

# University of Glasgow

## Course/Programme Approval Process

### External Academic Consultation Proforma

#### Proposal for a **NEW programme or NEW course** or **AMENDMENT** of a programme or **SUBSTANTIVE AMENDMENT** of a course or **WITHDRAWAL** of a programme or course

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| <b>Programme and/or Course Name(s):</b><br>(please list all programme and/or courses as appropriate) | POLITIC5093 International Relations of the Middle East |
| <b>School:</b>   | Social and Political Sciences                          |
| <b>College:</b>  | Social Sciences  |

#### Instructions to Proposers

This proforma should be completed for **new programme** and **course** proposals, **amend programme** and **course** proposals (other than simple corrections or non-substantive changes<sup>1</sup>), and **programme** or **course withdrawals**.

Where amendments are being made to a programme or set of cognate programmes which involve either the development of new core courses or the amendment of existing courses, the external academic may be invited to comment on the documentation as a suite (rather than being asked to complete a separate consultation proforma for each course). The same approach may be used where the same or a similar amendment is being made to a suite of courses, some of which may be core to one or more programmes (for example, PGT dissertation/project option courses). In these cases, the expectation is that:

- proposals are sensibly batched (e.g., by the similar/identical motivation for and nature of the amendments proposed to courses within a programme).
- the external academic has the required knowledge and expertise and is competent to comment on the content of all programme or courses presented for consideration.
- All the programme and courses that the external academic has reviewed are listed on the proforma, and it's made clear what feedback applies specifically to which course.

If there is no External Examiner, consultation should take place with an external academic whom the School would normally approach to become an External Examiner.

The draft proposal(s) should be discussed with the external academic at an early stage. However, the external academic must be provided with the completed Programme or Course Specification document(s) in order to complete Section 1 of this proforma.

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<sup>1</sup> [Guidance](#) is available on whether a course amendment is substantive.

The external academic must be at least given **at least 1 week** to review the proposal(s) and return the form.

Programme or course proposers must respond to feedback provided by the external academic.

Evidence of the external consultation should be submitted to the Board of Studies and/or School Learning & Teaching Committee (as appropriate) with the proposal documentation; therefore, **this proforma must be completed *BEFORE* the final documentation is due for submission to the Board of Studies for scrutiny.** If this proforma is being used for a suite of courses across two or more PIP proposals, please ensure that a copy of this proforma is uploaded to each PIP proposal.

**Section 1** is to be completed and signed by the external academic.

**Section 2** is to be completed and signed by the programme or course proposer.

## Section 1: Comments from the external academic

*The University greatly values the input of external academics when programmes and courses are being developed or amended. This independent external advice contributes to the transparency of the approval process and the confirmation of academic standards.*

In the case of proposals for **new** programmes or courses, Questions 1 – 6 should all be completed.

In the case of proposals for **amended** programmes or courses, Questions 1 – 6 should be completed **where appropriate** (so if, for example, an amendment has only been made to the methods of assessment, comment need only be provided for Question 3 and the other questions can either left blank or responded to as ‘*Not applicable*’).

In the case of proposed **withdrawals**, only Question 7 should be completed.

Please provide comment on the programme and/or course(s) listed overleaf and, where appropriate, advise on how the proposal might be revised or improved. If providing comment on more than one programme and/or course, please make clear what feedback applies specifically to which programme and/or course.

The expectation is that comment will usually be provided on each programme and/or course specification (as appropriate).

### 1. Aims

This course aims to introduce students to the contemporary Middle East through sustained and rigorous engagement with theories of international relations. It situates the Middle East within its wider international context by examining histories of empire and decolonisation, patterns of hegemony and resistance, dynamics of conflict and cooperation, and the role of identity in foreign policy. The course also addresses key themes in international relations, including security, nationalism, intervention, and regional subsystems, with particular attention to Arab regional integration and the Arab–Israeli conflict. By completing this module, students will be well prepared for more specialised study of the region in whole or in part.

### 2. Intended Learning Outcomes

The intended learning outcomes are both ambitious and well structured, offering students a strong foundation for advanced study. The course develops a nuanced understanding of the histories and politics of key Middle Eastern states while equipping students to apply core international relations concepts to the region. It encourages critical analysis of inter-state relations across colonial, Cold War, and post–Cold War contexts, and places appropriate emphasis on developing clear, well-evidenced written arguments. Overall, the outcomes are coherent, rigorous, and well aligned with the intellectual demands of the subject.

### 3. Methods of assessment

The proposed assessment strategy is well calibrated to the cohort and learning objectives, combining a 2,000-word reflective piece (40%) with a 3,000-word essay (60%). The initial thematic reflection is particularly well designed for students new to the region, allowing them to engage early with core concepts such as empire, identity, and great-power rivalry through critical, region-specific analysis. This staged approach

effectively builds confidence, conceptual clarity, and analytical depth ahead of the final essay.

4. Level of the course, or of the courses comprising the programme

Level 5 (SCQC Level 11)

5. The credit rating of the course, or of the courses comprising the programme


20

6. The potential for enhancement of students' employability/graduate attributes

This course has strong potential to enhance students' employability by developing a combination of substantive regional expertise and highly transferable analytical skills. Through sustained engagement with the international relations of the Middle East, students gain in-depth knowledge of a strategically important region shaped by colonial legacies, conflict, and global power politics, an asset for careers in diplomacy, international organisations, NGOs, journalism, policy analysis, and security-related fields. The emphasis on applying international relations theory to real-world cases strengthens students' ability to analyse complex political environments, evaluate competing explanations, and situate contemporary events in historical context. In addition, the course's assessment structure prioritises advanced research, critical reflection, and the production of well-evidenced written arguments, directly supporting the development of communication, synthesis, and independent thinking skills valued across public, private, and third-sector employment.

7. [**Withdrawals only**] In the case of the proposed withdrawal of a course or courses, please comment on implications for the associated programme or programmes. In the case of the proposed withdrawal of programmes please comment on any known implications.

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| <b>External Academic Name:</b> | Scott Fitzsimmons   |
| <b>Title:</b>                  | Dr.   |
| <b>Institution/Employer:</b>   | University of Limerick  |
| <b>Signature:</b>              |  |
| <b>Date:</b>                   | January 8, 2026   |

## Section 2: Response from the programme or course proposer

1. Has the external academic suggested any alterations to the proposal? (please check box)

**Yes**

**No**

If **Yes** and the suggestions HAVE been adopted, provide details of the changes made:

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If **Yes** and the suggestions have NOT been adopted, explain why not:

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2. Has the external academic suggested further consideration of any issues? (please check box)

**Yes**

**No**

If **Yes**, provide a commentary:

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| <b>Programme or Course Proposer:</b> | Mehdi Beyad                         |
| <b>Title:</b>                        | Lecturer in International Relations |
| <b>Date:</b>                         | 22/12/25                            |