

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

1 Awarding Institution University of Newcastle Upon Tyne

2 Teaching Institution University of Newcastle Upon Tyne

3 Final Award BA (Hons.)

4 Programme title Politics and Economics

5 Programme Accredited by: Not relevant

6 UCAS Code LL21

7 QAA Subject Benchmarking Group(s) Politics, Economics

8 Date of production/revision October 2004

9 Programme Aims:

- to develop a knowledge and understanding of aspects of political and economic activity, principles and institutions
- to provide opportunities for students to specialise within politics according to their interests
- to provide a grounding in the theoretical concepts and analytical apparatus of economics and to enhance students' ability to use these tools to address a range of economic issues confronting modern society
- to provide students with opportunities to develop a range of cognitive and key skills
- to provide a learning environment enhanced by scholarship and research
- to provide graduates who are capable of pursuing a variety of careers or, if they have the necessary ability, of embarking on work at MA level

10 (a) Programme Intended Learning Outcomes:

Note: these learning outcomes are defined at the level of the typical graduate

A Knowledge and understanding of

A1 Some central aspects of government and politics and of some specialised topics within the discipline of politics

A2 Economic analysis and quantitative methods, of core principles of microeconomics and macroeconomics and of a range of more specialised topics in economics

B Subject-specific/professional skills

B1 The capacity to make effective use of a wide range of information sources, including qualitative and quantitative data, library, internet and other electronic sources.

B2 The capacity to use the analytical apparatus of economics to address the range of issues confronting modern society.

C Cognitive skills

C1 Critical evaluation of arguments and evidence

C2 Presenting a reasoned and informed position

D Key (transferable) skills

D1 Written and oral communication

D2 Planning and organisation

D3 Basic IT skills

D4 Numeracy

10 (b)

**Programme Intended Learning Outcomes:
Teaching and Learning Methods and Strategies**

A *Knowledge and understanding*

Core knowledge is imparted and understanding developed through lectures supplemented by handouts and sometimes by other visual media, such as videos and web sources. Seminars and Workshops are used to check and improve students' understanding, and to develop appreciation of issues through discussion, argument and problem-solving. A1 is developed throughout the curriculum and, in particular, by the requirement to choose a certain number of modules from a short-list of modules at stage 1. A2 is developed by compulsory modules covering the topics specified and by the requirement to choose more specialised economic options at each stage.

B *Subject-specific/professional skills*

Professional skills (B1) and their application to the study of politics are taught through lectures, seminars, exercises, and debates in skills modules at Stage 1. Student presentations and essays require effective extraction of information. B2 is developed throughout the economics curriculum, including problem-solving workshops.

C *Cognitive skills*

C1 and C2 are developed throughout the curriculum in both politics and economics and are inherent in the nature of the subjects and its teaching. Students develop, evaluate and present evidence and arguments in essays, exams, projects, presentations and seminar discussion.

D *Key (transferable) skills*

Written communication (D1) is developed through essays, projects and examinations while oral communication (also D1) is developed through seminars, presentations and debates. Planning and organisation (D2) skills, are also required for such sessions. IT skills (D3) are taught in Study Skills modules and further developed in compulsory modules in Economics, particularly the quantitative modules (D4).

10 (c)

**Programme Intended Learning Outcomes:
Assessment Strategy and Methods**

A *Knowledge and understanding*

- 1 Government and politics - Unseen written exams, essays
- 2 Economics - Unseen written exams, essays

B *Subject-specific/professional skills*

- 1 Information sources - Presupposed in essays
- 2 Economics issues - Essays and unseen written exams

C *Cognitive Skills*

- 1, 2 Unseen written exams, essays

D *Key (transferable) skills*

- | | | |
|---|---------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1 | Written communication | Unseen written exams, and essays |
| 2 | Planning and organisation | Presupposed for essays and exams |
| 3 | Basic IT skills | Stage 1 Skills module |

11 Programme Curriculum, Structure, and Features

Duration: 3 years

Stages: 3

Number of credits per stage: 120 (60 Politics and 60 Economics at stage 1 with more flexibility at stages 2 and 3).

