

## PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

Name, title and level of final qualification(s)	<b>BA Politics</b> (Level 6)
Name and title of any exit qualification(s)	Dip HE, Cert HE,
16Is the programme offered with a Foundation Year	Yes
Awarding Body	University of London
Teaching Institution(s)	Birkbeck, University of London
Home school/other teaching departments	School of Social Sciences
Location of delivery	Central London
Language of delivery and assessment	English
Mode of study, length of study and normal start month	Full-time (3 years) / Part-time (4 years) / Full-time with Foundation Year (4 years) Part-time with Foundation Year (6 years) September
Professional, statutory or regulatory body	N/A
<a href="#">QAA subject benchmark group(s)</a> <a href="#">Higher Education Credit Framework for England</a>	Politics and International Relations
UCAS code and URL	LL20, LL2F
Birkbeck Course Code	UUBAPOLT_C (3 years full-time) UBAPOLTC_C (4 years part-time) UUBFPOLT_C (4 years full-time with FY) UBFPOLTC_C (6 years part-time with FY)
HECoS Code	100491
Start date of programme	Autumn 2011
Date of programme approval	Summer 2011
Date of last programme amendment approval	June 2025
Valid for academic entry year	<b>2025-26</b>
Date of last revision to document	17/06/2025

## Admissions requirements

We welcome applicants without traditional entry qualifications as we base decisions on our own assessment of qualifications, knowledge and previous work experience. We may waive formal entry requirements based on judgement of academic potential.

The UCAS tariff score is applicable to you if you have recently studied a qualification that has a UCAS tariff equivalence. UCAS provides a tariff calculator for you to work out what your qualification is worth within the UCAS tariff.

**BA Politics:** The UCAS tariff is set at 112 points. Students who fail to achieve this level may still be considered for entry if they demonstrate the required level of intellectual commitment and potential. We welcome applicants without traditional entry qualifications as we base decisions on our own assessment of qualifications, knowledge and previous work experience. We may waive formal entry requirements based on judgement of academic potential.

**BA Politics with Foundation Year:** This programme is designed for people who can demonstrate the ability and motivation to complete the BA Politics but who do not currently meet the entry criteria for direct entrance onto the degree. Applicants will often be invited for interview to discuss their interests and future plans, and to assess their needs and aptitudes. For those students who already have Level 3 qualifications the expectation is that they will have qualifications equivalent to 48 UCAS tariff points. Given that students on the foundation year will be enrolled on degree programmes, applicants will be offered a place only if there is significant evidence to suggest they have the ability to complete the full degree.

## Course aims

**BA Politics:** The BA Politics equips you with the tools to understand the nature of Politics in the modern world. It is taught with an emphasis on the interdisciplinary nature of the study of politics, drawing on history, sociology, economics, anthropology, human geography and psychology as well as politics. It also recognises the close connection between theoretical and empirical approaches, rejecting the artificial distinction that is often made between political theory and political science. Students are provided with a strong grounding in British politics in years 1 and 2, but from the beginning are encouraged to think about Politics in comparative and international perspective. There is also a stress on the idea of politics as a practice, an activity engaged in not just by politicians, but by many different kinds of actors and institutions in modern societies.

**BA Politics with Foundation Year:** For the BA Politics with Foundation Year programme, the purpose of the Foundation Year is to prepare you for successful completion of your undergraduate degree. The Foundation Year provides you with the opportunity to explore your interests and build on their study skills, and on successful completion of the Foundation Year, students may progress onto year one of the programme. The final three years (full-time) or 4 years (parttime) of the 'with foundation year' programme is the same as the 3 or 4 year BA programme and students who successfully complete a degree programme with foundation year are awarded the same final degree title as students on the other BA degree routes.

## Course structure

Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credit	Comp Core/ Option	Likely teaching term(s)
<b>Full-time 3 years</b>					
<b>Year 1</b>					
4	SSPO017S4	Foundations of Social and Political Science	30	Comp	T1-3
4	SSPO265S4	Transformations in Modern Politics: Democracy, Conflict and Globalisation	30	Comp	T1
4	FFPO956S4	Comparative Government	30	Comp	T2
4		Option	30	Option	T3
<b>Year 2</b>					
5	SSPO151S5	Governing by Numbers	30	Comp	T1-3
5	POSO003S	Contemporary British Politics	30	Comp	T2
5		Option	30	Option	T1
5		Option	30	Option	T3
<b>Year 3</b>					
6	SSPO220S6	Doing Political and Social Research	30	Comp	T1
6	POSO013S	Social and Political Theory	30	Comp	T2
6		Option	30	Option	T1, 2 or 3
6		Option OR	30	Option	T3
6	SSPO187S6	Politics dissertation	30	Option	T1-3
<b>Part-time - 4 years</b>					
<b>Year 1</b>					
4	SSPO017S4	Foundations of Social and Political Science	30	Comp	T1-3
4	SSPO265S4	Transformations in Modern Politics: Democracy, Conflict and Globalisation	30	Comp	T1
4	FFPO956S4	Comparative Government	30	Comp	T2
<b>Year 2</b>					
5	SSPO151S5	Governing by Numbers	30	Comp	T1-3
4		Option	30	Option	T1, 2 or 3*
5		Option	30	Option	T1, 2 or 3*
*NOTE: PT students may take a maximum of 30 credits of option modules in a single term					
<b>Year 3</b>					
5	POSO003S5	Contemporary British Politics	30	Comp	T2
5		Option	30	Option	T1 or 3*
6		Option	30	Option	T1 or 3*
*NOTE: PT students may take a maximum of 30 credits of option modules in a single term					

