Module Specification

Public Policy and Decision Making

Version: 2023-24, v2.0, 28 Jun 2023

Contents

Part 1: Information

Module title: Public Policy and Decision Making

Module code: UZQY6N-15-3

Level: Level 6

For implementation from: 2023-24

UWE credit rating: 15

ECTS credit rating: 7.5

Faculty: Faculty of Health & Applied Sciences

Department: HAS Dept of Social Sciences

Partner institutions: None

Field: Politics

Module type: Module

Pre-requisites: None

Excluded combinations: None

Co-requisites: None

Continuing professional development: No

Professional, statutory or regulatory body requirements: None

Part 2: Description

Overview: This module will focus on the making of decisions and policies.

Features: Not applicable

Educational aims: See Learning Outcomes

Outline syllabus: The module will cover explanations of key issues including how and why policy issues emerge, which issues are deemed important and why, how do policy actors formulate their ideas and responses to problems, what problems can be

encountered in implementing policies and decisions, and what factors contribute to the success of failure of policy action.

Due to the dynamic and evolving nature of this content, and the range of cases that will be used in the module, content will be variable to reflect developments in the real world. Frameworks for analysis will include areas such as:

The idea of policy stages and cycles.

Policy actors and institutions.

Theories of decision making.

Issue emergence and policy agendas.

Policy formulation and Legitimation.

Implementation.

Policy success and failure.

Part 3: Teaching and learning methods

Teaching and learning methods: The module will take a broad approach that will allow students to examine policy processes in countries of their choosing.

Module Learning outcomes: On successful completion of this module students will achieve the following learning outcomes.

> **MO1** Critically engage with, and evaluate, how decisions and public policies are made.

> **MO2** Show a critical understanding of policy cycles and processes.

> **MO3** Demonstrate an awareness of explanations relating to stages such as agenda setting and policy implementation.

> **MO4** Understand the nature and operation of the main policy institutions and actors such as governments, parliaments and organized interests.

> **MO5** Demonstrate critical skills in analysing contemporary policy issues.

Hours to be allocated: 150

Contact hours:

Independent study/self-guided study = 114 hours

Face-to-face learning = 36 hours

Total = 150

Reading list: The reading list for this module can be accessed at readinglists.uwe.ac.uk via the following link https://uwe.rl.talis.com/modules/uzqy6n-15-3.html

Part 4: Assessment

Assessment strategy: The assessment is in two parts, an oral policy presentation and a 'policy brief' on a contemporary issue, which are designed to:

Allow students to identify and consider a contemporary policy issue from a country of their choice.
Develop policy making skills and test the understanding of students about the broad the nature of decision and policy making.

The oral presentation is intended to develop presentational skills in relation to the effective social scientific communication of complex policy detail (a transferable skill to 'real world' situations), drawing on material in relation to decision and policy making. It will typically involve the use of well-chosen text and graphics/charts/tables to present a proposal in relation to policy information and to demonstrate processes relating to key themes in the content of the module, including for example the definition of policy, stages models of policy processes (agenda-setting, formulation and implementation), theories of decision making, and considerations of policy success and failure.

The policy brief on a contemporary issue allows students to select an issue from any policy area, and from any country, and to present an informative brief about the nature of the policy, including why it emerged onto the policy agenda, how the issues

has been 'framed', the broad nature of formulation of the policy proposal, considerations of which policy instruments have been chosen, how the policy is implemented, and whether or not is has been successful. The board aim is to develop thinking about what constitutes effective policy and decision-making.

While the content of the module focuses on 'public' policy, many of the approaches considered in both assessments are transferable to 'private' and non-governmental decision-making, for example in businesses and voluntary organisations.

Assessment tasks:

Written Assignment (First Sit)

Description: Policy brief (2000 words)

Weighting: 70 %

Final assessment: No

Group work: No

Learning outcomes tested: MO1, MO4, MO5

Presentation (First Sit)

Description: Policy proposal presentation (10 minutes)

Weighting: 30 %

Final assessment: Yes

Group work: No

Learning outcomes tested: MO1, MO2, MO3, MO4

Written Assignment (Resit)

Description: Policy brief (2000 words)

Weighting: 70 %

Final assessment: No

Group work: No

Learning outcomes tested: MO1, MO4, MO5

Presentation (Resit)

Description: Policy presentation (10 minutes)

Weighting: 30 %

Final assessment: Yes

Group work: No

Learning outcomes tested: MO1, MO2, MO3, MO4, MO5

Part 5: Contributes towards

This module contributes towards the following programmes of study:

Politics and International Relations [Sep][FT][Frenchay][3yrs] BA (Hons) 2021-22

Politics And International Relations [Sep][SW][Frenchay][4yrs] BA (Hons) 2020-21

Politics And International Relations {Foundation} [Sep][FT][Frenchay][4yrs] BA (Hons) 2020-21

Politics And International Relations {Foundation} [Sep][SW][Frenchay][5yrs] BA (Hons) 2019-20

Politics And International Relations [Sep][PT][Frenchay][6yrs] BA (Hons) 2019-20

Politics And International Relations [Sep][PT][Frenchay][6yrs] BA (Hons) 2018-19