

Programme Specification: Public Policy and Management MA

Course record information

Name and level of final award	• Master of Arts - Public Policy and Management The award is Bologna FQ-EHEA second cycle degree or diploma compatible
Name and level of intermediate awards	• Postgraduate Diploma (Pg Dip) - Public Policy and Management • Postgraduate Certificate (Pg Cert) - Public Policy and Management
Awarding body/institution	University of Westminster
Teaching institution	University of Westminster
Status of awarding body/institution	Recognised Body
Location of delivery	Primary: Central London Secondary/Tertiary Locations: Marylebone campus
Language of delivery and assessment	English
QAA subject benchmarking group(s)	QAA Public Policy and Administration (consultation document, Dec 2024)
Professional statutory or regulatory body	None
Westminster course title, mode of attendance and standard length	• Public Policy and Management, Full-time, September or January start - 1 year standard length • Public Policy and Management, Part-time day, September or January start - 2 years standard length
Valid for cohorts	From 2026/7

Admissions requirements

There are standard minimum entry requirements for all postgraduate courses. Students are advised to check the standard requirements for the most up-to-date information. For most courses a decision will be made on the basis of your application form alone. However, for some courses the selection process may include an interview to demonstrate your strengths in addition to any formal entry requirements. More information can be found here: <https://www.westminster.ac.uk/courses/postgraduate/how-to-apply>.

Aims of the programme

This course prepares students to establish and advance careers in a range of areas of professional work involving the advocacy, development, leadership, management and delivery of public policy, public goods and services. Internationally, such opportunities can be found in organisations, groups and public authorities from across the public and private sectors, and civil society.

Students develop a range of key skills for policy-related roles across diverse international settings. These include how to analyse, evaluate and formulate policy proposals, assess policy impacts, communicate policy recommendations, and how to lead and manage policy implementation, and delivery of public goods and services across a range of sectors and institutional contexts.

The nature of the skills required for policy related work and the areas where they are needed is evolving due to technological change, including developments in communication technology and rapid advances in artificial intelligence. Through a course advisory board and partnerships with external organisations involved in policy-related work, the skills training provided by the course is regularly reviewed, ensuring that this continues to enable students to achieve their goals in policy-related careers and vocations.

Developing and deploying policy-related skills requires awareness of political debates and changing institutional arrangements that shape policy goals, processes and programme management. Contested priorities and competing interests are often prominent and can themselves be driven by dynamically changing media and technological landscapes. Hence, this course will actively foster critical thinking and social science skills.

The design of the course reflects the university's commitments to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) and addressing a range of profound, cross-cutting policy challenges, as captured by the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). These commitments are reflected in the variety of case studies of policy making and management which students explore. To achieve inclusivity, the course incorporates engagements with a range of organisations, including international partners. Some of the case studies explored will be through partnerships with policy professionals and external organisations, to provide rich insights into the challenges of policymaking, evaluation and management. Key concepts, approaches and methods are considered in relation to a range of international areas of governance and policymaking. Hence, the course balances development of conceptual and theoretical understanding, with learning about the management and implementation of policy delivery through a range of practice-orientated case studies. Inclusivity and representation of diverse populations are vital to policy analysis, development and implementation and as such, are a core consideration in our teaching.

Employment and further study opportunities

Today's organisations need graduates with both good degrees and skills relevant to the workplace, i.e. employability skills. The University of Westminster is committed to developing employable graduates by ensuring that:

- Career development skills are embedded in all courses
- Opportunities for part-time work, placements and work-related learning activities are widely available to students
- Staff continue to widen and strengthen the University's links with employers in all sectors, involving them in curriculum design and encouraging their participation in other aspects of the University's career education and guidance provision
- Staff are provided with up-to-date data on labour market trends and employers' requirements, which will inform the service delivered to students.

This course is designed for those aiming to establish and further develop careers with a policy focus across the public, private and non-governmental sectors that involve policy advocacy, policy research, policy design, delivery and management. The different types of organisations where policy-related skills are required include think tanks, non-governmental organisations, civil service at national level, local and regional authorities, as well as private firms – especially larger firms who often play active roles in policy lobbying and consultations. The course design is informed by ongoing consultations with professionals working in policy roles across a range of such organisations to discuss the kind of skills required for such careers.

