



KEELE WORLD AFFAIRS

The UK's Leading Forum for International Politics and Global Issues
Founded 1980

Results of Member Survey MS24 Season 43, October 2023–April 2024

In Season 43, all 20 scheduled meetings were held with no postponements. One meeting was held virtually with the speaker, the remainder being face-to-face in the Westminster theatre.

We had 357 responses to this year's survey. Over 83% of members that attended meetings or watched the videos, completed the survey between 22 March 2024 and 9 April 2024 for which responses we are extremely grateful.

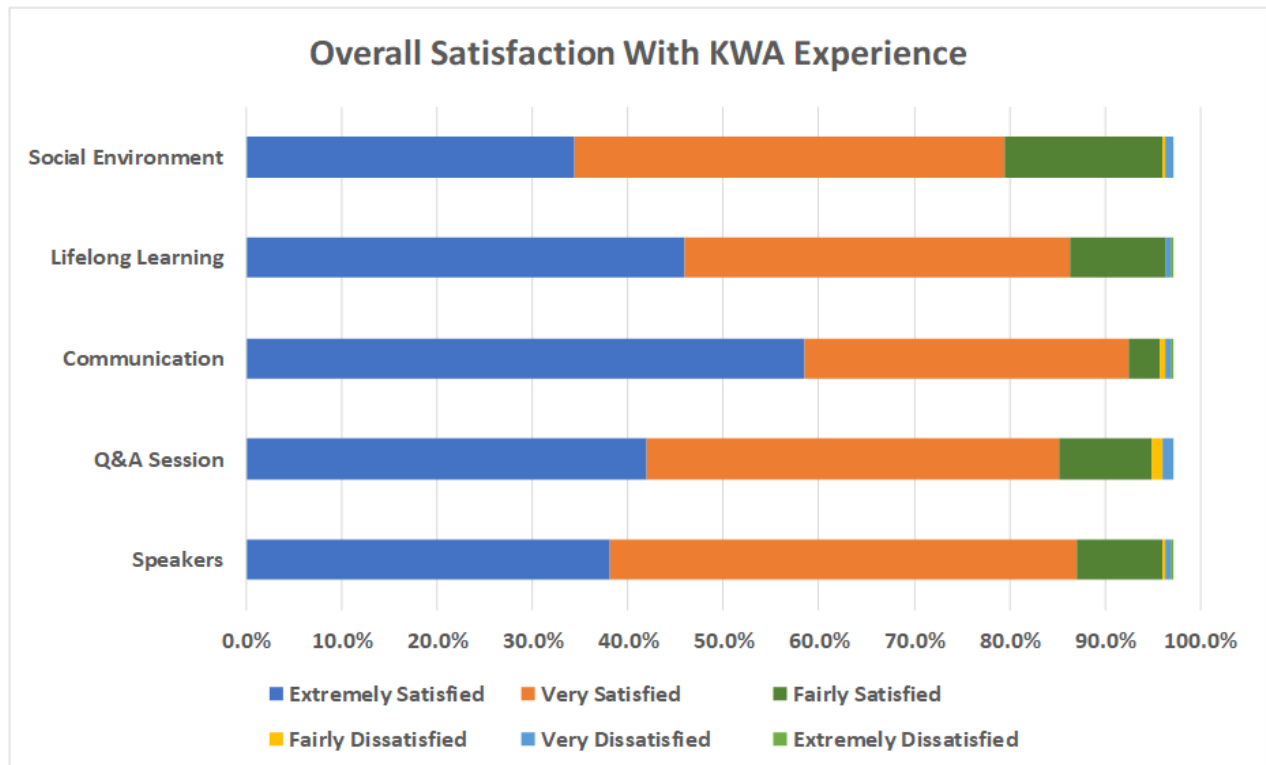
1. Overall Satisfaction with Keele World Affairs Experience

We ask the same questions in each annual survey and Season 43 results are as follows:

