Introduction to Politics

Module Title	Introduction to Politics
Module NFQ level (only if an NFQ level can be demonstrated)	8
Module number/reference	N/A
Parent programme(s) the plural arises if there are embedded programmes to be validated.	Higher Diploma in Politics and Society
Stage of parent programme	Award
Semester (semester1/semester2 if applicable)	1
Module credit units (FET/HET/ECTS)	ECTS
Module credit number of units	5
List the teaching learning and assessment modes	This module will be taught synchronously online with 6 hours asynchronous learning and assessed by continuous assessment (100%)
Entry requirements (statement of knowledge, skill and competence	As per course entry requirements
Pre-requisite module titles	
Coquisite module titles	
Is this a capstone module? (Yes or No	No
Specification of the qualifications (academic, pedagogical and professional/occupational) and experience required of staff (staff includes workplace personnel who are responsible for learners such as apprentices, trainees and learners in clinical placements) If staff not in post at present, specify qualifications and experience required	A minimum Level 9 qualification in Social Science, Politics or a closely cognate area is required.
Maximum number of learners per centre (or instance of the module)	25
Duration of the module	12 weeks
Average (over the duration of the module) of the contact hours per week (see * below	1.5
Module-specific physical resources and support required per centre (or instance of the module	Lecture hall, white board, computer, and projector. Library Resources

Analysis of required learning effort									
Effort while in contact with staff						Contact Hours for the Module			
Classroom and demonstrations		Mentoring and small-group tutoring		Other (specify)		Directed e-learning	Independent learning	Other hours (specify)	Work-based learning	Total effort
Hours	Minimum ratio teacher / learner	Hours	Minimum ratio teacher / learner	Hours	Minimum ratio teacher / learner				
12	1:10					6	107		125

Allocation of Marks Within the Module					
	Continuous Assessment	Supervised Project	Practical	Final Exam	Total
Percentage Contribution	100%				**100%**

Module aims and objectives

This module introduces the study of politics and is intended as a practical guide to some of the main concepts and vocabulary of political science. The module provides an introductory guide to important themes and issues related to the study of politics, such as the state, regime types, and political change and behaviour. It also introduces learners to some of the study skills that they need to complete assignments and assessments in the area of politics. This module is relevant to MIPLOs 1, 2, 3, 4. This module will introduce learners to political and social science research methods. It will provide learners with a foundational knowledge of the theoretical dimensions of conducting research in the field of political and social sciences. A variety of qualitative and quantitative research methods, data sources and methods of data analysis are explored.

Minimum intended module learning outcomes

On successful completion of this module, learners should be able to:

1. Identify and explain some of the core concepts used in political analysis. (MIPLO 1)
2. Contrast different political systems and forms of political power. (MIPLO 1, 2)
3. Demonstrate an appreciation of arguments about politics and the merits of different political systems. (MIPLO 1, 2)
4. Distinguish between different political institutions and electoral systems and demonstrate an understanding of the structure and functions they perform at Irish and European level. (MIPLO 1, 2, 4)
5. Demonstrate practical skills and competencies in reviewing texts of political analysis (MIPLO 3, 4)
6. Have an informed understanding of quantitative and qualitative paradigms, and the link between theory and practice in social research. (MIPLO 1, 2, 4)

Rationale for inclusion of the module in the programme and its contribution to the overall proposed Programme Learning Outcomes

There is a significant focus in this module on the development of practical skills. The combination of practical skills with key concepts and theories provides a strong basis for the transfer of knowledge, skills, and competencies to other modules, and presents an opportunity for integrated assessment strategies that encourage learner engagement and highlight the connection between theory and practice and will foster a more in-depth understanding of the complexity of the relationship between political institutions and civil society. The Research Assignment will be included as part of the final E-Portfolio in the Pedagogy module.

The module is relevant to all programme modules and helps learners to develop a deeper understanding of the individual module content.

Information provided to learners about the module

College Prospectus specifies module name, stage and ECTS. College website and programme handbook to contain (in addition to above) short description of module content, module learning outcomes, prerequisite modules, and assessment mechanisms. Module Moodle Page and Module Handbook to contain (in addition to above) schedule of classes and topics, detailed assessment information with titles and submission dates, full bibliography, and list of learning resources.

