

BA Politics & International Relations

UCAS code: L258

Awarding Institution:
Teaching Institution:
Relevant QAA subject benchmarking group(s):
Faculty of Economic and Social Sciences
For students entering Part 1 in 2003
Programme Director: Dr P.J.Giddings (Politics & IR)
Programme Adviser:
Accreditation: Not appropriate

The University of Reading
The University of Reading
Politics & IR
Programme length: 3 years
Date of specification: November 2004

Summary of programme aims

The programme aims to give students an appreciation of the normative, methodological and institutional issues involved in the study of politics in relation to the three main sub fields of the discipline: political philosophy, comparative government and international relations. Students encounter a variety of concepts, approaches and methods for the study of domestic and international politics and are provided with a critical understanding of how society can 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. In following this programme, students will have had the opportunity to enhance their skills relating to career management, communication (both written and oral), information handling, numeracy, problem-solving, team working and use of information technology.

Programme content

Each part comprises 120 credits. In Part 1 at least TWO Politics modules must be chosen (40 credits). Students may take a further 20 credits from the third Politics module, or take all of the remaining 80 credits from modules elsewhere in the University. In Parts 2 or 3 20 credits may be taken from elsewhere in the University.

Part 1 (three terms)	Certificate (C) level	<i>Credits</i>	<i>Level</i>
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At least TWO of the following modules

PO1 IRS	<i>Politics I (International Relations and Strategic Studies)</i>	20	C
PO1 GOV	<i>Politics II (Comparative Government)</i>	20	C
PO1 THE	<i>Politics III (Political Theory)</i>	20	C

Part 2 (three terms)	Intermediate (I) level	<i>Credits</i>	<i>Level</i>
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Compulsory modules:

PO2 SOP	<i>Study of Politics</i>	20	I
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PO2 CGP	<i>Comparative Government and Politics</i>	20	I
PO2 MIR	<i>Modern International Relations</i>	20	I
PO2 PHC	<i>Political Classics</i>	20	I
<i>Optional modules (2 from):</i>			
PO2 AMG	<i>American Government and Politics</i>	20	I
PO2 BGP	<i>British Government and Politics</i>	20	I
PO2 COS	<i>Contemporary Strategy</i>	20	I
PO2 EPI	<i>European Political Integration</i>	20	I
PO2THI	<i>Political Thinking</i>	20	I
PO2 RGP	<i>Russian Government and Politics</i>	20	I
PO2SNA	<i>Strategy in the Nuclear Age</i>	20	I

Students may replace one of the above modules with a 20 credit module in another department.

PO2SAA	<i>Study Abroad</i>	20	I
PO2SAB	<i>Study Abroad</i>	20	I
PO2SAC	<i>Study Abroad</i>	20	I

The following module is compulsory. Its credits are distributed through the 120 credits of Part 2

<i>Career Management Skills</i>	5	I
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Part 3 (three terms) Honours (H) level Credits Level

Compulsory modules

PO3 DIS <i>Dissertation</i>	40	H
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Optional modules:

Four 20 credit optional modules:

At least one, but not more than two of

PO3 FPT <i>Feminism and Political Theory</i>	20	H
PO3 MID <i>Modern Ideologies</i>	20	H
PO3 WPE <i>War, Peace and International Ethics</i>	20	H

At least one, but not more than two of

PO3 BFD <i>British Foreign and Defence Policy since 1945</i>	20	H
PO3 FPA <i>Foreign Policy Analysis</i>	20	H
PO3 PIE <i>Politics of the International Economy</i>	20	H
PO3 MEA <i>Politics and International Relations of the Middle East</i>	20	H
PO3USF <i>United States Foreign Policy since 1950</i>	20	H
PO3WPE <i>War, Peace and International Ethics</i>	20	H

At least one, but not more than two of

PO3 AFG <i>African Government and Politics</i>	20	H
PO3 POC <i>Policing Citizens</i>	20	H
PO3 MEA <i>Politics and International Relations of the Middle East</i>	20	H
PO3 POP <i>Politics of Protest</i>	20	H
PO3 UKP <i>UK Politics since 1960</i>	20	H
PO3 WEG <i>West European Government and Politics</i>	20	H

Students who have not taken a module outside the Department in Part 2 may replace one of the above modules with a 20 credit module in another department.

PO3SAA	<i>Study Abroad</i>	20	H
PO3SAB	<i>Study Abroad</i>	20	H
PO3SAC	<i>Study Abroad</i>	20	H

Progression requirements

To proceed to Part 2 students must:

- obtain at least 40% in each of the Politics modules taken;
- achieve an overall average of 40% in 120 credits taken in the examination;
- achieve not less than 30% in any non-Politics module except that a mark of less than 30% in a total of 20 credits may be condoned, provided that the candidate has pursued the course for the module(s) with reasonable diligence and has not been absent from the examination without reasonable cause.

To proceed to Part 3 students must:

- obtain at least 35% in each of the Politics modules taken;
- achieve an overall average of 40% in 120 credits taken in the examination;
- achieve not less than 30% in any non-Politics module except that a mark of less than 30% in a total of 20 credits may be condoned, provided that the candidate has pursued the course for the module(s) with reasonable diligence and has not been absent from the examination without reasonable cause.

