



MSc Public Policy

SUMMER READING RECOMMENDATIONS FROM TEACHING STAFF 2026

Staff member nominating the book	Title	Author(s)	Comments
Existing source	Policy Paradox: The Art of Political Decision Making	Deborah Stone	The most accessible and perceptive introduction to public policy available. Highly recommended as your first port of call. See also Paul Cairney's blogpost on why it's so good.
Existing source	The Oxford Handbook of Public Policy	Moran, Rein & Goodin (eds.)	A standard reference covering most problems, issues, and approaches in the field. Use it as a resource to dip into by topic rather than reading cover to cover.
Markus Ketola	Past, Present and Future (podcast)	David Runciman	An intelligent and reflective discussion of both historical current policy affairs, invaluable for understanding today's politics through the lens of history. Available on all major podcast platforms. Its predecessor podcast, " Talking Politics ", is also excellent and well worth exploring for its in-depth coverage of wide-ranging political themes.
Markus Ketola	Ministry for the Future	Kim Stanley Robinson	A novel rather than an academic text, but unusually policy-rich: it imagines the institutional and political responses to accelerating climate change. Provocative, creative, and a great way to think about policy futures before the semester begins.
Markus Ketola	Understanding Public Policy: Theories and Issues	Paul Cairney	An excellent companion to Stone, this textbook offers a clear and systematic introduction to the major theories and frameworks used in public policy analysis. Very well suited to students arriving without a policy background. Paul Cairney's website also offers a sneak peak at the upcoming 3 rd edition.
Markus Ketola	What Money Can't Buy: The Moral Limits of Markets	Michael Sandel	A highly readable and thought-provoking examination of where market logic does and doesn't belong in public life. Raises core questions of values and priorities that lie at the heart of policy-making.



Markus Ketola	The Entrepreneurial State: Debunking Public vs. Private Sector Myths	Mariana Mazzucato	A widely debated and influential account of the role of the state in driving innovation and economic growth. Challenges conventional assumptions about public vs. private sector roles and raises important questions about how governments create and shape markets. Excellent for grounding debates on industrial policy, health, and technology.
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