Political and International Relations & related work
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Getting into the sector

The political and international relations sector includes many different occupations and employing organisations. It is possible to enter this field from a broad spectrum of degree subjects. Information on a range of job options for those specifically studying for a degree in politics and/or international relations can be found on-line at www.prospects.ac.uk in the Careers Advice “What can I do with my degree?” section.

Political and international relations work is a broad multi-disciplinary field and can overlap with work in many areas including administration, project management, finance, policy, research, media, communications, public relations, diplomacy, sustainability, human rights work, conflict resolution, peace building, humanitarian aid, international development, and work with refugees and asylum seekers.

This sector encompasses a wide range of jobs some of which may be suitable for generalists whilst others will require specialist knowledge/qualifications and training. The relevant skills, personal attributes and previous experience will vary depending on the types of work and requirements of individual posts. These may differ greatly depending on the hiring organisation and the job role. It tends to be a competitive sector to get into and you will need to consider the best ways to gain the experience and skills which may be required. Recruitment practices are different around the globe and some jobs may never be advertised being filled through personal contacts or internally to existing staff and volunteers.

Typical employers include a wide range of organisations at international, national and local level including Government, IGOs (Inter-Governmental Organisations), NGOs (Non-Governmental Organisations), Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) charities, consultancies, universities and research centres/institutes.
Job profiles and case studies

These can be useful sources of information often including entry requirements and suggestions for skills development, pre-entry experience as well as case studies. Examples include:

- Prospects website [www.prospects.ac.uk/links/occupations](http://www.prospects.ac.uk/links/occupations) occupational profiles for: Intelligence Analyst/Officer, International Aid/Development Worker, Government Social Research Officer, Politician’s Assistant, Public Affairs Consultant, Social Researcher and Trade Union Research Officer.
- Target Jobs [https://targetjobs.co.uk/careers-advice/job-descriptions](https://targetjobs.co.uk/careers-advice/job-descriptions) job descriptions for Political Party Agent, Political Party Research Officer and Trade Union Research Officer.
- Civil Service Fast Stream website has Fast Streamer profiles. [www.gov.uk/faststream](http://www.gov.uk/faststream)
- The National Careers Service website has profiles for Diplomatic Service Officer, European Union Official and a Member of Parliament (MP). [https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/advice/planning/jobfamily/Pages/default.aspx](https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/advice/planning/jobfamily/Pages/default.aspx)

Qualifications, training and experience

There is no set route for gaining the experience and/or further qualifications that may be required. Whilst a Masters degree may be helpful for some areas for others professional/vocational training and qualifications may be of greater importance. You will need to research and gain the experience, skills and knowledge needed in the area of work.
you wish to enter. Volunteering and work experience/internships can not only provide valuable insights but may be helpful for relevant pre-entry experience.

**Qualifications and training**

There are a number of UK University postgraduate programmes and research opportunities on offer in a range of subjects/disciplines related to the sector. At the University of Manchester these include:

▪ The School of Social Sciences [www.socialsciences.manchester.ac.uk/](http://www.socialsciences.manchester.ac.uk/) offers a comprehensive range of postgraduate courses covering subjects such as Politics and Economics.

▪ The Institute for Development Policy and Management (IDPM) the UK’s largest university-based postgraduate centre specialising in international development: [www.seed.manchester.ac.uk/subjects/idpm/postgraduatetaught](http://www.seed.manchester.ac.uk/subjects/idpm/postgraduatetaught)

▪ The Humanitarian and Conflict Response Institute (HCRI) [www.hcri.manchester.ac.uk/](http://www.hcri.manchester.ac.uk/) offers a range of study and research opportunities in the fields of humanitarianism, conflict responses, global health, international disaster management and peacebuilding.

