

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

UCAS code: L258

Awarding Institution:	University of Reading
Teaching Institution:	University of Reading
Relevant QAA subject Benchmarking group(s):	Politics and International Relations
Faculty:	Social Sciences Faculty
Programme length:	3 years
Date of specification:	18/Aug/2010
Programme Director:	Dr Jeremy Lester
Programme Advisor:	
Board of Studies:	Politics
Accreditation:	

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

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.

Programme content

Each part comprises 120 credits. In Part 1 the three compulsory modules must be taken. The remaining 60 credits must be taken from modules elsewhere in the University. In either Part 2 or Part 3, 20 credits may be taken from elsewhere in the University.

Part 1 (three terms)

Compulsory modules

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

Part 2 (three terms)

Compulsory modules

<i>Mod Code</i>	<i>Module Title</i>	<i>Credits</i>	<i>Level</i>
PO2CGP	Comparative Government and Politics	20	I
PO2MIR	Modern International Relations	20	I
PO2PHC	Political Classics	20	I
PO2SOP	The Study of Politics	20	I
PO2CMS	Career Management Skill (distributed component)	5	I

Optional modules (2 from):

PO2 AMG	American Government and Politics	20	5
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PO2 BGP	British Government and Politics	20	5
PO2 EPI	European Political Integration	20	5
PO2THI	Political Thinking	20	5
PO2 RGP	Russian Government and Politics	20	5
PO2WAP	War and Peace Since 1800	20	5

Students may replace one of the above modules with a 20 credit module in another department.
Study Abroad 20, 40 or 60

Part 3 (three terms)

Compulsory modules

<i>Mod Code</i>	<i>Module Title</i>	<i>Credits</i>	<i>Level</i>
PO3DIS	Dissertation	40	H

Optional modules: Four 20 credit optional modules:

At least one, but not more than two of

PO3DDP	Democracy and Democracy Promotion	20	6
PO3FPT	Feminism and Political Theory	20	6
PO3MID	Modern Ideologies	20	6
PO3WPE	War, Peace and International Ethics	20	6

At least one, but not more than two of

PO3CSS	Introduction to Critical Security Studies	20	6
PO3DDP	Democracy and Democracy Promotion	20	6
PO3EUS	European Security	20	6
PO3INT	Intelligence, War and International Relations	20	>6
PO3ITE	>International Terrorism	20	6
PO3PIE	Politics of the International Economy	20	6
PO3STH	Strategic Theory	20	6
PO3SWW	Strategy in the Two World Wars	20	6
PO3UNI	UN and International Order	20	6
PO3WPE	War, Peace and International Ethics	20	6

At least one, but not more than two of

PO3 BFD	British Foreign and Defence Policy since 1945	20	6
PO3 MEA	Politics and International Relations of the Middle East	20	6
PO3PES	(The) Politics of Electoral Systems	20	6
PO3 UKP	UK Politics since 1960	20	6
PO3USF	United States Foreign Policy since 1950	20	6

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.

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;

c) 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:

a) obtain at least 40% in each of the Politics modules taken (except PO2SOP) AND obtain a Pass in PO2SOP;
b) achieve an overall average of 40% in 100 credits taken in the examination AND achieve a Pass in PO2SOP;
c) 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. Part 1 modules are assessed by a mixture of coursework (40%) and examination (60%). All other modules except 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

Entrants to this programme are normally required to have obtained:

Grade C or better in English in GCSE; and achieved UCAS Tariff: 280 points from three subjects, or 300 from 3 A level and 1 AS level

International Baccalaureat: 33 points

Irish Leaving Certificate: Equivalent

Admissions Tutor: Dr O Tansey

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).

Students are provided with 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. The School has a photocopier which is available for student use. Support for students in their studies is provided by personal tutors and ilearn on Blackboard.

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.

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

A. Knowledge and understanding of:

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.

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

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 lectures 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.

Assessment

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

Skills and other attributes

B. Intellectual skills - able to:

1. think logically on Political matters
2. analyse issues in Political life
3. organise tasks into a structured form
4. understand the evolving state of knowledge in the rapidly developing discipline of Politics and IR
5. transfer appropriate knowledge from an area within the discipline to another
6. plan, conduct and write an independent study on an aspect of the discipline

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

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

1-3 are assessed throughout the programme, while 5 contributes to the more successful work, 6 is assessed in the dissertation.

C. Practical skills - able to:

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

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

1 is taught through lectures and seminars. 2 and 3 are acquired through written work and oral presentations, 3 and 4 are developed through more independent learning, especially the dissertation

critical judgement

4. reflect on their own learning and seek and make use of feedback
5. manage their own learning self-critically.

D. Transferable skills - able to:

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.

Assessment

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.

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

- 1 is embedded in all modules.
- 2 is demonstrated by the use of I.T. based exercises.
- 3 is an essential requirement for the timely and effective completion of the programme.
- 4 is developed through active participation in seminars.
- 5 is delivered through the CMS module.

Assessment

1,2,3 and 5 are assessed through coursework and examinations.
4 is assessed through seminar participation.

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.