COURSE SPECIFICATION

MPA PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION (TOP UP) (DL)

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Course Title	*MPA Public Administration (Top up) (DL)*
Final Award	*Master of Public Administration (MPA)*
Exit Awards	*Post Graduate Diploma Public Administration*
Course Code / UCAS code (if applicable)	P3747PTD
Mode of study	*Part time*
Mode of delivery	*Distance Learning*
Normal length of course	*1 year*
Cohort(s) to which this course specification applies	From September 2026 intake onwards
Awarding Body	*University of Portsmouth*
Teaching Institution	*University of Portsmouth*
Faculty	*Humanities and Social Sciences*
School/Department/Subject Group	School of Area Studies, Sociology, History, Politics and Literature
School/Department/Subject Group webpage	SASSHPL
Course webpage including entry criteria	*https://www.port.ac.uk/study/courses/postgraduate-taught/mpa-public-administration*
Professional and/or Statutory Regulatory Body accreditations	*https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/for-providers/registering-with-the-ofs/registration-with-the-ofs-a-guide/conditions-of-registration/*
Quality Assurance Agency Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) Level	*Level 7*

This course specification provides a summary of the main features of the course, identifies the aims and learning outcomes of the course, the teaching, learning and assessment methods used by teaching staff, and the reference points used to inform the curriculum.
This information is therefore useful to potential students to help them choose the right course of study, to current students on the course and to staff teaching and administering the course.

Further detailed information on the individual modules within the course may be found in the relevant module descriptors and the Course Handbook provided to students on enrolment.

Please refer to the Course and Module Catalogue for further information on the course structure and modules.

Educational aims of the course

This programme is designed to help students who have already completed a postgraduate level diploma in Public Administration or relevant advanced professional qualifications to further enhance their knowledge and qualifications. The 60-credit qualification will be assessed either by completing a traditional research-based dissertation or a project that places an emphasis on exploring and resolving practical issues

Successful completion of this programme leads to the award of a Masters in Public Administration.

The MPA Top-Up will allow students to:

- *Develop an advanced understanding of public sector organisations, their management and the changing context in which they operate.*
- *Develop the ability to apply knowledge and understanding of the theories to improve practice.*
- *Enhance lifelong learning skills and personal development so as to be able to work with self-direction and originality and to contribute to the field of public administration and to society at large.*

Course Learning Outcomes and Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategies

The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) sets out a national framework of qualification levels, and the associated standards of achievement are found in their Framework for Higher Education Qualifications document.

Office for Students Conditions of Registration

The Course Learning Outcomes for this course are outlined in the tables below.

A. Knowledge and understanding of:			
LO number	**Learning outcome**	**Learning and Teaching methods**	**Assessment methods**
A1	Demonstrate a critical awareness of current challenges through a comparative political, historical and financial context of public administration.	Online Tutorials, and guided independent study, work based research	Dissertation or Major Project
A2	Specialist subject knowledge of research in specific fields of relevance to their career. Research and scholarship that enables students to develop the critical perspective necessary so they can apply the theory to real life situations		

B. Cognitive (Intellectual or Thinking) skills, able to:			
LO number	**Learning outcome**	**Learning and Teaching methods**	**Assessment methods**
B1	Apply a range of advanced, scholarly theoretical models to a broad spectrum of areas in public administration issues and areas of operation	Online tutorials, guided independent study, work based research.	Dissertation or Major Project
B2	Analyse and critique different theoretical models, methods of delivery and policy making processes		
B3	Advanced skills to collate, synthesise and analyse data from a variety of sources using a range of methodologies		
B4	Demonstrate general and subject specific research and information retrieval skills, including the ability to gather, integrate and organise material critically to evaluate its significance within appropriate practical frameworks.		

C. Practical (Professional or Subject) skills, able to:			
LO number	**Learning outcome**	**Learning and Teaching methods**	**Assessment methods**
C1	Understand and contribute to current debates in comparative administration, interpreting the knowledge gained from your studies	Online tutorials and guided independent study, work based research.	Dissertation or Major Project
C2	Use appropriate methodologies to investigate problems and issues relevant to public sector managers in order to develop policies and strategies for delivering public services to consumers and to advise policy makers.		

D. Transferrable (Graduate and Employability) skills, able to:			
LO number	**Learning outcome**	**Learning and Teaching methods**	**Assessment methods**
D1	Demonstrate advanced literacy and oral and/or written communication skills, including the ability to present a rhetorically effective, coherent, well supported and sustained argument.	Online tutorials and guided independent study, work based research.	Dissertation or Major Project
D2	Structure and communicate complex ideas effectively, interpreting and presenting new knowledge with confidence.		
D3	Identify and provide credible, well reasoned and creative solutions to complex problems.		
D4	Demonstrate relevant skills and political sensitivity.		

Academic Regulations

The current University of Portsmouth Academic Regulations: Examination & Assessment Regulations will apply to this course. Approved course exemptions can be found here.

Support for Student Learning

The University of Portsmouth provides a comprehensive range of support services for students throughout their course, details of which are available at the MyPort student portal.

Evaluation and Enhancement of Standards and Quality in Learning and Teaching

The University of Portsmouth undertakes comprehensive monitoring, review and evaluation of courses within clearly assigned staff responsibilities. Student feedback is a key feature in these evaluations, as represented in our Policy for Listening to and Responding to the Student Voice where you can also find further information.

Reference Points

The course and outcomes have been developed taking account of:

- University of Portsmouth Connected Curriculum
- University of Portsmouth Vision
- Office for Students Conditions of Registration
- University of Portsmouth Code of Practice for Work-based and Placement Learning
- Quality Assurance Agency UK Quality Code for Higher Education
- Quality Assurance Agency Qualification Characteristic Statements
- Quality Assurance Agency Subject Benchmark Statement for MPA in **Public Administration**
- Quality Assurance Agency Framework for Higher Education Qualifications
- Vocational and professional experience, scholarship and research expertise of the University of Portsmouth's academic members of staff
- National Occupational Standards

Changes to your course/modules

The University of Portsmouth has checked the information provided in this Course Specification and will endeavour to deliver this course in keeping with this Course Specification. However, changes to the course may sometimes be required arising from annual monitoring, student feedback, and the review and update of modules and courses.

Where this activity leads to significant changes to modules and courses there will be prior consultation with students and others, wherever possible, and the University of Portsmouth will take all reasonable steps to minimise disruption to students.

It is also possible that the University of Portsmouth may not be able to offer a module or course for reasons outside of its control, for example, due to the absence of a member of staff or low student registration numbers. Where this is the case, the University of Portsmouth will endeavour to inform applicants and students as soon as possible, and where appropriate, will facilitate the transfer of affected students to another suitable course.

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