

# Decision of the FIBAA Accreditation and Certification Committee



5<sup>th</sup> Meeting on March 23, 2022

## PROGRAMME ACCREDITATION

<b>Project Number:</b>	20/105
<b>Higher Education Institution:</b>	Doha Institute for Graduate studies
<b>Location</b>	Qatar
<b>Study Programme:</b>	Politics and International Relations (Master of Social Sciences and Humanities)
<b>Type of Accreditation</b>	Initial accreditation

The FIBAA Accreditation and Certification Committee has taken the following decision:

According to § 7 (6) in conjunction with § 9 (1) of the FIBAA General Terms and Conditions within the framework of procedures for the award of the FIBAA Quality Seal for Programmes from April 2020, the study programme is accredited.

Period of Accreditation: March 23, 2022, to March 22, 2027.

The FIBAA Quality Seal is awarded.



**FOUNDATION FOR INTERNATIONAL  
BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION ACCREDITATION**

FIBAA – BERLINER FREIHEIT 20-24 – D-53111 BONN

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## Assessment Report

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**Higher Education Institution:**

Doha Institute for Graduate Studies, Qatar

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**Master programme:**

Politics and International Relations

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**Qualification awarded on completion:**

Master of Social Sciences and Humanities

# General information on the study programme

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The Master programme Politics and International Relations (POL/IR) is a two-year programme (full-time) that can also be studied part-time (in three or four years). With a workload of 42 credit hours (equivalent to 84 ECTS credits) the POL/IR programme aims to produce skilled academics who can work as independent researchers and thinkers responding to the needs of the Arab region. While one of the primary aims of the programme is to prepare students for further study in political science and international relations at the doctoral level, graduates often choose to pursue applied careers in politics or to work as researchers at research institutions proliferating throughout the region and beyond. The programme is taught primarily in Arabic, but students have to read and use literature also in the English language. Therefore, by content and languages the programme is strongly international which is also underlined by the internationally-oriented faculty and student body.

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**Type of study programme:**

Master programme

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**Projected study time and number of ECTS credits / national credits assigned to the study programme:**

Full time: 2 years; Part-time: 3 or 4 years; 42 credits hours (equivalent to 84 ECTS credits)

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**Mode of study:**

Full-time and part-time

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**Didactic approach:**

Study programme with obligatory class attendance

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**Double/Joint Degree programme:**

No

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**Scope (planned number of parallel classes) and enrolment capacity:**

15-20 students per academic year

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**Programme cycle starts in:**

Winter semester

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**Initial start of the programme:**

September 2015

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**Type of accreditation:**

Initial accreditation

# Procedure

A contract for the initial accreditation of the programme Politics and International Relations (Master of Social Sciences and Humanities) was made between FIBAA and the Doha Institute for Graduate Studies (DI) on October 7, 2020. On June 30, 2021, the HEI submitted a self-evaluation report, which included a detailed description of the programme and further documents to prove that the criteria for programme accreditation are met.

At the same time, FIBAA appointed a review panel<sup>1</sup>. The HEI has agreed to the chosen experts. The panel consisted of:

**Prof. Dr. Tariq A. Khwaileh**

Qatar University, Qatar  
Chair Department of English Literature and Linguistics  
(Linguistics, Phonetics, Psycholinguistics)

**Prof. Dr. Mark Laffey**

University of London, United Kingdom  
Ass. Professor of International Relations  
(International Relations Theory, International Security, Foreign Policy Analysis)

**Prof. Dr. Bernd Müller-Jacquier**

University of Bayreuth, Germany  
Prof. em. of Intercultural German Studies  
(Linguistics, Literature, Foreign Language Didactics)

**Prof. Dr. Stephan Stetter**

University of the Bundeswehr Munich, Germany  
Professor of International Politics and Conflict Studies

**Dr. Philipp Stiel**

Bavarian State Chancellery, Munich, Germany  
Budget Officer, Head of Budget and Internal Services Department  
(Organisation, Rule of Law, Public Management)

**Tim Thiessen**

Leuphana University, Lueneburg, Germany  
Student of Political Sciences (Bachelor)

FIBAA project manager:  
Dr. Birger Hendriks

The assessment is based on the self-evaluation report, amended by further documents, as requested by the panel, and an online conference (because of the Covid-19 pandemic). The online conference took place on November 2 and 3, 2021 via the video conferencing tool *Zoom* with DI representatives. The same cluster included an appraisal of the Comparative

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<sup>1</sup> The panel is presented in alphabetical order.

Literature programme (Master of Social Sciences and Humanities) and the Conflict Management and Humanitarian Action programme (Master of Science in Conflict Management and Humanitarian Action). At the end of the online conference, the panel has given brief feedback on its first impressions to representatives of the HEI.

The assessment report based on this was delivered to the HEI for comment on February 25, 2022. The statement on the report was received on March 3, 2022. It has been taken into account in the report at hand.

# Summary

The Politics and International Relations programme, offered by the Doha Institute for Graduate Studies, fulfils the FIBAA quality requirements for master programmes and can be accredited by the Foundation for International Business Administration Accreditation (FIBAA) for five years starting on March 23, 2022, and finishing on March 22, 2027. The programme is in accordance with the national and the European Qualification Frameworks and the European Standards and Guidelines in their applicable version valid as of the time of the opening of the procedure, and with the Bologna Declaration.

There are many criteria in which the programme exceeds the quality requirements:

- International orientation of the study programme design (see chapter 1.2),
- Positioning of the study programme in the educational market (see chapter 1.3),
- Admission requirements (see chapter 2.1),
- Selection procedure (see chapter 2.3),
- Interdisciplinary thinking (see chapter 3.1),
- International contents and intercultural aspects (see chapter 3.4),
- Internationality of student body (see chapter 3.4),
- Internationality of faculty (see chapter 3.4),
- Foreign language contents (see chapter 3.4),
- Academic qualification of faculty (see chapter 4.1),
- Student support by the faculty (see chapter 4.1),
- Process organisation and administrative support for students and faculty (see chapter 4.2),
- Quantity, quality, media and IT equipment of teaching and group rooms (see chapter 4.4),
- Access to literature (see chapter 4.4),
- Career counselling and placement service (see chapter 4.5).

For the overall assessment of the programme, please refer to the quality profile at the end of this report.

# Information

## Information on the Institution

The Doha Institute for Graduate Studies (DI) is an independent non-profit academic institution for postgraduate studies. DI was founded in 2015 and aims to combine teaching and learning with scientific research in a manner that prepares its graduates to become accomplished academic researchers and capable professionals in their fields of study. Also, graduates shall be able to advance knowledge and respond to the needs of the Arab region. DI aims to help produce a new generation of academics, researchers, and independent thinkers at international scientific standards. Arabic Language is the main language for DI's teaching and research, supported by other languages, especially English. This also forms part of both admission and graduation requirements.

Based on its institutional bylaws, DI has a President who is the chief executive and academic officer of the Institute and its representative. The President is appointed by the Board of Trustees and chairs the councils which govern the academic and administrative affairs of DI. These include the Doha Institute Council, the highest executive body, and the Faculty General Assembly. At the level of the School, mechanisms are in place to encourage autonomous governance.

DI comprises two Schools: the School of Social Sciences and Humanities and the School of Public Administration and Development Economics. It offers 19 study programmes. The Politics and International Relations (POL/IR) programme belongs to the School of Social Sciences and Humanities (SOSH).<sup>2</sup> Head of each School is a Dean who is appointed by the President. Each school at the Doha Institute has the independence to regulate its internal academic and administrative policy, but subject to the provisions of the bylaws, rules, institutional regulations, and general policies developed for the institute. In the event of any action that may affect the financial obligations of the institute or its academic policies, the Dean refers the policy or procedure to the Vice President for Academic Affairs, who in turn submits it to the President of the Institute.

DI and its programmes are licensed by Qatar's Ministry of Education and Higher Education<sup>3</sup> and they are listed on the Ministry of Education and Higher Education's website ([edu.gov.qa](http://edu.gov.qa)).

## Further development of the programme, statistical data

The programme blueprint, structure and — to a considerable extent — curricular content was approved by the Academic Planning Committee and DI interim Board of Trustees (BoT) in 2015. The programme was further developed and finalised by the head of programme and faculty during its first year of operation, leading to a fully developed programme that has been reviewed and approved by the DI Council, BoT, and the Ministry of Education and

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<sup>2</sup> The Institute also has an Executive Education Excellence Center and a Language Center. See <https://www.dohainstitute.edu.qa/EN/Academics/Pages/Academic-Policies.aspx>.

<sup>3</sup> Decision of the Minister of Education and Higher Education No. (45) of 2016 Licensing the Doha Institute for Graduate Studies.

Higher Education, which licensed the programme in 2016. The POL/IR programme had its first graduates in 2017.

### Political and International Relations Master Programme

		POL 2017	POL 2018	POL 2019	POL 2020	POL 2021	POL 2022
<b># Study Places</b>		20	20	20	20	20	20
<b># Applicants</b>	∑	97	345	137	121	123	218
	f	30	99	48	38	37	83
	m	67	246	89	83	86	135
<b>Application rate</b>		485.00%	1725.00%	685.00%	605.00%	615.00%	1090.00%
<b># First-Year Student</b>	∑	14	19	12	18	13	10
	f	6	7	11	8	4	5
	m	8	12	1	10	9	5
<b>Rate of female students</b>		42.86%	36.84%	91.67%	44.44%	30.77%	50.00%
<b># Foreign Students</b>	∑	11	14	7	10	13	10
	f	4	4	6	4	4	5
	m	7	10	1	6	9	5
<b>Rate of foreign students</b>		78.57%	73.68%	58.33%	55.56%	100.00%	100,00%
<b>Percentage of occupied study places</b>		70.00%	95.00%	60.00%	90.00%	65.00%	50.00%
<b># Graduates</b>	∑	14	17	8	15	12	
	f	6	7	7	6	4	
	m	8	10	1	9	8	
<b>Success rate</b>		100,00%	94,74%	66,67%	83,33%	92,31%	
<b>Dropout rate</b>		0,00%	5,26%	33,33%	16,67%	7,69%	
<b>Average duration of study</b>		2	2.14	2.11	2.13	2.04	
<b>Average grade of final degree</b>		3.75	3.62	3.53	3.46	3.56	

Note: Success / Dropout rates of POL 2017 refer to the cohort admitted in 2015 and so on.

The statistics stem from DI and show that the numbers of applications exceed by far the number of available study places. Nevertheless, DI numbers of admitted students fall short of the numbers of available study places. On average, the percentage of female admitted students falls short of the male students. The rates of foreign students are with an average of 77.7 % high and by trend increasing as are the success rates with an average of 87.4%.

# Programme Description and Appraisal in Detail

## 1. Objectives

### 1.1 Objectives of the study programme (Asterisk Criterion)

The Politics and International Relations (POL/IR) programme at DI aims to provide its students with the advanced understanding of political science and international relations necessary to conduct research that contributes to scholarly debates within the field. As such, it seeks to equip students with the tools, knowledge and skills to enable them to both understand and produce innovative research. Students acquire a broad understanding of the traditional subfields of political science: comparative politics, international relations, research methods and political theory.

The POL/IR programme is committed to achieving the following broad goals:

- A. Empower students to evaluate scholarly research in a critical and competent way
- B. Enable students to produce innovative, theoretically sophisticated and methodologically rigorous research on political phenomena and dynamics;
- C. Prepare students for further study in PhD programmes related to the field, as well as careers as researchers or practitioners capable of drawing on scholarly work.

Whether the students choose to pursue doctoral degrees or enter the workforce upon graduation, the POL/IR programme is primarily aimed at helping them become capable researchers in the field of politics and international relations.

