

## COLLEGE LECTURER AND RESEARCHER IN POLITICS

### MERTON COLLEGE, UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD FURTHER PARTICULARS

|                             |  |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Job title                   | College Lecturer and Researcher in Politics  |
| College                     | Merton College   |
| Salary                      | £47,389-£56,535 p.a. with discretionary range to £61,759 p.a.  |
| Start date                  | 1 October 2026 or as soon as possible thereafter   |
| Hours                       | This is a full-time post   |
| Contract type               | Permanent, subject to probationary arrangements  |
| Application deadline        | 09.00am (UK time) Friday 30 January 2026   |
| Number of referees required | Two references   |
| Recruitment contacts        | <a href="mailto:vacancies@merton.ox.ac.uk">vacancies@merton.ox.ac.uk</a> or <a href="mailto:senior.tutor@merton.ox.ac.uk">senior.tutor@merton.ox.ac.uk</a> |

## 1. GENERAL

Applications are invited for a full-time, permanent College Lecturer and Researcher in Politics, tenable from 1 October 2026 or as soon as possible thereafter. The post-holder will be required to undertake an average of 12 weighted hours of undergraduate teaching per week in full term, engage in an independent high-quality programme of original research in Politics, and to share in organisational responsibilities for undergraduate degrees involving Politics, including taking on the role of the College's co-ordinator for Politics for the joint degrees of Philosophy, Politics & Economics (PPE) and History & Politics.

## 2. MERTON COLLEGE

There are thirty-nine self-governing and independent colleges within the University of Oxford, giving both academic staff and students the benefits of belonging to a small, interdisciplinary academic community as well as to a large, internationally-renowned University. The collegiate system fosters a strong sense of community, bringing together leading academics and undergraduate and postgraduate students across a wide range of subjects, and from different cultures and countries.

Merton College was founded in 1264 by Walter de Merton, and is one of the oldest colleges in Oxford. It was the first fully self-governing college in the University of Oxford and was originally founded for twenty fellows, with undergraduates being formally admitted in the early 1380s. Over the centuries, many eminent scholars and cultural leaders have called Merton home including three Nobel Prize winners and an Abel Prize winner. Merton College

has a strong commitment to excellence in research and teaching across a range of subjects in the Social Sciences, Humanities and the Sciences. Information about Merton College can be found at <http://www.merton.ox.ac.uk>.

The College community currently comprises around 620 students (320 undergraduates and 300 postgraduates), some 70 Fellows, 50 other academic staff and over 100 members of support staff. On average the College has around 12 early career fellows at any one time. A number of Merton Fellows and graduates take part in the College's interdisciplinary discussion groups, currently organised in three areas: the History of the Book, Biomedical and Life Sciences, and the Ockham Lectures. In addition, the College convenes a number of research talks throughout the year and fosters international collaboration through an active Visiting Researcher scheme including provision of accommodation for scholars.

The College strives to create a diverse, welcoming, inclusive and supportive community in which its members can thrive.

### **3. POLITICS AT MERTON**

The College normally admits 8 students per year for the undergraduate degree in Philosophy, Politics & Economics (PPE) and 1-3 students per year for the joint undergraduate degree in History & Politics. These degrees attract a healthy ratio of applicants to places and students' performance in university examinations is typically strong. The post therefore offers the opportunity to teach excellent undergraduates within the University of Oxford. Information about the degrees can be found at the following links:

- <https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/undergraduate/courses/course-listing/philosophy-politics-and-economics>
- <https://www.merton.ox.ac.uk/course/philosophy-politics-and-economics-ppe>
- <https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/undergraduate/courses/course-listing/history-and-politics>
- <https://www.merton.ox.ac.uk/course/history>

The appointee will join a teaching team that includes Professor Patricia Thornton (Fellow and Tutor in Politics), Dr Bassel Tarbush (Fellow and Tutor in Economics) and Professor Sam Fletcher (Fellow and Tutor in Philosophy). The College expects to appoint a second Fellow and Tutor in Philosophy from October 2026. The History teaching team at Merton includes Professor Steven Gunn (Fellow and Tutor in History), Dr Matthew Grimley (Fellow and Tutor in History) and Dr Jennifer Altehenger (Fellow and Tutor in History).

Merton has a sizeable graduate community which includes around 10 postgraduates in Politics and related subjects undertaking research and taught postgraduate degrees at any one time.

