

BRITISH POLITICAL STUDIES¹

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This chapter looks at the development of British political studies and how the process has shaped modern university programmes in political studies and the canon of literature of the subject. The authors outline the history of the discipline and review its institutional growth, from the establishment of political science institutes and faculties at universities through to the founding of associations of professionals and leading scholarly journals. In this context, political science research and education in Great Britain is explored and their key features presented.

Let us begin with some important comments on the semantics. The discipline of political research is most often referred to in English as “political science.” However, the term “political studies” is also grounded in the tradition of British political research. As shown further in this paper, the difference between “political science” and “political studies” has had a significant impact on the institutionalization of the discipline. Until the 1950s, British academics claimed that the connotation of the term “political science” did not correspond to their research practice, which was based on different methods and was less scientific in character than that of (positivistic) natural sciences.² It was not until late 1960s and early

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² This opinion is acknowledged in statements of some leading figures in the British political studies. In 1926, Harold Laski stated: “Political science has not the axiomatic quality of mathematics. In its equations the variables are human beings whose uniqueness prevents their reduction to law in the scientific sense of that much-abused word. We deal with tendencies; we can predict upon the basis of experience. But our

1970s when, together with the establishment of new universities, younger-generation researchers set to make more extensive use of empirical and qualitative methods. Nowadays, a distinction can be made between academic centres which conduct political science research and those which are grounded more in the tradition of political studies.

The chapter consists of four main parts. Part one focuses on the history of British political studies as an independent scientific discipline. In spite of a long tradition of research into politics and growing autonomy of teaching, administration and institutionalization of the discipline from late 1800s, political science did not become an independent field of study with its own identity until after the Second World War. In part two, the post-war history of political studies is outlined, with special focus on the formation of the Political Studies Association (PSA) in 1950 and further changes of research trends, associated with the establish-

predictions are limited by the necessity of recognizing that the facts are not within our control. We can influence and attempt and hope; the certainty and precision of the chemist, or even the physiologist, can never be ours.” (Laski, 1977, p. 2). Ernest Barker, profess of political science at Cambridge, stated in 1928: “I am not altogether happy about the term ‘Science.’ It has been vindicated so largely, and almost exclusively, for the exact and experimental study of natural phenomena, that its application to politics may convey suggestions, and excite anticipations, which cannot be justified. If I am to use the designation of Political Science, I shall use it, as Aristotle used *πολιτική επιστήμη* [*politikē epistēmē*], to signify a method, or form of inquiry, concerned with the moral phenomena of human behaviour in political studies. I should prefer to call such a method or form of inquiry by the name of Political Theory, because I should hope, by the use of that name, to avoid the appearance of any excessive claim to exactitude, and I should be indicating more precisely the nature of the inquiry, as simply a ‘speculation’ (*θεωρία* [*theoria*]) about a group of facts in the field of political action, a speculation intended to result in a general scheme which connects the facts systematically with one another and thus gives an explanation of their significance” (Barker, 1977, p. 17). A similar view was expressed by Denis W. Brogan, the successor of E. Barker at Cambridge. In his inaugural lecture of the academic year 1945/46, he said that a political researcher “is not professing an exact science in which his opinions, prejudices, views of his field of study matter little.” Although such disciplines may exist, “the academic study of politics is most certainly not one of them.” D. Brogan acknowledged that one might doubt the existence of political science as a discipline, considering the poor relations between science and politics. The role of social sciences may be restricted to organising of the data provided by “the whole of human experience as an unplanned biological experiment.” Political researchers “do not acquire any such mastery of the political world as do physical scientists of the material world”; in this sense, the term “political science” should be deemed pretentious (Brogan, 1977, p. 34, 36).

ment of new universities and adoption of modern research methods. In part three, modern British political studies are characterized. Part four presents programmes in politics, together with their curricula, offered by selected British higher education providers. Conclusions from the analysis close the chapter.

1. BEGINNINGS

1.1. Universities in Great Britain

The history of higher education providers on the British Isles dates back to the early beginnings of the Oxford University in the second half of the 12th century (where educational activity had already been pursued for a hundred years). Oxford and Cambridge were the only universities in England until the end of the 1820s.³ The 15th century in Scotland saw the foundation of universities in St. Andrews (1413), Glasgow (1451), and Aberdeen (1495), and one hundred years later – in Edinburgh (1582). Ireland's first university was founded in Dublin (1592). These seven universities, created before 1600, are referred to as ancient universities.

The subsequent phase of establishing universities in the UK took place in the 19th century. Starting from the 1830s, several academic centres were created which nowadays are leading political research centres. Of special importance are those founded in the capital of the United Kingdom, mostly in response to the increasing interest in higher education among less well-off representatives of the urban middle class. In 1826, London University, the predecessor of today's University College London (UCL), was founded through a joint stock company, under the inspiration of the utilitarian theories by Jeremy Bentham.⁴ In response

³ The third in the history of English universities was the University of Northampton, which operated for a short period of time only (1261–1265).

⁴ Jeremy Bentham's (1748–1832) actual contribution to the establishment of the university was limited merely to the acquisition of a £100 worth of shares (Harte, 1998). Nowadays, however, he is considered a spiritual mentor of UCL. His preserved corpse, dressed in an outfit from the first half of the 19th century (the so-called "Auto-Icon"), is displayed to the public in a special cabin in the hall of the Wilkins Building in London's Bloomsbury district (Marmoy, 1958).

to the establishment of this first secular higher education institution, the Anglican King's College was founded in 1829. In 1836, both institutions formed part of the University of London, founded by the government to examine students and award degrees. Other matters, such as teaching curricula and methods, remained within the decision-making powers of the colleges (Vernon, 2004, pp. 51–62). Owing to its open structure, the number of higher education providers affiliated with the University of London increased quickly and included universities in other English cities. As a result of the reform implemented during the years 1898–1900, many autonomous until that time colleges of London became constituent parts of the federal University of London. The scope of supervision performed by the University of London over the affiliated institutions was also extended to include the teaching process (Vernon, 2004, p. 91). One of the universities affiliated to the University of London was the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE). Founded in 1895 by Sidney Webb, Beatrice Webb, Graham Wallas and George Bernard Shaw, members of the Fabian Society, it was intended to popularize Fabian Socialism.⁵

Outside London, four other universities were created in Great Britain in the 19th century. In 1832–1837, the Anglican University of Durham was established in North East England (Vernon, 2004, pp. 101–102). In 1880, the Federal Victoria University was founded by Royal Charter to unite the Owens College of Manchester, the University College of Liverpool, and the Yorkshire College of Leeds. The three universities became independent again in the early 1990s, while the Victoria University of Manchester (which retained the name of the federal university) was to become one of the key academic centres of institutionalized political studies, which saw a rapid development in the subsequent decades (R. Barker, 2014, pp. 35–41). In 1893, the Federal University of Wales was established. Its constituent colleges included Aberystwyth, Cardiff and Bangor (Vernon, 2004, pp. 37–39). The history of the Irish Queen's University of Ireland, founded in Belfast in 1850, is a bit more complex. Its constituent colleges included three colleges which admitted catholic students (unlike the University of Dublin) in Belfast, Cork

⁵ Henry Hunt Hutchinson (1822–1894) bequeathed £10,000 (today, an equivalent of ca. £ 1m) to the Fabian Society, and thus facilitated the establishment of LSE. Today, the Hutchinson Silver Medal is awarded every year to students of LSE for outstanding achievements in research (Dahrendorf, 1995, p. 4).

and Galway. In 1880, the Queen's University of Ireland was substituted by the Royal University of Ireland which, similarly to the University of London, awarded degrees to students of the affiliated colleges (Vernon, 2004, pp. 35–37).

The third stage in the development of British universities was the establishment of the so-called civic universities,⁶ mainly in larger cities, during the years 1900–1909, and then – except for the University of Reading (1926) – during the years 1948–1957. Apart from the universities in Manchester (1903), Liverpool (1903), and Leeds (1904), which regained autonomy after the dissolution of the Victoria University, three universities were created in Birmingham (1900), Sheffield (1905), and Bristol (1909). During 1940s and 1950s, five other higher education providers were granted university status. Among them, universities in Nottingham (1948) and Hull (1954) remain important nowadays in terms of their activity in the field of political studies. In this way, a hierarchical system was created with the most prestigious universities of Oxford, Cambridge and London, and city universities enjoying a higher status than technical or teacher training colleges (R. D. Anderson, 1992, p. 21). It explains, at least in part, why, for a long time, political researchers of the main academic centres were reluctant to admit employees of polytechnics as members of the PSA.

The subsequent, fourth stage in the development of university education in Great Britain was closely related to the most far-reaching reform of the British higher education in the 20th century, triggered by the development of a report in 1961–1963 by the government committee chaired by Lord Lionel Robbins. Although the establishment of new universities followed from the implementation of report recommendations, the decision to found seven new universities had been taken at the end of the 1950s. Thus, when the report was published, 31 higher education providers in Great Britain had university status (Robbins, 1963, p. 22). Towards the end of the decade, their number soared to 45 (Deem, Hillyard, Reed, 2007, p. 38). Some of the new academic centres created at the time were referred to as plate-glass universities, with campuses, unlike those of civic universities, located outside big cities. A few of the universities established in the 1960s are today's leading political research centres,

⁶ Owing to their architecture, the universities are also referred to as redbrick universities (Whyte, 2015).

including the University of York (1963), University of Warwick (1965), and especially the University of Essex (1965), whose representatives were to become the key initiators of the methodological revolution in the early 1970s.

The following decade did not see the establishment of any new universities. In the 1980s, university status was granted to two existing higher education providers. The fifth stage of development did not start until the 1990s. The Further and Higher Education Act adopted in 1992 for England and Wales and, separately, for Scotland, altered the system of financing of higher education providers. However, its most far-reaching consequence was the creation of new universities, mainly through the process of conversion of 35 existing polytechnics, what became possible under the new legislation. In consequence, in 1997 as many as 115 higher education providers had university status, including those forming part of federal universities in Wales and London⁷ (Dearing, 1997, p. 41). At the end of the decade, 88 institutions held university status. New universities were established in the aftermath of devolution in the United Kingdom after 1998 and transfer of the power of shaping independent educational policy to Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, as well as the general liberalization of the policy. Amendments to the laws on higher education, adopted in 1998 and 2004, introduced university tuition fees and replaced the existing system of student grants with an extended system student loans.⁸ In 2004, the Ministry of Education permitted higher education providers in England and Wales with taught degree awarding powers to apply for the right to use the word “university” in their title, and abolished the requirement of holding research degree awarding powers for that purpose. As a result, during 2001–2009 as many as 49 new universities were established, some of them through

⁷ Colleges comprising the University of London started to gain more autonomy in 1993, when – under the Act of 1992 – their model of financing changed from receiving funds through the University of London to being financed directly from public funds.

