Module Descriptor

Title	Comparative Governance & Public Administration		
Session	2025/26	**Status**	Current
Code	SSPG11011	**SCQF Level**	**SCQF 11**
Credit Points	20	**ECTS (European Credit Transfer Scheme)**	10
School	**Education and Social Sciences**		
Module Co-ordinator	M Arnott		

Summary of Module

This module provides students with an understanding of the models, theories, structures and processes of governance and public administration in a comparative context. Students will gain an understanding of the structures and functions of public administration at national, regional and local levels. It explores dimensions such as culture, executive and non-executive power, accountability and governance. The module draws on contemporary case studies to illuminate the issues and dimensions of organisational theory and how these are relevant to the study of the internal and external organisation of public administration. Although the case studies are contemporary, they are considered within a historical context in order for students to understand the patterns of administrative reform at multiple levels of governance. Students will consider, amongst other debates, the extent to which we are now living in an era of 'post-New Public Management' and how such debates are relevant within different state contexts.

The syllabus includes:

- Undertaking comparative analysis in governance and public administration
- Politics and the bureaucracy
- Administrative reform in a global context: New Public Management and beyond
- Public administration in developed and developing countries
- Patterns of governance and authority
- Aspects of accountability and control
- Public administration and multi-levels of governance
- Regulation, deregulation and regulatory reform

Module Delivery Method	On-Campus[1] ☒	Hybrid[2] ☐	Online[3] ☐	Work -Based Learning[4] ☐
Campuses for Module Delivery	☐ Ayr ☐ Dumfries	☐ Lanarkshire ☐ London ☒ Paisley	☐ Online / Distance Learning ☐ Other (specify)	

Terms for Module Delivery	Term 1	☒	Term 2	☐	Term 3	☐
Long-thin Delivery over more than one Term	Term 1 – Term 2	☐	Term 2 – Term 3	☐	Term 3 – Term 1	☐

Learning Outcomes	
L1	Demonstrate originality or creativity the analysis and evaluation of comparative governance and public administration
L2	Demonstrate critical understanding of the comparative analysis of public policy
L3	Synthesise information from a variety of sources, including academic research publications, to offer sound and distinct insights on chosen research topic
L4	Critical analysis of models, theories, structures and processes of governance and public administration
L5	

Employability Skills and Personal Development Planning (PDP) Skills	
SCQF Headings	**During completion of this module, there will be an opportunity to achieve core skills in:**
Knowledge and Understanding (K and U)	**SCQF 11** Critical analysis of models, theories, structures and processes of governance and public administration.
Practice: Applied Knowledge and Understanding	**SCQF 11** Applying a range of evaluative tools to understand the dynamics and impacts.
Generic Cognitive skills	**SCQF 11** Demonstrate the ability to conduct analysis, evaluation and synthesis.

[1] Where contact hours are synchronous/ live and take place fully on campus. Campus-based learning is focused on providing an interactive learning experience supported by a range of digitally-enabled asynchronous learning opportunities including learning materials, resources, and opportunities provided via the virtual learning environment. On-campus contact hours will be clearly articulated to students.

[2] The module includes a combination of synchronous/ live on-campus and online learning events. These will be supported by a range of digitally-enabled asynchronous learning opportunities including learning materials, resources, and opportunities provided via the virtual learning environment. On-campus and online contact hours will be clearly articulated to students.

[3] Where all learning is solely delivered by web-based or internet-based technologies and the participants can engage in all learning activities through these means. All required contact hours will be clearly articulated to students.

[4] Learning activities where the main location for the learning experience is in the workplace. All required contact hours, whether online or on campus, will be clearly articulated to students

Communication, ICT and Numeracy Skills	**SCQF 11** Demonstrate the ability to communicate, using appropriate methods, to a range of audiences with different levels of knowledge/expertise.
Autonomy, Accountability and Working with Others	**SCQF 11** Exercise substantial autonomy and initiative in carrying out learning activities. Take responsibility for own work and contribute to the collective learning activities of the group in ways which support and develop critical reflection

Prerequisites	**Module Code**	**Module Title**
	Other	
Co-requisites	**Module Code**	**Module Title**

