

Social Policy
at Edinburgh

Study **Social Policy** at a world-leading university.



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH
School of Social and
Political Science

Welcome to the School of Social and Political Science

The School of Social and Political Science is one of the leading schools of social science in the UK and we pride ourselves on our innovative teaching, lively community of staff and students, and pursuit of academic excellence.

Our research is world class and it informs and shapes our teaching. As one of our students, you will enjoy a challenging, rich and rewarding learning environment, as well as the opportunity to engage in the most current debates from the start of your studies.

The School of Social and Political Science brings together specialists in a wide range of disciplines and is also home to many research centres and groups.

Our school is a vibrant and intellectually stimulating place to study, which will provide you with an education enriched with insights from across the social and political sciences and beyond.

Why Edinburgh?

World-class reputation

The University of Edinburgh is one of the world's leading universities. We are consistently ranked amongst the 50 best universities in the world, which allows us to attract some of the brightest academics and students. This means that you will learn from and amongst the best and you'll experience the very best in teaching and research.

Invest in your future

Choose to study at Edinburgh and you'll be investing in an education that will help you build a successful future. We support students to develop a broad range of skills, grow in confidence and learn more about themselves.

As a result, employers regard Edinburgh as an excellent training ground for high-flyers and value our graduates for their intellectual ability and the attributes they're able to develop while studying with us.

Make the right connections

Our close relationships with the Scottish Government and other policy-making institutions will give you the opportunity to be immersed in a wide variety of contemporary policy developments.

Flexibility and choice

The study of Social Policy at Edinburgh allows for multi-disciplinary learning and is offered in a wide variety of flexible degree options to reflect your interests. If you choose to study with us you will also benefit from our innovative approach to teaching, with new courses and degree options being constantly developed to address changes in the Social Policy landscape.

A supportive environment

Student support is embedded within the School and you will have a named contact to guide you through university life. There are also a number of student peer-learning opportunities in place to ensure you always feel supported.

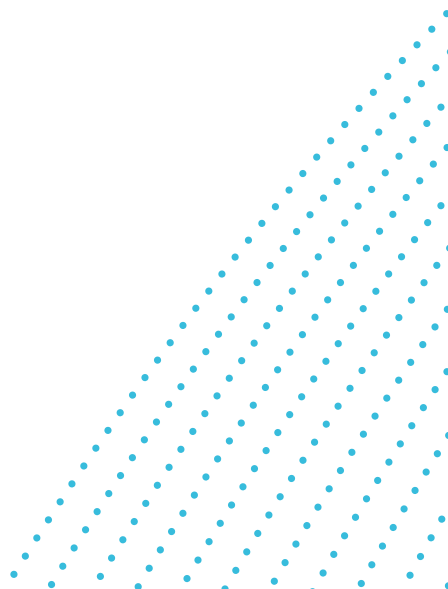
What is Social Policy and who is it for?

Social Policy is concerned with the ways in which public policies, market forces and social institutions affect wellbeing in contemporary societies. Social policies can be seen as efforts by societies to respond to the pressures of social, economic and technological change.

Social Policy appeals to students who are interested in current political and social issues – such as how to organise and pay for healthcare, reduce inequalities, or accommodate a more diverse and individualised society. At Edinburgh, these issues are explored in a Scottish, UK-wide, European and international context.

Students can study the specialised single honours degree Government, Policy and Society or study Social Policy combined with the following subjects as part of a joint honours degree:

Economics, French, German, Law, Politics, Quantitative Methods, Russian Studies, Scandinavian Studies, Social Anthropology and Sociology





What you'll typically study

Your undergraduate degree in Social Policy will cover a comprehensive range of subjects, giving you a broad introduction to the subject and the flexibility to study topics within and outside it.

Our **Government, Policy and Society** programme is for people who want to understand the workings of government, the process of policy making and the impact on society. It answers questions such as: How are government policies made? How are they implemented? What influences decision makers?