⁸ Tuition fees were introduced following the recommendations included in the report drafted in 1997 by the special government commission chaired by Ronald Dearing (Dearing, 1997). In 1999, the Labour Party cabinet introduced a tuition fee of £1,000. In 2006, it was raised to £3,000 (Hussey, Smith, 2010, pp. 10–12), while in 2010 the Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition government raised its upper limit to £9,000. In the 2017/2018 academic year, almost all universities made a decision to raise the tuition fee to £9,250 (Havergal, 2016).

a merger of previously independent institutions. In 2016, more than 130 higher education providers in Great Britain held university status (Higher Education Council for Wales, 2017; Higher Education Funding Council for England, 2017; nidirect, 2017; Scottish Funding Council, 2017). The overall number of higher education providers was 163, and the number of students in all programmes amounted to nearly 2.3 m; there were nearly 40,000 students of political science (Higher Education Statistics Agency, 2016).

With a high level of autonomy, British universities rank in top positions on the university autonomy scorecard developed by the European University Association.⁹ They enjoy complete freedom in the design of programmes and curricula for both the bachelor's and master's degrees. In early 2017, works were in progress to adopt the Higher Education and Research Bill 2016–2017 – a new legal act regulating higher education in Great Britain. By this act, the British government intended to simplify the process of granting the right of awarding degrees to private, profit-oriented colleges and converting them to universities. In January 2017, that part of the legislation was questioned by the House of Lords through an amendment which contained the definition of a university, aimed at prohibiting higher education providers to seek profit and preserving their autonomy (Elgot, 2017). The act was finally passed on 27 April 2017 in a version including some of the amendments proposed by the House of Lords. Under the Act, new educational institutions wishing to be awarded university status must meet the requirements set forth in the guidelines issued by the Ministry of Education.

1.2. Political science programmes before 1945

Reviewing the history of political science in Great Britain, we must stress the fundamental role or pre-scientific, philosophical political thought. Undoubtedly, British political philosophers, along the French and German ones, have created the most influential Western tradition of political thought. Political thinkers such as Thomas More, Thomas Hob-

⁹ In the ranking by the EUA, the British system of education comes first in organisational autonomy, third in financial autonomy, second in staffing autonomy, and third in academic autonomy (European University Association, 2017). For a comparison, the Polish system of education ranks 14th, 19th, 12, and 15th, respectively.

bes and John Locke (all of them graduates from Oxford) not only made a significant – from the historical perspective – contribution to the political philosophy of Renaissance and Enlightenment, but also outlined a series of topics in political theory discussed to date, such as the concept of state, political representation, understanding of freedom, the scope of government's powers, etc. There is a close relation between political philosophy and historical political context. From this point of view, special importance is attributed to the second half of the 17th century – a period of civil wars between supporters of strong monarchy and those of the parliament or – in a broader sense – the republican system, which ended with the Glorious Revolution of 1688 and shaped the modern British political system and political culture (Hayward, 1991, p. 302). Owing to the continuity of the political system and the fact that philosophers referred to that and other historical contexts, today, political philosophy of Renaissance and Enlightenment retains its relevance in political theory (Skinner, 1998).

What differentiates philosophical thought from political thought is the comprehensive nature of the former (Strauss, 1959). Unlike science, philosophy avoided disciplinarily; philosophers were “as much concerned with law as with politics [...] They were disposed to treat society, and social problems, as a single unit of study” (P. King, 1977, p. viii). Therefore, political thought was an integral part of broader considerations on the society, devoid of its own clear identity, which it did not begin to evolve until the late 19th century.

Politics as a teaching and research field took a long time to gain the status of independent discipline at British universities – even longer than at American ones. The single honours degree (a degree awarded at graduation in one autonomous discipline) in political science was not awarded until the 1960s (Grant, 2010, pp. 5–6). Until then, political science was taught as part of programmes combining various fields of study, and research was conducted in faculties and institutes of history, law, or philosophy.

At Oxford University, as philosopher David George Ritchie wrote in 1891, political issues were taught at courses assessed through examinations at three out of seven existing honours schools: the school of *Literae Humaniores* (teaching mainly classical philosophical Greek and Latin literature, the so-called Greats), the school of jurisprudence and the school of modern history. Political topics were combined with

political economy, constitutional law, and political philosophy. Lectures on these subjects were taught at the Faculty of Law and Faculty of Arts. Separate lectures on political science and political and social matters were given at the Faculty of Arts, as part of the curriculum of modern history programmes (Ritchie, 1891, p. 94). Political science and political economics with history of economy were compulsory courses at the honours school of modern history; however, students who did not aspire to be awarded a first-class or second-class degree were allowed to skip political science or political economics (Chester, 1986, p. 7). The list of literature of the subject included classical philosophical texts, such as *Politics* by Aristotle and extracts from *Leviathan* by Hobbes, as well as contemporary works, such as *Principles of Political Economics* by John Stuart Mill and textbooks in law – *The Theory of the State* by Johann Kaspar Bluntschli and *Ancient Laws* by Henry Maine (Ritchie, 1891, p. 88).

In the years 1910–1911 the Gladstone Professorship of Political Theory and Institutions was established at Oxford, chaired by W. G. S. Adams (1874–1966) until 1933, and later by Arthur Salter (1881–1975) until 1944. However, a real turn around in teaching political science at Oxford was marked by the establishment of bachelor's programme Philosophy, Politics, Economics (PPE) as a new honour school in 1920. The programme was an alternative to classical studies and referred to as Modern Greats (Hammerstein, Heirbaut, 2011, p. 392). Philosophers tailored most of the curriculum¹⁰, which was largely criticised by supporters of a programme focused on political science and economics (Chester, 1986, pp. 31–38).¹¹ The criticism led to a reform of the programme in

¹⁰ In 1930, the reading list for the political philosophy programme included works by Edmund Burke (*American Speeches, Letter to the Sheriff of Bristol*), Lord Durham (*Report on British North America*), John Stuart Mill (*Considerations on Representative Government*), James Bryce (*Modern Democracies*), Albert Venn Dicey (*Law of the Constitution, Report on Indian Constitutional Reforms, 1918*), and Adhémar Esmein (*Eléments de Droit Constitutionnel Français et Comparé, Tome Premier, La Liberté Moderne*) (Chester, 1975, p. 155).

¹¹ Students would sit an exam in moral and political philosophy, British political and constitutional history from 1760, British social and economic history after 1760, the history of philosophy from René Descartes, political economy, two recommended books in metaphysics and moral philosophy, political philosophy or political economy (at students' choice), and one additional course in philosophy, politics or economics plus at least two translations from French, German or Italian (Chester, 1986, p. 38).

1931–1933, which was given a more modern touch through, among other things, extended scope of political science (Chester, 1986, pp. 40–45). However, its primary goal of training future political and economic elites remained unchanged (R. Barker, 2014, pp. 28–32).

Initially, the creation of the PPE programme was not accompanied by any institutional or personal changes which would ensure autonomy of the discipline of political science at Oxford. In 1934, the Sub-Faculty of Politics was created as part of the Faculty of Social Studies, staffed mainly by historians and philosophers (Hood, King, Peele, 2014, p. 7). Another institutional driver of the development of political studies at Oxford was the establishment of Nuffield College in 1937. It was the first co-educational college and at the same time the first college committed to pursue social studies and collaborate with non-academic circles in resolving serious social problems (Grant, 2010, p. 10).

The development of political studies at the University of Cambridge was a bit more complex. In mid-19th century *Moral Science Tripos*¹² in humanities at the bachelor's level was established, which combined philosophy, logic, psychology, history, political philosophy, political economics, and jurisprudence (Collini, Winch, Burrow, 1983, p. 345). In 1860–1867 the programme's curriculum included history and political philosophy. Works by Greek classics (including Plato's *Republic* and Aristotle's *Politics*) as well as modern (*The Spirit of the Laws* by Montesquieu) and contemporary authors (*The History of Civilization in Europe* and *The History of the Origins of Representative Government in Europe* by François Guizot, *Constitutional History* and *The Middle Ages* by Henry Hallam, *Political Philosophy* by Henry Brougham) were on the compulsory reading list. After the year 1867, the subject was replaced with moral and political philosophy and the compulsory reading list extended with works on philosophy (including Kant and Bentham). Under the influence of Henry Sidgwick¹³ (1838–1900), in 1874 names of other philosophers were added to the syllabus (Thomas Hobbes, Samuel Clarke, Shaftesbury, David Hume, William Paley, John Stuart

¹² *Tripes* – an equivalent of Oxford's *honours schools* – is typically a two-part, three-year undergraduate course which provides students with the opportunity to specialise in at least two subject areas.

¹³ Two works by this utilitarian philosopher, *The Elements of Politics* (1891) and *The Development of European Polity* (1903), were to become some of the primary texts applied in political science programmes in early 1900s.

Mill and Hugo Grotius), and the syllabus became “explicitly concentrating upon the conflict between Intuitionism and Utilitarianism” (Collini et al., 1983, p. 346). In 1891, the subject was renamed once again and from then on was referred to as political philosophy or politics. The syllabus covered more material on the history of political systems and a comparison of the European constitutional systems, and the list of textbooks included – similarly to that at Oxford – authors dealing with constitutional law. The subject was taught in this form until 1903, when it was removed from the curriculum altogether.

From 1874, political subjects were taught at the newly-created Historical Tripos, which in years 1860–1869 was part of the Moral Sciences Tripos, and in 1870–1873 – Law Tripos (B. E. Hammond, 2009, p. 421). The compulsory courses included political philosophy, jurisprudence, constitutional law, political economics, public international law and constitutional history, to name just a few (B. E. Hammond, 2009, p. 425). Apart from the textbooks studied at Moral Sciences Tripos, the recommended reading list contained *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* by Edward Gibbon and *The Old Regime and Revolution* by Alexis de Tocqueville. Some of the key authors of the programme, apart from H. Sidgwick, were the historian John Seeley (1834–1895)¹⁴ and the economist Alfred Marshall (1842–1924). In opposition to Mandell Creighton (1843–1901), Henry Gwatkin (1844–1916) and Frederic Maitland (1850–1906), they considered Historical Tripos a programme mainly in political science. Owing to them, as a result of a reform of the programme in 1885, the course in political philosophy was replaced with political science, and the theory of law and government was introduced into the curriculum as a new course (Collini et al., 1983, pp. 347–348). Apart from inductive political science,¹⁵ the lectures covered deductive

¹⁴ J. Seeley was the author of one of the textbooks in political science, *Introduction to Political Science* (1896), compiled on the basis of a series of lectures in the Historical Tripos. He used an aphorism to describe the direct relation between political and historical studies: “History without political science has no fruit; political science without history has no root” (Seeley, 2005, p. 4).