Year 4					
6	SSPO220S6	Doing Political and Social Research	30	Comp	T1
6	POSO013S6	Social and Political Theory	30	Comp	T2
6		Option OR	30	Option	T3
6	SSPO187S6	Politics Dissertation	30	Option	T1-3
Full-time with foundation Year - 4 years					
Foundation Year (Year 0)					
3	CASE002S3	Fundamentals of Study	30	Core	T1
3	CASE001S3	Breaking Boundaries of Knowledge	30	Core	T2-3
3	SSSS001S3	Crossing Borders	30	Core	T1
3 4	SSSS002S3	Contemporary Global Issues: Approaches in Social Science, History and Philosophy OR Level 4 Language module	30	Option	T2-3
Year 1					
4	SSPO017S4	Foundations of Social and Political Science	30	Comp	T1-3
4	SSPO265S4	Transformations in Modern Politics: Democracy, Conflict and Globalisation	30	Comp	T1
4	FFPO956S4	Comparative Government	30	Comp	T2
4		Option	30	Option	T3
Year 2					
5	SSPO151S5	Governing by Numbers	30	Comp	T1-3
5	POSO003S	Contemporary British Politics	30	Comp	T2
5		Option	30	Option	T1
5		Option	30	Option	T3
Year 3					
6	SSPO220S6	Doing Political and Social Research	30	Comp	T1
6	POSO013S	Social and Political Theory	30	Comp	T2
6		Option	30	Option	T1, 2 or 3
6 6		Option OR	30	Option	T3
6	SSPO187S6	Politics dissertation	30	Option	T1-3
Part-time with foundation Year - 6 years					
Foundation Year (Year 0a)					
3	CASE002S3	Fundamentals of Study: Learning through the Global City	30	Core	T1
3	CASE001S3	Breaking Boundaries of Knowledge	30	Core	T2-3
Foundation Year (Year 0b)					
3	SSSS001S3	Crossing Borders	30	Core	T1
3 4	SSSS002S3	Contemporary Global Issues: Approaches in Social Science, History and Philosophy OR Level 4 Language module	30	Option	T2-3

Year 1					
4	SSPO017S4	Foundations of Social and Political Science	30	Comp	T1-3
4	SSPO265S4	Transformations in Modern Politics: Democracy, Conflict and Globalisation	30	Comp	T1
4	FFPO956S4	Comparative Government	30	Comp	T2
Year 2					
5	SSPO151S5	Governing by Numbers	30	Comp	T1-3
4		Option	30	Option	T1, 2 or 3*
5		Option	30	Option	T1, 2 or 3*
*NOTE: PT student may take a maximum of 30 credits of option modules in a single term					
Year 3					
5	POSO003S5	Contemporary British Politics	30	Comp	T2
5		Option	30	Option	T1 or 3*
6		Option	30	Option	T1 or 3*
*NOTE: PT students may take a maximum of 30 credits of option modules in a single term.					
Year 4					
6	SSPO220S6	Doing Political and Social Research	30	Comp	T1
6	POSO013S6	Social and Political Theory	30	Comp	T2
6		Option OR	30	Option	T3
6	SSPO187S6	Politics Dissertation	30	Option	T1-3
Indicative options					
4	SSP0118S4	Introduction to Global Politics	30	Option	T3
5	SSPO270S5	International Relations and Foreign Policy	30	Option	T1
5	POSO029S5	Introduction to International Political Economy	30	Option	T2
5	SSPO272S5	Digital Politics	30	Option	T3
6	POSO004S6	War and Modern Society	30	Option	T2
6	SSPO122S6	Parliamentary Studies	30	Option	T1
6	POSO036S6	Politics and the Middle East	30	Option	T3

Note: options shown above are indicative only and may vary each year

Core: Module must be taken and passed by student

Compulsory: Module must be taken but can be considered for compensated credit (see CAS regulations paragraph 24)

Option: Student can choose to take this module

### How you will learn

Your learning and teaching is organised to help you meet the learning outcomes (below) of the course. As a student, we expect you to be an active learner and to take responsibility for your learning, engaging with all of the material and sessions arranged for you.

Each course is divided into modules. You will find information on the virtual learning site (Moodle, see Academic Support below) about each of your modules, what to expect, the work

you need to prepare, links to reading lists, information about how and when you will be assessed.

Your learning for this course will be organised around the activities outlined below.