Other study opportunities:

▪ Information about postgraduate study opportunities overseas [www.prospects.ac.uk/studying_abroad.htm](http://www.prospects.ac.uk/studying_abroad.htm)

▪ PLOTEUS (Portal on Learning Opportunities throughout the European Space) [http://ec.europa.eu/ploteus/home_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/ploteus/home_en.htm)

▪ For qualifications and training including languages and IT check out the Careers Service [www.manchester.ac.uk/careers/study/languagecourses/](http://www.manchester.ac.uk/careers/study/languagecourses/) and the National Careers Service websites [https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/advice/courses/whylearn/Pages/default.aspx](https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/advice/courses/whylearn/Pages/default.aspx)
- All eligible undergraduate students at The University of Manchester may be able to study overseas as part of their degree programme and the Study Abroad Unit can provide further information [www.manchester.ac.uk/undergraduate/courses/studyabroad/](http://www.manchester.ac.uk/undergraduate/courses/studyabroad/)
- The University Language Centre offers the opportunity to learn a language through the Language Experience for All Programme (LEAP) [www.langcent.manchester.ac.uk](http://www.langcent.manchester.ac.uk).

**Experience**

**Volunteering:**
- It is not unusual for people to start by undertaking volunteering/work experience/internships. These opportunities may be offered by a number of organisations listed in this briefing sheet. Please see individual organisation websites for details.
- For more information on volunteering see the Starting Point series hand-out on Volunteering available as a downloadable PDF [www.manchester.ac.uk/careers/startingpoints](http://www.manchester.ac.uk/careers/startingpoints) or to collect from the Careers Service.
- The volunteering website [www.do-it.org.uk](http://www.do-it.org.uk) enables a search for voluntary opportunities under categories such as Politics, Human & Civil Rights and International Aid. There may be opportunities available in North-West England.
- Opportunities exist for first degree students at The University of Manchester to engage in local community volunteering activities [www.manchester.ac.uk/volunteers](http://www.manchester.ac.uk/volunteers)
- The Manchester Leadership Programme (MLP) [www.manchester.ac.uk/mlp](http://www.manchester.ac.uk/mlp) which is a combination of an academic unit and volunteering provides an insight into some of the key challenges facing 21st century society.

**Other experience:**
An interest in political, current affairs and world news can be gained from various forms of media such as the major television and radio networks such as the BBC World Service, the internet including blogs and the press.
Some professional associations/societies (e.g. British International Studies Association and the Political Studies Association) have membership categories for students/graduates. Membership may confer the opportunity to attend events, participate in working groups, apply for awards/prizes and access specialist information resources.

Sources of information

Please note: This is not a fully comprehensive list of information resources and websites
The website links are used to provide further information and are not intended to signify that the University endorses such websites and/or their content. We cannot be held responsible for the recruitment practices and the ethos of the organisations listed.

Information Gateways/Resource Centres

- BBC Democracy Live – includes coverage of the House of Commons, House of Lords, Scottish Parliament, Welsh and Northern Ireland Assemblies and the European Parliament
  [http://news.bbc.co.uk/democracylive/hi/default.htm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/democracylive/hi/default.htm)
- DODS – political information, publishing and communications business
  [www.dods.co.uk](http://www.dods.co.uk)
- ICVA (International Council of Voluntary Agencies) – Global network of human rights, humanitarian and development NGOs
  [www.icva.ch](http://www.icva.ch)
- International Relations & Security Network (ISN) – open access information server for international relations and security professionals
  [www.isn.ethz.ch](http://www.isn.ethz.ch)
- OneWorld Group – on-line resource covering human rights and sustainable development
  [www.oneworldgroup.org](http://www.oneworldgroup.org)
Politics.co.uk – UK political news
www.politics.co.uk

Politicshome.com – political and parliamentary news
www.politicshome.com

Political Studies Association (PSA) Politics Portal
www.psa.ac.uk/politics

Prospects – graduate careers website includes a Jobs Sector profile on Government and Public Administration at
www.prospects.ac.uk/links/industries and a section on Working Abroad online at www.prospects.ac.uk/links/workabroad

Richard Kimber’s Political Science Resources including an International Relations section
www.politicsresources.net/

Social Platform – The Platform of European Social NGOs
www.socialplatform.org

Trades Union Congress includes a list of member organisations
www.tuc.org.uk

World Newspapers and Magazines
www.world-newspapers.com

The World Association of Non-Governmental Organisations (WANGO) – includes a link to the Worldwide NGO Directory
www.wango.org

Conflict Prevention and Resolution/Peace Building

• Alliance for Conflict Transformation (ACT)
  www.conflicttransformation.org

• Carnegie Endowment for International Peace
  www.carnegieendowment.org

• Conflict Resolution Information Source
  www.crinfo.org/

• Global Partnership for the Provision of Armed Conflict (GPPAC)
  www.gppac.net

• Global Peace Index (GPI)
  www.visionofhumanity.com
International Crisis Group – a NGO working to prevent and resolve conflict has information about global conflicts  
www.crisisgroup.org

