



## Politics and International Relations (IR) - how to find Politics and IR resources

Claire Molloy, June 2021

QG SOC005 [<https://www.abdn.ac.uk/library/documents/guides/qgsoc005.pdf>]

### Introduction

**Politics** and **international relations** are two very broad descriptions incorporating elements of many different subjects such as economics, business, law, education and even history. The University Library uses the Dewey Decimal Classification scheme (go to [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dewey\\_decimal](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dewey_decimal) for a quick introduction) to organise books and other materials; politics is at 320 and IR roughly 327. They are parts of social science and can be found on Floor 6 of The Sir Duncan Rice Library.

This guide aims to give you a very quick introduction to the various resources available to you. If you would like any further information or help with finding and using resources, please contact the **Social Science Subject Team** based on **Floor 6** of The Sir Duncan Rice Library, or email the **Information Consultant for Politics and International Relations**, Claire Molloy: [c.a.l.molloy@abdn.ac.uk](mailto:c.a.l.molloy@abdn.ac.uk).

### New to the Library?

As you can imagine, the Library, like the rest of the University is still operating in pandemic mode which means some things are not quite as we are used to. Check out our COVID-specific pages to find out more:

<http://bit.ly/COVID-19LibraryUpdates>

### Getting Inside

The Sir Duncan Rice Library is on the west-side of campus off Bedford Road – you can't miss it, it is the huge, stripy, glass building! Anyone can visit the Sir Duncan Rice Library but as a student you will need your University ID card to get in and borrow items.

### Opening Hours

Our opening hours vary depending on the time in the academic year – full details are at:

[http://bit.ly/TSDRL\\_opening-hours](http://bit.ly/TSDRL_opening-hours)

### Borrowing

Undergraduates and taught Postgraduates can borrow up to 20 items, Research students can borrow up to 40. If you are an on campus student you will need your ID card and to set up a PIN to allow you to use the self-issue kiosks (these are like self-serve at the supermarket!). Details of how to set up a PIN are emailed out at the start of the first semester or you can email the Subject Team [subjectteam@abdn.ac.uk](mailto:subjectteam@abdn.ac.uk)

### Loan Periods

There are many different loan periods depending on the demand on an item from Heavy Demand (overnight), right through to full academic year. All loans are subject to recall which means you may be asked to return items before the original due date.

You can find out about borrowing, loans and recalls at: <https://bit.ly/3hoFYgm>

### How is The Sir Duncan Rice Library laid out?

As noted above we use Dewey Decimal to order our materials and Floors 3-7 are where we hold these. The Entrance or Ground floor is where you will find the café and the Welcome Desk as well as the returns area and the main swipe gates into the library. Floor 1 has the main issue desk, heavy demand area and various different study zones. Floor 2 has the main computer classrooms and the hard copy periodicals. Each of the 'collection' floors has various types of study space including silent study rooms, study desk, PCs and comfy seating. You will also find an enquiry point on these floors where you can ask for help finding that book you really need! You can [find out more about the various types of study space](#) and more detail about how we organise the collections floors can be found in our library guides. The Floor 6 [guide for the Social Sciences and Education](#) and [others can be found on our Library guides page](#).

---

## But how do I work out which floor items are on?

In order to find your reading you should use our Resource Discovery tool which is called [Primo](#). It allows you to search by title, author or even subject in order to find the e-link or the shelf location. Log in to Primo, click on advanced (to give you a really good search!) and then try one of the following:

- The **Books+** tab lists the thousands of titles we have full immediate e-access to
- The **Articles+** tab details thousands of articles, book reviews and more

*Note, you won't see these options in the Basic search screen you see when you first go to Primo.*

There is a [handy guide all about Primo](#). We have access to millions of items, some are in e-format, some are physical and held in one of our on campus libraries, but some are held in our store located a few miles away. Primo tells you where and how to access an item – anything not on campus or in e-format can be 'requested' using the link in Primo.

You may also find the [Taylor Library](#) with its [European Documentation Centre \(EDC\)](#) and [Official Publications](#) (UK and Scotland) useful. See our other library guides: [Official Publications Collection guide](#) and [European Documentation Centre guide](#)

## Finding Resources

You can use [Primo](#) to find items to read, particularly where you have been given details in a reading list but we have other tools you can use to find even more. Resources such as **International Bibliography of the Social Sciences (IBSS)**: <http://www.proquest.com/shibboleth> produced by **the London School of Economics** and covers social and cultural anthropology, sociology, education, economics, and the political sciences. It provides access to over 2.5 million references dating back to 1951 and current data is taken from over 2,800 selected journals and around 7000 books per annum. A quick guide is [available online](#).

We pay a lot of money for resources such as these and you will have to log in to read anything you find – check out the relevant library guide for details.

**Social Theory**: <http://solomon.soth.alexanderstreet.com/> offers an extensive selection of documents that explore the complexities and interpret the nature of social behaviour and organization. The collection includes more than 122,000 pages from 346 works by 100 authors. Highlights include 33 volumes of the Complete Works of Marx and Engels and nearly 26,000 pages of German language content. [Our quick guide is available online](#).

**The Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ)** <https://doaj.org> covers open access journal from across the world and across many disciplines.

**The Hathi Trust** <https://www.hathitrust.org> Founded in 2008, HathiTrust is a not-for-profit collaborative of academic and research libraries preserving 17+ million digitized items. Anyone can view public domain materials – some is not protected by copyright.

**OECD iLibrary**: [www.oecd-ilibrary.org/](http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/) is the online library of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) featuring its **books**, **working papers** and **statistics** and is the gateway to OECD's analysis and data. It contains content published by the International Energy Agency (IEA), the Nuclear Energy Agency (NEA), the OECD Development Centre, PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment), and the International Transport Forum (ITF).

