

## **BA Italian and Politics**

### **For students entering Part 1 in 2006**

**UCAS Code: LR23**

Awarding Institution:

The University of Reading

Teaching Institution:

The University of Reading

Relevant QAA subject benchmarking group(s):

Languages and Related Studies;  
Politics and International Relations

Faculty of Letters and Social Sciences

Programme length: 4 years

Date of specification: Feb. 2007

Programme Director: Professor C. Duggan

Programme Adviser: Dr J Lester

Board of Studies: Italian and Politics and International Relations

### **Summary of programme aims**

The Italian programme aims to develop students' intellectual potential, enabling them to progress to a wide range of careers or to postgraduate study, while also promoting a lifelong love of learning. Its multi-disciplinary approach aims to produce graduates who are competent communicators in spoken and written Italian and have a sound knowledge of a range of aspects of Italian culture, history and society, selected in accordance with individual academic interests.

The Politics curriculum gives students an appreciation of the normative, methodological and institutional issues involved in the study of politics in relation to two of the three main sub fields of the discipline: political philosophy, comparative government and politics, and international relations. Students encounter a variety of concepts, approaches and methods for the study of politics and are provided with a critical understanding of how societies are and should be governed. They progress from introductory and survey modules to more specialist options involving greater independent study. They also acquire a number of generic intellectual and transferable skills that prepare them for the world of work.

### **Transferable skills**

The University's Strategy for Teaching and Learning has identified a number of generic transferable skills which all students are expected to have developed by the end of their degree programme. Students of Italian and Politics will develop their abilities to deal with intellectual problems effectively by locating information, assessing it critically, communicating independent points of view logically and clearly (both orally and in writing), and substantiating opinions with evidence. In the course of such activities, they will gain experience of using information technology, working in groups, and organising their own time. Opportunities will be provided to enhance skills in numeracy and career management. The year abroad provides particularly good opportunities for developing increased cultural awareness and self-reliance.

### **Programme content**

The profile which follows states which modules must be taken (the 'compulsory' modules) together with one or more lists of modules from which the student must make a selection (the 'optional' modules). Not all options will necessarily be available every year. Admission to options will be at the discretion of the Programme Director. Students must choose such additional modules as they wish, in consultation with their programme adviser, to make 120 credits in each Part. The number of credits for each module is shown after its title, and the credit requirement for progression in Italian and Politics is indicated for each Part.

Each Part comprises 120 credits. In Part 1 the remaining credits can be made up from any optional modules and/or from modules elsewhere in the University. In Part 3, up to 20 credits can be taken from modules available elsewhere in the University.

Part 1 in Italian includes the study of both language and an introduction to aspects of Italian culture. Students with A level (or equivalent qualifications) in Italian must take a compulsory 20-credit language module and a compulsory 20-credit module on cultural themes. Students without an A level in Italian (including complete beginners) take a compulsory 40-credit module which includes both language and cultural studies. All students, if they wish, may also take a further module in Italian culture.

In Part 2 students take one compulsory 20-credit Italian language module (the level at this stage depends on their previous experience), and two optional modules from a range of broadly-based culture modules (up to 20 credits may derive from modules taken elsewhere in the University).

During the year abroad the experience of living in Italy enables students to make great strides in their linguistic skills, particularly their oral and aural ones: by the end of this period the differences between former beginners and other students will have been eliminated. Students further broaden their knowledge of Italian culture by pursuing courses of their own choice at an Italian University; and they engage in independent study for their dissertation.

Part 3 comprises one module of further Italian language study, and two optional modules chosen from a range of specialised topics relating to many different aspects of Italian culture (up to 20 credits may derive from modules taken elsewhere in the University).

In Politics and International Relations, Part 1 requires the modules in Modern Politics (20 credits) and International Relations and Strategic Studies (20 credits). In Part 2 students take certain compulsory modules (to the total of 40 credits), and one option. In Part 3 students take options in Politics.

