

London South Bank
University

Module Guide

**Politics, Decision Making and
Democracy**

DSS_4_PDM

**School of Law and Social
Sciences**

2015/2016

Level 4

BA (Hons) Politics

Module Title	Politics, Decision Making and Democracy
Level:	4
Unit Number:	DSS_4_PDM
Unit Value:	20
Student Study hours:	155 hours
Class contact hours	45 hours
Co-requisites	None
Unit Co-coordinator:	Edwin Shaw shawe5@lsbu.ac.uk
Parent Faculty:	School of Law and Social Sciences
Subject area:	Social Sciences

Note: the Easter holiday lasts three weeks and runs from Monday 21 March to Friday 8 April

1.0 MODULE DESCRIPTION

This module is concerned with the key institutions and processes of British politics. It looks at the framework and dynamics of the British system of government and aims to promote in students an understanding of the key issues and debates in contemporary politics in the United Kingdom. There is a focus on power and its impact on decision making and policy development. The module looks at formal aspects of British politics including the role political parties and the key role of ideology. Key institutions such as the Prime Minister and Cabinet, Parliament and local government are investigated and analysed. The module looks at democracy beyond the formal realm including the role of pressure groups in the political process. There is also a focus on specific policy areas.

2.0 AIMS

- 1) To introduce students to the basic concepts of politics and academic perspectives of the state.
 - 2) To provide knowledge and critical awareness of the political institutions that make up the British state at both central and local level
 - 3) To examine the main aspects of British political life and culture, including
-

- elections, parties, and pressure groups
- 4) To critically examine mainstream political doctrines and ideologies and how they evolve
- 5) To bring critical understanding to the study of British politics

3.0 LEARNING OUTCOMES: Knowledge and Understanding

At the end of the module students will have:

- acquired an understanding of post-war political trends, and their relevance to contemporary political debates;
- gained a good understanding of the complexity of British politics;
- understand the role of power and ideology in political decision making;
- developed some critical awareness of political concepts;
- acquired an understanding of the difference between analysis and description;
- developed the ability to critically engage with academic literature
- have gained an understanding of the role of theory in political science

4.0 Transferable and Practical Skills

At the end of the module students will have:

- developed good time management skills;
- acquired good communication skills both written and oral;
- Developed presentation skills.
- worked as part of a group

Employability Skills

At the end of the module students will have developed skills in

- Oral and written communication skills
 - Problem solving
-

- Planning and organisation
- Team work
- Presentation skills

5.0 INDICATIVE CONTENT

The role of the state, the principal political institutions of the British political system; the central executive – the cabinet and Prime Minister and Parliament; elections and democracy; sub national government in the United Kingdom, party politics and ideology, the role and influence of pressure groups, the politics of climate change, some policy case studies, and pressures for change and continuity in the British political system.

6.0 TEACHING AND LEARNING PROGRAMME

The aim is to develop a concern with both the processes of policy making and of specific issues in contemporary British politics.

Teaching and learning strategies are designed to encourage student involvement and to develop a conceptual appreciation of British politics. To this end various teaching methods will be employed – lectures to provide overall frameworks and concepts; seminars based on student group work and presentation. There will also be video presentations, directed reading and handouts.

Private study should be used for directed reading and question preparation as indicated in the unit guide. In addition you should use this time to follow contemporary developments in newspapers, journals, television and radio, and internet resources.

Please note that the module is supported by an active Moodle site

All lecture outlines are available as power points on this site. You should print these out and bring to the lecture to help your note taking.

7.0 LECTURE PROGRAMME

- (1) Module overview. The Changing role of Government in the UK
 - (2) Central Executive: the PM and the Cabinet
 - (3) Parliament
 - (4) Representation, Elections and Democracy
 - (5) Political Parties, the Party System and Ideology
 - (6) Pressure Groups and Power
 - (7) The Politics of Northern Ireland
 - (8) UK Foreign Policy
 - (9) The Politics of Climate Change
 - (10) The Politics of Local Democracy
 - (11) Devolution to Scotland and Wales: the breakup of the United Kingdom?
- Module Summary

