

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

UCAS code: LL12

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

Summary of programme aims

The 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: comparative government and politics and either political philosophy or 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 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.

The programme focuses on coverage of economic principles and their relevant application: the areas of economic principles are compulsory in the second part of the degree, and relevant applications are compulsory in the third part. Students taking the degree will be expected to acquire a good knowledge and appreciation of the basic elements of economic theory and of relevant uses and applications.

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.

In addition, the programme encourages business awareness, and an understanding of important features of decision making, such as uncertainty, constraints and opportunity cost.

Programme content

Students are required to take a total of 120 credits in each Part. Where the compulsory modules in a Part total less than 120 credits, students are required to select options containing sufficient credits to make up the shortfall. Any such options selected must be drawn from the options provided at Parts 2 and 3; in Part 1 they can be drawn from anywhere in the University subject to any restriction which may be applied to particular module choices. Not all optional modules will necessarily be available in any year. Admission to optional modules will be at the discretion of the Programme Director. In Economics Part 1 deals with the microeconomic and macroeconomic foundations of the subject. These are developed in more depth in Part 2. In Part 3, choice over a range of options is available to explore specific sub-disciplines and/or applications. In Politics Part 1 introduces students to the three main strands of study: comparative government, political thinking and international relations. Students will expand on their knowledge in Part 2 by taking a compulsory government module, a compulsory Study of Politics module, and a module of their choice from those available. Part 3 offers a wide range of optional modules covering all aspects of politics and international relations.

Part 1 (three terms)

Compulsory modules

EC1F1A	Introductory Microeconomics	20	4
EC1F1B	Introductory Macroeconomics	20	4
PO1IPI	Introduction to Political Ideas	20	4
PO1IRS	Politics: International Relations and Strategic Studies	20	4

PO1MOG	Modern Government	20	4
--------	-------------------	----	---

Optional module:

PO1BRI	British Society	20	4
--------	-----------------	----	---

Part 2 (three terms)

Compulsory modules

EC201A	Microeconomics I.1	20	5
EC201B	Microeconomics I.2	10	5
EC202A	Macroeconomics I.1	20	5
EC202B	Macroeconomics I.2	10	5
PO2SOP	The Study of Politics	20	5
PO2CMS	Career Management Skill (distributed component)	5	5

Either

PO2 CGP	Comparative Government and Politics	20	5
Or			
PO2 PHC	Political Classics	20	5

Options (one of)

(if PO2CGP taken above, one from)

Government

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

If PO2PHC taken above **Theory**

PO2 THI	Political Thinking	20	5
---------	--------------------	----	---

Part 3 (three terms)

Compulsory modules

A dissertation of 40 credits is compulsory and may be taken in either Economics or Politics. In addition students must choose modules totalling 40 credits in both Economics and Politics.

If PO2PHC is taken at Part 2 at least one must be from list A unless a government option has been taken in Part 2. If PO2CGP is taken in Part 2 at least one must be from List B unless a theory option has been taken in Part 2.

A 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
PO3MEA	Politics and International Relations of the Middle East	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 World Order	20	6
PO3WPE	War, Peace and International Ethics	20	6
BPO3BFD	British Foreign and Defence Policy since 1945	20	6
PO3FPT	Feminism and Political Theory	20	6
PO3MID	Modern Ideologies	20	6
PO3PES	(The) Politics of Electoral Systems	20	6
PO3UKP	United Kingdom Politics since 1950	20	6

In Economics: (total 40 credits)

EC308A	Business Economics 1	20	6
EC311A	International Economics 1	20	6
EC312A	Economics of Development 1	20	6
EC314A	Public Economics 1	20	6
EC316A	European Economic Integration 1	20	6
EC320A	Money and Banking 1	20	6
EC324A	European Urban and Regional Economics 1	20	6
EC328A	Economics of Land, Development and Planning 1	20	6
EC337A	Processes of Long Term Political and Economic Change 1	20	6

Progression requirements

To proceed to Part 2 students must

- obtain at least 40% in each of the compulsory 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

- achieve an overall weighted average of at least 40% across all Part 2 modules totalling 100 credits (except PO2SOP) AND achieve a Pass in PO2SOP;
- obtain at least 40% in each of the Politics modules taken (except PO2SOP) AND obtain a Pass in PO2SOP;;
- achieve an overall weighted average of at least 40% in Economics modules totalling 60 credits;
- achieve not less than 35% in any Economics module at Part 2 (i.e. no marks of less than 35% will be condoned). A mark (or marks) of 35-39% will be permitted in Economics modules totalling a maximum of 20 credits.
- 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

Teaching is organised in modules. The delivery of material varies among modules, especially in the proportions of time allocated to lectures, and to classes and seminars. All modules involve coursework, which takes a variety of forms. Final assessment normally involves a written examination, and may also incorporate coursework marks; the maximum proportion of a final module mark allocated to coursework is 25%, other than in special cases, and in Part 1 Politics and International Relations where the coursework content is 40%.