**Part 1 (three terms)** *Credits*    *Level*

**In Italian:**

Students must take at least 40 credits in Italian. A further 20-credit module in Italian may be taken if desired. Additional modules, to a total of 120, should be chosen from those available elsewhere in the University.

*Compulsory modules*

For students with 'A' level in Italian (or equivalent):

IT1001	<i>Advanced Italian Language I</i>	20	C
IT1002	<i>Twentieth-Century Italian Culture</i>	20	C

For students without A level in Italian (including complete beginners):

IT1003	<i>Italian Language (Elementary) and Culture</i>	40	C
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*Optional module (open to all students):*

IT1004	<i>Italian Mediaeval and Renaissance Culture (in translation)</i>	20	C
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**In Politics**

*Compulsory modules:*

PO1 IRS	<i>Politics I, International Relations and Strategic Studies</i>	20	C
PO1 MOP	<i>Politics II, Modern Politics</i>	20	C

*Optional module:*

**Part 2 (three terms)** *Credits*    *Level*

*Students take 60 credits in Italian and 60 credits in Politics.*

**In Italian:**

*Compulsory modules (to total of 20 credits)*

<i>Either:</i>	IT201	<i>Advanced Italian Language II</i>	20	I
<i>Or:</i>	IT202	<i>Intermediate Italian Language</i>	20	I

*Optional modules (40 credits)*

Students must choose two option modules to the value of 40 credits. A complete list of options is available from the Programme Coordinator, and a list of current options can be found in the relevant Departmental Handbook.

Of the 120 credits in Part 2, 5 are taken up by Career Management Skills (Level I).

**In Politics**

*Compulsory (40 credits)*

PO2 SOP	<i>Study of Politics</i>	20	I
PO2 CGP	<i>Comparative Government and Politics</i>	20	I

**Optional module**

Students must choose one option module to the value of 20 credits. A complete list of options is available from the Programme Coordinator, and a list of current options can be found in the relevant Departmental Handbook.

<b>Year abroad (three terms)</b>	<i>Credits</i>	<i>Level</i>
<i>Compulsory modules (to total of 120 credits)</i>		
IT331	<i>Italian Oral</i>	20 H
IT332	<i>Italian Written and Oral Presentation</i>	20 H
PO3LDS	<i>Dissertation in Politics (to be assessed at Part 3)</i>	40 H
IT231	<i>Credits from Italian University course (1)</i>	20 I
IT232	<i>Credits from Italian University course (2)</i>	20 I

<b>Part 3 (three terms)</b>	<i>Credits</i>	<i>Level</i>
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**In Italian:**

*Compulsory module(20 credits)*

IT301	<i>Advanced Italian Language III</i>	20	H
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*Optional modules (40 credits)*

Students must choose two option module to the value of 40 credits. A complete list of options is available from the Programme Coordinator, and a list of current options can be found in the relevant Departmental Handbook.

**In Politics (60 credits)**

Students choose three 20-credit modules from two lists. At least one must be chosen from list A and one other must be from list B unless a government or theory option has been taken in Part 2. A complete list of options is available from the Programme Coordinator, and a list of current options can be found in the relevant Departmental Handbook.

**Progression requirements**

To gain a threshold performance at Part 1 and qualify for the CertHE a student shall normally be required to achieve an overall average of 40% over 120 credits taken in Part 1, where all the credits are at C level or above, and a mark of at least 30% in individual modules amounting to not less than 100 credits. In order to progress from Part 1 to Part 2, a student shall normally be required to achieve a threshold performance at Part 1, and to have obtained at least 40% in each of the compulsory modules taken for Italian and International Relations.

To gain a threshold performance at Part 2 and qualify for the DipHE a student shall normally be required to achieve an overall average of 40% over 120 credits taken in Part 2, and a mark of at least 30% in individual modules amounting to not less than 100 credits. In order to progress from Part 2 to the Year Abroad, a student shall normally be required to achieve a threshold performance at Part 2. In addition, students must normally have obtained at least 35% in each of the compulsory modules taken for International Relations and at least 40% in the compulsory Italian module.

