Programme Specification for BA (Hons) Politics: People and Power

1.	Awarding institution/body	University of Worcester			
2.	Teaching institution	University of Worcester			
3.	Programme accredited by	N/A			
4.	Final award	BA (Hons)			
5.	Programme title	Politics: People and Power			
6.	Pathways available	Joint, Minor			
7.	Mode and/or site of delivery	University of Worcester			
8.	Mode of attendance	Full and part time, some evening attendance required			
9.	UCAS Code	Joint Honours:			
		History and Politics: People & Power BA - VL12 BA/HPPP			
		Journalism and Politics: People & Power BA - PL52 BA/JPPP			
		Media & Culture and Politics: People & Power BA - PL32 BA/MCSPPP			
		Politics: People & Power and Sociology BA - LL23 BA/PPPS			
		Human Geography and Politics: People & Power BA - 7L1L			
10.	Subject Benchmark statement and/or professional body statement				
		<u>S-politics-15.pdf</u>			
11.	Date of Programme Specification preparation/ revision	January 2013 March 2014 - Change of title for HIST2105 April 2014 - JOIN coded modules added to Level 6 JH options. August 2014 and October 2014 – regulations amended. January 2016 – HIST3110 removed and replaced with HIST3120. HIST3103 added. POLP3101 status changed to optional for minor pathways and explanatory notes for joint pathway requirements at Level 6 amended. POLP3102 module code changed to POLP3103.			
		March 2016 - MECS3008 added, minor updating throughout			

12 Educational aims of the programme:

The course is an interesting and stimulating examination of political life. The Worcester course is distinctive, as it also includes political insights from History and Sociology, and is more engaging to students than any pre-conceptions about 'politics' might suggest. The course's main concern is not the mechanics of formal political procedures, but rather argument about matters of real significance to 'ordinary' citizens. In particular, it studies the broader forces ('power') which determine 'who gets what, where, when, and how' in society, and the wider social, economic and cultural contexts and impacts of political processes.

In summary, the aims of the Politics: People and Power course are:

- To enable students to analyse the exercise of power within society, especially in relation to political activities and debates about 'governance', public policy, and the distribution of power and resources.
- To foster the use of explanatory and normative theory to evaluate interpretations of issues, events, values and ideas.
- To help students to apply the concepts and insights offered by the academic subject of Politics in order to interpret and evaluate a range of political phenomena and ideas.
- To draw insights from cognate academic disciplines to explore the historic, social, and cultural contexts of contemporary political phenomena.
- To provide students with a structured learning experience which combines the required breadth and progression of understanding with depth through opportunities to select modules in pursuit of coherent lines of enquiry.
- To develop in students cognitive, affective, personal and practical capacities as a sound basis for continued learning in their subsequent careers and for participation in the society/communities to which they belong.

13 Intended learning outcomes and learning, teaching and assessment methods

On successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- 1. analyse and think critically about political and policy-making processes, bringing academic insights to bear on questions of public concern;
- 2. interpret contemporary and historical political issues within the UK and elsewhere;
- 3. evaluate evidence and argument, making use of appropriate academic approaches, concepts and tools;
- 4. research material from a variety of sources (including academic books and journals, the internet and news media, and real-life observation), and synthesise these into a coherent argument;
- 5. communicate effectively in a range of written and oral forms, and in a variety of formal and less formal contexts, assisted by technology wherever appropriate;
- 6. show self-reliance and independence of judgment, and a willingness to work cooperatively with others, including students from different academic backgrounds;
- show positive and responsible attitudes to study and research, the ability to respond to guidance by tutors and learning processes involving 'active learning' and 'learner autonomy', and thus a commitment to operate as an effective independent learner;
- 8. approach topics in depth, synthesising and developing learning from different sources, including material derived from taught modules;
- 9. apply learning from the course to develop themselves as people, including planning their future careers and other forms of participation in the wider community.