### **4. TUTORIAL RESPONSIBILITIES**

The main teaching and oversight responsibilities of the Lecturer and Researcher will be as follows:

- a. To share responsibility for the organisation of Politics teaching and the PPE degree for the College, including arranging specialist teaching by colleagues in other colleges.

- b. To deliver 12 weighted hours<sup>1</sup> of high-quality undergraduate tutorial teaching per week in Politics, averaged over the three eight-week terms of the academic year. Tutorials usually consist of an hour of academic discussion between a tutor and a small number of students (typically 2-3). The teaching requirements are set out below (see also Appendix 1 for overviews of these topics). Some teaching may be delivered to undergraduates of other colleges, if needed to fulfil teaching obligations or as part of swap arrangements with other colleges.
  - (i) The postholder will be expected to teach the Practice of Politics component of the first-year Introduction to Politics module; and
  - (ii) For second- and third-year (Final Honour School) students, the Lecturer will be expected to teach the core Political Sociology Paper and at least one other core paper from Comparative Government, British Politics & Government since 1900, Theory of Politics, International Relations.
- c. To set, mark and provide timely feedback on tutorial work and internal college exams (collections), and to monitor and report on student progress, through termly written reports and attendance at student progress meetings with the Warden (the Head of the College).
- d. To act as Director of Studies and to take responsibility for the pastoral support of undergraduates reading degrees with Politics, liaising with relevant Directors of Studies and welfare colleagues, as appropriate.
- e. To provide induction, study skills and examination preparation support for students studying undergraduate degrees with Politics in all years, as required.
- f. To participate in wider subject activities and student events, including the Admissions Dinners (for all first-year undergraduates and graduates), the Shrove Tuesday Dinner (a dinner for undergraduate finalists) and the Postmasters' Dinner (a dinner for undergraduate scholars and exhibitioners).
- g. To participate fully in the College's admissions procedures (undergraduate and postgraduate), including taking shared responsibility for the exercises to select PPE and History & Politics undergraduates (which may include acting as co-ordinator for the College's PPE selection processes).
- h. To participate in outreach activities including Open Days and the College's access schemes, which may fall outside of full term.
- i. To act as College Advisor for postgraduates studying degrees in Politics and related areas.
- j. To undertake academic administration (e.g. the planning and organisation of students' subject options; the endorsement of applications made by students for travel grants and other College assistance; the writing of references; the selection of books for the College Library etc).

<sup>1</sup> The weighting system means that hours spent teaching groups larger than one person count as more than one hour. Twelve weighted hours, if tutorial teaching is done with groups of two students, equates to 10 contact hours or for groups of three this equates to 8 contact hours.

- k. To participate in meetings of the College's Warden & Tutors' Committee and to contribute to the intellectual life and activities of the College as an academic and research community.

## **5. RESEARCH RESPONSIBILITIES**

The College Lecturer and Researcher is expected to engage in advanced Politics research and its dissemination. The successful candidate will be expected to:

- a. Independently plan and manage a high-quality programme of original research.
- b. Publicise the outcomes of that research through publications and presentation of papers.
- c. Establish and develop appropriate research collaborations with other academics in Oxford and elsewhere, including organising research activities for students in the social sciences.
- d. Submit an annual report on their research activities to the College's Fellowships & Appointments Committee.

The College Lecturer and Researcher may ask to undertake a limited amount of teaching beyond the College tutorial hours specified above, but they are under no obligation to do so. Permission to teach beyond the stated tutorial hours must be given by the Senior Tutor.

## **6. CRITERIA FOR APPOINTMENT**

Candidates should:

- a. Have completed a doctorate, or be close to completion of a doctorate in Politics in a topic relevant to the teaching range required of this postholder. The appointee must have submitted their thesis no later than 3 months before the advertised start date of the post (i.e. 1 October 2026).
- b. Have research expertise in their chosen field, commensurate with the candidate's career, as demonstrated by a recently completed (or close to being completed) doctoral thesis, published or forthcoming books or articles in refereed journals (as relevant to the candidate's field), or evidence of such future achievement (as relevant to the candidate's field).
- c. Have evidence of active participation in the successful dissemination of their research findings to fellow academics at national and international conferences or in professional research seminars.
- d. Have a well-planned and coherent plan of research, which is expected to make valuable contributions to the candidate's field.
- e. Be able to teach the papers specified in 4 (b) above.

