

### Programme Specification

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| 1  | <b>Awarding body</b>   | University of London   |
| 2  | <b>Teaching Institution</b>                                  | <b>Birkbeck College</b>  |
| 3  | <b>Programme Title(s)</b>                                    | <b>BA Politics, Philosophy and History</b>   |
| 4  | <b>Programme Code(s)</b>                                     | UUBAPOPH_C (3 years full-time)<br>UBAPOPHI_C (4 years part-time)<br>UBAPOPHD_C (6 years part-time) |
| 5  | <b>UCAS code</b>   | LV25   |
| 6  | <b>Home Department</b>                                       | Politics   |
| 7  | <b>Exit Award(s)</b>   | Dip HE, Cert HE  |
| 8  | <b>Duration of Study (number of years)</b>                   | 3 years full-time, 4 years part-time, 6 years decelerated  |
| 9  | <b>Mode of Study</b> (FT/PT/DL)                              | Full time and Part time  |
| 10 | <b>Level of Award (FHEQ)</b>                                 | 6  |
| 11 | <b>Other teaching depts or institution</b>                   | History, Classics and Archaeology (HCA),<br>Philosophy   |
| 12 | <b>Professional, Statutory Regulatory Body(PSRB) details</b> | N/A  |
| 13 | <a href="#"><u>QAA Benchmark Group</u></a>                   | N/A  |

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| 14 | <b>Programme Rationale &amp; Aims</b>  |
|    | <p>The BA Politics, Philosophy &amp; History brings together three subjects in a unique combination. The programme is interdisciplinary, drawing on three of Birkbeck's Departments, and is unified by three core courses taught by members of all three contributing Departments and taken by all students on the degree. These core courses bring the three disciplines together and focus on problems they share in common.</p> <p>The main aims are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. to enable mature students in full-time employment to undertake undergraduate study in Politics, Philosophy and History, in fulfilment of the mission of the College;</li> <li>2. to enable students to develop and deepen their understanding of the conceptual and theoretical bases of the three disciplines, their methods of inquiry, and their domains of knowledge, with particular emphasis on using the methods of philosophical inquiry as tools for examining the other two disciplines;</li> <li>3. to offer students the opportunity to develop and deepen their skills of critical evaluation and analysis; and</li> <li>4. to enable students to develop and extend their key skills as a foundation for personal development, employment or further academic study.</li> </ol> |

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| 15 | <b>Entry Criteria</b>   |
|    | <p>The UCAS tariff is 120–128 points. The UCAS tariff score is applicable for students who have recently studied a qualification that has a UCAS tariff equivalence. Students who fail to achieve the required grades in A-Levels may still be considered for entry if they demonstrate the required level of intellectual commitment and potential.</p> <p>Birkbeck also welcomes 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.</p>   |
| 16 | <b>Learning Outcomes</b>  |
|    | <p>Students completing the BA Politics, Philosophy &amp; History will have:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. demonstrated an ability to apply critically the main theories, models and concepts used in the three disciplines to the analysis of issues arising within and across those disciplines;</li> <li>2. demonstrated knowledge and understanding of:       <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) the social, political, cultural and intellectual changes that gave rise to the modern system of states;</li> <li>b) the origins of modern conceptions of the human and the challenges to which it has been subjected by philosophers, scientists and politicians; and</li> <li>c) the distinctive approaches of the disciplines of Politics, Philosophy and History to the logic of social explanation, problems of meaning, and issues of historiography and historical interpretation.</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. expanded and deepened their knowledge of each of the three disciplines via the completion of at least two full course units in each discipline;</li> <li>4. successfully completed an independent research project, where they have chosen the dissertation option as their final course unit;</li> <li>5. extended and developed their analytical, evaluative and critical capacities; and</li> <li>6. developed transferable skills, including the ability to take responsibility for their own learning, learning how to learn, making oral and written presentations, planning and producing written assignments, working independently, and, where they have so chosen, using information technology.</li> </ol> |
| 17 | <b>Learning, teaching and assessment methods</b>  |
|    | <p>Lecturers provide an overview of issues relevant to the subjects being studied. Seminars allow students to explore issues in depth and, where students work in or have experience of areas related to their course, their experiences enrich discussion. Both methods are used to develop subject knowledge and understanding, and to foster key skills and analytical skills. Learning outcomes are defined for all courses and weekly assignments specified in written</p>   |

