Politics, Philosophy and Economics - Undergraduate Live Chat - PPE: Chat with our Current Students

Students from our Politics, Philosophy and Economics Department will be online to answer your questions on studying PPE at Warwick

Hello and welcome to the PPE Live Chat. We’ll be hosting a Q&A session for today’s chat. Please feel free to ask your questions, and we’ll try and answer these for you. Chatting with you today are 4 current PPE students, Ciara, Sophie, Laura and Mo and PPE Programmes Officer, Chloe Stamper.

Please remember that this is a public chat, so please do not share personal or confidential information. If you have anything that is confidential that you wish to ask, please contact us by email at PPEoffice@warwick.ac.uk

Hi guys!

Hello, my name is Emir, I would like to ask if you believe a combination of Physics, Math and Economics is a suitable combination of A-levels for this course, and if not, what would be the ideal combination?

Hi Emir, I did Physics and Maths at A-level, along with History. As long as there is a suitable amount of essay content in Economics it will be fine.

I plan to do an IPQ related to both politics and economics in Europe beyond the already very essay based Economics “A” A-Level to further boost my profile.

That sounds great! Good luck! Do you have any questions about the course?

Hi! I am a final year PPE student at Warwick. I went on a year abroad to France, so please ask any questions about a year abroad! Or Warwick life in general.

Hey Mo, what’s been your favourite thing about Warwick?

Hey Ciara, I’ve really enjoyed the flexibility of the course because it allowed me really pursue my interests when choosing my modules. I always say that the best thing about PPE is that no two people do the exact same PPE degree because we all choose our modules based on our personal interests. I like that PPE at Warwick allows us to do that.

Hey Mo, what’s been your favourite thing about Warwick?

I love that too! In my first year, I did an optional module of French. It gave me my own stamp on the PPE degree, and I met other students from across the university. Plus, now I can speak French!
Towards your final year of the course can you do a combination of modules that focuses on mainly just two of the disciplines of PPE, like Politics and Economics?

Yes, that’s exactly what I do. In your first year, you have core modules in all three disciplines. In second year, you choose your pathway. You may wish to do 2 of the disciplines, or all 3. And you can even choose to do a BSc Economic Major, if you take Econometrics/Applied Econometrics.

Nice!

Towards your final year of the course can you do a combination of modules that focuses on mainly just two of the disciplines of PPE, like Politics and Economics?

I’m in my final year and doing 50% econ and 50% philosophy, with no politics. You could swap out philosophy for politics and choose any combination you want.

Any major tips for the personal statement?

When I wrote my personal statement, I aimed to express my interest in all three subjects that make up the PPE degree. You don’t have to do that, but it’s important to show interest for at least two subjects. Back it up with any relevant readings that you did in that area - but that shouldn’t simply be a list, try to emphasise what you learned from these and how they shaped your perspective, or provide a brief critique. You can also talk about your academic achievements, or any extracurricular activities that could be relevant. Hope that helped and good luck!

Would mentioning GCSE performance help?

Hi everyone! About how many hours of contact time do you have a week?

Hi Tom! It really depends. You have a lecture, and a seminar, for each module. Some lectures are once a week, others a twice. A seminar is always one hour. So you can expect about 12 hours. You’ll also spend time studying independently every week, coming up with ideas to bring to your seminars.

But, maybe you don’t know what a seminar is! Shall I elaborate?

Yes please - what’s the difference between lectures and seminars?
Would mentioning GCSE performance help?

Hi Emir, GCSE form part of the application process, so there will be a section for you to mention your GCSE performance. There are more general tips for making an application to Warwick available online; https://warwick.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/apply/tips/

Hope this information helps?

Tips for making an application

There isn’t a right or a wrong way to write your application, but there are a number of things that you should consider to make your application stand out from the crowd. Knowing what the assessors look for is the key to catching their eye.

Thanks

You’re welcome!

Yes please - what’s the difference between lectures and seminars?

A lecture is delivered to the whole module cohort, there will be no student contributions (unless you have any burning questions throughout!). You will have a small group seminar, that will be an opportunity to reflect on the lecture and the readings in a group. Seminars are interactive, fun, and a great way to engage with the module content.

