
MA Module Code: 7PIRS025W (Level: 7, Credits: 20)

Lecture and Seminar: Thursday 10.00am-1.00pm Regent Street 352 (semester 1)

Module Leader: Professor David Chandler (Room: Wells Street 504, email: D.Chandler@wmin.ac.uk)

Module Summary

Today the biggest challenge facing policy-makers appears to be the growing awareness of complexity. In a complex world, it is seemingly much more difficult to govern, and to act instrumentally, in order to fulfil policy goals. The module introduces students to the theoretical frameworks and practices of the politics of complexity, the debates that have been triggered, and the way that complexity understandings have developed, especially in the 2000s and 2010s. Emphasis is placed upon introducing students to some of the conceptual frameworks deployed in understanding system effects on political, economic and social life and how these enable us to rethink governance, power and agency. However, this module is also very practically orientated, it engages with how complexity is reflected in new approaches to policy-making and understanding, particularly focusing on how problems are responded to and the distinctions between preventive policy-understandings, resilience/bouncing back approaches and more transformative understandings of how to engage with a complex world.
Module Aims

1. To introduce students to the theoretical frameworks and practices of the politics of complexity, the debates they have triggered, and the way that complexity approaches have developed, particularly over the last decade.

2. To consider the changing framework of discussions of governance in relation to questions of who governs, how governance is legitimated, the processes of governance and the objects of governance.

3. To trace discussion of policy-making in relation to agency and the politics of complexity, in particular the changing understandings of agency with more diversified ranges of actors and more circulatory, asymmetric and flatter concepts of agency.

4. To consider some of the contexts in which understandings of political power are expressed within the framework of complexity.

5. To analyse reflexive forms of governing, resilience and adaptivity as responses to the problem of governing complexity.

6. To examine the changing nature and dynamics of democratic practices, and to facilitate the development of analytical skills that enable students to understand different democratic initiatives within a wider framework of complexity approaches.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this module, students are expected to:

1. Critically evaluate a range of theories of complexity as they affect political understandings of the role and practices of government.

2. Demonstrate a sound critical and advanced understanding of the different ways in which complexity thinking is deployed as both a limit to political power and also as a way of enabling political change.

3. Analyse how different conceptualisations of politics and complexity developed in relation to different bodies of theory, such as pragmatism, neoliberalism, assemblage theory, complex adaptive systems, post-foundationalism, new institutionalism, actor-network-theory, new materialism and posthumanism.

4. Critically evaluate how the politics of complexity interrogates and challenges liberal modernist binaries of politics/economics, state/society, public/private, subject/object, mind/body, human/nature, threat/security referent, inside/outside, means/ends etc.

5. Rigorously evaluate the link between democracy as this is understood in terms of formal representation and in terms of social or societal processes.

**Teaching, Learning and Assessment**

One 3 hour seminar per week involving small group work and student led-discussions. Students are expected to prepare in advance as this involves discussion/interpretation of key readings.

Readings asterisked are available on Blackboard course materials.

The questions with each seminar presentation are to guide your thinking only; the readings will be at the centre of our discussion.

The 3 essential readings for each seminar will be discussed in groups or in class collectively, it is essential that you undertake at least your one group reading and preferably all three to make the most of the seminar discussion.

The assessment for this module is one book review of 1,500 words and one essay of 3,500 words.

The books for review and the essay questions are available on pages 26-27 of this module guide.

**The deadline for the book review is 12.00am Thursday 10 November 2016 and the deadline for the essay is 12.00am 15 December 2016.**

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<td>Book Review (1,500 words)</td>
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## Lecture Programme

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| Week Eight: 17 November | The Implications for Rights and Representation  
(with Sara Raimondi) |
| Week Nine: 24 November | The Implications for Knowledge: The Promise of Big Data |
| Week Ten: 1 December | The Ethics of Hacking, Composing and Worlding  
**Discussion of essay questions and preparation** |
| Week Eleven: 8 December | The Implications for Theory: Actor-Network Theory, New Materialism, Speculative Realism and Object-Oriented Ontology |
| Week Twelve: 15 December | Conclusion: Beyond Complexity? (with Sara Raimondi) |
| **15 December** | **Essay Deadline 12.00am** |
**Essential Reading**


**Key Texts**


**Background Reading**


**Periodicals and Other Sources**

Resilience: Policies, Practices and Discourses
Security Dialogue
International Political Sociology
Constellations
Ecology and Society
Economy and Society
Theory, Culture and Society
Millennium: Journal of International Studies
Week One: 29 September 2016
Introduction: What Do We Mean By Complexity?

