

Programme Specification Definitive Document

1. Basic Information

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| 1.1 Awarding Institution: | Plymouth Marjon University |
| 1.2 Teaching Institution: | Plymouth Marjon University |
| 1.3 Locus of Delivery: | Plymouth Marjon University |
| 1.4 Final Award Title: | Bachelor of Arts (Hons) |
| 1.5 FHEQ Level: | 4, 5 and 6 |
| 1.6 Programme Title: | Social Science |
| 1.7 Mode and Duration of Study: | Full Time – 3 years Part Time – 6 years |
| 1.8 School: | Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences |
| 1.9 HECOS Code: | 101307 |
| 1.10 Collaborative Provision Arrangement: | None |
| 1.11 UCAS Code(s): | L301 |
| 1.12 Admission Criteria: | Normal University entrance criteria apply (please refer to the website for further details). International students will be expected to meet the English language requirements of IELTS 6.0 or equivalent. |
| 1.13 Accrediting Professional Body/PSRB: | N/A |
| 1.14 QAA Subject Benchmarking Group(s): | Sociology; Psychology; Social Policy & Administration; Politics & International Relations |
| 1.15 Other External Points of Reference: | Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ); The Campaign for Social Science; Subject Benchmark Statement: Social Policy [Draft for Consultation, October 2015] |
| 1.16 Language of Study (for learning, teaching and assessment): | English |
| 1.17 Work-Based Learning Arrangements: | Work-based learning takes place within the module SSCD90 |
| 1.18 Foundation Degree Progression Routes: | N/A |
| 1.19 Arrangements for Distance Learning: | N/A |
| 1.20 Original Date of Production: | September 2015 |
| 1.21 Date of Commencement: | September 2016 |
| 1.22 Review Date: | September 2022 |

2. Programme Outline

The BA (Hons) Social Science is a trans-disciplinary programme, underpinned by Sociology, Psychology, and Social Policy. It will appeal to students seeking a broad based Social Science

degree; but will offer the opportunity of greater specialisation as the student progresses. The programme will explore a number of contemporary social issues such as globalisation, health and social welfare, children and young people, education, and crime and deviance. The programme will ensure students are prepared for their future employment through the development of appropriate critical thinking skills, knowledge and understanding, intellectual skills, practical skills and key and transferable skills.

2.1 Integrating Sustainability into the Curriculum

The concept of sustainability focuses on achieving human well-being and quality of life, pursued through the maintenance, care and equitable use of natural and cultural resources. Issues of sustainability are therefore integral to the study of the social sciences, but will be particularly addressed within the modules SSC D03: Globalisation: The Local and the Global; and CYC H14: Global Education and Sustainability. The programme team aims to enable students to participate in activities for a sustainable future and, in-line with the pedagogy of the programme, critique and develop this knowledge further. For example, we will aim to reduce our impact on the environment, and enhance student's digital literacy skills, through the use of e-learning, e-submission and e-books. We will promote student wellbeing and build confidence, in the self and others. Additionally, there will be an emphasis on encouraging students to ask critical questions of themselves, others and our global community, which will enable them to clarify their own values as well as promote a sustainable future.

3. Distinctive Features

The proposed BA (Hons) Social Science will attempt to align with the University's mission, as outlined in the Strategic Plan 'Challenging Horizons' (2014:14):

'Development and dissemination of cutting-edge knowledge in distinctive areas, including through innovative use of technology and new modes of delivery, to have a positive influence and make a lasting impact on society, economy, culture, environment and wellbeing'.