One of the primary goals of the POL/IR programme at DI is to mentor and guide students who are interested in contributing to the fields of political science and international relations while centering their efforts on Arab communities in their research. There is a relative dearth of Arabic-language scholarship on politics that meet international standards of quality and rigor. Moreover, research in the field about the Middle East is being produced by scholars and researchers far removed from the region. The POL/IR programme is dedicated to fostering an environment conducive to the development of researchers with the ability to produce cutting-edge scholarship that synthesizes the broader literature in their field with a deep understanding of the prevailing local context.

The POL/IR programme aims to contribute to DI's core objective of producing skilled academics who can work as independent researchers and thinkers responding to the needs of the Arab region.

All masters' programmes at DI have been designed and developed to meet and be aligned with the UK qualification framework and its learning outcome descriptors for a higher education qualification at level 7 on the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (FHEQ) and Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) level 11 on the Framework for Qualifications of Higher Education Institutions in Scotland (FQHEIS).<sup>4</sup> The qualification descriptors of the UK frameworks for higher education qualifications align with the qualification descriptors of the Framework for

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<sup>4</sup> See "The Frameworks for HE Qualifications of UK: <https://www.qaa.ac.uk>

Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area (QFEHEA), with Dublin descriptors. Conforming to the UK framework has been discussed and agreed upon with the Ministry of Education and Higher Education in Qatar and was a prerequisite to achieving successful licensure for all DI's programmes.

The POL/IR programme aims to deliver seven Programme Learning Outcomes (PLOs)/ objectives<sup>5</sup> focused on knowledge and understanding, intellectual skills, and practical skills to its students.

The knowledge and understanding-centered outcomes are:

- PLO 1: Demonstrate a nuanced understanding of the theoretical, conceptual, and methodological frameworks underpinning political science.
- PLO 2: Identify the core challenges and contemporary debates within the discipline and its respective subfields.
- PLO 3: Situate the main concepts and theories in the discipline within their historical, cultural and socioeconomic contexts, and critically evaluate the politics of the Arab world in relation to them.

The intellectual skills-centred outcomes are as follows:

- PLO 4: Formulate logically coherent, evidence-based arguments relevant to complex contemporary political challenges.
- PLO 5: Design, conduct and present innovative research, incorporating qualitative and/or quantitative research methods to explain political phenomena.

The practical skills-centered outcomes are:

- PLO 6: Assess the effects and policy implications of global, regional, and national developments using the tools of theoretical and empirical analysis commonly used in the field of politics and international relations.
- PLO 7: Effectively communicate ideas, theories and issues related to politics and international relations to diverse audiences.

The outcomes relate broadly to the larger focus on academic proficiency, employability, social commitment, and the development of individual student personality. Specifically, the knowledge and understanding and intellectual skills learning outcomes speak to academic proficiency, while practical skills learning outcomes — with their focus on original research in politics and international relations — serve both employability and social commitment objectives.

All three areas serve the development of individual student personality, given that each of the three broad areas of focus, and all seven outcomes, require students to maintain originality, both in terms of ideation and execution. These three areas are also directly aligned with both the UK qualification framework. Moreover, each programme in the DI has a specification – a document that serves to record and maintain the design specification, structure, and content of a programme. The specification document provides a clear description of a programme, including its learning outcomes, and is a source of useful information for stakeholders such as students, employers, and external reviewers.

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<sup>5</sup> See SER p. 11 f.

## Appraisal:

The panel notes that the POL/IR programme emphasises to not only train students in core political science disciplines but also render them active researchers in Arabic. This should contribute to make Arabic academic traditions and scholarships more visible. These qualification objectives of the programme are explained and convincingly presented in relation to the target group, targeted professional field and societal context of the discipline. They embrace academic proficiency, comprehensive employability, as well as the development of the individual student's personality. The panel also notes that DI has designed its study programmes including the learning outcomes aligned with the UK qualification Frameworks.

The subject-specific and extra-curricular qualification objectives and skills to be acquired correspond with the aspired level at graduation. They are oriented at the requirements of the UK qualification frameworks for higher education which are similar to those of the European Qualification Framework (EQF).

	Exceptional	Exceeds quality requirements	Meets quality requirements	Does not meet quality requirements	n.r.
1.1* Objectives of the study programme (Asterisk Criterion)			X		

## 1.2 International orientation of the study programme design (Asterisk Criterion)

The POL/IR programme has prioritized and successfully maintained an international orientation in three core respects:

- A. The curriculum offered to students.
- B. The composition of its students and faculty;
- C. The standards it has established with regards to both pedagogy and research;

The curricula of most politics and international relations programmes tend to be international. While POL/IR courses<sup>6</sup> in international relations are global in nature, course offerings in the fields of comparative politics, political theory and research methods are also thoroughly internationalised. With regards to the POL/IR programme's offerings in comparative politics, discussions of the most relevant concepts regarding military regimes cannot be adequately taught without reference to studies of Latin America. Any examination of waves of democratisation will require a thorough exploration of the democratic transitions that occurred in Eastern and Central Europe. Moreover, the political theory course offers students the opportunity to examine the ideas of Western and Eastern theorists. Even in the methodology course of this year (POL 611), students were required to study articles related to gender quotas in India, a survey experiment regarding foreign policy attitudes in Japan, and an exploration of ideological divisions and elections in Turkey.

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<sup>6</sup> See below chapter 3.1.

Faculty members in the POL/IR programme have received their doctoral degrees from programmes in Algeria, Canada, France, the United Kingdom, and the United States.<sup>7</sup> Most of these faculty members have also gained experience teaching outside of Qatar. Having faculty members drawn from such diverse backgrounds has contributed to the development of a curriculum that bridges between many of those taught around the globe, diversified the literature covered, and broadened the methods of research and analysis that are emphasized.

Faculty members in the POL/IR programme have set out to meet and exceed international standards with regards to the quality of training provided to students. This attempt to meet international standards begins with the faculty members themselves, who are expected to consistently publish in peer-reviewed journals. While faculty members are encouraged to publish in Arabic they also regularly publish in leading English-language international journals (see chapter 4.1).

**Appraisal:**

The panel welcomes the strong international orientation of the POL/IR curriculum in teaching and study as well the international experience of faculty members. The programme design appropriately takes into account the required international aspects, with respect, too, to its graduates’ employability.

Owing to the emphasis of the programme design on internationality in teaching and study (e.g. in terms of curricular contents, academic staff, practical experience abroad), the programme, by imparting knowledge with that goal in mind and developing the concomitant skills, enables graduates to competently manage international tasks. The panel welcomes that despite the programme’s relative youth internationally recognized scientists from abroad have become faculty members.

	Exceptional	Exceeds quality requirements	Meets quality requirements	Does not meet quality requirements	n.r.
1.2* International orientation of the study programme design (Asterisk Criterion)		X			

**1.3 Positioning of the study programme**

Among the universities in the Arabian region, there are few institutions that provide graduate education in political science. It is perhaps for this reason that the POL/IR programme has been able to attract a broad range of students from across the region to study politics and international relations at DI. Moreover, the social sciences, and particularly political science, have largely been neglected by many of the universities in the region.

<sup>7</sup> One of the faculty members received a joint Ph.D. degree from the University of Ottawa (Canada) and the Institut d’études politiques de Paris (Sciences Po) (France).

DI has recruited faculty members who perform research in the field and have the experience to guide burgeoning researchers from the region as they embark on a career in political science. By providing students with generous funding, a demanding course load, a faculty-to-student ratio of approximately 1:5, opportunities to serve as research assistants and guidance from leading researchers in their fields, the POL/IR programme helps fill a gap in the academic landscape of the region.

While one of the primary aims of the programme is to prepare students for further study in political science and international relations at the doctoral level, graduates often choose to pursue applied careers in politics or to work as researchers at research institutions proliferating throughout the region and beyond. Among those who have chosen to pursue their doctoral degrees soon after graduation, students went on to study at the University of Edinburgh, the University of Exeter, the University of Warwick, and the University of Khartoum. The establishment of a Ph.D. programme at DI that is anticipated to begin in 2022-2023.

One of DI's fundamental missions is to provide the region with an elite local institution dedicated to contributing to academic and policy-oriented discourse in the social sciences and humanities. The POL/IR programme is crucial to the development of a robust and vibrant social scientific community and is one of the cornerstones of DI. In coordination with the Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies, POL/IR programme faculty members have contributed significantly to organizing, facilitating, and leading academic discussions and debates on and off campus. Moreover, DI is committed to producing and supporting researchers who produce work in the Arabic-language. The POL/IR programme's primary language of instruction is Arabic, and faculty members frequently author Arabic-language research.

## Appraisal:

The panel is convinced that the POL/IR programme is well positioned in the educational market. The reasons given for this are plausible. The Institute has thoroughly examined the educational market and used the results in establishing its own unique and competitive profile

In particular because it analyses relevant issues from a critical Arab perspective while relating to international practice and standards.

The arguments in support of graduate employability on the basis of the stated qualification objectives are convincingly presented. The future fields of employment for graduates are plausibly set forth.

Also, the panel has the view that the study programme is convincingly integrated into the HEI's overall strategic concept. The study programme's qualification goals are in line with the HEI's mission and strategic planning.

		Exceptional	Exceeds quality requirements	Meets quality requirements	Does not meet quality requirements	n.r.
1.3	Positioning of the study programme					
1.3.1	Positioning of the study programme in the educational market		X			
1.3.2	Positioning of the study programme on the job market for graduates („Employability“)			X		
1.3.3	Positioning of the study programme within the HEI's overall strategic concept			X		

## 2. Admission

DI has elaborated an “Admission Policy”<sup>8</sup> which includes general rules such as the objectives and principles of student recruitment and admission process but also admission regulations. Applicants are required to have a solid first degree with a GPA<sup>9</sup> that is evaluated to be above average or excellent relative to other students at their university. The department has a preference for applicants who received their bachelor’s degree in political science or an academic discipline that is related to political science, such as international studies, economics, sociology, history or philosophy. Applicants from other disciplines are encouraged to apply if they can demonstrate a sufficient understanding of the field of political science in their essay and interview. Successful candidates for admission must be proficient in English and Arabic to be accepted into the programme (see detailed requirements below).

DI evaluates the admission procedure on a regular basis and lists all admission requirements on its website<sup>10</sup>.

The Admission Office makes sure that the admission files are filtered and that the candidates being evaluated meet the requirements and conditions for admission. The files are evaluated according to the following steps: 1) Grades statements evaluation: It is a stage in which the admission department reviews and evaluates students' academic statements. 2) Academic evaluation: The institute's programmes evaluate the files of students who passed the Grades statements evaluation. This stage includes the evaluation of students' writings and curricula vitae. 3) Personal interview: The Institute's programmes at these stage interview students who have passed the Academic evaluation stages.

The Admissions Department plays a fundamental role in ensuring that students who may be interested in joining DI are properly informed as to the requirements and standards for admission. Information regarding the admissions process and scholarship application requirements are also posted online. Faculty members primarily play a role in advertising DI’s individual programmes at scheduled events and by making public appearances.

Each year, multiple “Open Days” are held where potential applicants in Qatar are provided with a comprehensive presentation on the admissions process and meet with a faculty member in the POL/IR programme. When applicable, prospective international students can meet DI representatives in recruitment activities abroad. Furthermore, faculty members are encouraged to engage in direct outreach by giving guest lectures throughout the Arab world and informing students in other countries of what DI can offer. All prospective applicants can also submit questions to either the head of programme via DI website to or via a special email address set up for this purpose — [admissions@dohainstitute.edu.qa](mailto:admissions@dohainstitute.edu.qa). They may also email the head of programme directly at a personal email address listed on the website or call with inquiries at a posted phone number (+974-4035-6900).