This session intends to introduce students to the module as a whole and to the problematic governing complexity. We will begin to engage with the problematic at the most general level, especially as most of the class will not have had the chance to do much of the readings and discuss what complexity might be, how it might be measured and what the implications of complexity might be for governing and for our understandings of power and agency and also for critical theorising.

Questions

How can things be made more complex? What needs to be added or taken away?
What is the relationship between complexity and causality?
What is the relationship between complexity and agency?
Is complexity a solution or a problem?

3 Essential readings

Danile Clausen, ‘Crude Thinking — 7 Ways of Dealing with the Complex in IR’, E-IR, 29 January 2016

Readings

Anything on complexity or recent thinking in political theory, IR, philosophy, human geography and the social sciences more generally will be fine. There are some more specific suggestions below.

M. Mitchell Waldrop, Complexity: The Emerging Science at the Edge of Order and Chaos (Viking, 1993)
The Politics of Global Complexity (2016-17) Department of Politics and International Relations, University of Westminster


**Week Two: 6 October 2016**

**The End of Modernity? The Anthropocene**

This session will discuss whether complexity is new or not. You may have come across the term ‘the Anthropocene’, this is a term for a new geological epoch, one in which human activities can no longer be seen as separate from the Earth's ecosystems, heralding a paradigm shift in governance theory and practice. This understanding of the end of an ‘outside’ - that human understandings of progress have reached a limit is crucial for understanding complexity. The entanglements of human actions with environmental processes is captured well in the work of sociologists Anthony Giddens and Ulrich Beck. For these theorists the complex world is understood as ‘late-modernity’, the ‘second modernity’, ‘risk society’ or the ‘globalised world’ and is a relatively recent phenomenon. Another position, that these entanglements of complexity are not new but merely involve the recognition that modernist assumptions rested on a false, reductionist set of understandings is perhaps most boldly articulated by Bruno Latour. What does Bruno Latour mean when he says: ‘Put quite simply, second modernity is first modernity plus its externalities: everything that had been externalized as irrelevant or impossible to calculate is back in – with a vengeance’? (Is Re-modernization Occurring’, p. 37)

**Questions**

Is the Anthropocene a threat or an opportunity?
How does the linking of culture/environment; human/nature change modernist thinking?
It seems that stratigraphers are engaged in similar debates to social scientists on when the divide between culture/nature was breached, what is at stake in this debate?

**3 Essential readings**

Readings

Some awareness of the Anthropocene and any books or articles by Anthony Giddens and Ulrich Beck and/or Bruno Latour will be fine for this session. These are major social theorists and their work is easily accessible. Some suggestions are below.


Ian Sample, ‘Anthropocene: is this the new epoch of humans?’, *Guardian*, 16 October 2014.


Welcome to the Anthropocene (website)


David Chandler, Resilience: the Governance of Complexity (Abingdon: Routledge, 2014) chapters 1, 2 and 3.

Week Three: 13 October 2016
Complexity as a Limit: From Linear to Non-Linear Causality

In modernist understandings of governance, there was an assumption that certain sets of policies could be applied to achieve certain desired results. This was implied in the capacity to learn lessons from policy failures and the ability to export governance systems elsewhere in the world, from the spread of ‘civilisation’ under colonial rule to the contestation between liberal market economies and socialist state-based economic systems. However, these modernist views of linearity have been increasingly challenged by non-linear understandings of social causality which emphasise difference, plurality and social processes. For non-linear approaches, difference makes a difference. Firstly, differences in time, space, culture, law, politics, religion, economy etc mean that there is little ‘linear’ in the relation between cause and effect. Different contexts or states of affairs will be affected
differently with different outcomes. Secondly, differences make a difference in terms of the direction of time, previous states of affairs, decisions etc impact on the responses to later events, this directionality of time is often called ‘path dependency’. Non-linear approaches were associated from the late 1970s with new institutionalist and neoliberal understandings, particularly in the field of international development (where North develops and applies Hayek’s approach). Non-linearity is at the heart of complexity understandings and is also associated with a radical or left critique of linear assumptions (see the Scott reading).

