

Department of **Politics**, **Philosophy** and **Religion**



This short brochure is designed to give you some basic information about studying at the **Department of Politics, Philosophy and Religion (PPR)** at Lancaster University. Fuller information and details about current courses, study abroad opportunities, funding, bursaries, staff research and so on, can be found on the departmental website: <http://www.lancs.ac.uk/fass/ppr/>

The brochure is arranged in **five sections**. Depending on your interests, and what kind of degree or course of study you want to pursue, different sections will be of greater relevance than others.

Section 1 is an **introduction** that tells you a little about the department (further information about staff and their interests can be found in section 4).

Section 2 is about **undergraduate study**. It begins with some general information about the flexible degree structure here in Lancaster, then goes on to say a bit about teaching and learning in PPR. Three subsections introduce our degrees— including many joint and combined degree options— in the subject areas of:

- **Politics and International Relations**
- **Philosophy**
- **Religious Studies**

Section 3 is about **postgraduate study**: about taught MA programmes, and about research degrees in the three subject areas in PPR.

Section 4 introduces the **academic staff** in PPR and their research interests.

Section 5 is about **living in Lancaster**—on campus, in the city, and taking advantage of the surrounding areas of outstanding natural beauty.



1. INTRODUCTION

The **Department of Politics, Philosophy and Religion (PPR)** brings together over 35 academic staff from three departments:

- **Politics and International Relations**
- **Philosophy**
- **Religious Studies**

Each of these disciplines has built up an excellent reputation for teaching and research. The department not only allows researchers and students to engage in subject-specific teaching, learning and research, but also with problems of great contemporary importance that benefit from an interdisciplinary approach. For example: problems of religion and conflict, diplomacy, terrorism, health policy, and human rights.

By choosing to study in PPR you will be joining a vibrant, international community based in the thriving Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at Lancaster University (ranked in the top 10 in the UK in *The Guardian* 2011 University guide). PPR is ranked number one in the North West in all three of its subject areas.

Members of the Department are deeply committed to both teaching and research. All academic staff are engaged in both activities. We believe that students learn best when their teachers are the people who do the research and write the books that shape the discipline. We also believe that our research benefits from being discussed with students. The department is large enough to cover key areas with specialist options in each subject area whilst remaining small enough to provide a friendly and engaging environment for study and research.



2. UNDERGRADUATE STUDY

PPR offers a wide range of challenging, engaging, and rewarding undergraduate **BA (Bachelor of Arts) Honours degree** schemes. One great advantage of studying at Lancaster is the **flexible degree structure**. This allows you to find out more about subjects that you want to study, to change what you study, or to take modules outside your main area of study. All students in PPR take three subjects in their first year (what we call Part I). For example, a **single honours** Religious Studies students will have to take RST100 (the Religious Studies Part I course) but then can choose what else to study from over 40 other options (e.g. she might take Politics and Sociology, or History and Film Studies, in her first year). Note that there are entry requirements for some Part I courses, and quotas for others. The current University Undergraduate Prospectus has details. Another example: a **joint honours** student in Philosophy and Politics will take Part I courses in Philosophy and Politics, and choose one other option (e.g., History, Religious Studies, Criminology).

At the end of the first year students decide which subjects they want to continue with in the second and third year (Part II). The Philosophy and Politics student may decide

to drop Philosophy and carry on doing single honours politics. The Religious Studies student may decide that she really likes Politics, and so switches to a joint honours degree. In other words, rather than being stuck with the decision you made *before* you went to university, Lancaster allows you try out undergraduate study in different subjects and then see what suits you best. The Lancaster system is akin to that found in the traditional universities in the US, like Harvard, Yale and Princeton where students decide on their “major” after an initial sampling of different courses. As a result Lancaster has one of the lowest undergraduate dropout rates in the UK.

The Lancaster system makes a wide range of degree options available and PPR offers, and teaches upon, a wide range of degree schemes. Many of our students choose to do single honours degrees in Politics, Religious Studies or Philosophy where the aim is to focus upon a specific subject in depth. Other students prefer to develop their knowledge and skills in more than one area. One way of doing this is to do a joint honours degree within the department, where both subjects are taught within PPR (for example: Philosophy and Politics, Religious Studies and

Philosophy, Politics and Religious Studies). It is also possible to combine subjects taught within the Department with those taught by other departments (for example: Politics and History; Mathematics and Philosophy; Religious Studies and Sociology). A third option is to take a “**triple major**” degree scheme (such as Philosophy, Politics, Economics). Students taking single honours or joint honours can elect to take up to two modules as “minor” modules (so, a Politics student might take two Philosophy courses, but still come out with a single honours Politics BA).

Study Abroad

The Department is keen to support study abroad opportunities. This generally involves a full year abroad in your second year, usually to a North American (USA, Canada) university. This is something that you need to apply for in the first term of your first year, but please note that making an application at this stage does not commit you to going. There are usually other study abroad and exchange options available of varying lengths, and to different countries (e.g., Australia, India, Czech Republic). These vary from year to year. Please see the departmental website for current study abroad opportunities.

