

BA French and Politics
For students entering Part 1 in 2006

UCAS code: RL12

Awarding Institution:
Teaching Institution:
Relevant QAA subject benchmarking group(s):

Faculty of Arts and Humanities
Date of specification: Feb. 2007
Programme Director: Professor J. Félix
Programme Adviser: Professor A. Knapp and Dr J Lester
Board of Studies: French and Politics

The University of Reading
The University of Reading
Languages and Related Studies,
Politics and International Relations
Programme length: 4 years

Summary of programme aims

The French part of the programme seeks to develop students' intellectual potential, enabling them to embark on a wide range of careers or postgraduate studies. Its multi-disciplinary approach aims to produce graduates who are competent communicators in French, who have a sound critical understanding of French and francophone culture, history and politics, and who have acquired a range of skills to underpin their life-long development.

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 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 communication (both written and oral), information handling, problem-solving, team working, information technology (word-processing and use of web-based material) and career management. Students on this programme are also expected to have gained experience and show competence in the following transferable skills in addition to those prescribed by the University: use of library resources, self-reliance, cultural awareness.

Programme content

The programme which follows states which modules must be taken (the compulsory part), together with information about the number and availability of modules from which the student must make a selection (the "selected" modules). 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 in each module is shown in column after its title.

Part 1 (three terms) Certificate level

Students must take at least 40 credits in French and 40 credits in Politics.

A further 20-credit optional module in French may be taken if desired.

Additional modules, to a total of 120, should be chosen from those offered in the Part 1 Handbook.

French
Either:
Advanced French
Compulsory modules

		<i>Credits</i>	<i>Level</i>
FR101	<i>Advanced French Language</i>	20	C
and either			
FR103	<i>Contemporary France: History, Politics, Literature</i>	20	C
or			
FR104	<i>French Cinema: Society, Culture and History</i>	20	C
<i>Optional Module</i>			
either		20	C
FR103	<i>Contemporary France: History, Politics, Literature</i>	20	C
or			
FR104	<i>French Cinema: Society, Culture and History</i>	20	C

Or:
Intermediate French
Compulsory modules

		<i>Credits</i>	<i>Level</i>
FR102	<i>Intermediate French Language</i>	20	C
and either			
FR103	<i>Contemporary France: History, Politics, Literature</i>	20	C
or			
FR104	<i>French Cinema: Society, Culture and History</i>	20	C
<i>Optional Module</i>			
either		20	C
FR103	<i>Contemporary France: History, Politics, Literature</i>	20	C
or			
FR104	<i>French Cinema: Society, Culture and History</i>	20	C

On successful completion of Part 1 Intermediate French, students will be eligible to proceed to any appropriate degree course involving French.

Politics
Compulsory modules

POL1IRS	<i>Politics 1, International Relations and Strategic Studies</i>	20	C
POL1MOP	<i>Politics II, Modern Politics</i>	20	C

Part 2 (three terms) Intermediate level

Students will take modules amounting to 60 credits in French and 60 credits in Politics.

Of the 120 credits in Part 2, 5 are taken up by Careers Management Skills (level I) and will be delivered in the Department of French Studies.

French
Compulsory module

		<i>Credits</i>	<i>Level</i>
FR201	French Language	20	I

Optional modules

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.

Politics

Compulsory modules

PO2CGP	<i>Comparative Government and Politics</i>	20	I
PO2SOP	<i>Study of 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.

Year Abroad (three terms in a French-speaking country)

Compulsory modules

		<i>Credits</i>	<i>Level</i>
	PO3LDS <i>Dissertation in Politics (to be assessed at Part 3)</i>	40	H
	FR302 <i>French Oral</i>	40	H
and either			
	FR231 <i>University study abroad</i>	40	I
or			
	FR232 <i>Assistantship abroad</i>	40	I
or			
	FR233 <i>Work placement abroad</i>	40	I

Part 3 (three terms) Honours level

Students will take modules amounting to 60 credits in French and 60 credits in Politics.

French

Compulsory module

		<i>Credits</i>	<i>Level</i>
	FR303 <i>Advanced Language Skills</i>	20	H

Optional modules

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.

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 French and Politics.

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 Part 3, 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 Politics and at least 40% in the compulsory French module.

To proceed from the Year Abroad to Part 3, students must normally satisfy the examiners that they have completed an approved programme of study or employment in a French-speaking country.