To ensure that skills development for policy related careers and vocations continues to be fostered, the course includes the following features:

- Training in a range of skills of key importance for policy delivery and management, including: policy research and evaluation, project management, procurement, data analysis, critical thinking and ethical reflection.
- A course advisory board comprising professionals from a range of sectors involved in policy-related work. The board meets annually to discuss employers' skills requirements for policy-related roles.
- Partnerships with external organisations, including London and UK-based as well as internationally. Through these partnerships, guest speaker and site visits will be incorporated into the core modules to provide insights into the management and practice of policy delivery, as well as the policy process. These partnerships will also enable the development of practice-led student projects involving policy evaluation, delivery and management.

What will you be expected to achieve?

Course learning outcomes

Learning outcomes are statements on what successful students have achieved as the result of learning.

These are threshold statements of achievement the learning outcomes broadly fall into four categories:

The overall knowledge and understanding you will gain from your course (KU)

Graduate attributes are characteristics that you will have developed during the duration of your course (GA)

Professional and personal practice learning outcomes are specific skills that you will be expected to have gained on successful completion of the course (PPP)

Key transferable skills that you will be expected to have gained on successful completion of the course. (KTS)

Level 7 course learning outcomes: upon completion of Level 7 you will be able to:

- 001 Utilise a deep understanding of the key concepts and theoretical frameworks evident in different approaches to policy analysis, applying them to real-world policy problems (KU KTS)
- 002 Analyse policy goals and their interrelationships with ethical principles, including sustainable development, social justice, diversity and inclusion (KU PPP)
- 003 Critically assess governance structures and administrative systems, understanding their impacts on policy development, implementation and the attainment of policy goals (including sustainable development, diversity and inclusion) (KU KTS)

- 004 Work collaboratively, as a member or leader of a team, to address the challenges involved in managing policy in different political and administrative environments, considering resource allocation and cultural contexts (KU PPP KTS)
- 005 Identify and assess potential uses of policy research in diverse roles and organisations and across different policy sectors and international contexts (PPP KTS CS)
- 006 Design and conduct independent policy research that assesses the impacts of existing policies and expected impacts of proposed policies. (PPP KTS)
- 007 Develop and advocate recommendations for addressing policy challenges and problems (PPP KTS)
- 008 Communicate policy proposals effectively to diverse stakeholders using a range of media. (PPP KTS)
- 009 Deploy transferable skills required for policy-related roles, including project management, leadership, and negotiation, in diverse public, private and third sector contexts. (KTS)

How will you learn?

Learning methods

Learning on the course is inclusive, accessible, student-centred and challenging. We welcome and greatly value the multiple perspectives and professional and vocational experiences brought by our diverse community of students. Learning through engagement with a variety of case studies and insights from professional practice is central to the course. Students are supported in exploring their specific policy-related interests through independent research and projects. We are committed to working in partnership with students and co-creating the curriculum where feasible.

To make our teaching and learning provision accessible and flexible, we have adopted digital and technology-enhanced on-site teaching. All learning materials including recorded lectures and other course materials are consistently available on Blackboard and readings lists are accessible online.

The learning methods used in the course are designed for active and authentic learning, and classroom-based learning is extended to field-based learning where possible. Students are exposed to real-world scenarios through case studies, field visits, and learning through workshops, policy labs and community engagement, with funding for this provided by School of Social Sciences where required. These activities will involve collaboration with research centres and groups across the university who are involved in policy relevant research and knowledge exchange. Students also get the opportunity to train in professional skills such as communication, strategic thinking and teamwork through a variety of learning activities and assessments.

We strive to enable students from every background from different parts of the world to develop into resilient graduates with in-depth skills in analysis, problem-solving and teamwork, who will respond flexibly and creatively to future challenges. Learning activities and assessments on the course are designed to ensure equality of opportunity and furthering social inclusion and career advancement within and beyond the university. Students have access to a range of additional support like academic writing, career development and personal development through our Academic Learning Development Centres and Library Services.

We are committed to an inclusive, accessible curriculum, designed to enable exploration of a diverse range of viewpoints and perspectives from contrasting international contexts. Students are encouraged to think critically about policy challenges, and the institutional structures and policy processes through which they are addressed. This includes critical reflection on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, and the application and delivery of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. Staff who teach on the programme will continuously review their module reading lists, course materials and teaching methods to ensure this. We expect students to interact with staff and other students with respect and, in so doing, build a learning community based on trust to enable learning through vigorous study and vibrant discussion and debate.

Teaching methods

We are committed to providing personalised and flexible teaching in technology enhanced classrooms and blended learning formats. We predominantly teach in small seminar groups and tutorials and employ active and authentic learning pedagogies as we know students find such teaching and learning more engaging and effective. A variety of learning, teaching and summative and formative assessment formats are used across modules to cater for students' varied backgrounds and learning styles. All our modules allow for blended learning, with tools for teaching face to face and online.