MA (Hons) Government, Policy and Society

YEAR 1

- Social Policy and Society
- Politics of the Welfare State
- Understanding Public Policy
- 3 semester-long courses in outside subjects of your choice

YEAR 2

- Evidence, Economy, and Social Policy
- Comparative Social Policy: Global Perspectives
- Research Skills for Social Policy
- 3 further semester-long courses in outside subjects of your choice

YEAR 3

- Qualitative Research: Principles and Practicalities for Social Policy
- Analysing and communicating Social Policy
- Doing Survey Research
- Three further semester-long courses from a list of policy specialisation and process orientated courses

YEAR 4

- Dissertation
- 4 semester-long courses from a list of policy specialisation and process orientated courses

Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this booklet at the time of going to press. However, it will not form part of a contract between the University and a student or applicant and must be read in conjunction with the individual degree specifications, which can be found at www.drps.ed.ac.uk

MA (Hons) Government, Policy and Society with Quantitative Methods

This programme is ideal for those who want to add a data analysis dimension to their Social Policy knowledge.

YEAR 1

- Social Policy and Society
- Mathematics for Social Science
- Politics of the Welfare State
- Understanding Public Policy
- Introduction to Statistics for Social Science
- One further semester-long course in outside subjects of your choice

YEAR 2

- Evidence, Economy, and Social Policy
- Doing Social Research with Statistics
- Comparative Social Policy: Global Perspectives
- Research Skills for Social Policy
- Two semester-long courses in outside subjects of your choice

YEAR 3

- Analysing and communicating Social Policy
- Qualitative Research: Principles and Practicalities for Social Policy
- Statistical Modelling
- One semester-long course from a list of Quantitative Methods courses
- Two semester-long courses from a list of Social Policy courses

YEAR 4

- Dissertation: Social Policy
- One or two further semester-long courses from the Quantitative Methods honours options
- Two or three further semester-long course from the Social Policy honours options

MA (Hons) Social Policy and Economics

YEAR 1

- Social Policy and Society
- Politics of the Welfare State
- Economics 1
- Two semester-long courses in outside subjects of your choice

YEAR 2

- Comparative Social Policy: Global Perspectives
- Evidence, Economy, and Social Policy
- Research Skills for Social Policy
- Economics 2
- Statistical Methods for Economics
- One semester-long course in an outside subject of your choice

YEAR 3

- Analysing and Communicating Social Policy
- Topics in Macroeconomics OR Applications of Econometrics
- Topics in Macroeconomics
- Essentials of Econometrics
- Your choice of 1 of the following semester-long courses:
 - Qualitative Research: Principles and Practicalities for Social Policy
 - Doing Survey Research
- One semester-long course from a list of Social Policy courses

YEAR 4

- Dissertation: Social Policy or Economics
- Two semester-long courses from a list of Economics courses
- Two semester-long courses from a list of Social Policy courses

MA (Hons) Social Policy and Law

YEAR 1

- Social Policy and Society
- Politics of the Welfare State
- Scottish Legal System
- Public Law of the UK and Scotland
- Two further semester-long courses in outside subjects of your choice

YEAR 2

- Comparative Social Policy: Global Perspectives
- Evidence, Economy, and Social Policy
- Public Law and Individual Rights
- Research Skills for Social Policy
- Two-three courses from a list of Law courses
- One further semester-long course in an outside subject of your choice

YEAR 3

- Analytical Perspectives in Social Policy
- Your choice of either:
 - Qualitative Research: Principles and Practicalities for Social Policy
 - Doing Survey Research
- Four semester-long course from a list of Social Policy and Law courses

YEAR 4

- Dissertation: Social Policy
- Four semester-long courses from a list of Social Policy and Politics courses

MA (Hons) Social Policy and Politics

YEAR 1

- Social Policy and Society
- Politics of the Welfare State
- Politics and International Relations 1A
- Politics and International Relations 1B
- Political Thinkers
- One semester-long course in an outside subject of your choice

YEAR 2

- Comparative Social Policy: Global Perspectives
- Evidence, Economy, and Social Policy
- Research Skills for Social Policy
- Comparative Politics in a Globalized World
- Three semester-long courses in outside subjects of your choice