¹⁵ In a guide for students of 1893, the course was described as follows: “Political Science is, for the most part, treated inductively in this paper. It is not, like the previous subjects, confined to England or the British Empire, but a wide survey, for the purpose of scientific comparison, is taken of the political institutions of the ancient, mediaeval and modern world. The attention of the student is directed to the origin and development of political society and government in general, the nature of different

and analytical political theory. From 1897, political science, referred to as Comparative Politics, ceased to be a compulsory course. At the time, the dispute over the place of political studies in the curriculum of the programme flared up again.¹⁶ Repeated attempts at creating separate Political Sciences Tripos, supported by the economists, failed. From 1909, political subjects were referred to as Political Science A or Political Science B, and remained optional. In 1930, they were replaced with, respectively, History of Political Thought and Theory of Modern State (Collini et al., 1983, pp. 349–350).

It is worth noting once again that throughout the period under analysis, a historical approach was taken to teaching political science at Cambridge, focused on ancient Greek or Roman political institutions, with little attention given to modern states – a fact commented on as follows: “the political science taught at Cambridge did not do was to study politics” (Collini et al., 1983, p. 360).¹⁷ The curriculum was tailored to train future government and colonial officials (the Indian Civil Service officers were taught at Cambridge): “In all these ways the science of politics reflected the current political agenda and expressed the academics’ own sense of their intimate involvement with the business of government, whether seen from the floor of the House or a seat on the Indian Coun-

forms of government, and the conditions under which they tend to come into being, the mutual relations of the various portions of the state-machine, and similar matters. The point of view is throughout historical rather than theoretical” (Collini et al., 1983, p. 348).

¹⁶ F. Maitland, a distinguished historian of law, was one of the main critics of political science, at least in its deduction-based, theoretical form. Thomas Thornley recalls his negative attitude to the discipline: “once when Professor Maitland was dining with me at Trinity Hall, the Master was referring contemptuously to the little scraps and snips of useless information which a popular newspaper was in the habit of dishing up for its readers, such as the number of pocket-handkerchiefs which, if stretched diagonally, would reach from the earth to the moon. ‘That’, said Maitland, ‘is what we call Political Science here’.” (Collini et al., 1983, p. 349).

¹⁷ Michael Oakeshott, who studied history at Cambridge in early 1920s, expressed a somewhat different criticism of the syllabus, stressing its insufficient grounding in philosophy. Writing about “the school of political science of Cambridge,” he states that it has lost its real object (which should be people rather than institutions), deals with forms of government isolating the issue from broader human experience and erroneously identifying the government with the state, and treats the latter as a fixed idea, regardless of whether a city state, a national state or a modern state is under analysis (Oakeshott, 2004, pp. 51–56).

cil, or just from the common-rooms and drawing-rooms in which they mingled with current Cabinet Ministers and future Governor-Generals.” (Collini et al., 1983, p. 361). The fact that the Professorship of Political Science was established at Cambridge in 1928, on the initiative of the Rockefeller Foundation, and the first holder of the Chair was Ernest Barker (1874–1960), a historian of political thought, replaced in 1939 with Denis Brogan (1900–1974), a historian, also proves the conservative approach to the discipline (Easton, Gunnell, Stein, 1995, p. 117; P. King, 1977, p. x).

The London School of Economics and Political Science was founded with the initial intention to train political reformers and administrators.¹⁸ Creators of LSE looked to the example of the French *École Libre des Sciences Politiques* established in 1872, London’s Imperial College, the German *Technische Hochschule* (a polytechnic) in Berlin and the American Massachusetts Institute of Technology where, as Sidney Webb put it, “the *Economics* course is the best I ever heard of” (Dahrendorf, 1995, p. 5). LSE study programmes were addressed to future government officials, lawyers, bankers and insurance professionals (R. Barker, 2014, p. 34), and prepared them for examinations held by other institutions, such as the Civil Service, the Council of Legal Education, the Institute of Bankers, the Institute of Actuaries, as well as the University of London and the London Chamber of Commerce (Hayek, 1946, p. 5). During the first years of operation, the courses taught included economics, commercial and industrial law, commercial geography, statistics, history of trade, as well as political science, referred to – what is significant – as the Government, taught by Graham Wallas (Hayward, 1991, p. 305). The fact that the Department of Railway Economics was considered the leading and exemplary department of the School shows its specialist profile (Hayek, 1946, pp. 5–6). During the subsequent years, the curricula were augmented with

¹⁸ A technocratic concept of the school is confirmed in a post in the Diary by Beatrice Webb: “Advertised for political science lecturer – and yesterday interviewed candidates – a nondescript set of university men. All hopeless from our point of view – all imagined that political science consisted of a knowledge of Aristotle and modern! writers such as De Tocqueville – wanted to put the students through a course of Utopias from More downwards. When Sidney suggested a course of lectures to be prepared on the different systems of municipal taxation, when Graham suggested a study of the rival methods of election from *ad hoc* to proportional representation, the wretched candidates looked aghast and thought evidently that we were amusing ourselves at their expense.” (R. Barker, 2014, p. 33).

public administration, public finance, transport, railway studies, insurance studies, demographics, bibliographic studies and library management, to name just a few courses (Hayek, 1946, p. 14).

Much against common expectations, the first director at LSE was not G. Wallas, but rather 29-year-old Albert Samuel Hewins (1865–1931), a mathematician and economist of the University of Oxford. He held the post until 1903 and was later elected to the House of Commons as a Conservative MP (Dahrendorf, 1995, pp. 10–12). He was replaced for the subsequent four years by Halford J. Mackinder (1861–1947), one of the main authors of the concept of geopolitics, who – along his scientific career – pursued political activity and unsuccessfully ran for MP in 1900 and 1908 to finally get elected in 1910 as a representative of the Liberal Unionists (Dahrendorf, 1995, pp. 72–73, 108). In 1908–1919, the post of LSE director was held by the historian William Pember Reeves (1857–1932), born in New Zealand, former Minister of Justice, Labour and Education in New Zealand’s government in 1890s. At the time, W. Reeves also held the post of director of the National Bank of New Zealand (Dahrendorf, 1995, pp. 109–111). Last but not least, nearly throughout the interwar period (1919–1937), the post of LSE director was held by the economist William Beveridge (1879–1963), earlier engaged in the works of the Committee of the Privy Council for trade. During the First World War, he worked for the ministries responsible for procurement, and in 1919 was awarded the title of Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Food (Dahrendorf, 1995, pp. 139–140).

An important event in the history of LSE and the British political studies in general was the creation of the British Library of Political Science in 1896, one year after the inauguration of the School. In 1900, LSE was incorporated into the University of London and LSE lecturers – into the Faculty of Economics and Political Science. Owing to that transition, in 1904 LSE was granted the right to award the bachelor’s degree in economics (Hayek, 1946, pp. 13–14). The Professorship of Political Science was established in 1914. The co-founder of the School, social psychologist G. Wallas, was the first person to hold it until 1923. During 1926–1950 the Chair was held by Harold Laski (1893–1950), a distinguished political theorist and leader of the Labour Party in 1945–1946 (P. King, 1977, p. xi).

The University of Manchester was another academic centre marked on the map of British political studies, along Oxford, Cambridge and Lon-

don, “at least in terms of the number of students” (Chester, 1975, p. 156). In the 1920s, programmes combining economics and political studies (Grant, 2010, p. 11) at Manchester University enjoyed great popularity among employees of local public institutions. Therefore, programmes at Manchester were designed more to address the educational needs “considered conducive to flourishing in an industrial city” (R. Barker, 2014, p. 39) rather than to foster research activity.

In his evaluation of the initial period in the development of political studies in Great Britain, Jack Hayward, a historian of British political science and critic of its antiscientific character, draws attention to a number of theoretical and philosophical disputes which continued to shape the discipline in the subsequent decades. He claims that the pre-scientific, philosophical political thought pursued as a secondary activity by politicians (e.g. Edmund Burke) and thinkers (e.g. David Hume and Thomas Hobbes) failed to produce useful methodology of political research. The attempt at developing a deductive approach to political research, undertaken by utilitarians, failed, confronted by whiggish, inductive and theological historical approach. The latter was strongly opposed by the idealists of Oxford (T. H. Green); however, “by the end of the nineteenth century, the entrenched historico-philosophical-legal tradition had successfully resisted the attempts, made apparently with more success in economics and sociology, to develop politics into a rigorous science with a pretence to formulating experimentally tested axioms” (Hayward, 1991, s. 305). In his evaluation of the interwar period, Dennis Kavanagh pointed to four fundamental characteristic features of the discipline at the time: small scale, a lack of specialised lecturers, a lack of methodology which would distinguish political science from philosophy or history, and no impact from the more advanced American political science (Kavanagh, 2003, pp. 596–600).

2. BRITISH POLITICAL STUDIES AFTER THE SECOND WORLD WAR

The Second World War, which revealed the “importance of the social sciences in public affairs” (Chester, 1975, p. 157), was undoubtedly a strong driver in the development of British political studies. As early as in 1943, the necessity to establish a social research council was identi-

fied. As a result, the Clapham Committee was appointed, which in 1946 reported a need to increase spending on political research and establish grants which would facilitate the creation of new university jobs (Grant, 2010, pp. 12–16). Institutionalisation of the discipline was fostered by the activities conducted by UNESCO which, in 1947, recommended an analysis of the condition of political science as a discipline of utmost importance for the resolution of problems in individual countries and on an international scale. In September 1949, in response to the recommendation, the International Political Science Association (IPSA) was founded, on the initiative of, among others, representatives of the British political studies (Chester, 1975, pp. 151–152). However, the British participation in the works of the IPSA required the establishment of a national association. Hence the establishment of the Political Studies Association (PSA) in 1950.

The history of establishment of the PSA is interesting considering the above mentioned dispute between supporters of more scientific political science and those of broader in scope political studies. In the letter of November 1949, which put forward a proposal to form the association,¹⁹ a reference was made to political studies. The constitution of the association proposed during the inauguration meeting in March 1950 contained the term “political science”; however, regardless of the objection put forward by W. A. Robson, a representative of LSE, and the intention of H. Laski, expressed in a letter sent in to the meeting, it was replaced with the term “political studies”,²⁰ and the phrase “and allied subjects” was added, which – as D. Brogan claimed – was necessary taking into

¹⁹ The letter was signed by 14 representatives of leading academic centres which carried out political research and offered courses in political science: Ernest Barker, D. W. Brogan, E. C. S. Wade of Cambridge; D. N. Chester, G. D. H. Cole, Michael Oakeshott, K. C. Wheare, C. H. Wilson, Lindsey of Birker of Oxford; H. Laski, W. A. Robson, K. B. Smellie of LSE; Hector Hetherington of Glasgow; W. J. M. MacKenzie of Manchester (Grant, 2010, p. 18).