Teaching and Learning

What do you actually do when you study for a degree in the Department? Studying at university is different from school or college. In addition to structured teaching through lectures and seminars you are given the freedom to develop your own knowledge and skills. Teaching and learning in PPR involve a number of different kinds of activity. First there are **lectures**. These are where academic staff provide you with information, guidance, and—we hope—inspiration. We teach topics that we have an interest in and know a lot about: so we hope that we can get some of our enthusiasm for our subject across to you! Lectures can be quite large—much bigger than classes at school—with up to 300 in some first year lectures. Second, there are **seminars**. These are smaller group meetings with up to 15 students and a tutor. Seminars typically involve set readings, exercises, or other tasks, which form the basis for debate and discussion. In the third year most students will do a dissertation (5,000 or 10,000 words) where they work one-on-one with a tutor on a specific topic of their choosing within the area of their degree.

How does all this fit together? In the first year, as we saw above, you take three Part I courses. These normally have two one

hour lectures a week, plus a one hour seminar, per course (some courses may have slightly more or less). Everyone does three courses in Part I giving a total of nine hours of contact time per week. In the second and third year, during Michaelmas and Lent term, you will typically be doing four Part II modules at the same time. Each module generally has a 1.5 hour lecture and a one hour seminar making ten hours a week in total. That might not seem like much, but remember, you are expected to work approximately 35 hours a week on your studies. Throughout the year in both Part I and Part II you are expected to produce essays, or other assignments, which are assessed. Course work in Part II counts towards your final degree result. Most taught modules also have summer exams (second and third year results count towards your final degree). For most modules, the exam will count for more than the coursework (typically 60% exam, 40% coursework). Overall, throughout all three years, we expect a considerable degree of personal responsibility for learning on the part of students: but then that's what makes doing a degree interesting and rewarding—it wouldn't really be worth studying for three years if we could simply tell you all the answers in an afternoon!

Developing skills

The various forms of learning and assessment involved in the degrees offered in PPR help students develop a wide range of knowledge and skills—both subject specific skills and wider transferable skills that contribute towards employability. More specifically, students refine and develop: their critical and analytical abilities through their reading and essay writing; presentational and team working skills through seminar and group work; IT skills through the use of online teaching and learning resources; and written presentation skills through the production of well-structured, well-edited, academic texts.

The Lancaster degree structure also encourages personal development and an increase in individual responsibility for study as students progress through their degree. In Part II students choose which modules they want to study from a range of options. In the third year most students will be required to do a sustained piece of writing—a dissertation or project—on a specific topic agreed upon with an individual supervisor. By the time students finish their Undergraduate studies in PPR they will have developed the initiative and skills necessary to engage in self-directed study and research (and many of our

students stay on to do graduate courses where they pursue their interests and develop their skills even further).

Applications and open days

Admission to Undergraduate degree schemes is via UCAS (www.ucas.ac.uk). The Department organises a number of **UCAS open days** during the year, normally on selected Wednesday and Saturday afternoons in Lent (Spring) term. These are intended for applicants to undergraduate degree schemes who have received a UCAS offer. Dates for the current year are detailed in the offer letter (alternatively, you can check the PPR website www.lancs.ac.uk/fass/ppr). The Departmental and University websites also have details about bursaries, scholarships and student finances.

Campus accommodation - guaranteed

One final point worth noting if you are thinking of applying to Lancaster is that Lancaster University can guarantee campus accommodation for all incoming undergraduates who make Lancaster their firm UCAS choice. Most students live off campus in their second year —there is plenty of affordable, safe and attractive housing in Lancaster. Many students choose to return to campus accommodation in their third year. Further details are available on the

University website:
www.lancs.ac.uk/sbs/accommodation/

We can now turn to the BA Honours degree schemes offered in PPR in the three subject areas.



2.1 POLITICS AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS DEGREE SCHEMES

The study of Politics and International Relations has a long and proud history at Lancaster University. Undergraduate Studies have played a key role in this success and in securing our current no.1 ranking in the Northwest and no.11 in the UK (*Guardian University Guide 2011*). Politics and International Relations at Lancaster is distinctive in seeing Politics as



a discipline that connects theory and government, global and local, state and society. The study of politics involves both an understanding of the history of political ideas and of the institutions that make the practice of politics possible.

PPR offers a broad range of options for students studying Politics & IR at Lancaster. The various degree courses focus upon the central questions of politics and international relations that have shaped the modern world and invite students to analyse, discuss and develop their ideas about such themes as war and peace, poverty and inequality, order and justice, governance and power. All of our degree schemes share a common Part I programme. This first year acts as a foundation for the second and third year of your politics degree and provides a broad account of the themes, concepts and events that have shaped modern politics. In so doing it enables you to engage with a range of theoretical and empirical issues that have been central to politics in the Twentieth and into the Twenty-First Centuries. Second year courses are more specialised, but designed to cover major areas of the discipline. Third-year courses are more specialised still, and allow you to pursue topics of interest in considerable depth.