Questions

What is a ‘linear’ understanding? Why is it ‘mechanistic’ or ‘reductionist’?
Why does North say that “every effort at producing change in the system has usually produced almost exactly the reverse consequences downstream”?
What conditions are necessary for linear cause-and-effect outcomes? What are the consequences of this?

3 Essential readings


Readings


For further readings you might think about how our discussion relates to the classical pragmatism of John Dewey, which argues that institutions cannot be exported but depend upon their constitution by the public, or to discussions of critical realism, for example the work of Roy Bhaskar, which concerns the reality of generative processes which are not necessarily reflected in the regularity of appearances. There is a nice treatment of critical realism in the Bryant reference above.

**Week Four: 20 October 2016**

**Beyond the Limits of Complexity: Emergent Causality**

Last session, non-linear approaches introduced us to the problem of complexity as a problem of knowledge. Adding differences of time and space made causal understandings more difficult. But not necessarily impossible, instrumental policy interventions were still possible even though the emphasis shifted from the policy-maker to the object of policy itself. The key shift in complexity understandings over the last couple of decades have involved a shift from a problem of knowledge of complex determinations to a question of the ‘emergent’ nature of reality itself. This understands complexity in a more ontological way, as not a problem of knowledge of determinations but of a reality which emerges more contingently without hidden determinations. This view of complexity is seen as advancing scientific knowledge in some US approaches, particularly those based at the Santa Fe Institute which seeks to apply complexity understandings to social problems, and as less ‘scientific’ and more open and creative in more ‘European’ critical social thought.

**Questions**

Is complexity similar to realism and/or to postmodernism?
What is a complex adaptive system? What is emergence?
Does complexity open up new avenues for research and understanding?

**3 Essential readings**

Readings


Articles from the *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, 41:3 (June 2013) special issue ‘Materialism and World Politics’.


**Week Five: 27 October 2016**

**Constituted vs Constituent Power**

What are the implications of complexity for power? Some analysts suggest that power is not what it was, that maybe its location has shifted and that power has become more distributed and diversified or shifted to other (lower) levels. For other analysts, power needs to be understood as a contest between the constituent power of life, potencia, vis-à-vis the constituted power of government, potestas. We shall discuss how constituted power is seen as unable to grasp, direct or control social processes and outcomes.

**Questions**

What is problematic about constituted power?
What is the source of the productive power of the ‘Multitude’?
What is meant by the distinction between ‘transcendent’ and ‘immanent’ understandings of power?

**3 Essential Readings**


Readings


If you want to expand your preparation further, you can also reflect on the connection of today’s topic with analyses of agonistic democracy, for instance in:


Week Six: 3 November 2016

**Resilience, Adaptation and Vulnerability**

In a more interconnected world, it is held there is less separation between governance policies and objects/subjects to be governed/secured. Often policy-making involves a greater understanding of our own relations/entanglements. Resilience has become a major field of policy-making through which these new, more relational understandings have been worked through. There are many possible
examples, perhaps one useful one is that of resilience in relation to disasters. Disasters were once seen as external events or shocks, and which necessitated recovery and ‘bouncing back’, but now are increasingly understood rather differently. Disasters are part of a learning/developmental/governmental process in ways in which they were not before. Disasters are reinscribed as the final point of processes which were previously hidden to us, or which we lacked awareness of; processes (or assemblages, in current parlance) in which we were all the time and already embedded within as actors with agency. Thus, in reflexive resilience-thinking, disasters do not require ‘bouncing back’ to the status quo ante, but rather require self-reflexivity, in the awareness of how to bounce back differently: how to learn from the bad forms of governance that the disaster reveals and thus to prevent or limit such events in the future.

Questions

What is the difference between prevention, bouncing back and bouncing forward?
What happens when the security threat and the referent object of security are blurred?
What is the relationship between resilience and complexity?

3 Essential readings
https://www.radicalphilosophy.com/commentary/resisting-resilience

Readings

Rockefeller Global Resilience Partnership
http://www.globalresiliencepartnership.org/.
Peter Rogers, *Resilience and the City: Change, (Dis)Order and Disaster* (Ashgate, 2012).