²⁰ The full wording of the name of the association, suggested during the discussion, was the British Political Studies Association. Its author, Anthony Birch (1924–2014), years after commented as follows: “but this was rejected politely by Chester, who said it was unnecessary as we would always know who we were and if some person outside Britain should think that we were Turkish association, then that person ‘would be genuinely in error’ (I remember the last words distinctly as they struck me as a very Oxford way of saying that somebody was an idiot)” (Grant, 2010, p. 22).

consideration the University of Cambridge (Chester, 1975, pp. 153–154; Grant, 2010, pp. 20–21).

In the 1950s, the PSA was an elite organisation with a strict process of member selection. As a result of the reform of universities carried out in the 1960s, the PSA opened to members of other scientific centres. At the same time, the number of opponents of the hitherto prevailing anti-scientific approach to the discipline was growing. In 1965 the Social Science Research Council was appointed – an institution awarding grants and research scholarships, which in the late 1960s and early 1970s financed an increasing number of research projects carried out in new academic centres. One of the Mayor beneficiaries of the grants awarded by the SSRC was the University of Essex, which became a powerful critic of the current condition of the discipline.

In 1970, representatives of the University of Essex (one of three British universities, along Nuffield College of Oxford University and the Scottish University of Strathclyde) took part in the constituent meeting of the European Consortium for Political Research (ECPR), an international organisation modelled on the American Inter-University Consortium for Political Research and oriented towards empirical, behavioural political science. Another event which triggered a change in the shape of the discipline was the establishment of *British Journal of Political Science* in Essex in 1971. Its editor in chief, Brian Barry (1936–2009), became one of the key initiators of the reform of the PSA, referred to by some as “an insurgency” or even a ‘coup’ (Grant, 2010, p. 73). As a result of the reform, younger generation of researchers were admitted to the governing bodies of the PSA, and the number of members was increased to include, among others, representatives of social science faculties at polytechnics, whose membership in the PSA had been reluctantly perceived before. New groups of professionals popped up, conferences organised by the PSA attracted increasing numbers of participants, and in 1976 the IPSA World Congress of Political Science was held in Birmingham, hosted mainly by the PSA.

Nevertheless, these significant changes failed to cause a general turnaround from the critical approach towards positivism, which was rejected by both followers of Michael Oakeshott’s conservative idealism – W. H. Greenleaf and Nevil Johnson, and “social humanists”, including Charles Taylor and Quentin Skinner (Bevir, Rhodes, 2007, pp. 243–247). Bernard Crick was another ardent critic of the American approach to political science.

Transformation of the discipline into a fully-fledged professional field of study was impeded by cuts in the financing of education in the 1980s. At the methodological level, it was the dawn of behavioural approach, while the impact of the American empirical political science was assessed by one of the researchers as infinitesimal:

Despite Crick's anathema against the behaviouralism of American political science, British political studies had meanwhile begun to adopt in a piecemeal incremental fashion many of the theoretical, quantitative and substantive concerns of American political scientists but without their concomitant theoretical self-consciousness. [...] The British response to American political science was a classic case of dynamic conservatism: changing enough so as to keep things basically the same (Hayward, 1991, p. 313).

In the opinion of Jack Hayward, "homeopathic dozes" of the American approach to political science immunized the British political studies against external influence. This is why in 1991 he could still refer to the specific British approach to political science.

3. POLITICAL STUDIES IN CONTEMPORARY GREAT BRITAIN

The first half of the 1990s saw a significant institutional change in the British higher education: polytechnics were granted the possibility to convert into universities. As a result, many new, thriving political science centres were created. The area of interest of political researchers augmented to cover practical implementation of public policies. The establishment of a number of new international scientific journals and – owing to the development of information technologies – easy access to sources and publications led to internationalisation of British political studies. In 2006, one of the researchers stated that "it is increasingly difficult to speak of a British tradition of political studies, as distinct from an American one" (Aspinwall, 2006, p. 3).

Today, British political science is pluralistic. Its leading representatives conduct political research also within the framework of other social disciplines and humanities. The list of winners of the Sir Isaiah Berlin Prize awarded by the PSA (Tab. 1) includes names of not only representatives of political science in its strict meaning, but also philosophers and historians of ideas.

Table 1

**Winners of the Sir Isaiah Berlin Prize for lifetime contribution
to political studies (2000–2016)**

Year	Name and surname	Institution represented	Areas of research interest
2016	Anne Philips	London School of Economics and Political Science	Democracy and representation, equality, feminism, human rights, multicultural studies
2015	Anthony King	University of Essex	Political parties and political party systems, electoral systems, constitutionalism
2014	Baroness Onora O'Neill	House of Lords	Political philosophy, ethics, bioethics
2013	Joni Lovenduski	Birkbeck College, University of London	Gender studies, feminism
2012	Michael Freedon	University of Oxford	Political theory, political ideologies
2011	Jack Hayward	University of Hull	History of political studies, French politics, European politics
2010	Raymond Plant	King's College London	Philosophy, political thought
2009	Richard Rose	University of Aberdeen	Political parties and political party systems, electoral systems, European studies
2008	Vernon Bogdanor	University of Oxford	Constitutionalism
2007	John Dunn	University of Cambridge	Intellectual history, political theory
2006	Quentin Skinner	Christ's College, Cambridge	Intellectual history, political theory
2005	Andrew Gamble	University of Sheffield	Political economics, British politics, modern political thought
2004	Ivor Crewe	University of Essex	Electoral behaviours, political parties and political party systems
2003	Lord Parekh	House of Lords	Political theory, history of ideas, multicultural studies
2002	Anthony Birch	University of Victoria, Canada	Comparative politics, representation, federalism, nationalism
2001	David Marquand	Mansfield College, Oxford	British politics, social democracy, European studies
2000	Samuel Beer	Harvard University, United States	Political philosophy, history of political thought, British politics

The broad area of interest of British political scientists is also illustrated by the list of specialised groups which operate within the PSA (Tab. 2). Interestingly, there is a large number of groups involved in research into politics of particular regions and countries.

Table 2

List of specialised research groups operating within the PSA

1. American Politics	30. Marxism
2. Anarchist Studies	31. Media and Politics
3. Anti-Politics	32. Modern Liberty
4. Art and Politics	33. Nordic Politics
5. British and Comparative Political Economy	34. Parliaments
6. British Idealism	35. Participatory and Deliberative Democracy
7. Britishness	36. Political Leadership
8. Caribbean Politics	37. Political Marketing
9. Communism	38. Political Methodology
10. Comparative European Politics	39. Political Psychology
11. Conservatives and Conservatism	40. Political Thought
12. Contemporary Aristotelian Studies	41. Political Violence and Terrorism
13. Corruption and Political Misconduct (CPM)	42. Politics and History
14. Development Politics	43. Politics and Policy in Southeast and East Asia
15. Elections, Public Opinion and Parties (EPOP)	44. Politics and Religion
16. Environmental Politics	45. Politics of Property
17. Ethnopolitics	46. Politics of South Asia
18. Executive Politics and Governance	47. Populism
19. French Politics and Policy	48. Public Policy and Administration
20. German Politics	49. Qualitative Research
21. Global Justice and Human Rights	50. Rhetoric and Politics
22. Greek Politics	51. Security and Intelligence
23. Interpretive Political Science	52. Space, Governance and Politics
24. Irish Politics Group	53. Sport and Politics
25. Italian Politics	54. State Theory
26. Labour Movements	55. Teaching and Learning in Politics
27. Latin American Politics	56. Territorial Politics
28. Liberals and Liberalism	57. Women and Politics
29. Local Politics	58. Young People's Politics

A somewhat more vague image of the areas of interest of British political scientists can be inferred from the list of titles of the PSA annual international conferences (Tab. 3). General titles (or, in some cases, no conference title at all) seem to prove that the PSA, from its beginnings, has attempted at creating an opportunity for the participants to present a broad range of issues of interest. As a result, the conferences in the recent years were attended by 600–800 speakers from all over the world. Traditionally, the conference is held each year in a different academic centre, including those which do not belong to the elite of British universities

(what is symptomatic, neither Oxford nor Cambridge has hosted a PSA annual conference so far). Since 2009, the sessions have been held at conference centres, hotels or facilities made available by the local authorities rather than at university facilities, what can be interpreted, at least partly, as an attempt to capture public attention and spread the message on the conducted activity. Each PSA conference is preceded by a graduate conference, usually held one or two days before.

Table 3

PSA annual scientific conferences, 2001–2017

Date	Title	Venue
2001, 10–12 April	Politics in an Era of Globalisation	University of Manchester
2002, 5–7 April	Making Politics Count	University of Aberdeen
2003, 15–17 April	Democracy and Diversity	University of Leicester
2004, 5–8 April	54th Political Studies Association Annual Conference (no title)	University of Lincoln
2005, 4–7 April	55th Political Studies Association Annual Conference (no title)	University of Leeds
2006, 3–6 April	Liberty, Security and the Challenge of Government	University of Reading
2007, 11–13 April	Europe and Global Politics	University of Bath
2008, 1–3 April	Democracy, Governance and Conflict: Dilemmas of Theory and Practice	University of Swansea
2009, 7–9 April	Challenges for Democracy in a Global Era	Manchester
2010, 29 March–1 April	Sixty Years of Political Studies: Achievements and Futures	Edinburgh
2011, 19–21 April	Transforming Politics: New Synergies	London
2012, 3–5 April	In Defence of Politics	Belfast
2013, 25–27 March	The Party's Over	Cardiff
2014, 14–16 April	Rebels & Radicals	Manchester
2015, 30 March–1 April	Civic Pride	Sheffield
2016, 21–23 March	Politics and the Good Life	Brighton
2017, 10–12 April	Politics in Interesting Times	University of Strathclyde, Glasgow

The most important publishing houses which publish works on political science are those of the two oldest universities – Cambridge University Press (CUP, the world's oldest publishing house, founded in 1534) and Oxford University Press (OUP, founded in 1586). Each year, each

of them publishes several hundred works on political science, some of them in series, such as Oxford Political Theory (edited by Will Kymlick and David Miller), Oxford Companions, Very Short Introductions, Cambridge Companions, and Cambridge Texts in the History of Political Thought (edited by Quentin Skinner) – a series of special importance also for historians of ideas and political philosophers. Apart from books, CUP and OUP publish several dozen journals dedicated to politics and international relations. One of the journals published by CUP is *The British Journal of Political Science*; OUP was a long-time publisher of the official journal of the PSA – *Political Studies* (1953–1983). Both publishing houses have gone global and nowadays publish, among other things, American journals, including World Politics (CUP for the Princeton Institute for International and Regional Affairs) and *Political Analysis* (OUP for the American Political Science Association). Other important British publishers in the area of political science include Routledge (a member of Taylor & Francis Group), Palgrave Macmillan (part of Springer Nature), and smaller publishing companies, such as Polity (established in 1984 by Anthony Giddens and others) and Verso. Oxford's Blackwell (from 2007 – Wiley-Blackwell, a member of John Wiley & Sons, Inc.) played a historically important role as the publisher of the PSA official journals in 1989–2015. In 2016, the PSA changed the publisher to the American SAGE Publications (Political Studies Association of the United Kingdom, 2016, p. 7).