	Speakers	Q&A Session	Communication	Lifelong Learning	Social Environment
Extremely Satisfied	38.1%	42.0%	58.5%	45.9%	34.5%
Very Satisfied	49.0%	43.1%	33.9%	40.3%	45.1%
Fairly Satisfied	9.0%	9.8%	3.4%	10.1%	16.5%
Fairly Dissatisfied	0.3%	1.1%	0.6%	0.0%	0.3%
Very Dissatisfied	0.6%	1.1%	0.6%	0.6%	0.8%
Extremely Dissatisfied	0.3%	0.0%	0.3%	0.3%	0.0%

Across all categories there was an average rating of:

- 86.1% satisfaction for 'Extremely Satisfied' + 'Very Satisfied'
- 95.9% satisfaction for 'Extremely Satisfied' + 'Very Satisfied' + 'Fairly Satisfied'
- 0.45% aggregated average across all dissatisfaction categories



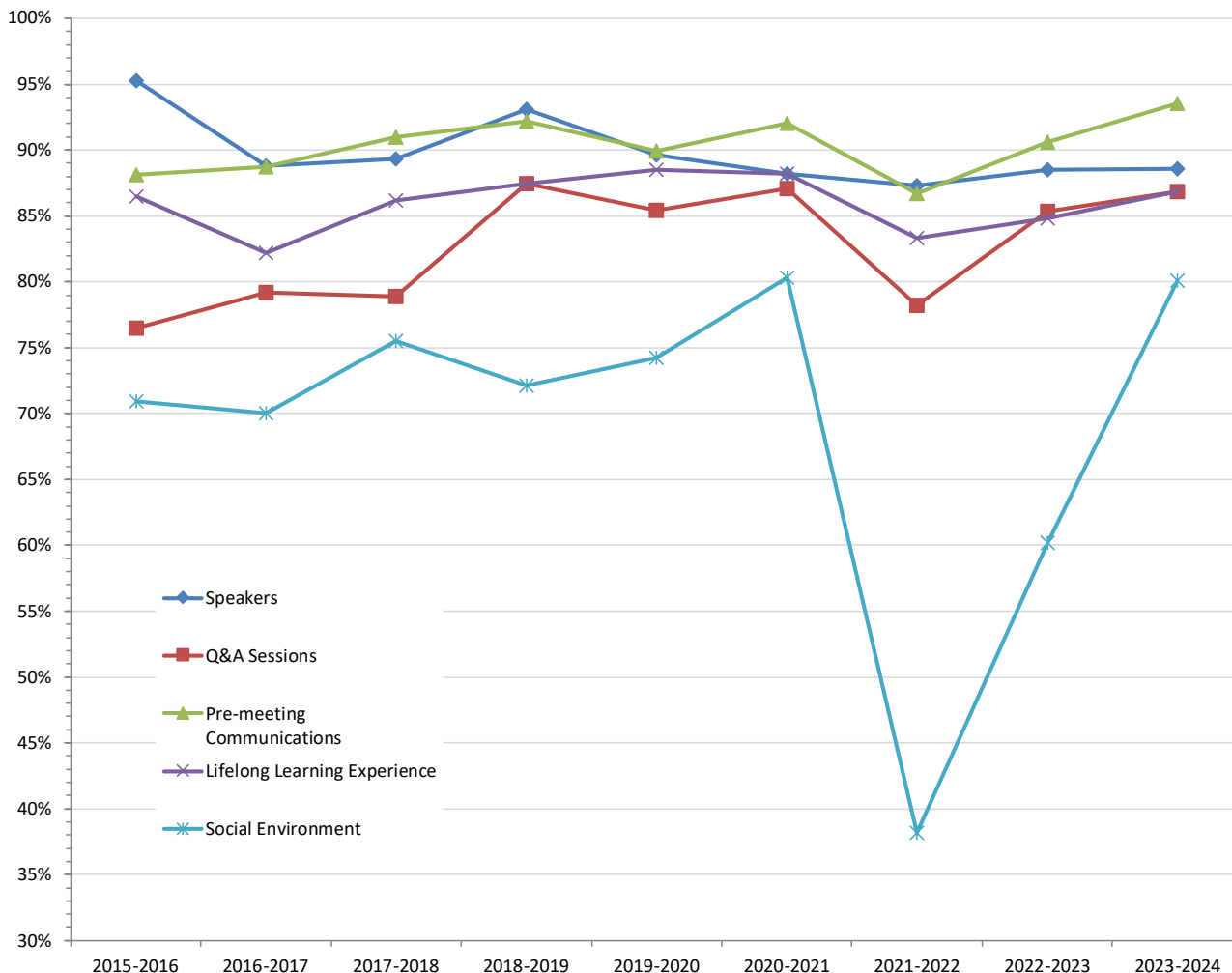
2. Overall Satisfaction compared with previous seasons