**Week Seven: 10 November 2016**

**The Implications for International Interventions**

There are few areas where complexity and the awareness of nonlinearity (the gap between intentions and outcomes) is growing faster than that of foreign policy, particularly with regard to the difficulties of exporting Western norms or in terms of
interventions in the cause of peace, development and democracy. In the 1990s universal approaches were popular, in the fields of humanitarian intervention, human rights promotion, international peacebuilding and statebuilding etc. Today, these approaches to international policy intervention are seen to be much more problematic. In this session we hope to discuss how our understandings have shifted so rapidly, perhaps leading to scepticism towards any attempt at international problem-solving.

Questions

Why does the Overseas Development Institute see humanitarianism as problematic?
Is it possible to separate the fields of peace, development and rights?
How can international interveners ensure that the unintended consequences don’t undermine the intended ones?

3 Essential readings


Readings

Cedric de Coning (17 minute YouTube video) ‘Coping With Peacebuilding Complexity’. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_n9dNELJ-qc

Daniela Körppen and Norbert Ropers, ‘Introduction: Addressing the Complex Dynamics of Conflict Transformation’. 


http://www.stabilityjournal.org/article/view/sta.as/39


Roger Mac Ginty, International Peacebuilding and Local Resistance: Hybrid Forms of Peace (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2011);


**Week Eight: 17 November 2016**

**The Implications for Rights and Representation**

In Week 5, we have seen how approaches of complexity uphold an understanding of power as emergent and fluid. There, life is conceived as a productive, performative and enabling force, which is always in excess with regard to the rigid and constraining structures of the formal power of potestas. This week’s session enquires what the implications of this conception of power are for ideas of politics, law and rights. How can the traditional modern tenets of constitutions, representation and decision-making be reformulated in order to attend to the relational complexities of a natural-and-social world? How can the universality of rights be reconciled with the assumption of life’s infinite difference and plurality? How can the rigidity and generality of the law become responsive to the fluidity of
emergent global processes? In a Spinozian fashion, some authors identify strategies of empowerment and development with the enhancement of individuals’ self-fulfillment and freedom (Sen). Others discard a paradigm of representation built on identity and focus on beings’ capacities of doing and becoming (Grosz, Sharp). In the domain of law, finally, there emerges a growing need to adjust existent normative frameworks to the fluidity and fleetingness of new global societal dynamics. Despite their variety, the many perspectives explored in the session seem to converge on a common trend. They express a move away from an understanding of politics as the constructed and artificial sphere of human institutions and concerted action towards one that is increasingly searched at the level of everyday interactions, relations and practices.

Questions

What is freedom? Is it a state of being or a process? Why does it matter?
Can democracy exist without the artificial formal separation of constituted power?
Are all forms of representation problematic? What is problematic about representation per se?

3 Essential Readings

Amartya Sen, Development as Freedom, Intro and Chapter 1
http://my.ilstu.edu/~jkshapi/Grosz_freedom.pdf

Readings

Leo Benedictus, “The nudge unit – has it worked so far?”, Guardian, 2 May 2013.
http://www.theguardian.com/politics/2013/may/02/nudge-unit-has-it-worked

For an application to the discourse of Human Rights you can look at

**Week Nine: 24 November 2016**

**The Implications for Knowledge: The Promise of Big Data**

How do we know things under complexity? What type of knowledge do we need? Many people argue that the type of knowledge needs to be context specific and real time. What is the difference between modernist forms of generating knowledge, through statistical generalisation and complexity approaches based upon ‘drilling down’? Can knowledge ever be ‘real time’ and, if it was, would it make a difference?

**Questions**
Why is it argued that correlation can replace causation?
Why is the situated perspective more ‘objective’ than a ‘God’s eye’ view?
Why is it argued that Big Data can resolve problems? How does this work?

**3 Essential readings**

Readings

  


Stefano Canali, 'Big Data, epistemology and causality: Knowledge in and knowledge out in EXPOsOMICS', *Big Data & Society*, 3(2), 2016: 1–11


UN Global Pulse 'Big Data for Development: Challenges & Opportunities', May 2012.

Week Ten: 1 December 2016
The Ethics of Hacking, Composing and Worlding

(we will also be discussing essay questions and preparation)

Complexity is welcomed in many critical and radical accounts as facilitating possibilities and enabling change through our multiple entanglements. We will consider how the agency and responsibilities of the ‘entangled’ subject differs from the modernist or autonomous subject. For a possible half-way view of ethical duties please have a look at the Pogge readings.

