

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

Name, title and level of final qualification(s)	MSc Public Policy and Management (Level 7)
Name and title of any exit qualification(s)	PG Dip Public Policy and Management PG Cert Public Policy and Management 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 or online
Language of delivery and assessment	English
Mode of study, length of study and normal start month	Full-time (1 year) Part-time (2 years) October, January (on-campus study, referral only)
Professional, statutory or regulatory body	N/A
QAA subject benchmark group(s) Higher Education Credit Framework for England	N/A
Birkbeck Course Code	TMSPPMIP_C (on-campus study) TMSPPMMX_C (flexible study) TMSPPMON_C (online study) TMSPPMNJ_C (January start)
HECoS Code	100647 100090
Start date of programme	Autumn 1996
Date of programme approval	Spring 1996
Date of last programme amendment approval	August 2023
Valid for academic entry year	2025-26
Date of last revision to document	02/04/2025

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).

Course aims

This course addresses the central issues that face everyone participating in the public policy process, whether as advisers, civil servants, managers or campaigners. It is ideal for people working, or seeking a career, in public policy research and implementation in central and local government, or in other public and private organisations engaged in delivering government programmes, undertaking regulatory functions and participating in public policy processes.

The course provides an advanced understanding of the ideas, interests and institutions that contribute to the making of policy across a wide range of areas, including healthcare, society and social care, migration, the environment, education and macroeconomics.

The course provides insights into how policy choices are made, in comparison to policy developing by default, without clear choices or the establishment of priorities and strategies. Alongside this, it explores how the different parts of national and local government interact and how the private sector is involved in the implementation of public policy. Students will acquire the essential skills needed for the systematic analysis of government policies and for the professional practice of policy formulation and implementation.

The course is highly topical, considering up-to-the-minute concerns and real-world debates within contemporary UK politics.

Course structure

Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credit	Comp Core/ Option	Likely teaching term(s)
Full-time – 1 year, October start					
		Students must take at least 60 credits from the following list of compulsory modules:	60	Compulsory	
7	POSO025S7	Public Policy: Ideas, interests, institutions	30		T1
7	SC05003S7	Perspectives on public services and the public sector,	30		T1
7	BUEM087S7	Economics: Theory, Policy and Institutions	30		T1
7		Option modules	60	Option	T1, 2 or 3
7	SSPO244D7	Dissertation	60	Core	3
Part-time – 2 years, October start					
Year 1					
		Students must take at least 30 credits from the following list of compulsory modules:	30	Compulsory	
7	POSO025S7	Public Policy: Ideas, interests, institutions	30		T1
7	SC05003S7	Perspectives on public services and the public sector,	30		T1
7	BUEM087S7	Economics: Theory, Policy and Institutions	30		T1
7		Option module	30	Option	T2 or 3

Year 2					
		Students must take at least 30 credits from the following list of compulsory modules:	30	Compulsory	
7	POSO025S7	Public Policy: Ideas, interests, institutions	30		T1
7	TBC	Perspectives on public services and the public sector,	30		T1
7	BUEM087S7	Economics: Theory, Policy and Institutions	30		T1
7		Option module	30	Option	T2 or 3
7	SSPO244D7	Dissertation	60	Core	3
Full-time – 1 year, January start					
7		Option modules	60	Option	Spring, Summer/
		Students must take at least 60 credits from the following list of compulsory modules:	60	Compulsory	
7	POSO025S7	Public Policy: Ideas, interests, institutions	30		Autumn
7	SC05003S7	Perspectives on public services and the public sector	30		Autumn
7	BUEM087S7	Economics: Theory, Policy and Institutions	30		Autumn
7	SSPO244D7	Dissertation	60	Core	T3-1 (submission in Jan, one year after prog start)
Part-time – 2 years, Jan start					
Year 1					
		Students must take at least 30 credits from the following list of compulsory modules:	30	Compulsory	
7	POSO025S7	Public Policy: Ideas, interests, institutions	30		Autumn
7	SC05003S7	Perspectives on public services and the public sector	30		Autumn
7	BUEM087S7	Economics: Theory, Policy and Institutions	30		Autumn
7		Option module	30	Option	Spring, Summer
Year 2					
		Students must take at least 30 credits from the following compulsory modules:	30	Compulsory	
7	POSO025S7	Public Policy: Ideas, interests, institutions	30		Autumn
7	SC05003S7	Perspectives on public services and the public sector,	30		Autumn
7	BUEM087S7	Economics: Theory, Policy and Institutions	30		Autumn
7		Option module	30	Option	Spring, Summer
7	SSPO244D7	Dissertation	60	Core	T3-1 (submission in Jan, one year after prog start)
Indicative politics options:					
7	POSO007S7	International Political Economy*	30	Option	2

7	POSO082S7	Global Politics, Governance and Security	30	Option	1
7	POSO035S7	War, Politics and Society*	30	Option	2
7	SSPO144S7	Food, Politics and Society	30	Option	1
7	SSPO120S7	Emerging Powers in World Politics*	30	Option	3
7	POSO022S7	Political Theory & Contemporary Politics*	30	Option	2
7	SSPO263S7	Investigating the Social World*	30	Option	2
7	SC05003S7	Perspectives on Public Services and the Public Sector* (if not taken as a compulsory)	15	Option	3
7	POSO025S7	Public Policy: Ideas, interests, institutions* (if not taken as a compulsory)	30	Option	1
7	BUEM087S7	Economics: Theory, Policy and Institutions (if not taken as a compulsory)	30	Option	1-2
7	POSO044S7	Nationalism, Religion, and Conflict (in person)	30	Option	2
7	SSPO245H7	Experiments in Social Science*	15	Option	3
7	SSPO242H7	Qualitative Social Research Methods*	15	Option	1
7	SSPO243H7	Qualitative Research Design*	15	Option	2
7	SSPO239H7	Introduction to Quantitative Social Research	15	Option	1
7	SSPO240H7	Applied Social Data Analysis in R	15	Option	2
7	SSPO241H7	Advanced Topics in Quantitative Social Research	15	Option	3

All compulsory modules are delivered via hyflex allowing in-person and online attendance. Options marked with * are planned to be delivered via hyflex for 2025/6.

Note: option choices for students taking a fully online route through the programme are restricted to those being offered with an online seminar.

30 credits of options can be taken from the wider college, with some disciplinary restrictions.

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.

The programme is offered in person and there is also a fully online route. Students may also select to take some modules in-person and some online. Options for students taking the fully online route are restricted to modules offered in the Department with an online seminar (the core modules on the MSc International Security and Global Governance and selected others). Pre-recorded lectures are provided online for both in-person and online modes. In-person and online classes run once a week over 90 minutes

How we will assess you

The course will use a variety of assessment methods. 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.

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

- apply critically the key theories, models and concepts used in the study of politics to the analysis of politics and management in Britain;
- demonstrate substantive knowledge of the organisation of the public sector at the national and subnational level demonstrate a comparative and historical understanding of public policy-making and administration in contemporary Britain.

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

- extended and developed their analytical, evaluative and critical capacities
- demonstrated the ability to conduct an independent research project.

Careers and further study

You will find Public Policy and Management graduates in the following kinds of roles:

- research positions in universities and other public and private research bodies;
- teaching in higher, further, and secondary 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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