Single honours

- **L200** Politics
- **L250** Politics and International Relations
- **L240** Global Politics
- **L251** International Relations and Strategic Studies
- **LL92** Peace Studies and International Relations
- **L201** Politics (Study Abroad)

Joint honours

- **VL52** Philosophy and Politics
- **LV26** Politics and Religious Studies
- **LL21** Economics and Politics
- **LL12** Economics and International Relations
- **LV21** History and Politics
- **VL12** History and International Relations
- **LL23** Politics and Sociology
- **RL12** French Studies and Politics (4 years)
- **RL22** German Studies and Politics (4 years)
- **RL42** Spanish Studies and Politics (4 years)

Triple major honours

- **VOLO** Politics, History and Philosophy
- **LOVO** Politics, Philosophy and Economics



Specific details about Politics and International Relations degree schemes—including information about their aims, structure, module options, entry requirements and scholarships—can be found in the relevant **Degree Factsheets**, or on the PPR website.

2.2 PHILOSOPHY DEGREE SCHEMES

Philosophy is the oldest subject in the Western academic curriculum. It no longer claims to provide a comprehensive view of the whole of human knowledge, but it still offers a rigorous form of enquiry into

the general foundations of knowledge, the nature of values, and the theoretical basis of our social organisation and social relationships. This gives it a central role to play, both in a general education, and in the critical understanding of ideas and methods in many specialist disciplines. In PPR we approach philosophical questions not only through the history of philosophy—figures such as Aristotle, Kant, Descartes and Nietzsche—but also through contemporary philosophical discussion of a wide range of important and relevant topics. Philosophers in the department have a wide range of expertise (see section 4) and The *Guardian*

University Guide 2011 places Lancaster number one for philosophy in the Northwest.

The Department of Politics, Philosophy and Religion (PPR) offers a wide range of undergraduate programmes in philosophy which aim to introduce students to key philosophical problems and to develop a range of methods for analysing, critically engaging with, and discussing such problems. In doing so we aim to enable students to develop transferable skills in rigorous argumentation, in the critical analysis of problems and in clear, well-structured, communication. The development of such skills helps prepare students for employment, or further study and training, after graduation.



Single honours

- **V500** Philosophy (single honours)

Joint honours

- **VL52** Philosophy and Politics
- **VV65** Philosophy and Religious Studies
- **VV56** Ethics, Philosophy, Religion
- **QV35** English Literature and Philosophy
- **VVC5** History and Philosophy
- **QV15** Linguistics and Philosophy
- **GV15** Mathematics and Philosophy
- **PV35** Film Studies and Philosophy
- **RV15** French Studies and Philosophy
- **RV25** German Studies and Philosophy
- **RV45** Spanish Studies and Philosophy

Triple major honours

- **LOV0** Philosophy, Politics and Economics
 - **VOLO** History, Philosophy and Politics
- Specific details about Philosophy degree schemes—including information about their aims, structure, module options, entry requirements and scholarships—can be found in the relevant **Degree Factsheets**, or on the PPR website.



2.3 RELIGIOUS STUDIES DEGREE SCHEMES

The Lancaster Religious Studies degree scheme is one of the most distinguished in Britain, taught by staff with a national and international reputation for both teaching and research. It was also the first degree of its kind in the UK, its distinctive, global and multidisciplinary approach to the study of religion having become a model for its development in Britain and overseas. The *Guardian University Guide 2011* places Lancaster number one for Religious Studies in the Northwest.

Religion is a major factor in world history and modern politics and its study involves knowledge of the major traditions, of the issues they raise and of the different methods of analysing them. PPR offers a comparative approach to the study of religion, focusing upon the various ways the human race has expressed its search for meaning. Our degrees will appeal both to those who have studied religion before and to those who do not have Religious Studies as a school subject. The questions religions pose are as old as History and as new as the New Age. We offer courses on the major traditions and methods

appropriate to their study: historical, textual, philosophical, theological, sociological, anthropological and psychological. Religious Studies is recognised as a high quality degree which equips graduates with a wide range of skills in analysis and human interaction. In an increasingly global world and an increasingly multicultural society, those with knowledge of other faiths, beliefs, philosophies and cultures are highly valued by many prospective employers in both the private and public sectors.

Single honours

- **V627** Religious Studies

Joint honours

- **VV65** Philosophy and Religious Studies
- **VV56** Ethics, Philosophy, Religion
- **LV26** Politics and Religious Studies
- **QV36** English Literature and Religious Studies
- **VV16** History and Religious Studies
- **VL63** Religious Studies and Politics



Specific details about Religious Studies degree schemes—including information about their aims, structure, module options, entry requirements and scholarships—can be found in the relevant **Degree Factsheets**, or on the PPR website.

If you are still at school or college it may be hard to picture what it is like studying for any of the degrees noted above. In the following section some of our undergraduate students give their views of studying here.