YEAR 3

- Analysing and communicating Social Policy
- Three semester-long courses from a list of Social Policy and Politics courses

YEAR 4

- Dissertation: Social Policy or Politics
- Two semester-long courses from a list of Social Policy courses
- Two semester-long courses from a list of Politics courses

MA (Hons) Social Policy and Sociology

YEAR 1

- Social Policy and Society
- Politics of the Welfare State
- Sociology 1A: The Sociological Imagination
- Sociology 1B: Individuals and Society
- Two further semester-long courses in outside subjects of your choice

YEAR 2

- Comparative Social Policy: Global Perspectives
- Evidence, Economy, and Social Policy
- Research Skills for Social Policy
- Sociology 2A: Thinking Sociologically
- Sociology 2B: Researching Social Life
- Two further semester-long courses in outside subjects of your choice

YEAR 3

- Analysing and Communicating Social Policy
- Social Theory
- Qualitative Research: Principles and Practicalities for Social Policy
- Doing Survey Research
- Two semester-long courses from a list of Social Policy and Sociology courses

YEAR 4

- Dissertation: Social Policy or Sociology
- Two semester-long courses from a list of Social Policy courses
- Two semester-long courses from a list of Sociology courses

MA (Hons) Social Policy with Quantitative Methods

This programme is ideal for those who want to add a data analysis dimension to their Social Policy knowledge.

YEAR 1

- Social Policy and Society
- Politics of the Welfare State
- Mathematics for Social Science
- Introduction to Statistics for Social Science
- Two semester-long courses in outside subjects of your choice

YEAR 2

- Comparative Social Policy: Global Perspectives
- Evidence, Economy, and Social Policy
- Research Skills for Social Policy
- Doing Social Research with Statistics
- Two semester-long courses in outside subjects of your choice

YEAR 3

- Analysing and Communicating Social Policy
- Qualitative Research: Principles and Practicalities for Social Policy
- Statistical Modelling
- Three semester-long courses from a list of Social Policy courses

YEAR 4

- Dissertation: Social Policy
- Four semester-long courses from a list of Social Policy and Quantitative Methods courses

Summary of Social Policy courses

Social Policy and Society considers how welfare issues are constructed and debated in society, and focuses on the role of the family, looking in particular at family breakdown, domestic violence, delinquency, child abuse, children's rights, and the balance between work and domestic responsibilities.

Politics of the Welfare State explores the politics and institutions of the welfare state. It looks systematically at roles played by politicians, officials, professionals and the public in the making and implementation of policy, at changing ideologies and their implications for the welfare state, and at the future of the welfare state. This course looks particularly closely at changing agendas in health, and in social security and employment policies.

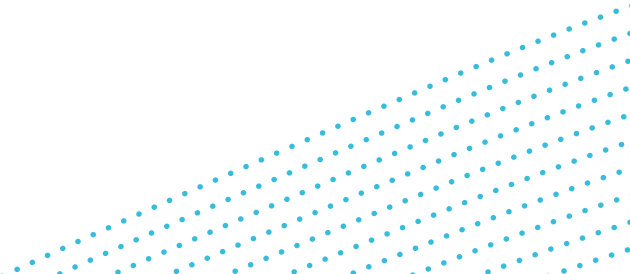
Comparative Social Policy: Global Perspectives compares different approaches to social policy in both European and non-European countries.

Evidence, Economy, and Social Policy provides students with the analytical skills to engage critically with the economic dimension of social policy and its intersection with contemporary debates on the welfare state.

In **Understanding Public Policy**, students are equipped with the skills needed to analyse specific policies created by governments with regards to their goals, structures and effectiveness. In the course students will engage with external practitioners to understand the practical implications of their academic knowledge to the world of real policy-making.

Qualitative Research: Principles and Practicalities for Social Policy will equip students with the qualitative research skills necessary to appreciate, critically assess and undertake qualitative research relevant to social policy.

In **Doing Survey Research** students are equipped to work with large-scale quantitative datasets to analyse information from surveys of any unit, ranging from people to countries and firms. Using real-life data, students learn skills useful for many career paths.