- f. Demonstrate the ability to be an effective and inspiring teacher of Politics to undergraduates of high ability in a tutorial system, along with the personal qualities needed to foster a high level of achievement in both undergraduate and postgraduate students. This will be demonstrated by:
  - (i) Evidence of previous relevant undergraduate teaching experience including political sociology and at least one of the core papers listed in 4 (b) (ii) above;
  - (ii) Evidence of ability to teach undergraduate quantitative social sciences methods, substantiated through past teaching experience or through use of such methods in research.
  - (iii) Positive evaluations of teaching by colleagues and students; and evidence of the ability to plan cogent and stimulating teaching plans in response to Oxford courses.
- g. Demonstrate aptitude for the full range of academic administrative duties, besides teaching, upon which the effective operation of Politics as a Joint Schools subject within the College depends, including professionalism as a colleague and a proven track record of working with others.
- h. Be prepared to undertake required training, including relating to undergraduate admissions.

Applicants should make sure that their applications show very clearly how their skills and experience meet these criteria.

## **7. REMUNERATION AND CONDITIONS**

The annual stipend for the role will be on Grade 8 of the University of Oxford's salary scale, i.e. £47,389 - £56,535 per annum with discretionary points to £61,759 per annum. The postholder will be enrolled in the Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS), with a right to opt out.

In addition, the postholder will be entitled to the following:

- a. Free meals at the Common Table of the College, when the kitchens are open.
- b. Full membership of the Senior Common Room (for which a small monthly subscription is payable).
- c. A teaching room in College.
- d. Medical insurance for the postholder (the premium is assessable as a taxable benefit).
- e. A research allowance for qualifying expenses under the relevant College Bylaw (currently of up to £3,800 p.a.).
- f. A taxable entertainment allowance (currently £450 p.a.).
- g. One term of Sabbatical leave in every five-year period, once the postholder has served for at least 8 terms.

Successful applicants will be required to be in Oxford during term-time unless agreed otherwise by the Senior Tutor.

The appointment is subject to an initial probationary period of 5 years, with an interim review of performance held halfway through this period. The procedure is that the postholder will be asked to submit to the Senior Tutor a report on their activities since appointment under the three headings of teaching, research and publication, and administration. If appropriate, the College may seek input from other parties (e.g. relevant research experts).

## **8. RIGHT TO WORK IN THE UK**

The appointment will be conditional on satisfactory provision of proof of the right to work in the UK. Applicants who would need a work visa if appointed to the post will be supported through the visa application process by the College's Human Resources team and the University of Oxford Staff Immigration Team.

They are also asked to note that the visa application process will require them to submit no later than three months prior to the start date of this post, either a copy of their doctoral award certificate, or an academic reference confirming that their doctorate has been awarded, or an academic reference confirming that they have submitted their thesis, if they have not yet completed.

## **9. PROCEDURE FOR APPLICATION**

Those wishing to apply for this post should complete the online application form at [www.merton.ox.ac.uk/about-merton/vacancies](http://www.merton.ox.ac.uk/about-merton/vacancies) **AND** email the following as a **single PDF document** (in this exact order) to [vacancies@merton.ox.ac.uk](mailto:vacancies@merton.ox.ac.uk):

- A curriculum vitae incorporating a list of publications.
- A statement explaining how you meet the selection criteria above, including in relation to the teaching needs of the College specified above.
- A research statement of no more than 1,000 words.

The PDF should be named in the format '**Last Name First Name Politics Application**'. Please put your **last name and 'College Lecturer and Researcher in Politics'** in the subject of the email.

**The closing date for applications is 09.00am (UK time) on the closing date of Friday 30 January 2026.** Hard copy applications are not necessary. Late applications will not be accepted.

Shortlisted candidates will be asked to submit written work samples of no more than 15,000 words in advance of the interviews.

Interviews are expected to be held in the latter half of February 2026.

Any enquiries related to these Further Particulars should be directed in the first instance to the Senior Tutor at [senior.tutor@merton.ox.ac.uk](mailto:senior.tutor@merton.ox.ac.uk). The deadline for submission of queries is **9.00am on 23 January 2026**.

## References

When completing the application form, you will be asked to provide details of two referees. Applicants should ask their referees to write by the closing date to the HR Team at [vacancies@merton.ox.ac.uk](mailto:vacancies@merton.ox.ac.uk) **Applicants are responsible for requesting references from their referees and for ensuring that references arrive by 09.00am (UK time) on the closing date of Friday 30 January 2026;** they should therefore give referees enough time to write in their support. The College will not request references directly from the referees.

