



Mona Damian was born in Germany and grew up moving in-between Germany, Australia and the UK. She obtained her Bachelor of Arts degree in Classics and Oriental Studies from Oxford University, St Anne's College, including a thesis on 'Rules and Argumentation in Roman and Classical Indian Law'.

Examining modern issues, such as conflict and migration, through the prism of the ancient world during her undergraduate degree, sparked Mona's interest in foreign affairs. At university she used this interest in her role as President of the Oxford International Relations Society, creating a forum where students could debate global issues with eminent experts in diverse fields, including diplomacy, economics and intelligence.

To pursue international affairs further, she took up a three month internship opportunity at Chatham House shortly after graduating in 2015. At Chatham House, Mona supported the arrival and initial research stages of five new fellows joining the Queen Elizabeth II Academy for Leadership in International Affairs. In particular she became inspired by working with two fellows whose remit was security and defense studies.

Her internship at Chatham House led on to a job with the British Government, working on cyber security and information policy issues as part of the National Cyber Security Programme. Her role focused on investigating the implications of cyber-crime on the public sector and enforcing new policy directives across central government departments to ensure data security.

Mona was raised bilingually with German and English and has a good command of French. At university she gained proficiency in Classical Greek, Latin and Sanskrit. Her keen interest in the study of languages caused her to co-author an Op-Ed for *The New York Times* on the importance of language acquisition for peace in the global community.

At SAIS, she is concentrating in the General International Relations track, with a minor in Conflict Management. She is planning to complement this by learning Arabic at SAIS. She is hoping this will enable her to pursue a career in public policy on conflict and defense.