The application process is highly competitive, with only top students gaining admission. During the 2020 admissions cycle, the POL/IR programme offered admission to approximately 5.5 % of applicants, having received 218 applications and offered admission to 12 applicants.

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<sup>8</sup> As of February 22, 2017.

<sup>9</sup> Grade Point Average.

<sup>10</sup> See [https://www.dohainstitute.edu.qa/EN/Prospective\\_Students/Admissions/Pages/School-of-Social-Sciences-and-Humanities.aspx](https://www.dohainstitute.edu.qa/EN/Prospective_Students/Admissions/Pages/School-of-Social-Sciences-and-Humanities.aspx).

The selection process is conducted in three phases: the Admissions Department filtering phase, the application review phase, and the interview phase. The Admissions Department filters applications before final, completed, and qualified applications are received by the POL/IR programme. The Admissions Department does not pass on to the programme any applications that are incomplete or which do not meet the minimum admissions requirements. In addition to ensuring that basic requirements have been met, the filtering process also accounts for the strength of an individual's undergraduate record by conducting an in-depth examination of each applicant's transcript.

Upon the completion of the filtering process by the Admissions Department, the remaining applications are forwarded on to the POL/IR head for programme review. The POL/IR head of programme forms an annual, three-person applications committee — chaired by the head of programme and including two other programme faculty members — to evaluate all applications received by the programme. The second stage of the admissions process is conducted through an evaluation of the applicant's submitted materials. Using the electronic Student Information System (SIS), committee members conduct individual close readings of transcripts, academic essays, and personal statements. Each admissions committee member uses SIS to anonymously score each prospective student on a scale of 1-10 for each of the three aforementioned items. Applicants with average weighted scores of 6.0 or higher (on the ten-point scale) move on to the final stage of the application process, which consists of a video conference interview with the programme admissions committee. In addition to numerical scores, the committee also includes short comments on applicant quality in an open-ended item on the SIS evaluation page.

Video interviews are conducted via WebEx or Skype and last 30-minutes. Interviewers pose questions in both Arabic and English and seek to assess each applicant's academic aptitude, fit for the POL/IR programme, commitment to graduate study, and ability to comprehend and communicate in both Arabic and English. Students with the highest composite and weighted scores are admitted.

While the primary language of instruction at DI is Arabic, English is a frequently used as a secondary language of instruction in the POL/IR programme. Course readings that students must engage with are often provided in the English language. As such, each POL/IR student must possess a requisite level of Arabic and English language fluency to successfully navigate/master? the programme.

Students who graduated from universities where English was the primary language of instruction are waived from any testing requirements associated with demonstrating competence in the English language. Those who graduated from institutions where the primary language of instruction was not English are required to obtain a score of at least 5.5 on the IELTS (or 59 on the TOEFL) to be admitted to the programme. To graduate from the POL/IR programme, students are required to achieve an IELTS score of at least 6.5.

While there is no formal Arabic-language examination requirement prior to submitting an application, students who moved on to the interview stage of the admissions process and did not graduate from institutions where Arabic was the primary language of instruction, were required to preliminarily demonstrate their fluency during the interview. They were provided a brief excerpt from the political science literature, asked to read it aloud, and then were asked

questions about the excerpt that allowed them to demonstrate their understanding of what they read. In 2020, those students who performed satisfactorily during this exercise and received sufficiently high scores to be granted admissions were subsequently evaluated by the Admissions Department to ensure that they held a sufficient command of the Arabic language.

All programme evaluation results are communicated electronically and in real-time via SIS to the Admissions Department and the Dean of SOSH. As noted, this documentation includes both numerical scores and qualitative comments about all applicants regarding the underlying logic of the scores they received.

All applicants are formally informed of their admissions status via emails sent by the Admissions Department at the conclusion of the evaluation process. Accepted applicants are subsequently asked to fill out a confirmation of enrolment form and scholarship application form. In addition, applicants who wish to enrol are required to provide the Admissions Department with their official required documents. Unsuccessful applicants are sent a rejection letter.

The applicants can petition for changing the admission decision based on additional information. The Head of the programme will decide upon the petition.

## Appraisal:

The panel notes that DI has a clear regulation on the admission procedure. The admission requirements are defined and comprehensible. The national requirements are presented and taken into account. As the programme filters and selects applicants based on their scores and results of the interview, this is in line with and oriented at the strategic goals of the study programme to gain excellent students.

Applicants can directly turn to a student counselling service of the Admissions Department and / or the head of programme, for clarification of specific questions, of personal aptitude, of career perspectives and others. Personal dialogue between applicants and the HEI is provided by defined office hours, by telephone and via e-mail.

The selection procedure is transparent and ensures that highly qualified students are admitted.

The selection procedure was developed on the basis of the study programme's objectives. The procedure is periodically reviewed for its effectiveness and adapted in accordance with the obtained results.

The panel notes that for both Arabic and English the admission requirements (in terms of required language proficiency level or required result in a concrete language test) ensure that students are able to successfully complete the study programme (courses, additional literature, utilisation of counselling services and extracurricular activities).

The admission procedure is described, documented, and accessible for interested parties. The admission decision is based on transparent criteria and is communicated in writing. An annual report is prepared by the committee and submitted to DI's Provost. The Provost examines the report and recommends any necessary changes required to the admissions process, on behalf of the Institute.

		Exceptional	Exceeds quality requirements	Meets quality requirements	Does not meet quality requirements	n.r.
2.1*	Admission requirements (Asterisk Criterion)		X			
2.2	Counselling for prospective students			X		
2.3*	Selection procedure (if relevant)		X			
2.4(*)	Professional experience (if relevant; Asterisk Criterion for master programmes that require professional experience)					X
2.5*	Ensuring foreign language proficiency (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
2.6*	Transparency and documentation of admission procedure and decision (Asterisk Criterion)			X		

### 3. Contents, structure and didactical concept of the programme

#### 3.1 Contents

The POL/IR programme is primarily aimed to train students to become researchers in the field of politics and international relations, regardless of whether they choose to pursue a doctoral degree or start their working life upon graduation.

MA in Politics & International Relations											
1 <sup>st</sup> Semester											FIBAA
Modul No.	Title of Module / Course Unit	Credit Hours per Semester				Workload		Method of Teaching i.e. lecture course, seminar	Form and Duration of Examinations	weight of exam related to final grade	
		1.	2.	3.	4.	Hours in Class	Hours Self-Study				
<b>M1</b>	<b>Modul 1</b>	3				42	126				1/14
M 1.1	POL 611 - Research Methodologies in Political Science					42	126	L/S	Research Project (40%) - 4 weeks		
<b>M2</b>	<b>Modul 2</b>	3				42	126				1/14
M 2.1	POL 613 - Comparative Politics Seminar					42	126	L/S	Research Paper (30%) - Duration of Course		
<b>M3</b>	<b>Modul 3</b>	3				42	126				1/14
M 3.1	POL 614 - International Relations Seminar					42	126	L/S	Research Paper (40%) - Duration of Course		
<b>M4</b>	<b>Modul 4</b>	3				42	126				1/14
M 4.1	SOSH 601 - Issues in the Study of Social Sciences and Humanities					42	126	L/S			
2 <sup>nd</sup> Semester											
<b>M7</b>	<b>Modul 5</b>		3			42	126				1/14
M 5.1	POL 615 - Middle East Politics					42	126	L/S	Research Paper (40%) - Duration of Course		
<b>M8</b>	<b>Modul 6</b>		3			42	126				1/14
M 6.1	POL 616 - Theories of Democratic Governance					42	126	L/S	Final Paper (30%) - Six Weeks		
<b>M7</b>	<b>Modul 7</b>		3			42	126				1/14
M 7.1	POL 618 - Critical Issues in Political Theory					42	126	L/S	Final Paper (40%) - Duration of the Course		
<b>M8</b>	<b>Modul 8</b>		3			42	126				1/14
M 8.1	POL 619 - Foreign Policy Analysis					42	126	L/S	Research Paper (40%) - Duration of Course		
<b>M9</b>	<b>Modul 9</b>		0			42	84				0
M 9.1	POL 001 - English Readings in Political Science					42	84	L/S	Not Graded		
3 <sup>rd</sup> Semester											
<b>M10</b>	<b>Modul 5</b>			3		42	126				1/14
M 10.1	POL 612 - Seminar on Arabs and Political Science					42	126	L/S	Final Paper (40%) - Duration of the Course		
<b>M11</b>	<b>Modul 6</b>			3		42	126				1/14
M 11.1	SOSH Elective					42	126	L/S	Depends on Course		
<b>M12</b>	<b>Modul 7</b>			3		42	126				1/14
M 12.1	SOSH Elective					42	126	L/S	Depends on Course		
<b>M13</b>	<b>Modul 8</b>			3		42	126				1/14
M 13.1	Program/Free Elective					42	126	L/S	Depends on Course		
...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
4 <sup>th</sup> Semester											
<b>MA</b>	<b>Master's Thesis</b>				6	0	336				1/7
MA	POL 699 - Dissertation in Politics and International Relations					0	336	T/S	Thesis (100%) - Beginning of the Semester until the Oral Defense Period		
<b>total</b>		<b>12</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>546</b>	<b>1932</b>				
L:	Lecture										
S:	Seminar										
T:	Tutorial										

Moreover, for their third semester and as part of the curriculum students have to choose two of the following interdisciplinary electives that are offered by the Faculty SOSH:

Course Code	Credit Hours	Course Name
SOSH 673	3	Gender, Identity and Modernity in the Middle East
SOSH 674	3	Critical Readings in Modern and Contemporary Aesthetics: Sound, Image, Text
SOSH 675	3	Sociolinguistics
SOSH 676	3	Political Economy of the Arab World
SOSH 677	3	Comparative Cultural Studies: Theory and Application
SOSH 678	3	History of Liberation Ideas
SOSH 679	3	War Ethics
SOSH 680	3	Advanced Critical Thinking and Academic Writing
SOSH 681	3	Power and Language
SOSH 684	3	Religion State and Society
SOSH 695	3	Framing other cultures: Arab-US encounters
SOSH 696	3	History, Philosophy and Social Sciences: Epistemological and Methodological Relations
SOSH 697	3	French Theory: Theoretical Approaches and Models
SOSH 669	3	Understanding Arab conflicts
SOSH 668	3	The sublime, the beautiful, the subversive: On politics, art and literature
SOSH 667	3	The Palestinian cause
SOSH 666	3	Critical Readings on Arab Renaissance Questions
SOSH 665	3	Human Development
SOSH 664	3	Intergroup Relations: Groups, Conflict and its Reduction
SOSH 663	3	Freud and the social and human sciences

The POL/IR curriculum has a workload of 42 credit hours<sup>11</sup> and is designed at the programme objectives to guide students from acting primarily as consumers of knowledge in the field to becoming contributors and active participants in the production of knowledge. All students who finish this programme will have taken courses in research methods, comparative politics, international relations, and political theory. Moreover, given the programme's interests in serving the region, students are expected to gain significant familiarity with the politics of the Arab world.

The programme aims to first provide students foundational knowledge in the field of politics and international relations, and then move on to adding subject-specific depth and the critical application of such knowledge. The first semester provides students with broad overviews of the subfields of political methodology, comparative politics (POL 613) and international relations (POL 614). In addition, during that first semester, students are required to take an interdisciplinary course (SOSH 601) that exposes them to research conducted in other fields in the social sciences and humanities and encourages interdisciplinarity. A fourth foundational core course is taken by students in their second semester, Critical Issues in Political Theory (POL 618), where students are provided an overview of the core literature in the subfield of normative political theory. The other core courses that students take during their second and third semesters are primarily oriented toward providing subject-specific depth and honing critical analytical skills. In their third semester, students are also afforded the opportunity to choose a programme or non-programme elective course, as well two

<sup>11</sup> 42 credit hours are equivalent to about 84 ECTS credits; see also below chapter 3.2.

interdisciplinary courses from among the list provided by the School. As is noted above, students dedicate their final semester to completing a thesis.