Various teaching and learning methods are used on the degree. Most teaching takes place in lectures and seminars, employing a variety of methods such as small group work, student presentations, debates, guest speakers and so on. Other forms of teaching are used where appropriate, including field-trips, the use of film, etc. In line with other teaching in the Department, extensive use is made of audio-visual facilities and web-based learning tools such as Moodle.

### **How we will assess you**

The course will use a variety of assessment methods. Assessment is used to enhance your learning rather than simply to test it. For most of the modules associated with this course, your assessment will be through the following types of assessment.

A mix of assessment strategies is used. Level 4 modules employ a combination of short essays and in-class tests. Assessment at levels 5 and 6 is through coursework (essays), smallscale assessment tests (for example, quizzes, political blogging, writing policy briefs, seminar logs) and examinations. Where essays are used, they are compulsory. Written feedback on essays is provided within three weeks of submission, and students have the opportunity to clarify any feedback by contacting their lecturers and seminar leaders.

### **Learning outcomes (what you can expect to achieve)**

'Learning outcomes' indicate what you should be able to know or do at the end of your course. Providing them helps you to understand what your teachers will expect and also the learning requirements upon which you will be assessed.

#### **On successful completion of the foundation year programme you will be able to:**

- Articulate at a foundational level key concepts in some of the disciplines offered in Social Sciences, History and Philosophy.
- Undertake academic reading, writing, research and assessment skills appropriate to the study of those disciplines
- Understand other key learning skills required for university-level study and know of how to access support at Birkbeck to develop these.

#### **On successful completion of the BA programme you will be able to:**

- Demonstrate knowledge of politics in a number of different societies;
- Employ comparative analysis in the study of political institutions and practices across different societies and regions;
- Demonstrate a developed knowledge of various theories of politics drawn from political science, political theory and other disciplines in the social sciences;
- Recognise the importance of political practice and how this shapes and is shaped by large scale political institutions and processes;
- Demonstrate developed skills of enquiry and analysis in politics and social science;
- Demonstrate a capacity to communicate clearly ideas and arguments about politics both orally and in writing; and

- Where appropriate, employ skills developed in the course of study in public and vocational settings.

### **Careers and further study**

You will find Politics graduates in the following kinds of roles:

- research positions in universities and other public and private research bodies;
- jobs in central and local government, trades unions, political parties, NGOs and international organisations;
- (political) journalism;
- political/civic activism;
- political consultancy; and
- teaching in secondary education.

Birkbeck's BA Politics graduates will complete with a set of valuable attributes, for example:

- The ability to work as part of a team
- High-level oral and written communication skills in English
- Research skills
- Skills in evaluating and assessing types of information
- The ability to present yourself and an argument

Birkbeck offers a range of careers support to its students. You can find out more on [the careers pages of our website](#).

### **Academic regulations and course management**

Birkbeck's academic regulations are contained in its [Common Award Scheme Regulations](#) and Policies published by year of application on the Birkbeck website.

You will have access to a course handbook on Moodle and this will outline how your course is managed, including who to contact if you have any questions about your module or course.

### **Support for your study**

Your learning at Birkbeck is supported by your teaching team and other resources and people in the College there to help you with your study. Birkbeck uses a virtual learning environment called Moodle and each course has a dedicated Moodle page and there are further Moodle sites for each of your modules. This will include your course handbook.

Birkbeck will introduce you to the Library and IT support, how to access materials online, including using Moodle, and provide you with an orientation which includes an online Moodle module to guide you through all of the support available. You will also be allocated a personal tutor and provided with information about learning support offered within your School and by the College.

[Please check our website for more information about student support services](#). This covers the whole of your time as a student with us including learning support and support for your wellbeing.

### **Quality and standards at Birkbeck**

Birkbeck's courses are subject to our quality assurance procedures. This means that new courses must follow our design principles and meet the requirements of our academic

regulations. Each new course or module is subject to a course approval process where the proposal is scrutinised by subject specialists, quality professionals and external representatives to ensure that it will offer an excellent student experience and meet the expectation of regulatory and other professional bodies.

You will be invited to participate in an online survey for each module you take. We take these surveys seriously and they are considered by the course team to develop both modules and the overall courses. Please take the time to complete any surveys you are sent as a student.

We conduct an annual process of reviewing our portfolio of courses which analyses student achievement, equality data and includes an action plan for each department to identify ongoing enhancements to our education, including changes made as a result of student feedback.

Our periodic review process is a regular check (usually every four years) on the courses by department with a specialist team including students.

Each course will have an external examiner associated with it who produces an annual report and any recommendations. Students can read the most recent external examiner reports on the course Moodle pages. Our courses are all subject to Birkbeck Baseline Standards for our Moodle module information. This supports the accessibility of our education including expectations of what information is provided online for students.

The information in this programme specification has been approved by the College's Academic Board and every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information it contains.

Programme specifications are reviewed periodically. If any changes are made to courses, including core and/or compulsory modules, the relevant department is required to provide a revised programme specification. Students will be notified of any changes via Moodle.

Further information about specifications and an archive of programme specifications for the College's courses is [available online](#).

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