



CENTRE FOR OPPOSITION STUDIES PRESS RELEASE

MA IN GOVERNMENT, OPPOSITION AND PARLIAMENTARY STUDIES

The Centre for Opposition Studies at the University of Bolton announces a new MA in Government, Opposition and Parliamentary Studies. The two-year part time online programme has been developed in collaboration with parliamentarians and includes a residential Westminster Experience.

The programme provides an in-depth knowledge of the workings of Government and Opposition and relevant theories. Uniquely, it aims to give equal prominence to the importance of political opposition and scrutiny; central to this is the exploration of the dynamic between those who hold power and those who scrutinise it.

Applicants should normally have successfully completed an honours degree (or equivalent) in a relevant subject such as politics/government, history, liberal arts, humanities (minimum classification 2.2 or equivalent).

The programme combines theoretical study of political frameworks with practical application of their use in opposition. While the course is founded on the understanding of the British parliamentary system and in particular the way politicians are held to account by a variety of means, you will have the opportunity to study opposition in an international context and to study one country in depth. A key module is Political Communication which uses a practical approach to explore the nature and function of communication in the political process.

During the residential Westminster Experience, you will engage first-hand with the workings not only of the British Parliament but also the associated functions including the media, the civil service and lobbyists. Guest lectures will be provided by current and former politicians, journalists, advisers, analysts and public servants who will provide contemporary perspectives on approaches to opposition, democracy and government in action.

Following a research methods module, the programme culminates in either a traditional research dissertation or a more practical based research project.

Dr Nigel Fletcher, Research Director of the Centre for Opposition Studies and a consultant on the MA programme, said: "It's exciting to be launching this unique postgraduate programme at Bolton, giving students a fully rounded view of how politics actually operates at Westminster. As well as bringing students into close contact with political practitioners, it will also highlight the importance of political scrutiny and opposition alongside the more traditional study of government."

Sir John Hayes MP, Visiting Professor, said: “This innovative new course will help students better understand the theory and practice of politics, and is a great example of the creative way Bolton has always combined academic learning with a vocational focus grounded in the real world.”

Professor George Holmes, Vice Chancellor and President of the University welcomed this new development saying “I am delighted that the Centre for Opposition Studies is building on their research work with the development of this new MA in Government, Opposition and Parliamentary Studies.”

Professor Mohammed Abdel-Haq, Executive Director of the Centre for Opposition Studies, said: “We are proud to have created this new MA course at the University of Bolton, which represents a fresh approach to teaching politics. Students will be able to gain a proper insight into the dynamics of the political system in a way that they would not with other courses. We very much look forward to welcoming students onto the programme in the years ahead.”

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