Examples of methods used to achieve each of the course's learning outcomes:

- 1-3 seminars include not only discussions and debates, but also formative preassessment tasks; formal assessments include document analyses, reflective essays, critical reports, and presentations.
- 4 mandatory and optional modules expose students to a wide range of learning materials such as traditional academic texts, print and visual media, the internet and social media, documentary and audio visual primary sources and to utilise these for a wide range of assessments.
- 5 writing techniques are taught in mandatory module POLP1101; and can be further studied in option module LANG1002; with some assignments there is a requirement to draft and redraft; oral presentation skills are developed via seminar discussion.
- 6 although assignments are normally prepared individually, oral presentations may involve group work. Seminars are routinely based upon group work.
- 7 seminar tasks develop study and research skills, especially in the mandatory module POLP2101 which explicitly studies research methodology. While extensive tutor support is offered for assignments at Level 4, students are expected to operate increasingly independently as they progress through the course.
- 8 an independent project (or equivalent) is required in the final year via module POL3101 with tutor support.
- 9 the seminar tasks and variety of assignments are designed to support students in acquiring a wide range of transferable skills and qualities. Personal Academic Tutorials and Careers' sessions in Worcester Weeks further support students' career planning Students also have the opportunity to take the Politics Work Project module, POLP2105.

The learning, teaching and assessment methods used on the course include the following features:

- Stimulating source material: The taught modules usually include some conventional lectures, to stimulate and motivate students and to guide them through subsequent general reading. However, the source material in modules is not confined to lectures, but includes structured and general reading, and in some modules video case studies, guest speakers, visits, observation or interviews.
- Active learning: The skills of analysis and evaluation are developed not by passive absorption of ideas, but by interactive strategies to ensure that students engage with the material e.g. seminar discussions and team presentations, and sometimes other methods such as role-play. As well as cognitive skills, these also develop other important qualities such as inter-personal and communicative skills.
- **Blended learning:** Although all modules have class-based sessions, on-line learning is an important element of most of them. All modules have a Blackboard page which students can use not only to access information, but also to interact with each other and with the tutor in collaborative learning. They can also access electronically an increasing range of library sources including an extensive range of journal articles.

14 Assessment Strategy

- Assessment process: For each module they undertake, students receive a module outline detailing the assessment requirements: this lists the assessment criteria against which their work will be judged. The grade awarded is based on UW's standard grade descriptors.
- Variety of assessments: The assessments are designed not only to test students' learning, but also to be a vital part of the learning experience, and a range of

assessment tasks and styles is used because the course's modules aim to develop a wide variety of skills. Students are assessed predominantly through individual written assignments, including not only the conventional forms of essay and seminar paper, but also other written forms (for example, briefing-papers). Students also experience assessment through such methods as oral presentations.

• **Tests and examinations:** Most modules in the course have forms of assessment other than tests or examinations. The Team strongly believes that this is justified: the other assessment methods have been selected to be rigorous enough to meet the main objectives claimed for test and exams, while testing a variety of skills which tests and exams cannot.

However, test or examination - type assessments form part of a small number of modules (eg. HIST1104): these have a useful role in assessing certain kinds of material and also provide students with experience of having to perform under pressure and they are one way of verifying that students can show appropriate skills without relying on having texts to hand.

- Formative assessment: In line with the University's assessment policy, in all modules in the course there is one or more opportunity for students to try out their ideas and get some feedback on them, prior to submitting their assessment. This is done in various ways, including feedback on seminar presentations or discussions, and in tutorials or via email. In some modules, students formally submit part of their assignment in draft.
- **Prevention of plagiarism:** Assignments on many of the modules have been designed so that there is reduced possibility of students plagiarising, either from fellow students or from the internet. Tutors also check rigorously for plagiarism. Some use of in-class tests (or exams) and/or tutor involvement at draft stage referred to above further add to the precautions against plagiarism.

15 **Programme structures and requirements**

The course is available in full and part-time modes. Students may combine their study of Politics with another subject in Joint or Major/Minor combination.