8.1 CORE READING

INDICATIVE CORE READING

- 1) M. Moran, Politics and Governance in the UK, Palgrave, 2015
- 2) A. Seldon and P Snowden, Cameron at Ten, Harper Collins, 2015
- 3) R. Heffernan et al, Developments in British Politics 9, Palgrave, 2011
- 4) I. Budge et al, The New British Politics, Pearson Longman, 2007
- 5) B. Jones, British Politics Today: the essentials, Pearson, 2009
- 6) D. Kavanagh et al, British Politics, Oxford University Press, 2006
- 7) M. Garnet and P Lynch, Exploring British Politics, Pearson, 2009
- 8) R. Gordon, Repairing British Politics: a blueprint for change, Hart Publishing, 2010
- 9) A.King, Who Governs Britain? Pelican, 2015

8.2 SUPPLEMENTARY TEXTS

(It is recommended that you read widely: inter alia diaries, personal accounts and journals are especially valuable; they are of course subjective, but they can help you to get closer to the flavour of events and they can also challenge conventional interpretations, without the sterilising 'spin' applied by those who just recycle the same old secondary material).

N. Annan , Our Age, Weidenfield and Nicolson,1991

A. Clark, Diaries: In Power 1983-1992, Weidenfield and Nicholson, 1993

R. Crossman, Diaries of a Cabinet Minister, Hamish Hamilton, Jonathan Cape 1975

A. Jones, Chavs: The Demonization of the Working Class, Verso, 2012

C. Moore, Margaret Thatcher: The Authorized Biography, Volume One: Not For Turning, Penguin, 2013

C. Moran, Winston Churchill, The Struggle for Survival, Constable, 1966

I. Watson, Five Million Conversations, Luath Press, 2015

The reading lists are only a guide to the *kind* of reading that you should do. There are many different texts available, the main thing is to develop a broad familiarity with the core concepts and debates. The following politics journals are available in the library and should be consulted regularly:

Government and Opposition; West European Politics; Parliamentary Affairs; Political Quarterly; Politics. You should also consult internet sites relevant to politics.

The journals Politics and Society and Politics and Policy are available electronically via the library.

9.0 ASSESSMENT

Assessment is based on a combination of coursework and examination. Coursework takes the form of a 1200 word essay accounting for 50% of the total marks. *The essay question will be chosen from one of the seminar questions. The date and time for the hand in of the essay: Monday April 11, 1pm.*

At the end of the semester, there will be a two-hour examination for 50% of the total marks. This will comprise two questions to be answered from between 10 and 12 questions. It is expected that the exam will take place sometime between May 23 and June 10 (precise dates yet to be announced).

The pass mark for the unit is 40% of the total mark available, on condition that at least 30% is obtained in each element of assessment. **Note: turnaround time for essay**

and script marking is 20 working days.

Assessment Objectives

All coursework essays and examination scripts are assessed in relation to the individual learning outcomes for each unit. Requirements in relation to the level of conceptual analysis and acquired skills will intensify with the student's progression through the course.

At Level four:

The overall learning outcome of level one units is that the student should be able to demonstrate a good knowledge of basic institutions, concepts and ideas, in the Politics area and should be attempting to provide some analysis of alternative views. In particular, at the end of level one, students should have acquired a number of key skills, which should be reflected in their written work:

- the ability to collect, sift and record information from a variety of sources (e.g. library, database, lectures);
- the ability to distinguish between description and analysis in information sources;
- the ability to isolate key arguments within source material.

At Level five:

The conceptual analysis and skills developed at level one will be deepened, and students will develop their interactive skills within a learning group. Additionally, students will be expected to demonstrate:

- ability to distinguish between differing viewpoints;
- ability to identify key elements of a problem and choose the theories/methods for its resolution;
- ability to analyse political systems using comparative methodology;
- ability to research a topic of their choice as part of a group, and to present this research in oral and written form (Group Project).

At Level six:

Students will be expected to demonstrate:

- ability to identify and define problems in the area of inter-state relations;
- ability to apply appropriate knowledge and skills to the solution of problems;
- clear understanding of the relation between economic, social and political factors in international political processes;
- a clear understanding of the influence of global political forces on international relations;
- ability to present in written form a critical piece of academic analysis and research, demonstrating a firm grasp of methodological principles in the selection and use of themes for a more specialised piece of work.

