

General Student Guidelines

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1. Enrollment

The deadlines for enrollment for students **holding an Italian qualification** are available on the University website [here](#).

To start the procedure go online to your [student portal \(area riservata\)](#) and register (or login with your username and password if you have already registered). Continue to ADMINISTRATION>ENROLLMENT > and select the desired course. Complete all the required sections and at the end of the process print out the ENROLLMENT receipt. The third page of the receipt is a "MAV" (Payment against notice). You need this document for the payment of the first installment of the tuition fees.

Newly enrolled students will receive a personal 'Welcome' email providing general information, including their official university email address to be used as the only means of communication with the University of Pavia.

Students have to activate the new email account as soon as they receive the new credentials for accessing the online university services (e.g. Reserved Area and WI-FI). Those already in possession of a University of Pavia e-mail account will retain it together with their credentials for accessing the Reserved Area and online services.

If you have obtained your bachelor degree outside Italy , you can send the scan of the required documents (check the finalize enrollment section [here](#)) via email to admission@unipv.it .

Once the Student Administration Office (*Segreteria Studenti*) receives confirmation of the first installment payment and the required documents within the stated deadlines, you will be enrolled.

2. Choice of study plan

In November, you have to choose your study plan for the first year (*scelta del piano di studi*). You will not have to choose your study plan for the second year until November of next year.

In your first year, you have 6 free-choice credits: For these free-choice credits, you may choose any course offered by the University, located in either semester.

All students who have obtained their qualification abroad **MUST** include in their study plan 6 credits in the Italian language unless:

- they have obtained a high school diploma or a bachelor's degree in Italian in Italy;
- they have obtained an Italian school diploma abroad;
- they possess an Italian language certification of at least level B1.

If you wish to include languages other than Italian in your study plan, it is important to plan this *from the beginning* of your first year of study, given that basic-level courses tend to be in the second semester, and intermediate courses in the first semester of the following year.

You may insert up to 24 credits of extra exams in your study plan (these extra exams are called *esami in sovrannumero* – i.e. exams that will take your total number of credits beyond the required 120).

Regarding elective courses, note that, apart from the courses in English on offer in this Department, there are courses in English on offer in other Departments. In particular, the Department of Economics offers a large number of courses in English, many of them with an international focus.

Italian students (and indeed non-Italian students) may, if they wish, cover their free-choice credits with a course taught in Italian rather than in English. Please note that **international students must have successfully passed the Italian language exam** in order to be eligible to sit a free-choice exam taught in Italian.

In some cases it is possible to vary the study plan by substituting a compulsory course with some other course (this is called choosing an “individual” study plan (*piano di studi individuale*). Such individual study plans are quite rare, however. A special reason needs to be provided for the change, and the change has to be approved by the Departmental Board. If you require more information on this possibility, please consult the admin personnel (*segreteria studenti*) in the first instance.

3. Online services and databases

Once you have enrolled you will be given a username and password for access to the university's online services and research databases (including credentials for using wifi on your laptops within the University buildings). The online services include access to your study plan, enrollment for single exams, and your exam record (*libretto universitario*). The databases include academic

journals subscribed to by the university library system (via databases such as JStor) and more specialized databases for particular subject areas. You will need these for some of your course readings and research for essays.

Teachers use the online platform **KIRO** for the provision of course material:

<https://elearning.unipv.it/course/index.php?categoryid=26>

It is essential that you sign up for on KIRO for each of the courses in your study plan, and consult the page regularly.

4. Study facilities and computer rooms

The Department of Political and Social Sciences has a number of study areas and computer rooms which are available for use by students.

Within the Departmental building in the central area of the University, the student study areas are the reading room next to the Head of Department's office (*Direttore del Dipartimento*) and the Aula Leoni (at the end of the same corridor). The Department normally closes at 8pm. There is another study room on the ground floor off the Political and Social Sciences quad, next to Aula C. There is also a university study room open until 11pm near the main university entrance at Corso Strada Nuova 65.

