

# PO206-30 Politics in the United Kingdom

22/23

## Department

Politics & International Studies

## Level

Undergraduate Level 2

## Module leader

Laura Gelhaus

## Credit value

30

## Module duration

20 weeks

## Assessment

100% coursework

## Study location

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

---

## Description

### Introductory description

This is a module about politics and power in the United Kingdom. It has perhaps never been more important, or exciting, to deepen our understanding of politics in the UK. Recent years have seen an upheaval in the major political parties, a major financial crisis and the deployment of austerity policies, an increased use in referendums to address major constitutional questions, and revived protest politics on both the left and the right. This module takes a systematic approach to understand all of these changes, combining both historical and comparative lenses to illuminate contemporary UK politics.

### Module aims

The first aim of this module is to provide you with an understanding of Politics as they are conducted within the UK. The intention is to move beyond journalistic or narrowly descriptive accounts of politics in the UK towards an understanding of political processes which involves evaluation and explanation. You will be expected to familiarise yourself with some necessary elements of institutional and historical fact but, what is more important, you will be expected to acquire the skill necessary to evaluate rival explanatory accounts. The essence of success in the module is to be measured by your awareness of rival accounts and your ability to judge between

them. Secondly, you will develop a level of understanding of comparative politics, including an appreciation of the methodology of comparison and its usefulness in understanding politics in a single state.

## Outline syllabus

This is an indicative module outline only to give an indication of the sort of topics that may be covered. Actual sessions held may differ.

Weeks 1 to 13 will present a historical and institutional overview of UK Politics. First, a historical overview will be presented, including the post-war consensus, Thatcherism, New Labour, the coalition government and devolution. Then, the students will be familiarised with the institutional context of UK politics, including elections, parties, the core executive, parliament, and other avenues of political influence. Weeks 14 to 20 will discuss current policy debates, including race, class, gender, sexuality, austerity, Brexit, globalisation, and foreign policy.

## Learning outcomes

By the end of the module, students should be able to:

- Demonstrate familiarity with the constitutional apparatus of UK politics
- Show an awareness of rival interpretations of the current state of politics in the UK
- Show an ability to examine the politics of the UK within a comparative context
- Show an awareness of the most important political constraints affecting the conduct of UK government in a range of policy sectors
- Show an appreciation of the extent to which UK politics are affected by external economic and political constraints
- Show an understanding of the role played by gender, class and race in the shaping of politics of the UK.

## Indicative reading list

tbc

## Subject specific skills

The module provides students with opportunities to acquire or develop the following key skills:  
Understanding of the political system of the United Kingdom

Political research

Comparative research

Producing literature reviews

## Transferable skills

The module provides students with opportunities to acquire or develop the following key skills:

Communication skills, including both written and oral presentation skills

Lateral thinking skills

Skills in the distillation and application of complex information and ideas

Critical thinking

Analytical skills

Independent research skills

Problem solving

Time management

Information Technology

Skills in academic practice

Awareness of, and sensitivity to, diversity

Decision making

Assessing and managing information

---

## Study

### Study time

Type	Required
Lectures	22 sessions of 1 hour (7%)
Seminars	22 sessions of 1 hour (7%)
Private study	256 hours (85%)
Total	300 hours

### Private study description

tbc

## Costs

No further costs have been identified for this module.

---

## Assessment

You do not need to pass all assessment components to pass the module.

Students can register for this module without taking any assessment.

### Assessment group A

<b>Weighting</b>	<b>Study time</b>	<b>Eligible for self-certification</b>
------------------	-------------------	----------------------------------------

**Assessment component**

1000 word article review 20% Yes (extension)

A review of one of the recommended readings for weeks 1-10.

**Reassessment component is the same**

**Assessment component**

2000 word word essay 40% Yes (extension)

2000 word essay on one of the topics from weeks 1-14, excluding the week on which a student completed their literature review.

**Reassessment component is the same**

**Assessment component**

2000 word policy brief 40% Yes (extension)

A policy brief on one of the topics from weeks 15-20.

**Reassessment component is the same**

## **Feedback on assessment**

PAIS feedback form and verbal feedback.

---

## **Availability**

## **Courses**

This module is Core optional for:

- Year 2 of UPOA-M100 Undergraduate Politics
- Year 2 of UPOA-M164 Undergraduate Politics, International Studies and German

This module is Optional for:

- Year 2 of UECA-3 Undergraduate Economics 3 Year Variants
- Year 2 of UECA-4 Undergraduate Economics 4 Year Variants
- Year 2 of UECA-LM1D Undergraduate Economics, Politics and International Studies
- Year 2 of UPHA-V7ML Undergraduate Philosophy, Politics and Economics
- Year 2 of UPOA-M100 Undergraduate Politics
- Year 2 of UPOA-M16A Undergraduate Politics and International Studies
- Year 2 of UPOA-M169 Undergraduate Politics and International Studies with Chinese (3 year)
- Year 2 of UPOA-M164 Undergraduate Politics, International Studies and German
- Year 2 of UPOA-M162 Undergraduate Politics, International Studies and Quantitative Methods

This module is Option list A for:

- Year 2 of UPOA-M168 Undergraduate Politics and International Studies with Chinese
- Year 2 of UPOA-M169 Undergraduate Politics and International Studies with Chinese (3 year)
- Year 2 of UPOA-ML13 Undergraduate Politics and Sociology
- UPOA-M163 Undergraduate Politics, International Studies and French
  - Year 2 of M163 Politics, International Studies and French
  - Year 3 of M163 Politics, International Studies and French
- UPOA-M164 Undergraduate Politics, International Studies and German
  - Year 2 of M164 Politics, International Studies and German
  - Year 3 of M164 Politics, International Studies and German
- UPOA-M166 Undergraduate Politics, International Studies and Hispanic Studies
  - Year 2 of M166 Politics, International Studies and Hispanic Studies
  - Year 3 of M166 Politics, International Studies and Hispanic Studies
- UPOA-M165 Undergraduate Politics, International Studies and Italian
  - Year 2 of M165 Politics, International Studies and Italian
  - Year 3 of M165 Politics, International Studies and Italian

This module is Option list C for:

- Year 2 of UHIA-VM11 Undergraduate History and Politics

This module is Option list D for:

- Year 2 of UHIA-VM11 Undergraduate History and Politics
- Year 2 of UHIA-VM13 Undergraduate History and Politics (with a term in Venice)

This module is Option list E for:

- Year 2 of UPHA-V7MW Undergraduate Politics, Philosophy and Law