Additional year three and four courses in Social Policy

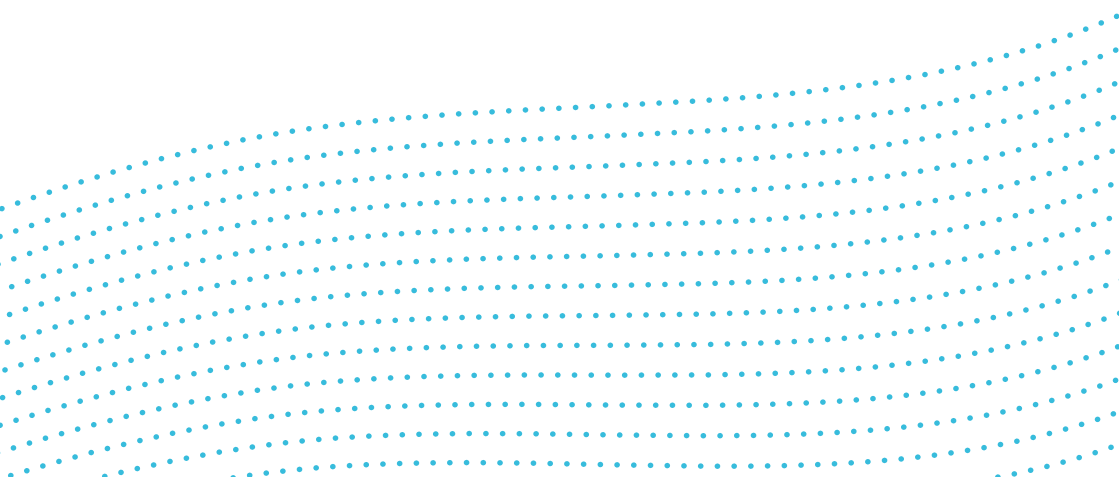
Our year three and four courses vary from year to year but are likely to include, for example, the following options:

- Children's Rights
- Advocacy, Lobbying and the Politics of Planetary Health
- Party Politics and Welfare States in Democratic Capitalism
- Race, Power, and Social Policy
- Global Politics of Public Health
- Population Health and Health Policy
- Labour Market Policy in Europe
- Social Inequality and the Life Course

Additional honours options in Social Anthropology

Our honours options vary from year to year. Here are some examples of what you could study:

- Anthropology of Health and Healing
- Happiness: Cross-Cultural Perspectives
- The Anthropology of Death
- Contagion
- Latin American Anthropology
- The Anthropology of Africa
- Anthropology and Environment
- Anthropology of Violence
- Anthropology of Sex and Reproduction
- Magic, Science and Healing
- Visual Anthropology
- Anthropology of Games and Play
- Demystifying Money



Teaching

We use a variety of teaching methods including lectures, tutorials, workshops, seminars and online activities.

Most of the teaching in years one and two will take the form of lectures and tutorial groups. Year three and four courses are often taught as seminars and individual supervision is provided for students writing a dissertation. Tutorial groups contain 10-12 students, whilst most year three and four courses contain 15-30 students. Year one and two courses are assessed through a combination of coursework and written examinations, taken in December and April/May. Assessment at year three and four comprises a mixture of coursework essays, written examinations and a dissertation or project report.

It is expected that students will engage in independent study and learning throughout their degree, based on the guidance provided by course reading lists.

Study Abroad

We offer students an extensive range of opportunities to study abroad as part of their degree. Our exchange partners include a wide range of institutions across the world, including universities in the US, Canada and China.

International study allows you to immerse yourself in different cultures. You will have the opportunity to try new things, take on new challenges and to make the most of your time at University.

