

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

This document describes **Honours Degree programmes in Politics, Philosophy and Economics**. This specification is valid for new entrants from **September 2012**.

The aims of all Honours Degree programmes in Politics, Philosophy and Economics are:

- to provide a systematic understanding and knowledge of political theory and institutions;
- to expose students to a broad and coherent philosophical curriculum that draws on both the European and Anglo-American traditions;
- to provide training in the principles of economics and in their application appropriate to the type of degree concerned;
- to stimulate students intellectually through the study of philosophy, politics and economics, and to lead them to appreciate its application to a range of problems and its relevance in a variety of contexts;
- to encourage critical awareness of current political, philosophical and economic problems at both national and international levels;
- to provide theoretical insights and methodological techniques relevant to the development and interpretation of knowledge in philosophy, politics and economics and to the evaluation of current research and scholarship in these fields;
- to equip students with appropriate tools of analysis with which to tackle issues and problems of economic policy;
- to develop in students a range of transferable skills that will be of value in employment and self-employment;
- to provide students with the knowledge and skill base from which they can proceed to further studies in politics, philosophy, economics and related areas;
- to enable students to develop independent critical thinking and judgement by taking progressive responsibility for their own learning, concluding the process in the final year through the production of an extended piece of writing;
- to develop a friendly, stimulating, and supportive academic environment that encourages each student to strive to achieve their potential in the subjects studied;

The programme is delivered in three stages, each of which comprises one year of full-time study during which the student must follow courses to the value of four units (one unit is equivalent to 30 national credits). It provides progressive structures in which students are able to gain ever-wider knowledge and understanding, and appropriate skills. The programmes contain a combination of compulsory core courses to introduce students to the foundations of each of the disciplines of politics, philosophy and economics, with a range of stage two and three specialist options. In each case the structure encourages students, in stages two and three, to develop their own interests through informed choice among specialist options. In stage three all students are required to write a dissertation.

Further information

[Learning outcomes](#)

[Teaching, learning and assessment](#)

[Details of the programme structure\(s\)](#)

[Progression and award requirements](#)

[Student support and guidance](#)

[Admission requirements](#)

[Further learning and career opportunities](#)

[Indicators of quality and standards](#)

[List of programmes, with details of awards, degree titles, accreditation and teaching arrangements](#)

This document provides a summary of the main features of the programme(s), and of the outcomes which a student might reasonably be expected to achieve if full advantage is taken of the learning opportunities provided. Further information is contained in the College prospectus, the College Regulations and in various handbooks issued to students upon arrival. Whilst Royal Holloway keeps all its information for prospective applicants and students under review, programmes and the availability of individual courses are necessarily subject to change at any time, and prospective applicants are

therefore advised to seek confirmation of any factors which might affect their decision to follow a specific programme. In turn, Royal Holloway will inform applicants and students as soon as is practicable of any substantial changes which might affect their studies.

Learning outcomes

Teaching and learning in the programme are closely informed by the active research of staff, particularly with respect to advanced courses. In general terms, the programmes provide opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate the following learning outcomes:

Knowledge and understanding

- extensive knowledge and critical understanding of recent and current developments in the field of political science and international relations, and of the issues and controversies associated with these developments;
- a grounding in central theories in the fields of logic, epistemology, metaphysics, ethics, aesthetics and philosophy of mind, as well as an informed awareness of topics that are of interest to philosophers working today;
- extensive knowledge and understanding of a coherent core of economic principles, and understanding of relevant mathematical and statistical techniques;
- knowledge of relevant analytical methods in economics and knowledge necessary to apply core economic theory and economic reasoning to applied topics;
- understanding required to analyze economic data;
- a sound knowledge of the theories, techniques and concepts used to further our understanding of the issues, processes and phenomena associated with the field of politics;
- a sound understanding of the principal approaches and current issues in a range of politics, philosophy and economics options taught during the second and third years of the programme;
- a grasp of the methodological and conceptual relations between the disciplines of politics, philosophy and economics;

Skills and other attributes

- ability to assess the merits of theories, models and explanations in politics, philosophy and economics and to situate them in a wider disciplinary context;
- ability to apply the concepts and methods used in politics, philosophy and economics;
- ability to evaluate current research and scholarship in the fields of politics, philosophy and economics, and to evaluate and, where appropriate, develop critiques of the methodologies and approaches employed in these disciplines;
- ability to carry out an independent investigation of a political, philosophical, and/or economic topic or issue and produce a coherent written account;
- an ability to summarise complex philosophical arguments and to present critical evaluations both orally and writing;
- abstraction (the ability to simplify while still retaining relevance);
- analysis and deduction (economic reasoning is highly deductive and logical analysis is applied to assumption based models);
- quantification (the organisation and presentation of economic data);
- framing and specification (the ability to decide what should be taken as given or fixed for the purposes of setting up and solving a problem);
- command of a wider vocabulary and appropriate critical and theoretical terminology;*
- decision-making;*
- numeracy and computation;*
- ability to gather, organise and deploy evidence, data and information from a variety of sources, and assess their nature and value;*
- ability to communicate complex ideas and present arguments and complex information in a clear and concise manner in writing;*
- ability to analyse and interpret complex issues, and develop reasoned arguments and make sound, critical judgements in the absence of complete data;*
- ability to use literature, internet and database searches to gain necessary information;*
- the intellectual autonomy and self-direction needed for independent investigation of intellectual problems;*
- exercise of initiative and personal responsibility;*
- ability to work autonomously and collaboratively with others;*
- Self-awareness and self-management of research;*
- time management;*

