



## Module Descriptor

<b>Title</b>	<b>Contemporary Social Issues</b>		
<b>Session</b>	2025/26	<b>Status</b>	
<b>Code</b>	SSPG11020	<b>SCQF Level</b>	11
<b>Credit Points</b>	20	<b>ECTS (European Credit Transfer Scheme)</b>	10
<b>School</b>	<b>Education and Social Sciences</b>		
<b>Module Co-ordinator</b>	I McPhee		

### Summary of Module

This module will examine a range of contemporary social issues, drawing on various case studies and research across sociology, political science, policy, criminal justice, and cultural studies. The module seeks to analyse the complex interrelationships between public and policymakers, key stakeholders, and social movement groups as they attempt to define and address the major social problems and issues of today.

Students are encouraged to critically analyse the evidence base for social and public policy, the role of non-governmental groups including think tanks (both national and international) in the policy-making process, and to consider how contemporary issues of public concern are defined, communicated, and then addressed/resolved. The module explicitly fosters a comparative, intersectional and critically interdisciplinary perspective. Students are encouraged to explore how different topics of concern across the social sciences are addressed in - and between - different disciplinary fields, and how research is used outside academia to inform policy and inform/shape public opinion.

- Introduces critical approaches to understand contemporary social issues.
- Engages students evaluating research data and academic and sources of evidence.
- Engages students in critical evaluation and effective use of social sciences methods.

<b>Module Delivery Method</b>	<b>On-Campus<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Hybrid<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>Online<sup>3</sup></b>	<b>Work -Based Learning<sup>4</sup></b>
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> 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.

<sup>3</sup> 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.

<sup>4</sup> 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

<b>Campuses for Module Delivery</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Ayr		<input type="checkbox"/> Lanarkshire		<input type="checkbox"/> Online / Distance Learning	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Dumfries		<input type="checkbox"/> London <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Paisley		<input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify)	
<b>Terms for Module Delivery</b>	Term 1	<input type="checkbox"/>	Term 2	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Term 3	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Long-thin Delivery over more than one Term</b>	Term 1 – Term 2	<input type="checkbox"/>	Term 2 – Term 3	<input type="checkbox"/>	Term 3 – Term 1	<input type="checkbox"/>

Learning Outcomes	
<b>L1</b>	Demonstrate a critical understanding of how social problems/issues are defined and addressed in contemporary society.
<b>L2</b>	Demonstrate a critical awareness of conflict and contestation between policymakers and social movements/groups over the definition and resolution of social problems.
<b>L3</b>	Communicate an understanding of the challenges and possibilities of interdisciplinary research and its application to contemporary social issues.
<b>L4</b>	Subject policymaking to critical scrutiny and evaluation, ability to become a critical user of research evidence.
<b>L5</b>	Develop and apply on a modest scale the techniques taught in the research methods module of the programme to a contemporary social issue.

Employability Skills and Personal Development Planning (PDP) Skills	
<b>SCQF Headings</b>	<b>During completion of this module, there will be an opportunity to achieve core skills in:</b>
<b>Knowledge and Understanding (K and U)</b>	<b>SCQF 11</b> Students will develop critical knowledge and understanding of key theories and concepts in analysing and discussing social sciences
<b>Practice: Applied Knowledge and Understanding</b>	<b>SCQF 11</b> Students will apply knowledge and understanding of contemporary social issues in class based discussions, online forums, and in assessment practice
<b>Generic Cognitive skills</b>	<b>SCQF 11</b> Students will develop a range of academic and professional skills including those relevant to critical reflection on assessing evidence
<b>Communication, ICT and Numeracy Skills</b>	<b>SCQF 11</b> Students will engage with a range of modes of communication, oral, literary, and in online forums in the VLE Aula
<b>Autonomy, Accountability and Working with Others</b>	<b>SCQF 11</b> Students will have opportunities to work in groups and will work autonomously to discuss and debate contemporary social issues

<b>Prerequisites</b>	<b>Module Code</b>	<b>Module Title</b>
	<b>Other</b>	

Co-requisites	Module Code	Module Title
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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	Student Learning Hours
During completion of this module, the learning activities undertaken to achieve the module learning outcomes are stated below:	(Note: Learning hours include both contact hours and hours spent on other learning activities)
Lecture / Core Content Delivery	24
Practice-based Learning	12
Tutorial / Synchronous Support Activity	6
Asynchronous Class Activity	6
Independent Study	152
Please select	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>200</b>

Indicative Resources
<p><b>The following materials form essential underpinning for the module content and ultimately for the learning outcomes:</b></p> <p>* Becker, Saul. (2004). Understanding research for social policy and practice: themes, methods and approaches (Alan. Bryman, Ed.). Policy.</p> <p>*Cree, V., Clapton, G., &amp; Smith, M. (Eds.). (2015). Revisiting moral panics [electronic book] . Policy Press.</p> <p>May, M., Page, R. M., &amp; Brunsdon, Edward. (Eds.). (2001). Understanding social problems: issues in social policy . Blackwell.</p> <p>*Isaacs, Stuart. (2015). Social problems in the UK: an introduction. Routledge. (Available online in UWS library)</p>
<p><b>(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)</b></p>

Attendance and Engagement Requirements
<p>In line with the <a href="#">Student Attendance and Engagement Procedure</a>, 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.</p> <p><b>For the purposes of this module, academic engagement equates to the following:</b></p> <p>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</p>

teaching sessions, asynchronous online learning activities, course-related learning resources, and complete assessments and submit these on time.

## 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](https://www.uws.ac.uk/media/6317/equality-diversity-and-human-rights-code-approved-feb-2023.pdf).**

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**(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

<b>Divisional Programme Board</b>	<b>Social Sciences</b>
<b>Overall Assessment Results</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Pass / Fail <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Graded
<b>Module Eligible for Compensation</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <b>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.</b>
<b>School Assessment Board</b>	Pg Social Sciences
<b>Moderator</b>	TBC
<b>External Examiner</b>	S Kippen
<b>Accreditation Details</b>	
<b>Module Appears in CPD catalogue</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Changes / Version Number</b>	

## Assessment (also refer to Assessment Outcomes Grids below)

### Assessment 1

This is an independent essay project consisting of a 2500 written essay, submitted to turnitin.

### Assessment 2

This is an independent poster project that is presneted over 10 minutes maximum in person or online

### Assessment 3

NA

(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
Written essay reprot	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	50	6

Component 2							
Assessment Type	LO1	LO2	LO3	LO4	LO5	Weighting of Assessment Element (%)	Timetabled Contact Hours
Poster presentation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	50	6

Component 3							
Assessment Type	LO1	LO2	LO3	LO4	LO5	Weighting of Assessment Element (%)	Timetabled Contact Hours
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Combined total for all components						100%	hours

#### Change Control

What	When	Who
Reading lists and assessment wieghting	March 2025	Iain McPhee