Summary of teaching and assessment

In French, in Part 1, FR103 is taught by lecture to the entire year group accompanied by small-group teaching in seminars. FR104 is taught by lecture with integrated group and pair work. The structure of the content modules in Parts 2 allows for classes normally of no more than 25 students, and at Part 3 of no more than 12 students. These classes will normally be conducted through a combination of lecture and seminar discussions. All language teaching is based on work in groups of no more than 15 students except for the grammar component of FR201 which is taught by a mix of lecture to the entire year group and supplementary internet material for student self-access.

Part 1, Part 2 and Part 3 modules are assessed by coursework, formal examination or a mix of coursework and formal examination.

To be eligible for Honours, students must normally have obtained an overall average of 40%.

In Politics, Part 1 and Part 2 modules involve both lectures and seminars. Part 3 optional modules are usually taught by seminars. All modules at Parts 2 and 3 other than the Study of Politics module and the Dissertation are assessed by a mixture of course work (25%) and examination (75%). Modules at Part 1 are assessed at 30% and 70% respectively.

Weighting

The conventions for assessment and classification are included in the Programme Handbook, but it should be noted that, until at least Finals 2009, Part 2 modules and Year Abroad I-level modules will count for 33% of final assessment, and Year abroad H-level modules and Part 3 modules will count for 67% of final assessment.

Admission requirements

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). Candidates must have either 'A' level French, 50 points at 'A/S' French or an A* at GCSE French. Equivalent international qualifications will be accepted.

Mature applicants. Applications from mature candidates are welcomed. A mature applicant is more likely to receive an offer of a place if he or she has undertaken recent study, for example two or more A levels or an Access course, but each case is assessed on its individual merits. We recommend that you contact an admissions tutor as soon as possible to discuss your individual circumstances.

International applicants. Applications from international candidates are welcomed. International candidates are advised to contact either the EU or the international admissions tutor first, to discuss the suitability of their qualifications.

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, and the Students' Union.

The Department of French Studies has a departmental library containing a wide range of essential and secondary texts, and videos of French films and documentaries. The departmental newspaper room contains daily newspapers and weekly or monthly magazines. There is also a satellite TV enabling students to watch French programmes. The Department has a comprehensive website containing information and learning material. The website is regularly updated. The grammar course at Part 2 has all the PowerPoint information and supplementary grammar exercises available online in pdf format. French Career Management Skills at Part 2 has its own Blackboard site, containing computer-assessed and other learning activities.

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. Feedback is given on essay work. There is also a departmental Library and a photocopier available for students' use.

Career prospects

Students graduating in this programme work in many different fields.

A degree in French and Politics, like degrees in other Humanities subjects, leads to careers in such areas as administration, management or marketing, or be a prelude to the study of law and accountancy; and a large number of students find positions in the business world, including the travel industry, where their knowledge of French can be a distinct asset.

It can also lead to a career in education, in schools, colleges, extra-mural departments or the WEA, or to teaching English as a Foreign Language abroad; or it can be the basis for post-graduate courses in various areas, including translating.

Opportunities for study abroad or for placements

Subject to arrangements made in exceptional cases only, all students on this programme spend a year abroad either as an assistant teacher, on work placement or at an institute of higher education with which the University of Reading has an agreement under the Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP) and Erasmus University Charter.

Educational aims of the programme

The French part of the programme 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 communication; appreciate the mentality and outlook of people from another culture or age; and develop sound work discipline, including commitment to deadlines and time management. Particular parts of the programme will also have enabled students to develop relevant IT and Career Management skills.

By the end of French part of the programme, students are expected to be able to:

- understand native-spoken French within an educated French environment and to communicate orally with fluency and accuracy;
- read with understanding, critical judgement and evaluation a range of specialist and non-specialist cultural, factual and other texts;
- write accurately in French with an appropriate understanding of the implications of register and style.

The Politics part of the programme will equip graduates with a range of generic intellectual skills, enabling them to:

- gather, organise and deploy evidence, data and information from a variety of primary and secondary sources;
- identify, investigate, analyse, formulate and advocate solutions to problems;
- construct reasoned argument and exercise critical judgement;
- reflect on their own learning and seek and make use of feedback;
- manage their own learning self-critically.

It will also equip them with a range of personal transferable skills, enabling them to;

- communicate effectively in speech and writing;
- use communication and information technology for the retrieval and presentation of information, including statistical or numerical information;
- work independently, demonstrating initiative, self-organisation and time-management;
- collaborate with others to achieve common goals.

