

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

Name, title and level of final qualification(s)	MRes Politics (Level 7)
Name and title of any exit qualification(s)	PG Dip Politics PG Cert Politics
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	TMRPOLTC_C
HECoS Code	100491
Start date of programme	Autumn 2009
Date of programme approval	Summer 2009
Date of last programme amendment approval	November 2022
Valid for academic entry year	2025-26
Date of last revision to document	11/7/22

Admissions requirements

A second class honours degree (2:2 or above) in a related area, or relevant experience combined with an adequate academic background (subject to interview).

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

- Provides quantitative and qualitative research methods training
- Flexible programme, allowing students to combine research training with any of the specialisms offered in politics at Master's level; allows students to pick and choose from the wide range of modules offered from the department's existing specialist programmes in Politics
- Ideal for students pursuing, or considering, a career in government or advisory bodies where research skills are required, or for students seeking to go on to an MPhil/PhD.
- This degree offers a higher level of flexibility for students than the specialist degrees and is potentially more suitable for students who are not certain about their preferred specialism or are interested in subjects across several specialisms.

Course structure

Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Status	Likely Teaching Term
Full-time – 1 year					
7	EITHER SSPO239H7, SSPO240H7 OR SSPO241H7	EITHER Introduction to Quantitative Social Research, Applied Social Data Analysis in R OR Advanced Topics in Quantitative Social Research	15	Core	1 2 3
7	EITHER SSPO242H7 OR SSPO243H7	Qualitative Social Research Methods OR Qualitative Research Design	15	Core	1 2
7		Two from the modules below not selected above.	30	Core	1,2,3
7	SSPO239H7	Introduction to Quantitative Social Research,	15		1
7	SSPO240H7	Applied Social Data Analysis in R,	15		2
7	SSPO245H7	Experiments in Social Science	15		3
7	SSPO242H7	Qualitative Social Research Methods	15		1
7	SSPO243H7	Qualitative Research Design	15		2
7	SSPO241H7	Advanced Topics in Quantitative Social Research	15		3
7		Optional module	30	Option	
7		Optional module	30	Option	
7	POSO072D7	Dissertation MRes Politics	60	Core	3
Part-Time – 2 years					
Year 1					
7	EITHER SSPO239H7, SSPO240H7 OR SSPO241H7	EITHER Introduction to Quantitative Social Research, Applied Social Data Analysis in R OR Advanced Topics in Quantitative Social Research	15	Core	1 2 3

7	EITHER SSPO242H7 OR SSPO243H7	Qualitative Social Research Methods OR Qualitative Research Design	15	Core	1 2
7		Optional module	30	Option	
Year 2					
7	SSPO239H7	Two from the modules below not selected above. Introduction to Quantitative Social Research, Applied Social Data Analysis in R, Experiments in Social Science Qualitative Social Research Methods Qualitative Research Design Advanced Topics in Quantitative Social Research	30	Core	1,2,3
7	SSPO240H7		15		1
7	SSPO245H7		15		2
7	SSPO242H7		15		3
7	SSPO243H7		15		1
7	SSPO241H7		15		2
7		Optional module	30	Option	1-3
7	POSO072D7	Dissertation	60	Core	3*

*In term 3 of year 1, part-time students undertake initial preparatory work for their dissertation which is completed at the end of the second year.

Indicative options

7	SSPO120S7	Emerging Powers in World Politics	30	Option	3
7	SSPO266S7	European and International Public Policy	30	Option	1
7	SSPO144S7	Food, Politics, and Society (level 7)	30	Option	1
7	POSO082S7	Global Politics, Governance and Security	30	Option	1
7	POSO044S7	Nationalism Religion and Conflict	30	Option	2
7	POSO025S7	Public Policy: Interests, Ideas, Institutions	30	Option	2
7	POSO020S7	Power and Politics in the UK	30	Option	1
7	POSO022S7	Political Theory and Contemporary Politics	30	Option	2
7	POSO035S7	War, Politics and Society	30	Option	2
7	POSO007S7	International Political Economy	30	Option	2

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 (pre-recorded) 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 mainly be through essays and online examinations (usually completed at home or in a workspace in college), but may also involve short written exercises, quizzes and multiple-choice questionnaires, practical assessments, case studies, or problems to solve.

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 have:

- Familiarity with a broad range of theoretical approaches in politics and the ways they are brought to bear on current political issues;
- Understanding of major lines of contestation and critique within politics, and how these relate to political debates in the wider world;
- An advanced knowledge of contemporary research in politics, including engagement with the research done by members of the teaching staff through their research-led teaching;
- An understanding of the main approaches to research design in politics, the issues they present and their implications for doing political research;
- Enhanced generic intellectual skills, particularly relating to clear and persuasive communication of ideas, and engagement with political arguments.

On successful completion of this programme a student will be expected to be able to:

- apply quantitative and qualitative methods to the study of politics
- demonstrate substantive knowledge of fields of politics, political theory, international relations and global politics, depending on the options taken

On successful completion of this programme students will be expected to have:

- obtained a good level of competence in applying qualitative and quantitative research methods
- extended and developed their analytical, evaluative and critical capacities
- demonstrated the ability to conduct an independent research project.
- developed their ability to obtain and analyse information from a wide array of sources

Careers and further study

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

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

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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