



# Social Policy visit day 2020

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# This presentation...

- Introducing Social Policy
- Social Policy at the University of Bristol
- Teaching, learning, and student support
- Why study social policy at Bristol?
- Career routes in Social Policy

# What is Social Policy?

- ‘... the study of the social relations necessary for human wellbeing and the systems by which wellbeing may be promoted or, ... impaired’ (Hartley Dean, 2012)
- policy and practice in social services, health, social security, education, employment, community care and housing;
- social problems, e.g. crime, disability, unemployment, mental health, learning disability, old age;
- issues relating to social disadvantage, including race, gender and poverty;
- the range of collective social responses to these conditions (Paul Spicker, 2017);
- An interdisciplinary social science; politics, sociology, criminology, human geography, public policy...
- Empirical; theoretical; comparative



# What is Social Policy?

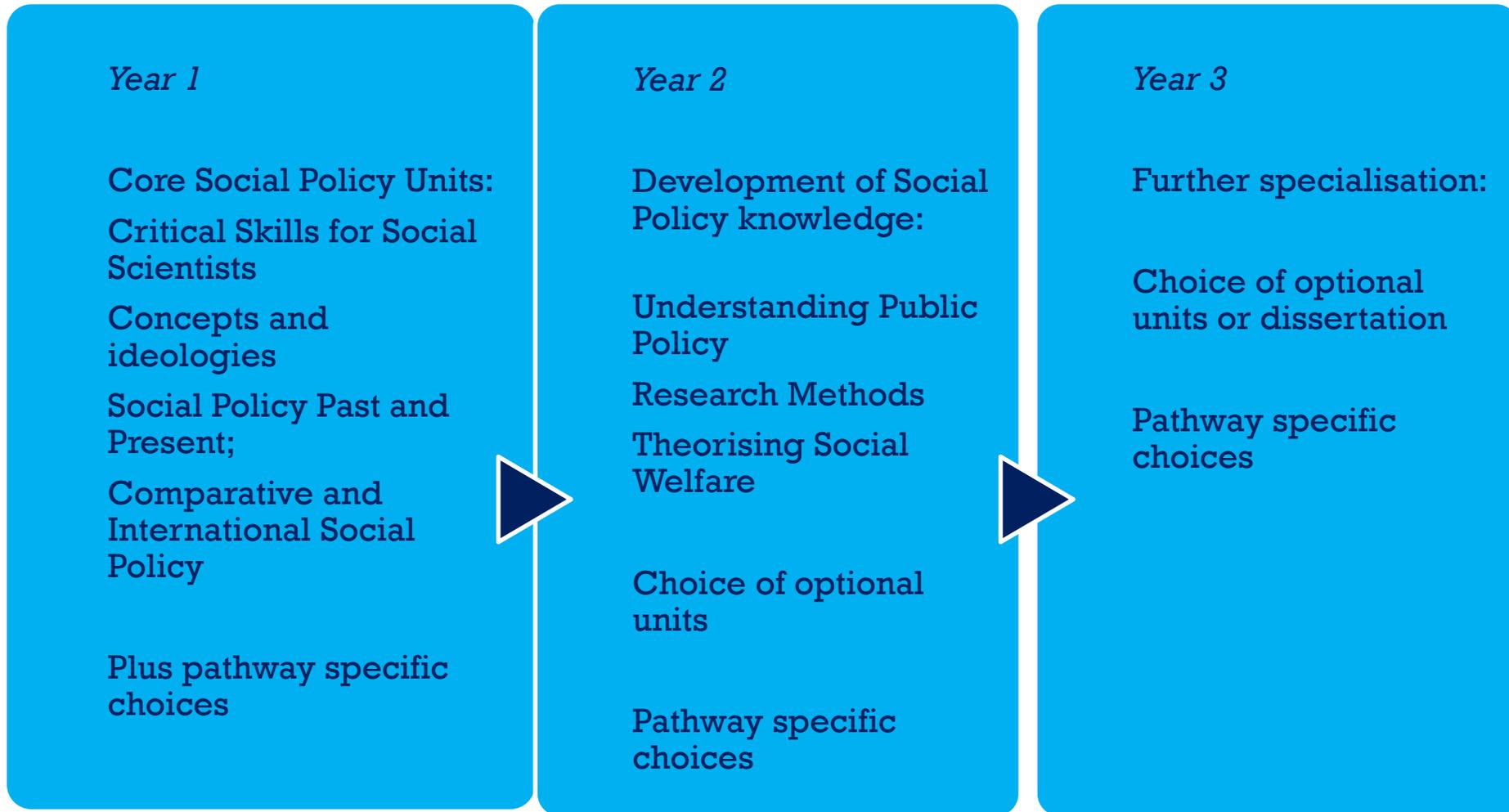
- Should we do anything about inequality?
- Why does poverty persist?
- Should everyone have a basic income?
- What are the impacts of austerity?
- Who should pay for higher education?
- Who should pay for care for the elderly?
- How can we address housing affordability?
- What effects does migration have on society?
- What impacts does imprisonment have on offenders?
- How does social policy function in different countries?
- How can we prevent gender violence?