Questions
How can we learn ‘to be affected’ and why is this important?
Does the fact that we have more entanglements mean that our agency is increased?
Why does Latour counterpose ‘composition’ to ‘critique’?
How does ‘hacking’ enable the release of immanent potentiality?

3 Essential readings
http://t.co/ung1fOZcIP

Reading
The Invisible Committee, To Our Friends (2014) 4 Fuck Off Google
https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/the-invisible-committeeto-our-friends
Week Eleven: 8 December 2016
The Implications for Theory: Actor-Network Theory, New Materialism, Speculative Realism and Object-Oriented Ontology

For many thinkers today, complexity approaches have opened up new ways of thinking about the world that challenge some of the basic binaries of modernist thinking. What are the implications of the end of the nature/culture divide or the end of the subject/object divide? Is it important for us to experiment with how objects think and know the world? Why do some authors think that this is more important than understanding how people think about the world?

Questions

What is the difference between a ‘mediator’ and ‘intermediary’? What does ‘translation’ do?
Is complexity about ‘relations’ or ‘entities’ or both?
What is a ‘flat ontology’?

3 Essential readings


Readings

* Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, 'Nomadology: The War Machine', chapter from *A Thousand Plateaus*.

http://humweb.ucsc.edu/feministstudies/faculty/barad/barad-posthumanist.pdf
http://static.guim.co.uk/ni/1381763590219/-Some-thoughts-on-education.pdf

**Week Twelve: 15 December 2016**

**Conclusion: Beyond Complexity?**

In this concluding session we will reflect on the module as a whole and the implications of complexity for our understandings of governance, power and agency as well as considering whether the global world will continue to become more complex or whether complexity itself has limits and if so how these may be understood. Perhaps the fact that complexity now appears as something to be welcomed rather than feared indicates that the work of complexity is already achieved?
Assessment

Book review Deadline 12.00am Thursday 10 November 2016

Choose one of the following ten books. Write a 1,500 word review on how the book relates to rethinking governance, power and agency today (do not just provide a summary of the book, treat it analytically).


3,500 word Essay  Deadline 12.00am Thursday 12 December 2016

Choose one of the following six essay titles

1. What are the implications of complexity for our understanding of how governance should operate?

2. How is complexity linked to our understanding of the human?

3. What are the implications of complexity for our understanding of power?

4. What is the link between resilience and complexity?

5. Do we still need knowledge in a world of complexity? What sort of knowledge?

6. What are the implications of complexity for our understanding of democracy and agency?
**Assessment Rationale**

The assessment regime is designed to encourage research expertise in the area of politics and complexity. It aims to develop advanced understanding of the concepts, frameworks and approaches of complexity thinking as applied to the rethinking of governance, agency and power. The assessment by essay and book review enables students to develop a critical understanding and to apply key theoretical accounts to current debates and problems with regard to the impact of complexity.

In particular, the book review is designed to develop analytical skills and to ensure that basic concepts and frames of debate are understood at an early stage of the module. The review encourages students to focus on their capacity to digest, comprehend and contextualise concepts, theories and policies key to governance and complexity.

The research essay allows students to develop an extended analysis of key concepts, theories and/or policies, to engage in an in-depth evaluation of competing interpretations and theoretical approaches, and to explore the application of governance practices both domestically and internationally. The essay challenges students to critically engage with their chosen topic and demonstrate their critical and analytical ability.

**Assessment Criteria**

In marking essays, I will consider the following:

1. extent to which the essay question has been addressed using relevant material from the module reading list. These need to be combined with material acquired through independent research;
2. structure, coherence and justification of the argument put forward;
3. clarity and accuracy with which ideas are expressed;
4. degree to which different concepts and theoretical approaches are sufficiently described, discussed and integrated;
5. range of research and collation of information and material;
6. selection and correct attribution of sources in support of an argument.

