

School of Social Sciences  
and Philosophy

# PPES – Philosophy, Political Science, Economics and Sociology (TR015)



**Trinity College Dublin**  
Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath  
The University of Dublin

[www.tcd.ie/ssp/undergraduate/ppes/](http://www.tcd.ie/ssp/undergraduate/ppes/)

# School of Social Sciences and Philosophy

Trinity College Dublin is recognised internationally as Ireland's leading university and as one of the top universities in the world. Trinity was founded in 1592, and today the university is a lively and cosmopolitan community of students from around the globe. Its bustling 47-acre campus is the ideal environment for studying, learning, relaxing and living.

Trinity's School of Social Sciences and Philosophy is at the forefront of research and teaching across the disciplines of philosophy, political science, economics and sociology.

Trinity has an international reputation for its research on issues of global societal and economic importance such as migration, development, international macroeconomics and political and economic integration in Europe. Our students benefit from a research-led education which exposes them to leading academics, the latest knowledge and ideas, and to an education that emphasizes analytical skills and creative thinking.

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## Why Choose the PPES Programme?

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Trinity's PPES programme is the only university degree in Ireland where students can combine the study of philosophy, political science, economics and sociology. It provides an integrated multidisciplinary education in the social sciences and philosophy, with students studying four subjects that are central to understanding any society. It brings together some of the most important approaches to understanding the social and human world, developing skills suited to a range of future careers and activities.

PPES will appeal to students who are excited about the challenges of understanding the way societies are organised, create wealth and are governed, while drawing on the methods and insights of philosophical enquiry. If you are puzzled about how our world is structured and have a desire to change it, then PPES is the degree for you.



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## Philosophy

If you are interested in questioning society's basic assumptions and in analysing the moral, political, and religious questions at the heart of our culture, you will find philosophy a stimulating subject. Philosophy will train you to question your own assumptions and someone else's, and to articulate your point of view carefully and thoughtfully.

There has been a rich tradition of philosophical excellence at Trinity College since its foundation. Trinity's department of philosophy is a close-knit, intellectual community of researchers, teachers and students which combines high-quality teaching with expansive research activity.

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## Political Science

It's easy to think of political issues that we have opinions about. Should government tax the rich to achieve greater equality? Should it introduce 'green taxes' to help protect the environment? Such questions, along with analysis of political systems and how democracy works, are at the heart of the study of politics.

Political science has been an important part of the curriculum since 1855. Today it is a vibrant, outward-looking department which is recognised world-wide for its research work on the European Union, comparative politics, international relations and public opinion.

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## Economics

Many issues dominating the headlines are economic. For example why do certain countries enjoy high growth rates and what are the best ways to reduce poverty? Economics blends together theory, data and statistical techniques to help understand economic problems and to make policy recommendations which will hopefully improve society's welfare and living standards.

Economics has been an important part of Trinity's curriculum since 1832. The department is committed to delivering the highest standards of teaching and has a strong research record, with a particular emphasis on applied economics.

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## Sociology

Sociology is foremost among the social sciences in studying social change and the consequences of human behaviour. With core themes such as migration, race and gender, conflict studies, digitalisation, identities and employment studies, sociology students gain a critical global perspective on a variety of social issues.

There has been a strong tradition of sociological education at Trinity since the 1960s. The department is committed to advancing the understanding of society and to igniting the passion of our students through exceptional teaching and research.

# Degree Options in PPES

PPES is an extremely flexible degree which allows gradual specialisation over the course of the four-year programme. Students have a great deal of choice and flexibility in shaping their degree pathway and can opt to graduate with a Single Honor, Joint Honor, or Major with Minor Award, in any combination of the four disciplines, Economics, Philosophy, Political Science and Sociology.

## Joint Honor & Major with Minor

- Philosophy and economics
- Philosophy and political science
- Philosophy and sociology
- Political science and economics
- Political science and sociology
- Economics and sociology

## Single Honor

- Philosophy
- Political science
- Economics
- Sociology

## Study abroad

In third year, students have the opportunity to apply to study abroad in a prestigious European university with the EU-funded Erasmus programme. In addition to Erasmus programmes in Europe, the Departments also have bilateral links with leading universities across the world. Our exchange programmes are highly successful, and are an extremely popular option for PPES students each year. Participating students find that they are hugely enjoyable, academically and culturally rewarding, and appeal to prospective employers.

Further information on the year abroad programme, and a list of partner universities, can be found at: [www.tcd.ie/ssp/undergraduate/ppes/current/study-abroad/](http://www.tcd.ie/ssp/undergraduate/ppes/current/study-abroad/)

## The PPES Disciplines

The concept behind the PPES programme is that in order to understand social and human phenomena we must approach them from several complementary disciplinary directions and analytical frameworks. For example political decisions often concern economic matters, and government decisions are often influenced by economic events.

## CAPSTONE PROJECT

In your final year of study, you will undertake a Capstone project – an independent research project which comprises an in-depth investigation of a specific area of scholarship. The Capstone project is a catalyst to enable you to reflect on your learning from the programme as a whole and to demonstrate your ability to think independently, communicate effectively, develop continuously and act responsibly as you transition to the world of work or to postgraduate studies.