Students will participate in both classroom-based and field-based activities to encourage enquiry-led, experiential and collaborative learning. Classroom-based learning will be mainly composed of interactive lectures, workshops and seminars where students are engaged in learning key topics, theories and their application and are encouraged to take part in debates and discussions. Module sessions will require students to demonstrate their ability to apply a range of analytical frameworks to problems, policy issues, case studies, presentations and team-based activities. Students will learn how to solve complex problems in a systematic way, informed by relevant knowledge, tools and techniques.

Field-based learning will be composed of workshops and policy labs with policy makers and representatives from professional bodies as well as professional skills and competency development sessions and where possible, field trips. Towards the end of the course, students will work independently on a substantial research project, under academic (or professional, if relevant) supervision, culminating in the submission of either an academic dissertation, or Applied Research Project (ARP). Other teaching methods include case studies, simulation exercises and group activities at workshops on digital platforms like Padlet and Teams.

Assessment methods

In line with the course team's inclusivity strategy, the assessments are intended to provide flexible ways for students to demonstrate that they meet the learning outcomes. The modules across the programme are designed to incorporate authentic learning and assessment methods, which requires students to apply their knowledge and skills to 'real world situations'. The diversity of assessments will involve students carrying out a variety of tasks, such as: policy and executive briefs, reflective journal, project proposal, critical literature reviews, presentations and independent study projects.

The overall aim of the various assessment methods is to challenge students to consolidate and synthesise the theoretical and practical insights on policy analysis and delivery and demonstrate advanced and critical understanding of research methods and conceptual frameworks. Through a range of assessment types, students will be able to enhance their knowledge and skills, particularly: analytical skills; writing styles, ranging from report writing to reflective writing; presentation delivery and engagement with diverse audiences; evidence-based research; independent study and enquiry skills.

Within each core module, to promote authenticity, we have included assessments involving reflective writing that must interconnect with module discussions and/or other assessments. Hence, for example, where students might use online databases, research or Gen AI tools as resources and aids for producing outputs for an assessed task, they will be expected to explain their use of such tools in their reflective writing accompanying these outputs, along with authorship reports (e.g. Grammarly Authorship reports). Each assessment will incorporate detailed rubrics designed to reflect the 'real life' nature of the tasks set.

Feedback on the assessments is an important part of the learning process of students, and we strive to provide this iteratively through both formative and summative feedback. Formative feedback of 'work in progress' is offered in each core module, in the form of small group activities and through tutor and peer feedback. Summative assessments will contribute to the final mark on the module and will have specific guidelines and instructions on the assessment criteria. Feedback will be provided on an assessment rubric covering key criteria, with specific and actionable information to help students manage their learning and areas of improvement.

Graduate Attribute	Evident in Course Outcomes
Critical and creative thinker	001, 003, 005, 006
Literate and effective communicator	004, 007, 008, 009
Entrepreneurial	004, 005, 009
Global in outlook and engaged in communities	004, 005, 009
Socially, ethically and environmentally aware	002, 003

Course Structure

This section shows the core and option modules available as part of the course and their credit value. Full-time Postgraduate students study 180 credits per year. Additional free text information on the choices may also be included, for example where students must choose one of two modules.. Course structures can be subject to change each academic year following feedback from a variety of sources.

Modules

Level 7

In two of the core modules (Governance, Policy Practice and Sustainable Development and Case Studies in Public Policy), students explore key concepts, theories and approaches to analysing and evaluating governance and policy. In these two modules, covering mutually complementary theories and approaches, this learning takes place through a series of case studies and examples from across a broad range of policy sectors and governance contexts. The practical focus of the module Policy Delivery and Management complements and interconnects with these other two core modules. These three modules serve as preparation for students on the capstone module Policy Research Project which provides an opportunity to further apply their prior learning on the course.

Module Code	Module Title	Status	PT Year (where applicable)	UK credit	ECTS
7PIRS021W	Governance, Policy Practice and Sustainable Development	Core	1	20	10
7POMN003W	Policy Research Project	Core	2	60	30
7POMN001W	Case Studies in Public Policymaking	Core	Various	20	10
7POMN002W	Policy Delivery and Management	Core	Various	20	10
7MEDS013W	Critical Issues in Campaigning	Option	Various	20	10
7PIRS030W	Democratic Innovations: Participatory Spaces around the World	Option	Various	20	10
7PLAN029W	Environmental Policy, Assessment and Climate Change	Option	Various	20	10
7POMN004W	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in Organisations and Policy	Option	Various	20	10
7DVST006W	Just Development Futures: Ideas, Concepts and Debates	Option	Various	20	10
7CRIM006W	Privatising Justice	Option	Various	20	10
7ECON013W	Sustainable Energy Policy	Option	Various	20	10

Please note: Not all option modules will necessarily be offered in any one year. In addition, timetabling and limited spaces may mean you cannot register for your first choice of option modules.

