



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

This programme specification covers the curriculum in **Politics** for the following dual honours degree programme(s) and should be read in conjunction with the relevant programme specification for the second subject:

1. Programme Title	2. Programme Code	3. JACS Code
Japanese Studies and Politics (BA)	EASU05	TL22
Economics and Politics (BA)	ECNU08	L100
French and Politics (BA)	FREU04	R100
Geography and Politics (BA)	GEOU06	LL72
German and Politics (BA)	GERU04	R200
Hispanic Studies and Politics (BA)	HSSU04	R400
History and Politics (BA)	HSTU105	VL12
Politics and Sociology (BA)	POLU02	L000
Politics and Philosophy (BA)	POLU04	L200
Russian and Politics (BA)	RUSU03	R700
4	Level of Study	Undergraduate
5	Final Qualification	Bachelor of Arts with Honours (BA Hons)
6	Intermediate Qualification(s)	None
7	Teaching Institution (if not Sheffield)	Not applicable
8	Faculty	Social Sciences
9	Co-ordinating Department	Politics (Politics and Sociology, Politics and Philosophy) Economics (Economics and Politics) Geography (Geography and Politics) History (History and Politics) East Asian Studies (Japanese Studies and Politics) French (French and Politics) Germanic Studies (German and Politics) Russian and Slavonic Studies (Russian and Politics) Hispanic Studies (Hispanic Studies and Politics)
10	Other Department(s) involved in teaching	None
11	Mode(s) of Attendance	Full-time
12	Duration of the Programme	Three years
13	Accrediting Professional or Statutory Body	Not applicable
14	Date of production/revision	January 2010

Dual Degrees

The University of Sheffield defines a dual degree as the independent study of two parallel subjects. Dual degrees offer students the flexibility to choose a programme of study that reflects their interests and gives the opportunity to develop detailed knowledge and key skills in two major subjects. Whilst the two subjects may be taught independently, they will complement, inform and illuminate one another. Where there are two programme specifications for dual degrees, one for each half of the programme, and students should refer to both documents for a full description of the whole programme. Where there are clear links between the two subjects, details will be included in Sections 15 and 20 of the programme specifications. However, there are some single programme specifications for dual degree combinations where there is a substantial degree of integration between the two subjects.

15. Background to the programme and subject area

The dual degree programmes involve the parallel study of two major disciplines in complementary fields, offering students a broad context for their intellectual development. The study of politics involves the development of knowledge and understanding about governance in human societies. Politics is concerned with ideas, institutions and practices from the local and regional levels to the national and international domains. Issues such as power, democracy, and rights are central to its pre-occupations. Graduates are equipped to pursue a variety of careers in the public, private and voluntary sectors. Teaching is organised to provide a challenging learning environment that reflects the research interests and expertise of staff. Particularly at the third level, students have the opportunity to take specialist taught and project modules and complete a dissertation. This allows all students to actively engage with the research process.

*The Department of Politics at Sheffield has gained an international reputation as one of the top Politics research Departments in Britain. It was awarded top grade of 5*A in the 2001 Research Assessment Exercise and a grade point average of 3.15 in the 2008 Research Assessment Exercise which was the highest grade awarded. In terms of teaching the department was awarded a maximum 24 points in the Quality Assurance Agency Subject Review. In its 40-year history, many prominent scholars in the field of Politics and International Relations have been members of staff and a number of leading figures in the discipline currently work in the Department.*

Further information on programmes can be found on the Department's website at <http://www.shef.ac.uk/politics>.

16. Programme aims

The aims for the politics component of the dual degree programmes are:

1. to produce graduates with knowledge and understanding of political phenomena, and of some of the concepts, theories, approaches and methods employed in the study of politics;
2. to enable students to evaluate different interpretations of political processes, events and controversies, and to assess critically specific issues of contemporary public concern;
3. to enable students to develop a range of important intellectual, practical and transferable skills;
4. to prepare graduates for employment in a wide range of contexts, or for continued studies.