If you like, you can also use the University Central Library for study. This is an attractive historic library, located at the top of the large double staircase near the main university entrance at Corso Strada Nuova 65.

The Department currently has two computer rooms which are open to students at any time except when occupied for teaching. One of these is located on the first floor, within the Department, in the first main corridor after passing by the information office. The other, Aula 7, is located on the ground floor in the Political Sciences quad (near the University bar). You can access university online services either from one of the terminals in these rooms or from your own computers using wifi.

5. Professors' office hours

During professors' office hours, you can meet individually with a Professor outside class times. In case of need, you can also write Professors an email and they will arrange an appointment, either online or in person depending on the circumstances.

6. Written assignments and coursework

Apart from your final thesis, a number of courses will involve an assessed essay that will contribute to your final mark for that particular course (exactly how much it contributes is a matter for individual teachers and is specified in the individual course syllabus). An assessed essay is a standard term paper based on several readings. An assessed essay should normally show some autonomous ability to construct or reconstruct explanations, arguments or lines of reasoning, and if possible should show some critical distance with respect to the study materials. Prescribed essay

lengths may vary, but a typical example is 4,000 words. Individual teachers will provide further explanations regarding their expectations.

The “Students” section of the WPIR website includes a general guide to essay writing. Some professors also provide more specific guidance regarding their own particular discipline. It is understood that most of the work for an assessed essay will be carried out *outside* term time (*fuori dal periodo delle lezioni*). Most of your study time during term time is likely to be spent on course reading in preparation for seminars. In some courses, however, a shorter written commentary might be asked of you during term time as part of your seminar preparation. In addition, in some courses you may be expected to give an oral presentation, or to participate in a presentation given by a group.

We expect students embarking on a degree course at the Master level to be fully aware of the nature and seriousness of plagiarism in written work. Assessed essays and final theses will be checked for plagiarism, and to this end should be submitted to course teachers or supervisors electronically as well as (if required by the course teacher) in hard copies. If you have any doubts about plagiarism and how to avoid it, information in English can be found here:

<http://www.plagiarism.org/>

The University uses the anti-plagiarism software Compilatio, which can be used by enrolled students as well as by professors: <https://www.compilatio.net/it/>

Finally, please note that there is an optional 3-credit (20 hour) course in *Academic Writing* scheduled for the second semester. This is the first part of a longer 6 credit course (also attended by students of other degree programs) in advanced English. This first part, open to WPIR students as a 3-credit option, is devoted to the writing of academic papers. Students who feel they still need to improve their English writing style and/or who do not already have extensive experience of academic writing in English are strongly advised to include this course in their first year as an extra exam (*esame in sovrannumero*). The three credits can count towards the second-year 12-credit slot for languages and training courses. For further information about this course, contact Prof. Cristina Mariotti.

7. Attendance policy

As a student enrolled in the degree program in World Politics and International Relations, you are required to attend all core courses and to participate actively in them. Admittance to any one of the relevant exams depends on your attending the relevant course.

All absences have to be justified to the course teacher. Justifications other than illness (such as grave family reasons) may be taken into account at the discretion of the course teacher. Unjustified absences may negatively affect your exam grade, depending on how the grade breaks down in individual courses, and prolonged unjustified absences will ultimately result in your being excluded from taking the exam. Problems of protracted illness will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

Valid justifications do *not* include extra-curricular educational activities (except in exceptional circumstances relating to the aims of the degree course) or internships. Regardless of whether or

not they are recognized as a part of your study plan, internships have to be pursued outside the relevant term times – that is, either during the vacation or during the second semester of the second year.

Different professors assess and monitor attendance in different ways, so pay careful attention to the rules in individual course syllabuses, and to any instructions provided at the introductory lecture of each course.

The full attendance rule applies only to the compulsory courses, and therefore does not apply to elective courses used to cover your free-choice credits or to the 12-credit slot for languages etc. in your second year. For these free-choice and additional credits, attendance rules will depend on the particular courses chosen. In many such cases it will be possible to choose between: (i) taking an exam after attending the course (*esame da frequentante*), and (ii) taking a “non-attender exam”, which does not require full attendance (*esame da non-frequentante*).

