

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

Name, title and level of final qualification(s)	Cert HE Politics and International Studies (Level 4)
Name and title of any exit qualification(s)	N/A
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 (1 year) Part-time (2 years) September
Professional, statutory or regulatory body	N/A
QAA subject benchmark group(s) Higher Education Credit Framework for England	N/A
Birkbeck Course Code	UEHPOLIS
HECoS Code	100489
Start date of programme	Autumn 2011
Date of programme approval	Summer 2011
Date of last programme amendment approval	April 2023
Valid for academic entry year	2025-26
Programme Director	Ali Burak Guven
Date of last revision to document	18 April 2023

Admissions requirements

All modules are taught at university level and you should be able to read, write and speak English fluently.

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.

Course aims

What are the main issues in politics and international relations today? This Politics and International Studies Certificate of Higher Education allows you to develop an understanding of the nature of politics and government in contemporary societies. You will compare and contrast the institutions and practices of government in different societies, and analyse different theories of politics and government.

You will also address various international topics, learn about the processes that give rise to international conflict and the ways in which co-operation is promoted, and explore the impact of globalisation on political, economic and social life. This course will also teach you the skills to continue onto further study in politics and the social sciences.

The programme

- provides an introduction to the fields of political science and international relations
- Improves general knowledge of domestic and international political affairs and processes.

Course structure

Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credit	Comp Core/ Option	Likely teaching term(s)
Full-time – 1 year					
4	SSPO017S4	Foundations of Social and Political Science	30	Compulsory	T1-3
4	SSPO265S4	Transformations in Modern Politics: Democracy, Conflict and Globalisation	30	Compulsory	T2
4	FFPO956S4 OR SSPO118S4	Comparative Government OR Introduction to Global Politics	30	Compulsory	T3 T1
4		Option (1 x 30 credits chosen from list below)	30	Option	T1, 2 or 3
Part-time – 2 years					
Year 1					
4	SSPO017S4	Foundations of Social and Political Science	30	Compulsory	T1-3
4	SSPO265S4	Transformations in Modern Politics: Democracy, Conflict and Globalisation	30	Compulsory	T2

Year 2					
4	FFPO956S4	Comparative Government	30	Compulsory	T3
4	OR SSPO118S4	Introduction to Global Politics			T1
4		Option (1 x 30 credits chosen from list below)	30	Option	T1, 2 or 3 (st max 30 credits per term)
Indicative options*:					
4	FFPO956S4	Comparative Government	30	Option	T3
4	SSPO118S4	Introduction to Global Politics	30	Option	T1
4	SSPO137S4	Governing by Numbers	30	Option	T1
4	SSPL234S4	Knowledge and Reality	30	Option	T1
4	HICL200S4	Approaching the Past	30	Option	T1-3
*Note: the above is a provisional list that may be subject to change. Students may take a level 4 option, available for modular enrolment, from across the school.					

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.

Teaching on this course is a combination of lectures and seminars. Lectures are designed to provide you with an outline or overview of the topic, to engage you with the material and direct you to other resources. They are a springboard for your own learning. Seminars are group sessions where you will be asked to contribute to discussion or group work around the topic, with material set in advance for which you need to prepare.

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 coursework, essays and take-home tests.

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.

At the end of this course, you should be able to:

- understand and interpret current and historical events in domestic politics and international affairs
- demonstrate improved skills in reading, writing and speaking about current affairs
- begin to use theories to analyse topical issues and events.

Careers and further study

Our graduates go on to careers in:

- local and national government
- the diplomatic service
- policy work
- the voluntary sector
- research
- journalism.

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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