2.4 UNDERGRADUATES' VIEWS OF PPR

I immediately knew Lancaster was for me after attending an open day where the content of the Religious Studies course, the chance to take courses separate to your degree scheme as minors, and the friendly atmosphere on campus all really appealed to me. I have always been glad I made the choice to come to Lancaster despite it being a five hour journey from home due to the incredible opportunities it has offered me. I was lucky enough during my first year to win a place studying abroad for my second year at the University of California, Santa Barbara, where I had the opportunity to take classes and study areas of religion I would never have been able to in England, such as Native American religious traditions, and the contemporary religious landscape of America today.

This year abroad was not only a fantastic opportunity, but also complemented my Lancaster degree perfectly, and my return to the UK for my third year was a smooth one thanks to the friendly and approachable members of staff in the department who were always willing to explain things and help me adjust back to an academic style very different to the one in America. I found the range of courses on offer in my third year to be very broad and incredibly interesting, with lecturers who take the time to get to know each student, resulting in a very friendly department. Now I've graduated I know I'm going to miss Lancaster so much, and I would recommend it to anyone!



Alice – BA Religious Studies

Hi! My name's Georgina and I'm a 2nd year Ethics, Philosophy and Religion student. Religious Studies and Philosophy is more complex than A level but with the support of the colleges and department you get the feeling of being a part of a community. The enthusiasm of the lecturers comes across in seminars and lectures and I've come to love my course. In fact I enjoy it so much I've decided to go into teaching and I hope that my love for the subject will transfer to my own future students. This supportive and friendly atmosphere has allowed me to really enjoy EPR and my time at Lancaster and I'm really looking forward to my final year.



Georgina – BA Ethics Philosophy and Religion

I'm Bob, a mature student in PPR at Lancaster. Why am I here? Well, after a career in engineering, a second career in outdoor education and fast approaching seventy, what was I to do next? My knees probably were not going to let me lead too many more mountaineering expeditions, so I decided to be a researcher and writer. For that, I decided I needed a degree in philosophy, especially a good grounding in classical logic, ethics, political philosophy and the nature of truth. I am just completed my second year and love every minute of it. What is it like to be a mature student at Lancaster? In a word – amazing, there seems to be a veil of invisibility here which makes age meaningless, I am just a student like everyone else.



Bob – BA Philosophy

I chose Lancaster University because I like the brilliant combination of courses that were available to me. The course outline also appealed to me because I could pick three subjects to study in my first year and then choose my own modules in my second and third years. The flexibility available to students means you can really tailor your course to your own strengths and interests. The way Lancaster combines city living and the beautiful countryside was also a great attraction to me. With everything based on campus, you can explore the surrounding area as much or as little as you want (although I would really recommend a walk along the canal!) The student union is also a fantastic way of getting involved not only with other students but also with the local community.



volunteering Unit especially helps students get involved in a wide range of schemes (and let's face it, it looks good on the CV too!) After graduating, I am considering doing a Masters degree in International Relations. Hopefully this will lead to bigger and better things in the future!

Gemma - BA Philosophy and Politics

The fact that degree structures are so flexible is one of the best things about taking a degree at Lancaster University. When I first arrived here, I didn't really have any idea where I wanted to take my degree, or even what subjects I was interested in. However, the ability to pick up to three different subjects in first year really helped me to find out what interested me most, and has led me to a minor in Spanish - a language I had no knowledge of before I came to Lancaster! It is no coincidence that Lancaster has shot up the league tables in recent years and it will only continue to improve. Plus with 9 bars and a Greggs on campus what more could any student need!



Dan – BA Politics and International Relations

I chose to do philosophy at Lancaster mainly because I couldn't face doing straight maths; as it happens, it was one of the best decisions I have ever made. I have always felt supported by the staff, my dissertation tutor even read over my dissertation draft during the Christmas holidays! The special subjects taught in 3rd year are particularly enjoyable; it was very interesting to discuss topics that the lecturer was currently doing research in. What is more, there is a wide variety of modules and the seminars are always engaging. Lecturers ensure that resources are plentiful whether in the library, online or given as reading packs. Overall, I would highly recommend Lancaster to anyone interested in studying philosophy.



Naomi - BA Mathematics and Philosophy

I am currently studying Politics and Religious Studies. The course's inherent flexibility allows me to choose modules in both subjects that complement each other perfectly offering an integrated learning experience that may not be afforded at other institutions. Your minors can be converted into your major degree if you wish at the end of your first year. Because of this, you can change your degree without any worry or expense; I changed mine from Philosophy and Religious Studies to Politics and Religious Studies and it was really easy to do.

During my first year, I have enjoyed learning about the four major world religions; Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism and Islam. I particularly enjoyed Hinduism. The course itself is taught extremely well, the lecturers make religion interesting and this makes you want to learn more about it. Having to write a compulsory essay on one aspect of each religion is a rewarding and fascinating task that requires more in-depth study and breadth of reading. Furthermore, all members of the department are friendly and willing to help. As an option in the summer of your 2nd year, you can go to India as part of your Religious Studies course. This looks really interesting and I am looking forward to going to India next year with the Religious Studies Department.



