**Module Descriptor**

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| **Title** | Comparative Governance & Public Administration | | |
| **Session** | 2026/27 | **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] ☐ |
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| **Campuses for Module Delivery** | ☐ Ayr<br>☐ Dumfries | ☐ Lanarkshire<br>☐ London<br>☒ Paisley | ☐ Online / Distance Learning<br>☐ Other (specify) | |

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| **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** | |
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| **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** | |
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| **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**<br>Critical analysis of models, theories, structures and processes of governance and public administration. |
| **Practice: Applied Knowledge and Understanding** | **SCQF 11**<br>Applying a range of evaluative tools to understand the dynamics and impacts. |
| **Generic Cognitive skills** | **SCQF 11**<br>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

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| **Communication, ICT and Numeracy Skills** | **SCQF 11**<br>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**<br>Exercise substantial autonomy and initiative in carrying out learning activities.<br>Take responsibility for own work and contribute to the collective learning activities of the group in ways which support and develop critical reflection |

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

| **Learning and Teaching** | |
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| 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**<br>During completion of this module, the learning activities undertaken to achieve the module learning outcomes are stated below: | **Student Learning Hours**<br>(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 | 12 |
| Please select | |
| Please select | |
| **TOTAL** | 200 |

| **Indicative Resources** |
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| **The following materials form essential underpinning for the module content and ultimately for the learning outcomes:**<br>Ansell, C., Sørensen, E., Torfing, J. and Trondal, J., (2024). Robust governance in turbulent times. Cambridge University Press<br>Ansell, C. and Torfing, J. eds., (2022) Handbook on theories of governance. Edward Elgar Publishing.<br>Bevir, Mark (ed) (2011) The Sage Handbook of Governance (London: Sage)<br>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:**

Students are required to attend all scheduled classes and participate with all delivered elements of the module as part of their engagement with their programme of study. Consideration will be given to students who have protection under the appropriate equality law.

**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.**

In line with current legislation (Equality Act, 2010) and the UWS Equality, Diversity, and Human Rights Code, our modules are accessible and inclusive, with reasonable adjustment for different needs where appropriate. Module materials comply with University guidance on inclusive learning and teaching, and specialist assistive equipment, support provision and adjustment to assessment practice will be made in accordance with UWS policy and regulations.

**(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**

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| **Divisional Programme Board** | **Social Sciences** |
| **Overall Assessment Results** | ☐ **Pass / Fail** ☒ **Graded** |
| **Module Eligible for Compensation** | ☐ **Yes** ☒ **No**<br>**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.** |

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| **School Assessment Board** | PG Social Sciences |
| **Moderator** | A Van der Zwet |
| **External Examiner** | |
| **Accreditation Details** | |
| **Module Appears in CPD catalogue** | ☐ **Yes** ☒ **No** |
| **Changes / Version Number** | 1 |

| **Assessment (also refer to Assessment Outcomes Grids below)** |
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| **Assessment 1** |
| Short essay - 1500 words (Employment-focused mock recruitment exercise)(40% weighted |
| **Assessment 2** |
| Case study project - 2500 words (60% weighted) |
| **Assessment 3** |
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| (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.<br>(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 |

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