The programme offers students grounding in the traditional subfields of political science: comparative politics, international relations, research methods, and political theory. Students in the programme gain an advanced understanding of key concepts, theories, issues, and debates in this field, including issues of governance, justice, democratisation, citizenship, political development, the public sphere, conflict and violence, gender politics, war, and Arab and Middle East politics. Moreover, they will be provided with the methodological training and mentorship necessary to produce research and contribute to politics in the region and beyond. After completing their study plan, students are expected to be aware of the core issues and rival theories and positions in the various subfields of political science.

They are also expected to demonstrate critical analytical skills in applying theories to existing cases and problems in politics. The training also encourages them to develop a critical awareness of past and contemporary Arab contributions to political thought, and not shy away from providing their own original/critical contributions to disciplinary debates. Thus, the aim is for students to deepen the understanding of major theories, but also to critically engage them and intelligently apply them to the Arab context.

The Politics and International Relations programme confers upon graduates a Master of Social Sciences and Humanities in Politics and International Relations degree. Its name and the degree mirror the programme's essential areas of the curriculum including the elective courses.

As far as the integration of theory and practice is concerned students are required to take a methods course (POL 611) in their first semester where they are provided with a comprehensive overview of the methodological tools commonly used by political scientists. Within the course, they are required to practice designing their own research and conducting their own qualitative and quantitative analyses. Subsequent (as well as concurrent) courses provide students with the opportunity to practice designing research and writing research papers. Moreover, students are expected to critically evaluate the literature in order identify potential gaps, discrepancies, methodological shortcomings, or important issues that have not been covered.

The field of politics and international relations is inherently interdisciplinary. Drawing on the methods and theories of sociology, economics, psychology, philosophy, anthropology and history, the study of politics and international relations often requires its practitioners to acquire familiarity with literature produced by scholars in other fields. Thus, even within the POL/IR programme curriculum, students will at times read work from outside of the discipline.

As students are required to take at least two elective interdisciplinary courses<sup>12</sup> and one interdisciplinary course (the "Free Elective" course) they have the opportunity to engage more directly with other fields. This offers students a valuable opportunity to gain insight into how other fields deal with related topics and spark the creative cross-fertilization of ideas across disciplines.

As far as ethical aspects are concerned, during their orientation, students are provided with presentations on subjects such as plagiarism, proper citation and other related matters.

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<sup>12</sup> See above in this chapter 3.1

These topics are taken up again in classroom discussions during the first semester. Moreover, faculty members stress the ethical responsibility that students have to their subjects and community. This is done more formally during their methods course (POL 611) in the first semester, but the discussions are often relevant to both evaluations of research that has been conducted by others, as well as the research projects students are working on. In addition, students explore issues related to justice, fairness and the public good while exploring the literature on normative political theory (POL 618) in the second semester.

All students in the programme are required to obtain Institutional Review Board (IRB) training prior to conducting research on human subjects that requires the collection of novel data via interviews, surveys, or other means. After completing such training, students become eligible to submit their study for review and approval by the IRB committee. In addition, thesis supervisors encourage their students to account for the potential consequences associated with data collection, even where IRB approval may plausibly be granted.

As for POL/IR, the field of politics and international relations is epistemologically diverse, and the training provided by the POL/IR programme reflects that diversity<sup>13</sup>. Students in the programme are exposed to various conceptualisations of science and analytical/empirical tools such as in the course on Political Methodology (POL 611).

POL/IR assessments are outlined in detail in the individual syllabi for every course. Instructors design assessments matching with course learning outcomes, which are aligned with programme learning outcomes. During the course students have to pass assessments such as: critical reflections for an article (weekly) (counting 25 %), a research paper proposal (1000 words) (10 %), a literature review of a research article (2,000 words) (25 %) and a final research paper (5,000 words) (40 %). For example, some courses require weekly short critical reflections on their readings, while other courses require monthly, critical reviews of research in addition to exams or research papers. In some courses, class participation is utilized as a tool for evaluation. The various assignments and assessments are described in every syllabus.

Several courses are aimed at producing a research paper, whereby students submit a research proposal, topical literature review on their chosen subject and a final research paper. Other courses require that students complete more structured assignments and essays, such as exams and projects that are explicitly assigned to students. In all courses, there are usually multiple tools of evaluation that are utilized.

The Institute has issued binding regulations on the assessments: “Grading policy” and “Assessment Policy”. Moreover, a regulation on the thesis (Academic Policies Master’s Thesis)<sup>14</sup> governs the completion of MA theses and outlines all thesis requirements for both students and examiners.

Each course has three assignments that are distributed in roughly equal intervals throughout the semester. Each assignment tackles issues addressed in the course sessions, and the final assignment addresses the overall learning and understanding process in the course. All assessments are outlined in detail in the attached individual course syllabi. Instructors design assessments to align with course learning outcomes and programme learning outcomes.

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<sup>13</sup> See SER p 33.

<sup>14</sup> See below chapter 3.2.

Students develop their own critical analytical position vis-à-vis arguments presented in the reading materials and lectures, providing them with skills that allow them to learn and think independently. This way of examination meets the learning results of each course and the programme in general. In addition to the assignments, in some courses, students may take one final exam to ensure they have acquired the knowledge and skills needed.

As a research-oriented programme, all students are required to submit a final thesis. Students must produce a novel contribution to the literature in the field of politics and international relations. The thesis that should be between 12,000 – 18,000 words in length, is expected to meet the standards of research in the domain chosen by students. Students are encouraged to begin thinking of a thesis topic early, and near the end of their second semester, they are required to submit a short abstract of their proposed research. They are subsequently assigned a thesis supervisor, and in consultation with the supervisor, begin to formulate a more comprehensive 2,000-word thesis proposal. After this proposal is approved, students move on to the thesis writing stage of the process. In their fourth and final semester (if they are full-time students), they submit their final thesis for review by their supervisor and a second reader. If the thesis is evaluated as ready for defence, students then move on to the oral defence of their thesis. Both the supervisor and the second reader evaluate the thesis and submit their recommendation regarding whether the thesis should receive a passing grade and what revisions are required before submission of the final thesis. Students are provided detailed feedback by the evaluators. Students who do not receive a passing evaluation are allowed three months to revise the thesis and defend their thesis at a subsequent date.

## Appraisal:

Taking into account the programme's objective that students become researchers in the field of politics and international relations, regardless of whether they choose to pursue a doctoral degree or start their working life upon graduation, the panel takes the view that the POL/IR curriculum adequately reflects the qualification objectives of the study programme. The contents of the courses are well-balanced, logically connected, and oriented towards the intended learning outcomes. The areas of compulsory electives enable students to acquire additional competences and skills.

The panel is convinced that the degree and programme name correspond to the contents of the curriculum and the programme objectives.

The students' practical work mainly consists of designing own research and conducting their own qualitative and quantitative analyses. Against the background of the programme's strong research orientation, this allows students to combine practical experience with solving theoretical questions.

The panel welcomes that POL/IR programme is as such and inherently interdisciplinary. Therefore, it qualifies students for interdisciplinary thinking. Students become acquainted with diverse areas and subjects that qualifies and prepares them for an occupation requiring trans- or interdisciplinary knowledge such as in politics, NGOs or in the science sector.

Already during the first two semesters, ethical implications (for example those of research, plagiarism or issues related to justice, fairness and the public good) are appropriately communicated.

In some courses of the programme students can directly acquire methodological competences and are enabled to do scientific work on the required level.

All exams, as they are defined for the courses, are suited in format and content to ascertain the intended learning outcomes. The requirements are in accordance with the desired qualification level. The exams are characterised by a wide variety of test formats.

The final theses are evaluated based on previously published and coherently applied criteria, rules, and procedures.

The students prove, especially in their thesis, their ability to do scientific work and the achievement of the study programme's qualification objectives.

	Exceptional	Exceeds quality requirements	Meets quality requirements	Does not meet quality requirements	n.r.
3.1 Contents					
3.1.1* Logic and conceptual coherence (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
3.1.2* Rationale for degree and programme name (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
3.1.3* Integration of theory and practice (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
3.1.4 Interdisciplinary thinking		X			
3.1.5 Ethical aspects			X		
3.1.6* Methods and scientific practice (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
3.1.7* Examination and final thesis (Asterisk Criterion)			X		

## 3.2 Structure

Projected study time	Two years for full-time students, and either three years or four years for part-time students
Number of Credit Points (CP)	42 credit hours = 84 ECTS credits
Workload per CP	2 hours
Number of modules/courses	14 (including one non-credit English course and the thesis)
Time required for processing the final thesis and awarded CP	Students have one semester to complete their thesis, which totals 6 credit hours.
Number of contact hours	546 for three semesters (without thesis)

DI operates on a semester-based system and uses the US-American system of credit hours. They are in a ratio to ECTS credits of about 1:2. Full-time students, who constitute the majority of students in the POL/IR programme, typically dedicate three semesters primarily to coursework and spend their final semester focused on completing their thesis under the

supervision of a thesis supervisor. On average, students complete 546 contact hours for the first three semesters when the non-credit English language course is included in the calculations. Part-time students follow the regular curriculum but can take courses of the programme at a later stage within a frame of three or four years.

The table below presents the breakdown of the programme according to the classification of the courses.

<b>Course Type</b>	<b>Courses</b>	<b>Credit Hours</b>
Programme Core Courses	9 <sup>15</sup>	24
Programme/Free Electives	1	3
Interdisciplinary Core Course (SOSH)	1	3
Interdisciplinary Electives (SOSH)	2	6
Thesis	1	6
<b>Total</b>		<b>42</b>

The POL/IR programme has a syllabus for every course which serves as information for students as well as for faculty. It provides all necessary information and detailed descriptions such as the course title, credit hours, course description, information about the instructor, assessment description, semester schedule/plan, the prerequisites for the course, intended learning outcomes, methods of assessments, recommended course readings, teaching and learning methods. The syllabus template is used by all DI instructors. It seeks to ensure that all instructors appropriately develop their syllabi and include all necessary information.

There are legally binding regulations for assessments and examinations, grading, re-sits, academic standing, credit transfer, and the theses. As already mentioned above<sup>16</sup> DI issued regulations on the assessments. They are published in full on the DI website<sup>17</sup> and are referred to and summarized in course syllabi and in a Student Handbook.

The “Assessment Policy” outlines the assessment criteria, assessment rules and regulations for both courses and individual assignments. Instructors are required to provide detailed feedback on student assignments, at least 60 % of a course’s assessments must be research related. No single course assessment can represent more than 40 % of an overall course grade.

The “Grading Policy” outlines each of DI’s grading categories — from A to F — and includes a description of what characterizes each grade level.

<sup>15</sup> This number includes the 0-credit English reading course which counts as a core course.

<sup>16</sup> See chapter 3.1.

<sup>17</sup> (<https://www.dohainstitute.edu.qa/EN/Academics/Pages/Academic-Policies.aspx>).