Award map

Course Title: Politics: People and Power Year of entry: 2013/14 onwards

Level 4					
Module Code	Module Title	Credits (Number)	Status (Mandatory (M) or Optional (O))	Pre-requisites (Code of Module	Co-requisites/exclusions and other notes
			Joint Hons	required)	
POLP1101	Democracy: Past, Present and Future	30	М	None	Excluded combination SOCG1105
GEOG1122	Unequal World	15	0	None	None
HIST1104	Ideology and Conflict in Europe Since 1789	30	0	None	None
HIST1106	Twentieth-Century Britain: conflict, stability and change	15	0	None	None
SOCG1106	Welfare for All? the story of a dream	15	0	None	None
LANG1002	Improving English Usage and Style in Academic Writing	15	0	None	None
LANG1210	French Stage 1	15	0	None	None
LANG1230	German Stage 1	15	0	None	None
LANG1250	Spanish Stage 1	15	0	None	None

Joint Honours Requirements at Level 4

Joint Honours students must take 60 credits from the table above to include POLP1101 (30 Credits). Joint Honours students may take only one LANG coded module.

Level 5						
Module Code	Module Title	Credits (Number)	Status (Mandatory (M) or Optional (O))		Pre- requisites (Code of	Co-requisites/exclusions and other notes
			JH	Min	Module required)	
POLP2101	Pathways in Politics	30	М	М	None	None
POLP2105	Politics Work Project	15	0	0	None	Excluded combination SOCG2110
GEOG2131	Geographies of Development	15	0	0	None	None
HIST2103	Twentieth-Century USA	30	0	0	None	None
HIST2105	The German Lands in the Nineteenth Century	30	0	0	None	Excluded combination HIST2115
HIST2118	Politics, Religion and Society in Ireland, 1690-1848	15	0	0	None	Excluded combination HIST2102
HIST2119	Politics and Society in Twentieth-Century Russia	15	0	0	None	None
JOUR2006	Reporting Politics I	15	0	0	None	None
SOCG2105	Campaign Power - People, Pressure Groups and Social Debates	15	0	0	None	None
SOCG2109	'Race' and Ethnicity in Contemporary Britain	15	0	0	None	None

Joint, Major and Minor Honours Requirements at Level 5

Students following Joint Honours pathways can adjust their studies at level 5 to take more modules in one subject or can maintain an equally balanced programme of modules in each subject. The precise award title (Joint Hons or Major/Minor Hons) depends on the total number of credit achieved in each subject at levels 5 and 6 – for further information see the table at the end of this document.

Joint Pathway Requirements at Level 5

Joint pathway students must take at least 45 credits and no more than 75 credits from the table above to include POLP2101 (30 credits).

Minor Pathway Requirements at Level 5 Minor Pathway students must take at least 30 credits and no more than 60 credits from the table above to include POLP2101 (30 credits).

Level 6						
Module Code	Module Title	Credits (Number)	Status (Mandatory (M) or Optional (O))		Pre- requisites (Code of	Co-requisites/ exclusions and other notes
			JH	Min	Module required)	
POLP3101	Politics Independent Project	15	0	NA	None	None
POLP3103	Challenging Politics: people versus power across the globe	15	М	М	None	None
GEOG3131	Political Geography	15	0	0	None	None
HIST3103	Nationalism	15	0	0	None	None
HIST3112	Propaganda and Politics in the 20th Century	15	0	0	None	None
HIST3120	British Imperialism c. 1784-1972	30	0	0	None	None
JOUR3004	Reporting Politics II	15	0	0	JOUR2006	None
SOCG3104	Response to Crime: The Justice Process	15	0	0	None	None
SOCG3110	'Race', Ethnicity and Education	15	0	0	None	None
SOCG3112	Risk Society	15	0	0	None	None
SOCG3113	Constructing Emotions: social / political perspectives	15	0	0	None	None
MECS3008	War Democracy and the media	15	0	0	None	None

Joint, Major and Minor Honours Requirements at Level 6

Students following pathways in two subjects can adjust their studies at level 6 to take more modules in one subject or can maintain an equally balanced programme of modules in each subject. The precise award title (Joint Hons or Major/Minor Hons) depends on the total number of credit achieved in each subject at levels 5 and 6 – for further information see table at the end of this document.

Joint Pathway Requirements at Level 6

Joint pathway students must take 45, 60 or 75 credits (to make at least 105 credits over levels 5 and 6 in the subject, and no more than 135 credits over levels 5 and 6 in the subject), from the table above to include POLP3103 Joint pathway students who choose to take their Independent Study (or equivalent) in this subject must take POLP3101.