Oh okay, so how many students would be in them?

It depends on the module! In first year, your core modules may include students from our other degree programs (such as Economics). One of my lectures in first year had hundreds of students! For smaller modules, you can expect much less than 100 people.

I should also add how many students are in seminar groups!

15 is the average number!

Is the seminar with the professor who lectured?

It depends, there tends to be more than one seminar tutors so you could sign up for on with the lecturer or one with another tutor

Okay, thanks. So how much time do you think you spend on working by yourself?
It depends on what your core skills are, and how comfortable you feel with the content. Generally speaking, you will have modules that weigh 15 CATS (credit points) that run during a single term and modules that weigh 30 CATS and run over the entire year. The general expectation in the UK is that 1 CAT measures 10 hours of learning effort (including lectures and seminars). So for a year-long module, you are expected to work 300 hours in total. Of course, this is different for every student, as we all have our own studying pattern, but that’s just a rough guide.

How many modules would we take in the first year considering our initial commitment to all 3 areas of the course?

Hi, so in first year you have 120 CATS to use. There are three core modules: Intro to politics (30 CATS), Intro to philosophy (30 CATS) and Economics 1 (30 CATS). That leaves a spare 30 credits to take optional modules. You can either do a year long one for the full 30, or two 15 credit modules (one in each term). I took French as my optional module, but it can come from any course in the university, it’s not restricted to PPE.

How many modules would we take in the first year considering our initial commitment to all 3 areas of the course?

Sorry, I forgot! We also do Quantitative techniques which is 30 CATS, so there are 150 CATS overall! You can do Maths and Stats at different levels within that, depending on your abilities.

Could I potentially do a module related to engineering?

Not all modules are open to outside courses as you’d have to meet other requirements to take them. People predominantly take an optional module from the languages or social sciences departments, e.g. history, english. In special circumstances you can speak to the director of the programme to apply to do a module, but this is not always guaranteed.

How is the Maths? I’m a bit worried as I haven’t taken it for A Level.

So I didn’t take Maths A-levels and I was fine, especially because you have the choice of Maths A and Maths B or Stats A and Stats B, the A modules are less intense than the B’s so I did Maths and Stats A. Also, there are Maths and Stats drop in sessions that you can sign up for if you ever needed extra support. There are also numerical skills sessions offered by the careers and skills dept. There’s also the opportunity to go to your tutor if you ever need any extra support.
Just to let you know the chat is due to end in 10 minutes, so please let us know if you have any questions. If we are unable to answer your question, please contact us by email at PPEoffice@warwick.ac.uk.

| How is the Maths? I'm a bit worried as I haven't taken it for A Level |
Can I just add that for all modules, lecturers and tutors have advice and feedback hours every week and you are encouraged to go ask questions if you have any!

Thanks, that sounds good!

So are there lots of tests?

I have to choose between Economics and PPE, however I am unsure as to which one I should go for! If you had a similar dilemma when making your decision, could you help me by revealing what made you go for this course over another related one?

So are there lots of tests?

For Maths and Stats (regardless of the level), you have 2 tests - one halfway through the module and one in the last two weeks. For the Philosophy, Politics and Economics modules, you have a few essays throughout the year. Some are formative, so they don’t count towards your grade, but most of them weigh up to 15% of your mark for the module. There are also modules that are 100% coursework, most of them available for second- and third-year. And finally, in the Summer Term, you have most of your exams.

I have to choose between Economics and PPE, however I am unsure as to which one I should go for! If you had a similar dilemma when making your decision, could you help me by revealing what made you go for this course over another related one?

So I was originally torn between just doing just Politics and PPE. I'm now doing 50% Econ and 50% Philosophy and no politics. That's the beauty of this degree, you get to refine your interests and find out what you really enjoy. If you're really interested in Economics then you can major in Econ and get BSc Econ Major PPE degree. However, if you want to explore it further and get an in depth understanding PPE is better and more rounded.

Thank you for joining us and asking your questions. We really enjoyed chatting with you! If you have any questions following this chat, please contact us at PPEoffice@warwick.ac.uk.

Thanks!