<b>Numerical</b>	<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>Grade Point Average (GPA)</b>	<b>Course Letter Grade Classification</b>
95 - 100	A	4.00	Distinction. Outstanding performance showing comprehensive proficiency and exceptional understanding of the subject matter.
90 - 94	A-	3.75	Excellent. Distinguished performance showing comprehensive and in-depth understanding of the subject matter.
87 - 89	B+	3.25	Very Good. Clearly above average performance with very good knowledge and understanding of the subject matter and with no deficiencies.
83 - 86	B	3.00	Good. Above average performance with good knowledge of principles and facts at least adequate to communicate intelligently in the discipline.
80 - 82	B-	2.75	Average. Average performance with acceptable knowledge of principles and facts at least adequate to communicate intelligently in the discipline.
75 - 79	C+	2.25	Satisfactory. Basic understanding of knowledge of principles and facts with deficiencies.
70 - 74	C	2.00	Pass. Marginal performance with definite deficiencies.
00 - 69	F	0	Unsatisfactory. Fail.

As far as the recognition of study degrees and / or periods of study is concerned DI refers to the official Qatari and its own regulation. Thereby, all admitted foreign students are required to authenticate their official diplomas and grade reports in Qatari embassies overseas. The Qatari embassies are able to provide certification to students when foreign credentials are recognized by the State of Qatar. Qatari nationals with academic degrees issued internationally are required to present an equivalence certificate from the ministry.

DI issued a regulation on “Transfer Policy” and confirms that students can study abroad for a period. For a transfer of credits (which means recognition) the DI programme department has to compare the programme conditions of the foreign university with those of DI. For recognising the credits, the course completed at the foreign university must be comparable to the DI programme. Accepted transfer credits will count towards required elective courses for the DI programme. As Qatar is not a signatory to the Lisbon Recognition Convention it is not obliged to apply its regulations when recognising foreign study degrees or study periods. This means DI will decide upon the recognition based on equivalence of the study period and not on substantial differences between both (as required in the Lisbon Recognition Convention).

While the workload is challenging, its feasibility is demonstrated by the ability of students to complete the programme and its requirements. Since the programme’s inception, 81 % of students who enrolled in the POL/IR programme were able to successfully complete the degree requirements and graduate. Students are expected to maintain a GPA of 3.0 or higher to graduate. In 2020, the average final GPA of graduates of the programme was a

3.42 out of 4. Across all programmes at DI, the course loads and study plans are being evaluated to ensure that they are both in line with the mission of DI and its programmes.

The POL/IR programme aims to offer a supportive and cooperative environment oriented toward providing mentorship and guidance as students transition from consumers to producers of knowledge in the field of politics and international relations. Students in the POL/IR programme are assigned a faculty advisor at the beginning of their tenure in the programme to help guide the student and monitor their progress.

Moreover, class sizes range from 5 to 20 students for courses taken within the programme, and the faculty-to-student ratio in the programme is approximately 1:5. Thus, while the programme is demanding, students are provided significant support from faculty members as they navigate the POL/IR programme's challenging curriculum. Additionally, "Student-Faculty Forums" also provide a venue for students to raise concerns. General student support is provided by Student Affairs and the Office of the Registrar, which are available during regular working hours.

During the online conference students confirmed the feasibility of their study workload and the supportive activities of faculty members. Students have the opportunity to utter concerns about the workload of the programme in questionnaires, but also to their advisors.

DI considers student applications without regard to race, gender, nationality, religion, and most other demographic characteristics. The Institute is also interested in assisting lower-income students who are aided by the Institute's free tuition programme. All non-local students benefit from scholarship packages that cover tuition, on-campus housing, a monthly stipend, reimbursement of public health insurance fees, airfare to-and-from their home countries, and subsidized transportation.

Students with special needs are encouraged to visit the Enrolment and Student Affairs department. All syllabi include a note about students with special needs. The text is as follows: "Special needs or any disability-related concerns and requests must be submitted by students to the Enrolment and Student Affairs Department in good time to allow for facilitating such requests. The course instructor must also be previously informed of any requests and accommodations."

## Appraisal:

The programme structure supports the smooth implementation of the curriculum and helps students to reach the defined learning outcomes. The programme consists of courses and assigns credit hours per course on the basis of the necessary student workload. The course descriptions provide detailed descriptions of intended learning outcomes and the information defined in the ECTS Users' Guide.

There are legally binding study and exam regulations which contain all necessary rules and procedures and take into account, where applicable, national requirements. The study programme is designed so that students can study for a certain time at other HEIs or do internships without any extension of their overall study time.

The recognition of degrees and periods of study at other HEIs is regulated on a basis that is not in full accordance with the European Lisbon Recognition Convention which is not binding for DI because Qatar is not a signatory.

The final grade is supplied with either a relative grade or an ECTS grading table.

Also because of confirmations from students the panel is convinced that the study programme's workload is feasible but not easy. This is ensured by a suitable curriculum design, by a plausible calculation of workload, by an adequate number and frequency of examinations, by appropriate support services as well as academic and general student counselling. When reviewing the workload, the HEI also takes into account evaluation findings, including student feedback and the programme's success rate. The panel notes that every student in the POL/IR programme is assigned a faculty advisor and DI is extremely supportive to students.

The HEI ensures gender equality and non-discrimination. Students with disabilities are provided with affirmative actions concerning time and formal standards/requirements throughout the programme and examinations. Students in special circumstances, such as single parents, foreign students, students with a migration background and/or from so-called non-academic backgrounds, are particularly assisted.

		Exceptional	Exceeds quality requirements	Meets quality requirements	Does not meet quality requirements	n.r.
3.2	Structure					
3.2.1*	Modular structure of the study programme (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
3.2.2*	Study and exam regulations (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
3.2.3*	Feasibility of study workload (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
3.2.4	Equality of opportunity			X		

### 3.3 Didactical concept

Courses are designed around course learning outcomes (CLOs) that relate to POL/IR's broader programme learning outcomes. CLOs are explicitly provided to clarify the goals of the course and how they fit into the broader aims of the programme. The pedagogical methods utilized in and out of the classroom are expected to help achieve those specific course outcomes. Thus, the POL/IR's programme learning outcomes should inform the course learning outcomes, and the course learning outcomes should shape how the course is taught.

While faculty members are provided the flexibility to design their own courses to meet the outcomes associated with the courses, each course contains both lecture and discussion components. Generally, these are specified directly in the syllabi, whereby there is a statement that notes that each 3-hour session will generally dedicate approximately 1 hour to lecture and 2 hours to discussions or interactive exercises. The core objective is to allow students to benefit from the knowledge of the scholars instructing them, but also participate

in the critical evaluation of the foundational and innovative literature in the field in an interactive manner. The teaching methods for each course are clearly outlined in the course syllabus.

The head of the programme reviews all syllabi to ensure they are consistent with these learning outcomes and consults with faculty on their design and implementation. Syllabi are discussed regularly in programme meetings. Moreover, courses are frequently adjusted based on student feedback.

As a research-oriented graduate programme, course readings play a leading role in instruction. The readings are expected to be drawn from the larger body of foundational literature and literature that is at the forefront of the subject. Moreover, readings for courses are expected to expose students to a diverse set of ideas and epistemological lenses. Most courses utilize traditional PowerPoint lectures for the lecture component of the course. Professors also utilize videos and guest lectures to assist in delivering content and motivating discussions and critical analyses.

All course materials are uploaded online to the course's Moodle website. These materials include syllabi, course readings, assignments, lecture PowerPoint slides, videos, discussion boards, and other supplementary material. Grades and other assessment records are also generally uploaded to Moodle.

During the pandemic, courses shifted online in the middle of the Spring 2020 semester and were online throughout the 2020-2021 academic year as well. The courses taught in the Spring 2020 semester were generally conducted using synchronous lectures with minor modifications to the teaching methods. During the Fall 2020 semester, professors generally provided recorded synchronous lectures or asynchronous lectures that were available online for students to access at any time, and synchronous discussion sessions.

One of the significant benefits students in the POL/IR programme are afforded is the opportunity to follow different varying viewpoints presented by leading experts working on issues related to politics. The Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies is housed on DI's campus and regularly holds events that draw experts from around the region and the globe. These events occur every week, providing students with consistent opportunities to explore topics ranging from technical discussions of the political ramifications of sovereign wealth funds to discussions of the natures of Arab States.

## Appraisal:

The didactical concept of the study programme is plausibly described and adequately oriented towards the programme objectives. It allows for the application of different teaching and learning methods, such as, for instance, course readings, videos and discussions. Students are encouraged to take an active role in creating the learning process.

The accompanying course materials are oriented towards the intended learning outcomes and correspond to the required qualification level. They are up to date and digitally accessible for the students. They are user-friendly and encourage students to engage in further independent studies.

Guest lecturers are invited and contribute to the students' qualification process with their special experience, either from professional practice or scientific work, but also, for example, from culture and politics.

	Exceptional	Exceeds quality requirements	Meets quality requirements	Does not meet quality requirements	n.r.
3.3 Didactical concept					
3.3.1* Logic and plausibility of the didactical concept (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
3.3.2* Course materials (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
3.3.3 Guest lecturers			X		
3.3.4 Lecturing tutors					X

### 3.4 Internationality

The POL/IR programme is international in nature, as the subject requires students to dig into cross-cultural and cross-country comparisons and explicitly study transnational interactions as well. Throughout their studies, students are required to explore literature that closely examines political phenomena across the globe. The course syllabi demonstrate the broad range of countries and regions covered within the courses. While students are expected to develop a strong understanding of the politics of the Arab world, they ought to develop a broad foundation in the fields of comparative politics and international relations as well.

The POL/IR programme's student body has been drawn from 22 countries spanning three continents. The most recent cohort admitted to the POL/IR programme consists of students from Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine, Somalia, Syria, Turkey, and Qatar. This reflects both the POL/IR programme's commitment to diversity and its interest in admitting the best cohorts possible.

There are currently four faculty members in the POL/IR programme and one faculty member who is currently on leave. Among these five faculty members, two earned their PhD degrees in the United States, one earned a PhD degree in Algeria, one earned a PhD in England, and another one earned a joint degree from a university in France and a university in Canada. Between these five faculty members, eight different citizenships are represented. While all current faculty members are of Arab origin, their national identities represent North Africa, the Levant and the Gulf.

While Arabic is the primary language of instruction at DI, students in the POL/IR programme are expected to possess both a strong command of Arabic and English<sup>18</sup>. In order to gain admission to the POL/IR programme, students must achieve a score of 5.5 on the IELTS. Students who do not achieve a score higher than 6.5 on the IELTS prior to enrolling in DI are expected to take English-language training courses and earn a score above 6.5 on the IELTS prior to graduation. POL/IR faculty members are also required to possess the requisite level of Arabic and English fluency to teach and assess work in both languages.

<sup>18</sup> See (also) above chapter 2 (Admission).

The primary language for lectures is Arabic; however, the majority of the assigned readings is in the English language. This is due both to issues associated with the availability of adequate translations and the necessity that students learn how to explore the literature in the English language more broadly outside of the classroom. Thus, while Arabic translations of seminal works are used when available, reading texts in English provide the added bonus of preparing students to conduct research in the English language. In addition, students are required to pass a non-credit course dedicated to helping them learn how to read technically sophisticated work in the English language.

Students have the option to submit their assignments and exams in either Arabic or English. Most of them choose Arabic, some prefer submitting assignments in English.

## Appraisal:

The panel was impressed by the international orientation of DI and the POL/IR programme as well as of faculty and students. It notes that the acquisition of intercultural competences and skills are at the core of the programme's learning objectives and strongly promoted. The whole POL/IR programme is international by its nature and content. Students are thus prepared for the challenges in an international working environment. Through assignments and practical examples as parts of the courses, students are enabled to act in an intercultural environment.

The international composition of the student body corresponds to the programme concept. The measures taken to promote internationality are goal oriented.

Students come from various language areas and cultural backgrounds. Classroom discussions and group work often reflect international aspects. The measures taken to ensure an international composition of the student body show sustainable effect.