Learning and Teaching	
In line with current learning and teaching principles, a 20-credit module includes 200 learning hours, normally including a minimum of 36 contact hours and maximum of 48 contact hours.	
Learning Activities During completion of this module, the learning activities undertaken to achieve the module learning outcomes are stated below:	**Student Learning Hours** (Note: Learning hours include both contact hours and hours spent on other learning activities)
Lecture / Core Content Delivery	24
Personal Development Plan	12
Independent Study	154
Asynchronous Class Activity	10
Please select	
Please select	
TOTAL	200

Indicative Resources
The following materials form essential underpinning for the module content and ultimately for the learning outcomes: Ansell, C., Sørensen, E., Torfing, J. and Trondal, J., (2024). Robust governance in turbulent times. Cambridge University Press Ansell, C. and Torfing, J. eds., (2022) Handbook on theories of governance. Edward Elgar Publishing. Bevir, Mark (ed) (2011) The Sage Handbook of Governance (London: Sage) Christensen, Tom and Laegreid, Per (eds) (2016) The Ashgate Companion to New Public Management (Farnham: Ashgate)

Cairney, P. (2019). Understanding public policy: theories and issues. Bloomsbury Publishing.

Dodds, A., (2018). Comparative public policy. Bloomsbury Publishing.

Farazmand, A (ed) (2024.) Comparative Governance Reforms. Springer Nature.Knill, C. and Tosun, J., 2020. Public policy: A new introduction. Bloomsbury Publishing.

Lapsley, I. and Miller, P. eds., (2024). The resilience of new public management. Oxford University Press.

Kuhlmann, S., Wollmann, H. and Reiter, R., (2025) Introduction to comparative public administration: Administrative systems and reforms in Europe. Edward Elgar Publishing

Ongaro, E. and Van Thiel, S. eds., (2018). The Palgrave handbook of public administration and management in Europe(pp. 261-278). London: Palgrave Macmillan

Pouliot, V. and Thérien, J.P., (2023). Global Policymaking Cambridge University Press

(N.B. Although reading lists should include current publications, students are advised (particularly for material marked with an asterisk*) to wait until the start of session for confirmation of the most up-to-date material)

Attendance and Engagement Requirements
In line with the Student Attendance and Engagement Procedure, Students are academically engaged if they are regularly attending and participating in timetabled on-campus and online teaching sessions, asynchronous online learning activities, course-related learning resources, and complete assessments and submit these on time. **For the purposes of this module, academic engagement equates to the following:**

Equality and Diversity
The University's Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Procedure can be accessed at the following link: UWS Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Code.
(N.B. Every effort will be made by the University to accommodate any equality and diversity issues brought to the attention of the School)

Supplemental Information

Divisional Programme Board	**Social Sciences**
Overall Assessment Results	☐ **Pass / Fail** ☒ **Graded**
Module Eligible for Compensation	☐ **Yes** ☒ **No** **If this module is eligible for compensation, there may be cases where compensation is not permitted due to programme accreditation requirements. Please check the associated programme specification for details.**
School Assessment Board	PG Social Sciences
Moderator	A Van der Zwet
External Examiner	M Ketola
Accreditation Details	
Module Appears in CPD catalogue	☐ **Yes** ☒ **No**

Changes / Version Number	1

Assessment (also refer to Assessment Outcomes Grids below)
Assessment 1
Short essay - 1500 words (Employment-focused mock recruitment exercise)(40% weighted
Assessment 2
Case study project - 2500 words (60% weighted)
Assessment 3
(N.B. (i) Assessment Outcomes Grids for the module (one for each component) can be found below which clearly demonstrate how the learning outcomes of the module will be assessed. (ii) An indicative schedule listing approximate times within the academic calendar when assessment is likely to feature will be provided within the Student Module Handbook.)

Component 1							
Assessment Type	**LO1**	**LO2**	**LO3**	**LO4**	**LO5**	**Weighting of Assessment Element (%)**	**Timetabled Contact Hours**
Essay	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	40	0

Component 2							
Assessment Type	**LO1**	**LO2**	**LO3**	**LO4**	**LO5**	**Weighting of Assessment Element (%)**	**Timetabled Contact Hours**
Case Study	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	60	0

Component 3							
Assessment Type	**LO1**	**LO2**	**LO3**	**LO4**	**LO5**	**Weighting of Assessment Element (%)**	**Timetabled Contact Hours**
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
Combined total for all components						100%	hours

Change Control

What	When	Who
new template, no changes 25/26	Apr 25	M Arnott