To this end, one of the distinctive attributes of this programme will be its mode of delivery. There will be an emphasis on the student as producers (rather than reproducers) of knowledge (Neary, 2012). This 'enquiry based' approach involves the students 'doing' social science (Barnett and Coate, 2005), involving a considerable amount of project work and student presentations; and will necessitate a strong grounding in social research methods and methodologies, both quantitative and qualitative. Work based learning opportunities will enable students to integrate academic and research knowledge with work-based placements, and ensure that students are equipped with the skills, values and knowledge for the modern day workplace

4. Programme Aims

1. To develop students' knowledge and understanding of the social sciences, especially sociology, psychology, and social policy.
2. To develop the critical and analytical capabilities of the student, together with an understanding of the contested nature of social scientific knowledge.
3. To develop the student's problem-based learning skills, and the transferable skills necessary for graduate employment and/or further study.
4. To develop the student's confidence and interpersonal skills, to enable them to work both autonomously, and within teams.
5. To develop research skills, and skills in data analysis and interpretation.

5. Programme Learning Outcomes

Knowledge & understanding:

By the end of this programme students should be able to demonstrate:

1. Knowledge and understanding of the key relevant concepts and theoretical approaches that have developed, and are developing within the social sciences.
2. An awareness of social context, of the nature of social processes, and of social diversity and inequality.
3. An understanding of the social processes underpinning social change, both locally and globally.
4. An understanding of a range of quantitative and qualitative research strategies and methods, and of the ethical dimensions of social research.
5. An understanding of the distinctive nature of social science in relation to other forms of understanding, such as its relation to other disciplines and to everyday explanations.

Intellectual skills:

By the end of this programme students should be able to demonstrate:

6. An ability to review and critically evaluate relevant theory, research, argument and evidence.
7. An appreciation of the complexity and diversity of social situations.
8. An ability to gather, retrieve, and synthesise information, and to use it to make reasoned arguments.
9. An ability to analyse policies and practices in the light of a range of theoretical perspectives.

Practical skills:

By the end of this programme students should be able to demonstrate:

10. An ability to formulate questions about the social world, informed by the social sciences.
11. Competence in using theoretical perspectives and concepts in the social sciences, and their application to social life.
12. The capacity to analyse, assess and communicate empirical social science information.
13. An ability to identify a range of quantitative and qualitative research strategies and methods, and to comment on their relative advantages and disadvantages.
14. The ability to conduct social scientific work in a preliminary way.
15. The ability to undertake and present scholarly work.
16. An understanding of the ethical implications of social science research
17. An ability to recognise the relevance of social scientific knowledge to social, public, civic, and global policy.

Transferable / key skills:

By the end of this programme students should be able to demonstrate:

18. Learning and study skills.
19. Written and oral communication skills in a variety of contexts and modes.
20. Statistical and other quantitative techniques.
21. An ability to collect and analyse qualitative data.
22. Information retrieval skills in relation to primary and secondary sources of information.
23. Communication and digital literacy skills.
24. Skills of time planning and management.
25. Group work skills.

6. Learning and Teaching Methods

(To include a paragraph on the learning and teaching strategy)

The social science programme will utilise many of the traditional methods of university teaching, such as lectures, seminars, and tutorials. However, the learning and teaching strategy will be student-centred, placing considerable emphasis on autonomous, self-directed and active learning. Through the use of 'enquiry based learning', students will be encouraged and supported to become self-motivated, autonomous and curious lifelong learners.

Throughout the curriculum students will be encouraged to discuss the applications of social science theories and evidence, and its relevance to everyday life. In addition, students will learn how we can use social science knowledge to solve world and local problems, work sustainably and promote equality, social cohesion and work in the service of others in a non-judgemental, anti-discriminatory manner.