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|  | <p>guidance that is distributed to students. Teaching, learning and assessment are regularly reviewed in the light of student feedback, student achievement, external examiners' reports and peer monitoring. Students frequently consult staff outside formal teaching hours, often by e-mail. Teaching is supported by comprehensive written guidance designed to support independent learning. A detailed course book for each course gives contact details of course tutors, describes intended learning outcomes, and includes a course outline, schedule, recommendations for weekly reading, and essential information about course organisation and assessment. Further materials are distributed in class, and guidelines on dissertations, revision and exam techniques are provided to students during the year.</p> <p><i>Assessment Methods:</i> A mixture of essays and unseen written examinations across the taught modules. In addition, students are required to complete zero-weighted essays and other assignments which provide valuable formative feedback. Essays enable students to read around a particular facet of a subject in depth; examinations provide an opportunity to test students' grasp of a wide range of material within a reasonably short assessment procedure.</p> |
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| 18 | <b>Programme Structure</b>  |
|    | <p><b>Description</b></p> <p>The BA Politics, Philosophy and History programme consists of 360 credits. Students take 30 credits from each department at level 4, two compulsory cross-disciplinary modules of 30 credits at level 5, and one compulsory cross-disciplinary module of 30 credits at level 6. Students take further options to the value of 180 credits, of which at least 90 credits must be at level 6. Options are usually taken equally from the three disciplines, i.e. 60 credits each in Politics, History and Philosophy respectively.</p> <p><b>The Compulsory Modules:</b></p> <p>Three cross-disciplinary modules are taught by members of all three Departments:</p> <p><i>Rise of the Modern State</i> (30 credits at level 5) examines the social, political, cultural and intellectual changes which gave rise to modern political systems in Europe.</p> <p><i>Conceptions of the Human from the Enlightenment to Today</i> (30 credits at level 5) focuses on the history of the human from the eighteenth century Enlightenment to current debates over biotechnology and the future of human nature.</p> <p><i>Problems of Explanation and Interpretation</i> (30 credits at level 6) examines the approaches of the three disciplines to the logic of social explanation, problems of meaning, interpretation, historiography and historical interpretation.</p> <p>In addition, students take 90 credits in level 4 modules:</p> <p>Approaching the Past (30 credits)<br/>     30 credits chosen from: Philosophy as the Art of Living: Modern Views (15 credits), Knowledge and Faith (15 credits), Identity, Mind and Free Will (15 credits)<br/>     Governing by Numbers (30 credits)</p> <p><b>Option modules</b></p> <p>The discipline-specific modules from the three departments offer both a wide range of choice and the possibility of concentrating on one of the three subjects. As a focused interdisciplinary degree PPH is quite unlike joint-honours degrees. Politics, Philosophy and History are disciplines which share broadly similar teaching styles and expectations,</p> |