Summary of teaching and assessment

Part 1 modules and the compulsory Part 2 modules involve both lectures and seminars. Part 2 and 3 optional modules typically place greater emphasis on seminars. All modules other than the Study of Politics, Career Management Skills and Dissertation are assessed by a mixture of coursework (25%) and examination (75%). The conventions for classification are included in the Department Handbook, but you should note that weighting between Part 2 and Part 3 for classification purposes is 33% and 67%.

Admission requirements (under review)

Entrants to this programme are normally required to have obtained:

Grade C or better in English in GCSE; and achieved UCAS Tariff: 260 points from three subjects, or 280 from 3 A level and 1 AS level

International Baccalaureat: 31 points

Irish Leaving Certificate: Equivalent

Admissions Tutor: Dr J.S.Golub

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.

Students are provided with Department 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 written feedback on essay work, a departmental Library, and a photocopier. 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.

Career prospects

Politics and International Relations students are given specific vocational training and orientation through a second year Career Management Skills module run in conjunction with the Careers Advisory Service. A single-subject degree in Politics and International Relations can lead to a wide range of jobs, such as the public services (civil service, local government, public corporations, hospital management, etc), the social services (child care, youth employment, probation, etc), advertising, journalism, radio and television, management traineeships in industry, professions such as accountancy and law (barristers and solicitors alike), banking and insurance, and various research agencies..

Opportunities for study abroad or for placements

Students may choose to spend part of their second year studying at a University in another European country, via the Socrates programme, or in the United States, via the American Studies exchange programme. While such exchanges may involve some additional financial expenditures and some adjustments to coursework at Reading, the Department believes these exchanges offer an excellent opportunity to broaden educational and life experience. In the first instance interested students see their personal tutor.

Educational aims of the programme

The programme 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

The programme provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding, skills, qualities and other attributes in the following areas:

Knowledge and Understanding

<p>A. Knowledge and understanding of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The fundamental concepts of Political Theory and major texts from the Greeks to the present time.2. The comparative analysis of government institutions, political movement and the social bases of politics.3. The various approaches and the study of Modern International Relations.4. A range of selected specialised subjects within the fields of Political Theory, Comparative Government and International Relations.	<p>Knowledge and understanding are gained through formal teaching (lectures, seminar discussions, and individual essay feedback), prescribed and recommended reading, and the writing of essays and a dissertation. In Part 1 and Part 2 students attend both lecturers and seminars, which in Part 3 most teaching is through seminars. Part 1 modules introduce 1, 2 and 3 which Part 2 modules (deepen) and (develop) students understanding. The optional modules in 4 build on the agree modules in 1,2 and 3.</p> <p><i>Assessment</i></p> <p>Most knowledge is tested through a combination of coursework and formal examination. Dissertations and oral contributions also contribute.</p>
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Skills and other attributes

<p>B. Intellectual skills – able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. think logically on Political matters2. analyse issues in Political life3. organise tasks into a structured form4. understand the evolving state of knowledge in the rapidly developing discipline of Politics and IR5. transfer appropriate knowledge from an area within the discipline to another6. plan, conduct and write an independent study on an aspect of the discipline	<p>Teaching/learning methods and strategies</p> <p>The ability to think logically is essential to the understanding and analysis of the discipline. Analysis requires an appreciation of the issues and results in organisation of written work and oral presentations. Students are encouraged to link core and optional modules and also to use experience from modules in the dissertation</p> <p><i>Assessment</i></p> <p>1-3 are assessed throughout the programme, while 5 contributes to the more successful work, 6 is assessed in the dissertation.</p>
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<p>C. Practical skills – able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. gather, organise and deploy evidence, data and information from a variety of primary and secondary sources. 2. identify, investigate, analyses, formulate and advocate solutions and problems 3. construct reasonable argument and exercise critical judgement 4. reflect on their own learning and seek and make use of feedback 5. manage their own learning self-critically. 	<p>Teaching/learning methods and strategies</p> <p>1 is taught through lectures and seminars.</p> <p>2 and 3 are acquired through written work and oral presentations,</p> <p>3 and 4 are developed through more independent learning, especially the dissertation</p> <p><i>Assessment</i></p> <p>1,2 and 3 are tested formatively and summatively in examinations. 4 is assessed through examination of student progress. 5 is assessed particularly through the dissertation.</p>
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<p>D. Transferable skills – able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 communicate effectively in speech and writing 2 use communication and I.T. for the retrieval and presentation of information, including statistical or numerical information 3 work independently, demonstrating initiative, self-organisation and time management 4 collaborate with others to achieve common goals 5 plan their career. 	<p>Teaching/learning methods and strategies</p> <p>1 is embedded in all modules.</p> <p>2 is demonstrated by the use of I.T. based exercises.</p> <p>3 is an essential requirement for the timely and effective completion of the programme.</p> <p>4 is developed through active participation in seminars.</p> <p>5 is delivered through the CMS module.</p> <p><i>Assessment</i></p> <p>1,2,3 and 5 are assessed through coursework and examinations.</p> <p>4 is assessed through seminar participation.</p>
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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 expect 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 module and programme handbooks.