It is impossible to guarantee an absence of timetable clashes between compulsory courses and the many elective courses, including language courses. If a timetable clash does occur, our general rule is that we will allow you to give priority to attendance at the elective course *only* if it is a *language class* (in this case, we will relax the attendance requirement for the compulsory WPIR course and you should seek advice from the WPIR course teacher about the exam format). Otherwise, we will ask you to give priority to attendance at the compulsory WPIR course.

8. Taking exams

When you wish to take an exam for a particular course, you need to sign up online (this is called *iscrizione online*) for one of the exam dates (*appelli di esame*). Depending on the individual course format, which is specified by the individual course teacher, this exam might consist in a written exam, an oral exam, or a discussion of an assessed essay that you have previously handed in. At the end of the exam the course teacher will award an overall mark for the course, based on the particular combination of marks specified in the individual course syllabus (e.g., a certain percentage for participation in class, a certain percentage for an assessed essay, and a certain percentage for the final exam).

There are three exam sessions (*sessioni di esame*) during each academic year: a first session in January-February (i.e. at the end of the first semester), containing three exam dates for each course; a second session in June-July (i.e. at the end of the second semester), again containing three exam dates for each course; and a third session, in September, containing two exam dates for each course.

Thus, for each individual course you will have 8 opportunities throughout the year in which to take the exam. You are free to choose between these exam dates.

In addition, there is a special exam session in March-April (*sessione straordinaria*) which is reserved for students who have delayed taking their exam by more than a year (*studenti fuori Corso*).

N.B. As a result of the above rule, it is NOT open to first-year students to take any exams in the March-April special exam session.

Exam marks are registered online and then appear online on your exam record (*libretto universitario*), to which only you have access online.

If you pass an exam but are dissatisfied with the mark awarded, you can “refuse” it (*rifiutare il voto*), either communicating this fact directly to the teacher at the end of the exam, or online within a specified number of days after the exam. If you “refuse” a mark, the mark is not registered. You are then obliged to retake the exam at a later date of your choice.

Further notes on “refusing” marks for WPIR exams:

In the case of a course with compulsory attendance where a portion of the final mark depends on your participation in class, refusing a final exam mark normally amounts to refusing only that part of your mark that can in practice be retaken within the same year (i.e. an assessed essay or an end-of-course oral or written exam). You cannot refuse that part of your mark that is awarded for participation in class, except by choosing to participate again in the same course a year later.

If you refuse a mark given for an assessed essay, retaking that part of the exam will involve writing a wholly new essay on a new topic. It will not involve simply reworking or rewriting the same essay on the basis of the feedback provided.

9. Postponing exams

In the Italian university system, you can choose when to take individual exams. We strongly recommend that you take exams during the exam session immediately subsequent to the relevant course, taking them in the prescribed order and keeping up with the overall exam schedule of the degree course (Italians call this “*rimanere in corso*”). However, you are formally free to do otherwise. It is up to you to sign up to take an individual exam, and you will suffer no sanctions if you do not take an exam immediately after completing the relevant course. Bear in mind, though, that if you delay exams too much, you will wind up taking more than two years to graduate and eventually, if you stay on beyond April of the third year, you will have to pay a third year of tuition fees.

NB: Students who postpone a particular exam to the subsequent academic year should bear in mind that the relevant required readings for the exam may change from year to year. As a default rule, *you should assume that the exam will be based on the readings of the current academic year*. Some teachers allow students to take the exam based on the readings of a previous year, but *you should check this with the individual teacher* before signing up to take the exam.

10. Final Thesis

At the end of your course of study you will be expected to submit a thesis. This final thesis is a substantial piece of written work (worth 24 credits) involving an in-depth study on a particular topic. The bulk of the work for the thesis normally takes place during the second semester of the second year. The thesis may be in any subject area taught within the degree course, subject to agreement with your thesis supervisor. It is up to you to approach one of the teachers in the Department to ask them to act as supervisor.