To proceed from the Year Abroad to Part 3 students must satisfy the examiners that they have successfully completed an approved programme of studies at a University in Italy and have handed in the work and assignments required by the programme.

### **Summary of teaching and assessment**

In Part 1 in Italian language modules are always taught in small groups and the other modules are taught by a mixture of lectures and seminars. In Parts 2 and 3 students are normally taught in small groups for all modules, and when lectures are used they are informal. Most modules are assessed by a mixture of coursework and formal examination.

The Credits from Italian University courses will derive from marks obtained in oral examinations set by the Italian university. The Oral in Italian and the Written and Oral Presentation will be examined at the beginning of Part 3.

The dissertation comprises a piece of work based on supervised independent study.

In Politics, Part 1 modules and the compulsory Part 2 modules involve both lectures and seminars, Parts 2 and 3 optional modules typically place greater emphasis on seminars. All modules other than the Study of Politics and the Dissertation are assessed by a mixture of coursework(25%) and examination (75%).

The conventions for classification are included in the Programme Handbook but you should note that I level credits contribute 33% of the final assessment and H level credits contribute 67%.

### **Admission requirements**

No previous qualifications in Italian are required.

Entrants to this programme are normally required to have obtained 280 points from three A-level subjects or 300 points from three A-Level and one AS Level (From entry 2008, this will become 300 or 320 points respectively).

Equivalent international qualifications will be accepted.

*Mature applicants:* Applications from mature candidates are welcomed, and many have done notably well in the past. A mature applicant is more likely to receive an offer of a place if he or she has undertaken recent study, for example 2 or more A Levels or an Access course (70% or more usually required) but each case is assessed on its merits. Potential applicants should contact the Admissions Tutor well in advance to discuss individual circumstances.

*International applicants:* Applications from international candidates are also particularly welcomed. Advice on the acceptability of your qualifications may be sought, where necessary, from the Admissions Tutor.

Admissions Tutor: Dr Lisa Sampson  
Tel: 0118 931 7952 (44 118 931 7952 from abroad)  
e-mail: [l.m.sampson@reading.ac.uk](mailto:l.m.sampson@reading.ac.uk)  
for Politics e-mail: [j.s.golub@reading.ac.uk](mailto:j.s.golub@reading.ac.uk)

Admissions Secretary: Mrs Lucy Hudson  
Tel: 0118 931 8400 (44 118 931 8402 from abroad)  
e-mail: [l.c.hudson@reading.ac.uk](mailto:l.c.hudson@reading.ac.uk)

Information on courses may be obtained via the Internet on:

<http://www.rdg.ac.uk/italian>

or <http://www.rdg.ac.uk/AcaDepts/lp/>

### **Support for students and their learning**

University support for students and their learning falls into two categories. Learning support includes IT Services, which has several hundred computers and the University Library, which across its three sites holds over a million volumes, subscribes to around 4,000 current periodicals, has a range of electronic sources of information and houses the Student Access to Independent Learning (S@IL) computer-based teaching and learning facilities. There are language laboratory facilities both for those students studying on a language degree and for those taking modules offered by the Institution-wide Language Programme. Student guidance and welfare support is provided by Personal Tutors, the Careers Advisory Service, the University's Special Needs Advisor, Study Advisors, Hall Wardens and the Students' Union. Support for students in their studies is provided through the University's Personal Academic Record (PAR) scheme, in which students meet their personal tutors regularly to review their progress.

The Departmental Handbooks issued to Part 1 and to degree course students provide extensive information on resources and study skills. The Access Point for Individual Language Learning (APILL) contains a range of audio and audio-visual materials to promote self-study in languages, together with facilities for watching Italian television by satellite. The University Library is particularly well stocked with works relating to many different aspects of Italian culture and the Faculty possesses a video suite to support cinema studies. The Departmental Library contains a range of reference works which can be used by students and offers a congenial study space.