The British Journal of Political Science is a British scientific journal dedicated to political science with the highest Journal Impact Factor (Journal Citation Report) – 3.316 in 2016. The impact factors awarded in 2016 to the journals published by the PSA were as follows: *The British Journal of Politics & International Relations* – 1.423; *Politics* – 1.263; *Political Studies* – 1.200; *Political Studies Review* – 0.625. *Political Insight*, published by the PSA since 2010 and addressed to a larger group of readers, including students of political sciences, is not listed in the Journal Citation Report.

In his outline of the current condition of political science, in 2010 Patrick Dunleavy wrote as follows:

‘Political science’ is a ‘vanguard’ field concerned with advancing generic knowledge of political processes, while a wider ‘political scholarship’ utilising eclectic approaches has more modest or varied ambitions. Political science nonetheless necessarily depends

upon and is epistemologically comparable with political scholarship. I deploy Boyer's distinctions between discovery, integration, application and renewing the profession to show that these connections are close woven. Two sets of key challenges need to be tackled if contemporary political science is to develop positively. The first is to ditch the current unworkable and restrictive comparative politics approach, in favour of a genuinely global analysis framework. Instead of obsessively looking at data on nation states, we need to seek data completeness on the whole (multi-level) world we have. A second cluster of challenges involves looking far more deeply into political phenomena; reaping the benefits of 'digital-era' developments; moving from sample methods to online census methods in organisational analysis; analysing massive transactional databases and real-time political processes (again, instead of depending on surveys); and devising new forms of 'instrumentation', informed by post-rational choice theoretical perspectives (Dunleavy, 2010, p. 239).

4. POLITICAL SCIENCE CURRICULUM CONTENT

British universities have adopted the three-cycle education system. Typically, undergraduate courses last three years and lead to the bachelor's degree. Titles of the degrees awarded differ across universities and programmes. Students of humanities are typically awarded the degree of Bachelor of Arts (BA). Nevertheless, a number of universities (including LSE) award the degree of Bachelor of Science (BSc) in most programmes, including humanities. If undergraduate studies require the completion of a larger number of courses, the Bachelor of Arts with Honours (BA (Hons)) degree is awarded. Graduate or postgraduate courses last one to two years and lead to a Master's degree – Master of Arts (MA), Master of Science (MSc), or Master of Philosophy (MPhil). The title of degree awarded depends, similarly to the Bachelor's degree, on the university tradition. Less popular is the degree of Master of Research (MRes), awarded in programmes preparing for the doctorate, and the degree of Master of Studies (MSt), awarded by a few universities only, which typically lasts two years and finished with a dissertation. Doctoral courses, which typically take three to five years, lead to the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD).

Undergraduate courses in political science (including international relations) are offered by 98 higher education providers (UNISTATS, 2017).

A characteristic feature of programmes offered at the undergraduate level are degrees combining political studies with other areas of study. Typically, programmes in politics or international relations are combined with foreign languages.

The authors analysed curricula offered by five higher education providers: the University of Oxford, University of Cambridge, London School of Economics and Political Science, University of Essex, and the University of Westminster. The selection was made with the aim to show similarities and differences between diverse traditions of two ancient universities (Oxford and Cambridge), the LSE, established in the 19th century and today one of the leading higher education providers, the University of Essex, established in the 1960s as a plate-glass university, which nowadays is the main centre of quantitative studies, and the University of Westminster, founded in early 1990s as a result of transformation of a polytechnic.

Curricula for the academic years 2016/2017 or 2017/2018, current as at the date of this paper, were analysed. If a particular higher education provider offers more than one programme in political science, the most classical, purely political science-related programme is selected for the analysis. The selection of syllabuses of particular courses is based on the criterion of whether a subject is compulsory. Optional modules are mentioned only. We should be aware of the fact that teachers of particular courses have a lot of freedom in designing syllabuses, and especially reading list. Therefore, on one hand, it is impossible to present a definite, fixed canon of literature of the subject. On the other hand, however, it shows the wide variety of sources applied in training British political scientists, often selected in line with the intellectual tradition of a given higher education institution. Some works on the reading lists are listed *in extenso*, with a full bibliographic reference.

4.1. University of Oxford

The University of Oxford comprises 38 colleges and six permanent private halls. Undergraduate courses are offered at 35 of them. Applicants admitted to the University become members of a college which organises accommodation and assigns individual tutors. Teaching is organised by specialised departments; political science programmes are organised by

the Department of Politics and International Studies. Students can choose among three programmes – Philosophy, Philosophy, Politics and Economics (PPE), and History and Politics. The prestigious PPE courses open the door to the world of politics and business (Beckett, 2017). Graduate (Master’s) degrees are divided into taught degrees, leading to Master of Philosophy (MPhil), and research degrees, where students study for the Master of Science (MSc).

Table 4

Undergraduate, graduate and doctoral programmes in political science, University of Oxford, academic year 2017/2018

Programme	Degree awarded	Study mode	Duration
Undergraduate			
Philosophy, Politics and Economics (PPE) History and Politics	BA	Full-time	3 years
Graduate			
Comparative Government European Politics and Society Political Theory International Relations	MPhil	Full-time	2 years
Politics Research Political Theory Research	MSc	Full-time	1 year
Doctoral			
Politics International Relations	DPhil	Full-time	3 years

The PPE degree, offered by the Balliol College (the birthplace of the degree in 1920), has an interdisciplinary character. Students can choose their Major from a wide variety of subject areas. In the first year, students study all three branches: in philosophy – General Philosophy, Moral Philosophy and Logic; in politics – Theory of Politics, Practice of Politics, and Political Analysis; and in economics – Microeconomics and Macroeconomics. The Majority of courses are taught in the form of individual tutorials, and students are required to write essays on a weekly basis.

At the end of the first year, students can choose to specialise in two selected branches or continue with all three (University of Oxford, 2017a). If politics is selected, compulsory (assessed) courses include two of the following: Comparative Government, British Politics and Government

since 1900, International Relations, and Political Sociology. Students can also choose from a list of several dozen optional courses in political science dedicated to a particular geographical region, political thought, political theory, sociological theory, etc.

Let us take a closer look at the graduate programme in Politics Research. During one year of the study, compulsory courses include Political Theory and Research Methods Training, and students are required to sit an examination in one of two subjects – comparative government or European governance. To be awarded the degree, students must present a thesis of no more than 15,000 words. On successful accomplishment of the study, graduates can apply for admission to doctoral programmes (University of Oxford, 2017b).

4.2. University of Cambridge

Similarly to the University of Oxford, the University of Cambridge also comprises several dozen colleges (31). Programmes in political science are organised by the Department of Politics and International Studies (POLIS), created in 2009 through a merger of the Department of Politics, operating since 2004, and the Centre for International Studies. POLIS is part of the Faculty of Human, Social and Political Science, and – together with eight other departments – part of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences. Unlike most new universities, Cambridge offers a relatively small number undergraduate programmes (30). Two of them are in politics: Human, Social, and Political Sciences (HSPS) Tripos, which combines Politics, Sociology, Social Anthropology and International Relations; and – since 2017 – History and Politics Tripos, a programme taught in collaboration with the Department of History. Traditionally, courses in political science were part of the Historical Tripos, and the curriculum of the Historical Tripos still covers the history of political institutions and political thought, which is why it should be considered a course in politics. Undergraduate programmes lead to a BA (Hons) degree, which means that students need to take a larger number of courses than for a BA degree. The University offers three graduate programmes in political science: International Relations and Politics and Public Policy, leading to a Master of Philosophy (MPhil) degree, and International Relations, which leads to a Master of Studies (MSt) degree. Programmes in

politics, such as African Studies, Development Studies, Latin American Studies, South Asian Studies and Gender Studies, are also taught by centres operating within the University. Some of them offer doctoral studies. POLIS teaches a doctoral programme in Politics and International Relations.

Table 5

**Undergraduate, graduate and doctoral courses in political science,
University of Cambridge, academic year 2017/2018**

Programme	Degree awarded	Study mode	Duration
Undergraduate			
Human, Social, and Political Sciences (POLIS) History and Politics (POLIS and Department of History) History (Department of History)	BA (Hons)	Full-time	3 years
Graduate (offered by POLIS)			
International Relations and Politics Public Policy	MPhil	Full-time	1 year
International Relations	MSt	Part-time	2 years
Graduate (offered by other university centres)			
African Studies Development Studies Latin American Studies Modern South Asian Studies Multi-disciplinary Gender Studies	MPhil	Full-time	1 year
Doctoral (offered by POLIS)			
Politics and International Relations	PhD	Full-time	3–4 years
		Part-time	5 years
Doctoral (offered by other university centres)			
Development Studies Latin American Studies Multi-disciplinary Gender Studies	PhD	Full-time	3–4 years

Students of HSPS may design their programmes by choosing to follow one of three single-subject “tracks” (Politics and International Relations, Sociology or Social Anthropology) or one of three joint “tracks” (Politics and Sociology, Sociology and Social Anthropology, Social Anthropology and Politics) (University of Cambridge, 2017c).

Students of the first year of Politics and International Relations (single track) must be assessed (“take papers” – in the Cambridge terminology) in four subjects, including one module in politics – Modern State and

Its Alternatives, and one module in international relations – International Conflict, Order and Justice. The third paper should be taken in a subject of the primary study area (i.e. politics and international relations, sociology and social anthropology), while the fourth one may be in a subject shared with the course of Archaeology, Psychological and Behavioural Sciences (University of Cambridge, 2017o).

Modern State and Its Alternatives module provides “understanding of the practical and imagined basics of modern politics as well as the reaction and resistance towards it” (University of Cambridge, 2016). Part one of module deals with the topic of modern state, part two – with origins of representative democracy in the United State, and part three – with criticism of the state and democracy. The module covers more than thirty topics and has an extensive list of compulsory and additional literature.

International Conflict, Order and Justice presents diverse approaches to and debates among various schools of international relations. Six primary topics indicated in the syllabus cover the nature of international studies, international policy of development, war in an international society, sovereignty and international hierarchies, diplomacy theory and practice, and global justice (University of Cambridge, 2017i).