More specifically:

**Structure and Quality of Argument**

Is the thesis of the essay stated in the introduction?
Is the overall structure of the argument clear and coherent?
Are the points made in a logical sequence?
Is the argument sufficiently analytical?
Is there a conclusion?
Does the conclusion address the essay question directly?
Is the conclusion adequately supported by the preceding argument?
Contents

Is the writer’s argument adequately backed up rather than just asserted?
Are the sources used subjected to analysis and critical reflection?
Has the student researched the topic sufficiently?
Are there any important omissions?
Has the student thought about what s/he has read or simply reproduced material from sources?
Is there evidence of critical thinking or an original synthesis?
Has the student gone beyond the essential reading?

Use of Evidence

Are the points made supported by evidence from cited sources?
Are the sources drawn on sufficient and appropriate?
If empirical evidence is used, is it described clearly and in appropriate detail?
Does the evidence presented support the conclusions reached?
Is the interpretation of the evidence presented appropriately qualified (i.e. have overgeneralisations and sweeping statements been avoided)?

Writing Style and Presentation of the Essay

Is the essay referenced correctly?
Are quotations identified and fully referenced?
Are the ideas presented fully credited?
Is the essay fluent and readable?
Is the grammar and spelling adequate?
Has the student made an effort to use their own words?

Assessment Grading Scheme

Essay assessment is a complex process that cannot be reduced to a simple formula. However, it is possible to articulate some of the features that your lecturers will expect to find in each of the marking categories.

First class essays (70-100%) will: address the question or title; develop a well-informed argument; demonstrate familiarity with the relevant literature; present an analysis and evaluation of the ideas and theories discussed; reveal internal integration and coherence; use references and examples to support the claims and arguments made; provide detailed references and sources in the bibliography or reference section; be written in good and grammatically correct English. Differences within the range are usually attributable to differences in the quality of analysis and evaluation and internal integration and coherence.

Upper second class essays (60-69%) will: address the title; develop a clear argument; demonstrate familiarity with relevant literature; use references and examples. The difference between essays in this class and a first class pieced of work is often the quality of the analysis and evaluation presented and the degree to which it is integrated around its central theme.

Lower second class work (50-59%) may show weaknesses with regard to a number of the features mentioned above. Generally, the analysis and evaluation may be poor, so that the work fails to convey an unified consideration of the topic under discussion. Often, for example, ideas and theories will be presented but not related to each other, so that the reader is left to draw his/her own conclusions. This may
also mean that the material presented is not used to address the question but is simply included as vaguely relevant. Finally the sequential structure of essays in this category could usually be improved.

**Failed essays** (40-49%) are, at best, manifestly failing with regard to a number of the features mentioned above. In particular, their demonstration of familiarity with the literature is usually poor and their structure difficult to discern.

Essays which are of extremely poor quality will receive marks that are under 40%. We use the full spectrum of marks.

**Assessment Submission Information**

All coursework on this module is submitted via Blackboard only. It will automatically be scanned through the Turnitin Plagiarism Detection Service software.

- You DO NOT need to attach a copy of the CA1 form;
- You DO need to include your name and student ID on the first page of your assignment.

To submit your assignment:

- Log on to Blackboard at [http://learning.westminster.ac.uk](http://learning.westminster.ac.uk);
- Go to the relevant module Blackboard site;
- Click on the ‘Assessments’ link on the left-hand side;
- Click on the link to the relevant assignment;
- Follow the ‘upload’ and ‘submit’ instructions.

A two-minute video showing the submission process can be found by following this link: [http://www.youtube.com/user/SSHLUniWestminster#p/u/0/I-ZQs4nSWL4](http://www.youtube.com/user/SSHLUniWestminster#p/u/0/I-ZQs4nSWL4)

**IT IS A REQUIREMENT THAT YOU SUBMIT YOUR WORK IN THIS WAY. ALL COURSEWORK MUST BE SUBMITTED BY 12:00 AM ON THE DUE DATE.**

**IF YOU SUBMIT YOUR COURSEWORK LATE BUT WITHIN 24 HOURS OR ONE WORKING DAY OF THE SPECIFIED DEADLINE, 10% OF THE OVERALL MARKS AVAILABLE FOR THAT ELEMENT OF ASSESSMENT WILL BE DEDUCTED, AS A PENALTY FOR LATE SUBMISSION, EXCEPT FOR WORK WHICH OBTAINS A MARK IN THE RANGE 50 – 59%, IN WHICH CASE THE MARK WILL BE CAPPED AT THE PASS MARK (50%).**

