



MODULE SPECIFICATION

Code: UMED3H-15-M **Title:** Contemporary Policy Analysis **Version:** 1
Level: M **UWE credit rating:** 15 **ECTS credit rating:** 7.5

Module type: Standard

Owning Faculty: FBL **Field:** Economics

Faculty Committee approval: QMAC **Date:**

Valid from: 1 September 2011 **Discontinued from:**

Contributes towards: MSc Applied Economics

Pre-requisites: None

Co-requisites: None

Excluded combinations: None

Aim of module

- To furnish students with a critical appreciation of current issues in microeconomic and macroeconomic policy.
- To develop skills of debate and critical evaluation within students.
- To expose students to contemporary policy documents and debates.
- To further develop research skills on specific policy areas.

Learning outcomes:

On successful completion of this module students will be able to:

- Comment critically on current issues and debates in economic policy (component A, component B)
- Understand the key conflicts in economic policy making between competing demands, such as the economic, political, and ethical, on decision making (component A, component B)
- Evaluate the framework for economic policy decision-making (component A, component B)
- Apply techniques of data analysis and evaluation in considering the economic policy making (component B)

In addition the educational experience may explore, develop, and practise but not formally discretely assess the following:

- Team-working
- Research skills and design
- Independent learning
- Debating

Syllabus outline:

The syllabus may well be different each year, depending on the pace at which economic policy issues change. However, the following are at present likely issues for discussion:

- Complexity and economic policy
- Behavioural economics and policy

- Immigration policy
- Public policy and welfare state reform
- Capital account management and associated policy
- Financial regulation: micro and macroprudential aspects

Teaching and learning methods:

Teaching and learning strategy will be affected by student numbers but will involve a combination of lectures, lectorials, seminars and private study. Lectures will be used sparingly, to convey core material. Lectorials act as more interactive fora in which students make contributions. Seminars will be a forum in which students will be expected to discuss the scheduled topic, usually with reference to the directed relevant journal article(s) or case studies on the topic. Seminar activities may include non-assessed presentations of topics on which students would be asked to debate. Seminars will sometimes make use of electronic resources, including secondary data sources and computer packages where applicable. Seminars will give an opportunity for students to work in groups and to debate the issues arising from the case studies. Students will be expected to engage in private study to obtain, read and analyse prescribed reading and to develop independent learning skills in seeking out relevant material from electronic and non-electronic sources. Students will be directed towards the University Library online Study Skills resources for the development of skills appropriate to the level and style of the module. Students will be directed on how the resources on this site should be used to develop the skills that will underpin their studies in the module handbook and/or via Blackboard.

Reading Strategy

All students will be encouraged to make full use of the print and electronic resources available to them through membership of the University. These include a range of electronic journals and a wide variety of resources available through web sites and information gateways. Clearly also, given the focus of the module, students will be expected to access policy documentation, for instance from publicly available government websites. The University Library's web pages provide access to subject relevant resources and services, and to the library catalogue. Many resources can be accessed remotely. Students will be presented with opportunities within the curriculum to develop their information retrieval and evaluation skills in order to identify such resources effectively. Students would be encouraged via liaison with the Library to use the *iSkillZone*. At Masters level students are expected to manage their own reading and discover new resources for reading.

Essential reading:

There is no core text for this module. Given the nature of the module, the reading will be updated annually and made available via the module handbook or on Blackboard. It is essential that students read widely. In addition, they should follow sources on specific topics, as specified in the seminar programme and assignment briefing. As postgraduate students, they are expected to be able to identify further sources appropriate to their study. Students should mainly consult refereed journal articles. As this is a policy-focused module, students will be expected to read policy documents.

Indicative Reading List:

There is no indicative reading list, however, these texts may prove useful as general background reading:

Books:

Glimcher, P, Camerer, C., Poldrack, R. and E, Fehr (eds), *Neuroeconomics: decision-making and the brain*, Elsevier, 2009
 Hein, E. and A. Truger, *Money, distribution and economic policy: alternatives to orthodox macroeconomics*, Edward Elgar, 2007.

Journals (all available electronically):

Oxford Review of Economic Policy
 Economic Policy
 Bank of England Quarterly Bulletin
 American Economic Review
 Journal of Economic Behaviour and Organisation