The chart below compares this season's ratings with earlier seasons.

During Season 43 just ended, we experienced growth in weekly attendances after the slower post-pandemic Season 42 when we had to rebuild enthusiasm for our programmes. Therefore on most measures we have seen some real improvement year on year, especially for Q&A, Pre-meeting communications and Social Environment.

The satisfaction with Speakers might have been slightly higher had it not been for one contentious meeting (see section 4). In contrast, most of the positive comments by members in the survey were about the excellent speakers during the season.

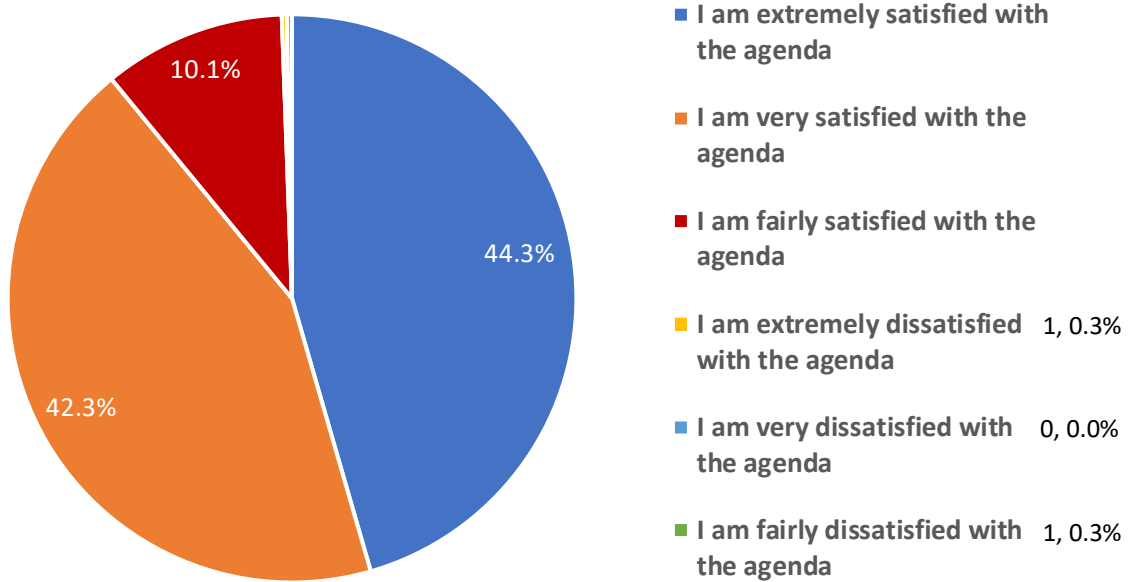
Extremely & Very Satisfied % 2015-2024



3. Satisfaction with the World Affairs Agenda/Topics

For the first time, we changed the survey in order to separate the measure of satisfaction with Speakers from members' satisfaction with the topics that make up our agenda in international politics and global issues. So respondents were provided with a detailed description of the agenda topics (in Appendix 2 of this report), then asked to rate their satisfaction on the same scale, with results shown in the following chart.

Looking at recent and future programmes,
how do you view the Keele World Affairs agenda



As the chart shows, 87% of members were extremely or very satisfied with the agenda, on a par with Speakers and Q & A.