**IF YOU SUBMIT YOUR COURSEWORK MORE THAN 24 HOURS OR MORE THAN ONE WORKING DAY AFTER THE SPECIFIED DEADLINE YOU WILL BE GIVEN A MARK OF ZERO FOR THE WORK IN QUESTION (PLEASE SEE ALSO THE SECTION ‘PENALTIES FOR LATE SUBMISSION OF COURSEWORK’).**

**LATE WORK AND ANY CLAIM OF MITIGATING CIRCUMSTANCES RELATING TO COURSEWORK MUST BE SUBMITTED AT THE EARLIEST OPPORTUNITY TO ENSURE AS FAR AS POSSIBLE THAT THE WORK CAN STILL BE MARKED (PLEASE SEE ALSO THE SECTION ‘MITIGATING CIRCUMSTANCES’). LATE WORK WILL NOT NORMALLY BE ACCEPTED IF IT IS RECEIVED MORE THAN FIVE WORKING DAYS AFTER THE ORIGINAL COURSEWORK DEADLINE. ONCE THE WORK OF OTHER STUDENTS HAS BEEN MARKED AND RETURNED, LATE SUBMISSIONS OF THAT SAME PIECE OF WORK CANNOT BE ASSESSED.**
Online Feedback via GradeMark

The Department of Politics and International Relations offers online feedback on written coursework via GradeMark (accessed via Blackboard). Failure to submit your essay via Blackboard will mean that your coursework will not be graded and subsequently will not count towards your assessment for this module. GradeMark gives academic staff a full-featured digital environment for grading and commenting on student work. After grades are posted, students can access GradeMark to review comments and print or save a copy of the graded files. Further information about GradeMark can be found online: http://www.submit.ac.uk/resources/documentation/turnitin/sales/GradeMark_Overview.pdf

Penalties for Late Submission of Coursework

The University operates a two-tier penalty system for late submission of coursework and in-module assessment. This regulation applies to all students registered for an award irrespective of their level of study. All University coursework deadlines are scheduled between Monday and Thursday inclusive. Where possible, the submission day will coincide with the day the module classes are normally taught. However, the University does not allow submission deadlines to be set for Fridays.

If you submit your coursework late but within 24 hours or one working day of the specified deadline, 10% of the overall marks available for that element of assessment (i.e. 10%) will be deducted, as a penalty for late submission, except for work which obtains a mark in the range 50 – 59%, in which case the mark will be capped at the pass mark (50%). If you submit your coursework more than 24 hours or more than one working day after the specified deadline you will be given a mark of zero for the work in question.

Late work and any claim of Mitigating Circumstances relating to coursework must be submitted at the earliest opportunity to ensure as far as possible that the work can still be marked. You will normally have the right to submit coursework 10 working days after the original deadline. Once the work of other students has been marked and returned, late submissions of that same piece of work cannot be assessed.

Referral Opportunities

A referral in an item of assessment gives you the opportunity to resubmit coursework for the module. A referral opportunity (or re-sit) may be awarded to those students who have an overall module mark of greater than or equal to 40%. If you have been given the opportunity to resubmit coursework the work will normally be due to take place in July 2014.

**NB:** It is your responsibility to contact the registry/module leader to obtain details of the referral coursework deadlines and requirements.
Plagiarism and Academic Honesty Information

If carried out knowingly, cheating and plagiarism have the objectives of deceiving examiners and gaining an unfair advantage over other students. This is unethical. It also threatens the integrity of the assessment procedures and the value of the University’s academic awards.

While you are studying here your academic performance will be assessed on the basis of your own work. Anyone caught cheating through coursework assignments will be subject to formal investigation in accordance with Section 10 of the University Academic Regulations.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you are not vulnerable to any allegation that you have breached the assessment regulations. Serious penalties are imposed on those who cheat. These may include failure in a module or an element of a module, suspension or exclusion from your course and withdrawal of academic credits awarded previously for modules which have been passed.

What is Plagiarism?