We normally advise identifying a thesis topic after the second-year courses have begun, so as to be aware of all the options. However, you may seek advice on exploratory reading for the thesis as early as you like.

For more details, consult the guidelines on the final thesis in the “Students” section of the WPIR website.

Important note for non-EU students: your residence permit (*permesso di soggiorno*, issued by the *Questura*) must be up-to-date at the time when you hand in your application for admission to the final exam at the Student Administration Office (*segreteria studenti*). The *segreteria studenti* cannot proceed with your thesis defence unless you are still a legal resident in Italy. Even if you happen to be residing outside Italy for the final part of your studies and intend to return only for the thesis defence, it is not sufficient simply to return with a tourist visa.

11. International mobility

Students enrolled in the degree program in World Politics and International Relations are encouraged to take advantage of opportunities for international mobility, given the congruence of these opportunities with the overall aims of the degree program. Every year a large number of WPIR students take advantage of this opportunity and they have a good success rate in winning grants. For more information, click on “Students” in the WPIR website.

As a rule, all Pavia students going abroad for one or two semesters are required to take courses or activities that are deemed to be equivalent to all the compulsory courses in their Pavia study plan for the relevant period. Where free-choice exams are substituted by exams in the foreign host university, students must choose courses that cohere in an overall sense with the Pavia degree program. The above-mentioned equivalence and coherence will be assessed by the Coordinator for International Mobility in Pavia, who may consult the degree program Coordinator and the colleagues teaching the specific Pavia courses. Courses taken abroad must be 4th- or 5th-year courses (MA level or 4th year undergraduate level); courses that serve to substitute Pavia free choice exams may also be chosen among undergraduate level courses at the host university, excluding first-year undergraduate courses.

Outgoing mobility may be used for research in view of the final thesis, provided the students have found a subject and a supervisor for their thesis and a tutor in the host institution.

Students may apply for all mobility programs offered by the University of Pavia (Erasmus+, Overseas Exchange Program, Coimbra Group SEN, etc.); students in “Merit Colleges” (*Collegi di merito*) may apply for the special mobility programs offered by their own Colleges.

In the case of applications to USA universities in the International Student Exchange Program (ISEP), a strong preference should be given to the second semester of the second year (rather than the first semester), given the uncertainty, in the specific case of ISEP, about access to courses that correspond sufficiently to those in the Pavia degree program.

Visit the University website for updated information on outgoing mobility:

<https://internazionale.unipv.eu/en/mobility/going-abroad/>

12. Internships

In your second year, you may gain credits for a work placement or internship (in Italian, *stage* or *tirocinio*). This should be planned for a period outside those in which classes are taking place. It is up to students to take the initiative in finding an internship, and you should be aware that the University does not guarantee you an internship.

It is important to keep the University informed of your plans: all internships have to be approved as appropriate to the degree course in World Politics and International Relations (for example: an internship with an embassy, or with a private firm with international dealings, is likely to be approved; an internship involving taking local orders for a local Pavia-based trader, is not).

The faculty member with responsibility for work placements is Prof. Axel Berkofsky.

13. Public Lectures

Periodically, we organize special *Public Lecture in World Politics and International Relations*, with important academic and non-academic speakers from outside the University. These lectures represent occasions on which to bring together the WPIR community (including students from different years and teachers from different disciplines). WPIR students are expected to attend, and a number of Faculty also usually attend.

14. Other events of interest

Take advantage of the many research seminars, conferences, and other cultural events organized by the Department of Political and Social Sciences (keep an eye on the degree course website and on email updates), as well as those held in other Departments and, in the evenings, by the many University Colleges, such as the Collegio Borromeo, the Collegio Ghislieri, the Collegio Nuovo and the Collegio Santa Caterina da Siena. You will see posters advertising these events in the Department and elsewhere in the University. Most of them are held in Italian, but an increasing number are held in English and often include speakers of international standing.