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 3 A Levels or 300 points from 3 A Levels and 1 AS Level

International Baccalaureate: 31 points

Irish Leaving Certificate: BBBB

Two AS grades are accepted in place of one A Level.

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 2 or more A levels or an Access course, but each case is assessed on its individual merits.

International applicants Applications from international candidates are welcomed. If you are not offering A levels we advise you to contact either the EU or international admissions tutor before applying in order to discuss the acceptability of your qualifications.

Admissions Tutor: Dr J P Lester

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).

Both departments provide handbooks that outline programme and module content. In addition to lecture and class time, each module lecturer has appointed office hours during which they may be consulted without prior appointment.

Career prospects

Certain combined-subject courses, eg Politics/Economics, might be useful for people interested in market research or the finance divisions of major firms or social science research units such as the Institute for Public-Policy Research, Policy Studies Institute or Chatham House. A combined degree with a national curriculum subject is useful for students wishing to teach in schools and colleges or extra-mural departments and the WEA. In recent years graduates from this programme have entered a variety of careers in both the private and the public sectors. Examples include jobs in banking and finance, accountancy, the civil service, and universities. Students are given specific vocational training and orientation through a second year Career Management Skills module run in conjunction with the Careers Advisory Service.

Opportunities for study abroad or for placements

There are no formal arrangements, but opportunities are available at institutes of higher education with which the University of Reading has a Socrates agreement.

Programme Outcomes

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

Knowledge and Understanding

A. Knowledge and understanding of:

1. The fundamental concepts at the core of economic knowledge comprising microeconomics and macroeconomics.
2. Empirical studies in economics, using statistical and other methods.
3. How to integrate and apply economic concepts to real world problems and issues.

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

Formal lectures, classes and practical sessions, supported by directed and assessed self-study. Feedback and guidance are an important part of the process for all three years of study. Students undertake project work and write essays, in which they learn to apply economic concepts to relevant real world issues.

Assessment

Courses are assessed through a combination of coursework and unseen examinations. Feedback is provided on assessed work.

Skills and other attributes

B. Intellectual skills - *able to:*

1. Structure, analyse and solve problems.
2. Think laterally and explore alternative solutions.
3. Comprehend the evolving state of knowledge in the degree subject areas.
4. Suggest, organise, collect relevant data and compile a report on an economic issue.

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

Substantive problems are illustrated in lectures and smaller groups. Essays, project work and problem sets provide related opportunities for problem solving. Lectures supported by essays and discussions provide the basis of ensuring the accumulating knowledge base becomes comprehensible.

Assessment

Skills are assessed through examination questions, essays, project work and problem sets.

C. Practical skills - *able to:*

1. Collect and critically evaluate the major literature on a topic.
2. Obtain data, to use them, and to assess the empirical work of others that use economic data.
3. Use computerised tools for the purposes of research and learning.
4. Draw on the knowledge base in economics and economic research methods to suggest ways to solve problems.

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

Practical issues are illustrated in lectures and classes, reinforced by problem sets, essays and project work. The tasks required of students involve library and computerised searches to collect references and data, and to use them to complete practical tasks within set deadlines.

Assessment

Assessment is through essays and project work.

D. Transferable skills - *able to:*

1. Use IT, including word processing, data exchange, graphics, spreadsheets and other such software, and the conduct of web site searches.
2. Communicate orally and in writing.
3. Work as part of a team.
4. Use library and web-based resources.
5. Organise project work from beginning to completion.
6. Manage time to achieve goals.

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

The learning of IT is encouraged through web site searches, use of library resources, and the presentation of word processed documents including graphics displays. Oral presentations are required at several points in the programme. Preparation for these presentations require working as part of a team at several points in the second and third years. Good time management is essential to organising a timetable to complete essays and project work.

Assessment

Assessment is through the production of essays and project work, and through the critical evaluation of presentation performances.

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.