

Brightfield Project Examples: Politics

1. Policy Briefing: Managing Diplomatic Relations in a Regional Conflict

Introduction:

Students will draft a policy briefing advising government officials on strategies to manage an ongoing regional conflict. The project involves assessing political interests, diplomatic risks, and proposing actionable recommendations.

Field of Politics:

International Relations / Diplomacy / Conflict Resolution

Required Level of Knowledge:

Basic understanding of international politics, diplomatic objectives, and key global institutions. Key frameworks will be introduced during the project.

Real-World Example:

The ongoing South China Sea territorial disputes involve multiple countries asserting competing claims over maritime territory, with direct implications for trade routes, military alliances, and regional security. Policy briefings have been essential tools for governments navigating these complex geopolitical tensions. Source: <https://www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/territorial-disputes-south-china-sea>

What You Would Be Doing:

You will take the role of a junior policy analyst within a government advisory team. Provided with a background briefing on a hypothetical regional conflict, you will identify the key actors and their interests, map out diplomatic, military, and economic dimensions of the conflict, research international law, treaties, and alliances affecting the dispute, assess the risks and opportunities of potential policy actions, and draft a professional policy briefing advising senior officials on recommended courses of action, supported by research and evidence.

2. Foreign Policy Recommendation: Strategic Partnership Proposal

Introduction:

Students will research and propose a foreign policy strategy for developing or strengthening a partnership between two nations, considering trade, security, and diplomatic objectives.

Field of Politics:

Foreign Policy / Geopolitics / Economic Diplomacy

Required Level of Knowledge:

General understanding of global politics, international trade, and security concerns. Key theories and frameworks will be introduced during the project.

Real-World Example:

The UK's evolving trade partnerships post-Brexit, including its negotiations to join the CPTPP (Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership), highlight how nations seek new strategic alliances to expand trade access and strengthen geopolitical ties. Source: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/the-uk-and-the-comprehensive-and-progressive-agreement-for-trans-pacific-partnershipcptpp>

What You Would Be Doing:

As a foreign policy advisor, you will research two nations' political, economic, and security interests, identify areas for strategic collaboration (e.g. trade, defence, technology, environmental cooperation), evaluate current agreements, conflicts of interest, and potential barriers, and draft a detailed policy recommendation memo for government leaders, justifying your proposed partnership strategy.

3. Voter Behaviour Analysis: National Election Case Study

Introduction:

Students will analyse voter behaviour data from a recent national election to identify patterns, trends, and key electoral drivers.

Field of Politics:

Political Science / Electoral Studies / Political Data Analysis

Required Level of Knowledge:

Basic familiarity with electoral systems, voting behaviour, and political campaigning. Data interpretation skills will be developed throughout the project.

Real-World Example:

The 2016 Brexit referendum showed how voter behaviour was strongly influenced by age, education, income level, and regional differences, illustrating complex patterns that continue to shape UK politics. Source: https://www.bbc.com/news/politics/eu_referendum/results

What You Would Be Doing:

You will act as a political data analyst examining national election results. Your tasks will include analysing voter turnout and demographic breakdowns, evaluating how factors such as age, education, and income affected voting patterns, reviewing public opinion polling data, assessing how campaign messaging may have influenced specific voter groups, and producing a comprehensive report summarising your findings, supported by data visualisations and written analysis.

4. Negotiation Strategy: Resolving a Trade Dispute

Introduction:

Students will develop a negotiation strategy for resolving a trade dispute between two nations, balancing domestic interests and international relationships.

Field of Politics:

International Trade / Negotiation / Economic Policy

Required Level of Knowledge:

Basic understanding of trade policy, tariffs, and international economic relations. Trade negotiation frameworks will be introduced during the project.

Real-World Example:

The U.S.–China trade war (2018–2020) involved escalating tariffs and negotiations over issues such as intellectual property, trade balances, and market access, eventually resulting in partial trade agreements. Source: <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/more-pain-than-gain-how-the-us-china-trade-war-hurt-america/>

What You Would Be Doing:

In this project, you will serve as a trade negotiation advisor. You will analyse the interests and demands of both nations involved in the trade dispute, study trade data, tariffs, and sectoral impacts, research existing trade agreements and legal frameworks (WTO, bilateral agreements, etc.), develop a proposed negotiation strategy balancing domestic political pressures with long-term economic goals, and prepare a written negotiation proposal outlining key concessions, red lines, and possible areas for compromise.