- skills of oral presentation, including the ability to communicate and defend arguments to peers;*
- bibliographical skills appropriate to the subject including accurate citation of sources and consistent use of conventions in the presentation of scholarly work;*
- the capacity to evaluate and adjudicate between competing normative claims;*
- confidence in the planning and execution of essays and project-work.*

* transferable skills

[Back to top](#)

Teaching, learning and assessment

Teaching, learning and assessment methods subserve the programme aims by recognising the students' expanding knowledge and command of correlated skills as they progress from stage 1 to stage 3 and both acknowledging and encouraging their increased intellectual independence. Teaching and learning on the programme draws on the methods and concepts used to investigate political, philosophical and economic issues, and are also strongly informed by the current research interests of the core teaching team. The main methods used to develop knowledge and understanding are formal lectures, tutorials and seminar discussions based on a combination of staff-led sessions and student presentations.

Assessment is by a combination of assessed coursework and examination, as indicated in individual course specifications. The aim through the programme is to use a variety of different assessments (essays, examinations, other set coursework, presentations) to gauge the performance of students in as comprehensive a way as possible. There is a compulsory dissertation unit in the final year assesses students on the basis of their organization and management of student-led seminars, as well as on a final 10,000 word dissertation produced through independent research. Throughout the duration of the programme the required word lengths for coursework are gradually increased. This allows for student development and for their increased ability to articulate their knowledge, understanding of text and their arguments at a more advanced level. Full details of assessments for individual courses can be obtained from the [Department of Politics and International Relations](#), the [Department of Economics](#) and the [Royal Holloway Philosophy Team](#).

[Back to top](#)

Details of the programme structure(s)

Please note that not all courses run each year. A full list of courses including optional courses for the current academic year can be obtained from the [Department of Politics and International Relations](#), the [Department of Economics](#) and the [Royal Holloway Philosophy Team](#).

Stage one:

Students must take:

EC1101: Principles of Economics (1 unit)
 EC1102: Quantitative Methods of Economics (1 unit)
 PR1400: Introduction to Politics and Government (1 unit)
 PY1001: Fundamental Questions in Philosophy (1 unit)

Stage two:

Students must choose **AT LEAST ONE**, and **NO MORE THAN TWO** units from available courses in each discipline of politics, philosophy and economics, for a total of four course units for the year.

Students **MUST** take

PY2001 Introduction to European Philosophy 1: From Kant to Hegel (0.5 units)
 PY2002 Mind and World (0.5 units)

as part of their second year philosophy programme.

Economics courses are limited to:

EC2201: Microeconomics (1 unit)
 EC2202: Macroeconomics (1 unit)

Stage three:

Students must take:

PE3000: Advanced Seminar and Dissertation in Politics, Philosophy and Economics

and a further three units of courses from available options in politics, philosophy and economics. Students may concentrate their choices on courses from one of the disciplines, but must take courses from at least two of the three, and must take courses so as to ensure that they may pass the minimum number of courses in each discipline (detailed in Progression and Award Requirements below) required to complete the degree. Choices in Economics are subject to the following conditions:

1) Students can take third year Economics courses **ONLY** if they have taken and passed both EC2201 and EC2202 in year 2.

2) Students who have taken only EC2201 or EC2202 in year 2 may only take the other course in year 3.

Courses from other Departments

Students may be permitted to take courses offered by other departments, but only if these courses are consistent with the aims and objectives of the PPE programme and with the permission of the PPE Programme Director.

[Back to top](#)

Progression and award requirements

The progression and award requirements are essentially the same across all Honours Degree programmes at Royal Holloway. Students must pass units to the value of at least three units on each stage of the programme. On some programmes there may be a requirement to pass specific courses in order to progress to the next stage or to qualify for a particular degree title (see programme structure above). Students are considered for the award and classified on the basis of a weighted average. This is calculated from marks gained in courses taken in stages two and three, and gives twice the weighting to marks gained in stage three. In order to qualify for the award, students must gain a weighted average of at least 35%.

Students must pass EC1101, PR1400, and PY1001 to progress to stage 2 of the degree. Students must pass at least three units of Economics courses, at least two units of Politics, and at least two units of Philosophy courses over the duration of their degree. Students must also pass PE3000.

Depending on course selections and achievement, students who meet the minimum College requirements for award of degree will exit with one of the following degree titles.

1) Students who pass at least two units worth of dedicated third year Economics courses will graduate with a **BSc Politics, Philosophy and Economics**.

2) Students who pass dedicated third year Economics courses of at least 0.5 units but less than two units will graduate with a **BA Politics, Philosophy and Economics**.