Zoe – BA Politics and Religious Studies



3. POSTGRADUATE STUDY

This section gives some basic information about postgraduate study at the Department of Politics, Philosophy and Religion (PPR) at Lancaster University. More information and details about current postgraduate funding opportunities, bursaries, staff research interests, and so on, can be found on the departmental website:
<http://www.lancs.ac.uk/fass/ppr/>

Reflecting its status as one of the top 10 universities in the UK (according to the 2011 *Times*, *Independent* and *Guardian University Guides*) Lancaster University is firmly committed to postgraduate study, demonstrated by its lively and cosmopolitan Graduate School of nearly 3,000 students. People come to study, and teach, at Lancaster from all over the world – about 90 different nationalities

are represented on campus. Reflecting its international reputation, the University has links with many other universities around the world, and there are regular staff and student exchanges with many other countries. Lancaster offers a safe, attractive and well designed campus, with a purpose-built graduate college situated in close proximity to some of Britain's most beautiful countryside.

PPR is part of an exceptionally strong Arts and Social Sciences Faculty at Lancaster University with a large number of leading scholars attracting a lively and diverse postgraduate intake. In PPR we have over 35 academic staff applying world class expertise to understanding and solving some of the 21st century's major challenges in the areas of Politics, International Relations, Philosophy and Religious Studies.

The Department offers two main postgraduate degree pathways: (i) MA (and also MRes/LLM); (ii) MPhil/PhD:

3.1 MA programmes

The MA programmes in PPR are based upon—depending on the specific programme—a combination of advanced level taught courses, self-directed supervised study, and a substantial

dissertation. They are usually taken full-time over one year, but may also be taken on a part-time basis over two years. The MA is a widely recognised qualification in its own right, providing advanced training beyond first degree level, and also prepares students for the more intensive research of the PhD programme.

Teaching and learning

MA programmes usually start in October and (for full-time students) run to the end of September in the following year. Students take a number of taught modules in Michaelmas and Lent term (the norm is five modules). In the summer vacation full-time students write a substantial dissertation of 15-20,000 words for submission in September

There is some variation amongst the different MA programmes on offer in PPR. Most programmes involve one or more core taught modules. Taught modules last for one term, may involve weekly seminars, and are normally assessed by a 5,000 word essay. In addition to core taught modules MA students select additional taught modules in their subject area. For a full list of current modules see the Department website <http://www.lancs.ac.uk/fass/ppr/>

Other modules may involve self-directed supervised study on a topic agreed upon and developed with an academic supervisor, once again, assessed by a 5,000 word essay.

Entry and applying

Entry to the MA degree scheme normally requires at least an upper second class honours degree (or the equivalent) in a subject related to the field of study for the MA. If you are unsure about your eligibility for the MA programme contact the PPR postgraduate secretary Clare Coxhill (c.coxhill@lancaster.ac.uk). There is no strict deadline and you may apply at any time. However, it is advised to apply as early as you can in the academic year, especially if you are applying from outside of the UK. Please note that studentships, scholarships and other awards usually have deadlines. In order to be considered for financial aid you are normally required to apply to the University.



MA programmes in PPR are offered in the three main subject areas:

Politics and International Relations

- MA Politics
- MA/MRes International Relations
- MA Conflict Resolution and Peace Studies
- MA Conflict, Development and Security
- MA/LLM (With Law) International Law and International Relations

These MA programmes in the subject area of Politics and International relations offer opportunities for graduate study particularly in politics, international relations, diplomacy, security, development conflict resolution and peace studies. The programmes are designed to prepare students for further academic work and provide high-level training for those pursuing careers in such areas as foreign and international affairs, national and international non-governmental organisations, journalism and international business. Our aim is to provide graduate students with teaching and supervision by leading scholars in their fields, and in addition we involve politicians, diplomats, civil servants and journalists in the delivery of the programmes. In addition to these core areas, the Department also offers a

co-taught (with the School of Law) MA/LLM in International Law and International Relations. Students obtain an MA or LLM depending on the amount of Politics and International Relations or Law modules taken in the course.



Philosophy

- MA Philosophy
- MA/LLM (With Law) Bioethics and Medical Law

The MA in Philosophy offers opportunity for graduate study in philosophy on a range of philosophical topics and seeks to develop both philosophical knowledge and expertise and also a range of critical research skills that are useful and relevant to employment, in academic or other careers. The MA/LLM in Bioethics and Medical law is taught with the School of

Law focusing on ethical and legal issues that arise from developments in biomedicine. Students obtain an MA or LLM depending on the amount of Philosophy or Law modules taken in the course.

Religious Studies

- MA Religious Studies
- MA (With EdRes) RS and Educational Research

The MA in Religious Studies explores the full range of theoretical approaches to the study of religion and monitors your progress from induction to completion of your dissertation. Dissertation topics are developed in consultation with your academic supervisor and the Director of Studies. Postgraduate students benefit from our dynamic research culture and we have long-standing links with scholars, professional bodies and organisations both inside and outside Lancaster

Further information and details about MA programmes

For more information and current details of the MA programmes that interest you, please see the relevant **MA factsheets** or go to the PPR website:

<http://www.lancs.ac.uk/fass/ppr/>

3.2 MPhil and PhD research degrees

The MPhil and PhD research degrees are both based predominantly on a sustained piece of research (a dissertation) and are ideally suited for those contemplating a career in research or teaching at an advanced level. Admission to the MPhil/PhD programme is dependent on your showing evidence of your capacity to work at the appropriate level.