The panel welcomes the international composition of faculty (teachers from different countries and with international academic and professional experience) which is an essential element shaping the profile of the study programme. It promotes that students acquire international and intercultural competencies and skills. The measures taken are goal oriented.

As Arabic is the primary course language and most students stem from Arabic countries English is the most important foreign language for them, for readings as well as for course materials. But also, Arabic is a foreign language for those students who come from a non-Arabic country. Against this background course materials in foreign languages predominate. Internationality is clearly a key element of the study programme's profile.

The proportion of foreign language courses and required foreign language materials corresponds with the qualification objectives of the study programme.

	Exceptional	Exceeds quality requirements	Meets quality requirements	Does not meet quality requirements	n.r.
3.4	Internationality				
3.4.1*		X			
3.4.2	X				
3.4.3		X			
3.4.4		X			

### 3.5 Multidisciplinary competences and skills (Asterisk Criterion)

In addition to the interdisciplinary elective courses, students are provided with training in discourse analysis, historical analysis, interview techniques, ethnography, statistics, statistical programming, and the logic of causal inference in the social sciences. It is expected that students will then deepen their competency in the area that is presumably relevant to the work they will conduct.

Students are required to carry out long-term and short-term projects during their coursework and as research assistants, often as members of groups. Such opportunities provide students with leadership skills and practice in working cooperatively to complete tasks. Outside of the classroom, students are also encouraged to participate in student groups, and these groups provide them with opportunities to gain leadership experience, learn how to resolve conflicts, and grow accustomed to working with others cooperatively. In addition, students are provided with opportunities to improve their communication skills by presenting their work in courses and during annual thesis presentations.

#### Appraisal:

The panel takes the view that students in the POL/IR programme become acquainted with diverse subjects such as history, social science, politics and geography. Moreover, students acquire communication and public-speaking skills as well as cooperation and conflict handling skills in accordance with the course descriptions as well as in elective courses of SOSH. This is supported by means of suitable didactical and methodological measures. Also, the acquisition of further multidisciplinary competences, such as leadership skills and broad contextual knowledge, is ensured.

	Exceptional	Exceeds quality requirements	Meets quality requirements	Does not meet quality requirements	n.r.
3.5*	Multidisciplinary competences and skills (Asterisk Criterion)			X	

### 3.6 Skills for employment / Employability (Asterisk Criterion)

Graduates of the POL/IR programme will be offered the possibility to acquire the necessary skills to move directly into any of these career paths: (a) doctoral studies in political science

and international relations; (b) researchers in social scientific research centers and think tanks; (c) leadership roles that involve critical analysis and strategic planning; (d) careers in diplomacy and international organizations; (e) careers in the media and policy studies; or, (f) employment as public servants in government offices. The interdisciplinary and research skills and substantive knowledge students gain in the programme will help them in careers outside of political science as well.

According to an Alumni survey that has been conducted in 2019, at that time 91.7 % of graduates of the programme were employed, and 63.6 % of those employed held positions in the field of politics and international relations or a related field.

**Appraisal:**

The promotion of employability – for instance through the integration of interdisciplinary and research skills and through the promotion of multidisciplinary competences – runs as a common thread of the study programme through all its modules/courses.

		Exceptional	Exceeds quality requirements	Meets quality requirements	Does not meet quality requirements	n.r.
3.6*	Skills for employment / Employability (Asterisk Criterion)			X		

## 4. Academic environment and framework conditions

### 4.1 Faculty

As mentioned above<sup>19</sup>, at present the programme is taught by four full-time professors and one professor who is on leave. Full-time professors at DI teach two courses per semester. The head of the programme is offered a course release for the year. Two of the faculty members in the POL/IR programme have significant responsibilities with Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies and only teach one course per semester. Given the move to online instruction during the pandemic, the faculty member who is on leave was hired to teach a course virtually as an adjunct professor. DI assured that all courses taught are covered by the lecturers mentioned. The faculty member on leave will be replaced.

The research and teaching interests of the faculty are varied and sufficiently diverse to cover the courses taught. Four faculty members primarily focus on comparative politics and one faculty member's primary subfield is international relations. Each course is taught by an individual whose major or minor field in their doctoral studies directly and extensively covers the topic of the course or has research experience in the relevant subject.

All professors in the POL/IR programme hold PhDs from reputable universities and political science departments. Moreover, they are established scholars and experts in their respective areas who have published extensively on their subjects. Faculty members in the programme are expected to average at least one peer reviewed publication per year. From September 2015 – December 2020, POL/IR faculty's peer-reviewed outputs include 22 peer-reviewed articles, 19 chapters in edited volumes, three edited volumes and three monographs. Among their English language outputs, they have published books with Oxford University Press and Routledge, and articles that have appeared in journals of significant international renown, such as *Political Research Quarterly*, *Journal of Common Market Studies*, *Democratization*, *International Interactions*, and *Mediterranean Politics*. Moreover, POL/IR faculty members publish in leading Arabic and French outlets in addition to their English-language publications. They are also active on the political science and international relations conference circuit, presenting their research in conferences such as the annual meetings of the American Political Science Association, the International Studies Association, the Middle Eastern Studies Association, the Southern Political Science Association, and the Midwestern Political Science Association.

The typical recruitment process of faculty is competitive. Once the decision on a new faculty member is made a hiring committee is formed to evaluate the hire, and an advertisement is sent out by the Human Resources Department. The hiring committee consists of three members from within the programme, chaired by the head of the programme, and an external member who is drawn from another programme. The hiring committee evaluates the applicants' files and creates a list of candidates to interview. Interviews are held virtually and last approximately one-hour. After the interviews have concluded, committee members discuss and debate the suitability of the interviewed candidates and choose a candidate from among the interviewees. A report is drafted by the head of the committee that reflects the final decision of the committee and also reports the expressed preferences and opinions

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<sup>19</sup> See chapter 3.4.

voiced during the committee meeting. The final hiring decision must then be approved by both the Dean of SOSH and the President of DI.

Each of the faculty members in the POL/IR programme, as experts in their respective fields, are expected to carefully give their own courses in accordance with the policies and guidelines of DI. The goal of ensuring the quality of the pedagogical and didactical methods used by professors is accomplished in two ways. First, the POL/IR programme emphasises teaching experience and quality in the interview process. As a general rule, the POL/IR programme does not hire individuals who have not taught a course as instructor of record. Moreover, the interview process is dedicated to probing the pedagogical methods used by candidates, in addition to their competence as researchers. The faculty members currently in the POL/IR programme have extensive teaching experience across various institutions and have proven to be outstanding instructors. Second, DI provides opportunities for continued education and training on pedagogical methods and approaches. The Teaching and Learning Assessment (TLA) Committee has produced an extensive array of workshops and training sessions that have played a significant role in keeping faculty members informed of the latest advances in pedagogical methods. Professors within the programme are expected to stay up to date on teaching and learning by regularly participating in these courses.

As is noted above, all candidates for positions in the POL/IR programme are required to have pedagogical experience and evidence of research productivity in order to be offered a position. In addition to their academic experience, faculty members in the POL/IR programme carry with them experience in government bureaucracies, advocacy organizations, banking, and the law.

Faculty members in the POL/IR programme meet at least once a month to make decisions regarding the programme, communicate issues that require attention, discuss progress on research and teaching initiatives and ideas for how the programme can better serve students and faculty members. Decisions regarding the programme's vision and the design of the POL/IR programme's documents are conducted collectively.

As far as the student support by the faculty is concerned, the low faculty-to-student ratio of the programme allows students to frequently and meaningfully interact with faculty members in the programme. Moreover, as each student is assigned an academic adviser from admission to graduation, these academic advisers are required to meet with academic advisees each semester to provide guidance on course registration and other academic matters.<sup>20</sup> Thesis supervisors are also required to meet regularly with their students. Faculty members currently advise approximately six students and supervise three theses per year. Furthermore, each semester, the POL/IR programme holds a meeting with students where they have the opportunity to discuss the programme and raise concerns with faculty members who are required to hold regular office hours. Beyond these formal meetings and required interactions, faculty members work closely with students on research projects and help assist them in picking up new skills and competencies.

During the online conference students confirmed that most students would be fully content with the support that they received in particular from lecturers and academic advisors. DI organised activities for students outside the study programme.

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<sup>20</sup> In the internal regulation „DI Academic Advising Policy“ the responsibilities of the Registrar's Office (on admission of students), Academic Advisors ( on advising and communicating with students) and students themselves (on communicating with the advisors and consulting them) are described.

## Appraisal:

The panel was impressed by quality and commitment that the faculty members showed during the online conference. It became convinced that even when their teaching assignments in other study programmes are taken into account, the structure and number of the faculty correspond to the programme requirements and ensure that the students reach the intended qualification objectives. The faculty's composition, consisting of full-time lecturers, guarantees that both the academic standards and the requirements of professional practice are fully satisfied.

The academic qualification of the faculty corresponds to the requirements and objectives of the study programme. The HEI carefully verifies the qualifications of the faculty members by means of an established transparent procedure. Specific measures for the further qualification of the faculty members are implemented. The faculty's outstanding academic qualification is underlined by scientific publications in peer-reviewed journals and books which results from the CVs.

The pedagogical and didactical qualification of the faculty correspond to the requirements and objectives of the study programme. The HEI verifies the qualifications of the faculty members by means of an established procedure. The HEI ensures that assessors are familiar with existing testing and examination methods and receive support in developing their own skills in this field. Specific measures for the further qualification of the faculty members are implemented.

The practical business experience of the faculty corresponds to the requirement of the programme to integrate theory and practice.

The faculty members cooperate with each other for the purpose of tuning the modules/courses towards the overall qualification objectives. Meetings of all those teaching in the programme take place regularly.

Student support is an integral part of the services provided by the faculty. It is offered on a regular basis and serves to help students study successfully. The faculty members are available for the students outside the specified office hours as well. The students are "fully content" with the support they receive.

	Exceptional	Exceeds quality requirements	Meets quality requirements	Does not meet quality requirements	n.r.
4.1 Faculty					
4.1.1* Structure and quantity of faculty in relation to curricular requirements (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
4.1.2* Academic qualification of faculty (Asterisk Criterion)		X			
4.1.3* Pedagogical / didactical qualification of faculty (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
4.1.4 Practical business experience of faculty			X		
4.1.5* Internal cooperation (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
4.1.6* Student support by the faculty (Asterisk Criterion)		X			
4.1.7(*) Student support in distance learning (only relevant and an Asterisk Criterion for blended learning/distance learning programmes)					X

## 4.2 Programme management

The POL/IR head of programme leads all areas of programme administration with the assistance and guidance of other faculty members, the programme coordinator, and the Office of the Dean of SOSH. The purview includes the distribution of course loads and course scheduling, drawing up the study plan, advisor assignments, thesis supervisor assignments, leading programme meetings, budgeting, planning programme events and representing the programme in the School Executive Council. The POL/IR head of programme also acts as an intermediary between the Dean's Office and the programme. As such, the head of programme is responsible for achieving the programme's objectives within the framework of regulations, rules and guidance established by the School Executive Council, the Dean's Office and DI.

While the head of programme takes on the primary leadership role in the administration of the POL/IR programme's objectives, decisions are made collectively by faculty members. During the programme's monthly meetings, faculty members are encouraged to propose ideas regarding various facets of the programme. The head of programme executes the decisions that were reached collectively regarding changes to the programme, hiring, admissions, and any other matters decided within the programme.

Administrative support is provided by the programme coordinator, who plays a significant role in the organisation of the programme, facilitating communication with the Dean's Office and assisting students and faculty members with course registration, the submission of advising forms and thesis submission. The programme coordinator is often the first person consulted with regards to these issues. Other administrative units within DI also help students and faculty with registration, course materials (including the online course management programme), information technology, library resources, and obtaining Institutional Review Board approval, among other things.