Joint pathway students must take one Independent Study (or equivalent) either in this subject, in their other joint subject or take JOIN 3001/2 or JOIN 3003 where an Independent Study covers both joint subjects.

Minor Pathway Requirements at Level 6

Minor pathway students must take either 30 or 45 credits from the table above to include POLP3103 (15 credits) and excluding POLP 3101

Credit requirements for awards involving two subjects

In determining whether an award derived from two subjects is Joint Honours (subject 1 <u>and</u> subject 2) or Major/Minor Honours (subject 1 <u>with</u> subject 2) credits taken in each subject at levels 5 and 6 will count as follows:

Subject 1	Subject 2	Award
120	120	Joint Hons
135	105	Joint Hons
150	90	Major/minor Hons
165	75	Major/minor Hons
180	60	Major/minor Hons

16 QAA and Professional Academic Standards and Quality

Although Politics: People and Power is not a single honours course, the programme is designed to comply with the recommendations of the relevant sections of the current (2015) QAA honours degree benchmark statement for Politics and International Relations. This can be found at:

http://www.gaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Documents/SBS-politics-15.pdf

The course handbook indicates how the relevant recommendations are addressed in the course. The award is located at level 6 of the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ.)

17 Support for students

The Politics Course Team is committed to ensuring that all students are given consideration and support throughout their time at the University of Worcester.

Students' transition into university life is assisted by an initial short, one week induction programme which, through a range of activities, introduces students to their course, the staff who will be teaching them, and the Institute. Students are, for example, invited to attend the Institute of Humanities and Creative Arts (IHCA) Fresher's Party in Welcome Week.

During this initial Welcome Week, and in the first Worcester Week, students are involved in a range of activities which support them in developing an understanding of the expectations of their course, undergraduate study and the University's systems and services. They have talks or tours, for example, which introduce them to the Hive (i.e. the University's library), and IT facilities, Media Services, the Careers and the Counselling Service.

Students are also provided with a brief induction into their second and third year in the mandatory modules POLP2101 and POLP3103.

In addition, the Institute for Humanities and Creative Arts monitors attendance closely in the first year and provides support for students through the First Year Tutor system. This comprises dedicated members of staff who are available every day for drop-in sessions during the semester between 12:00 & 14:00 and provide on-line support.

All students are allocated a Personal Academic Tutor who will advise them on issues related to their course throughout their study at the University and who monitors their progress. Personal Academic Tutor sessions take two forms: one-to-one sessions where notes are taken and stored on SOLE, and group sessions in the mandatory modules where general points and issues relating to the course are dealt with. Students are invited to meet their Personal Academic Tutor twice a semester.

Staff teaching students on modules support students through one-to-one and small group tutorials, and provide students with clear indications of times they will be available to see students; they do this either via notices on their office door, or via email or in module outlines.

Students are further supported through a range of on-line support, for example via email. All modules are supported through the virtual learning environment, Blackboard, and Course information is available via Blackboard too.

Furthermore, the Course Team liaises with a range of centrally provided support services to ensure that students access all appropriate channels of support, for example:

- The Disability and Dyslexia Service within Student Services offers specialist support on a one to one basis - <u>http://www.worcester.ac.uk/student-services/disability-anddyslexia.htm</u>.
- Writing support from the Royal Literary Fund Writer in Residence.
- Writing support, for international and EU students, from the Language Centre http://www.worcester.ac.uk/your-home/humanities-language-centre.html
- The Students' Union which, as an independent charity devoted to the educational interests and welfare of all students studying at the University, represents student views within the University - <u>http://www.worcsu.com/</u>

18 Admissions

Admissions Policy

The admissions policy for Politics: People and Power seeks to be inclusive, and the course is committed to widening participation to include all groups in society.

Entry requirements

The University's standard entry requirements apply: 4 GCSEs (Grade C or above) plus 120 Tariff points from a minimum of 2 and maximum of 3½ A Levels or equivalent Level 3 qualifications.

See UW Admissions Policy for other acceptable qualifications.