In Politics, students are provided with Departmental Handbooks which outline the programme, provide guidance on study skills, and contain information on staff, facilities and specialised sources of help within the University. Additional support is given in the Study of Politics module in Part 2. There is also a departmental Library, and a photocopier.

Both Departments provide written feedback on essay work.

### **Career prospects**

Students graduating in Italian work in many different fields. Some use their linguistic skills in teaching, including teaching English as a Foreign Language abroad; others proceed to post-graduate courses in various areas, including translating. A degree involving Italian can also, like degrees in other arts subjects, lead to careers in such areas as administration, management or marketing, or be a prelude to study in law or accountancy; and increasing numbers of students find positions in the business world, including the travel industry, where their knowledge of Italian can be a distinct asset.

Over the years students who have followed this programme have gone into jobs in both the public and private sectors. In the public sector, jobs include academic and academic related jobs (e.g. lectureships, administrative posts on research boards), the civil service, local government, public corporations, hospital management, and in the social services, such as child care, youth employment, probation and so on. In the private sector, recent jobs include working for advertising, journalism, radio and television, computer firms and large finance and insurance companies.

### **Opportunities for study abroad or for placements**

The Department of Italian Studies participates in SOCRATES exchanges with the Universities of Padova, Roma III, Firenze, Siena, Pisa, Pavia, Genova, Napoli (Federico II), Bologna, Bergamo, Salerno and Venezia. Students spend the whole of the third year studying at one of these Universities. Further information on these Universities is available on the Internet at:

<http://www.rdg.ac.uk/italian>

### **Educational aims of the programme**

The programme aims to develop students' intellectual potential, enabling them to progress to a wide range of careers or to postgraduate study, while also promoting a lifelong love of learning. Its multi-disciplinary

approach aims to produce graduates who are competent communicators in Italian and have a sound knowledge of a range of aspects of Italian culture, history and society.

The programme therefore aims to equip students with:

- a competence which comes as near as possible to that of an educated Italian person in the reception and production of spoken and written Italian;
- a sound body of knowledge of a range of aspects of Italian Studies chosen in accordance with their academic interests;
- familiarity with the theories and methods of the various disciplines covered and the ability to develop their own expertise and present their own arguments in these areas.

The programme also aims to equip students with the ability to seek and identify sources of information; make articulate written and oral presentations; conduct lucid arguments in support of a case, using evidence appropriately; analyse the form and content of written and audio-visual communications; appreciate the mentality and outlook of people from another culture or age; articulate in rational discourse the expression of emotion; and develop sound work discipline, including commitment to deadlines and time management.

The Politics component aims to provide a thorough degree level education in Politics and International Relations. It aims to produce graduates who have experience of the main sub-fields of the discipline and have acquired appropriate study skills.

## Programme Outcomes

### *Knowledge and Understanding*

<p><b>A. Knowledge and understanding of:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. The Italian language</li><li>2. Selected aspects of Italian literature, history and culture.</li><li>3. Methods of approach, analysis and interpretation associated with the various disciplines covered.</li><li>4. The comparative analysis of government institutions, political movement and the social bases of politics</li><li>5. The various approaches and the study of Politics</li><li>6. A range of selected specialised subjects within the fields of Political Theory, Comparative Government and International Relations.</li></ol>	<p><b>Teaching/learning methods and strategies</b></p> <p>1. At Part 1, Italian is taught at three distinct levels: beginners, intermediate and advanced. Separate teaching is maintained throughout Part 2, but after the year in Italy all students follow the same courses. Teaching is always in small groups, with different classes being devoted to grammar, oral and aural skills, reading and writing skills and translation. Audio-visual resources are used as appropriate. Regular non-assessed coursework is set, and considerable emphasis is based on individual study. The Year Abroad provides experience in the use of everyday Italian and the opportunity to follow University courses.</p> <p>2,3. These areas are taught through a combination of usually informal lectures and seminars. Students are expected to undertake independent reading on the basis of bibliographies issued for each module, and prepare seminar papers and essays. The dissertation provides an opportunity for the further development of independent research.</p> <p>5,6. These are taught through a combination of lectures and seminars. In Parts 1 and 2 the emphasis is on lectures in core modules supplemented by seminars; in Part 3 the emphasis is on seminars for all modules.</p> <p><i>Assessment</i></p> <p>Language work is assessed by oral and written examinations. The Italian University courses are assessed by oral examinations. Modules on Italian literature and culture are assessed by a combination of coursework and examination. Assessment of Politics modules is by written assignments; and examinations at the conclusion of each part of the programme. There is also an independent dissertation.</p>
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### *Skills and other attributes*