Each Triposat Cambridge is divided into two parts – general (Part I) and specialised (Part II). Students may choose to do Part I in one year and Part II in two years, or vice versa. For example, students of the single-track Politics and International Relations will do the specialised part of the programme in two years (Part IIA, Part IIB) or one year (Part II). In the second year, students must take papers in four subjects: International Organisation, Comparative Politics, The History of Political Thought to c.1700 or The History of Political Thought from c.1700–1890, and the fourth, optional paper selected from the modules offered at HSPS, among them Conceptual Issues in Politics and International Relations and Statistics and Methods in Politics and International Relations (University of Cambridge, 2017f).

International Organisation is aimed to extend the study area explored in the first year of the programme. The course presents the historical background for research into international institutions and organisations, provides an understanding of the key theoretical terms used in research into institutionalised cooperation and conflict in the international system, gives an insight into the multiple levels at which international politics

may be analysed, and discusses key roles of Major international organisations, such as the UN, the WTO and the World Bank, from a theoretical and empirical perspective (University of Cambridge, 2017j). The course comprises about 30 lectures and seminars, divided into three parts: co-operation – basic terms and historical facts, international organisation in theory, and international organisation in practice. There is along reading list for each subject area.

Comparative Politics is aimed to give students “an understanding of the key actors and dynamics that make up the contemporary politics” by means of “a comparative perspective, meaning that it selects examples from across the world in order to determine how universal certain domestic political phenomena are, what common causes they may share, and how different trajectories of political development are possible and why they occur” (University of Cambridge, 2017k).

As mentioned before, students of the second year can choose *The History of Political Thought to c.1700* or *The History of Political Thought from c.1700–1890*. The former encompasses lectures on Plato, Aristotle, the medieval reception of classical political thought, temporal and spiritual in medieval political thought, Roman law in political thought, Machiavelli, More, Renaissance humanism, Hobbes, reason of state, the origins of international law, Locke, Sovereignty, revolution and toleration (University of Cambridge, 2017l). The reading list is impressive and includes not only the greatest works in philosophy and politics, but also several dozen other publications which enable students to embed statements of particular authors in an intellectual context.

The History of Political Thought from c.1700–1890 also has an abundant reading list. The paper comprises two parts – in part one, students read mainly texts by philosophers; in part two, students focus on “groups of texts which are thematically and historically connected” to develop students’ ability to understand “the way that a given political language is inflected in different directions according to different demands of national and international debate in the modern period” (University of Cambridge, 2017m). Apart from lectures, students attend paired supervisions with their tutors to construct their own pathway of analysis of political thought (e.g. political thought in late Enlightenment, the republican political thought, or the consequences of the French Revolution).

In the third year, students who have chosen two-year Part II of the Tripos (Part IIA and Part IIB) can take four papers in selected subjects

or three papers and a dissertation (University of Cambridge, 2017g). The papers to select from are as follows: the History of Political Thought from c.1700 to c.1890, Political Philosophy and the History of Political Thought from c.1700 to c.1890, the Politics of the Middle East, the Politics of Europe, the Politics of Asia, the Politics of Africa, Conflict and Peacebuilding, Politics and Gender, the Idea of the European Union, China in the International Order. There is only one compulsory paper in Conceptual Issues and Texts in Politics and International Relations, which gives students an opportunity to show what they have learnt over three years of study (University of Cambridge, 2017n). In the third year, students who have chosen one-year Part II can take four papers selected from those offered at two-year Part IIA and Part IIB (University of Cambridge, 2017e).

As mentioned before, the University of Cambridge offers two other undergraduate programmes in political sciences. Traditionally, political sciences were studied within the framework of the Historical Tripos. However, considering the fact that purely political courses (except from the History of Political Thought) have been removed from the Historical Tripos, its curriculum is not discussed here (University of Cambridge, 2017p). Nevertheless, in 2017 the Tripos in History and Politics was launched. The degree consists of Parts IA, IB and II. In the first year, students attend the compulsory course in Evidence and Argument as well as courses offered by POLIS – Analysis of Politics and International Relations. Additionally, they opt for one of the papers from the History course: British Political History 1688–1886, British Political History since 1880, European History 1715–1890, or European History Since 1890. In the second year, students must choose one of the papers in the History of Political Thought (either to c.1700 or in 1700–1890), Comparative Politics or International Relations, one of the History papers (World History Since 1914, History of the United States since 1865, British Economic and Social History 1700–1880, or British Economic and Social History Since c.1880), and write an essay, a historical project, or a paper in Statistics and Methods. In the third year, there is a compulsory paper in General Themes and Issues, which considers the most important issues in history and politics and the relationship between the two disciplines. Additionally, students must take three papers, one from each of the following branches: History (from a list of modules devoted to, without limitation, the transformation of

the Roman world, South Asia since c.1800 and American experiences in Vietnam in 1941–1975), Politics (from the list of courses offered by POLIS, mentioned above) and Political Thought. As an alternative, students can select two papers from the specified range and a 10–15,000 word dissertation (University of Cambridge, 2017a).

At the Master's level, the most extensive specialisation in political sciences can be obtained at the MPhil degree in International Relations and Politics. During one year of study, students follow a compulsory course in Methods and Research Design, and take three course options at their choice from the following list of modules: Comparative Politics of Europe, Politics of Africa, Middle East and North Africa, International Relations Theory, International Organisation, International Security, International Political Economy, International Constitutional Law. They must present a dissertation of 20–25,000 words (University of Cambridge, 2017d). Moreover, the University of Cambridge offers a doctoral programme PhD in Politics and International Studies, which may last three or four years. The major focus of the first year are research methods. Most of the study is done individually under the supervision of the student's primary and secondary supervisor (University of Cambridge, 2017h).

4.3. London School of Economics and Political Science

Political courses at the London School of Economics and Political Science are organised by the Department of Government, while the Philosophy, Politics and Economics course – by the Department of Philosophy, Logic and Scientific Method. Additionally, the School offers graduate courses organised collaboratively by several departments, as well as a double degree programme organised in collaboration with Peking University (PKU). Undergraduate programmes lead to the award of a Bachelor of Science (BSc) degree, while graduate courses – to a Master of Science (MSc) degree, what reflects the School's focus on the development of skills necessary for conducting empirical studies. Moreover, courses in public administration are offered, leading to a degree of Master of Public Administration (MPA). The courses offered, as well as the name of the department and the leading programme which is analysed in detail below, clearly show that LSE follows the intention of its founders, mentioned above.

Table 6

Undergraduate and graduate courses in political science, London School of Economics and Political Science, academic year 2017/2018

Programme	Degree awarded	Study mode	Duration
Undergraduate			
Government Government and Economics Government and History Politics and Philosophy Politics and International Relations	BSc	Full-time	3 years
Philosophy, Politics and Economics (PPE)	BSc	Full-time	4 years
Graduate			
Comparative Politics Conflict Studies Global Politics Public Policy and Administration Political Science and Political Economy Political Theory Regulation	MSc	Full-time	1 year
Master's – double degree			
Public Administration and Government (in collaboration with Peking University)	MSc	Full-time	2 years
Master's – joint programmes			
European Union Politics	MSc	Full-time	1 year
Public and Economic Policy Public Policy and Management	MPA	Full-time	2 years

The three-year undergraduate programme in Government encompasses four compulsory or optional courses during each year of the programme, and – beginning in the Lent term of the first year and running through the Michaelmas term of the second year – the compulsory LSE100 course. The latter is a compulsory introduction to social sciences and asks “big” questions, such as “How should we address poverty and inequality?”, “Is nationalism a source of unity or conflict?”, “Is punishment a response to a crime?”. The aim is to broaden students’ the ability of critical thinking, learn forms of explanation and deepen critical understanding of their own disciplines (London School of Economics and Political Science, 2017e). Compulsory courses during the first year include Introduction to Political Science and Introduction to Political Theory, and two courses of students’ choice from the list of optional modules, taught outside the home department. Introduction to Political Science will introduce students to some of

the basic concepts of political behaviour, political institutions, and differences between countries in this respect (London School of Economics and Political Science, 2017b).

In the second year, students must choose three courses from the list of courses offered by the home department (list A): Public Choice and Politics, Politics of Economic Policy, Democracy and Democratization, Theories and Problems of Nationalism, Power and Politics in the Modern World: Comparative Perspectives, Research Design in Political Science, Government, Politics and Public Policy in the European Union, Contemporary Political Theory, Public Policy Analysis, Politics and Institutions in Europe. Moreover, one additional module taught outside the home department is compulsory, or – as an alternative – either Introduction to Political Science or Introduction to Political Theory, if not taken during the first year.

In the third year, students will choose four courses from list A presented above, or from list B which has a dozen or so modules, including Key Themes in the History of Political Thought, Global Public Policy, Leadership in the Political World, Politics of Money and Finance in Comparative Perspective, British Government, Politics of Trade in Comparative Perspective, Voting and Elections in Developing Democracies, Advanced Issues in Applied Political Theory, Modern State – Theory and Practice, Advanced Issues in Political Economy, African Political Economy, and Political Economy of the Developing World. Students may also choose the Government Dissertation Option, and present a dissertation of no more than 10,000 words (London School of Economics and Political Science, 2017c).

Master's programmes at LSE are one- or two-year courses, if leading to a MPA degree. Students can design the curriculum individually. One or two modules are compulsory, additional courses can be selected from the list of courses offered by the Department of Government as well as other LSE departments. For instance, the Master's programme in Comparative Politics encompasses two compulsory courses, Introduction to Comparative Politics and Dissertation, while the other two or three modules depend on the chosen pathway (Democracy and Democratization, Nationalism and Ethnic Politics, Comparative Political Economy, Popular Politics, Comparative Political Institutions, and Politics of the Developing World) (London School of Economics and Political Science, 2017f).

The Political Theory programme encompasses two compulsory modules – Dissertation and Foundations of Political Theory. Other five cours-

es are selected by students individually from the list of more than twenty modules (London School of Economics and Political Science, 2017g). Considering the relative freedom in the choice of courses, there is no uniform reading list for the diverse graduate programmes.

A separate category are graduate research MRes/PhD programmes. The study lasts up to five years and encompasses both individual research work and – during the first, introductory year – participation in tutorials. In the first year, students develop skills of using qualitative and quantitative research methods and study political theory. Regardless of the selected track, all students must take the compulsory Research Design in Political Science course, where they learn how to find their research questions, choose a feasible data collection or modelling strategy, match data collection and analytic methods, and consider relation of political theory and political science and explore research methodologies in normative theory (London School of Economics and Political Science, 2017d).