Number of credits per module: 10-30

Number of study hours per 10 credit module: 100

Students may take up to 20 credits in subjects other than Politics and Economics in Stages 2 and 3 of the degree.

Requirements for progression: Satisfactory completion of each stage in accordance with University Progress Regulations

Map of learning outcomes onto curriculum: attached.

STAGE ONE

Aims to provide a foundation in economic analysis and in some major branches of politics, chosen from options to include political thought, political systems and international politics; to introduce major methods and techniques used in the two disciplines; to introduce students to degree level standards in each department; to enhance confidence in the capacity to apply skills appropriate to each discipline; and to develop an appreciation of the learning styles and standards of assessment used in the two subjects.

Stage 1 modules: Economics

Code Credit Descriptive title

ECO101 (20) Economic Analysis

ECO110 (20) Mathematics for Economics

ECO104 (10) The World Economy

ECO112 (20) Economics of Europe

ECO113 (10) The European Economy

ECO114 (10) European Economic Integration

ECO115 (10) The British Economy

Stage 1 modules: Politics

Code Credit Descriptive Title

POL120 (20) Studying Politics I: Skills & Techniques

POL121 (20) Introduction to UK Government and Politics

POL122 (20) Introduction to Political Thought

POL123 (10) Introduction to Comparative Government

POL129 (20) Political Thought: the Ancient World and the Middle Ages

POL130 (10) Introduction to the European Union

POL131 (10) Studying Politics

POL132 (20) Introduction to International Politics

STAGE 2

Aims to deepen students' understanding of economic principles and statistical techniques (A2) and of selected aspects of politics (A1), and to provide: a range of optional modules in each department, an understanding of micro and macro economic principles and of statistical techniques used in economics, knowledge of additional areas of economics and politics, a sense of the standard required to obtain the best honours degrees of which students are capable, improved capacity to deal with a range of sources (B2) as well as enhanced cognitive (C1,C2) and key (D1-D3) skills.

Stage 2 modules: Economics

Code Credit Descriptive title

ECO106 (10) Statistics for Economics

ECO201 (20) Microeconomic Analysis

ECO202 (20) Macroeconomic Analysis

ECO206 (10) Natural Resource and Environmental Economics

ECO208 (10) International Economics

ECO209 (20) Empirical Economic Analysis

ECO210 (10) Economic Appraisal of Projects

ECO211 (10) Government and Industry

Stage 2 modules: Politics

Code Credit Descriptive Title

POL207 (10) Political Thought: Socialism & Anarchism

POL208 (10) Political Thought: Nationalism & Fascism

POL215 (10) The EU: Politics & Policy

POL216 (10) Britain and the EU

POL222 (20) Government & Politics of the USA

POL228 (10) Studying Politics II: Research Project

POL261 (10) Politics of the Middle East

POL263 (10) International Politics: Global Transformations

POL264 (20) Political Thought: Hobbes to Mill

POL266 (20) East Asia: Power & Culture

POL270 (10) British Politics: State & Society

POL273 (10) Political Marketing

POL275 (20) The Politics of Sub-Saharan Africa

STAGE 3

Aims to offer students a range of specialised modules on each side of the degree, to give students the option of undertaking project or dissertation work in politics, to allow students to broaden their degree by taking some modules from outside departments, and to provide detailed knowledge of particular aspects of each discipline, and enhance students' awareness of their own interests and perspectives on both politics and economics.

