

BA Politics and Economics
For students entering Part 1 in 2015/6

UCAS code: LL12

Awarding Institution:	University of Reading
Teaching Institution:	University of Reading
Relevant QAA subject Benchmarking group(s):	
Faculty:	Arts, Humanities and Social Science Faculty
Programme length:	3 years
Date of specification:	07/Dec/2016
Programme Director:	Dr Emma Mayhew
Programme Advisor:	Dr Sarah Jewell
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 establishes key economic principles and tools of analysis at parts 1 and 2. At Part 2 this begins to broaden out to a consideration of policy issues, and a further choice of applied or statistical study. Part 3 provides a wide range of options. Students taking the degree will be expected to acquire a good knowledge and appreciation of the fundamental elements of economic theory and its applications, and the ability to apply their skills beyond the areas of specific study.

Transferable skills

During the course of their studies at Reading, all students will be expected to enhance their academic and personal transferable skills. 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 Economics Part 1 deals with the microeconomic and macroeconomic foundations of the subject, and some basic techniques underpinning mathematical analysis in economics. Economic principles are developed further at Part 2, enhanced by a compulsory module related to policy and institutions. Optional modules can be taken exploring further 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

<i>Mod code</i>	<i>Module Title</i>	<i>Credits</i>	<i>Level</i>
PO1IPI	Introduction to Political Ideas	20	4
PO1IRS	Politics: International Relations and Strategic Studies	20	4
PO1ICD	Introduction to Contemporary Democracy	20	4
EC113	Introductory Microeconomics	20	4
EC114	Introductory Macroeconomics	20	4

EC115	Introductory Quantitative Techniques for Economics and Business 1	10	4
EC116	Introductory Mathematics for Economics 1	10	4

Part 2 (three terms)

Compulsory modules

EC201	Intermediate Microeconomics	20	5
EC202	Intermediate Macroeconomics	20	5
PO2SOP	The Study of Politics	20	5

And one of either:

<i>Code</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Credits</i>	<i>Level</i>
PO2CGP	Comparative Government and Politics	20	5
or PO2PHC	Political Classics	20	5

In Politics, one 20 credit option from a list of options available from the department. Alternatively, students may take a module outside the programme.

In Economics, one 20 credit option from the following:

<i>Code</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Credits</i>	<i>Level</i>
EC238	Economics of Social Policy	20	5

EC243	Economic History	20	5
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The Economics option may be replaced by a 20 credit study abroad module (PO2SAA, PO2SAB or PO2SAC) to enable a study abroad term.

Study abroad term

There are opportunities to study abroad during Part 2 - see this link for more details:

<https://www.reading.ac.uk/studyabroad/outgoingstudents/vso-outgoingstudents.aspx>. Students need to register their interest with Dr Andreas Behnke, Study Abroad Coordinator for Politics before the end of the Summer term of Part 1 and no later than the first week on the Autumn term of Part 2.

Additional year (three terms)

Students also have the opportunity to extend their degree programme by one year when taking the Work Experience Year or Study Abroad Year between Part 2 and Part 3. The degree programme will become BA Politics and Economics with Work Placement Year or Year Abroad, stated on the degree certificate. Students who are interested in taking a placement year should contact Vicky Wiles (v.l.wiles@reading.ac.uk) as soon as possible to find out more about opportunities and how to register interest.

<i>Code</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Credits</i>	<i>Level</i>
PO2WEP/EC2WEP	Work Experience Year	120	5

The placement should not normally be shorter than 9 months full-time and students will be assessed in the form of an end-of-year project.

<i>Code</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Credits</i>	<i>Level</i>
PO2SAY/EC2SAY	Study Abroad Year	120	5

The study abroad year should not normally be shorter than 9 months full-time.

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.

In Economics
either

EC3DSI	Dissertation in Economics	40	6
or			
PO3DIS	Dissertation in Politics	40	6

Students choose 40 credits from a range of optional modules available in the department. One of the modules maybe replaced with a 20 credit module in another department - or with a work placement if not taken previously. **Please note it is the student's responsibility to seek approval from the department concerned.**

In Economics, students must choose optional modules to total 40 credits from the following:

<i>Code</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Credits</i>	<i>Level</i>
EC311	International Economics	20	6
EC314	Public Economics	20	6
EC316	European Economic Integration	20	6
EC320	Money and Banking	20	6
EC324	European Urban and Regional Economics	20	6
EC328	Economics of Land, Development and Planning	20	6
EC337	Processes of Long Term Political and Economic Change	20	6
EC339	Microeconomics for Developing Countries	20	6
EC342	Macroeconomics for Developing Countries	20	6
EC344	Banking in Emerging Economies	20	6
EC347	Industrial Organisation	20	6
EC348	Business History	20	6

Students may choose to take a module outside the programme. One of the optional Economics modules may be replaced with a 20-credit module in another department (provided the total amount of outside options does not exceed 20 credits at Part 3) - or with a work placement (PO2WPP) if not already taken previously.

