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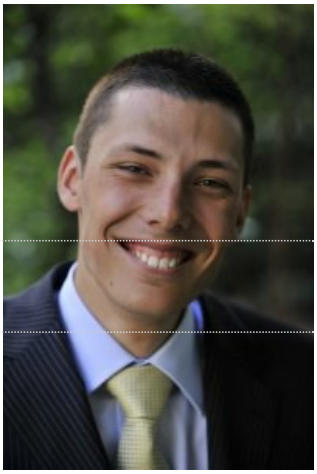
Nicholas Trigg, Swiss Student

MA International Relations (International Peacekeeping)

Nicholas Trigg, a Swiss student currently studying on our **MA International Relations (International Peacekeeping) (/postgraduate/courses/taught/govsoc/international-relations-peacekeeping.aspx)** programme, reflects on his experiences of moving to a foreign country and studying at Birmingham in POLSIS. Nicholas also completed his undergraduate studies in POLSIS.



"**I chose to study on the MA International Relations (International Peacekeeping) course because it interested me, with its mix of theoretical aspects linked to practical case studies, which I knew a little about.** I also chose to continue studying at Birmingham as I had an extremely positive relationship with my dissertation tutor (Dr Edward Newman) and I wanted to continue our working relationship.

There is everything you could possibly want at Birmingham. There is a nice green campus, and a quick pace of life; it's also great that the university is just 10 minutes away from the city centre. Most importantly though, the teaching staff and facilities are excellent; the staff are always available to advise and help the students.

> The University also has a lot to offer when it comes to activities like sport for example. I fancied doing something different so I learnt how to play volleyball and by doing so created another circle of friends outside my course friends and flatmates."

My MA in International Relations (International Peacekeeping) includes modules focused on 'International Law and Organisations', 'Ethics', 'Multiculturalism', and 'Peacekeeping' in the first term. The second term was slightly quieter as I 'only' had the International Law and Peacebuilding module. But the main focus of the course is on Peacekeeping in the first term and Peacebuilding in the second term.

I think that I was able to find a good balance between modules that were more theoretical and others that focused more on practical issues and debates. **But choosing modules is obviously a personal choice.**

Reaching my objectives at Birmingham has not been difficult due to the helpful departmental staff that are always willing to help. Writing my undergraduate dissertation has probably been one of the highlights of my experience in POLSIS, as it gave me the opportunity to focus on what I was really interested in.

> My first piece of advice to anyone considering studying in Birmingham would be an academic one and to think about what you really want to study. You really want to make sure that you enjoy what you are doing on your course, especially if you are considering further study, such as an MA or PhD."

My second piece of advice would be to find the perfect balance between studying and enjoying the university experience. There is no point spending all your time working if it is going to make you miserable, and there is no point enjoying yourself endlessly if you are not going to achieve your maximum potential on your course. It is a fine balance to find and one that certainly changes from the first year to the last.

Degrees and course information

- **International Relations (with specialist pathways) MA/PGDip (/postgraduate/courses/taught/govsoc/international-relations.aspx)**
- **International Relations (International Peacekeeping) MA/PGDip (/postgraduate/courses/taught/govsoc/international-relations-peacekeeping.aspx)**

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