

POU22040 — Introduction to Political Science Research

Module Information	
Module Code	POU22040
Module Title	Introduction to Political Science Research
Department	Political Science
Year Group	Senior Fresh
Module Personnel	Dr Lisa Keenan
Academic Year	2026–27
Credit Weighting	10 credits
Semester	Both
Contact Hours	Two lectures per week, fortnightly tutorial

Module Content	
Module Description	Note: this module is a prerequisite for the Political Science Capstone in Senior Sophister. Since 2024-25, no student will be permitted to do a Capstone in Political Science unless they have completed POU22040 Introduction to Political Science Research. This module is an introduction to evaluating and carrying out research as a political scientist. It provides an introduction to the principles of good research design, a review of the suite of available methods of data collection and analysis, and a practical guide to carrying out an original research project.
Module Learning Aims	This project aims to build students' understanding of core research skills, introduce them to the fundamental principles of research design in Political Science, and provide an introduction to the analysis of different kinds of data. This module is a prerequisite for the Capstone in Political Science, providing the foundations for the prerequisites that students will need to fulfil in Junior Sophister. Students wishing to complete a Capstone in Political Science in their Sophister should consult their programme handbook and/or the module outlines on the Department website prior to making their module selection for 2026-27.

Module Content

Learning Outcomes	On successful completion of this module students will be able to: • Critically read and evaluate journal articles; • Conduct a literature review; • Identify a gap in an existing body of literature; • Evaluate different research methods; • Propose a research question and develop an appropriate strategy to answer it; • Identify sources of data that could be used to answer a research question; • Create a plan for how to manage a research project; • Understand the obligations of a social science researcher; • Collect and choose a strategy for data analysis.
Indicative Reading / Resources	There are two textbooks for this module. • Bryman, A. (2012). Social Research Methods. Oxford: Oxford University Press. • Mannheim, J. B., Rich, R. C., Willnat, L., & Brians, C. L. (2012). Empirical political analysis. Edinburgh: Pearson Education UK.

Assessment

Assessment Components	Assessment Details • Continuous assessment [40%] • End-of-year exam - anonymous, 3-hours in duration [60%]
Assessment Details	In the event that a student must sit the supplemental exam (as a first attempt or as a repeat), this will take place during the assessment session in August (see the Academic Year Structure 2026/27). The supplemental exam is the same format as the end-of-semester exam. It is not possible to request an alternative exam format (i.e., a move to online). It is the responsibility of students to ensure that they are present in person at scheduled examination sessions.