Teaching and learning on the programme will utilise a combination of the following:

| Method | Description |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Blended learning | Content and materials are part delivered through digital and online media, part delivered through face to face interaction. |
| Blog | A regularly updated webspace (private or public) written by an individual student or group of students, written in an informal manner. |
| Directed learning | Lecturer guides student towards appropriate materials, study activities and reading, responsibility for acquisition and assimilation remains with the individual student. |
| Discussion board | E-learning tool, in which the students discuss a topic online. Discussion can be either synchronous or asynchronous. |
| Enquiry based learning (EBL) | Students investigate a presented question, problem or scenario. The process is usually facilitated. |
| Fieldwork | Learning undertaken in an alternative context, location or environment from the regular learning environment that may be for an extended period and may require transport and accommodation. |
| Flipped classroom | Reversal of traditional teaching and reading activities, in which students prepare for the session from guidance, by watching a lecture online, completing a specified reading etc. and the face to face session is devoted to exercises, projects or discussion. |
| Group critique | Groupwork which centres on a specific topic. Discussion is facilitated by a leader and members of the group are encouraged to think and speak critically on the topic. |
| Group-directed Learning | Tasks decided and allocated by members of a group, acquisition and assimilation of the materials and learning remains with the individual student. |
| Lecture | Verbal delivery of information to students can be face to face or via web 2.0 tools. |
| Placement | Learning achieved by undertaking activities, under supervision and mentoring, in a work context. Learning concepts and techniques associated with a particular profession or trade in a live working environment, while being monitored and supported by a tutor. |

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| Reflective diary | A personal record of experiences. A space in which the individual student can explore, critique and develop an understanding of their own experiences, skills and values. |
| Research Proposal | A written piece of work outlining a plan for research. |
| Self-directed Learning | Student decides focus of learning and study, responsibility for acquisition and assimilation remains with the student. |
| Seminar | Typically small groups of students learning through discussion or highly focused practical tasks. |
| Tutorial | Often one to one or small group encounters between a tutor and student in which learning may be stimulated by a student request or maybe focused on the detail of subject matter covered in another context. |
| Workshop | Learning which is normally delivered via a practical activity in which a group of students undertake tasks under guidance related to a common theme and in the process acquire skills, techniques and conceptual understanding. |

6.1 Learning Enhancement

A distinctive feature of the programme will be an emphasis on the student as producers (rather than reproducers) of knowledge (Neary, 2012). This approach involves the students 'doing' social science (Barnett and Coate, 2005), involving a considerable amount of project work and student presentations; and will necessitate a strong grounding in social research methods and methodologies, both quantitative and qualitative. Hence, research methods and methodologies are included at all levels of the programme. All students will follow the university wide module SSCC90: Engaging with Learning, designed to provide students with the basic academic skills and literacies needed for successful undergraduate study. This will be supported by the provision of a Personal Development Tutor for each student, who will mentor the student throughout the three years of the programme. The Level 5 module SSCD90: Engaging with Employability will provide students with an opportunity to apply social scientific analysis to everyday life.

6.2 e-Learning

E-learning and digital literacy development will be a central component of the social science programme. However, the relationship with e-learning and digital literacy will differ depending on the pedagogy of the module. All modules will at least provide information and links to literature and other resources on the University's virtual learning environment. Most of the modules will utilise a blended learning approach in which e-learning activities support the face to face interaction and learning environment, as well as providing the students with opportunities to further enhance and apply their social scientific knowledge. In particular, in the Level 5 modules SSC D01: Quantitative Research Methods and SSC D02: Qualitative Research Methods students will be encouraged to explore both statistical and qualitative data analysis software and other on-line research tools. Students will be encouraged to take advantage of the many e-learning tutorials that are offered centrally within the University.

7. Modes of Assessment

(To include a paragraph on the assessment strategy)

The assessment scheme embodies the principles of assessment of and for learning. Assessment has a role in providing an indication to students and staff of the level of attainment, in relation to established criteria. However, assessment is also designed for learning, because it is a means of actually doing learning – reading, thinking, researching, and writing. This is in accordance with the programme’s emphasis on students as producers, rather than simply consumers, of knowledge. The range of assessment tasks is intended to enable students to develop skills in communication, planning and time management, problem solving and analytical skills, critical thinking, decision making skills, and team working skills – all skills that relate to employability. The assessment regime accords with the University’s Assessment Regulations and Procedures.