|                                      | so students find little difficulty in moving between subjects. A wide range of options is available to PPH students. |  |         |            |
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| <b>Part-Time programme – 4 years</b> |  |  |         |            |
| <b>Year 1</b>                        |  |  |         |            |
| Level                                | Module Code  | Module Title   | Credits | Status*    |
| 4                                    | HICL200S4  | Approaching the Past   | 30      | Compulsory |
| 4                                    | SSPL016H4<br>SSPL012H4<br>SSPL011H4  | 30 credits from: Philosophy as the Art of Living: Modern Views (15 credits), Knowledge and Faith (15 credits), Identity, Mind and Free Will (15 credits) | 30      | Option     |
| 5                                    | POSO031S5<br>SSPO119S5   | <b>Either</b> Rise of the Modern State <b>Or</b> Conceptions of the Human  | 30      | Compulsory |
| <b>Year 2</b>                        |  |  |         |            |
| Level                                | Module Code  | Module Title   | Credits | Status*    |
| 4                                    | SSPO137S4  | Governing by Numbers   | 30      | Compulsory |
| 5                                    | POSO031S5<br>SSPO119S5   | <b>Either</b> Rise of the Modern State <b>Or</b> Conceptions of the Human  | 30      | Compulsory |
| 5 or 6                               |  | Option   | 30      | Option     |
| <b>Year 3</b>                        |  |  |         |            |
| Level                                | Module Code  | Module Title   | Credits | Status*    |
| 6                                    | POSO032S6  | Problems of Explanation and Interpretation   | 30      | Compulsory |
| 5 or 6                               |  | Option   | 30      | Option     |
| 5 or 6                               |  | Option   | 30      | Option     |
| <b>Year 4</b>                        |  |  |         |            |
| Level                                | Module Code  | Module Title   | Credits | Status*    |
| 6                                    | POSO024S6  | <b>Either</b> Dissertation <b>or</b> Option  | 30      | Option     |
| 6                                    |  | Option   | 30      | Option     |
| 6                                    |  | Option   | 30      | Option     |
| <b>Full-Time programme – 3 years</b> |  |  |         |            |
| <b>Year 1</b>                        |  |  |         |            |
| Level                                | Module Code  | Module Title   | Credits | Status*    |
| 4                                    | HICL200S4  | Approaching the Past   | 30      | Compulsory |
| 4                                    | SSPL016H4<br>SSPL012H4<br>SSPL011H4  | 30 credits from: Philosophy as the Art of Living: Modern Views (15 credits), Knowledge and Faith (15 credits), Identity, Mind and Free Will (15 credits) | 30      | Option     |
| 5                                    | POSO031S5<br>SSPO119S5   | <b>Either</b> Rise of the Modern State <b>Or</b> Conceptions of the Human from the Enlightenment to Today  | 30      | Compulsory |
| 5                                    |  | Option   | 30      | Option     |
| <b>Year 2</b>                        |  |  |         |            |

Year of entry: 2021/22

| Level                                | Module Code                         | Module Title   | Credits | Status*    |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|---------|------------|
| 4                                    | SSPO137S4                           | Governing by Numbers   | 30      | Compulsory |
| 5                                    | POSO031S5<br>SSPO119S5              | <b>Either</b> Rise of the Modern State <b>Or</b><br>Conceptions of the Human from the Enlightenment to Today   | 30      | Compulsory |
| 5 or 6                               |                                     | Option   | 30      | Option     |
| 5 or 6                               |                                     | Option   | 30      | Option     |
| <b>Year 3</b>                        |                                     |  |         |            |
| Level                                | Module Code                         | Module Title   | Credits | Status*    |
| 6                                    | POSO032S6                           | Problems of Explanation and Interpretation   | 30      | Compulsory |
| 6                                    |                                     | Option   | 30      | Option     |
| 6                                    |                                     | Option   | 30      | Option     |
| 6                                    | POSO024S6                           | <b>Either</b> Dissertation or Option   | 30      | Option     |
| <b>Part-time programme – 6 years</b> |                                     |  |         |            |
| <b>Year 1</b>                        |                                     |  |         |            |
| Level                                | Module Code                         | Module Title   | Credits | Status*    |
| 4                                    | HICL200S4                           | Approaching the Past   | 30      | Compulsory |
| 4                                    | SSPL016H4<br>SSPL012H4<br>SSPL011H4 | 30 credits from: Philosophy as the Art of Living: Modern Views (15 credits), Knowledge and Faith (15 credits), Identity, Mind and Free Will (15 credits) | 30      | Option     |
| <b>Year 2</b>                        |                                     |  |         |            |
| Level                                | Module Code                         | Module Title   | Credits | Status*    |
| 4                                    | SSPO137S4                           | Governing by Numbers   | 30      | Compulsory |
| 5                                    | POSO031S5<br>SSPO119S5              | <b>Either</b> Rise of the Modern State <b>Or</b><br>Conceptions of the Human from the Enlightenment to Today   | 30      | Compulsory |
| <b>Year 3</b>                        |                                     |  |         |            |
| Level                                | Module Code                         | Module Title   | Credits | Status*    |
| 5                                    | POSO031S5<br>SSPO119S5              | <b>Either</b> Rise of the Modern State <b>Or</b><br>Conceptions of the Human from the Enlightenment to Today   | 30      | Compulsory |
| 5 or 6                               |                                     | Option   | 30      | Option     |
| <b>Year 4</b>                        |                                     |  |         |            |
| Level                                | Module Code                         | Module Title   | Credits | Status*    |
| 6                                    | POSO032S6                           | <b>Either</b> Problems of Explanation and Interpretation <b>or</b> Option  | 30      | Compulsory |
| 5 or 6                               |                                     | Option   | 30      | Option     |
| <b>Year 5</b>                        |                                     |  |         |            |
| Level                                | Module Code                         | Module Title   | Credits | Status*    |
| 6                                    | POSO032S6                           | <b>Either</b> Problems of Explanation and Interpretation <b>or</b> Option  | 30      | Compulsory |
| 5 or 6                               |                                     | Option   | 30      | Option     |
| <b>Year 6</b>                        |                                     |  |         |            |