# Social Policy degrees

- BSc Social Policy
- BSc Social Policy with Innovation
- BSc Social Policy with Study Abroad
- BSc International Social and Public Policy
- BSc International Social and Public Policy with Study Abroad
- BSc Social Policy with Criminology
- BSc Social Policy with Management
- BSc Social Policy with Quantitative Research Methods (Q step)
- MSci Social Policy with Quantitative Research Methods (Q step)
- Social Policy with Innovation
- MSci Social Policy with Innovation
- BSc Social Policy and Politics
- BSc Social Policy and Sociology

# Current programme structure



# Current and recent optional units

- Comparative Social Policy in a Globalizing World
- Migration Policy in the UK and EU
- Drugs and Society
- Education and Society
- Housing, Economy, and Society
- Introduction to Disability Studies
- Youth, Sexualities, and Gendered Violence
- Gender Based Violence
- Poverty and Social Exclusion
- Punishment in Society
- Cities and Communities in the Urban Age
- Societal change and the Transformation of Work
- The State of Welfare
- Social Policy and the European Union
- Youth Justice
- Work and Work Placement
- Social Research Methods

# Current and recent optional units

## Criminology options

- Key Thinkers in Criminology
- Understanding Crime, Harm, and Society
- Controlling Crime and Social Harm
- Globalisation, Crime, Harm and Justice
- Violence, Conflict and Forced Migration
- Criminalising Welfare
- Understanding Terrorism
- Leisure, Pleasure and harm

## Q-step units

- Principles of Quantitative Social Science
- Conducting a Research Project using Secondary Data
- Convincing stories: using numbers in the social sciences
- Segregation and inequality: measurement and debate

## Management Options

- International Business Management
- Foundations of Business Law
- Public Management
- Project Management
- Marketing
- Organisation theory

# Recent dissertation topics

- Media representations of the migrant crisis
- Housing affordability for first-time buyers
- Discourses of disability in government proposals
- Gentrification in London
- Gated communities and notions of community
- Young people and restorative justice
- Attitudes to illegal drugs amongst students
- Widening access to higher education
- Internships, social networking and social mobility
- Dementia and care giving
- Police officer attitudes domestic violence
- Political participation and poverty

# Teaching, learning, and student support

- Teaching methods: interactive lectures, seminars, clinics, presentations, individual tutorials/discussions with your personal tutor/dissertation tutor
- Contact hours: 9/10 hours per week; plus extensive reading
- Lectures supported by small classes
- Assessment: examinations, essays, portfolio, dissertation.
- Student support:
  - Critical skills unit to equip for higher education
  - Quick guides
  - Workshops covering study skills, exam preparation, careers and more
  - Detailed written feedback on assessment
  - Recording of lectures
  - Personal tutor

## Quick Guide

### Criminology

### Writing essays

When you write essays, you develop important skills that enable you to respond meaningfully and with intelligence to a question. You demonstrate that you can find and retrieve relevant information, compare and explain different ideas, understand the main issues in a debate and discard irrelevant material. You show that you can organize material in order of importance, then summarize and deploy it coherently in an argument. You also establish that you can arrive at an informed and logical conclusion – informed, because it is based on reliable evidence, – logical, because it is based on the material that you have already presented. These are skills that employers expect from graduate recruits, so you should work on improving written communication because it is part of the process of becoming more professional.

