

**BA English Literature and Politics**  
**For students entering Part 1 in 2009/0**

**UCAS code: LQ23**

|   |                                 |
|---|---------------------------------|
| Awarding Institution:                       | University of Reading           |
| Teaching Institution:                       | University of Reading           |
| Relevant QAA subject Benchmarking group(s): | English Literature and Politics |
| Faculty:                                    | Arts and Humanities Faculty     |
| Programme length:                           | 3 years                         |
| Date of specification:                      | 11/Apr/2011                     |
| 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 Literature. 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 Literature 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 English 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 Literature. In Part 3, students take 40 credits in each subject and undertake a 40-credit compulsory dissertation, either in English Literature or Politics, or in the form of a Joint Dissertation bridging both subjects. However, in consultation with their programme adviser, Part 2 and Part 3 students may choose to take up to 20 credits each year from modules elsewhere in the University.

**Part 1 (three terms)**

*Compulsory modules*

| <i>Mod Code</i> | <i>Module Title</i>                                     | <i>Credits</i> | <i>Level</i> |
|-----------------|---|----------------|--------------|
| EN1LL           | Languages of Literature                                 | 20             | 4            |
| EN1WKT          | What Kind of Text is This?                              | 20             | 4            |
| PO1IRS          | Politics: International Relations and Strategic Studies | 20             | 4            |
| PO1MOG          | Modern Government                                       | 20             | 4            |

|        |                                 |    |   |
|--------|---------------------------------|----|---|
| PO1IPI | Introduction to Political Ideas | 20 | 4 |
| EN1REE | Researching the English Essay   | 20 | 4 |

## 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             | 5            |
| EN2CMS          | Career Management Skills | 5              | 5            |

## In English (60 Credits)

Students choose three optional modules of 20 credits each. At least one option must be chosen from a list of pre-1800 modules. A complete list of modules is available from the Programme Director and in the Part 2 Module Supplement.

## In Politics and International Relations

Students choose two modules of 20 credits each

### Compulsory module:

|        |                                     |    |   |
|--------|-------------------------------------|----|---|
|        | <i>Either</i>                       |    |   |
| PO2CGP | Comparative Government and Politics | 20 | 5 |
|        | <i>Or</i>                           |    |   |
| PO2PHC | Political Classics                  | 20 | 5 |

*Optional module:* If PO2CGP has been chosen above, this must be from

|        |                                  |    |   |
|--------|----------------------------------|----|---|
| PO2AMG | American Government and Politics | 20 | 5 |
| PO2BGP | British Government and Politics  | 20 | 5 |
| PO2EPI | European Political Integration   | 20 | 5 |
| PO2RGP | Russian Government and Politics  | 20 | 5 |

If PO2PHC has been chosen above, this must be

|        |                    |    |   |
|--------|--------------------|----|---|
| PO2THI | Political Thinking | 20 | 5 |
|--------|--------------------|----|---|

## Part 3 (three terms)

### Compulsory modules

## Dissertation (40 credits)

Students choose ONE of the following:

|        |                          |    |   |
|--------|--------------------------|----|---|
| EN3DIS | Dissertation in English  | 40 | 6 |
| PO3DIS | Dissertation in Politics | 40 | 6 |
| EN3DIP | Joint Dissertation       | 40 | 6 |

## 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 Part 3 Module Supplement. Admission to optional modules will be at the discretion of the Programme Director. All students have the opportunity to pursue a placement option as part of any Part 3 module.

## In Politics and International Relations total 40 credits

### Optional module from:

|        |   |    |   |
|--------|---|----|---|
| PO3BFD | British Foreign and Defence Policy since 1945           | 20 | 6 |
| PO3MEA | Politics and International Relations of the Middle East | 20 | 6 |
| PO3PES | Politics of Electoral Systems                           | 20 | 6 |
| PO3UKP | United Kingdom Politics since 19                        | 20 | 6 |
| PO3USF | United States Foreign and Defence Policy since 1950     | 20 | 6 |

*Optional module from:*

|        |   |    |   |
|--------|---|----|---|
| PO3CSS | Introduction to Critical Security Studies     | 20 | 6 |
| PO3DDP | Democracy and Democracy Promotion             | 20 | 6 |
| PO3EUS | European Security                             | 20 | 6 |
| PO3FPT | Feminism and Political Theory                 | 20 | 6 |
| PO3INT | Intelligence, War and International Relations | 20 | 6 |
| PO3ITE | International Terrorism                       | 20 | 6 |
| PO3MID | Modern Ideologies                             | 20 | 6 |

### **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 Literature 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 a pass in PO2SOP; 2. an average of 40% across English Literature Part 2 modules; 3. a mark of at least 30% in individual modules amounting to not less than 100 credits taken in Part 2

### **Summary of Teaching and Assessment**

In English Literature, teaching is through seminars, lectures and individual essay feedback. 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 Dissertation module is supported by workshops and individual supervision.

In Politics, Part 1 modules are assessed by a mixture of coursework (40%) and examination (60%). There is a greater diversity of assessment at Part 2. Students should consult each individual module description form for the full details. Apart from the Dissertation, Part 3 is 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 ABBBBB or above (A in English Literature)

Irish Highers at least ABBBBB (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 is provided by a wide array of services across the University, including: the University Library, the Student Employment, Experience and Careers Centre (SECC), In-sessional English Support Programme, the Study Advice and Mathematics Support Centre teams, IT Services and 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 advisers in the Student Services Centre. The Student Services Centre

is housed in the Carrington Building and offers advice on accommodation, careers, disability, finance, and wellbeing. 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 and runs workshops and seminars on a range of topics. For more information see [www.reading.ac.uk/student](http://www.reading.ac.uk/student)

The Department of English Language & 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 Literature 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 Literature 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 Language & 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 Literature 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 Language & Literature has a Careers Tutor available to advise students in English Literature on researching and planning their career choices. All students have the opportunity to pursue a placement option at Part 3.

### **Opportunities for study abroad or for placements**

#### **Programme Outcomes**

#### **Knowledge and Understanding**

##### **A. Knowledge and understanding of:**

In English Literature:

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 Literature

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

##### **Teaching/learning methods and strategies**

In English Literature, 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*

10. range of selected specialised subjects within the fields of Political Theory, Comparative Government and International Relations.

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

#### **Teaching/learning methods and strategies**

Intellectual skills in English Literature 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 Literature, 1 - 5 are assessed both formatively (in seminar discussion, coursework essays, essay feedback and tutorials) and summatively, in essays, unseen exams and the Joint 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,

Deploy appropriate conventions in the presentation of written work  
 Relate the study of English Literature 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  
 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.

**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.**

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 Literature, 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 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.