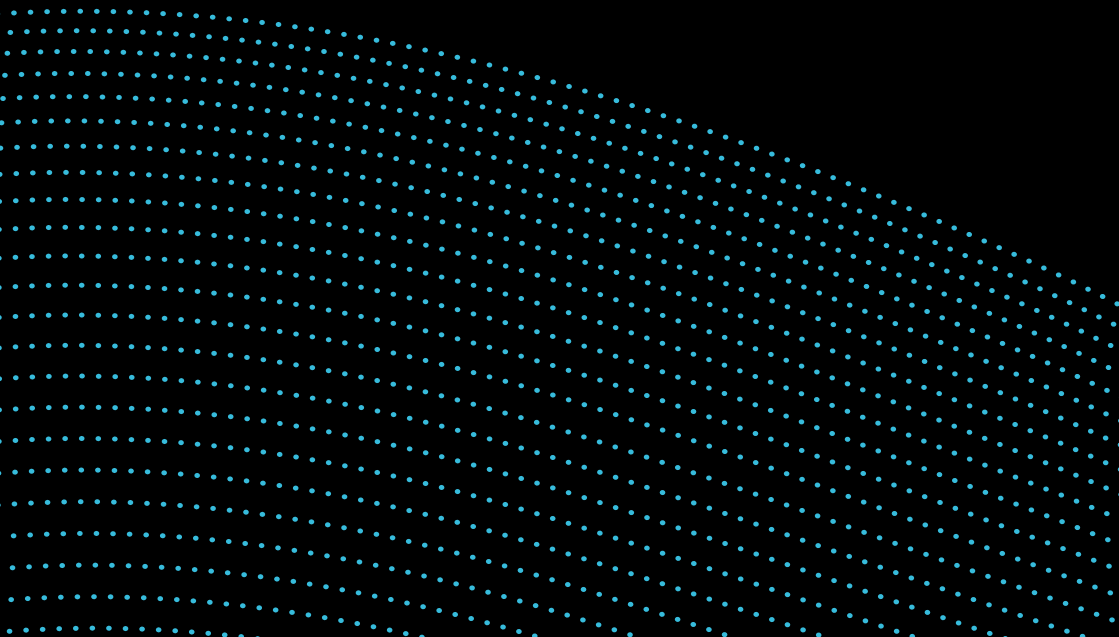
Studying abroad provides you with a different perspective on your degree subject as well as, perhaps, the opportunity to learn a new language.

Careers

A degree in the social sciences provides the knowledge, analytical and communication skills that employers require. Our Careers Service will help you plan for the future and provide advice and guidance with the job application process.

Six months after graduating over 95% of our students are in employment or postgraduate study.

In recent years, our graduates have gone primarily into areas such as the public service (civil service, foreign service), political and parliamentary research, finance and consultancy, the voluntary sector, journalism or teaching. Several have gone on to further training in professions such as accountancy and law, or have taken postgraduate degrees to pursue an academic career.



Getting ready for Edinburgh

If you'd like to get ahead with some background reading, we recommend the following books.

Dorling, D. (2015), *Injustice: Why Social Inequality Still Persists*, Bristol: Policy Press

Garland, D. (2016), *The Welfare State: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford: OUP

Hills, J. (2014), *Good Times, Bad Times: The Welfare: Myth of Them and Us*, Bristol: Policy Press

Wilkinson, R. and Pickett, K. (2010), *The Spirit Level: Why Equality is Better for Everyone*, London: Penguin Books

Zakaria, F. (2015), *In Defense of a Liberal Education*, London: Norton.

You'll also find lots of information and links to online publications at sites such as:

www.spicker.uk/social-policy

www.discoversociety.org

www.historyandpolicy.org

www.crin.org



Undergraduate degrees in **Social Policy**

- Government, Policy and Society (MA Hons)
- Government, Policy and Society with Quantitative Methods (MA Hons)
- Social Policy and Economics (MA Hons)
- Social Policy and Law (MA Hons)
- Social Policy and Politics (MA Hons)
- Social Policy and Sociology (MA Hons)
- Social Policy with Quantitative Methods (MA Hons)

For further information on entry requirements visit: [edin.ac/entry](https://www.ed.ac.uk/entry)

Read more about our programmes at: [edin.ac/ourdegrees](https://www.ed.ac.uk/ourdegrees)

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