



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	International Political Economy
2	Programme Code	SPRT002
3	JACS Code	L150
4	Level of Study	Postgraduate
5a	Final Qualification	Master of Arts (MA)
5b	QAA FHEQ Level	7
6a	Intermediate Qualification(s)	Postgraduate Diploma; Postgraduate Certificate
6b	QAA FHEQ Level	7
7	Teaching Institution (if not Sheffield)	Not applicable
8	Faculty	Social Sciences
9	Department	Politics
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	1 year or 2 years
13	Accrediting Professional or Statutory Body	Not applicable
14	Date of production/revision	October 2016, March 2018, July 2019, March 2026

15. Background to the programme and subject area

This programme is distinct in its intent to analyse 21st Century political economy problems with contemporary ways of thinking. This programme recognises the need to be flexible and innovative in bringing together ideas, approaches and methods from a diverse range of disciplines to critically analyse emergent issues and problems, such as unstable capitalism; inequalities and poverty; mass migration; environmental degradation and climate change; rapid technological change and emergent new powers. The analysis of these problems requires an understanding of the interplay of economy, polity, society and culture. They also usually require analysis that recognises the interplay between actors and structures at different levels of the global system: from the grass-roots, local, through community to the nation state, to the global system and its institutions.

The programme reflects the long-established approach to studying via research-led teaching, drawing on departmental strengths in the across the board (top three RAE / REF placement since 2001). The essential features are that political economy has to be understood in international terms and, if economics is concerned with resource distribution and use, politics is the study of power and, as such, is integral to the study of resource use and scarcity in the contemporary world.

The programme brings awareness of historic approaches to political economy analysis but also seeks to be informed by new theoretical, methodological and technological developments. The approach is methodologically pluralist, recognizing that different ontologies and epistemologies will yield different understandings of issues.

16. Programme aims

The programme aims are:

1. To bring together ideas, approaches and methods from a diverse range of disciplines to critically analyse emergent issues and problems in the international political economy.
2. To explore and evaluate the interplay of economics, politics, society and culture through detailed analysis of a range of contemporary political economy problems.
3. To provide understanding of historical approaches to political economy, as well as cutting edge methodological and theoretical developments.

4. To enable students to apply such theories and approaches to a range of different levels of the global system – local, national, regional and international.

17. Programme learning outcomes

Knowledge and understanding:

By the end of the programme, students will be able to:

K1	Demonstrate sophisticated understanding of different theoretical approaches to the study of international political economy.
K2	Be able to employ these approaches to the practical realities of political economy in a sophisticated, reflexive and critical manner.
K3	Critically engage with the key debates in the study of political economy, at the conceptual, analytical, explanatory and normative levels.
K4	Demonstrate understanding of how to develop, design and plan an extended piece of independent research around a research question related to international political economy.

Skills and other attributes:

S1	Critically evaluate advanced concepts and theories in the field of political economy.
S2	Employ primary and secondary sources in an effective and accurate way.
S3	Present reasoned and effective arguments in both written and oral form.
S4	Pursue independent learning and to show critical judgement.
S5	Work collaboratively with others in a group.
S6	Conduct the relevant theoretical and / or empirical research necessary to produce a major piece of independent research.

18. Teaching, learning and assessment

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

Lectures

Lectures will be used to impart essential knowledge and to give students the foundational knowledge they need for the successful completion of the Programme. Lectures are also an important means of engaging students with their modules and readings. No single module on the Programme will be delivered solely by lectures.

Seminars

Seminars will be used to develop students' critical understanding of the core issues raised in the modules and to deepen understanding gained in lectures and from readings.

- The use of group work in such seminars will enhance collaborative skills and allow students to apply their knowledge with others.
- The use of class presentations in those seminars will enhance communication and organisational skills and allow students to provide and receive peer feedback on their ideas.

Tutorials / Supervisions

Individual tutorials will be used during the supervision of the 12,000 word dissertation. Advice will be given on the construction and completion of an independent research project on a topic related to the Programme.