**B Intellectual skills** – able to:

1. analyse and interpret literary or cinematic works in their cultural contexts;
2. apply literary and historical concepts;
3. conduct lucid arguments in support of a case, using evidence appropriately;
4. think critically and independently.

**Teaching/learning methods and strategies**

These skills are developed throughout the programme. Classes in literary, historical, cinematic and other cultural modules involve analysis and discussion, often based on papers presented by students; and set essays involve analysis and debate on intellectual problems. Awareness of new approaches is encouraged as options are often linked to teachers' research interests. Individual feedback is provided on content and organisation of essays. Independent thinking is developed especially through the dissertation module for which initial preparation and regular support are provided.

*Assessment*

These skills are assessed in all Parts of the programme by a combination of coursework essays and examination. The independent dissertation is a key element, and there are further opportunities for writing extended essays.

**C. Practical skills** – able to:

1. speak, write, read and understand Italian at a high or near-native level of proficiency;
2. seek out and select information from published and Internet sources and use it critically;
3. make clearly-constructed written and oral presentations;
4. plan and carry out limited research projects.

**Teaching/learning methods and strategies**

Language classes are compulsory throughout the programme and there is regular unassessed coursework. The Year Abroad provides a range of experiences in the use of everyday and academic Italian. Primary source material and much secondary literature is in Italian. Bibliographies are provided for all modules, students are trained in library use, and many modules provide experience searching for information via the Internet. Students regularly give oral presentations and write essays and are given feedback on them. In the latter half of the programme the dissertation and, in some cases, extended essays provided experience of researching topics independently.

*Assessment*

Skill 1 is assessed at different stages by oral examinations and unseen written papers. Skills 2-4 are assessed by a combination of coursework, examinations and dissertation.

**D. Transferable skills – able to:**

1. construct and communicate arguments clearly and effectively in speech and writing, and support arguments with evidence;
2. think critically;
3. locate information and use information technology (especially word-processing and web-based resources);
4. participate effectively in group activities;
5. organise their own time purposefully and work independently;
6. show sensitivity to cultural differences;
7. make informed career plans.

**Teaching/learning methods and strategies**

Skills 1-6 are developed progressively throughout the programme. Participation in seminars and oral classes develops skills in self-expression and teamwork. Critical thought, the construction of arguments, and information skills are all developed through essay writing and the dissertation, and all assessed work must be word-processed. Time-management skills are enhanced by the regular production of language work and the meeting of strict essay deadlines. Sensitivity to cultural difference informs the whole programme and, together with the development of self-motivation and self-reliance, is greatly encouraged by the Year Abroad. Career management is taught through a distinct module linked with preparation for the Year Abroad.

*Assessment*

Skills 1-2 are assessed through coursework and examinations, including the examinations in Italy. The location of information forms part of the activity involved in the dissertation, but word-processing skills are not formally assessed. Skill 4 is not directly assessed. There are strict, clearly-defined penalties for lateness in handing in assessed work and for plagiarism.

**Please note - This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if he/she takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information on the learning outcomes, content and teaching, learning and assessment methods of each module can be found in the module description and in the programme handbook. The University reserves the right to modify this specification in unforeseen circumstances, or where the process of academic development and feedback from students, quality assurance processes or external sources, such as professional bodies, requires a change to be made. In such circumstances, a revised specification will be issued.**