17. Programme learning outcomes

Knowledge and understanding: By the end of the programme students will be able to demonstrate:

K1	Knowledge and understanding of political ideas, institutions and practices and specialised knowledge of at least one area in political studies;
K2	the ability to apply specific concepts, approaches and methods used to analyse political phenomena;
K3	the ability to evaluate critically differing interpretations of political processes, events and debates;
K4	the ability to appreciate and assess issues of contemporary political concern.

Skills and other attributes:

Intellectual and practical skills: by the end of the programme students will have demonstrated (in relation to political subject matter) an ability to:

SIP1	Collect data and information from a variety of sources including printed and electronic media;
SIP2	Understand and interpret qualitative and basic quantitative data;
SIP3	Organise and synthesise information, arguments, and evidence;
SIP4	Analyse issues, construct reasoned arguments, solve problems, and exercise critical judgement;
SIP5	Manage learning effectively, including self-assessment and the constructive use of feedback.

Key skills: By the end of the programme students will be able to:

SK1	Communicate information and ideas effectively in both oral and written forms;
SK2	Work independently, demonstrating responsibility, initiative, foresight and the capacity to manage time;
SK3	Collaborate effectively with others to achieve common goals;
SK4	Use information and communications technologies to retrieve and present information, and analyse data;
SK5	Undertake self-directed learning to acquire further knowledge and skills.

18. Teaching, learning and assessment

Knowledge and understanding (K1-4) are acquired in a variety of teaching and learning environments including lectures, seminars, small group interactions, and project work. Specialised knowledge and understanding of specific areas (K1) is particularly acquired through Level 3 seminars and project work. For all such learning outcomes (K1-4) considerable emphasis is placed on individual study – on reading and note taking, exploring printed and electronic sources, reflecting about material, and preparation. Assessment (see below) forms an integral part of the learning regime, with essays, projects and other course work designed to focus the learner's attention on critical issues, and feedback provided to allow the learner to further improve their performance. The balance among teaching modes varies as the programme progresses. Lectures play a significant role at Levels 1 and 2, and a support role at Level 3. Seminars and small group interactions are important at all levels. Individual supervision of self-directed learning projects is important at Level 3.

Lectures and seminars provide guidance and a framework to assist the progressive acquisition of **intellectual and practical skills** SIP1-5. Seminars, group work and class assignments provide a context to practice these skills, receive feedback from peers and staff, and gain confidence and proficiency. Modules across the curriculum promote cumulative learning of intellectual and practical skills SIP1, 3, 4 and 5.

Explicit instruction in particular skills is provided by the compulsory Level 1 module 'Introduction to Political Analysis', (SIP 1, 2 qualitative, 5), and the compulsory Level 2 module 'Political Analysis: Research Design and Data Analysis' (SIP 1, 2 quantitative, 3).

The numerical dimension of SIP 2 may be further developed at Level 3 (in special subject and project modules) depending upon the student's choice. Level 3 project modules and the dissertation module allows students to develop further their capacities to collect and interpret data (SIP1 and 2), organise and synthesise information (SIP3), and to extend their analytical and problem-solving skills (SIP4), and their capacity to manage their learning (SIP5).

Promotion of specific **key skills** occurs in different combinations across the curriculum at all Levels. Preparation for, participation in, and feedback from, seminars provide a context for developing capacities for oral communication (SK1 oral), independent working (SK2), and self-directed learning (SK5). Preparation of, and feedback from, written assignments provide a context for developing skills of written communication (SK1 written), independent working (SK2), and self-directed learning (SK5). Explicit guidance on essay writing (SK1 written) is provided in the Level 1 'Introduction to Political Analysis'. Use of information and communications technologies to retrieve, present and analyse data (SK4) is dealt with in 'Political Analysis' modules at Levels 1 and 2. And group work (SK3) is a central component of core 'Political Analysis' modules at Levels 1 and 2. All modules require students to display their capacities to undertake self-directed learning (SK5), with the Level 3 project module and the dissertation module extending this capacity to the fullest extent.

