



The
STRAND
Group

THE
POLICY
INSTITUTE

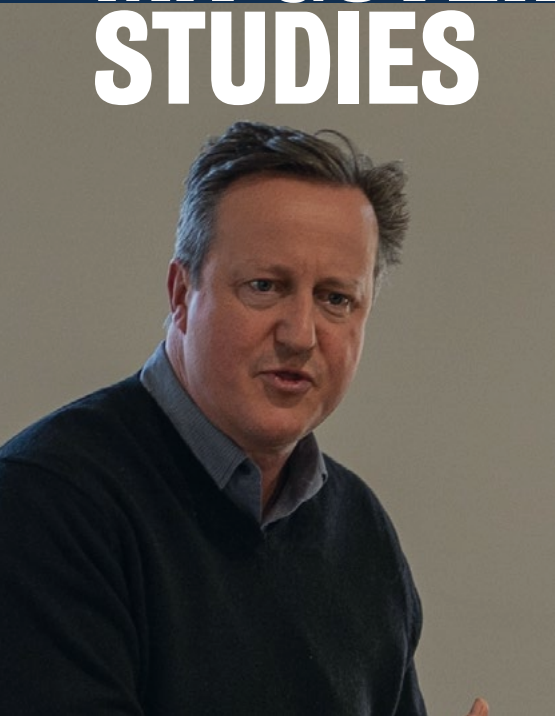
KING'S
College
LONDON



Course information



MA GOVERNMENT STUDIES



Secretary of State for Scotland The Rt Hon Douglas Alexander MP in conversation with Baroness MacLeod of Camusdarach at a Policy Institute event

Secretary of State for Scotland and former Visiting Professor at the Policy Institute

Former Senior Special Advisor to Alistair Darling and Visiting Professor at the Strand Group (chair)

Faculty of Social Science & Public Policy

MA overview



Strand Group students outside No.10 Downing Street after a class

Delivered in partnership with central government, our MA programme blends the theory and practice of working at the heart of British Government.

Taught by practitioners

The MA is delivered by an expert teaching team of **Dr Jack Brown**, **Dr Michelle Clement**, **Professor Jon Davis**, **Dr Can Gokcen** and **Dr Chetun Patel**, who teach alongside renowned practitioners such as former shadow Chancellor **Ed Balls**; *The Independent's* Chief Political Commentator **John Rentoul**; and former Cabinet Secretary **Lord Case**. Teaching practitioners are joined by stellar guests. Every year since 2017 we've brought a former Prime

Minister to engage with our students, offering unparalleled access to the minds behind pivotal decisions. **Sir Tony Blair**, **Lord Cameron**, **Baroness May of Maidenhead**, and **Gordon Brown** have all shared their insights. We've also welcomed a host of notable speakers, including **George Osborne**, **Alastair Campbell**, **Baroness Hunter of Auchenreoch**, **Baroness Jay of Paddington** and many more distinguished personalities.

Why is our programme unique?

Delivered in partnership with central government

Develop an understanding of the policy-making process from the viewpoint of those who work in government, including political, societal and economic challenges.

A bespoke programme

A true cohort approach with small group tutorials utilising a case study method. Learning from the past and understanding how decisions are made in practice, from the practitioners, is the hallmark of this course.

Take the full master's or standalone modules

MA Programme is designed for full time, part-time and as part of a stackable portfolio. You will study alongside officials working at the heart of government. Students will build their networks and enhance their career opportunities.

Former Prime Minister Sir John Major speaking at a Strand Group event in the Foreign Office's Locarno Suite



The STRAND

Examining the ins
of British Gover

Core module

Prime Ministers & No.10 Downing Street



THE
POLICY
INSTITUTE

*Solving societal
with evidence*

🐦 @policyatkings

Former Prime Minister Sir Tony Blair speaking to Strand Group students

Former Prime Minister Baroness May of Maidenhead at a Policy Institute event

These two modules, run in partnership with No.10 Downing Street, examine how British Prime Ministers governed in the years 1945 – to the present day.