At level three, the student should be able to critically review evidence-supporting

conclusions and to assess its validity and significance.

Marking Criteria

At all levels, five areas of assessment objective can be recognised:

1. Knowledge of the topic - ideas, concepts and institutions
2. Analysis of issues and an awareness of different viewpoints
3. Evaluation of competing explanations or theories applied to a problem
4. Ability to identify relevant sources of evidence, both empirical and theoretical, and to use these to produce an informative referencing system
5. Skill in the presentation of an answer with accuracy, clarity and coherence.

With these objectives in mind, the following model marking scheme should apply:

Fail	0-30%	Badly misunderstands the question; contains factual errors; none of basic objectives are achieved
	30-35%	Some knowledge of topic and examples, but objectives 2-5 not met
	35-39%	Exhibits some knowledge of topic, but essentially descriptive; cannot identify alternative viewpoints; objective 1 is present but 2-5 poorly met
Third	40-49%	Demonstrates limited basic knowledge of the topic, but essentially descriptive; displays an attempt at evaluation of material, but low on clarity and coherence; limited achievement of objectives 1,2,3,4,; low on objective 5
2:ii	50-59%	Exhibits good knowledge of the topic; can distinguish different approaches or viewpoints, and some ability of evaluation is present, but may to some extent lack clarity and coherence; reasonable attempt at referencing; very good on objective 1, weaker on 2-5
2:I	60-69%	Very good knowledge of basic ideas, concepts and institutions with good analysis of issues and evaluation; good uses of sources and references; meets objectives 1,2,4,5, weaker on 3
First	70-79%	Excellent knowledge of the topic, with high level analysis of a balanced nature. Strong on critical evaluation, clarity, coherence. All assessment objectives covered
	80% +	Same as the range 70-79% but adds a deeper understanding and evaluation of the issues and can “impose oneself on the subject”

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the act of taking the words or ideas of others and passing them off as your own. In many cases plagiarism takes the form of copying from books and articles without

full and accurate acknowledgement of sources. This can happen unintentionally when you use notes taken from a book/journal article and put them directly into your essay without properly attributing the source. Whether intentional or not, plagiarism is not acceptable in any circumstances. It is regarded as a form of cheating and there are strict University regulations to deal with it if it is discovered. You will find a discussion of the University regulations & procedures governing plagiarism in your Course Guide. You must read these carefully.

It is vital when taking notes to:

- (1) Note the FULL reference of the book/article at the top of the first page of notes.
- (2) Keep a precise note of the page numbers of any quoted material (for example in the margins of your notes)
- (3) Use precise double quote marks at the beginning & end of any quotes in your notes and check that any quotes/material used in your essay is accurately and carefully attributed.

NB – If you quote direct from an academic source or paraphrase an idea from an academic source, you must always (repeat always) give the page reference

Referencing & Bibliography

Note: the Module Guide uses a variety of referencing conventions, which do not necessarily accord with the system to be used in assessed work.

However, all essays must be fully and accurately referenced in the form described below, and must include, at the end, a bibliography of material consulted in the preparation of the essay. There are two well known systems of referencing which can be used for academic work. They are the Harvard System and the Notes system.

THE HARVARD SYSTEM:

This takes the form of giving details of the author and date of publication in square brackets after the relevant place in the text, for example [Pugh:1994]. The full reference to this text is then given in the Bibliography. When citing specific arguments or using quotations the page number must also be given in the bracket: e.g. [Thompson: 1963, p.66]

NOTE: When using sources which themselves quote or paraphrase other pieces of work always cite the source that you have consulted, e.g. Bentham believed.... [Garland:1985, p.77] The source in the bracket should be listed in the Bibliography.

Perry Library has a very detailed Help Sheet on the operation of the Harvard system. You should obtain a copy from the Library and read it carefully.

When constructing the Bibliography works should be listed by authors' surnames in alphabetical order. When you have used two more works by the same author these should be listed by chronological order of publication. Where there are two or more works by

one author in the same year they should be distinguished in the text and the bibliography by a letter [a,b,c...] thus [Tilly: 1977a], [Tilly:1977b].

