

## Teaching and learning

To enable you to better develop your own ideas and opinions, we will put you at the centre of the learning process. From the outset you will be encouraged to become an independent and self-motivated learner. Many of your lecturers at Birmingham will be **global experts in their fields** (</schools/government-society/research/index.aspx>) and their excitement and passion will translate into your **degree programme** (</schools/government-society/courses/index.aspx>).

Through the programme of study we offer, we will develop the qualities that employers value in today's university graduates - qualities that will set you apart in your future career.

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## Undergraduate

[Open all sections](#)

### Learning at Birmingham



To help you develop the above-mentioned skills, we adopt a range of teaching methods. They may include:

**Lectures** are where you will listen to experts sharing their knowledge and discoveries in challenging and thought-provoking ways. Academics will introduce you to key facts and ideas in a way that will help you to build a sound and up-to-date knowledge base in your subject, and gain an appreciation of how and why we have reached our current stage of understanding in the field. You can expect to do more than just listen during lecture – you will be asked to consider different viewpoints, make on-the-spot judgements and decisions, and solve problems.

**Your own research project** gives you the opportunity to produce an extended, in-depth piece of work – a **final-year dissertation** (</undergraduate/courses/govsoc/modules/year-three/dissertation-polsis.aspx>) – designed yourself according to your own interests. This can be one of the most exciting parts of your degree. It will be overseen by a staff member who is an expert in this area, and you will often have the chance to carry out the work in our research facilities. Library staff will also help you with this project.

**Self-study** is an important element of your education. At university you supplement your understanding through research into different perspectives on the topic; deepening your knowledge of an area at your own pace. Lectures map out the terrain of the topic and stimulate your curiosity. Then you find out more through your own independent study and teamwork with fellow students, both before and after the lecture itself.

**Small group learning** occurs regularly and is led by academic members of staff. These group sessions will be particularly intensive during your first year to help you make the transition to university. They will include seminars, workshops and academic tutorials where you will have a chance to present and share your ideas, debate interpretations and opinions with fellow students, discuss assignments and work on particular problems and topics with the guidance of a staff member.

**Your personal tutor** is an academic member of staff assigned to you for the duration of your study. They will support your academic progress, and the development of your transferable skills, and assist with any welfare issues. You will have regular contact with your personal tutor and are encouraged to see them whenever you need support.

### Assessment



Assessment methods will vary dependent on your modules but may include a combination of coursework, examinations and oral presentations. In the final year you will plan and complete your own extended research project (**dissertation** (</undergraduate/courses/govsoc/modules/year-three/dissertation-polsis.aspx>)) in an area of interest.

See our **Undergraduate degrees** (</schools/government-society/courses/undergraduate.aspx>) for specific information regarding assessment.

### Study support



To support your transition to this new way of learning, you have access to a comprehensive support system that will assist and encourage you:

- In addition to **your personal tutor**, welfare tutors based in your school and department can help you with both academic and welfare problems.
- **Individual feedback** will be offered on your assignments to enable you to understand how you are progressing.
- **Specialised learning support** services are available for **students with disabilities** (</undergraduate/support/disability/index.aspx>)
- **Peer-Assisted Study Sessions (PASS)** is a scheme that runs in a number of disciplines. It fosters cross-year support between students on the same programme. It encourages first-year students to support each other and learn co-operatively under the guidance of students from the year above.
- **International students** can also contact the **International Student Advisory Services (ISAS)** (<https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/as/studentservices/international/index.aspx>) to discuss their learning support needs.

More about [Undergraduate teaching and learning \(/undergraduate/teaching/index.aspx\)](/undergraduate/teaching/index.aspx) at the University of Birmingham.

## Postgraduate

At Birmingham we offer a wide range of research options leading to different qualifications. All our research degree courses offer research skills training to make sure you're well-equipped to realise your potential as a researcher here. During your research you will have access to a range of tailor-made services to support your study, develop your skills and strengthen your career prospects.

More about [Postgraduate teaching and learning \(/postgraduate/teaching-learning/index.aspx\)](/postgraduate/teaching-learning/index.aspx) at the University of Birmingham.

## More information

- [Enhancing your student experience \(/schools/government-society/teaching/enhancing-student-experience/index.aspx\)](/schools/government-society/teaching/enhancing-student-experience/index.aspx)
- [Student funding opportunities \(/schools/government-society/funding/student-funding-opportunities.aspx\)](/schools/government-society/funding/student-funding-opportunities.aspx)
- [Degree programmes and courses \(/schools/government-society/courses/index.aspx\)](/schools/government-society/courses/index.aspx)

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