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

Knowledge and understanding (K1-4) are assessed in a variety of methods appropriate to the specific material. Most modules involve both essays and unseen examinations. Some require the preparation of short written assignments (for example book reviews or briefing reports), oral presentations and group exercises. Marks on project modules are determined on the basis of the written submission. Formative assessment is provided in seminars, and structured feedback is provided on all written and oral forms of assessment for which marks are awarded.

Assessment of intellectual and practical skills (SIP1-5) is closely linked to that of knowledge and understanding. Cover sheets returned after graded written and oral work provide feedback on the range and use of sources (SIP1 and 2), and the structure and quality of analysis and argument (SK3 and 4). Feedback on SK6 is provided by project supervisors.

Assessment of key skills is integrated with the evaluation of course work at all Levels of the programme. SK1 and SK2 are assessed through seminar participation and the successful and timely completion of oral and written course work. Assessed group work (SK3) is a feature of core 'Political Analysis' modules at Levels 1 and 2. The capacity to use information and communications technologies (SK4) is demonstrated through assignments across the curriculum with the 'analyse data' element explicitly assessed on Level 2 'Political Analysis'. SK5 is not assessed independently, but demonstrated by student attainment on the programme, especially in the preparation of Level 3 projects. Module tutors complete reports on student seminar performance, and these are forwarded to personal tutors to complete the feedback process. The introduction of Personal Development Portfolios in 2003-2004 has further systematised the monitoring of key skills acquisition across the degree programme.

19. Reference points

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

Internal:

University Strategic Plan

<http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/strategicplan>

Learning and Teaching Strategy (2011-16)

<http://www.shef.ac.uk/lets/staff/lts>

Departmental research interests

External:

Subject Benchmark Statements

<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/AssuringStandardsAndQuality/subject-guidance/Pages/Subject-benchmark-statements.aspx>

Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (2008)

<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/The-framework-for-higher-education-qualifications-in-England-Wales-and-Northern-Ireland.aspx>

20. Programme structure and regulations

The dual degree is composed of two distinct components each of which constitutes approximately 50% of the credit weighting. The politics curriculum is designed to progressively promote the depth of understanding over the three years of undergraduate study. Teaching, especially at Level 3, is closely linked to the research interests of staff. Some modules and/or types of module are compulsory at each Level, but substantial choice is built into the programme to enable students (in consultation with staff) to devise a course of study tailored to their individual needs and interests.

'Political Analysis' modules (at Levels 1, 2 and 3) provide a central core to the politics component of the degree. Students are required to choose modules from four important strands of the discipline (political theory, British politics, international politics and comparative politics) at Level 1. At Level 2, they take two option modules in Politics. (In their final year, students take the core Political Analysis module and a dissertation, or a special subject module and the associated project module).

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.shef.ac.uk/govern/calendar/regs.html>.

21. Student development over the course of study

The curriculum is designed to allow students progressively to achieve the specified learning outcomes. Compulsory modules and/or types of module at each Level have been structured to enable students to extend systematically their knowledge and skills. Section 20 above (Programme structure and regulations) highlights key concentrations of study at each of the three Levels.

Level 1 provides a foundation, encouraging reflection on the complexity of political life, introducing the approaches required for its comprehension, and developing a range of skills.

Level 2 develops a solid core of student understanding, allowing students to extend their knowledge and skills base.

Level 3 enables students to accumulate in-depth knowledge in particular areas and to engage in independent learning through researching and writing an extended piece of work under individual supervision.

Coherence, a balance between breadth and depth of study, staged progression over the period of study, and flexibility and choice are promoted by a combination of compulsory and option modules. At all Levels, advice is available to help students choose coherent programmes of individual study.

22. Criteria for admission to the programme

Detailed information regarding admission to the programme is available at <http://www.shef.ac.uk/prospective/>

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>.