International Peace Bureau  
www.ipb.org

Peace Brigades International – NGO promoting non-violence and protection of Human Rights  
www.peacebrigades.org

Diplomatic/International/Foreign Affairs
- Chatham House (The Royal Institute of International Affairs)  
www.chathamhouse.org/
- Directory of Embassies and Consulates of the World  
www.embassyworld.org/
- The European Union External Action (EEAS)  
http://eeas.europa.eu
- Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO) includes information on careers with Britain’s Diplomatic Service  
www.gov.uk/fco
- Foreign Policy Association – US non-profit organisation covering global issues  
www.fpa.org
- Foreign Policy Centre – UK independent foreign affairs think tank  
http://fpc.org.uk
- The WWW Virtual Library: International Affairs Resources  
www2.etown.edu/vl
- Careers Service Reference Books – full listing of all titles available through the Careers Service careers library catalogue at  
www.manchester.ac.uk/careers/library
  Titles include: Careers in International Affairs

Finance and related
- European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD)  
www.ebrd.com
- European Investment Bank (EIB)  
www.eib.org
• Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO)  
  www.fao.org
• OECD (Organisation for Economic Cooperation & Development)  
  www.oecd.org
• International Finance Corporation (part of the World Bank Group)  
  www.ifc.org
• International Monetary Fund (IMF)  
  www.imf.org
• UN Economic & Social Council (ECOSOC)  
  www.un.org/en/ecosoc
• World Bank Group  
  www.worldbank.org
• World Economic Forum  
  www.weforum.org

**Government**

UK Government, Parliament and related

• A – Z of central government departments, executive agencies and non-departmental public bodies  
  www.gov.uk/government/organisations Please note that webpages for ministerial departments are currently in the process of moving to www.gov.uk
• Civil Service  
  www.civilservice.gov.uk
• Civil Service Fast Stream  
  www.gov.uk/faststream
• The House Magazine – weekly Parliamentary magazine  
  www.politicshome.com/publications/the-house-magazine
• Parliamentary & Health Service Ombudsman (Manchester)  
  www.ombudsman.org.uk
• UK Government website listing public services  
  www.gov.uk
• UK Parliament – House of Commons and House of Lords  
  www.parliament.uk
Devolved Government

- Northern Ireland Executive
  www.northernireland.gov.uk
- The Scottish Government
  www.scotland.gov.uk
- Welsh Assembly Government
  http://wales.gov.uk
- Isle of Man Government
  www.gov.im
- States of Jersey
  www.gov.je
- States of Guernsey
  www3.gov.gg/ccm/portal

Local Government

- Greater London Authority
  www.london.gov.uk/
- Local Authorities including those in the North West
  www.gov.uk/find-your-local-council
- NGDP (National Graduate Development Programme) for Local Government in England & Wales
  www.ngdp.org.uk

Elections

- Association of Electoral Administrators
  www.aea-elections.co.uk/
- The Electoral Commission
  www.electoralcommission.org.uk
- Electoral Reform Society
  www.electoral-reform.org.uk/index.php
- UK Parliament – Elections
Human Rights and Humanitarian Aid/Emergency Relief Work
For more information about this area of work see the Starting Point series handout available to collect from the Careers Service or download as a PDF from: www.manchester.ac.uk/careers/startingpoints

- Human Rights Work
- Working in Humanitarian Aid/Emergency Relief Work

Inter-Governmental Organisations
European Union /European Commission
- Council of the European Union www.consilium.europa.eu
- European Commission including the Directorate General for Development and European Aid Co-operation Office http://ec.europa.eu
- European Commission Civil Service http://ec.europa.eu/civil_service

