



Module Descriptor

Title	Foundations of Social & Political Thought		
Session	2025/26	Status	
Code	PLTC08006	SCQF Level	8
Credit Points	20	ECTS (European Credit Transfer Scheme)	10
School	Education and Social Sciences		
Module Co-ordinator	M McNally		
Summary of Module			
<p>This module aims to introduce students to some of the main concepts and theories employed to analyse the social and political world around us. The focus is on the foundational ideas in social and political thought inherited from the Enlightenment and developed thereafter that underpin modern thinking about the world in which we live. The central premise of the module is to consider the legacy of the Enlightenment period in Western cultural development in terms of the associated ideas of modernisation and social progress.</p> <p>It examines in particular the key social and political concepts that help to explain the process of modernisation as well as ideas that have contributed to evaluating and furthering the aims of social progress. The module adopts an avowedly interdisciplinary and applied approach providing opportunities to consider contemporary social and political issues using the concepts explored on the module as well as considering critically the legacies of the Enlightenment and its relations with European imperialism and colonialism.</p>			

Module Delivery Method	On-Campus¹ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Hybrid² <input type="checkbox"/>	Online³ <input type="checkbox"/>	Work -Based Learning⁴ <input type="checkbox"/>
Campuses for Module Delivery	<input type="checkbox"/> Ayr <input type="checkbox"/> Dumfries	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lanarkshire <input type="checkbox"/> London <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Paisley	<input type="checkbox"/> Online / Distance Learning <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify)	

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

Terms for Module Delivery	Term 1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Term 2	<input type="checkbox"/>	Term 3	<input type="checkbox"/>
Long-thin Delivery over more than one Term	Term 1 – Term 2	<input type="checkbox"/>	Term 2 – Term 3	<input type="checkbox"/>	Term 3 – Term 1	<input type="checkbox"/>

Learning Outcomes	
L1	Identify the key theoretical and normative perspectives and concepts of the Enlightenment;
L2	Demonstrate the ability to work in a group context to produce and communicate effectively a presentation using appropriate technology;
L3	Explain and critically evaluate one major foundational social or political theory or concept through independent inquiry-based reading and research;
L4	Communicate the findings effectively of independent study in written form.
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 8 Demonstration of knowledge and understanding of understanding foundational social and political theory.
Practice: Applied Knowledge and Understanding	SCQF 8 Application of knowledge and understanding of the Enlightenment. Apply understanding derived from module readings, workshop activities and independent study to critically evaluation foundational social and political theories.
Generic Cognitive skills	SCQF 8 Presentation and evaluation of information on social and political theory.
Communication, ICT and Numeracy Skills	SCQF 8 Communication of complex ideas using appropriate technology and in written form.
Autonomy, Accountability and Working with Others	SCQF 8 Work with others in a way that recognizes contribution of self and peers.

Prerequisites	Module Code	Module Title Introduction to Social Research (or equivalent)
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	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

Tutorial / Synchronous Support Activity

12

Asynchronous Class Activity

10

Independent Study

154

Please select

Please select

TOTAL

200

Indicative Resources

The following materials form essential underpinning for the module content and ultimately for the learning outcomes:

Ramgotra, M., and Choat, S. (2023) Rethinking Political Thinkers. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Stones, R. (ed.) (2017) Key Sociological Thinkers. 3rd Edition. London: Palgrave.

Deutch, K.L. and Fornieri, J.R. (2009) An Invitation to Political Thought. Belmont, Calif: Thomson Higher Education.

Brock, T. (2023) Welcome to Social Theory. London: Sage.

Iglis, D. and Thorpe, C. (2018) An invitation to Social Theory. 2nd Edition. Oxford: Polity.

Outram, D. (2019) The Enlightenment. 4th Edition. Cambridge: 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:

Compliance with the Student Attendance and Engagement Procedure.

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](#).

Aligned with the overall commitment to equality and diversity stated in the Programme Specifications, the module supports equality of opportunity for students from all backgrounds and with different learning needs.

(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	<input type="checkbox"/> Pass / Fail <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Graded
Module Eligible for Compensation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> 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	Undergraduate Social Sciences
Moderator	M Pugh
External Examiner	J Halsall
Accreditation Details	
Module Appears in CPD catalogue	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Changes / Version Number	

Assessment (also refer to Assessment Outcomes Grids below)

Assessment 1

Group PowerPoint Presentation (40%)

Assessment 2

Essay (60%)

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
Group PowerPoint Presentation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	40	1

Component 2							
Assessment Type	LO1	LO2	LO3	LO4	LO5	Weighting of Assessment Element (%)	Timetabled Contact Hours
Essay	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	60	2

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
new template, no changes 25/26	Mar 52	M McNally