Year of entry: 2021/22

| Level | Module Code | Module Title                         | Credits | Status* |
|-------|-------------|--------------------------------------|---------|---------|
| 6     | POS0024S6   | <i>Either</i> Dissertation or Option | 30      | Option  |
| 6     |             | Option                               | 30      | Option  |

**Status\***

*CORE – Module must be taken and passed by student; COMPULSORY – Module must be taken, mark can be reviewed at sub-exam board  
OPTIONAL – Student can choose to take this module*

**Indicative list of options**

*Politics*

Contemporary British Politics  
 Introduction to International Political Economy  
 Democracy and Authoritarianism  
 War & Modern Society  
 Social and Political Theory  
 The Politics of European Integration  
 Food, Politics, and Society  
 Capitalism and the Politics of Markets  
 Parliamentary Studies  
 American Politics and Foreign Policy  
 British and Comparative Foreign Policy  
 Politics and the Middle East  
 Challenges in Contemporary Politics

*Philosophy (15 credit option modules)*

Epistemology  
 Metaphysics  
 Philosophy of Mind  
 Philosophy of Science  
 Social Epistemology  
 Philosophy of Psychology  
 Philosophy & Evolution  
 Philosophical Logic  
 Propositions and other Intentional Objects  
 Fiction and Language  
 Ethics  
 Political Philosophy  
 Art and Value  
 Philosophy, Business & Society  
 Gender & Philosophy  
 Morality, Nature & Evolution  
 Moral Responsibility  
 The Idea of Freedom;  
 The Power of Art: Historical Themes  
 Metaethics  
 History of Ancient Philosophy  
 History of Modern Philosophy  
 Philosophy of Kant  
 Berkeley & Leibniz  
 Aristotle's Biology and Ethics

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Nietzsche  
 Hegel  
 Adorno & Foucault  
 Biology of Evil  
 Philosophy of Spinoza  
 Early Modern Philosophy of Mind

*History*

Crime, Poverty and Protest in England and Beyond, 1500-1800  
 The Reconstruction of Europe 1945-50  
 People, Culture and Ideas in Modern Britain and Ireland  
 Britannia's Embrace: The British Empire and the World  
 The Colonial Gaze: Western Perceptions of Asia, Africa and the Middle East, 1600-1960  
 Work and Play in Early Modern Britain  
 Medicine and Power in Modern Africa  
 Intimate Britain: Family, Society and Culture, 1832-1918  
 A Hundred Years of the Russian Revolution, 1891-1991

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| <sup>19</sup> | <b>Programme Director</b>              | Sam Ashenden |
| <sup>20</sup> | <b>Start Date</b> ( <i>term/year</i> ) | Autumn 1988  |
| <sup>21</sup> | <b>Date approved by TQEC</b>           | Spring 1988  |
| <sup>22</sup> | <b>Date approved by Academic Board</b> | Summer 1988  |
| <sup>23</sup> | <b>Date(s) updated/amended</b>         | April 2020   |