



MA Government Opposition and Parliamentary Studies

Aims of the programme

The principal aims of the programme are to:

- provide you with an in-depth knowledge of the workings of government and opposition with a particular focus on the UK system.
- deepen and broaden your understanding of contemporary political issues through the lens of opposition
- explore the dynamics between those who hold power and those scrutinising.
- develop your critical understanding of the principal research traditions and research methods used in government and politics.
- apply this knowledge and understanding of politics and government to complex scenarios through the lens of opposition and scrutiny.

Distinctive Features of the Programme

- The MA in Government, Opposition and Parliamentary Studies will provide you with an opportunity to join a postgraduate community of experts working within the institutions surrounding government.
- Teaching and supervision is delivered by a dedicated team of experienced and well-qualified staff from the Centre for Opposition Studies at the University of Bolton, and draws on expertise from the political domain and its wider influences.
- Online delivery is supported by the optional residential Westminster Experience which incorporates a range of visits, seminars and activities taking place in and around Westminster – not just in parliament, but in the offices of think-tanks, public affairs companies and political parties. This includes talks by current and former politicians, journalists, political advisers, lobbyists, and civil servants.
- Guest lecturers from the sector will provide contemporary perspectives on approaches to opposition, democracy and government in action.

Programme Structure

The course aims to provide an in-depth knowledge of the workings of Government and Opposition and relevant theories, with a particular focus on the UK system. Uniquely, it aims to give equal prominence to the importance of political opposition and scrutiny, in line with the innovative focus of the Centre for Opposition Studies. Central to this will be the exploration of the dynamic between those who hold power and those who are scrutinising it. Graduates will be equipped with skills and knowledge applicable to a range of employment sectors, including the public sector, lobbying and public affairs, and charity advocacy.

This MA Government, Opposition and Parliamentary Studies programme will develop your understanding of key functions of government and opposition activities.

This programme aims to provide a critical understanding of the problems and challenges facing those closely connected to the Government sector and equip you with the analytical and critical faculties to identify potential innovative solutions. These qualities are highly sought after by prestigious international employers, the civil service and in Parliament itself.

You will also evaluate and develop good practice in key areas of government, lobbying, and NGOs. You will have the opportunity to acquire the skills needed to work effectively, independently and as part of a team.

The programme culminates in a piece of independent research on a relevant topic of your choice.

If you are interested in PhD study with the Centre for Opposition Studies, then this degree is the ideal first step.

Programme Delivery

The programme is delivered online, part time over two years and typically, you will study:

- Research and Study Skills
- Political Institutions of the United Kingdom
- Opposition and Scrutiny in Practice
- International Government and Opposition
- Constitutional Law and Governance
- Parliamentary Studies
- Political Communication
- Research Methods
- Dissertation