The current UCAS Tariff requirements for entry to the course are published in the prospectus. <u>http://www.worcester.ac.uk/journey/request-a-prospectus.html</u>

Recognition of Prior Learning

Details of acceptable level 3 qualifications, policy in relation to mature students or applicants with few or no formal qualifications can be found in the prospectus or on the University webpages. Information on eligibility for recognition of prior learning for the purposes of entry or advanced standing is also available from the <u>University webpages</u> or from the Registry Admissions Office (01905 855111).

Admissions procedures

Full-time applicants apply through UCAS (see Section 9 above for list of codes). Part-time applicants apply directly to University of Worcester (UW) Applicants may be invited to interview to explore any aspect of their application that may require further clarification.

Admissions/selection criteria

The UCAS application form is used to ensure that the applicant has sufficient academic qualifications and experience to be able to engage with the course.

19 Methods for evaluating and improving the quality and standards of teaching and learning:

The Politics Course Team is committed to a combination of formal and informal methods of Quality Assurance and Enhancement and operates within robust University and IHCA quality mechanisms.

The Course Team draws upon a range of evidence to reflect upon the quality and standards of the teaching and learning and to write an Annual Evaluation Report (AER). These include:

- External Examiner's reports
- statistical indicators of student progression and achievement

• a range of indicators of student satisfaction including the NSS, module evaluations and the University of Worcester Student Survey (UWSS).

Reflection upon this material enables the Course Team to produce an action plan for future enhancements to the course and student experience.

In writing the AER, the Course Team benefits of from utilising feedback gathered from students throughout the academic year on their levels of satisfaction with the study experience and the extent to which their learning needs are being met. The mechanisms used for this include the following:

- Student Academic Representatives (StARs) Students elect representatives for each year of the course. Their role is to gather students' opinions about the learning experience and the learning resources available and feed these back to course staff, and to the External Examiner. The course representatives are members of the Course Management Committee and as such have a proactive and significant role in the development of the course.
- **Course Management Committee** The committee comprises student representatives, course tutors and Information and Learning Services staff from the University of Worcester. Meetings take place once each semester (usually in week 10). An agenda is issued in advance so that representatives can canvass opinion. The records of the meetings are kept and will feed into the annual monitoring process, so that students' views are fed through to the University of Worcester Academic Board.
- **Module evaluation** At any point during the module students have the opportunity to feed back to module tutors, and all modules undertake informal mid-module evaluations. At the end of a module students are asked to complete the University of Worcester module evaluation form. This feedback is anonymous and is intended to give the tutors insight into how to make improvements in the future to that module. The forms are electronically scanned to calibrate student responses and the statistical data, student comments and the module results are all drawn upon by the module leader in writing their module report. These reports are read by the Chair of the Institute of Humanities and Creative Arts (IHCA) Quality Committee and course leaders and are also made available to students on the module. Module evaluation results and reports are discussed at the IHCA Quality Committee, Course Management Committee, and in Course / Subject Annual Evaluation Reports.
- **External Examiner** visits aim to include time where students can provide feedback to the External Examiner.

The Politics team benefits from the culture of engagement about how to enhance teaching and learning within IHCA. The Course Leader sits on the Institute Learning and Teaching Committee; discussions here and within Course Management Team meetings and at Institute 'away days' explore ways of enhancing the student experience.

The Course Team participates in a range of course, IHCA, University, and external activities aimed at enhancing the quality and standards of student learning; these include:

- the University Learning and Teaching Conference, and staff development workshops
- IHCA Teaching and Learning Discussion Lunches
- Undertaking a Postgraduate Teaching Certificate course, or gaining an HEA Fellowship
- IHCA training for part-time (hourly-paid) lecturers
- Peer Learning through Observation scheme
- Attendance and participation at academic conferences and HEA events

• An active research culture including seminars, symposiums and conferences held at the University.

20 Regulation of assessment

The course operates under the University's Taught Courses Regulatory Framework.

Requirements to pass modules

- Modules are assessed using a variety of assessment activities which are detailed in the module specifications.
- The minimum pass mark is D- for each module.
- Students are required to submit all items of assessment in order to pass a module, and in some modules, a pass mark in each item of assessment may be required.
- All modules have attendance requirements.
- Full details of the assessment requirements for a module, including the assessment criteria, are published in the module outline.

