

Rhys Crilley, Postgraduate Study trip to Delhi

Rhys Crilley, MA International Relations (Terrorism and Political Violence), reflects on his experiences during the [Postgraduate Study trip to Delhi \(/schools/government-society/teaching/enhancing-student-experience/postgraduate-study-trip-delhi.aspx\)](#). Each year, a group of Masters students from across the School of Government and Society are given the opportunity to travel to Delhi, India, to take part in a week-long international module entitled 'Traditional and New Security Challenges: South Asia in Global Perspective'.

"Throughout my undergraduate and masters study I have had a keen interest in security. However, my focus has always been very 'western' and this module provided an opportunity to look beyond security issues for the UK, the USA and Europe. The module looked like a great way to enhance my knowledge of security by placing South Asia in global perspective and it also provided an exciting and rare opportunity to visit another country and to study there.

By undertaking the module I gained a great insight into the security politics of South Asia from several perspectives; the lectures from South Asian experts and security practitioners were particularly insightful and their experience was helpful in providing a thorough understanding of the contemporary security issues that South Asia faces.

The topics covered by the module were diverse and it was extremely interesting to look at issues such as nuclear weapons, migration, the environment and gender from a South Asian perspective. I find with International Relations it's very easy to stick to what you know, but this module has made me think more about other places and how issues such as globalisation and the 'war on terror' are impacting on people all over the world. By exploring specific case studies, the classes highlighted many interesting issues that have broadened my understanding of security.

With such a diverse group of students from Birmingham, Delhi and Melbourne there were many lively class discussions and I learnt as much from the group work as I did from the lectures. Working in small groups with a small amount of time to produce a presentation on a specific country, was challenging but good fun and it definitely helped to develop skills which will be invaluable in my future career.

Compared to modules I have taken in the UK, this module required a bit more preparation and effort. Due to the intensive nature of the course, lots of reading had to be done in a relatively short space of time. However, the workload was still manageable and interesting. It was interesting to see how the staff from each institution taught differently, and the mix of teaching styles helped to deliver a rounded and thorough exploration of South Asian security despite the intense nature of the course.

One of the main highlights for me was the lecture on terrorism by a retired commodore from the Indian navy. I was expecting him to be very pro-military but he was one of the most critical scholars I have ever been taught by! His insights into how South Asian states are dealing with terrorism were captivating and it was great to hear from someone who has not only studied security but actually spent several years 'doing' it. Another highlight was the group work we were able to do, it was fun to work with a diverse group of people on a presentation in a very short space of time.

The most enjoyable aspect of the module was simply being able to work and socialise with a very clever group of people in one of the most fascinating cities on the planet. It sounds cheesy but you start the week as strangers and end it as really good friends. All the students are still in touch with one another and I'm pretty sure that if I visit Delhi or Melbourne I'll be able to stay on someone's sofa!

My advice to anyone taking the module would be to do the reading and prepare for the module well in advance, that way you'll have plenty of time to enjoy Delhi. When you get there don't be afraid to explore the city and experience as much as you can in the short time you have there. Have an open mind and try the local food - it's delicious! Also, take a camera to document your trip. Perhaps most importantly though I'd suggest that you start saving for your next visit to India, it's an amazing, enchanting country and once you've visited once you will want to go back!"



Degrees and course information

- [International Relations \(with specialist pathways\) MA/PGDip \(/postgraduate/courses/taught/govsoc/international-relations.aspx\)](#)
- [International Relations \(Terrorism and Political Violence\) MA/PGDip \(/postgraduate/courses/taught/govsoc/international-relations-terrorism-political-violence.aspx\)](#)
- [Masters degrees \(/schools/government-society/courses/masters.aspx\)](#)
- [Masters degree modules \(/postgraduate/courses/taught/govsoc/modules/index.aspx\)](#)

Student experience

- [Postgraduate Study trip to Delhi \(/schools/government-society/teaching/enhancing-student-experience/postgraduate-study-trip-delhi.aspx\)](#)