## Appraisal:

The head of programme coordinates the activities of everyone involved in the programme and ensures that the programme runs smoothly, mostly based on collectively reached decisions.

The panel welcomes that faculty members and students are efficiently supported by the administration in the organisation of the study programme. The administrative staff acts as a service provider for both. Sufficient administrative staff is available. Decision-making processes, authority, and responsibilities are clearly defined. Teachers and students participate in the decision-making processes where their areas of work are involved.

The opportunities of electronic service-support are used and supplement personal one-to-one counselling. The HEI offers the administrative staff opportunities for continuous professional development.

		Exceptional	Exceeds quality requirements	Meets quality requirements	Does not meet quality requirements	n.r.
4.2	Programme management					
4.2.1*	Programme Director (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
4.2.2	Process organisation and administrative support for students and faculty		X			

## 4.3 Cooperation and partnerships

DI has signed agreements and memoranda of understanding (MoU) on collaboration with other universities and organisations. These agreements and MoUs can be categorized into the following groups according to their objectives:

### (1) Agreements and MoUs aimed to attract graduate students

These agreements and memoranda aim to enable students who completed their undergraduate degrees with honors to continue their studies at the graduate level in the different colleges and programmes at DI.

### (2) Agreements in the Areas of Training, Exchanging Expertise, and Research

They aim to reinforce collaboration between the Institute and organisations with similar interests in ways that promote human developments and the efficiency of administrative staffs. These objectives are achieved through DI's workshops, academic development courses, internships, and leadership training in the areas of public administration and policy studies. These agreements also aim to promote exchanging expertise through consulting opportunities for the Institute's faculty members, researchers, and specialists. Moreover, they facilitate collaborative research projects and co-organized conferences and seminars. The Institute has signed agreements of this category with organisations such as the Ministry of Administrative Development – Doha, Qatar; the Ministry of Development Planning and Statistics – Doha, Qatar; The Humanitarian Forum, Qatar; The Hague Institute for Global Justice; the Ibhara Academy center for vocational training; Zhejiang University – China.

### (3) MoUs on the Exploration of Academic and Research Collaboration Opportunities

This category of agreements aims to enable concerned parties to explore areas of shared interests and collaboration opportunities, including joined research projects, co-authored research publications, academic and student activities, and possibilities of developing dual enrolment graduate programmes, faculty exchange opportunities, and summer student exchange programs. The Institute has signed agreements in this category with the following universities: Columbia University N.Y (MOU) (USA); SOAS University – London (UK); Florida International University – Steven Green School of International & Public Affairs (USA).

Moreover, some additional agreements are particularly relevant to the POL/IR programme. Most notably, agreements have been entered into between DI and institutions in Morocco and Jordan to facilitate recruitment in those countries.

### Appraisal:

The scope and nature of cooperation with other academic institutions and networks as well as with business enterprises and other institutions relevant for the programme are plausibly presented. The agreements forming the basis of the cooperation are documented. The cooperation is actively pursued and has a clear impact on the conception and implementation of the study programme. All such activities contribute to the development of the students' qualification and skills.

	Exceptional	Exceeds quality requirements	Meets quality requirements	Does not meet quality requirements	n.r.
4.3 Cooperation and partnerships					
4.3.1(*) Cooperation with HEIs and other academic institutions or networks (Asterisk Criterion for cooperation programmes)			X		
4.3.2(*) Cooperation with business enterprises and other organisations (Asterisk Criterion for educational and vocational programmes, franchise programmes)			X		

## 4.4 Facilities and equipment

As the on-site visit had to be replaced by an online conference because of the Covid-19 pandemic DI made available to the panel numerous photos of its building, rooms, and the library as well as descriptions in the self-evaluation report thereof.

DI has a state-of-the-art facility that was designed to fully support the educational process and provide spaces not only for traditional teaching and learning but for hosting conferences and talks and facilitating day to day interactions. DI's campus spreads over an area of 112,000 m<sup>2</sup>, encompassing 23 different buildings. The campus buildings are used for living, educational activities, and leisure activities. Disabled students are given barrier-free access to all of these buildings.

Learning and teaching spaces are spread out around the campus, consisting of classrooms, labs, and auditoriums in addition to a library building, institute life buildings and faculty and

student accommodations. Additionally, there are also computer labs, virtual labs, a journalism studio, an e-library, an e-learning system (Moodle) and other specialized learning resources. With regards to classrooms, the total number of classrooms is 10 (+5 in Library Building), 4 smart classrooms and 6 classrooms equipped with audio visual systems and an auditorium that fits 70 people.

DI has also established an advanced Student Information System (SIS) that allows students to benefit from services through the self-service portal, and enables them to view their academic status, grades, and their registration status at the Institute. The SIS provides DI with the capability of registering students in courses; documenting grades, transcripts and dropout rates; tracking attendance; developing student schedules and managing other data needed for the Institute effectively. Student Services also maintains an Intranet site that provides direct access to all student related administrative procedures, forms, study plans, and SIS system guides and resources.

All students, faculty, and administrative staff are provided free internet access throughout campus – in classrooms, the library, residences, cafeterias, gym, and all other campus locations. The IT department provides technical support during normal working hours. Upon their arrival at DI, students participate in orientation days to become familiar with the IT system and are provided with detailed written instructions on how to use it inside and outside campus.

The DI IT department and the library managed to promptly provide students who have not yet arrived in Doha with maximum access to resources held by the library by deploying a technological solution (EZproxy) that facilitates secure remote access. This solution has been implemented. Moreover, licenses were offered to the students by providing cloud-based solutions and access to DI's virtual computer labs.

All POL/IR students have direct access to DI's growing research library, as well as the Qatar National Library (QNL), including all of its databases. The DI library builds its collections of varied materials and resources, in print and electronic formats, based on the established collection development policy and procedures that are responsive to the needs of DI community. At present, DI library features a total of 76,244 book titles, including approximately 12,082 of items in Political Science. POL/IR faculty members and DI librarian update the library collection with relevant books, textbooks and other sources. The allocated budget is sufficient to update the collections regularly. All literature assigned in course syllabi is available either in the DI library or is uploaded directly to and available on individual course Moodle sites.

In addition to DI's print and electronic collection, DI community has also access to the resources available through QNL. According to its website, QNL "has more than one million books in its collections, along with more than 500,000 eBooks, periodicals and newspapers, and special collections."

The library is open from 8:00am – 10pm during the work week (Sunday – Thursday) and from 9am – 9pm on Saturdays. The library is staffed appropriately and holds regular library orientations, database training sessions, and other workshops for students and faculty. The library features an array of spaces for the community such study rooms, quiet spaces, and public computers.

Combined, DI and the QNL subscribe to more than 265 databases in Arabic and English. For example, ProQuest's E-book Central, E-Marefa's Social Sciences, JSTOR, Taylor & Francis Online database, Wiley Online Books database, Wiley Online Journals database, and hundreds of other full-text databases in subjects such as Psychology, Philosophy, History, Media & Cultural Studies and other disciplines.

At initial student registration, the DI library provides all new students with unique DI barcode login credentials. Students are then able to access online resources from anywhere in the world via the internet for the duration of their DI study period.

## Appraisal:

Since the online conference was conducted replacing an on-site visit, the panel did not have the opportunity to visit DI's buildings. Instead, UKI provided photos and descriptions of its premises and facilities. Based on the materials provided, the panel formed the view that a smooth running of programmes is ensured regarding the capacities for teaching, research, studies, and administration.

The quantity, quality, media and IT facilities of the teaching rooms meet the standards required for the programme, even taking into account the resource needs of other study programmes. The teaching rooms and labs are equipped with state-of-the-art technology. For special contents of the curriculum (role-playing game, virtual elements), the HEI possesses appropriate rooms with the specific technical components needed such as visual systems.

The rooms are properly equipped for disabled students and give them barrier-free access. Access to the internet through laptops via wireless LAN is provided free of charge. A sufficient number of group rooms is available.

The panel in particular welcomes that access to the literature and journals as well as to digital media (e.g. electronic media, databases) is ensured. The opening hours of the DI library as well of the Qatar National Library take students' needs sufficiently into account. The literature expressly required for the study programme is available in the library and kept up to date. Access to relevant digital media is available from the students' home. Qualified library staff is there to advise students.

		Exceptional	Exceeds quality requirements	Meets quality requirements	Does not meet quality requirements	n.r.
4.4	Facilities and equipment					
4.4.1*	Quantity, quality, media and IT equipment of teaching and group rooms (Asterisk Criterion)		X			
4.4.2*	Access to literature (Asterisk Criterion)		X			

## 4.5 Additional services

DI offers career services as part of the student services. This includes career guidance and skills development services that are key to successful professional and business life.

As part of creating awareness about the job market, the Career Advising Specialist posts job announcements on the Career portal and explains how they can apply for openings. Moreover, the Career Advising Specialist posts announcements about internship opportunities and important scholarships for PhD programmes, and also facilitates cooperation and partnerships with external organisations in order to offer internship opportunities for students and expand potential student employment networks. The Career Advising Specialist also facilitates volunteer opportunities for students with organisations that align with their fields of study; moreover curriculum-vitae training, interview preparation training, and training/fieldwork workshops; holds individual meetings with students to advise on job interviews and contract negotiations; and conducts an annual job fair with local corporations, entities, and organizations. The Career Advising Specialist also holds an annual career fair and conducts mock interviewing.

So far, the responsible department initiated the following actions.

- Hired a full-time Alumni Affairs and Corporate Social Responsibility Coordinator.
- Created an Alumni Association webpage on DI's website in April 2020.
- Developed the Alumni Charter and Bylaws which received approval in October 2020.
- More than 550 Alumni have joined the association from 29 countries.
- All graduates have access to DI facilities.
- Invited graduates to be members of DI and Schools committees so they can add value and be part of future developments at DI.

### Appraisal:

The panel welcomes that DI offers career counselling and placement services to the students and graduates of the POL/IR programme to promote their employability. The HEI provides sufficient resources. In addition, career counselling and placement services are offered to the students and graduates on an individual basis. Such activities are planned on a long-time basis, performed regularly, and are actively marketed. Sufficient staff is available for this purpose. Students have access to the HEI-wide corporate network. The HEI brings its graduates in contact with representatives from business enterprises, public organisations and others at regular events. An alumni organisation has been set up with the aim of developing an alumni network.

		Exceptional	Exceeds quality requirements	Meets quality requirements	Does not meet quality requirements	n.r.
4.5	Additional services					
4.5.1	Career counselling and placement service		X			
4.5.2	Alumni Activities			X		

## 4.6 Financing of the study programme (Asterisk Criterion)

The DI was established in 2015 with an initial funding of 20,000,000 QR (about 4,81 million Euro) from the Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies. The DI operations and academic activities are still funded by the founder the Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies. Moreover, DI is financed through a Qatari state grant, providing the most significant portion of funding. Other funding is provided by student tuition fees. Since the establishment the DI has been expanding its services to accommodate the growing student body and to attain to students' and faculty members' teaching and learning needs. The Institute is pursuing a strategy to increase its independent research and executive training income.

### Appraisal:

The panel is convinced that the study programme is funded for the entire accreditation period so that students will definitely be able to complete their studies.

		Exceptional	Exceeds quality requirements	Meets quality requirements	Does not meet quality requirements	n.r.
4.6*	Financing of the study programme (Asterisk Criterion)			X		

## 5. Quality assurance and documentation

DI's Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Quality Assurance (OIEQA) provides a framework and guidance for assuring quality of academic programmes, research, academic services, administrative services, and public service at DI. This "Institutional Effectiveness and Quality Assurance Framework" has found the approval from the DI Board of Trustees. The POL/IR programme works within this framework to assure quality.

