

Careers for Politics and International Studies Majors

There are a great many career fields which build on studies in Politics and International Studies. In exploring options, reflect on the skills you have developed through your major, the ones you prefer using and the careers which are most strongly related.

What skills and knowledge do I develop by studying Politics and International Studies?

Politics and international studies majors ideally develop both analytical and research skills while undertaking the major. This is in addition to the development of an understanding how politics and political phenomena work. Generally, the most desirable students post-degree for employers have a few things in common when they undertake politics majors. They may start broad in their studies, but after their first or second year these students start to focus in on classes and research questions that are both within their interests but might work within the interests of government agencies, NGOs, or businesses. Towards the end of their studies, and building upon previous course work in a certain area, students might undertake further research training with a specific scholar in an honours year.

It is important to keep in mind that, with a major as broad as politics, the students that earlier identify potential career paths and investigate those careers can use their politics majors to build towards that goal. This also allows students to see what type of research or analytical skills they need for those professions, which is better understood earlier in their studies.

What careers build on these skills and knowledge?

The table below lists a range of careers which make use of studies in Politics and International Studies. The list is not definitive – depending on your own interests and experiences, there may well be other ways to build on your major.

More information on many of these career areas is available at:
http://careers.unimelb.edu.au/student/online_career_tools/exploring_your_options
(Career Exploration - Career Links by Degree – Arts)

Next Steps

The table also provides some information about ‘next steps’ ie what you might need to do to start a career in the particular field, specifically whether graduate study is required or whether immediate employment is possible.

There are two employment types for Bachelor graduates:

- General employment positions suitable for new graduates
- Graduate Employment Programs

Graduate Employment Programs are offered by some employers – generally large commercial organisations and government. Graduate Employment Program positions are jobs that include a substantial component of training and development. Recruitment for

these programs takes place early in the year (around March-May). Final year tertiary students and recent grads can apply. For some of the career areas discussed, Graduate Employment programs are available.

For more information on Graduate Employment Programs:

http://careers.unimelb.edu.au/student/find_a_job/professional_and_graduate_work

Career field	Employment setting	Next Steps: Employment and/or graduate study
Public policy – research, analysis, advice	Government/Public Service Policy Institutes, Think Tanks NGOs, special interest organisations	Graduate Employment Programs with Australian government, State governments - either after BA, or after BA Hons or graduate study eg Public Policy, Social Policy Graduate research study path – Honours/Masters/PhD (Research Assistant roles require Honours minimum), or Graduate study – Public Policy, Social Policy
Academia/Research	Universities, research institutes/centres, think-tanks	Graduate research study – Honours, Masters and/or PhD (Research Assistant roles generally require Honours minimum)
International Relations/Diplomacy	Government/Public Service International NGOs	GEPs with APS – either post BA, post BA Hons or post graduate study; some key departments eg DFAT, Defence and Immigration, but all APS departments have an ‘international desk’ Graduate study – International Relations
Intelligence	Government/Public Service – specific departments and agencies eg ASIS, Defence, AFP, ASIO	GEPs with APS – specific departments and agencies - either post BA, post BA Hons or post graduate study
International Development	Development NGOs, government departments and agencies	Graduate study – Development
Politics	Political Parties,	Post BA, BA Hons or graduate study

(domestic/party) eg Electorate Officers (MPs offices); Parliamentarian; campaign management	Unions, Parliament, Electorate offices	
Law	Law firms Public Service In-house legal advice	Graduate study – Law
Journalism and Media	Media organisations – television, radio, online and print	Graduate study – Journalism Some cadetships possible for non- media/journalism graduates – most likely in rural/regional areas
Teaching	Secondary schools	Graduate study – Teaching (requires studies to cover 2 ‘learning areas’)

What other careers could I consider?

Politics and International Studies majors may also pursue careers which are not directly related to the study of Politics and International Studies but make use of transferable skills and/or pick up on other interests.

- **Careers via graduate study** – many careers are available via graduate study which is accessible to Bachelor of Arts graduates; these include both Arts-related careers eg Journalism, Information Management/Librarianship, International Development; and careers in more diverse fields such as Urban Planning, Nursing, Information Systems, Accounting.
- **Careers via Graduate Employment Programs** - in addition to government, some other organisations have programs open to all disciplines eg Telstra, Australia Post, ANZ, Proctor & Gamble, Qantas. Graduates are generally recruited for broad-based management roles. Some management consultancies also consider applicants from all disciplines eg Bain, McKinsey.

Where can I find out more?

Further information on career areas:

http://careers.unimelb.edu.au/student/online_career_tools/exploring_your_options

(Career Exploration - Career Links by Degree – Arts)

Other discussions about what you can do with a major in Politics and International Studies:

- University of Tennessee <http://whatcanidowiththismajor.com/major/majors/>
- University of Victoria, Wellington, New Zealand:
www.victoria.ac.nz/st_services/careers/Resources/career_publications/career_view/index.aspx

Professional Associations:

http://careers.unimelb.edu.au/student/online_career_tools/exploring_your_options
(Career Exploration – Professional Associations by Degree - Arts)

Graduate study at University of Melbourne:

<http://futurestudents.unimelb.edu.au/courses/graduate>

<http://graduate.arts.unimelb.edu.au/>

<http://government.unimelb.edu.au/>

Researching courses which are not offered at Melbourne: www.myfuture.edu.au