Stage 3 modules: Economics

Code Credit Descriptive title

ECO301 (10) Advanced Microeconomics

ECO302 (10) Advanced Macroeconomics

ECO303 (10) Economics of Information

ECO313 (10) Public Policy

ECO314 (10) The World Economy

ECO318 (10) Financial Economics

ECO321 (10) Economics of Risk and Uncertainty

ECO323 (10) Monetary Economics

ECO326 (20) Industrial Economics and Policy

Stage 3 modules: Politics

Code Credit Descriptive Title

POL307 (10) Project in International Politics

POL314 (10) Project in African Politics

POL324 (20) The Politics of Central and Eastern Europe

POL329 (20) The Psychology of Politics

POL330 (20) Terrorism and Counter-Terrorism

POL333 (40) Dissertation

POL334 (20) Africa & the Politics of Development

POL339 (20) Environmental Politics: Philosophy & Practice

POL350 (20) Contemporary Political Philosophy

POL353 (10) Political Thought: Perspectives in International Affairs

POL354 (10) Oil and Security in the Persian Gulf
POL357 (10) Project on the EU
POL358 (10) Project on the Government & Politics of the USA
POL360 (10) Government & Politics of France
POL361 (10) Government & Politics of Italy
POL362 (10) Political Thought: Hegel and Marx
POL363 (20) EU: Decision-Making Simulation
POL364 (20) The Third World in Global Development
POL366 (10) Project in Contemporary Political Philosophy
POL372 (20) Water Politics & Water Policy
POL373 (20) The Politics of Immigration & Race in the UK

12 Criteria for Admission

GCSEs required: All candidates must satisfy the University's General Entrance Requirements and Matriculation Regulations at <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/calendar/>

A level subjects and grades: BBC from 18 units including two A levels, AVCE (Double Award) accepted if offered with an A level. Economics or Mathematics should ideally be offered at A or AS level.

Alternative Entry qualifications for candidates offering Access courses: modules in Arts and Social Sciences desirable (where graded, at Credit level).

The admissions policy is based on a number of considerations:

- the applicant's predicted grades (if he or she has not yet sat her exams);
- the applicant's school reference;
- the applicant's personal testimonial; and,
- the applicant's earlier academic performance (eg his or her GCSEs)

The decision as to whether to accept a candidate and, if so, what offer to make are based on all of these considerations.

Arrangements for non-standard entrants: We recognise that students will apply to our degree programmes with a range of qualifications. We consider each application on an individual basis, taking into account the information on the UCAS form including past academic performance and potential. We welcome applications from students with non-standard qualifications other than the ones described above, and are pleased to advise anyone interested with regard to choosing an appropriate preparatory course of study.

Any Additional Requirements: None

13 Support for Students and their Learning:

Induction

In advance of the start of the year, the University sends new students a pack of information. The Politics Department (where the degree is administered) also sends pre-registration information to both new and returning students, including degree programme handbooks and module handbooks.

The University devotes the first week of the new academic year to induction. The Department organises its own programme of meetings and events for Induction Week.

The main features of the Department's Induction Week for **all students** (new and returning undergraduates) are:

- meetings of all students with their personal tutors
- student registration for the academic year
- students' selection and registration of their modules
- welcome, information and advice meetings specifically for each stage of each degree
- briefing sessions on modules in each department

In addition, the following is provided for **new undergraduates**:

- a Faculty Induction meeting covering such matters as the careers service, student welfare, etc
- an introduction to, and tour of, the Library
- a 'Meet the Staff' session

Returning undergraduates also receive

- talks on careers (including talks held shortly after Induction Week) provided by the University Careers Service
- information on the 'Students into Schools' project

Study skills support

The degree includes a required 10-credit Study Skills module. The objective of POL 131 Studying Politics is to introduce students to the topic of political economy, which bridges

the two subjects, and to give students early experience of team presentations. In Economics, ECO 110 Mathematics for Economics and ECO 106 Statistics for Economics (both required) provide technical skills to support the economics programme.

All teaching staff are available in office hours to discuss academic progress with students. The Degree Programme Director is available to discuss issues affecting progress on the degree as a whole while the personal tutor offers advice on module selection, building on the general advice offered in induction week and in the Degree Handbook. All essays are given feedback; in the first semester of Stage 1 in Politics, this takes the form of individual discussion with the seminar tutor.

Pastoral support

Every Politics and Economics student is assigned for the duration of their studies to a specialized personal tutor, who has specific responsibility for support and guidance and has experience with this particular degree. The personal tutor (who is drawn from the full-time academic staff in Politics) has five main functions:

- to provide advice on academic matters
- to provide advice on non-academic matters affecting the student's work or situation within the University
- to be a source of help and sympathy
- to represent the tutee in his/her dealings with the university
- to write helpful and accurate references

All full-time members of academic teaching staff act as personal tutors. Assignment of students to personal tutors is by the Head of Politics Department. The student has the right, stated in the Degree Handbook, to ask the Head of Department for a change of personal tutor. A network of specialised support agencies provides much of the non-academic help and advice for students, but the personal tutor often provides the initial linkage to this network.