| Method | Description |
|--------------------------|--|
| Artefact | Student produces a creative artefact, on-line tool, or object in response to a question or problem posed by the lecturer. |
| Dissertation | An extended piece of work carried out by an individual student, on a relevant topic of their choice. It may involve scholarly primary research and/or a critical analysis of published works. A dissertation is normally an honours level assignment |
| Essay | Extended writing assignment in response to a question set by the module lead, or in negotiation between student and lecturer. |
| Examination | Time constrained and under test conditions. May be essay type answer, short answer, data analysis and interpretation or multiple choice questions. Can be written or verbal communication. |
| Placement File | A collection of materials of relevance to a work placement, including the contract, recordings/evidence, and a self-assessment. |
| Portfolio | Collection of short tasks, either in written format or a series of online tasks, such as blogs and discussion board communication. |
| Poster | A visual representation of data, critical review of literature or research findings. |
| Presentation | Clearly structured individual or group verbal delivery within timed conditions, delivered using appropriate methods and which demonstrates detailed knowledge and analysis. |
| Report | A written response structured to an event or activity which evaluates and assesses the processes and outcomes and makes recommendations |
| Research Proposal | A detailed outline for a research project which includes relevant reading and proposed methodology. |

8. Exemptions to University Regulations

N/A

9. Work-Based Learning/Placement Learning

The programme will be closely aligned with the University's Employability Strategy, with employability skills embedded in all areas of the curriculum. Employability will be at the heart of the programme design, delivery and development. The programme will continue ensure students are prepared for their future employment through the development of appropriate critical thinking skills, knowledge and understanding, intellectual skills, practical skills and key and

transferable skills. The work placement module SSCD90: Engaging with Employability is intended to provide practical experience in the application and usefulness of knowledge gained at the university. It enables students to develop skills in communication, planning and time management, problem solving and analytical skills, critical thinking, decision making skills, and team working skills.

The Faculty of Education, Enterprise and Culture has developed extensive links with potential employers, including schools, youth workers, early years providers, and youth offending agencies. The University has a high graduate employability rate, and this programme will continue to build on this reputation. The Social Science disciplines enable students to enter into a variety of types of employment, with current students entering into careers in youth services, family liaison, teaching and educational services, social work, the police force, and academia.

10. Programme Structure

Full Time

Level 4

| Module Code | Module Title | Credits | Assessment | Semester/ Term | Compulsory/ Optional | Condonable/ Non- Condonable |
|------------------------|---|---------|---------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| SSCC01 | Understanding Research, Theory and Method | 20 | 100% Coursework | Semester B | Compulsory | Condonable |
| SSCC02 | Introduction to Psychology | 20 | 50% Coursework 50% Exam | Semester X | Compulsory | Condonable |
| SSCC03 | Our Social Selves | 20 | 100% Coursework | Semester A | Compulsory | Condonable |
| SEDC01 | Introduction to Disability Studies | 20 | 50% Coursework 50% Practical | Semester A | Compulsory | Condonable |
| SSCC06 | Introduction to Sociology and Social Policy | 20 | 100% Coursework | Semester B | Compulsory | Condonable |
| SSCC90 | Engaging with Learning: Social Science | 20 | 100% Coursework | Semester X | Compulsory | Condonable |

Level 5

| Module Code | Module Title | Credits | Assessment | Semester/ Term | Compulsory/ Optional | Condonable/ Non- Condonable |
|------------------------|-------------------------------|---------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| SSCD01 | Quantitative Research Methods | 20 | 100% Coursework | Semester A | Compulsory | Non- Condonable |
| SSCD02 | Qualitative Research Methods | 20 | 100% Coursework | Semester B | Compulsory | Non- Condonable |

