

Programme Title: BA Politics



Programme Specification

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| Awarding Body/Institution | Queen Mary, University of London |
| Teaching Institution | Queen Mary, University of London |
| Name of Final Award and Programme Title | BA Politics |
| Name of Interim Award(s) | |
| Duration of Study / Period of Registration | 3 Years FT |
| QM Programme Code / UCAS Code(s) | L202 |
| QAA Benchmark Group | Politics and International Relations |
| FHEQ Level of Award | Level 6 |
| Programme Accredited by | N/A |
| Date Programme Specification Approved | 2 Apr 2013 |
| Responsible School / Institute | School of Politics & International Relations |

Schools which will also be involved in teaching part of the programme

Institution(s) other than Queen Mary that will provide some teaching for the programme

Programme Outline

The programme is designed to provide students with a strong grounding in various aspects of Political Studies, including political theory, political institutions, political practice, comparative politics, political analysis and international politics. The programme is designed to provide students with a grounding in all of these central issues (especially at levels 4 and 5), but at the same time provide sufficient flexibility to specialise in particular themes, topics and areas if they so wish (especially at level 6, but also to some degree at level 5).

The programme is designed to help students develop a strong sense of intellectual integrity, acquire substantial knowledge in the broad fields of Politics and apply these skills to wider situations.

Aims of the Programme

To:

- Provide students with a coherent, wide-ranging and intellectually stimulating programme including political theory, ideas and ideologies, government and institutions, public policy, area studies, comparative politics and international relations.
- Introduce students to, and encourage them to employ, a range of methodological approaches.

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- Enable students to develop independent critical thinking and judgement and to undertake independent research tasks.
- Develop a range of skills necessary to the effective communication of ideas and arguments.
- Provide a basis for further study in Politics or related disciplines.

What Will You Be Expected to Achieve?

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Academic Content:

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| A 1 | the nature of politics, including a range of principles, concepts and terminologies associated with the study of political ideas, institutions and behaviour; |
| A 2 | historical and contemporary political phenomena, including political texts, issues and problems within the field of study; |
| A 3 | appropriate theoretical and/or methodological approaches in the field of politics |

Disciplinary Skills - able to:

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| B 1 | demonstrate systematic and critical knowledge and understanding of a range of principles, concepts and terminologies associated with the study of politics; |
| B 2 | apply knowledge and understanding, selecting and using established techniques and a range of sources to evaluate political texts, issues and problems; |
| B 3 | select appropriate theoretical and/or methodological approaches to a range of issues within the field of study. |

Attributes:

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| C 1 | identify and critically evaluate appropriate information in specific contexts in a self-directed way, and reflect on how this might be used and adapted to different contexts; |
| C 2 | work independently, demonstrating clarity, initiative, self organisation and time management; |
| C 3 | establish a skills and learning agenda through negotiation, participation and communication in group discussions. |
| C 4 | develop a reasoned argument and synthesise information, and communicate this clearly and effectively; |
| C 5 | select and use information, including from IT sources; |
| C 6 | exercise critical judgement and self-reflection on their own learning, and to use this to adapt to new situations in professional settings |

How Will You Learn?

The programme is taught in accordance with the School's Teaching and Learning Strategy. The School is committed to developing, maintaining and supporting good and innovative teaching practice, and to fostering independent learning and

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critical thinking in our students. Our strategy is informed by the overall framework set out in the College Teaching and Learning Strategy, and within this we consider the following areas to be of central strategic importance:

Teaching takes a number of forms:

- lecture
- seminars
- workshops
- guest speakers
- individual supervision of projects and dissertations
- individual feedback on written work (where requested)

Learning is supported by:

- Coherently designed and effectively delivered modules
- Detailed module handbooks, providing learning outcomes and guided reading for each module
- The provision of key materials in libraries or through electronic resources
- Appropriate assessment exercises within each module
- Use of electronic teaching materials including Powerpoint, QMplus and online reading lists
- Encouraging active participation by students in seminar discussions
- Research methods training

How Will You Be Assessed?

Assessment is varied and takes a number of forms within the programme. The nature of the assessment is closely connected to the desired learning outcomes and the mode of teaching within each module. Forms of assessment include:

- Unseen examinations
- Critical essays (from 1,500 to 3,000 words)
- Research projects (10,000-12,000 words)
- Project synopses
- Student presentations
- Portfolios
- Literature reviews

How is the Programme Structured?

Year 1 (Level 4)

As with all the degree programmes in the department, the BA in Politics is taught within the academic credit framework system. In the first year students take three compulsory modules in Politics, which provide a grounding in key aspects of the study of politics:

- POL100 Introduction to Politics– 30 credits
- POL107 Background to British Politics – 30 credits
- POL105 Political analysis– 30 credits
- Either POL106 International Relations or 30 credits from other Schools, in modules appropriate to the field of study.

In order to progress from year one to year two, students must take modules to value of 120 credit points and pass modules to the value of 90 credit points at academic level 4 or above.

Year 2 (Level 5)

In the second year all students must take the module POL206 Modern Political Thought (worth 30 credits)*, which familiarises students with the texts of key political thinkers, and develops textual analysis skills. In addition, students must take at least one (30 credit) module from the following three (30 credit) modules; POL245 Theories of State, Economy and Society (30 credits), POL243 British Politics (30 credits) and POL246 Representative Democracy in Practice (30 credits).

Students can also choose from the other second year modules POL240 International Relations: Theories and Contemporary Issues, POL242 Global Governance (30 credits), POL244 International Politics of the Developing World (30 credits), and POL241

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War and Security in World Politics (30 credits).

* Where a student is unable to take the compulsory module at the normal point due to an approved study abroad period, the student may instead take the required modules at the next available opportunity.