Submission of assessment items

- Students who submit course work late but within 5 days of the due date will have work marked, but the grade will be capped at D- unless an application for mitigating circumstances is accepted.
- Students who submit work later than 5 days but within 14 days of the due date will not have work marked unless they have submitted a valid claim of mitigating circumstances.
- For full details of submission regulations see <u>Taught Courses Regulatory Framework</u>

Retrieval of failure

- Students are entitled to resit failed assessment items for any module that is awarded a fail grade, unless the failure was due to non-attendance.
- Reassessment items that are passed are graded at D-.
- If a student is unsuccessful in the reassessment, they have the right to retake the module (or, in some circumstances, take an alternative module).

Requirements for Progression

- Students at Level 4 may be permitted to progress to Level 5 when they have passed at least 90 credits at Level 4.
- Students at Level 5 may be permitted to progress to Level 6 when they have passed at least 90 credits at Level 5.
- A student who fails 90 credits or more due to non-submission will be required to withdraw from the University.
- Students who pass less than 90 credits but have submitted all items of assessment will be required to retake modules.

Award	Requirement				
CertHE	Passed 120 credits at Level 4 or higher				
DipHE	Passed a minimum of 240 credits with at least 90 credits at Level 5 or higher				
Degree (non-honours)	Passed a minimum of 300 credits with at least 90 credits at Level 5 or higher and a minimum of 60 credits at Level 6				
Degree with honours	Passed a minimum of 360 credits with at least 90 credits at Level 5 or higher and a minimum of 120 credits at Level 6				

Requirements for Awards

Classification

The honours classification will be determined by whichever of the following two methods results in the higher classification:

- Classification determined on the profile of the best grades from 60 credits attained at Level 5 and the best grades from 120 credits at Level 6. Level 5 and Level 6 grades count equally in the profile.
- Classification determined on the profile of the best grades from 120 credits attained at Level 6 only.

For further information on honours degree classification, see the <u>Taught Courses Regulatory</u> <u>Framework</u>

21 Indicators of quality and standards

- **External evaluation:** The work on POLP-coded modules is regularly favourably reviewed by the course's External Examiner. The course and related UW courses are subject to annual evaluation via the National Student Survey.
- **Staff:** For many years, Politics has been a notable feature of staff interest at Worcester. Several staff have notable records of research and publishing in areas broadly related to contemporary or historical politics, policy, public services, or theory. Guest lectures regularly feature papers related to Politics by researchers both from within UW and outside it and these are advertised openly to all staff and students. Several staff have recent or current experience of supervising PhD research students on related topics.

22 Graduate destinations, employability and links with employers

- Employability: The course concentrates on helping students develop transferable skills relevant to a wide range of graduate careers. Additional sessions alongside the mandatory modules and in the Worcester Weeks help students plan their career paths. Students can take the module POLP2105 Politics Work Project. The course Team regularly sends information to all Politics students advising them of other opportunities in the University and elsewhere, eg. opportunities to undertake voluntary work.
- **Politics-related career opportunities:** National data shows that the career potential for graduates from Politics course is good. In addition to the transferable skills, employers in all sectors value students who have an understanding of complex political and cultural issues in continually changing environments, especially in jobs which involve working in or with public authorities. Graduates from the course should therefore particularly be able to find openings in areas such as 'management', 'public affairs' or 'public services' or in areas, such as the media, where a knowledge of current affairs is desirable.

Some relevant career destinations are shown below:

Public services e.g. teaching (schools or colleges), police, probation, housing, civil service, local government, planning.

Pressure groups, voluntary organisations, charities, community work, consultancy Media, journalism, publishing, librarianship, advice work, research.

Business e.g. self-employment, management, personnel, administration, marketing/public relations.

Further study in politics, or subjects such as journalism, social policy, law.

• **External links:** The University of Worcester Politics Team, and the other subject teams which contribute to this course, have links with a range of employers and public bodies (such as local councils and media organisations) in the immediate locality and in the West Midlands region.

Please note: This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if s/he takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information on the learning outcomes, content and teaching, learning and assessment methods of each module can be found in the module outlines and the course handbook provided to all students at the start of the course. The accuracy of the information contained in this document is reviewed by the University and may be checked by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education