Regional
- African Union (AU) – Union of African states www.au.int
- ASEAN – Association of Southeast Asian Nations www.asean.org/
- Organization of American States (OAS) – organisation of independent states of the American continent www.oas.org
- South Centre – Intergovernmental Organisation of Developing Countries www.southcentre.org
- The Commonwealth – an association of over 50 independent states www.thecommonwealth.org
United Nations (UN)
- United Nations (UN) Home Page
  www.un.org
- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)
  www.unhcr.org
- United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA)
  www.unocha.org
- UN Agencies, including UNDP and UNICEF, have their own websites and this can be found via the main UN site. The individual sites provide details of recruitment including internships. The Junior Professional Officer (JPO) Programme is administered by the JPO Service Centre for a number of UN agencies including the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
  www.jposc.org
- United Nations Volunteers (UNV) Programme
  www.unv.org
- UN YouTube Channel
  www.youtube.com/user/unitednations

General information
- “A career in an International Organisation (IO) “ is available on the cinfoPoste website

Reference Books include:
- Careers in International Affairs
- Looking for work in International Organisations
- The No–Nonsense Guide to the United Nations

Full listing of all titles available through the Careers Library Catalogue at www.manchester.ac.uk/careers/library

International Development
For more information about this area of work see the Starting Point series handout – International & Overseas Development Work available to collect from the Careers Service or download PDF from www.manchester.ac.uk/careers/startingpoints

Media
For more information about this area of work see the Starting Point series handout – Journalism and Broadcasting including TV and Film available to collect from the Careers Service or download PDF from www.manchester.ac.uk/careers/startingpoints

Reference books include:
- So you want to be a Political Journalist?

A full listing of all titles available through the Careers Library Catalogue at www.manchester.ac.uk/careers/library

Politics and Public Affairs/Lobbying
- Association of Professional Political Consultancies www.appc.org.uk
- American Political Science Association (APSA) www.apsanet.org
- British Political Parties www.politicsresources.net/area/uk/bpp.htm
- Electus Start – careers information relating to working in politics and public affairs in the UK and EU www.electus-start.com
- Hansard Society – independent, non-partisan; political research and education charity www.hansardsociety.org.uk
- International Association for Political Science Students (IAPSS) www.iapss.org
- Political Studies Association (PSA) www.psa.ac.uk
The Public Affairs Network – resource for the public affairs, government relations, policy and communications industry
[www.publicaffairsnetworking.com](http://www.publicaffairsnetworking.com)

w4mp – Work for a MP website includes news, vacancies, details of training courses and the w4mp/Dods Guide to Working for a MP
[www.w4mp.org](http://www.w4mp.org)

**Reference books include:**
- How 2 Become a Politician
- So you want to be a Politician
- Hollis Public Relations Annual 2010 including Public Affairs

A full listing of all titles available through the Careers Library Catalogue at
[www.manchester.ac.uk/careers/library](http://www.manchester.ac.uk/careers/library)

**Refugees/Migration**
European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE) – an umbrella organisation of 80 refugee assisting agencies
[www.ecre.org](http://www.ecre.org)
- Forced Migration Online
  [www.forcedmigration.org](http://www.forcedmigration.org)
- IOM (International Organization for Migration) IGO working in the field of migration
  [www.iom.int](http://www.iom.int)
- Refugees International
  [www.refugeesinternational.org](http://www.refugeesinternational.org)
- UNHCR – United Nations Refugee Agency in the UK
  [www.unhcr.org.uk](http://www.unhcr.org.uk)
- Women’s Refugee Commission
  [www.womensrefugeecommission.org](http://www.womensrefugeecommission.org)

**Security/Intelligence**
- BASIC – British American Security Information Council
  [www.basicint.org](http://www.basicint.org)
- EUISS – European Union Institute for Security Studies
  www.iss.europa.eu
- EUROPOL – European Law Enforcement Organisation
  www.europol.europa.eu
- GCHQ
  www.gchq-careers.co.uk
- IHS Jane’s : Defence & Security Intelligence & Analysis
  www.ihs.com
- IISS – The International Institute for Strategic Studies
  www.iiss.org
- INTERPOL – International police organisation
  www.interpol.int
- NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization)
  www.nato.int
- Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) – Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights
  www.osce.org/odihr
- RUSI – Royal United Services Institute for Defence and Security Studies
  www.rusi.org
- The Security Service (MI5)
  www.mi5.gov.uk
- The Secret Intelligence Service (SIS)
  www.sis.gov.uk/
- United Nations Office on Drugs & Crime
  www.unodc.org/unodc/index.html