Quantitative research is taught at the following courses: Applied Regression Analysis, Casual Inference for Observational and Experimental Studies, Applied Quantitative Methods for Political Science, and Game Theory for Research. Qualitative research is explored at courses in Qualitative Methods in the Study of Politics and Introduction to Quantitative Analysis, while political theory – at the course of Research Methods in Political Theory. Moreover, students will attend political research field seminars, such as Comparative Politics, European Politics or Global Politics, Political Science and Political Economy, Political Theory and Public Policy and Administration. At the end of the first year, students will complete a Research Prospectus, which is a provisional research plan for their PhD. Students who are awarded a Merit (i.e. at least 60%) in the assessment of their courses and the Research Prospectus will be upgraded to the PhD part of the programme (London School of Economics and Political Science, 2017h).

4.4. University of Essex

University of Essex was founded in 1963 in a burst of reforms sparked by Lord Robbins's report. However, the plan to establish the University had been developed a few years before, on the initiative and with the support of local communities. The University campus is organised in

Wivenhoe Park near Colchester. Additionally, the University has a campus in Southend-on-Sea and the Acting School in Loughton. From the first year of its existence, the University has operated the Department of Government, first chaired by Jean Blondel (born 1929). The University scores top in rankings of social research; e.g. it ranked first in the UK for political science and international relations university programmes (Research Excellence Framework, 2014, s. 36). In 2013, the University was awarded a Regius Professorship by Her Majesty the Queen – the only such professorship in the UK. Professor David Sanders was appointed the UK’s first Regius Professor of Political Science (University of Essex, 2014). As mentioned before, the University of Essex was one of the Mayor academic centres propounding changes in political science, and in many aspects adopted the approach of American political scientists (Kavanagh, 2007, s. 116).

Political science is taught in more than ten undergraduate and graduate programmes. Undergraduate programmes last three years, or four year-swth one year of study abroad or placement. Some programmes focus on the development of skills necessary for research work, e.g. the undergraduate programme in Political Theory and Public Policy and most of the Masters programmes. Among the Masters programmes, special attention should be paid to MA Ideology and Discourse Analysis, established in 1982 by Ernest Laclau, co-founder of the so-called Essex school in discourse analysis (Laclau, 2000, pp. x–xi). The University offers two types of doctoral degrees: PhD Government and PhP. Doctoral courses last three years. To study for the PhD Government degree, Master’s degree is required. For the PhD degree, students can take remedial courses.

Table 7

**Undergraduate and graduate courses in political science,
University of Essex, academic year 2017/2018**

Programme	Degree awarded	Study mode	Duration
1	2	3	4
Undergraduate – singlehonours			
Politics	BA	Full-time	3 years
International Relations		Full-time, including one year of study abroad	4 years
Political Economy		Full-time, including one placement year	4 years
Political Theory and Public Policy			

1	2	3	4
Undergraduate – joint honours			
Philosophy, Politics and Economics (PPE) Economics and Politics Politics with Human Rights Sociology and Politics Modern History and Politics Modern History and International Relations	BA	Full-time	3 years
		Full-time, including one year of study abroad	4 years
		Full-time, including one placement year	4 years
Philosophy and Politics Politics and Modern Languages International Relations and Modern Languages	BA	Full-time	3 years
		Full-time, including one year of study abroad	4 years
Law with Politics	LLB	Full-time	3 years
		Full-time, including one year of study abroad	4 years
		Full-time, including one placement year	4 years
Graduate			
Politics	Graduate Diploma*	Full-time	9 months
Politics Ideology and Discourse Analysis Political Theory	MA	Full-time	1 year
		Part-time	
Political Science Conflict Resolution International Relations Political Economy Public Opinion and Political Behaviour	MA / MSc	Full-time	1 year
		Part-time	2 years
International Relations Political Economy Political Science	MRes	Full-time	2 years

* A bridge course for students with an undergraduate degree in other disciplines to be admitted to graduate degrees in politics (University of Essex, 2017d).

The comparison below focuses on two undergraduate programmes – Politics and Political Theory and Public Policy. The former provides students with a lot of freedom in the choice of their pathway. Starting from the first year, they can design their programme choosing from several dozen optional courses. The curriculum of the first year encompasses eight courses – two of them are compulsory and finish with an examination (Core Courses), four are compulsory, but assessment is not required

(Compulsory Courses). The Core Courses are Introduction to Politics and Democracy: Forms and Future; the Compulsory Courses are Truth, Justice, and the Nature of Politics, Politics and Power, Doing Political Research, and Career Portfolio.

The course in Introduction to Politics is compulsory in all undergraduate programmes except for International Relations. It explores the scope of political science as a field of inquiry, and methods and approaches (both normative and descriptive) used by political scientists (University of Essex, 2017m).

Another Core Course in the Politics programme is Democracy: Forms and Future. It is a continuation of Introduction to Politics, so both courses share the same textbook (Shivley, 2011). Just like Introduction to Politics, it is taught in all political science programmes except for International Relations. The course content is focused on particular political issues, such as roles of states, public opinion, organisations and institutions, as well as public policy and international relations (University of Essex, 2017n).

Similarly to the two courses described above, the modules of Truth, Justice, and the Nature of Politics, and Politics and Power are, respectively, the first and second module of a series. They explore classical texts of the Western philosophical tradition and “seek to examine the assumptions underlying these texts as well as the implications they have for us today,” with particular focus on themes such as “truth, justice, democracy, empire, what it is to live ‘a good life,’ the self, morality, the fair distribution of resources, the meanings of labour and gender, liberalism, republicanism, the meaning of mass society (particularly as it impacts the individual), and the despairing turn from optimistic anticipation of human emancipation.” The contextual method is applied – care is taken to “locate these texts in their respective historical contexts to better understand them as political acts,” with which the authors tried to effect change (University of Essex, 2017p). It means that the method of the Cambridge School in intellectual history, commonly applied at Anglo-Saxon universities, is used here as well (J. G. A. Pocock, Quentin Skinner).

Two other compulsory courses in the first year of political programmes are Doing Political Research, and Career Portfolio. The former is a compulsory course in all other undergraduate programmes and encompasses preparation for conducting research projects – from the development of a good research design through the choice of research theory to the work with sources of evidence (University of Essex, 2017g). The latter, includ-

ed in the curriculum across all the years of the study in most undergraduate programmes, “offers students the opportunity to develop necessary employability, citizenship, and life skills to successfully compete in the graduate labour market after graduation and to make a meaningful contribution to society more generally” (University of Essex, 2017v). Moreover, students of the first year must choose two courses in social science or humanities from a list of nearly one hundred optional modules (University of Essex, 2017aa).

In the second year of Politics, there are two compulsory courses (apart from Career Portfolio): International Relations: Theories and Approaches, and – at students’ choice – either Political Analysis: Introduction to OLS or Discourse, Rhetoric and Power. Additionally, students must accomplish three modules, at their choice, from a list of more than twenty optional courses in political science and international relations (University of Essex, 2017ab). The International Relations: Theories and Approaches module provides students with an introduction into the main theoretical schools, such as Realism, Liberalism and Post-positivist theoretical perspectives, such as Constructivism. Some key disputes among representatives of the discipline are also highlighted (University of Essex, 2017r).

The choice between Political Analysis: Introduction to OLS (ordinary least squares) and Discourse, Rhetoric and Power is in fact a choice between focusing on, respectively, quantitative research or qualitative research of discourse. The former module consists in lectures and practical tutorials in statistical methods.

The latter module explores “the central importance meaning and metaphor play in defining the political dimension of life” (University of Essex, 2017t) and refers to an impressive list of literature (more than 350 titles).

In the third year of undergraduate programme in Politics, apart from the compulsory Career Portfolio, students choose four courses from a list of optional modules. In the four-year course of study, the above applies to the fourth year, while the third year is taken abroad or spent at placement.

Let us compare the Politics programme presented above with Political Theory and Public Policy. The latter is designed as an introduction to research work. Similarly to Politics, the compulsory courses in the first year comprise Introduction to Politics, Truth, Justice, and the Nature of Politics, Politics and Power, Doing Political Research, and Career Portfolio. Moreover, students must sit an exam in Social Reasoning for the

Social Sciences – a course introducing to the fundamentals of philosophy and empirical theories of social science and their structure, procedures and techniques (University of Essex, 2017o).

In the second year, there are five compulsory courses, among them the abovementioned Discourse, Rhetoric and Power and Career Portfolio, as well as Principles of Social Justice, Analysing Policy Discourse, and Ethics and Public Policy. Similarly to the first year, in the second year students must choose four optional courses. Principles of Social Justice examines normative political theory and its application in the resolving of particular social and political problems (University of Essex, 2017s). The course explores the debate around John Rawls's theory of justice, libertarian concepts, and justice in a global, intergenerational and gender context.

Another compulsory course in the second year is Ethics and Public Policy – a module which exposes students to a variety of moral debates in politics, such as permissibility of abortion, capital punishment, legalisation of hard drugs, permissibility of torture, prohibition of pornography, legalisation of prostitution or euthanasia (University of Essex, 2017u).

In the third year, or the fourth year in the option with one-year study abroad or placement, students must accomplish eight courses chosen from a list of optional modules. Moreover, students have an opportunity to follow a pathway under the Q-Step programme, i.e. to specialise in applied quantitative methods. In order to do so, certain modules must be taken during the programme, mainly in statistical analysis methods. As a result, students receive the qualifier "(Applied Quantitative Methods)" at the end of their degree title (University of Essex, 2017a).

Candidates for Masters programmes in politics who have not been awarded an undergraduate degree in political sciences can take a 9-month bridge programme leading to a Graduate Diploma. The programme encompasses six compulsory courses: Measuring Public Opinion or Political Analysis: Introduction to OLS, Conflict Analysis, Principles of Social Justice, Ethics and Public Policy, and two optional courses (University of Essex, 2017d). The Masters programme content depends on the type of degree sought. Students may be awarded one of three degrees: Master of Science (MSc), Master of Arts (MA), or Master of Research (MRes). MSc is designed for students who have studied statistical analysis methods before, MA – for those who have not accomplished such courses. The third pathway is for students who intend to study for a PhD. The MA and

MSc degrees in Political Science last one year. Apart from the compulsory dissertation, students will accomplish four courses (including two from a list of optional modules), of which one – Theory and Explanation in Political Science – is offered at both degrees.