Titles of **books** and **journals** should always be underlined and the date of publication given. For your purposes it is not necessary to give place of publication OR publisher.

Books should be cited in the following manner:

K.LAYBOURN, Britain on the Breadline, (1990)

J.STEVENSON & C.COOK, The Slump, (1977)

Articles in readers [i.e. edited collections] are cited as follows:-

G.FENNELL, "The Second World War and the Welfare State in Britain: Sociological Interpretations of Historical Development," in L.JAMIESON & H.CORR, State, Private Life, and Political Change, (1990)

Articles in journals should be cited giving volume and issue number as well as date, for example:

J.TOMLINSON, "Planning: Debate and Policy in the 1940s," Twentieth Century British History, V.3(2), 1992

THE NOTES SYSTEM

With this system references are cited in the text by means of consecutive numerals and the sources given either at the bottom of the relevant page [**Footnotes**] OR gathered together in numerical order at the end of the text [**Endnotes**]. The footnote/end note usually gives full text citation the first time a particular source is used. Subsequent citations of the same source can be abbreviated. The text references are gathered together at the end of the essay for the Bibliography, set out in the manner described above. Many word processing programmes now have easily operated systems for creating and editing footnotes/endnotes.

You may use either of these referencing systems. BUT the important point is to be **consistent** and not to mix them.

Guidelines for Website Referencing.

There is no standard format for citing internet resources within academia and different publishers, academic journals and universities have their own styles. Please find below the recommended format for website referencing within the Department of Social Sciences and all students submitting coursework within the department are required to follow the format as set out below.

The term Online in brackets indicates the medium consulted, and should be used for all internet sources. The Accessed date is the date on which you viewed or downloaded the document.

This allows for any subsequent changes to the document. Remember that pages are

constantly erased from the web and there is no guarantee that you will ever find that page again. Individual Works For example: Trangmar, K. (1999) "Y2K: the cost effective solution to tackling the Millennium Bug" (Online). Harlend Computer Services. <http://www.cix.co.uk/~harlend/y> (Accessed 26 June 2008). Electronic Journals For example Cumper, P. and M.E. Rodgers (1997) "Equality for All? Higher Education and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995", Web Journal of Current Legal Issues 3 (Online). <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/~nlawwww/1997/issue3/cumper3.html> (Accessed 30 June 1997).

WEEKLY TEACHING PROGRAMME

1) Lecture The Changing Role of Government in the UK

The Creation of the Welfare State
 The Mixed Economy
 Consensus
 The End of Consensus
 A New Consensus?

Reading

T. Hepple, "The Theory of Post-War Consensus"
<http://www.britpolitics.co.uk/academic-articles-all/-theory-post-war-consensus-dr-timothy-heppell-leeds-university>

S. Jenkins, *Accountable to None*, Penguin, 1996

D. Kavanagh, "The Postwar Consensus," *Twentieth Century British History* (1992) 3#2 pp 175-190.

B. Pimlott, "Is The 'Postwar Consensus' A Myth?" *Contemporary Record* , 2#6, 1989, p12-14

R. Toye, , "From 'Consensus' to 'Common Ground': The Rhetoric of the Postwar Settlement and its Collapse," *Journal of Contemporary History*, 48#1, 2013, pp 3-23.

Seminar

- a) To what extent, if any, did Thatcherism challenge the role of the state?
- b) How did the New Labour state differ from the Thatcherite state? or
- c) Did the Coalition government differ much, in practice, from New Labour governments?

2) Lecture The Central Executive and the Role of Government

The Cabinet System
 The Role of Prime Minister
 Changes in the Central Executive

Reading

M. Bennister, R. Heffernan, 'Cameron as Prime Minister: The Intra-Executive Politics of Britain's Coalition Government', *Parliamentary Affairs*, 65, (4), 2012, pp. 778-801.

K. Dowding, "The Prime Ministerialisation of the British Prime Minister", *Parliamentary Affairs*, 66, (3), 2013, pp. 617-635.

P. Hennessy, *The Prime Minister: The Office And Its Holders Since 1945*, Penguin, 2001

B.Jones, P.Norton, *Politics UK*, Routledge, 2014

Seminar

Is too much power given to the Prime Minister within the British system of Government?