**UK Data Archive**: [www.data-archive.ac.uk/](http://www.data-archive.ac.uk/) is the UK's only nationally-funded research infrastructure for the curation and provision of access to social science data. The service provides unified access to the UK's largest collection of social, economic and population data for research and teaching purposes covering a range of different disciplines.

**Box Full of Broadcasts (BOB)** <https://learningonscreen.ac.uk/ondemand> contains BBC broadcasts since 1990s and permanent archive of BBC, ITV and Channel 4 and related broadcasts as well as recording of 65 free to air tv channels - millions of broadcasts. Saved lists, create clips...

---

## Resources by Geographical Region

There are lots of Open Access (OA) and other resources available – OA means that these are free to read, whereas other resources may require you to log in (like IBSS) to search and log in to read anything you find.

**CIA 'Country Files'** <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/>

### Africa

**African Journals Online (AJOL)** <https://www.ajol.info/index.php/ajol> a collection of OA and paid for journals. It is the world's largest and preeminent platform of African-published scholarly journals. AJOL is a Non-Profit Organisation that (since 1998) works to increase global & continental online access, awareness, quality & use of African-published, peer-reviewed research.

**Africa Portal** <https://www.africaportal.org> a research repository and expert analysis hub on African affairs. This open-access research repository holds over 9 000 reports, occasional papers and policy briefs which are available for free, full-text download.

### Latin America

**AMELICA** is a portal of open access journals <http://portal.amelica.org/?lang=en>

**REDALYC** is a bibliographic database and index of open access journals <https://www.redalyc.org>

**LATINDEX** is a bibliographic database and index <https://www.latindex.org/latindex/inicio?lang=en>

### Middle East

**CyberOrient** <https://cyberorient.net/#> is a semi-annual interdisciplinary OA journal published by the American Anthropological Association, the Faculty of Arts of Charles University, and the Centre for Theology and Religious Studies of Lund University. CyberOrient presents original, peer-reviewed articles, comments and books reviews on the online representation of any aspect of Middle Eastern cultures, Islam, the imagined "Orient" and the use and impact of the internet and new media in the Middle East and Islamic countries.

**Arabic Books Online** <http://dlib.nyu.edu/aco/> is a publicly available digital library of public domain Arabic language content. ACO currently provides digital access to 17,170 volumes across 10,110 subjects drawn from rich Arabic collections of distinguished research libraries.

### Asia

**The Asian Regional Open Access Survey** from 2017 <https://www.coar-repositories.org/files/Asia-OA-survey-results-final.pdf> gives lots of detail of how to access various OA resources such as theses and journals from institutions across the region.

### Eastern Europe and Russia

**Radio Free Europe** <https://www.rferl.org> has a mission to promote democratic values and institutions and advance human rights by reporting the news in countries where a free press is banned by the government or not fully established. These pages give some really useful information.

**The University of California Berkeley Library** has created this wonderful list of open access resources such as journals and images from across Central and Eastern Europe, the Balkans and Russia <https://guides.lib.berkeley.edu/c.php?q=386223&p=2620163>

## Reading smarter and evaluating

Getting as much as you can out of your reading requires focus and evaluation skills the following are just some tips to help:

**#1 FOCUS ON THE PURPOSE** First thing's first – switch off EVERYTHING! That means no Insta, no email, no phone, nothing. Social media and email are massively distracting. You need to get in the 'reading zone'. Find a comfortable, quiet space where you can sit with your device uninterrupted by anything and anyone. This is really hard to achieve but is really important to staying on point.

Next thing is related to the first – only look at one book or reading at a time. When you become more fluent at reading academic texts you can start to dip in and out of multiple items at a time, but for now we will concentrate on one text.

---

---

You now need to consider what is it you are looking for? What questions are you hoped will be answered by reading this ebook? Make a note of your questions – you may find it easier to put them in a table, or in a list format. Do whatever works best for you.

**#2 DETERMINE CREDIBILITY** Who has written the text you are reading? Has it been recommended by your Lecturer? Why? Is the author stating fact or opinion? Can you see similarities and parallels with your own ideas, practice or experience? If not, why not? It is not wrong to disagree with an author, you just have to be able to say why and back this up. Use the four 'Ws': *Who? What? Where? Why?* to help you work out if the author is credible this is sometimes called the CRAAP Test **C**urrency **R**elevancy **A**uthority **A**ccuracy **P**urpose - Do they have the knowledge and experience to be writing about this area?

It might be useful to use Stella Cottrell's book – Critical Thinking Skills. Paper copies are in the library and, although it is not available as an ebook [some really useful sections are available online](#) including [the teaching and learning resources section](#). Chapter 9 gives you '[concise critical notes for books](#)' – a table to complete for each book, who wrote it, what are the key arguments etc. etc. This is really helpful when you first start to read academic texts, some people continue to use them in their PhD studies!

**#3 CONSOLIDATE INFORMATION AND KEEP A NOTE OF YOUR REFERENCES** Remember to always keep a note of the author, publisher, year of publication, title etc. of what you are reading. Then note the key points, your own comments and any questions raised. Create your own table or list – whatever works for you. This will form the basis of your assignment.

## Reference Management

You might find it useful to organise the references you have found. There are many different free and 'freemium' resources available to help you with your reference management. Try using [Wikipedia's reference management software comparison document](#). UoA subscribe to **RefWorks** [www.refworks.com/refworks](http://www.refworks.com/refworks).

## Questions?

Contact the Information Consultant for **anthropology**, Claire Molloy: [c.a.l.molloy@abdn.ac.uk](mailto:c.a.l.molloy@abdn.ac.uk)

Last updated: 15<sup>th</sup> June 2021