Part of what makes someone a good writer is to read and write often. When you are reading, consider how effective writers construct arguments, integrate sources, use evidence, provide examples, deal with issues that they disagree with, use words carefully and precisely and write in a clear, consistent and accessible way.

#### Reading, understanding and interpreting an assignment question

Writing essays can be daunting, because conveying something in writing to an academic who already understands what you are struggling to explain is difficult. Consequently, you might assume too much of your reader and fail to explain what you mean or organise your essay clearly. Assignments often gain poor marks because the question is not properly addressed, the reader is not told at the outset where the explanation will lead or even what the conclusion is.

Poor essays convey the impression that the writer was following a set of instructions such as: *Write down whatever you can think of about this topic, in any order. Do not develop an argument or structure your answer logically. Include irrelevant material if you cannot think of anything better. Do not link what write to what you have read using references. Arrive at no logical conclusions.*

#### Interpreting the question

Homing-in on words such as 'inequality', 'poverty', 'globalisation', 'crime', 'class' etc., and writing at length in a descriptive way or trying to provide a narrative summary of events is a common mistake.

Try to think beyond concepts and events in order to understand what exactly is being asked of you and learn to explain rather than narrate.

It can be useful to separate essay question tasks into two components:

WHAT is the topic or content of the essay?  
HOW should you treat the topic?

You should be clear about the relationship between what the appropriate topic material is and how you manage information in order to answer the question.

Essay titles often invite you to explain, discuss, assess, compare, demonstrate or evaluate; this is quite different from reporting, describing, outlining, defining or giving an account. It is important that you appreciate the difference. You should provide critical discussion even if that is not an explicit part of the title, this means that you should cover different aspects of the question, conflicting arguments should be explored and backed up with evidence derived from reading and evidence should be weighed up in some kind of conclusion.

#### Using unit aims, outcomes and assessment criteria

Check unit aims and outcomes and consider how they relate to the essay (aims and outcomes are usually listed in handbooks or posted on Blackboard). Criteria differs by assessment type and for each stage (year) of study. You should be confident that you understand assessment criteria and that you have met them before you submit your assignment.

# University student health, well being, and support services

- Personal support within the School for Policy Studies:
  - Personal tutor
  - Senior tutor
  - Wellbeing advisers
- Support across the University:
  - NHS Students' Health Service on campus
  - Residential Life Service ('ResiLife')
  - Wellbeing Service
  - Student Counselling
  - Disability Services
  - Accommodation Office
  - Student Funding Office
  - 'Just Ask' (Students' Union)



Here to help.

# Why study Social Policy at Bristol?

**4th**

Most targeted  
university by top  
UK employers  
(High Fliers  
Research, 2020)

11th in the world's  
'cool list'  
destinations

National  
Geographic  
Traveller, 2018

**Top 5**

For research  
in the UK  
(REF 2014)

One of the  
safest universities  
in the UK  
(Student Experience  
Survey 2018)

**Top 10**

UK University  
in QS World  
Rankings 2020

# Why study social policy at Bristol?



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Highly rated in league tables:

- The Guardian: Social Policy #2 in league table (and has been # 1 or 2 most years since 2007)
- QS World Ranking: Social Policy at University of Bristol in top 20 globally

Research-informed teaching

- 80% of research ranked as world leading or internationally excellent
- Led largest ever study of poverty and social exclusion in UK
- Expertise in poverty, austerity, migration, disability, gender violence, international social policy...



REF2014  
Research Excellence Framework

# Why study at Bristol?

*“The best thing about studying here is the number of study spaces and libraries available and the support that we get from lecturers. They don't just assume we understand, but actually take time to break things down or address us privately.” (Jennifer)*

*•“The passion and diversity of the lecturers at Bristol meant it was always interesting and developed my own passion for the subject.”  
(Laura)*

*•“The best thing was how approachable everybody was – I always felt as though those who taught us were genuinely interested in our work and our futures, and this made for brilliant academic and pastoral supervision.” (Sophie)*



# Why Bristol?

- Wide variety of routes and optional units
- Supportive learning environment
- Research-led teaching
- Study abroad opportunities
- Sought after graduates

# Careers

<https://www.prospects.ac.uk/careers-advice/what-can-i-do-with-my-degree/social-policy>

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