All research students at Lancaster are initially registered as taking an MPhil and then after a period of successful progress are transferred to a PhD registration. However, an MPhil is a postgraduate qualification in its own right and students

can decide to register for this with the intention of completing a smaller study (a thesis of 40-60,000 words) over two years. At the end of your second, (final) year of the MPhil (if you are a full-time student), if your work has reached the appropriate level, you may transfer from a MPhil to a PhD registration. A PhD is now a basic requirement for any career in teaching and research in universities. The PhD takes a minimum of three years' full-time study (including the work done on the MPhil) or up to five years part-time. It is awarded on the basis of a substantial thesis (60 - 80,000 words), which must be seen as making an original contribution to its field.



Our research culture and code of practice for supervisors ensures that research students are well supported and can become actively involved in the research life of the department and the wider academic field relevant to their chosen study. The student and supervisors are at liberty to work out the most appropriate training package or style of support that the student needs and a structured programme of meetings and research targets including the presentation of papers to the department's friendly 'work in progress' sessions. PhDs are available part-time and changes of registration from part-time to full time (or the reverse) can be accommodated.

Research students are strongly encouraged to play a full and active roll in the life of the department. Reflecting its wide range of expertise, the Department has a lively research culture including regular departmental and PhD seminars together with annual Graduate Presentation Days where research students present work in progress to fellow students and staff. In addition, research students are encouraged to participate in the regular Faculty-wide workshops, presentations and training sessions. The University also has a wide range of programmes that research students are welcome to attend, and we

encourage all researchers to make links to other departments in the Faculty as well as to departments and research centres in other faculties. However, we do have the facilities to make arrangements to support students who live at a distance and wish to take their PhD in "distance" mode.

Applying for MPhil/PhD study

Subsequent to initial enquiries, formal applications need to be accompanied by a concise research proposal of about 3,000 words. The proposal should include a clear statement on the question or issues to be researched, the existing literature and/or debates on the question, what is special or original about this work, what methods will be used, and an outline of fieldwork if relevant. A short indicative bibliography should also be included.

Here are comments from some of our graduate students about their experience studying and doing research with us.

3.3 GRADUATE STUDENTS' VIEWS OF PPR

I originally decided to study at Lancaster University due to the prospect of easy weekend excursions to the Lake District for walking and climbing. The academic atmosphere of the University, however, has been as refreshing and pleasant as the weekend walks, and so I not only did my BA here (in Politics, Philosophy and Economics), but also an MA (Philosophy) and am now part-way through a PhD (in Politics and Philosophy). I am thus no stranger to inter-disciplinarity and welcome the pluralism in intellectual debates here. As a side-note, the staff members at the department were incredibly good at helping me secure funding for my PhD, something which was a necessity for me at the time and which I assume is even more important in the current economic climate.



Tom – PhD Politics and Philosophy

I took an undergraduate degree in Politics at Lancaster, and decided to stay for another year to help broaden my knowledge of international relations, whilst also enabling me to develop a field of speciality, which would lay the foundation for a future research degree. I decided to stay in Lancaster for a number of reasons. Firstly the diverse range of research areas active within the department enabled me to personalise my degree to suit my own interests, whilst also allowing me to maintain a balance between theory and practice. Secondly the friendly and informal atmosphere of the department meant that I always felt welcome, and engaged with activities and events happening within the department, both social and academic. Finally the University itself provides plenty of opportunities to get involved in sporting or cultural activities, with numerous societies and clubs available to students. Furthermore the University's campus provides an excellent range of facilities for both academic and extra curriculum pursuits.



Scott – MA Politics and International Relations.

I am a second year Ph.D. student conducting research on the female divine with Christian and Goddess Feminist women. I came to Lancaster from Canada on the strength of a telephone interview with my supervisor, and the reputation of the department. I definitely lucked out. The people of the department have been wonderful, I have made many good friends, and the social side of the department grows more lively every year. I could not ask for better supervisors, they have been very supportive and encouraging throughout my research.

The department actively encourages research students to develop the skills needed for a lectureship position: for example, I have been a teaching assistant on the first year undergraduate course, helped organise a conference, and will help to teach a class next year on the new M.A. pathway in studying spirituality. As a research student you also have the opportunity to audit any of the M.A. courses offered, and I found this very helpful in my first year. The department is progressive, open, and wide-ranging in terms of the research being conducted both by faculty and students. Lancaster is a lovely place and perfect as I am a lone parent of a four year old. The city itself is small but with good services, the schools are good (and the preschool on campus is excellent), the crime is low, and you are close to both seaside and hills. I live off-campus where student accommodation is plentiful and relatively cheap. Indeed, I have had such a positive experience in general that I don't really want to leave, and am hoping to do some postdoctoral research here after I finish my thesis.