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

12,000 word dissertation

The dissertation allows students the opportunity to put into practice all of the skills, knowledge and understanding that they have gained throughout the Programme. The dissertation is used to assess these attributes, as well as the ability of the student to undertake a major piece of independent research on a relevant

topic to the Programme.

Essays

Essays will be used to evaluate students' comprehension of particular concepts, theoretical perspectives and debates related to the module. They will also be used to assess students' ability to communicate clearly and construct well-developed arguments of their own.

Class presentations

Some modules will formally assess class presentations. These will evaluate students' understanding of an issue, as well as their organisational and oral communication skills.

Oral participation in seminars

Some modules will formally assess the level and quality of student participation in the seminars. This will evaluate students' participation in the module, understanding of the reading and ability to communicate and share their ideas with others.

'Learning log' (assessment of log generated by ongoing readings and discussions)

In some modules, students will be required to submit reflections and questions each week in response to the assigned readings: a 'learning log'. Such a log will allow evaluation of students' comprehension of the material, critical reflection of it, and their ability to communicate such understanding in a concise format.

The relationship between these learning and teaching methods, assessment methods and the programme learning outcomes are set out in the table below:

Teaching and Learning				Assessment Methods				
Learning Outcome (see section 17 for full text)	Lectures	Seminars	Tutorials / Supervisions	Dissertation	Essays	Class Presentations	Oral participation	Learning log
K1	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
K2	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
K3	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
K4	X		X	X				
S1	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
S2	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
S3		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
S4		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
S5		X					X	
S6	X		X	X				

19. Reference points

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

QAA Framework: Descriptor for a higher education qualification at level 7 on the FHEQ and SCQF level 11 on the FQHEIS: master's degree

QAA Subject benchmark for Politics and International Relations (Honours level applied to the Masters framework)

The University Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy

The Department of Politics Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy

Feedback from External Examiners

20. Programme structure and regulations

Students will undertake:

The Core Module:

Approaches to Political Economy (30 Credits)

Three mandatory Modules:

Understanding Politics (15 credits)

Dissertation Preparation Module (15 credits)

Dissertation Module (60 credits) (Dissertations will be required to address a topic **directly related** to the student's MA programme).

Two Optional Modules (30 credits each) from the following list **OR** one from this list **PLUS one non-core** module (30 credit) from another Politics MA programme (including the Politics modules on the MA in Political Theory):

The Political Economy of Poverty and Inequality

Capitalism and Crisis

Development and the State

Political Economy of Global Environmental Change

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

This programme of study has been designed so that there is a clear development in relation to students' knowledge, understanding and skills relevant to the sub-discipline of International Political Economy.

The mandatory module Understanding Politics – taught in the first semester - provides students with a foundation in the main approaches to studying the discipline as a whole. The core module for the Programme, Approaches to Political Economy – also taught in the first semester - provides students with a grounding in the main theories, debates and approaches relevant to the sub-discipline of Political Economy more specifically.

The optional modules then allow students to develop their understanding further by giving them the opportunity to build specialist knowledge of key themes within the sub-discipline.

The Dissertation Preparation Module – taught in the first semester - gives students' vital and focused preparation on how to frame, construct and execute an independent research project. By the end of this module, and the end of the semester, they will have completed a research proposal to guide their work in the Dissertation, which they can start work on in January, before the second semester's taught modules commence.

The Dissertation itself allows students to use their accumulated skills and understanding, with the support of their individual supervisor, to undertake an independent piece of research on a theme or issue relevant to the sub-discipline.

Throughout their development, students will be supported in their development by the teaching team and individual supervisors. And we expect them to be extremely well-placed to take up internships, placements and other employment opportunities once the formal teaching from the Programme comes to an end.

22. Criteria for admission to the programme

A **good Social Science degree** - first-class or a strong 2:1 honours, or an equivalent attainment in an overseas qualification. Relevant Social Science Degrees include Architecture, Economics, Education, Geography, International Relations, Journalism, Law, Management, Philosophy, Politics, Sociology, and Town and Regional Planning. Please get in touch if you would like to discuss whether your degree is suitable.

English Language Requirements

IELTS grade 6.5 overall with a minimum of 6.0 in all sub components.

23. Additional information

None

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>.