

af·fair

S2 W1

/ə'feə \$ ə'fer/

noun [countable]

1 | public/political activities **affairs** [plural]

a) HAPPEN

public or political events and activities:

Are you interested in world affairs?

the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Women had little role in public affairs.

b) PRIVATE/PERSONAL

things connected with your personal life, your financial situation etc:

I am not prepared to discuss my financial affairs with the press.

→ **state of affairs** AT STATE¹ (8)

2 | event

a)

an event or set of related events, especially one that is impressive or shocking:

the Watergate affair

The whole affair was a disaster.

b)

used when describing an event:

The party was a very grand affair.

3 | **relationship** RELATIONSHIP a secret sexual relationship between two people, when at least one of them is married to someone else

SYN love affair:

affair with

*He **had an affair** with his boss that lasted six years.*

4 object (informal) (old-fashioned) THING used when describing an object, machine etc:

The computer was one of those little portable affairs.

5 be somebody's affair PRIVATE/PERSONAL

if something is your affair, it only concerns you and you do not want anyone else to get involved in it:

What I do in my free time is my affair.

COLLOCATIONSense 1 adjectives

world/international affairs *China is now a major player in world affairs.*

current affairs (= important events that are happening now) *a 24-hour news and current affairs channel*

somebody's private affairs (= things that are personal and not for other people to know about) *He never discussed his private affairs in public.*

somebody's financial affairs *They offer advice on managing your financial affairs.*

somebody's business affairs *After dad retired, I managed his estate and business affairs.*

economic affairs *He was appointed Minister of State with responsibility for economic affairs.*

political affairs *The military promised to stay out of political affairs.*

military affairs *the president's advisor on military affairs*

religious affairs *She wanted to be more involved in the church and religious affairs.*

foreign/external affairs (= events in other countries) *the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs*

domestic/internal affairs (also home affairs **BrE**) (= events inside a country) *the Minister of Home Affairs* |

He said that the US should not try to interfere in his country's domestic affairs.

public affairs (= events that affect the people of a country) *He was active in public affairs in his region.*

phrases

affairs of state (= the business of the government) *The church played no role in the affairs of state.*

put your affairs in order (= organize them before you go somewhere or die) *I have cancer so I know I've got to put my affairs in order.*

Word origin

Date: 1100–1200

Language: Old French

Origin: *affaire*, from *à faire* 'to do'

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