**Social Policy/Research**
- British Sociological Association
  www.britsoc.co.uk
- Government Social Research Service (GSR)
  www.civilservice.gov.uk/networks/gsr
- LARIA – Local Authorities Research and Intelligence Association
  http://laria.org.uk/
- National Centre for Social Research (NatCen)
  www.natcen.ac.uk
- Researcher Development Initiative
  www.rdi.ac.uk
- The Association for Qualitative Research (AQR)
  www.aqr.org.uk
- The Social Research Association includes a careers section
  www.the-sra.org.uk
- UK Social Policy Association (SPA)
  www.social-policy.org.uk

Reference books include:
Association of Qualitative Research (AQR) Directory and Handbook
A full listing of all titles available through the Careers Service careers library catalogue at www.manchester.ac.uk/careers/library

Think Tanks
- Alphabetical index on international think tanks on worldpress.org
  www.worldpress.org/library/ngo.cfm
- Foreign Policy Research Institute (FPRI) Online Security and International Affairs research and education Think Tank Directory
  www.fpri.org/research/thinktanks
- Policy Library – social, economic and foreign policy resources online. Directory of Think Tanks
  www.policylibrary.com
- TTDeurope – Think Tank Directory of key think tanks in the EU
  www.eu.thinktankdirectory.org

Third Sector
This is a term used to cover the voluntary, community and not-for-profit sectors.
For more information about this area of work see the Starting Point series handout – Working for a Charity or Community Organisation available to collect from the Careers Centre or download as a PDF from www.manchester.ac.uk/careers/startingpoints
Trade

- Agency for International Trade Information & Cooperation
  www.acici.org/aitic
- EFTA – The European Free Trade Association
  www.efta.int
- Ethical Trading Initiative
  www.ethicaltrade.org
- Fair Trade Federation (FTF)
  www.fairtradefederation.org
- Federation of International Trade Associations (FITA) – Global Trade Portal
  www.fita.org
- World Fair Trade Organisation
  www.wfto.com
- International Trade Centre
  www.intracen.org
- World Trade Organisation (WTO)
  www.wto.org

Sources of jobs

- CareersLink – Resources section
  Includes specialist job websites for ethical, human rights, policy and political jobs. Access through login into CareersLink, click on the Resources Section on left hand side. Click on Subscriptions and open up Specialist Job websites document and follow the instructions using the passwords to login to each website.
  www.manchester.ac.uk/careerslink
- cinfoPoste – online database for jobs in international cooperation
  www.cinfo.ch
- Civil Service Jobs Online
  www.civilservice.gov.uk/jobs
- Development Aid
  www.developmentaid.org
- Devex – Development and NGO jobs
www.devex.com/jobs

- Devnet Jobs – development jobs portal  
  www.devnetjobs.org

- EurActiv - EU related jobsite including NGOs and international organisations  
  http://jobs.euractiv.com

- Euro Brussels – European Affairs Jobsite  
  www.eurobrussels.com

- European Personnel Selection Office – for EU careers and jobs information  
  http://europa.eu/epso/index_en.htm

- Jobs.ac.uk – academic and research jobs  
  www.jobs.ac.uk

- Jobs Go Public  
  www.jobsgopublic.com

- Links to World Newspapers and Magazines  
  www.world-newspapers.com

- Local Government Talent: Jobs  
  www.lgjobs.com

- Local Government Chronicle Online (including a job section)  
  www.lgcplus.com

- New Internationalist  
  www.newint.org

- Opportunities – The Public Sector Recruitment Weekly (online)  
  www.opportunities.co.uk

- Prospects International Graduate Jobs  
  www.prospects.ac.uk/international_graduate_jobs.htm

Regional and local newspapers e.g.

- Manchester Evening News  
  www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk

- Liverpool Echo  
  www.liverpoolecho.co.uk/

- The Economist  
  www.economist.com

- The Guardian  
  http://jobs.guardian.co.uk
- The Voice
  www.voice-online.co.uk
- Third Sector
  www.thirdsector.co.uk
- UN Careers Portal
- W4MP – jobs listing
  www.w4mpjobs.org/SearchJobs.aspx?search=alljobs
- WSE – International Development Jobs
  www.wse.org.uk/work/job.htm

Plus websites of various individual agencies, charities, voluntary sector organisations, consultancies etc.

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