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|------------------------|---|----|-----------------|------------|------------|----------------|
| SSCD03 | Globalisation: the Local and the Global | 20 | 100% Coursework | Semester A | Compulsory | Condonable |
| SSCD04 | Contemporary Social and Political Thought | 20 | 100% Coursework | Semester A | Compulsory | Condonable |
| SSCD05 | Political Economy of Welfare | 20 | 100% Coursework | Semester B | Compulsory | Condonable |
| SSCD90 | Engaging with Employability: Social Science | 20 | 100% Coursework | Semester B | Compulsory | Non-Condonable |
| SSCDIM | Independent Study | 20 | 100% Coursework | Semester B | Optional | Condonable |

Level 6

| Module Code | Module Title | Credits | Assessment | Semester/ Term | Compulsory/ Optional | Condonable/ Non-Condonable |
|------------------------|--|---------|----------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------|
| SSCH01 | The Body, Health and Illness | 20 | 100% Coursework | Semester A | Optional | Condonable |
| SSCH02 | Identity and Sexualities | 20 | 100% Coursework | Semester A | Optional | Condonable |
| SSCH03 | Crime and Deviance in Society | 20 | 100% Coursework | Semester A | Optional | Condonable |
| SSCH04 | Discourse, Communication and Interaction | 20 | 100% Coursework | Semester B | Optional | Condonable |
| SSCH05 | Education in Society | 20 | 50% Coursework 50% Exam | Semester B | Optional | Condonable |
| SSCH06 | Community Psychology | 20 | 100% Coursework | Semester B | Optional | Condonable |
| PAEH03 | Global Education and Sustainability: Formal and Informal Learning and Change | 20 | 100% Coursework | Semester A | Optional | Condonable |
| SSCH07 | Understanding Children and Young People | 20 | 60% Exam 40% Practical | Semester B | Optional | Condonable |
| SSCHIM | Independent Study | 20 | 100% Coursework | Semester A/B | Optional | Condonable |
| SSCHD1 | Dissertation | 40 | 100% Coursework | Semester X | Compulsory | Non-Condonable |

Key: Semester X = A & B

Programme Structure by Level

The programme has a prescribed route in levels 4, and 5, with options available at level 6.

Full-time Route:

Level 4:

| SEMESTER A | SEMESTER B |
|--|--|
| SSCC02: INTRODUCTION TO PSYCHOLOGY Semester X | SSCC02: INTRODUCTION TO PSYCHOLOGY Semester X |
| SSCC03: OUR SOCIAL SELVES | SSCC01: UNDERSTANDING RESEARCH,THEORY AND METHOD |
| SEDC01: INTRODUCTION TO DISABILITY STUDIES | SSCC06: INTRODUCTION TO SOCIOLOGY AND SOCIAL POLICY |
| SSCC90: ENGAGING WITH LEARNING | SSCC90: ENGAGING WITH LEARNING |

Level 5:

| SEMESTER A | SEMESTER B |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| SSCD01: QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH METHODS | SSCD02: QUALITATIVE RESEARCH METHODS |
| SSCD03: GLOBALIZATION: THE GLOBAL & THE LOCAL | SSCD05: POLITICAL ECONOMY OF WELFARE |
| SSC D04: CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL & POLITICAL THOUGHT | SSCD90: ENGAGING WITH EMPLOYABILITY |
| | SSCDIM: INDEPENDENT STUDY [Optional] |

Level 6:

| SEMESTER A | SEMESTER B |
|---|---|
| SSCHD1: DISSERTATION [PART 1] [Compulsory] | SSCHD2: DISSERTATION [PART 2] [Compulsory] |
| SSCH01: THE BODY, HEALTH & ILLNESS [Optional] | SSCH04: DISCOURSE,COMMUNICATION & INTERACTION [Optional] |
| SSCH02: IDENTITY & SEXUALITIES [Optional] | SSCH05: EDUCATION IN SOCIETY [Optional] |
| SSCH03: CRIME AND DEVIANCE IN SOCIETY [Optional] | SSCH06: COMMUNITY PSYCHOLOGY [Optional] |
| PAEH03: GLOBAL EDUCATION AND SUSTAINABILITY: FORMAL AND INFORMAL LEARNING AND CHANGE [Optional] | SSCH07: UNDERSTANDING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE [Optional] |
| SSCHIM: INDEPENDENT STUDY [Optional] | SSCHIM: INDEPENDENT STUDY [Optional] |

