

BA English and Politics
For students entering Part 1 in 2008/9

UCAS code:

Awarding Institution:	University of Reading
Teaching Institution:	University of Reading
Relevant QAA subject Benchmarking group(s):	Politics and English
Faculty:	Arts and Humanities Faculty
Programme length:	3 years
Date of specification:	10/Aug/2010
Programme Director:	Dr Andy Nash
Programme Advisor:	Dr Jeremy Lester
Board of Studies:	English
Accreditation:	

Summary of programme aims

This is a cross-disciplinary programme that aims to provide students with subject-specific knowledge of both Politics and English. The joint degree seeks to impart knowledge of a variety of different kinds of literary texts together with training in political theories and techniques, thereby providing a perspective on different methods of critical analysis. In Politics, the programme aims to give students an appreciation of the normative, methodological and institutional issues involved in the study of politics in relation to one of the three main subfields of the discipline: Political philosophy, comparative government and international relations. Students focus on comparative government and/or political theory compulsory modules, and associated optional modules, selected from across the available range. The course also aims to foster an independent approach to formulating problems and arguments, using the systematic research, close reading and analytical skills that are fundamental to both disciplines.

Transferable skills

During the course of their studies at Reading, all students will be expected to enhance their academic and personal transferable skills in line with the University's Strategy for Learning and Teaching. In following this programme, students will have had the opportunity to develop such skills, in particular relating to communication, interpersonal skills, learning skills, numeracy, self-management, use of IT and problem-solving and will have been encouraged to further develop and enhance the full set of skills through a variety of opportunities available outside their curriculum.

Politics and English are disciplines that lend themselves to critical judgement and problem-solving, both through personal engagement with issues and through dialogue and groups discussion. Students are encouraged to defend and to challenge established positions through the collection, collation and analysis of substantial quantities of material, the rigour of argument, and effective communication and presentation. The disciplines also prompt an awareness of numeracy through chronology, periodisation, and basic quantification. The programme develops students' familiarity with information technology in the production and presentation of their work and develops their skills in using computers for the location and retrieval of bibliographic and source material, accessing sophisticated databases and exploiting the internet.

In addition, students will develop a range of intellectual skills including the ability to synthesise, analyse and evaluate information and ideas; the ability to formulate independent arguments and to appraise and improve their own performance; and the ability to translate subject-specific knowledge and skills to new environments.

Programme content

Each Part of the degree programme comprises 120 credits. At Part 1 students are required to take 60 credits in the Department of English and American Literature and 60 credits in the School of Politics and International Relations. In Part 2, students must normally take 60 credits in both Politics and English. In Part 3, students take 40 credits in each subject plus a compulsory 40-credit Dissertation in English or Politics or a Joint Dissertation in both subjects. However, in consultation with their programme adviser, in either Part 2 or Part 3 students may choose to take up to 20 credits from modules elsewhere in the University.

Part 1 (three terms)

Compulsory modules

EN1LL	Languages of Literature	20	C
EN1RS	Revisioning Shakespeare	20	C
EN1WKT	What Kind of Text is This?	20	C

PO1IPI	Introduction to Political Ideas	20	C
PO1IRS	Politics: International Relations and Strategic Studies	20	C
PO1MOG	Modern Government	20	C

Optional module:

PO1BRI	British Society	20	C
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Part 2 (three terms)

Compulsory modules

<i>Mod Code</i>	<i>Module Title</i>	<i>Credits</i>	<i>Level</i>
PO2SOP	The Study of Politics	20	I
EN2CMS	Career Management Skills	5	I

In English (60 Credits)

Students choose three modules in Part 2, at least one in the Autumn term and one in the Spring term. At least one of the chosen modules must be an asterisked module. Not more than one module may be chosen from each group.

Autumn Term

Group A			
EN2RTC	*Renaissance Texts & Cultures	20	I
EN2MC1	Modernism and Modern Poetry	20	I
EN2RR	The Eighteenth-Century: Restoration to Romanticism	20	I
Group B			
EN2CMN	*Chaucer and Medieval Narrative	20	I
EN2NCN	Nineteenth-Century Novel	20	I
EN2WAR	Writing America: Romances of Nationhood	20	I
Group C			
EN2RDR	*Renaissance Drama	20	I
EN2LCT	Literary Criticism & Theory	20	I
EN2WF1	Women's Writing and Feminist Theory 1	20	I;
EN2OEL	*Introduction to Old English	20	I