3) Lecture Parliament

Role of Parliament
 Powers of Parliament
 Representation

Reading

V. Bogdanor, *The New British Constitution*, Hart, 2009

Q.Hogg, "Elective dictatorship". *The Listener*: 496–500. 21 October 1976.
(<http://www.crecib.fr/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/Dossier-Prunier.pdf>)

History of Parliament Online:<http://www.history.ac.uk/projects/digital/history-parliament-online>

P.Ihalainen, S. Matikainen, "The British Parliament and Foreign Policy in the 20th Century: Towards Increasing Parliamentarisation?" *Parliamentary History* 35, (1), 2016, pp.1-14.

D. S. Lutz, *Principles of Constitutional Design*, Cambridge University Press, 2006

Seminar

Is Parliament still 'fit for purpose' or are drastic changes needed, and if so what might they be?

4) Lecture: Representation, Elections and Democracy

Historical development of the British electoral system
Elections and Voting Behaviour
Debates about electoral systems and representation

Reading

G. Dangerfield, *The Strange Death of Liberal England*, Stanford University Press, 1997

D. Denver, *Elections and Voters in Britain*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2007.

D.M. Farrell, *Electoral Systems, A Comparative Introduction*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2011

M. Henn, M. Weinstein, and D. Wring, 'A generation apart ?" Youth and political participation in Britain', *British Journal of Politics & International Relations*, (2002) 4, 2, 2002, pp.167–192.

C. Jones, *A Short History of Parliament*, Boydell Press, 2009

A. Renwick et al, "The Expenses Scandal and the Politics of Electoral Reform", *Political Quarterly*, 82, 1, 2011, pp. 32–41.

R. Saunders, *Democracy and the Vote in British Politics*, Ashgate, 2011

A. Windscheffel, *Popular Conservatism in Imperial London, 1868-1906*, Boydell Press, 2007

Seminar

a) Is it true that there is a 'democratic deficit' in the UK?

5) Lecture Political Parties, Ideology and the Party system

The Role of Parties
 Party System and the Major Parties
 Ideology and Political Parties
 Coalition Government and the New Politics

Reading

N. Bollier, *New Parties in Old Party Systems: Persistence and Decline in 17 Democracies*, Oxford University Press, 2013

A.S. Crines, "Reforming Labour: The Leadership of Jeremy Corbyn", *Political Insight*, vol. 6, no. 3, 2015, pp.4-7.

J.B. Pilet and W. Cross, (eds), *The Selection of Political Party Leaders in Contemporary Parliamentary Democracies*, Routledge, 2014

P. Webb, *The Modern British Party System*, Sage, 2000

P. Webb, and T. Bale, Tim " Why do Tories defect to UKIP? Conservative party members and the temptations of the populist radical right", *Political Studies*, 62, 4, 2014, pp. 961-970.

P. Webb, " Who is willing to participate? Dissatisfied democrats, stealth democrats and populists in the United Kingdom." *European Journal of Political Research*, 52, 6, 2014, pp. 747-772.

P. Webb, T. Poguntke, "The presidentialization of politics thesis defended." *Parliamentary Affairs*, 66, 3, 2013, pp. 646-654.

Seminar

Did New Labour and also the post-Thatcherite Conservatives lose touch with their core constituencies? or

Will the rise of Jeremy Corbyn make a long term difference to the trajectory of British politics?

6) Lecture Pressure Groups, Political Influence on Policy

Pressure Groups: a typology
Power and Influence
Theoretical Models

Reading

W.N. Coxall, *Pressure Groups in British Politics*, Routledge, 2013

W. Grant, *Pressure Groups and British Politics*, Palgrave, 2000

W.Grant, "Pressure politics, a politics of collective consumption?", *Parliamentary Affairs*, 58, 2, 2005, pp. 366-79.

N.Jackson, "Pressure group politics", *Politics Review*, September 2004, pp.2-5.

H. Margetts, "Political participation and protest", in P. Dunleavy et al (eds.), *Developments in British Politics*, Palgrave, 2002

Seminar

Do pressure groups have too much influence?