Giselle – Ph.D Religious Studies

A few years ago, a friend who was pursuing his PhD toured me around the university and even introduced me to the faculty and staff of the department. For its warmth and intellectual vibrancy, I immediately knew that Lancaster was where I wanted to be for research attachment. Even my supervisor in Singapore, Prof. Bryan Turner, was optimistic about it. I am now in the final stages of my PhD at the Department of Sociology and the Asia Research Institute at the National University of Singapore.

When I arrived at Lancaster in 2009, my main objective was rather straightforward: to be supervised well and finish the draft of my thesis. On this, the department did not fail. My supervisor, Prof. Linda

Woodhead, is the best one could ever have, for having mentored me both as an academic and as a person for a full academic year. But being in this department has also exposed me to its various academic networks, not the least of which is the sociology of religion study group of the British Sociological Association. At its annual conference in April 2010, I presented a chapter from my thesis and met fellow graduate students and academics working on similar areas. I hope to have this chapter published very soon.

The final year of the PhD is usually the loneliest since one is, for the most part, engaged in conversations with the self, if not the computer whose screensaver automatically pops out after a long stare. Thankfully, the support system at Lancaster was very strong and in fact natural. It was typical, for instance, for graduate students, many of whom come from other countries as well, to visit each other's offices and engage discursively (another way of saying chat over tea). It was also encouraging that other colleagues and staff in the department were willing to offer practically anything to help and yes, even food.



Without the mentorship received and community built during my Lancaster experience, my PhD life would not have been as exciting, fulfilling, and worthwhile. As my PhD now draws to a close (fingers crossed!), I look back to the final year of my writing at Lancaster in deep gratitude.

Jayeel – Visiting PhD research student

I am currently in my 2nd year of studying a PhD encompassing work in moral and legal philosophy and analysis of potential research into genes and crime. I originally came to Lancaster 7 years ago for my undergraduate degree, and have stayed ever since - going on to study 2 Master's degrees here before moving onto my current programme of study. Having a Campus community really helps you find your feet when you first arrive, and being able to study 2 minors alongside your major subject in first year



means that you can get experience of more than one discipline (I came here originally to do Religious Studies, but found out Philosophy was for me in first year). The teaching I have received here, at all levels, has been amazing and the opportunities for further study have kept me here for the last seven years.

Andy – PhD Philosophy

4. ACADEMIC STAFF

Here is a list of the academic staff in PPR with a brief note of their main areas of research. Some of us have inter-disciplinary interests and work across the disciplines listed here. Much more information about individual staff research interests, their books, publications, research grants, public engagement and public policy work, is available on the PPR website: <http://www.lancs.ac.uk/fass/ppr/>



Politics and International Relations

Dr Patrick Bishop: Political theory; enlightenment thought; public administration; community consultation; e-government; public policy process.

Dr Nina Caspersen: Inter-ethnic conflict, especially in the Balkans.

Dr Feargal Cochrane: Irish politics; comparative ethnic conflict; the state and civil society.

Dr Mark Garnett: British politics; political ideas; Conservative party.

Prof Robert Geyer: Complexity theory; European Union politics and policy; Scandinavian politics; social policy.

Dr Julie Hearn: International politics of aid, north-south relations, Argentina.

Dr Mark Lacy: International security; climate change; US foreign policy.

Dr Victoria Mason: Middle East politics; human rights; conflict; refugees; minorities; diasporas.

Prof Christopher May: Political economy; intellectual property rights;

international law; global rule of law.

Dr Amalendu Misra: Dynamics of conflict and peace in deeply divided societies, nationalism and religious radicalism.

Dr Graham Smith: Contemporary political theory; friendship; political modernity.

Dr Ngai-Ling Sum: International political economy; the Asia-Pacific region.

Prof Christine Sylvester: Feminist international relations; international relations theory.

Philosophy



Prof David Archard: Social, political and legal philosophy; applied moral philosophy, especially sexual morality and children, family and the state.

Dr Sam Clark: Moral and political philosophy from the early modern period to the present, especially human flourishing, utopianism, the self, and justification.

Dr Rachel Cooper: Philosophy of science and medicine, especially philosophy of psychiatry.

Dr Brian Garvey: Philosophy of science, especially philosophy of biology; psychoanalysis; philosophy of mind.

Dr Mairi Levitt: Bioethics, empirical ethics.

Dr Neil Manson: applied philosophy; applied ethics (medical ethics; informed consent; privacy)

Dr Alison Stone: Post-Kantian European philosophy, especially German Idealism and German Romanticism; feminist philosophy and theory; philosophy of nature.

Dr Cain Todd: Analytic aesthetics, metaphysics and philosophy of mind.

Dr Nick Unwin: philosophy of mind, especially colour perception; philosophy of language; truth.

Dr Garrath Williams: Moral philosophy; political thought; history of philosophy; applied ethics; Kant, Hobbes and Arendt.

Religious Studies



Dr Brian Black: South Asian religious narrative; comparative philosophy; gender studies; theory & method in the Study of Religions.

Dr Andrew Dawson: Sociology of religion; religion in South America; religion and society.