DI's TLA Committee<sup>21</sup>, guided in part by the OIEQA, developed a Programme Annual Monitoring Report template which serves to collect data and information on the programme, student and faculty performance. Based on the analysis the Programme Annual Monitoring Report is elaborated. The report includes data and key details regarding admissions to the POL/IR programme, student grades, programme changes, teaching and learning strategies, graduation rates, alumni satisfaction, and employment, and plans for improvement. The process also includes a programme learning outcome assessment which features a special template. This annual report requires all faculty members in the programme to reflect on the data provided by the OIEQA.

In addition, the POL/IR programme meets every month to discuss programme outcomes and areas for improvement. The head of programme also keeps track of ongoing development and attempts to provide guidance and mentorship to faculty members as needed. As has been noted, students are also afforded opportunities to address their concerns with their advisors, the head of programme, and at the student-faculty gatherings that occur once per semester. Beyond these mechanisms, the head of programme also oversees syllabi, provides evaluations of courses based on the course content and student evaluations, and works to ensure that instructors abide by DI policies and guidelines. All faculty members are also evaluated comprehensively by the head of programme and perform self-evaluations, and these evaluations involve a component that constructively examines their overall teaching performance.

Before the conclusion of each semester, students are asked to fill out anonymous, individual course evaluations. The OIEQA collates the data from the completed student course surveys and sends them to the relevant course instructors and heads of programme. The final results include both quantitative and qualitative anonymized data that are provided to the course's instructor, the head of the programme and the institution. The template also opens the possibility to students to make comments on the workload. After each semester, all DI instructors use a specially designed form to comment on the student evaluation survey results for their courses and on the course development. Both final, collated student evaluation results and the instructor feedback form are required to be included as part of an end-of-semester "course file" submitted by each instructor to the OIEQA. The head of programme also uses the Instructor Course Feedback Form to report to the Dean regarding all courses taught, with specific reference to both student course evaluation results and instructor feedback on student course evaluations. Programmes are expected to address any glaring weaknesses in course design or delivery with faculty members. Measures for teaching improvement are implemented on a continuous basis.

To ensure the involvement of all relevant stakeholders in DI quality assurance process, students, faculty, and relevant administrative staff are represented in the TLA and IEQA

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<sup>21</sup> See above chapter 4.1.

committees. In addition, students can avail of other opportunities to provide contemporaneous evaluations of courses and programmes. Students meet with their advisers at least twice per semester to discuss their progress. These meetings allow for dynamic interactions between the student and their adviser regarding the programme and individual courses. They can also complete a form to evaluate various aspects of their experience at DI. Moreover, once per semester, a programme gathering/forum is held that inter alia deals with quality assurance aspects and allows students to express concerns regarding the programme and workload. Students are also encouraged to report concerns to their adviser or the head of programme. DI students are collectively represented by a student council.

Furthermore, DI provides various avenues for programme evaluation and improvement. The workshops provided by the TLA Office are not theoretical exercises, but structured environments for faculty members to improve their courses and programmes. These workshops provide guidance but also allow faculty members the flexibility to synthesize their own knowledge of their respective disciplines with the tools being taught to them in the workshops. Other entities in DI, such as the Research & Grants Department often hold events that also allow for faculty introspection, evaluation, and planning.

Finally, DI alumni also evaluate and provide programme feedback through the alumni and satisfaction surveys. The results of these surveys are addressed in the Programme Annual Monitoring Report. The programme devises improvement plans in order to address legitimate concerns that can be feasibly addressed. Important improvements are communicated to students via emails, meetings with the students and/or meetings with DI Student Council. It is also worth noting that the results of all surveys conducted are analysed and reported in summative OIEQA reports that are submitted to the Schools, DI Council and administrative units (where appropriate) for review and action.

DI's OIEQA administers satisfaction surveys every year to all students and bi-annually administers an alumni survey for SOSH and annually for the School of Public Administration and Development Economics. The most recent alumni survey response rate was low, but it provided insight into where POL/IR students are currently working and how we might assist them in the future.

DI is regularly evaluated by Qatar's Ministry of Education and Higher Education and is subject to its regulations.

DI, SOSH and the POL/IR programme have established clear protocols for document management. The head of programme and programme coordinator are responsible for collecting documents related to pedagogy, advising and theses and retain records of these for themselves. The records are subsequently forwarded to the SOSH office manager so that they may retain and evaluate documents, as necessary. Faculty members are required to retain all evaluations and feedback provided to students, course slides, grading rubrics, readings, and instructions, and upload them to a secure website. The programme coordinator organises the collection of these materials. Furthermore, at the end of each year, the head of the programme provides a comprehensive evaluation of the programme to the Office of the Dean.

The programme is documented in detail on DI website<sup>22</sup> which also includes programme entry requirements, faculty profiles, and programme structure.

News about DI, including the POL/IR programme and its faculty and students, is published regularly in Zajel, a monthly e-newspaper published by the DI Communications and External Relations department. Zajel includes information about new DI developments, publications, research grants, awards, conferences, and events. Additionally, DI uses its pages on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube to publish and broadcast news about the Institute, including the POL/IR programme and its faculty. The POL/IR programme publicises all of its events via the Communications and External Relations department.

The head of the programme and programme coordinator regularly keep faculty members and students aware of relevant updates and deadlines. In addition, activities that are administratively under the jurisdiction of SOSH are communicated to students and staff in a timely manner through the Dean's Office. DI's Office of the President also regularly updates all concerned members of changes, obligation deadlines and other matters that may be of interest to them.

The Communications and External Relations department provides regular announcements of events that are distributed to the whole DI community. For POL/IR programme events, the programme coordinator works with the Communications and External Relations department to create flyers and announcements of events.

## Appraisal:

The panel welcomes that DI set up a quality assurance and development procedure that systematically and continuously monitors and develops the quality of the programme with respect to its contents, processes, and outcomes. It takes into account the evaluation results and the analysis on student workload, success rate, and graduate employment as well as the profile of the student population. Faculty members participate in the respective committees to plan and assess the quality assurance and development procedures. Responsibilities are clearly defined.

Evaluation by the students is carried out on a regular basis and in accordance with a prescribed procedure; the outcomes are communicated to the students and provide input for the quality development process. Students are represented in the relevant committees as well as in the programme forum that also deals with quality assurance matters.

Quality control by the faculty as well as an external evaluation by alumni are conducted on a regular basis and in accordance with a prescribed procedure; the outcomes are communicated and provide input for the quality development process.

The study programme's content, curriculum and examination scheme have been suitably documented and published (e.g. course plan and exam regulations).

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<sup>22</sup><https://www.dohainstitute.edu.qa/EN/Academics/SOSH/Programmes/PoliticsandIR/Pages/default.aspx>.

DI regularly publishes current news and information – both quantitative and qualitative – about the study programme. In addition, the evaluation results are translated into a list of measures to be taken and published in an appropriate manner.

	Exceptional	Exceeds quality requirements	Meets quality requirements	Does not meet quality requirements	n.r.
5.1* Quality assurance and quality development with respect to contents, processes and outcomes (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
5.2 Instruments of quality assurance					
5.2.1 Evaluation by students			X		
5.2.2 Evaluation by faculty			X		
5.2.3 External evaluation by alumni, employers and third parties			X		
5.3 Programme documentation					
5.3.1* Programme description (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
5.3.2 Information on activities during the academic year			X		

# Quality profile

HEI: Doha Institute for Graduate Studies

Master programme: Politics and International Relations

		Exceptional	Exceeds quality requirements	Meets quality requirements	Does not meet quality requirements	n.r.
<b>1</b>	<b>Objectives</b>					
1.1*	Objectives of the study programme (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
1.2*	International orientation of the study programme design (Asterisk Criterion)		X			
1.3	Positioning of the study programme					
1.3.1	Positioning of the study programme in the educational market		X			
1.3.2	Positioning of the study programme on the job market for graduates („Employability“)			X		
1.3.3	Positioning of the study programme within the HEI's overall strategic concept			X		
<b>2</b>	<b>Admission</b>					
2.1*	Admission requirements (Asterisk Criterion)		X			
2.2	Counselling for prospective students			X		
2.3*	Selection procedure (if relevant)		X			
2.4(*)	Professional experience (if relevant; Asterisk Criterion for master programmes that require professional experience)					X
2.5*	Ensuring foreign language proficiency (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
2.6*	Transparency and documentation of admission procedure and decision (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
<b>3</b>	<b>Contents, structure and didactical concept</b>					
3.1	Contents					
3.1.1*	Logic and conceptual coherence (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
3.1.2*	Rationale for degree and programme name (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
3.1.3*	Integration of theory and practice (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
3.1.4	Interdisciplinary thinking		X			
3.1.5	Ethical aspects			X		
3.1.6*	Methods and scientific practice (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
3.1.7*	Examination and final thesis (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
3.2	Structure					
3.2.1*	Modular structure of the study programme (Asterisk Criterion)			X		

		Exceptional	Exceeds quality requirements	Meets quality requirements	Does not meet quality requirements	n.r.
3.2.2*	Study and exam regulations (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
3.2.3*	Feasibility of study workload (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
3.2.4	Equality of opportunity			X		
3.3	Didactical concept					
3.3.1*	Logic and plausibility of the didactical concept (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
3.3.2*	Course materials (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
3.3.3	Guest lecturers			X		
3.3.4	Lecturing tutors					X
3.4	Internationality					
3.4.1*	International contents and intercultural aspects (Asterisk Criterion)		X			
3.4.2	Internationality of the student body	X				
3.4.3	Internationality of faculty		X			
3.4.4	Foreign language contents		X			
3.5*	Multidisciplinary competences and skills (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
3.6*	Skills for employment / Employability (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
<b>4.</b>	<b>Academic environment and framework conditions</b>					
4.1	Faculty					
4.1.1*	Structure and quantity of faculty in relation to curricular requirements (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
4.1.2*	Academic qualification of faculty (Asterisk Criterion)		X			
4.1.3*	Pedagogical / didactical qualification of faculty (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
4.1.4	Practical business experience of faculty			X		
4.1.5*	Internal cooperation (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
4.1.6*	Student support by the faculty (Asterisk Criterion)		X			
4.1.7(*)	Student support in distance learning (only relevant and an Asterisk Criterion for blended-learning/distance learning programmes)					X
4.2	Programme management					
4.2.1*	Programme Director (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
4.2.2	Process organisation and administrative support for students and faculty		X			
4.3	Cooperation and partnerships					
4.3.1(*)	Cooperation with HEIs and other academic institutions or networks (Asterisk Criterion for cooperation)			X		

		Exceptional	Exceeds quality requirements	Meets quality requirements	Does not meet quality requirements	n.r.
	programmes)					
4.3.2(*)	Cooperation with business enterprises and other organisations (Asterisk Criterion for educational programmes)			X		
4.4	Facilities and equipment					
4.4.1*	Quantity, quality, media and IT equipment of teaching and group rooms (Asterisk Criterion)		X			
4.4.2*	Access to literature (Asterisk Criterion)		X			
4.5	Additional services					
4.5.1	Career counselling and placement service		X			
4.5.2	Alumni Activities			X		
4.6*	Financing of the study programme (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
<b>5</b>	<b>Quality assurance and documentation</b>					
5.1*	Quality assurance and quality development with respect to contents, processes and outcomes (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
5.2	Instruments of quality assurance					
5.2.1	Evaluation by students			X		
5.2.2	Evaluation by faculty			X		
5.2.3	External evaluation by alumni, employers and third parties			X		
5.3	Programme documentation					
5.3.1*	Programme description (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
5.3.2	Information on activities during the academic year			X		