- A definitive module descriptor is required for each module

11. Accrediting Professional Body /Professional Regulatory and Statutory Body (PSRB)

N/A

12. Professional Advisory Group

N/A

13. Academic Progression Opportunities

The programme places students in an excellent position to apply for post graduate taught programmes in the social sciences and post graduate research programmes such as M.Phil/Ph.D. Additionally the skills, knowledge and values that the students will gain, when successful, during the programme will enable them to be in a positive position if they wish to apply for further study in fields such as education, social work and health careers.

14. Employability and Career Progression Opportunities

Students with a degree in social science are extremely employable. The Campaign for Social Sciences (2013) report depicts that 84% of social science graduates are in employment 3.5 years after graduating in comparison to 78% of humanities graduates. The Social Science disciplines enable students to enter into a variety of types of employment. This programme will enable students to develop skills in communication, planning and time management, problem solving and analytical skills, critical thinking, decision making skills, and team working skills. The pedagogical underpinning of the programme, skills, knowledge and values that the students develop, will stand them in good stead to find and gain employment in the service of others, in addition to careers in marketing, management, leadership, research, business and innovation in a global marketplace. The Faculty of Education, Enterprise and Culture has developed extensive links with potential employers, including schools, youth workers, early years providers, and youth offending agencies. The University has a high graduate employability rate, and this programme will continue to build on this reputation.

15. Support for Students and for Student Learning

The University recognises the value of the whole student experience within Higher Education and students have full access to the University's facilities for academic and pastoral support and guidance. The Student Support team offers a confidential and comprehensive service to guide and support students through their studies in the following areas:

- Academic Advice
- Academic Skills
- Accommodation
- Disability and Inclusion Advice Service
- Employability and Careers Development
- Finance and Welfare
- Health
- Student Counselling and Well-being
- Student Volunteering

Student support and guidance is further promoted by the following:

- Personal Development Tutor for every student in the University
- Academic tutorial staff, including programme leaders, module leaders and tutors
- Extensive library, and other learning resources, and facilities
- Library and study skills guidance material
- Programme handbooks, and module guides
- The Chaplaincy Centre which is at the heart of the University and is used for social gathering, quiet reflection and prayer
- On-campus Nursery provision

16. Student Feedback Mechanisms

Students have a number of opportunities to feedback to the programme team, as well as at an institutional level, about their experiences. This feedback is used to enhance the programme, and the student experience. Student feedback mechanisms include:

- Regular staff-student liaison meetings [at the programme level]
- Tutorials with lecturers and seminar leaders
- Appointments with the Programme Area Lead
- A Personal Development Tutor
- Students' Union
- Institution-wide student satisfaction surveys
- National Student Survey

17. Other Stakeholder Feedback (i.e. graduates and employers)

Final year undergraduate students will be encouraged to provide feedback on their experience of the programme through the NSS. Other stakeholders, work-based placement providers and interested parties will be regularly invited to feedback on the content of the programme and the development of the students' skills, knowledge and values. This will be reported more widely in the institution through the Annual Programme Report.

18. Quality and Enhancement Mechanisms

The quality of the student experience and the standards of the awards are managed and quality assured through the University's regulations policies and procedures. Student achievement and progression is managed through the Module Assessment Boards (MABs) and the Progression and Award Boards (PABs). Programmes are reviewed annually through University annual monitoring processes, including external examiner contributions, and incorporate student feedback mechanisms at both modular and the programme level reported formally through the University's annual monitoring and reporting cycle.