Professional body accreditation or other external references

Course management

The course will be hosted by School of Social Sciences. The course leader, from School of Social Sciences, will be part of the course team delivering the core modules who will meet on a regular basis to coordinate delivery of the curriculum across modules.

The Head of School holds academic responsibility for the course and other courses within the School.

Academic regulations

The current Handbook of Academic Regulations is available at westminster.ac.uk/academic-regulations.

Course specific regulations apply to some courses.

Academic Support

Upon arrival, an induction programme will introduce you to the staff responsible for the course, the campus on which you will be studying, the Library and IT facilities, additional support available and to your Campus Registry. You will be

provided with the Course Handbook, which provides detailed information about the course. Each course has a course leader or Director of Studies. All students enrolled on a full-time course and part time students registered for more than 60 credits a year have a personal tutor, who provides advice and guidance on academic matters. The University uses a Virtual Learning Environment called Blackboard where students access their course materials, and can communicate and collaborate with staff and other students. Further information on Blackboard can be found at <https://www.westminster.ac.uk/current-students/studies/your-student-journey/when-you-arrive/blackboard>

The Academic Learning Development Centre supports students in developing the skills required for higher education. As well as online resources in Blackboard, students have the opportunity to attend Study Skills workshops and one to one appointments. Further information on the Academic Learning Development Centre can be found at [westminster.ac.uk/academic-learning-development](https://www.westminster.ac.uk/academic-learning-development).

Learning support includes four libraries, each holding a collection of resources related to the subjects taught at that site. Students can search the entire library collection online through the Library Search service to find and reserve printed books, and access electronic resources (databases, e-journals, e-books). Students can choose to study in the libraries, which have areas for silent and group study, desktop computers, laptops for loan, photocopying and printing services. They can also choose from several computer rooms at each campus where desktop computers are available with the general and specialist software that supports the courses taught in their College. Students can also securely connect their own laptops and mobile devices to the University wireless network.

Support Services

The University of Westminster Student and Academic Services department provide advice and guidance on accommodation, financial and legal matters, personal counselling, health and disability issues, careers, specialist advice for international students and the chaplaincy providing multi-faith guidance. Further information on the advice available to students can be found at <https://www.westminster.ac.uk/student-advice>

The University of Westminster Students' Union also provides a range of facilities to support students during their time at the University. Further information on UWSU can be found at <https://www.westminster.ac.uk/students-union>

How do we ensure the quality of our courses and continuous improvement?

The course was initially approved by a University Validation Panel. University Panels normally include internal peers from the University, academic(s) from another university, a representative from industry and a Student Advisor.

The course is also monitored each year by the College to ensure it is running effectively and that issues which might affect the student experience have been appropriately addressed. Staff will consider evidence about the course, including the evidence of student surveys, student progression and achievement and reports from external examiners, in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the course and make changes where necessary.

A Course revalidation takes place periodically to ensure that the curriculum is up-to-date and that the skills gained on the course continue to be relevant to employers. Students meet with revalidation panels to provide feedback on their experiences. Student feedback from previous years is also part of the evidence used to assess how the course has been running.

How do we act on student feedback?

Student feedback is important to the University and student views are taken seriously. Student feedback is gathered in a variety of ways.

- Through student engagement activities at Course/Module level, students have the opportunity to express their voice in the running of their course. Course representatives are elected to expressly represent the views of their peers. The University and the Students' Union work together to provide a full induction to the role of the course representatives.
- There are also School Representatives appointed jointly by the University and the Students' Union who meet with senior School staff to discuss wider issues affecting student experience across the School. Student representatives are also represented on key College and University committees.
- All students are invited to complete a questionnaire before the end of each module. The feedback from this will inform the module leader on the effectiveness of the module and highlight areas that could be enhanced.
- Final year Undergraduate students will be asked to complete the National Student Survey which helps to inform the national university league tables.

This programme specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the course and the learning outcomes that a student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate, if they take full advantage of the learning

opportunities that are provided. This specification is supplemented by the Course Handbook, Module proforma and Module Handbooks provided to students. Copyright in this document belongs to the University of Westminster. All rights are reserved. This document is for personal use only and may not be reproduced or used for any other purpose, either in whole or in part, without the prior written consent of the University of Westminster. All copies of this document must incorporate this Copyright Notice – 2022©