3) Students who do not pass any third year Economics courses will graduate with a **BA Politics and Philosophy with Economics**.

Students who do not achieve the required degree-specific minimums for any of these awards may be eligible for another degree award, such as a BSc Economics, Politics and International Relations or BA Philosophy, Politics and International Relations, albeit at an ordinary rather than honours degree level, and subject to consideration by the appropriate Examinations Sub-Board.

[Back to top](#)

Student support and guidance

- Personal Advisers: All students are allocated a personal adviser who is available to meet with them regularly through the programme. The adviser's role is to advise on academic, pastoral and welfare

issues.

- All tutors and academic staff, including the Heads of the Politics and International Relations Department and the Economics Department, and the PPE Programme Director, are available for consultation at advertised office hours.
- The Departmental Academic Coordinators for each Department provide guidance and advice on a range of academic, administrative, pastoral and welfare matters. There is also a PPE Programme Coordinator.
- An induction programme to the Departments and the College for orientation at the start of the first year.
- Detailed student handbook and course resources: there are detailed and comprehensive Departmental Student Handbooks, and course resources usually include resources on the College's virtual learning environment (VLE) system, Moodle.
- Representation on the Student-Staff Committee: the Departmental Staff/Student Committees act as a channel of communication between staff and students. Issues relating to specific courses should be raised with the Staff/Student Committee in the Department in question. More general programme issues will be relayed to the PPE Programme Coordinator or Heads of Department as appropriate.
- There are extensive supporting materials and learning resources in College libraries and Computer Centre. In addition, students also have access to a wide range of resources available from other University of London libraries, particularly Senate House Library.
- There is a College Careers Service and Departmental Careers Service liaison officers.
- Access to all College and University support services, including Student Counselling Service, Health Centre and the Educational Support Office for students with special needs.

[Back to top](#)

Admission requirements

The Department's standard conditional offer is available on the [Course Catalogue](#) web page. However, the Department also has considerable flexibility in its admissions and offers policy and strongly encourages applications from non-standard applicants. Students whose first language is not English may also be asked for a qualification in English Language at an appropriate level. It may also be helpful to contact the [Admissions Office](#) for specific guidance on the entrance requirements for particular programmes.

[Back to top](#)

Further learning and career opportunities

Students who graduate with good results from Politics, Philosophy and Economics degrees can find routes to a wide range of professions, as well as continuation onto Postgraduate studies. For further details please refer to the [Careers Service](#).

[Back to top](#)

Indicators of quality and standards

Royal Holloway's position as one of the UK's leading research-intensive institutions was confirmed by the results of the most recent Research Assessment Exercise (RAE 2008) conducted by the Higher Education Funding Council (HEFCE). The new scoring system for the RAE 2008 measures research quality in four categories, with the top score of 4* indicating quality that is world-leading and of the highest standards in terms of originality, significance and rigour. 60% of the College's research profile is rated as world-leading or internationally excellent outperforming the national average of 50%. The College is ranked 16th in the UK for research of 4* standard and 18th for 3* and 4* research.

In the 2008 RAE, 80% of the Economics Department's research submitted was ranked as world-leading or internationally excellent (rated 3* and 4*). A recent analysis of the 2008 Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) shows that the Economics Department at Royal Holloway is the third best department in the UK for publications. [The study by Jim Taylor and Ian Walker](#) provides further insight into the research standing of UK economics departments. Previous rankings from the data already showed the Department in the top 10 in the UK.

The politics and international relations courses within the programme are informed by the current and past research of staff, who are all research active and many of whom enjoy international recognition. In the 2008 RAE, 70% of the Politics and International Relations Department's research publications were

judged to be in the top three categories, from 'internationally excellent' to 'world leading'. These results ranked the Department in ninth place among departments of politics and international relations with fewer than 20 staff and second place among departments with fewer than 15 staff.

Royal Holloway began developing its philosophy portfolio in 2007 with the introduction of a series of Philosophy minor degrees. A set of joint honours Philosophy degrees were established in 2010. Staff teaching on the philosophy component of the degrees are also known nationally or internationally for their work either in philosophy specifically or in the more theoretical aspects of their particular disciplines. The philosophy teaching team now comprises three dedicated philosophy staff alongside staff in Politics and International Relations, English and Drama.

[Back to top](#)

List of programmes

All the programmes are taught by staff at Royal Holloway, University of London, and lead to awards of the University of London. Programmes in Politics, Philosophy and Economics are not subject to accreditation by a professional body. The QAA subject benchmark statements in each subject area describe the general features which one might expect from Honours Degree programmes in the subject, and can therefore be used as a point of reference when reading this document (see www.qaa.ac.uk). UCAS codes are given in parentheses (see www.ucas.ac.uk).

Degree programmes in Politics, Philosophy and Economics

There is a single degree programme in Politics, Philosophy and Economics (L0V0) with the following possible exit awards.

- BSc Politics, Philosophy and Economics
- BA Politics, Philosophy and Economics
- BA Politics and Philosophy with Economics

[Back to top](#)