The Department emphasises that tutors must be accessible, amicable, approachable and accurate in keeping records. All tutors are required to display their office hours and contact details (eg email address, phone number) outside their offices. Personal tutors are also encouraged by the Department to use email and the Student Support and Tutoring (SST) system to maintain regular contact with their tutees.

The Economics Department provides a Liaison Officer for Joint Degrees who is available to discuss the economics side of the degree.

Support for Special Needs

Support facilities available for students with special needs include the Disability Support Service, the Student Counselling Service, the Student Advice Service, University Student Office and the International Office. Personal tutors provide a link between the student and these support facilities.

Learning resources

Each Department aims to make efficient and effective use of its own resources and those of the University to provide students with a learning experience which is both appropriate to the student profile and productive in its outcomes.

Each Department recognises that full-time academic staff are its most important teaching resource. The Departments ensure that all modules are led by specialist staff with a high standard of expertise in their subjects.

The degree benefits from the excellent library and IT facilities provided by the University to support its teaching provision. We believe that the subject provision within the Robinson Library

is appropriate to the requirements of the curriculum, and that a high quality library service is delivered to users.

14 Methods for evaluating and improving the quality and standards of teaching and learning

Mechanisms for review and evaluation of teaching, learning, assessment, the curriculum and outcome standards

- Stage questionnaires
- Module questionnaires
- Biennial course review
- Peer observation of teaching
- Internal subject review
- External Examiner reports
- Staff meetings
- Annual review of progression rates, degree classes achieved, graduate employment statistics

Committees with responsibility for monitoring and evaluating quality and standards

- Board of Studies (includes student representatives)
- Teaching and Learning Committee
- Staff Student Committee (includes student representatives)
- Employers' Forum
- Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee
- University Teaching Committee
- Examination Boards

Mechanisms for gaining student feedback on the quality of teaching and their learning experience

- Staff Student Committee and student representation on Board of Studies
- Module and stage evaluation questionnaires

15 Regulation of Assessment

Assessment rules and Honours classification

- Minimum pass mark is 40% for each module
- Most modules are assessed by a combination of unseen written examination and coursework, although projects and dissertations are 100% coursework
- Information on assessment is available in the degree programme and module handbooks
- All stage 1 and stage 2 modules must be passed before students can proceed. There are two resit opportunities
- Degree classification is based on the weighted average result for stages 2 and 3, with stage 3 results accounting for twice the weight of stage 2
- Honours marks are based on the following University scale:

Mark Degree Class

> 70% First

60-69% Upper second

50-59% Lower second

40-49% Third

<40% Fail

Role of external examiners

The external examiners are leading members of the academic community appointed by Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee and their role is to:

- Approve assessment on modules which count for honours, including approving examination papers
- Review samples of examination scripts and coursework to check standards and assessment procedures
- Attend the Examination Boards
- Report back to the University

16 Indicators of Quality and Standards

With a standard offer of BBC, the degree attracts academically strong students, a large majority of whom progress well on the course and graduate with at least an upper second-class honours. The graduates from the degree are successful in entering a wide variety of occupations; including in particular the financial sector. Politics and Economics teaching each received 23 out of 24 marks in the Quality Assurance Agency reviews in 2001.

17 Other Sources of Information

This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes which a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if she takes full advantage of the learning opportunities provided. More detailed information can be found in the degree programme handbook and in module documentation. The accuracy of the information contained in this document is reviewed by the University and may be checked by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education.

Key information about the programme can be found in:

- Degree Programme Handbook
- The Module Handbooks
- The Regulations of the University of Newcastle Upon Tyne
 - The University's Undergraduate Prospectus and departmental brochure
 - Subject Review Reports
 - The Schools' websites (www.ncl.ac.uk/geps/ and www.ncl.ac.uk/nubs/undergrad/economics)