



Programme Specification

**A statement of the knowledge, understanding and skills
that underpin a taught programme of study leading to an
award from
The University of Sheffield**

1	Programme Title	Economics & Public Policy
2	Programme Code	ECNT60
3	JACS Code	L113, L100
4	Level of Study	Postgraduate
5a	Final Qualification	MSc
5b	QAA FHEQ Level	7 (PG Level M)
6a	Intermediate Qualification(s)	PG Diploma, PG Certificate
6b	QAA FHEQ Level	7 (PG Level M)
7	Teaching Institution (if not Sheffield)	Not applicable
8	Faculty	Social Science
9	Department	Economics
10	Other Departments providing credit bearing modules for the programme	None
11	Mode(s) of Attendance	Full-time or Part-time
12	Duration of the Programme	12 months or 24 months
13	Accrediting Professional or Statutory Body	Not applicable
14	Date of production/revision	September 2015, revised March 2018

15. Background to the programme and subject area

Using the growing teaching and research expertise in the area of public economics and policy within the Department of Economics, this programme will cover core areas of economics, with emphasis on public-sector economics and policy. Specifically, this programme will combine a strong understanding of microeconomics, macroeconomics and econometrics, with detailed, specialist knowledge on public policy design, implementation and evaluation.

16. Programme aims

This programme aims to offer students the tools required to analyse and evaluate public policy in fields such as education, health care provision, social security and taxation. It is thus designed for students who want to work in the public sector and research and policy-orientated centres, and who wish to receive the best research-led teaching in public policy analysis and to understand and apply powerful economic techniques that make a real difference in the outside world.

17. Programme learning outcomes

Knowledge and understanding:	
K1	Knowledge of how government taxation and spending activities affect the economy and the distribution of income.
K2	Understanding of the “quality” of different fiscal policy instruments.
K3	Analysis of practical difficulties that are often associated with government action.
K4	Knowledge of economic models used to analyse public policy areas and understanding of how these models are used in practice to inform policy debates.
K5	Development of an expertise in evaluating and presenting empirical evidence to inform policy debates.

Skills and other attributes:	
S1	Analysis of complex issues, exercising of critical judgement, and problem solving.
S2	Application of appropriate techniques to collect information, analyse findings and interpret evidence and go on to conduct an independent research project.
S3	Management of effective learning, including self-assessment and the constructive use of feedback.
S4	Communication of information and ideas in oral and written forms.
S5	Undertaking of self-directed learning, involving independent work, to solve problems and to acquire further knowledge and skills.

18. Teaching, learning and assessment

Development of the learning outcomes is promoted through the following teaching and learning methods:

Knowledge and understanding (K1-K5) are acquired in a variety of teaching and learning environments. Different modules will adopt different combinations of lectures, seminars and more student oriented activity. The latter activity involves individual and group based research and investigation and problem solving as well as seminar preparation and coursework. The overall aim is to enable students to participate fully in the course, to develop their own ideas, and to learn how to present their arguments in a clear and coherent way. As students' progress from core modules, through applications and developments to writing their dissertation, the emphasis will shift away from staff oriented lectures providing basic knowledge towards student oriented activity. This shift in teaching and learning methods is designed to promote more tacit and critical capabilities i.e. skills S1-S5. Preparation for the dissertation is supported throughout the year by study skills sessions, English language classes for non-native speakers, and workshops on topic choice, dissertation structure, and empirical research skills. Part-time students study two taught modules in each semester of years one and two, with the dissertation preparation and writing in year two.

Opportunities to demonstrate achievement of the learning outcomes are provided through the following assessment methods:

The three stages of the Masters programme (semester one taught modules, semester two taught modules, and dissertation) will each contribute 60 credits towards the final 180 credit rating. Modules are assessed using different combinations of unseen examination and coursework as appropriate to module objectives. The objective here is to provide a coherent combination of both formative and summative methods. Formal examinations are used to test the existence of basic core knowledge (i.e. K1 and K2 above) with coursework being used to develop and assess more student oriented and critical perspectives on topics (i.e. K3 – K5 above). Certain modules consider unseen examination an inappropriate means of assessment at advanced level because of the subject matter covered and course delivery adopted. Formal examinations take place at the end of the Autumn and Spring semesters. The dissertation will normally be written over the summer. This is viewed as a key learning experience to develop research and critical capabilities for all students (and so further develops K3 – K5 above), particularly those interested in going onto further research.

19. Reference points

The learning outcomes have been developed to reflect the following points of reference:

Internal

University of Sheffield Mission Statement.

University Learning and Teaching Strategy.

Departmental Learning and Teaching Strategy.

External

Quality Assurance Agency Framework for Higher Education Qualifications.

20. Programme structure and regulations

Detailed information about the structure of programmes, regulations concerning assessment and progression and descriptions of individual modules are published in the University Calendar available on-line at <http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/calendar/regs>.

21. Student development over the course of study

The curriculum is designed to allow students to achieve the specified learning outcomes in a progressive manner. The compulsory modules provide the foundation for further successive study involving optional modules and the preparation of a dissertation. This process involves a shift from staff to student oriented learning and a shift towards more research oriented methods of delivery. Advice is available at all stages to help students choose coherent programmes of individual study.

22. Criteria for admission to the programme

Detailed information regarding admission to programmes is available from the University's On-Line Prospectus at <http://www.shef.ac.uk/courses/>.

23. Additional information

This specification represents a concise statement about the main features of the programme and should be considered alongside other sources of information provided by the teaching department(s) and the University. In addition to programme specific information, further information about studying at The University of Sheffield can be accessed via our Student Services web site at <http://www.shef.ac.uk/ssid>.