These are the flagship modules of the Strand Group and were in our previous incarnation as the Mile End Group. The module started in 1992 as “Cabinet, Premiership and the Conduct of British Central Government since 1945”. It was created by Professor Peter (now the Lord) Hennessy to analyse the mechanics of government and utilise his extensive contacts to bring the foremost practitioners into the classroom. This module was the basis of the style and methodology that the MA in Government Studies still uses today.

The modules now are led by **Professor Jon Davis**, alongside co-teachers **Dr Michelle Clement, Dr Jack Brown, Dr Can Gökçen, Dr Chetun Patel** and **Martin Stolliday**. Special attention is given to the memoirs and diaries of the prime ministers, cabinet ministers and senior officials involved in managing the central machinery of government, as well as first-hand testimony from a selection

of highly-relevant and high profile guests. Classes take place within No. 10 Downing Street itself, and guest speakers have included former Prime Ministers **Sir Tony Blair, Lord Cameron** and **Baroness May of Maidenhead**, academic **Lord Hennessy** and Cabinet Secretaries **Lord Armstrong, Lord Butler, Lord Turnbull, Lord Wilson, Lord O'Donnell, Lord Heywood, Lord Sedwill** and **Simon Case**.

A photograph of Gordon Brown, former Prime Minister and Chancellor of the Exchequer, speaking at a podium. He is wearing a dark suit, a light blue shirt, and a red patterned tie. In the background, a blue banner features the Strand Group logo and the text 'STRAND Group'. A red sign with 'KING'S COLLEGE LONDON' is partially visible at the top left.

Former Prime Minister and Chancellor of the Exchequer
Gordon Brown speaking to Strand Group students

Optional module 1

Chancellors and the Treasury: Managing the British Economy

A photograph of Clare Lombardelli, Visiting Professor, Deputy Governor at the Bank of England and former Chief Economist at the OECD, giving a lecture. She is wearing a colorful patterned blouse and has her hands raised as if speaking. The background is a plain light blue wall.

Clare Lombardelli, Visiting Professor, Deputy Governor at the Bank of England and former Chief
Economist at the OECD giving a lecture

“Chancellors and the Treasury: Managing the British Economy” is the result of a unique collaboration between His Majesty’s Treasury the Policy Institute at King’s and the Strand Group. It studies the role and actions of the Treasury and its Chancellors since the Second World War up to the present day, through the context of the British economy.

The module is led by **Dr Chetun Patel** and co-taught weekly by former Shadow Chancellor and Chief Economic Adviser to the Treasury **Ed Balls** and former Permanent Secretary to the Treasury **Lord Macpherson of Earl’s Court**.

Lord Lamont, Lord Lawson and former Chief Secretaries of the Treasury Sir **Danny Alexander, David Gauke** and **Yvette Cooper** and, permanent secretaries past and present including **Lord Burns, Sir Tom Scholar** and **James Bowler**.

A wider teaching panel includes senior Treasury official, **Mario Pisani**, Deputy Governor at the Bank of England, **Clare Lombardelli** and **Baroness MacLeod of Camusdarach**, former special adviser to Chancellor Alistair Darling.

Prominent special guest speakers will further increase the stellar teaching panel – in previous years these have included former Chancellors **Kwasi Kwarteng, Sajid Javid, Lord Hammond, George Osborne, Lord Darling, Gordon Brown, Lord Clarke,**



Optional module 2

History of Prime Ministerial & Whitehall Defence, Security and Intelligence Decision Making

Former Cabinet Secretary Lord Case, former Chief Foreign Policy Advisor to the UK Prime Minister Professor John Bew and Dr Can Gökçen teaching Strand Group students.

Since the Second World War, matters of defence, intelligence, and security in the British state have become increasingly prime ministerial. This overload is evident in the roles, responsibilities, and increasingly the amount of time that Prime Ministers necessarily devote to securing the nation. The purpose of this class is to understand how we have arrived at this present moment, and to analyse what the causes and their various effects of this fundamental development of prime ministerial power are.