Spring Term

Group A			
EN2ERE	*English Renaissance Epic	20	I
EN2MC2	Modernity, Crisis and Narrative Fiction	20	I
EN2RD	Romanticism to Decadents	20	I
Group B			
EN2LV	*Lyric Voices 1340 - 1650	20	I
EN2MDR	Modern Drama	20	I
EN2WAS	Writing America: Self, Race, Region	20	I

EN2CAW	Communications at Work	20	I
EN2CW	Creative Writing and Critical Practice	20	I

Compulsory module:

Either

PO2CGP	Comparative Government and Politics	20	I
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Or:

PO2PHC	Political Classics	20	I
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Optional module: If PO2CGP has been chosen above, this must be from:

PO2AMG	American Government and Politics	20	I
PO2BGP	British Government and Politics	20	I
PO2EPI	European Political Integration	20	I
PO2RGP	Russian Government and Politics	20	I

If PO2PHC has been chosen above, this must be:

PO2THI	Political Thinking	20	I
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Part 3 (three terms)

Compulsory modules

Compulsory:

Students choose ONE of the following:

EN3DIS	Dissertation (English)	40	H
EN3DIP	Joint Dissertation	40	H
PO3DIS	Dissertation (Politics)	40	H

In English (40 Credits)

Students choose two optional 20-credit modules, one in each term, to make a total of 40 credits.

Optional modules: A complete list of options is available from the Programme Director and in the English Part 3 Module Supplement. Admission to optional modules will be at the discretion of the Programme Director.

In Politics and International Relations (total 40 credits):

Optional module from:

PO3BFD	British Foreign and Defence Policy since 1945	20	H
PO3MEA	Politics and International Relations of the Middle East	20	H
PO3PES	(The) Politics of Electoral Systems	20	H
PO3UKP	United Kingdom Politics since 1960	20	H
PO3USF	United States Foreign and Defence Policy since 1950	20	H

Optional module from:

PO3CSS	Introduction to Critical Security Studies	20	H
PO3DDP	Democracy and Democracy Promotion	20	H
PO3EUS	European Security	20	H
PO3FPT	Feminism and Political Thought	20	H
PO3INT	Intelligent, War and International Relations	20	H
PO3MID	Modern Ideologies	20	H
PO3PIE	Politics of the International Economy	20	H
PO3STH	Strategic Theory	20	H
PO3SWW	Strategy in the Two World Wars	20	H
PO3UNI	The UN and International Order	20	H
PO3WPE	War, Peace and International Ethics	20	H

Progression requirements

To proceed from Part 1 to Part 2, a Joint Honours student must obtain 1. an overall average of 40% over 120 credits taken in Part 1, where all the credits are at C level or above; 2. a mark of at least 40% in each English module; 3. a mark of at least 40% in each of the compulsory Politics and International relations modules; 4. a mark of at least 30% in individual modules amounting to not less than 100 credits taken in Part 1.

To proceed from Part 2 to Part 3, students must obtain 1. an overall average of 40% over 100 credits taken in Part 2 (except PO2SOP) AND obtain a Pass in PO2SOP; 2. an average of 40% across English Part 2 modules; 3. a mark of at least 30% in individual modules amounting to not less than 80 credits taken in Part 2 (except PO2SOP)

Summary of teaching and assessment

In English, teaching is through seminars, lectures and essay tutorials. In Politics, Part One modules and the compulsory Part Two modules involve both lectures and seminars. Part Two and Three optional modules typically place greater emphasis on seminars. In addition, the Joint Dissertation module is supported by workshops and individual supervisions in both departments.

In Politics, Part 1 modules are assessed by a mixture of coursework (40%) and examination (60%). All Part 2 and Part 3 modules other than the Study of Politics and the Dissertation are assessed by a mixture of coursework (25%) and examination (75%). Over the programme as a whole, assessment will be conducted through a mixture of assessed essays and formal examination. Conventions for degree classification are included in the Programme Handbook, but you should note that weighting between Part 2 and Part 3 for classification purposes is 33% and 67%.

Admission requirements

A previous qualification in Politics is not required. Entrants to the Joint Degree programme are normally required to have obtained:

UCAS Tariff: either 300 points from three A2s, including 100 points (grade B) in English Literature or English Language and Literature; or 320 points from 3 A2s + up to two AS, including 100 points (grade B) in English Literature or English Language and Literature

Scottish Highers ABBBB or above (A in English Literature)

Irish Highers at least ABBBB (A in English Literature)

International Baccalaureate 31 points with 6 or 7 for Higher level English Literature

GCSE/O: English Language preferred, grade C or above.

