Education aims to develop every participant regardless of ability, and our tutors will adapt their teaching to individual needs.

# Aim of the International Relations Programme

The Immerse Education International Relations programme is designed to provide participants with insight into what international relations is, and what it would be like to study this broad discipline at university. Participants are encouraged to explore new material in-depth and to form independent and considered opinions and ideas based on sound research and practical knowledge. By the end of the programme, participants will have a good understanding, not only of university-level content, but also the variety of degree programmes available in subjects related to international relations. Beyond this, participants will also explore the career opportunities available to graduates in this field.



# Introduction to International Relations

This session will serve as an introduction to the field of international relations and examine the different disciplines that this encompasses. We will first look at the main goals, concepts, and ideas in the field of international relations that will be encountered in detail throughout the programme and discuss the place of international relations in the overall disciplines of political and social sciences. Participants will be encouraged to contribute their own suggestions to the following questions: What is international relations, who are its principal actors, where did it come from and what does it aim to do?

# Competing Twins: Realism and Liberalism

This session explores the two foundational approaches to international relations. Realism and liberalism are important schools of thought that offer competing theories about how international politics works. Both schools largely agree that states are the primary actors in international politics, but disagree about the mechanisms that condition state behaviour. Realism understands states as utility-maximising actors that compete in an anarchic environment, which forces them to prioritise physical security above all else. Liberalism argues that international anarchy is variable and that it can be mediated through international cooperation, trade, and the existence of global norms and institutions. We explore the assumptions of both schools in view of concrete historical and contemporary examples.



# The Role of Ideas in International Relations

In this session participants will be introduced to constructivism through a series of case studies. We will compare and contrast the ideas behind constructivism with those of realism and liberalism, with participants contributing concrete examples in which the theories can be seen. We will explore the history of international relations theory by investigating the ideas of Hobbes and Locke and their influence on later political thinkers. This will culminate in participants researching and explaining Huntingtonian conflicts in international politics and peer-led debate concerning the theories we have so far encountered.

Unique Academic Enrichment Programmes





## Institutions in Practice: The United Nations and its Challengers

This session will look at the place of international organisations in a world that is largely dominated by nation-states (and if we take a long-term historical view: by empires and city-states). What is the role of international organisations in governing international politics? We will explore this question through an examination of the creation and functioning of the United Nations system. As we explore the context in which the United Nations was formed, we will also consider the motivations and contradictions that we identify in its constituent parts and varying functions.



# The Project of a United Nations

Five years after World War II had ended, France and Germany came up with a plan to ensure their two countries would never again risk waging war against each other. The result was a treaty signed in Rome, creating the European Economic Community in 1957 – the foundations of today's European Union. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the European Union in today's increasingly globalised world? This session will focus on understanding the internal structure of the European Union and assess its capabilities as a political actor in internal and external affairs.

Unique Academic Enrichment Programmes



# Change and Continuity in US Foreign Policy

The United States has been the world's pre-eminent superpower since the end of the Cold War. It has more military bases than any other country, it holds the world's biggest arsenal of nuclear weapons and it spends more on its military than any other country on the planet. This session will take a close look at the chief determinants of US foreign policy. We will assess what factors shape US foreign policy, whether these factors also matter for other countries and to what extent the direction of foreign policy can be changed by new presidents taking office in Washington DC.



# The Role of Technology in International Relations

Explore how advancements in technology, such as artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, and digital communication, are reshaping global diplomacy and cooperation. This session will discover the opportunities and challenges new technology presents in addressing international issues, from managing global crises to enhancing transparency in governance.