Dr Gavin Hyman: Philosophy of religion; postmodernism and theology; continental philosophy.

Dr Hiroko Kawanami: Contemporary Theravada Buddhism in South East Asia; gender and religion; urbanism and “new religions” in Japan; media and popular culture.

Dr Shuruq Naguib: Hermeneutics of the Qur’an; contemporary women interpreters of the Qur’an; traditional and contemporary

Muslim thought and practice.

Prof Christopher Partridge: New religions and alternative spiritualities; religion and popular culture; spirituality and popular music studies.

Prof Chakravarthi Ram-Prasad: Hinduism; early Indian religion; Indian and comparative philosophy; religion and politics.

Dr Deborah Sawyer: Christian origins; interpretation of the Bible; women and religion.

Dr David Smith: Indian religions and languages; Indian religions and art; classical Sanskrit poetry; religion and literature.

Prof Linda Woodhead: Modern Christianity; Christian ethics; Christian theology; contemporary religion and spirituality.



5. LIVING IN LANCASTER

There is a good reason to come to Lancaster over and above the flexible degree structure, the wide range of study options, and excellence in teaching and research: the **high quality of life in Lancaster**, whether on campus, in the City, or enjoying the beautiful coast and countryside.

Not only is Lancaster University one of the top universities in the UK (ranked 8th in *The Guardian University Guide 2011*) it is renowned for its **safe and friendly campus**—Lancaster has the lowest crime rate of any English university town and the campus is one of the safest in the UK.

There are over 11,000 students at the University, but Lancaster avoids the problem of students feeling lost in a large student body because it is a **collegiate University**. All students and staff are members of one of the nine colleges (eight undergraduate plus one graduate). Each college has accommodation, its own bar and social facilities and the members run a wide variety of activities and events. The college system allows students to make friends outside their course (so you have two routes to making friends!) and provides support—over and above that provided by departments and by the University student support services—in the form of college personal tutors (who are on hand to listen, and help out, should

you run into problems). Colleges have their own sports teams and there is enthusiastic inter-college rivalry in activities throughout the year.

Most undergraduates live on campus in their first year. This is, in part, because **Lancaster University guarantees accommodation** to UCAS applicants who make Lancaster their firm choice. The campus is set in green fields with views out to the sea and the mountains of the Lake District and is about three miles from Lancaster city centre with regular buses, and a network of cycle routes. Most undergraduates live off campus in their second year, though many return in their third year. The majority of students living off campus live in Lancaster.

Lancaster is an **attractive and vibrant university city**. It should be noted that Lancaster is not a large urban city but is, rather, in terms of its character and size, more like a historic market town (it was granted “city” status in 1937). The city has a population of 50,000 and adjoins the traditional seaside town of Morecambe which has a similar population. Lancaster avoids many of the social problems that face large cities. However, Lancaster’s rail links allow those with a taste for big city attractions—e.g., shops and nightlife—to travel to Manchester in an hour or so: Lancaster is

only two hours twenty minutes from London by train, and less to Edinburgh or Glasgow. For those travelling by car, the M6 motorway passes close to the University.

Lancaster is renowned for its **charm and friendliness**. With over 40 bars and pubs, a host of clubs, live theatre, cinemas, and a vibrant live music scene crammed into one city, finding a good night out in Lancaster is easy. The city has a wide range of distinctive shops, as well as the usual High Street stores, and both an outdoor and indoor market. Lancaster is an attractive (and reasonably priced!) place to live: with historic buildings, riverside and canalside walks, and a park with stunning views over Morecambe Bay and the mountains of the Lake District.

Lancaster is situated in one of the **most attractive parts of England**. One of the most striking features of the area is the spectacular mountains of the Lake District. The mountains, sweeping valleys and wide lakes are easily reached by road or rail. Closer to home, and less well-known to those outside the area, are two “**Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty**” —Arnsdale and Silverdale, with woodlands and wetlands, rare birds, and stunning views; The Forest of Bowland, with unspoilt moors, rivers and woods (and only a few minutes’ drive from campus!).

Lancaster has a great deal to offer those who enjoy **outdoor pursuits** and many of various University student societies pay regular visits to the surrounding area for backpacking, fell-walking, cycling, rock-climbing, orienteering and water sports.

Overall, Lancaster and its surrounding area make it a very attractive prospect—indeed, Lancaster University is renowned for its staff retention rate: once people experience the many advantages of living, working or studying here, they find it hard to leave!

We hope that you will consider joining us here at PPR in your studies, and that you will find the Department, the University and life in Lancaster, as rewarding and as enjoyable as we do!

Please see our webpage for detailed contact information or contact us directly at:

Department of Politics, Philosophy and Religion
County South Building
Lancaster University
Lancaster
LA1 4YL

Tel: 01524 65201

Department of Politics, Philosophy and Religion
County South
Lancaster University
Lancaster LA1 4YL
UK

Tel: +44 (0) 1524 594260

Web: <http://www.lancs.ac.uk/fass/ppr/>

Photographs of Antony Gormley's 'Another Place' by Bernard Lynne.