All applications are considered on their individual merits. Mature candidates will be usually be expected to have a B (100 points) at A level English, or equivalent qualification, but consideration is also given to applicants with other qualifications and experience.

Admissions Tutor: Mrs C Lyle

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, School Senior Tutors, the Students' Union, the Medical Practice and the Student Services Directorate. The Student Services Directorate is housed in the Carrington Building and includes the Careers Advisory Service, the Disability Advisory Service, Accommodation Advisory Team, Student Financial Support, Counselling and Study Advisors. Student Services has a Helpdesk available for enquiries made in person or online (www.risisweb.reading.ac.uk), or by calling the central enquiry number on (0118) 378 5555. Students can get key information and guidance from the team of Helpdesk Advisers, or make an appointment with a specialist adviser; Student Services also offer drop-in sessions on everything from accommodation to finance. The Carrington Building is open between 8:30 and 17:30 Monday to Thursday (17:00 Friday and during vacation periods). Further information can be found in the Student website (www.reading.ac.uk/student).

The Department of English and American Literature offers students specific help to improve and develop their essay writing skills through the Royal Literary Fund Fellowship scheme, which provides a resident professional writer whose role is to advise students individually, from first-year to postgraduate level, on raising the level of their academic writing.

Students of both English and Politics receive Handbooks which give details of the Programme, guidance on study skills such as note-taking and essay writing, and information about staff, facilities, and sources of specialised help within the University, such as the Study Skills Advisor and the Counselling Service. The English programme is designed to give students extensive teaching support in Part 1 leading to more independent work in Part 3. The Politics programme lays increasing emphasis on options and course work over the three years. Academic feedback and guidance is given through one-to-one essay tutorials, and academic and personal support is provided through the tutor system and the University's Personal and Academic Record (PAR) Scheme. Dissertation workshops prepare students for the Part 3 dissertation which is individually supervised. The Geoffrey Matthews Collection, housed in the Department of English and American Literature, provides books, xeroxed materials, cassettes and an extensive collection of videos for loan to students. A video-viewing suite is available within the Faculty. The Library is well stocked with printed materials as well as electronic databases, such as the OED, the MLA Bibliography, and JSTOR. Specialist subject librarians are available to give students advice and guidance to library resources. The Department of Politics provides additional support in the Study of Politics module in Part Two. There is also written feedback on essay work. In addition, Politics students have access to a departmental Library, and a photocopier.

Career prospects

A Reading degree in English and Politics provides graduates with a range of communication and analytical skills that stand them in good stead in the market place. In recent years graduates with qualifications in these subjects have gone into a wide variety of jobs, including teaching, publishing, journalism, the media, management, administration, and public relations. A sizeable minority follow careers in accountancy, banking or commerce, and the civil service; others have pursued interests in law. A number of graduates each year go on to further academic study and research. In addition to the help provided by the University Careers Advisory Service, the Department of English and American Literature has a Careers Tutor available to advise students in English on researching and planning their career choices.

Opportunities for study abroad or for placements

Programme Outcomes

Knowledge and Understanding

A. Knowledge and understanding of:

In English

1. Literary texts in English from selected periods between the Middle Ages and the present day;
2. A range of kinds of texts including fiction, poetry and drama
3. Methods of critical textual analysis
4. A range of approaches in English studies
5. Selected special fields of English

In Politics

7. The fundamental concepts of Political Theory and major texts from the Greeks to the present time;
8. The comparative analysis of government institutions, political movement and the social bases of politics
9. The various approaches to the study of Modern International Relations
10. range of selected specialised subjects within the fields of Political Theory, Comparative Government and International Relations.

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

In English, 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. Part 1 modules offer a broad introduction to items 1-5. In Part 2, the understanding and skills acquired at Part 1 are developed with particular emphasis on 1, 2 and 4 through seminars, lectures and individual feedback. Part 3 introduces more specialized study, particularly in relation to 3, 5 and 6, through a choice of seminar-based modules together with supervised, independent study leading to a Dissertation.

Assessment

At Parts 1 and 2, knowledge and understanding of 1 - 5 are tested through a combination of essays and unseen written examinations. At Part 3, assessment is through a mixture of methods, such as extended essays, essays plus unseen exams, and the dissertation.

In Politics, 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 the Dissertation. In Part 1 and Part 2 students attend both lectures and seminars and in Part 3 most teaching is through seminars.

Assessment

Most knowledge is tested through a combination of coursework and formal examination. Dissertations and oral presentations also contribute.