Module content, organisation and structure

Indicative module content:

1. *Thinking about Politics*
2. *Foundational Concepts in Politics*
3. *Participation and Public Opinion*

4. *Power and the Legitimation of Authority*
5. *Ideologies and the Political Spectrum*
6. *Political Representation and Political Parties*
7. *Electoral Systems and Elections: Elections and Appointment of the Houses of the Oireachtas; The Northern Ireland Executive and the European Parliament*
8. *The State*
9. *Democracy and Democratic Government*
10. *Political Institutions of Ireland and the European Union*
11. *International Politics*
12. *Researching Politics & Methods of Political Analysis (Introduction to Quantitative and Qualitative Research; Methods of Collecting and Analysing Data)*

Module teaching, learning and assessment strategy

The module is focused on the development of learner capacity to acquire self-awareness, to engage in critical reflection and to demonstrate a commitment to inclusion and ethical. Consequently, the teaching and learning strategy adheres to the philosophy and practice of transformative, collaborative and critically reflective learning approaches, inclusive of the following methods:

Lectures, peer learning achieved through face-to-face classroom discussion, role-play and participation in classroom exercises, case study analysis, video Lectures, discussion forums, case studies and group exercises. Learners will, in small groups, break down the material in tutorials for greater examination of the issues. Prescribed readings will be used to encourage engagement by learners and will provide a basis for formative assessment or assessment for learning (Carlow College Teaching and Learning Strategy).

Module summative assessment strategy

This module will be assessed by two assignments.

Nature of assessment materials

Assessment	Weighting	MIMLO
Online Quiz: Data Based Questions (x2)	40%	4, 5
Research Project: Essay & Poster Presentation	60%	1, 2, 3, 6

Timetabling, Learner Effort and Credit

Timetable	Learner Effort	Credit
Online; 6 x 2 hour fortnightly classes, and 6 hours asynchronous learning	125 hours combined online contact hours, learning and assessment	5 ECTS

Work-based learning and practice-placement

N/A

E-learning

Use of virtual learning platform, access to weekly online reading material and powerpoint presentations and a range of online learning materials.

Module physical resource requirements

The module will be delivered through a combination of workshops and asynchronous learning. Requirements include projectors, whiteboards, audio-visual equipment, and WiFi. Access to the Learner Gateway and Library resources are also a requirement.

Reading lists and other information resources

Key Texts:
Garner, R., Ferdinand, P. and Lawson, S. (2020) *Introduction to Politics*. (4th edition). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Heywood, A. (2019) *Politics*, (5th edition). London: Palgrave.
Stoker, G. (2006) *Why Politics Matters*. Lonon: Palgrave

Other Relevant Texts:
Hague, Rod and Harrop, Martin (2001) *Comparative Politics*. London: Palgrave
Newton, K. and van Deth, J.W (2005) *Foundations of comparative politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
Caramani, D. (2008) *Comparative Politics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press

Peer-Reviewed Political Science Journals:
Political Science and Research Methods. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/political-science-research-and-methods
Irish Political Studies, Routledge. https://www.psai.ie/journal/

Peer-Reviewed Political Science Journals:
Irish Journal of Sociology, Sage Journals. https://journals.sagepub.com/home/irj
Irish Journal of Applied Social Studies, Social Care Ireland. https://arrow.tudublin.ie/ijass/

Essential Sources:
Learners will be asked to engage with content written by high-quality journalists and/or academics.
- Websites
- Newsfeed and Political Commentary
- Print-Newspaper Websites
- TV/News Channels

Ethical Considerations
N/A

Re-Assessment Procedures
All details regarding compensation, penalties for late submissions, policy around repeat examinations/assessments, pass standards at programme, module, and assessment level, max completion period are outlined in the College's *Regulations in Relation to Assessment and Standards*. Where a learner does not successfully complete the module, they will have the opportunity to repeat the assessment in line with the College's *Regulations in Relation to Assessment and Standards*.