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> <p>In French</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The French language2. French and francophone history, politics and/or literature and culture3. Key approaches and methods of historical and political and/or literary and cultural analysis <p>In Politics</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">4. The comparative analysis of government institutions, political movement and the social bases of politics;5. The various approaches and the study of Modern Politics;6. A range of selected specialised subjects within the fields of Political Theory, Comparative Government and Politics.	<p>Teaching/learning methods and strategies</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Development of the skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking French is by small-group learning and regular non-assessed coursework. In Part 1, grammar is learnt in small groups with regular non-assessed coursework. The acquisition of French grammar is by PowerPoint lectures at Part 2, supplemented by access on the internet to the lectures and other self-access material. The Year Abroad in a francophone country offers immersion in French language and culture.2,3. Acquisition of aspects 2 - 6 is by lecture and seminar or tutorial and/or interrupted lecture. Students are expected to undertake independent reading and research from sources indicated in module bibliographies (library, internet), in order to gain fuller understanding of the topic and its context. <p><i>Assessment</i></p> <p>The assessment of knowledge is by a combination over the whole degree of unseen examination (1-3), coursework essays (2-3), an oral examination (1) and dissertation (2-3). The assessment (5-8) is by coursework and written unseen examinations. Also presentations and discussion in supervisor-led seminars.</p>
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Skills and other attributes

B. Intellectual skills – able to:

In French

1. critically apply literary and historical concepts
2. identify and solve problems
3. analyse and interpret
4. demonstrate and exercise independence of thought and sensitivity to cultural difference

In Politics

5. think logically on Political matters;
6. analyse issues in political life;
7. understand the evolving state of knowledge in the rapidly developing discipline of Politics;
8. transfer appropriate knowledge from an area within the disciplines to another.

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

Intellectual skills are developed through the teaching and learning programme outlined above. Each course involves discussion of the key issues, practice in applying key concepts both orally and in writing, analysis and interpretation of material and, where appropriate, individual feedback sessions on work produced.

Assessment

The variety of assessment methods employed places great emphasis on the learner's ability to demonstrate skills 1 - 8 through the production of coherent written and oral responses to the tasks set.

C. Practical skills – able to:

In French

1. speak, write, read and understand French at high or a near-native level of proficiency;
2. apply key methods and concepts of linguistic and literary and/or historical analysis;
3. retrieve, sift and select information from a variety of sources;
4. plan and undertake different forms of research based on bibliographies and/or evidence.

In Politics

5. critically discuss particular issues and arguments, and to engage in discussion of each other's responses as well as articulate their own;
6. utilise problem-solving skills;
7. manage their own learning self-critically, reflect upon it, and seek and make use of feedback.

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

All students receive initial guidance on how to identify, locate and use material available in the university and departmental libraries and elsewhere. Comprehensive bibliographies are provided at the outset of each course. Classes and tutorials are given to all students on the production of essays and literary, historical or linguistic concepts. Language classes are compulsory in every year, and much primary and secondary reading material is in French. The year abroad further promotes the active learning of French to a high level.

Assessment

Skill 1 is assessed by orals and unseen written examinations. There is regular unassessed coursework. Skills 2 - 8 are assessed through a pattern of coursework essays, unseen written examination and dissertation.

D. Transferable skills – able to:

1. structure ideas and communicate them effectively orally and in writing;
2. manage time and work to deadlines;
3. participate effectively in groups;
4. work independently;
5. find information and use information technology;
6. be responsible and self-reliant;
7. assess the relevance and importance of the ideas of others.
8. Careers Management

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

All courses require regular written and oral work, enabling the student to develop understanding and the need for effective and coherent expression (skill 1). Skill 2 is learnt through the management of different deadlines for different courses within the programme and is a focus of initial one-to-one session under the PAR student development scheme. Skills 3 to 7 are developed from the outset in seminars or interrupted lecture. Skill 6 is a particular focus of the year abroad, its importance being taught during preparatory session in year 2. IT skills are encouraged and developed by being an integral part of much teaching from year 1 onwards. Careers Management Skill development is an integral part of Part 2 and the year abroad with students undertaking appropriate activities.

Assessment

Effective communication of ideas is a major criterion for the assessment of student's work, including organisation of material, problem-solving skills, justified reasoning and logical arguments and fluency – clear introduction, clear presentation of argument and full conclusions. It will be assessed by essay and dissertation. Clearly notified penalties are imposed on students not adhering to deadlines or who plagiarise. Students are encouraged to use word-processing, but this skill is not formally assessed. Students are encouraged to use technology-enhanced language learning, but this skill is not formally assessed.

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.