Applicants are also requested to inform their referees that, under the UK General Data Protection Regulation and the Data Protection Act 2018, the references they provide will be regarded as disclosable to the subject of the reference unless it is clear that the reference has been given in confidence. The College asks that a reference given in confidence should be marked "**strictly confidential**" on the letter of reference itself. Referees should also be asked to note that even where a reference is marked "strictly confidential" it could still be disclosed to the subject of the reference if that subject so requested and the College's Data Protection Officer deemed it appropriate.

Applicants are encouraged to complete the Equal Opportunities Recruitment Monitoring form at the end of the Application form. The information collected on the Equal Opportunities Recruitment Monitoring form does not form part of the selection process and will **not** be circulated to the selection panel. It will be used solely to monitor the effectiveness of the College's equality policy which is published at <http://www.merton.ox.ac.uk/college-policies>.

## 10. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

The policy and practice of Merton College require that all staff are afforded equal opportunities within employment. Entry into employment with the College and progression within employment will be determined only by personal merit and the application of criteria which are related to the duties of each particular post and the relevant salary structure. In all cases, ability to perform the job will be the primary consideration. Subject to statutory provisions, no applicant or member of staff will be treated less favourably than another because of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.

## 11. PRIVACY NOTICE

To view our Privacy notice please see here <https://www.merton.ox.ac.uk/privacy-notices-and-ropas>

**Brief Course Descriptions of the Politics Papers included  
in the Further Particulars**

**(i) Brief Course Description of the Practice of Politics Component of the First-year Introduction to the Theory and Practice of Politics paper**

**The Practice of Politics**

Questions will be set on the following topics: (i) regime types; definition and measurement of variations between types of democracy; (ii) political institutions and practice outside the advanced industrial democracies; stability, state capacity and state formation; (iii) the state and its institutions (executives, legislatures, parties and party systems, electoral systems, courts, constitutions and centre-periphery relations); (iv) parties and party systems; political values and identity politics.

**(ii) Brief Course Descriptions for Final Honour School Papers**

**Political Sociology**

The study of the social basis of political competition (including social cleavages and identities), social and political attitudes (including political culture), processes of political engagement and competition (including elections, protest politics, elite formation and the mass media), the social basis for the formation, change, and maintenance of political institutions (including democracy and welfare states).

**Comparative Government**

Candidates are required to show knowledge of theories and methods of comparison in empirical political analysis, including both quantitative and qualitative approaches, and their application to specific problems. The course will include the study of (i) regimes and states; (ii) institutions; and (iii) political actors. Candidates may select any combination of questions in the examination. Topics in the area of regimes and states will include: state-building; colonial legacies; structural and actor-based explanations of democratization processes; institutional and legitimacy-rooted variation across hybrid and autocratic regimes; the outcomes of different regimes. Topics in the area of institutions will include: constitutional design and constitutional practice under different regime styles; executives and legislatures; judiciaries; bureaucracies; structures, purposes and consequences of devolved power; and variations in and consequences of electoral systems. Topics in the area of political actors will include: the origin of parties; the explanation of party-system variation and the causes of party-system change; interest groups and social movements, and their interaction with parties and government; the nature of political activism. Where appropriate, candidates must demonstrate an understanding of causal inference and causal mechanisms, and of associated problems of selection, endogeneity, and interaction effects.

**British Politics and Government since 1900**

British politics (including the major domestic political crises, ideologies and political issues) and the evolution of the British political and constitutional system (including elections and the electoral system, political parties, parliament, the cabinet system, and machinery of government). 'Political issues' will be taken to include the political

implications of social and economic development and the domestic implications of foreign and imperial policy.

### **Theory of Politics**

The critical study of political values and of the concepts used in political analysis and methods and approaches in political theory. Topics may include: ideal theory and realism; power, authority, and related concepts; liberty; rights; justice; equality; democracy and representation; political obligation and civil disobedience; neutrality and perfectionism; libertarianism; multiculturalism; socialism; and conservatism.

International Relations

### **International Relations**

The topics covered in this paper will include classical and critical approaches to the study of international relations; international law; power; postcolonialism and Empire; globalisation, global governance and international co-operation; theories of war and peace, and the domestic determinants of foreign policy; international organisations and security; ethnic, national, and cultural sources of conflict. Candidates will be required to illustrate their answers with contemporary or historical material. They will be expected to know the major developments in international affairs from 1990 onwards, and to cite these wherever appropriate. They may also be given the opportunity to show knowledge of earlier developments; but questions referring specifically to events before 1990 will not be set.