The curricula explore causal inference, rationality, behaviour and psychology, the role of models and assumptions, political economy including institution, aggregation of preferences, collective action, information, experiments overview, field experiments, parties, voters and behaviour, as well as institutions, political elites and authoritarian rule and transitions to democracy (University of Essex, 2017l). To be awarded an MA degree, students must accomplish a course in Political Explanation or Advanced Research Methods, which is in turn a compulsory course in the MSc programme. The Political Explanation module offers an introduction to the theory and practice of quantitative data analysis techniques. The goals of the course are “to provide students with the skills that are necessary to: 1) read, understand and evaluate the academic literature, and 2) design and carry out studies that employ these techniques for testing substantive theories” (University of Essex, 2017w). The syllabus explores specific issues of statistical analysis (linear, multiple, logistic regression), modelling and evaluation of theories, and introduces students to the programming language R employed in statistical calculations.

The compulsory course in Advanced Research Method also concentrates on quantitative methods and, first and foremost, on hypotheses testing using “Least Squares, and some classic violations of the Gauss-Markov conditions.” The second part of the module focuses on “more advanced models ubiquitous in political science” with the use of the STATA software and the R language (University of Essex, 2017x).

The two-year MRes Political Science programme encompasses six compulsory modules in the first year, including Political Explanation or Advanced Research Methods, Theory and Explanation in Political Science, as well as an optional course and two modules to be accomplished during the summer term. In the second year, compulsory courses include Research Design and the related Applied Research Design. The former introduces students to the principles of scientific method in social sciences and politics, and a discussion on the methods of research design (University of Essex, 2017y).

Applied Research Design introduces students to replication of existing empirical studies, what allows them to better understand the details of

the empirical analysis, and develop the paper by, for example, including new variables or changing the time period (University of Essex, 2017z).

As mentioned before, doctoral programmes, which typically last three or four years, may be pursued in two modes: focusing on one's own research work (PhD) or accomplishing selected courses from an undergraduate programme (PhP). The doctoral dissertation may be in the form of a thesis (up to 80,000 words) or a series of three or four papers submitted for publication in a scientific journal (University of Essex, 2017).

The syllabuses of undergraduate and graduate programmes in political science at the University of Essex presented above clearly show that special emphasis is put on developing students' skills of carrying out qualitative research, particularly statistical analysis with the use of specialised software. Students are provided with a significantly large freedom in designing their own pathway, while the programmes are highly specialised and strictly scientific in character. Obviously, the curricula reveal the influence of American political sciences. At the same time, the conceptual approach developed by the Cambridge School in intellectual history is applied to teaching courses in theory, philosophy and political thought.

4.5. University of Westminster

The University of Westminster – the youngest of the universities under analysis – was established in 1992 as a result of transformation of the Polytechnic of Central London, a successor of the Royal Polytechnic Institution founded in 1838. The University plays an important role in the development of political studies – it hosts the Department of Politics and International Relations (DPIR) and the Centre for the Study of Democracy, which offers doctoral programmes in political science. It offers a number of Bachelor's degrees (BA): single honours Politics and International Relations, joint honours History and Politics and international relations with modern languages (including Arabic, Chinese, French and Spanish) (University of Westminster, 2017a). At the postgraduate level (MA) courses are available in Energy and Environmental Change, International Relations, as well as International Relations and Democratic Politics and International Relations and Security. Research degrees, leading to a PhD or MPhil, are available in politics and international relations. They explore such subject areas as democratic institutions and govern-

ance, identity and political community, post-colonial politics, development and emerging powers, resilience and sustainability, security an international relations, and theorising politics and international relations (University of Westminster, 2017c). However, the programmes are not based on clearly designed courses and consist mainly in students’ own research work. One can also be awarded a PhD degree having submitted a previously published work (University of Westminster, 2017b).

Table 8

Political science programmes, University of Westminster, academic year 2017/2018

Programme	Degree awarded	Study mode	Duration
Undergraduate			
Politics Politics and International Relations International Relations International Relations and Development	BA	Full-time	3 years
History and Politics	BA	Full-time	3 years
		Part-time	5 years
Arabic and International Relations Chinese and International Relations French and International Relations Spanish and International Relations	BA	Full-time	3–4 years
		Part-time	5 years
Postgraduate			
Energy and Environmental Change International Relations and Democratic Politics International Relations and Security	MA	Full-time	1 year
		Part-time	2 years
International Relations	MA	Full-time	1 year

The curriculum of Politics will be of our interest here. As it is stated in the programme specification, the course has been designed “to provide a comprehensive understanding of human political reactions,” encompasses “philosophical, theoretical, institutional and issue-based concerns relating to governance” and offers “particular expertise in classical, critical and applied political thought; post-Cold War geostrategy, foreign policy and security; institutional and comparative politics and policy-making; and regional studies of Europe, the Middle East, Asia and Africa” (University of Westminster, 2015). Since “The boundaries of politics as a discipline are fluid and dynamic,” the programme encompasses relevant interdisciplinary fields including international relations, development

studies, sociology, cultural studies, behavioural psychology, philosophy, geography and political economy (University of Westminster, 2015). The first-year programme provides “an introduction to key concepts and structures of government,” and embeds the study of politics “in a wider context by providing a grounding in international relations and development studies.” In the second year the programme fosters “a critical awareness of conflicting narratives of the state and governance, particularly since the Cold War,” and includes an introduction to research methods for academic and professional purposes as well as a focus on analytical methods, including comparative method. In the final year, students may decide to take a more academic or more professional pathway; depending on the decision, they will complete a traditional academic dissertation or a professionally-oriented research report (University of Westminster, 2015).

During the course of study, students must complete several compulsory (Core) modules and may choose from a few to more than a dozen optional courses. There are three compulsory modules in the first year: Political Ideas in Action, Introduction to International Relations and Global Politics, and Dilemmas of International Developments.

Political Ideas in Action is a course in general political science which introduces students to the key political issues, from power and democratic institutions through systems of political representations and voting, local and community politics, and democratic deliberation, to key political doctrines, such as liberalism, Marxism, conservatism, as well as some key challenges of contemporary democracy, such as politics of gender, economic inequality, politics and religion, and politics of race. Writing essays is an integral part of the course. Essay writing skills are developed at the course in political research methods (Blaug, 2017).

Certain theoretical elements are explored in the Introduction to International Relations and Global Politics module (Raphael, 2017).

The list of topics encompasses war and peace, international institutions and norms, liberal world order, human rights, humanitarian interventions, global inequality, imperialism and colonialism, race, religion and ethnicity, sexuality and gender-related issues, as well as political violence and distribution of nuclear weapons.

Apart from core subjects, students of the first year have a selection of additional modules to choose from, including Democracy in Crisis, Global Governance and the State, British Politics, The Global Politics of

Migration. Another additional option are the so-called Westminster Electives – courses which may be taken across all the years of the study. They include London Lives: Migrant London, London Stories: Creative Writing, A Sexual History of London and Globalisation: Politics, Law and Arts (University of Westminster, 2017d).

The key methodological modules are in the curriculum of the second year. They include two compulsory courses in Theorising Politics and International Relations, and Doing Political Research: Project Management in the Social Sciences. Additionally, students must accomplish two other compulsory modules – Governance in Europe: Comparative and Multilevel Perspectives, and Power and the State. Theorising Politics and International Relations investigates major international schools (realism, idealism, neorealism, neoliberalism, constructivism, the English School, and critical theories) on the basis of texts by such classics as Hans Morgenthau and Alexander Wendt, as well as works by contemporary authors (Fluck, 2017). Optional courses in the second year include Environmental Politics, Middle East Politics, The European Union as a Regional Power, the Politics of Killing, Asia, Africa and Latin America: Dynamism and Change in the Global South, Politics and Society in 21st Century America, Questioning Rights, Democratic Innovations, Geopolitics, Global Security, Internship, Learning in an International Environment: A Short-Burst Module, Global Political Economy, Political Economy of Development.

In the third year, students work on their dissertation or research report. Additionally, they must take two compulsory courses in Equality, Justice and Citizenship, as well as Policy and Practice. Optional modules include Digital Politics, Social and Political Movements in a Globalising World, Security and the Surveillance State, American Power in a Multipolar World, Political Psychology, Gender and Politics, Radical Democracy, Foreign Policy and Diplomacy in a Changing World, Advanced Readings in Contemporary Political Theory, Humanitarian Intervention, Ethics, Morality and World Order(s), Contested Sovereignty: Jurisdiction and Power in Contemporary International Relations, Contemporary International Relations, Themes in Development: Comparative/Regional Perspectives, Postcolonial Politics and International Relations, Special Topic Module in Politics And International Relations.

The Masters programme in International Relations, as well as International Relations and Democratic Politics or International Relations and Security features one compulsory module – Dissertation and Research

Methods. The module comprises a tutored seminar and methodological workshops. The role of the tutor is to guide the student in the choice of optional courses which may be worth attending considering the subject area of their dissertation (University of Westminster, 2015, p. 312).

The programmes in political science offered at the University of Westminster prepare students, from the first year of the study, for research work. The syllabuses of introductory courses, with long reading lists, introduce students to the fundamentals of political theory and methodologies of social sciences, starting from the first year of undergraduate programmes. Students have a lot of freedom in the choice of their Mayor – in the subsequent years of the study there are only three or four compulsory (core) modules, with more than a dozen optional courses to choose from.

5. CONCLUSION

The discussion of political science programmes offered at five selected British universities leads to a few conclusions. Firstly, distinctive profiles of the programmes reflect the historical tradition of particular higher education providers. For example, the University of Cambridge focuses on the history of political thought, whereas the University of Essex gives priority to teaching empirical research methods.

The common denominator of all the programmes investigated are reading lists including works by classics in philosophy and politics. Although particular universities indicate different scopes of essential literature, each university requires students to familiarise themselves with a certain minimum canon of works by Aristotle, Plato, Cicero, Augustine, Thomas Aquinas, Machiavelli, Hobbes, Locke, Burke, J. S. Mill and Karl Marx. All five universities give their students freedom in designing their own intellectual pathway.

Regardless of the university, political science students receive a thorough theoretical and methodological background. Although, again, certain differences can be observed in the preferred research approaches, all the curricula analysed above broadly refer to texts exploring qualitative and quantitative methods, as well as the current theoretical considerations in political science or international relations. Tutoring in this regard often begins in the first year of the programme

and provides students with sound background for carrying out their own research projects.

Many historians of British political studies agree that the development of the discipline can be divided into two major stages, marked by the date of establishment of the Political Studies Association in 1950. A real change in the methodologies and theories of political science did not occur until 1960s, when new universities were established, or the 1970s, when the generation born after the Second World War took over the helm. Nowadays, political science programmes are offered by all British universities; however, the most influential are still the oldest academic centres, including the University of Oxford, LSE and – to a lesser degree – the University of Cambridge. Among universities established after 1950, the leading role is played by the University of Essex, whose profile to a large degree matches that of American universities. Although we may debate over whether there is a “specific” British approach to political research, the existence of a certain identity and tradition pursued at the analysed universities is unquestionable.

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