Suggestions on Topics

In the member survey over 150 suggestions were made on topics, some in considerable detail. The speaker programme team can study the list with Season 45 in mind. Of course, individuals often have quite specific views that might not suit the membership as a whole but we can look for a pattern that will help improve the balance of the agenda in the long run.

The following table shows in four columns:

- The main threads of the Keele World Affairs agenda
- the number of respondents who suggested a topic
- whether there will be a speaker on that topic in Season 44 (Y=Yes) and in brackets how many of the Season 44 speakers are expected to address the topic
- Comments about the topic e.g. when Keele World Affairs last covered it, how important it is in the overall programme, when we might cover it again

It is a highly complex subject but the table provides a good insight into what members are thinking and how organisers are able to respond. High quality speakers able to address some topics in the way Keele World Affairs would wish are not always to be found or willing to come to our meetings.

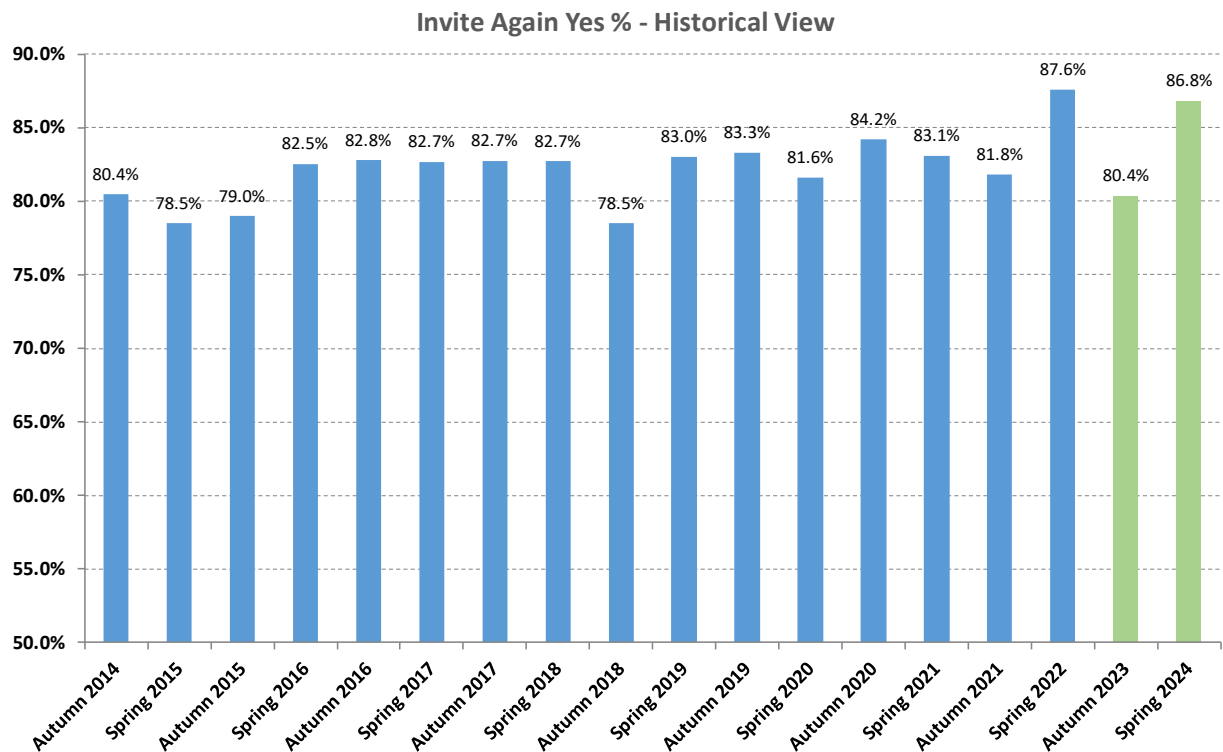
Thread/Theme/Topic	No of members mentioning	S44 speaker?*	Comments
Sustainability	14	Y [2]	Our most important thread – up to 5 speakers in past seasons
Science in Society	8	Y [1]	Usually one aspect per season. Lord Rees (Oct '23) gave broadest view
Britain's Place in the World	12	Y [1]	A different perspective most seasons
Democracy	8	Y [1]	Latest was Feb '24
International Security	5	Y [2]	We have many authoritative speakers e.g. Paul Rogers, Michael Clarke
Global Healthcare	13	N	Latest were Jan '24 and Nov '22. We'll look for experts on future pandemics
Energy, food, and water security	2	Y [1]	Oct'22, Dec '22, Feb'23, all covered this
Human Rights & International Law	4	N	Latest was Oct'23
Global finance and economics	0	N	Latest was Feb '23 with David Marsh
Capitalism and industry	8	Y [1]	We tend to cover its iniquities; more difficult to set up stimulating meetings on benefits of economic progress
Inequality	3	Y [1]	Latest was Feb'23
Development, Aid, Crises	5	N	Latest was Feb'20. We should return to this area soon
Corruption & criminality	2	Y [2]	Latest was Nov'22
Social issues e.g. gender, religion	13	N	Gender last covered Oct'22, speaker on religions expected Oct'25. We look for speakers with international expertise
History of Politics	1	Y [1]	Our President returns March 2025
Media/communications	2	N	Latest was March '24
China	5	Y [1]	Covered every season
North America/USA	2	N	Latest was Feb '24
Europe	8	Y [3]	Always in programme, now less Brexit-related than before
Russia	3	Y [1]	Latest Oct '22, March'24. We cannot ignore Putin
Middle East	5	Y [1]	Latest Nov'23, Feb'24. We try to address different countries, conflicts
Africa	2	Y [1]	Latest Feb'24. A huge continent with 50+ countries. Not easy to study
India	5	Y [1]	Often discussed, Feb'20 was latest dedicated meeting
South East Asia & Japan	4	Y [1]	Our focus mainly on Japan & N Korea. Latest were Mar'24, Jan'23.
S & C America	10	Y [1]	Over 30 countries, difficult to cover together or individually
Australia etc (Oceania)	3	N	Usually covered by Indo-Pacific topic