Skills and other attributes

B. Intellectual skills - *able to*:

Demonstrate the capacity for independent analysis and research

Identify problems and issues

Read closely and critically

Reflect on one's own positions

5. Analyse and critically deconstruct claims and arguments

6. Critically read, comprehend and evaluate a large range of texts

7. Negotiate both primary and secondary sources and be able to demonstrate how they inter-relate

8. Synthesise information from a range of sources, providing a coherent overview of positions in logical space

9. Analyse the logical construction of arguments

10. Produce and defend positions in response to critical pressure

11. Develop creative intelligence in independent research and interpretation

12. Think logically on political matters

13. Analyse issues of political life

14. Understand the evolving state of knowledge in the rapidly developing discipline of Politics

15. Transfer appropriate knowledge from one area within the disciplines to another.

C. Practical skills - *able to*:

Criticize and formulate interpretations of texts

Engage in critical argument using relevant theoretical approaches

Recognise the rhetorical resources of the English language

Exercise bibliographical and research skills

Deploy appropriate conventions in the presentation of written work

Relate the study of English to cultural and social issues

Develop and carry out individual research programmes and strategies

Gather, organise, and deploy evidence, data and information from a variety of primary and secondary sources

Locate and synthesise large quantities of material

Present a coherent talk delivered from notes

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

Intellectual skills in English are acquired through independent reading (1), seminar preparation and discussion, and essay writing (1, 2, 3) and essay feedback through tutorials (2, 3 and 4).

In Politics, the methods and strategies in the previous section are used, plus the facilitation of self-directed learning through the use of research-based teaching materials and methods, and logical exercises. Essay, portfolio, and dissertation preparation reinforce the research and analytical skills necessary to form and to validate arguments and judgements. 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.

Assessment

In English, 1 - 5 are assessed both formatively (in seminar discussion, coursework essays, essay feedback and tutorials) and summatively, in essays, unseen exams and the Dissertation.

In Politics, assessment of 6 - 15 is carried on through coursework, written unseen examinations, seminar presentations, and discussion in supervisor-led small groups and seminars.

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

1 - 3 and 6 are developed in English seminars, essays and essay tutorials. 4 and 5 are developed through essays, essay feedback and dissertation guidance and supervision.

In Politics, these skills are developed through lectures, supervised small group discussions, seminar groups with a facilitator, oral presentations and, especially in Part Three, independent learning.

Feedback on an individual basis combined with the University's personal tutor system encourages constructive self-criticism.

Assessment

In English, all the subject-specific practical skills are assessed through formative and summative essays. 1 - 3 and 6 are also tested in unseen examinations. In Politics, assessment of 7-14 is

Produce concise and accurate written reports
Critically discuss particular issues and arguments, and engage in discussion of each other's responses as well as articulate their own
Utilise problem-solving skills
Manage their own learning self-critically, reflect upon it, and seek and make use of feedback.

D. Transferable skills - *able to*:

Communicate fluently and effectively with a wide range of individuals using a wide range of means, including written and oral communication
Formulate and present arguments
Assess the merits of competing approaches
Translate subject-specific knowledge and skills into other environments
Find and use relevant information resources
Demonstrate time-management skills and prioritise workloads
Work independently, demonstrating initiative and self-organisation
Develop a creative approach to problem-solving in a variety of theoretical and more practical situations
Self-evaluate and self-reflect, with recognition of the steps required for improvement
Use information technology, especially word-processing, e-mail and the internet for the retrieval and presentation of information, including statistical or numerical data;
11. Analyse data
12. Exercise group and interpersonal skills
13. Develop vocational awareness with a view to planning a career.

carried on through coursework, written unseen examinations and seminar presentations.

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

The skills are developed through seminar discussions, seminar presentations, essay writing, tutorial feedback and unseen examinations. 4 and 7 particularly are developed through requiring students to draw on acquired knowledge and skills when analysing new material in essays and unseen examinations. 5 and 10 are developed through use of the library and other sources of information for seminar preparation, essay writing, and research for the joint dissertation.

Most of these skills are embedded in all Politics modules. The development of IT skills occurs throughout the programme and is especially apparent in modules where there is a research component. Independent learning is also developed throughout but becomes particularly important in Part Three of the programme. Vocational awareness is promoted especially by the CMS module.

Assessment

All the itemized skills are formatively assessed through coursework essays and seminar presentations, and summatively assessed through essays, unseen examinations, portfolios of work and the Dissertation.

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 process or external sources, such as professional bodies, requires a change to be made. In such circumstances, a revised specification will be issued.