7) Lecture The Politics of Northern Ireland

Division and Conflict
The Good Friday Agreement

Reading

T.P. Coogan, *The Troubles, Ireland's Ordeal 1966-1995*, Hutchinson, 1995

R. English, *Irish Freedom*, Pan, 2006

R.F. Foster, *Modern Ireland 1600-1972*, Penguin, 1990

B. Lomas, "The Good Friday Agreement", *Talking Politics*, 14, 1, 2000, pp. 28-31.

J.W. McAuley, *Ulster's Last Stand? : Reconstructing Unionism After the Peace Process*, Irish Academic Press, 2010

K. Toolis, *Rebel Hearts*, Picador, 1996

Seminar What were the causes of political conflict in Northern Ireland and what did they tell us about the United Kingdom?

8) Lecture UK Foreign Policy

Retreat from Empire
The Special Relationship with the USA
NATO

Britain and Europe
Three Circles of Foreign Policy

Reading

J. Dumbrell, *A Special Relationship: Anglo-American Relations since 1960*, Macmillan, 2000

J. Gaskarth, *British Foreign Policy: Crises, Conflicts and Future Challenges*, Polity, 2013

J. Kampfner, *Blair's Wars*, Free Press, 2003

B. Porter, *The Lion's Share: A Short History of British Imperialism*, Longman, 1988

D. Sanders, *Losing an Empire, Finding a Role: British Foreign Policy since 1945*, Macmillan, 1990

Seminar Is most UK foreign policy, in practice, decided in Washington?

9) Lecture The Politics of Climate Change and Sustainability

Post materialism
The rise of Green Politics
From Environmental Politics to Sustainable Development

Reading

L. Beckman L. and E. Page (2008) 'Perspectives on justice, democracy and global climate change', *Environmental Politics*, 17, 4, 2008, pp. 527–535.

R. Garner, *Environmental Politics: Britain, Europe and the Global Environment*, Macmillan, 2000

A. Giddens, *The Politics of Climate Change*, Polity, 2011

B.F.J. Manly, *Statistics for Environmental Science and Management*, CRC Press, 2005

C. Wright, D. Nyberg, *Climate Change, Capitalism and Corporations*,

Cambridge University Press, 2015

Seminar Is the UK's political system capable of dealing efficiently with environmental challenges?

10) Lecture The Politics of Local Democracy

Seminar Is there real local democracy in the UK, or is it just a means of adding another layer of government to people's lives?

Reading

M. Barnes et al, Participation and Political Renewal: Case Studies in Public Participation, Polity, 2007

P. Diamond, (ed), Public Matters: The Renewal of the Public Realm, Politicos, 2007

D. Halpern, The Hidden Wealth of Nations, Polity, 2010

L. Pratchett and S. Leach, "Local government: choice without constraint", *Parliamentary Affairs*, 57, 2, 2004, pp. 366-79.

E. Royles, Revitalizing Democracy? Devolution and Civil Society in Wales, University of Wales Press, 2007.

T. Travers, London's Boroughs at 50, Biteback Press, 2015

11) Lecture Devolution to Scotland and Wales: the breakup of the United Kingdom? Module Summary

Reading

P. Cairney, *The Scottish Political System since Devolution*, Imprint Academic, 2011

P. Lynch, *Scottish Government and Politics*, Edinburgh University Press, 2001

R. Rawlings, *Delineating Wales*, University of Wales, 2003

D. Torrance, *The Battle for Britain*, Biteback Publishing, 2013

A. Trench, *Devolution and Power in the United Kingdom*, University of Manchester, 2007

R. Wyn Jones, and R. Scully, *Wales Says Yes: Devolution and the 2011 Welsh Referendum*, University of Wales Press, 2012

Seminar Has devolution worked? Discussion of key module themes

ADDITIONAL USE OF RESOURCES

Additional reading lists and resources will be provided, when necessary, as the module unfolds.

It is important that students use non contact time to develop the issues and arguments that arise in the lectures and seminars. In order to do this, it is expected that students will explore the relevant literature in the library, use the electronic resources in the Learning Resource Centre and keep up with the changes in current affairs through the use of the media.

Plus make full use of the Moodle site that goes with this module.