*Total in column 3 exceeds 20, some speakers cover more than one topic

4. 'Rating' of Speakers

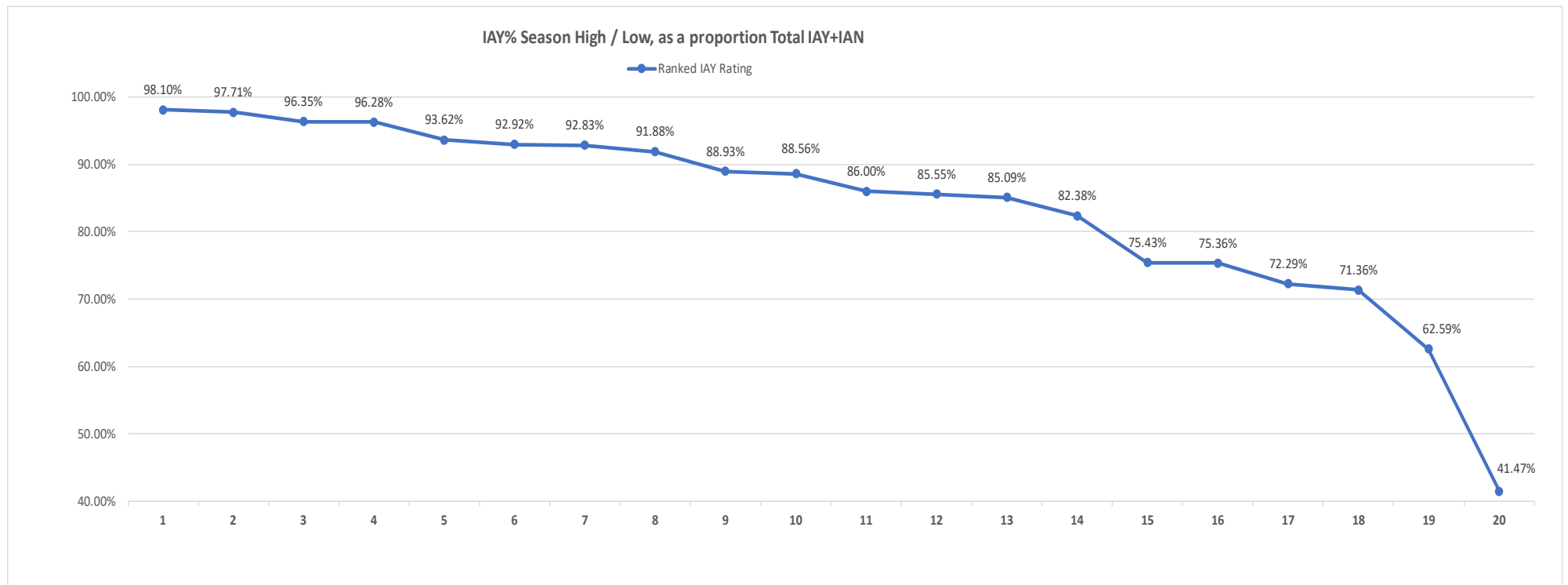
We have a long-running question that asks the member (Yes or No) whether or not they would like each speaker to be invited again. Though some dislike this simplistic formulation, it continues to indicate good selections and helps us identify any visitor who in some way did not match the high standard of the series.