### First Year

In first year you will take all four subjects: economics, philosophy, political science and sociology.

### Second Year

In second year you can choose to continue with one, two or three of the subjects and could, for example, take modules ranging from Intermediate Economics, to the History of Philosophy to International Politics, to an Introduction to Social Theory.

### Third and Fourth Years

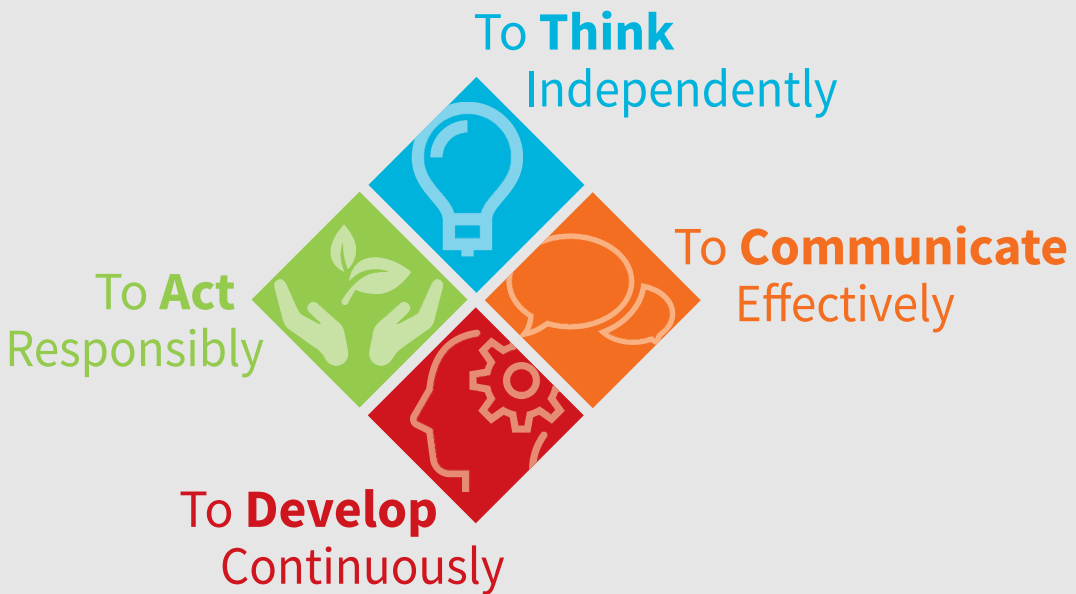
In third year you can take two of the four subjects, or one of the four subjects and modules from a range of approved modules and Trinity Electives. In the fourth year you may choose to take one or two subjects and can exit with a Single Honor, Major with Minor or Joint Honor award.

All students will complete a CAPSTONE project in their final year. Module Descriptors for all four years of the programme can be found on the PPES website: <https://www.tcd.ie/ssp/undergraduate/ppes/current/>



# Trinity Graduate Attributes

Students come to Trinity not only to acquire a certain set of facts or competences but because they have an understanding of the sort of person they want to become. Building on the strong value placed on a solid multidisciplinary formation, we wanted to address the answer to the question ‘what kind of person can I be?’ We distilled this sense of transformation into four Trinity graduate attributes listed below.



Defining the Trinity Education, these attributes encompass the qualities, skills and abilities that our students have the opportunity to develop throughout their entire university experience - both in and outside the classroom in activities such as internships or volunteering. They will benefit our students not just in their careers, but in their future lives as individuals and members of society.

“ As an individual fascinated by current affairs, I was keen to pursue a course of study that would enable me to better understand how society functions and operates. The opportunity to study a course which offered four different disciplinary perspectives therefore appealed to me. The early years gave me time to gain a broad overview of the social sciences before choosing my specialisations in later years.”

**Patrick Lavelle**  
PPES GRADUATE

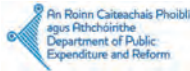
“ When researching courses during my final year of secondary school, it was the PPES degree which struck a chord with me. The small class size, range of subjects and the fact that it was the only course of its kind in the Republic of Ireland, made PPES stand out. Studying PPES has been an absolute joy, equipping me with the desired broad skillset essential in the pursuit of both career aspirations and further study.”

**Hannah Treanor**  
PPES GRADUATE

## Career and Postgraduate Opportunities

From a career perspective Trinity graduates are extremely well regarded worldwide. Many PPES graduates have gone on to postgraduate study both at Trinity College Dublin and at other leading universities around the world such as University College London, the University of Edinburgh and the College of Europe.

PPES students develop exceptional problem solving and critical thinking skills which are highly sought after by employers. PPES students also develop insights and expertise across a range of disciplines, which enable them to pursue careers in fields as varied as management, research, teaching, journalism, international affairs, public policy and public service. The following are just a few examples of the diverse organisations across the globe where PPES graduates work:



The Institute of International and European Affairs



## How to Apply

If you are interested in applying for the PPES programme please visit: [www.tcd.ie/study](http://www.tcd.ie/study)

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