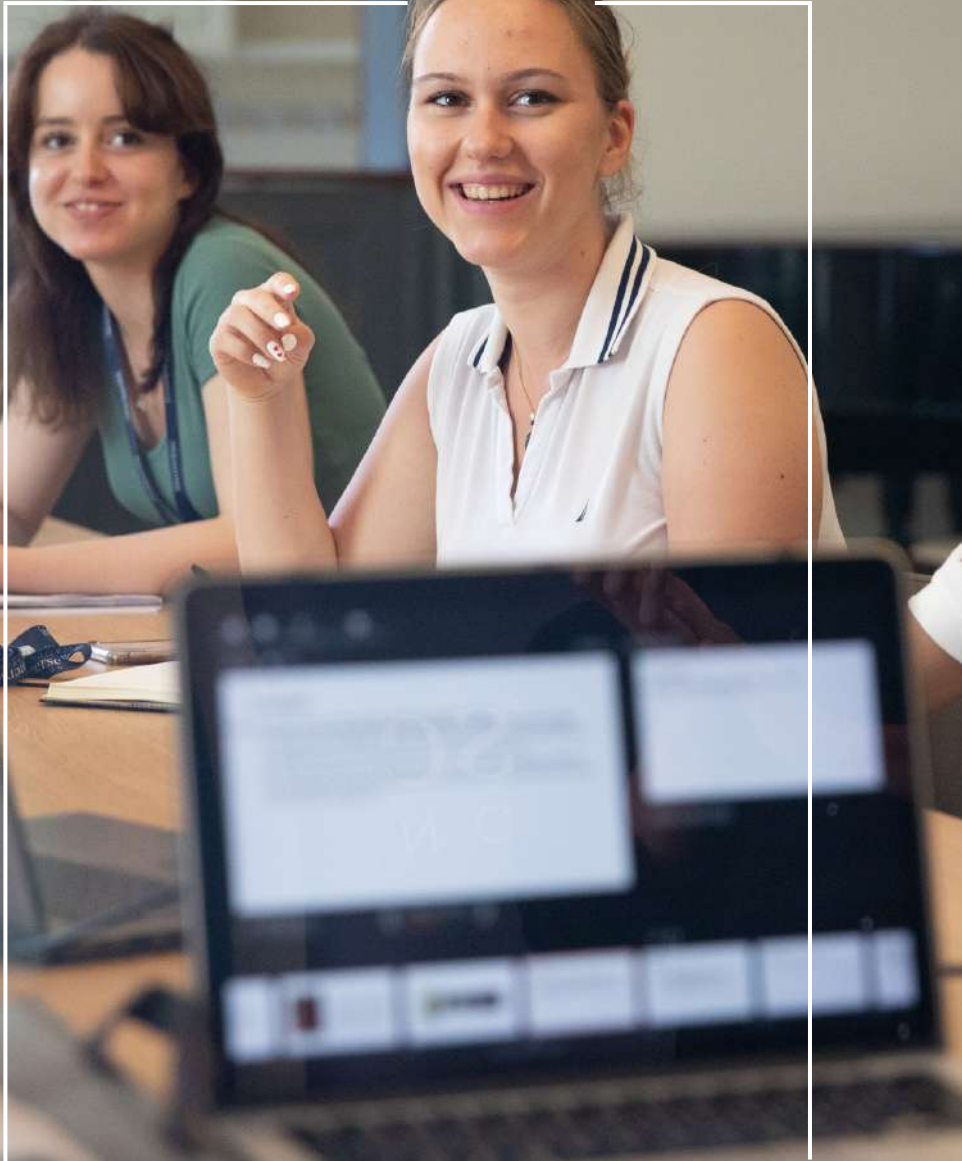
# Global Trade and Economic Interdependence

This module will cover the interconnected nature of the global economy and its role in international relations. Students will focus on topics such as international trade agreements, supply chain dynamics, and the impact of globalisation on developing and developed nations. Understand how economic policies shape alliances and drive competition among nations.

# Climate Diplomacy and Environmental Cooperation

Investigate how international cooperation addresses shared environmental challenges like climate change, biodiversity loss, and water security. Examine case studies of global agreements such as the Paris Climate Agreement and the role of international organisations in fostering collaboration to create sustainable solutions.





## Personal Project

Throughout the fortnight, participants will be working on their own personal project. Having been provided with a brief, participants should research and prepare a presentation for their peers. This will build upon an aspect of the theory that they have learnt over the course of the programme and is also an opportunity to showcase their ability to apply this to practical examples. The presentation is followed by questions from the audience and wider class discussion of particular points of interest. The tutor may also include feedback about the presentation in the written evaluation which is sent to participants after the programme has ended.



# Partnerships & Accreditation



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