The following charts show excellent results for the season. The 20 speakers have certainly provided us with high levels of expertise and some memorable evenings with very few leaving a feeling of disappointment.



Note: A speaker on whom the members are equally divided would 'score' 50%. If 80% say Yes and 20% say No, then 4 out of 5 are in favour of a return.

The chart below shows speaker ratings from high to low. 14 out of 20 speakers topped over 80% 'Invite again Yes' scores, with 8 topping over 90%.



As can be seen in the chart, the rating for one speaker was low by the high standards of Keele World Affairs. Though the individual spoke with authority on their topic, their talk contained some language promoting a political party, despite our standard prior guidance. Given our status as an educational charity, this runs counter to the Keele World Affairs ethos; members expect that issues will be discussed and party rhetoric excluded. The rating, obtained a considerable time after meetings take place, reflects a strong measure of disapproval.

Appendix 1: Analysis of MS23 Respondents

We asked members to classify themselves according to their participation during the season.

Number of replies / respondents	357
Attended Westminster Theatre meetings or watched them later on video	347
Did not attend any meetings or watched any meeting videos	10

Of the 20 meetings held this season, we know that 485 members attended at least one meeting and over 90.3% of respondents to the survey attended this season.

Appendix 2 – Keele World Affairs Topics / Threads Framework

Since 2010 the agenda of Keele World Affairs has focused on its mission of ‘international politics and global issues’. The world keeps changing so these are better thought of as threads rather than one-off topics. Important geopolitical issues are revisited frequently.

There is so much to address that we leave other programmes to address more academic topics such as psychology, sociology, business management, criminology, and law, although some speakers may touch on these areas.

With nearly 200 nations represented at the UN, we cannot study them all. We cover the USA, China, and Russia and the regions of Europe/EU, the Middle East, Africa, the Indian sub-continent, and East Asia (Indo-Pacific).

Threads overlap and include

Sustainability – impact of climate change, its politics, and mitigation in many ways
(The impact of) Science & Technology on Society
Britain’s Place in the World
Democracy, constitution and government, international institutions
International Security and Defence
Global Healthcare
Energy, food, and water security – themselves threads within Sustainability
Human Rights & International Law
Global finance and economics – in language meaningful to citizens
Capitalism and industry
Inequality – in its many forms globally
Development, Aid, and management of crises around the world
Corruption – within institutions but also international criminality
Social issues such as gender inequality, religion – with an international perspective
History of Politics – good governance should arise from the lessons of history