Progression requirements

In order to progress from Part 1 to Part 2 a student must achieve:

- (i) a weighted average of 40% over 120 credits taken in Part 1, where all the credits are at level 4 or above; and
- (ii) at least 40% in all compulsory modules in Politics; and
- (iii) a weighted average of 40% across all compulsory modules in Economics; and
- (iv) obtain a mark of at least 40% in all compulsory modules in Politics and International Relations at Part 1
- (v) marks below 40%, but at least 30%, in compulsory modules in Economics amounting to not more than 20 credits.

In order to progress from Part 2 to Part 3 a student must achieve the University-wide threshold performance. To gain a threshold performance at Part 2, a student shall normally be required to:

- (i) obtain an weighted average of 40% over 120 credits taken at Part 2;
- (ii) marks of at least 40% in individual modules amounting to not less than 80 credits; and (iii) marks of at least 30% in individual modules amounting to not less than 120 credits.

Summary of Teaching and Assessment

The University's honours classification scheme is:

Mark	interpretation
70% - 100%	First class
60% - 69%	Upper Second class
50% - 59%	Lower Second class
40% - 49%	Third class
35% - 39%	Below Honours Standard
0% - 34%	Fail

For the University-wide framework for classification, which includes details of the classification method, please see: <http://www.reading.ac.uk/internal/exams/Policies/eva-class.aspx>.

The weighting of the Parts/Years in the calculation of the degree classification is Part 2 one-third, Part 3 two-thirds.

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.

Admission requirements

Entrants to our courses are normally required to have obtained:

- Grade C or better in English in GCSE, Grade B or better in Maths GCSE and achieved A-Level results of ABB/BBB

International Baccalaureate: 32/30 points overall. If student has not taken Maths GCSE then we would look for at least 4 in Standard Level Maths within the IB to meet the grade B requirement.

Irish Leaving Certificate: Equivalent

Admissions Tutor: Dr Adam Humphreys

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 Careers, Placement and Experience Centre (CPEC), In-session 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, academic issues (eg problems with module selection) and exam related queries. 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

Career learning

Certain combined-subject courses, e.g. 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.

Career prospects

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 by means of Career Management Skills which are embedded within the Part 2 module PO2SOP.

Opportunities for study abroad

As part of the degree programme students have the opportunity to study abroad at an institution with which the University has a valid agreement.

Students can undertake a study abroad placement at one of our partner universities in Europe, via the Erasmus scheme, in the USA, and in Australia.

See the link: <https://www.reading.ac.uk/studyabroad/outgoingstudents/vso-outgoingstudents.aspx>

Students need to register their interest with Dr Andreas Behnke, Study Abroad Coordinator for Politics, before the end of the Summer term and no later than the first week of the Autumn term.

Placement opportunities

Placement Opportunities

Maxi Placement Students have the opportunity to extend their degree programme by one year when taking the PO2WEP-Work Experience Year module. Their degree programme will become BA Politics and Economics with Work Placement year, stated on the degree certificate. The aims of the work placement are to: 1. provide the student with the opportunity to apply the knowledge and skills gained in the first two years of their undergraduate studies; 2. extend knowledge and learning in their chosen degree discipline; 3. gain knowledge, understanding and skills of working in a relevant work environment. Students who are interested in taking a sandwich year should contact the School Placement Officer, Vicki Wiles as soon as possible to find out more about opportunities and how to register interest.

Mini Placement Students have the opportunity to complete a standalone placement module PO2WPP-Work Placement and Project during any term of part 2. Students will receive 20 credits for 120 hours of work experience. The placement must be approved by the module convenor, in terms of academic suitability and the School Placement Officer, Vicki Wiles in terms of health and safety. Students can only pick this module once and the placement must be secured before they can register for the module. Students should contact the School Placement Officer to find out more about the module, collect a placement pack and to register interest.

Micro Placement The Part 2 optional module British Government and Politics includes an academic placement, taking place over two weeks during the Easter vacation, through which students will be able to explore some aspect of British government and politics in detail. Please contact Vicki Wiles, Placement Officer, v.l.wiles@reading.ac.uk

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.

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

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.

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 requires 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.