Through meetings with advisers, students are supported in their module choices, and helped to develop a cognate programme of study. This approach is sufficiently prescriptive to support the idea that there are certain key things that all Politics students need to study, but also flexible enough to enable students to pursue their studies in accordance with their developing intellectual interests. Students may also select 30 credits from other Schools, in modules appropriate to the field of study.

In order to progress from year two to year three, students must have taken modules to the value of 240 credit points across years one and two and passed modules to the value of 180 credit points, where at least 90 credit points are at level 5 and no more than 150 credit points at level 4.

Year 3 (Level 6)

In the final year students undertake a self-designed research project worth 30 credits, along with modules worth 90 credits from across the range of modules provided by the department.* POL310 The Research Project is a 12,000 maximum word dissertation, and students are provided with one-to-one supervision, additionally supported by a programme of dissertation workshops. All module choices are made with the guidance of the student's personal adviser in the department. Level 6 is designed to allow students to specialise in areas of specific interests, both in their dissertation topic and their module choices. Students may also select 30 credits from other Schools, in modules appropriate to the field of study.

*level 6 15 credit modules can be offered in either semester to cover sabbatical leave and ensure an even provision across both semesters.

In order to get the degree award of BA (Hons) Politics, students must have taken modules to the value of 360 credit points across years one, two and three and passed modules to the value of 270 credit points, where at least 90 credit points are at level 6 and no more than 150 credit points at level 4.

Academic Year of Study 1

| Module Title | Module Code | Credits | Level | Module Selection Status | Academic Year of Study | Semester |
|---|-------------|---------|-------|-------------------------|------------------------|-----------------|
| Introduction to Politics | POL100 | 30 | 4 | Compulsory | 1 | Semesters 1 & 2 |
| Political Analysis | POL105 | 30 | 4 | Compulsory | 1 | Semesters 1 & 2 |
| Introduction to International Relations | POL106 | 30 | 4 | Elective | 1 | Semesters 1 & 2 |
| Background to British Politics | POL107 | 30 | 4 | Compulsory | 1 | Semesters 1 & 2 |

What Are the Entry Requirements?

The School considers each candidate individually and conducts admissions interviews.

We typically require a 320 points from 3 A2s.

We welcome well-motivated candidates with non-standard qualifications, including overseas and mature students.

How Do We Listen and Act on Your Feedback?

The Staff-Student Liaison Committee provides a formal means of communication and discussion between schools/institutes and its students. The committee consists of student representatives from each year in the school/institute together with appropriate representation from staff within the school/institute. It is designed to respond to the needs of students, as well as act as a forum for discussing programme and module developments. Staff-Student Liaison Committees meet regularly throughout the year.

Each school/institute operates a Learning and Teaching Committee, or equivalent, which advises the School/Institute Director of Taught Programmes on all matters relating to the delivery of taught programmes at school level including monitoring the application of relevant QM policies and reviewing all proposals for module and programme approval and amendment before submission to Taught Programmes Board. Student views are incorporated in the committee's work in a number of ways, such as through student membership, or consideration of student surveys.

All schools/institutes operate an Annual Programme Review of their taught undergraduate and postgraduate provision. APR is a continuous process of reflection and action planning which is owned by those responsible for programme delivery; the main document of reference for this process is the Taught Programmes Action Plan (TPAP) which is the summary of the school/institute's work throughout the year to monitor academic standards and to improve the student experience. Students' views are considered in this process through analysis of the NSS and module evaluations.

Academic Support

The School runs induction and welcome back meetings at the start of each semester, to update students on School/QM policies and advise them on studies.

Each student is assigned a dedicated Personal Adviser throughout their years of study to assist them in choosing their modules and advising them on their studies. The School has 1st, 2nd and Final year dedicated Senior Tutors to deal with Extenuating Circumstances, the Senior Tutors are assisted by the Student Support Manager.

To assist with their final year project students are assigned a supervisor whose research matches the topic/subject they wish to focus on.

Programme-specific Rules and Facts

NA

Specific Support for Disabled Students

Queen Mary has a central Disability and Dyslexia Service (DDS) that offers support for all students with disabilities, specific learning difficulties and mental health issues. The DDS supports all Queen Mary students: full-time, part-time, undergraduate, postgraduate, UK and international at all campuses and all sites.

Students can access advice, guidance and support in the following areas:

- Finding out if you have a specific learning difficulty like dyslexia
- Applying for funding through the Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA)
- Arranging DSA assessments of need
- Special arrangements in examinations
- Accessing loaned equipment (e.g. digital recorders)
- Specialist one-to-one "study skills" tuition
- Ensuring access to course materials in alternative formats (e.g. Braille)

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- Providing educational support workers (e.g. note-takers, readers, library assistants)
- Mentoring support for students with mental health issues and conditions on the autistic spectrum.

Links With Employers, Placement Opportunities and Transferable Skills

The BA (Hons) Politics programme is not connected to a particular employment path and the department does not have links with a particular set of potential employers. However the subject specific and generic skills that are generated by the programme's learning outcomes prepare students for a wide range of employment opportunities. By providing a coherent and thorough overview of the discipline of politics, students are prepared for politics-related careers such as the civil service, journalism, political research, social work, local government and working for a non-governmental organisation. More broadly, the emphasis on written and oral communication in the degree, along with the critical and analytical approaches to problem-solving, equip students for a wide variety of careers, including finance and banking, management training, PR and advertising. By providing a robust academic grounding in the subject students can also progress into higher levels of study, including MSc and research degrees, and professional qualifications in law and teaching.

Programme Specification Approval

Person completing Programme Specification

Person responsible for management of programme

Date Programme Specification produced/amended by School Learning and Teaching Committee

6 Mar 2013

Date Programme Specification approved by Taught Programmes Board

2 Apr 2013