When you submit work for individual assessment, the work must be your own. If you have included sections of text from other sources without referencing them correctly, then you may be accused of plagiarism. Plagiarism is defined as submission for assessment of material (written, visual or oral) originally produced by another person or persons, without acknowledgement, in such a way that the work could be assumed to be the student’s own. Plagiarism may involve the unattributed use of another person’s work, including: ideas, opinions, theory, facts, statistics, graphs, models, paintings, performance, computer code, drawings, quotations of another person’s actual spoken or written words, or paraphrases of another person’s spoken or written words. Plagiarism covers both direct copying and copying or paraphrasing with only minor adjustments. You must keep a careful record of all the sources you use, including all internet material. It is your responsibility to ensure that you understand correct referencing practices. If you use text or data or drawings or designs or artifacts without properly acknowledging who produced the material, then you are likely to be accused of plagiarism. Here are some simple dos and don’ts, to help you avoid plagiarism:
Students are also not permitted to re-present any assessment already submitted for one module as if for the first time assessment in another module. Double counting of assessed work is not normally allowed. If submitting work previously included in another assessment the student should attribute the section of text from the earlier work. This may be taken into account by the markers.

Always check with your Module Leader or Course Leader if you are unsure about subject-specific conventions concerning referencing and attribution (e.g. in design-based and creative subjects where there may be particular expectations about referencing and/or copyright). You can access a helpful tutorial about plagiarism in Blackboard. After signing in the tutorial can be accessed from any page in Blackboard by clicking on the ‘Skills Resources’ tab. Please consult the relevant Module Leader if you need any further advice.

Plagiarism Detection

To help eradicate plagiarism and thereby protect the value of your qualification all modules include the requirement that your coursework must be submitted electronically and checked by text-matching software. All coursework must be submitted via Blackboard.
Mitigating Circumstances

If illness or other unforeseen circumstances unavoidably prevent you from completing your assessed work, or submitting it on time, you can submit an application for Mitigating Circumstances (MCs) to be taken into consideration. If your MC claim is accepted it will result in one of the following outcomes:

- Your original mark will be reinstated (for late work submitted up to 10 working days after the published deadlines);
- You will be offered an opportunity to sit the assessment without penalty at the next available opportunity as a Deferral (in cases where you have missed an assessment entirely).

The University operates a fit-to-sit policy for assessment. This means that if you submit a piece of coursework or other time-limited assessment, you are deemed to have declared yourself fit to attempt the assessment and must accept the result of the assessment.

If you have missed a significant part of your studies due to ill health or other personal problems, you must speak to your Course Leader and Personal Tutor, to discuss whether you should suspend studies or request deferrals either for the individual assessments, or entire modules.

If you miss an assessment or submit work late, you should submit an application in writing using a Mitigating Circumstances claim form to your School Office, supported by original documentary evidence (e.g. a medical certificate), at the earliest available opportunity.

Mitigating Circumstances Boards meet throughout the year and it is in your best interests to submit your claim as quickly as possible, normally within one month of the circumstances occurring, as you will receive a decision on your claim much earlier and will be in a better position to plan your studies for the remainder of the year. Information about the final deadlines for claims is available via the Mitigating Circumstances website: http://www.westminster.ac.uk/study/current-students/your-studies/forms-and-procedures/mitigating-circumstances.

Please note that retrospective claims will not normally be considered, especially in cases where the claim is being made after the release of the results for the assessment in question.

If you do submit an MC claim, you should not assume that it is necessarily going to be accepted; it is your responsibility to make sure that you complete all assessment requirements in a module as far as possible.

It is very important that you read Section 11 of the Handbook of Academic Regulations, on Mitigating Circumstances, to find out what to do if you miss the deadline for any piece of work; in most cases it is crucial that you submit the work or participate in the assessment as soon as you possibly can. Late work will not
normally be accepted if it is received more than ten working days after the original coursework deadline. If other students have already had their marked work returned, the same assignment cannot be marked once submitted late.

Your MC claim will be considered by the Mitigating Circumstances Board. The Mitigating Circumstances Board makes a decision on your claim that is later communicated to the Assessment Board which meets at the end of the year to formally ratify all of the results for your course. The Mitigating Circumstances Board’s decision will be communicated to you by email within 5 working days of the Board meeting and you will also be able to check SRSWeb to see which deferrals you have been granted.

The University-wide criteria by which claims will be judged are standardised for reasons of fairness and these are published in detail in Section 11 of the Handbook of Academic Regulations, which you should read before submitting any claim. The criteria for acceptance or rejection of an MC claim reflect work-based standards of conduct and performance, and only those circumstances which are demonstrably serious and likely to have affected your academic performance will be considered.