This module covers the institutions through which defence, intelligence, and security are developed and administered in government. Its focus is necessarily broad. By mirroring the different issues and organs of state with which Prime Ministers carry out their responsibilities for national security, students will be challenged to think about the links between conventional and non-conventional threats that government is obliged to defend the nation against. This module will thus focus on this relationship between policy, organisation, and decision-making by prime ministers since 1945.

Each week, this module will cover a specific area of concern to UK national security. Subject areas include, for example, Crisis Management, UK-US Relations, the Strategic Nuclear Deterrent, Cyber Security, and more.

This module is taught by **Dr Can Gökçen** and **Former Cabinet Secretary Lord Case**, along with special guest practitioners.

The Blair Years

Former Prime Minister Tony Blair's Director of Government Relations
Baroness Hunter of Auchenroch speaking to Strand Group students



Optional module 3

The New Labour Years: The Blair Brown Revolution



Former Prime Minister Tony Blair's Director of
Communications Alistair Campbell speaking to Strand Group students

The module considers the New Labour governments from a historical perspective, tracing changes and themes across the thirteen years of Tony Blair's and Gordon Brown's premierships, using the rigour of the historical method. Special attention is given to the memoirs and diaries of the central protagonists, and a high-profile range of guests allow students to truly interrogate their sources face-to-face.

New Labour was a transformative government with a legacy that remains instructive for politicians and policymakers on both sides of the political spectrum. This module sees students learn and debate the breadth of New Labour years – the personal history of the key protagonists, the role of media spin, the power of the Treasury under Brown, the development of transformative public service reform, the role of special advisers, foreign policy and the Iraq War.

The course is co-taught by **Dr Michelle Clement**; **Professor Jon Davis** and **John Rentoul**, Chief Political Commentator for *The Independent*, biographer of Blair and King's Visiting Professor. The course was founded in 2008 and has been a pioneering learning environment for the study of the New Labour years. The first book

of the course, *Heroes or Villains?: The Blair Government Reconsidered*, was written by Rentoul and Davis.

The seminars see a wide range of prominent participants from government and the Civil Service invited to speak and to field questions. In the past guests have included **Ed Balls**, **Lord Blunkett**, **Alastair Campbell**, **Baroness Hunter of Auchenreoch**, **Baroness Jay of Paddington**, **Alan Johnson**, **Alan Milburn**, **Baroness Morgan of Huyton**, **Lord O'Donnell**, **Sir Kevin Tebbit**, and **Sir Tony Blair** himself.

A large group of diverse young people, identified as Strand Group students, are gathered in a room. In the center, two men are standing: one in a dark pinstriped suit with his arms crossed, and another in a dark sweater over a collared shirt. They are surrounded by students of various ethnicities and ages, all looking towards the camera.

Former Prime Minister Lord Cameron with
Strand Group Students

Optional module 4

The Conservative Years: Governing in an Age of Turmoil

A man in a light blue shirt and glasses is seated at a table, gesturing with his hands as if speaking. He is looking towards a young man in a dark suit and glasses who is listening intently with his hand to his chin. On the table in front of them are a large glass pitcher of water and a smaller glass. A book is visible on the table to the left.

Former Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities
Lord Gove speaking to Strand Group students

The Conservative Years builds on the successful approach of “New Labour in Government”, and brings its focus into even more ultra-contemporary historical study.

Taught by **Dr Jack Brown**, the module explores the politics and personalities that influenced the direction and actions of successive Conservative administrations since 2010. Looking at the inner workings of the Coalition government, the changing relationship between the prime minister and their party across the period, and the rise and fall of at least five Conservative leaders. Paying particular attention to the government-dominating issues of Austerity, Brexit and the government’s response to the Covid-19 pandemic. It also explores the inner working of the Conservative Party itself, and how it evolved over the period.

The ultra-contemporary focus of this module gives students the opportunity to have their thinking evolve continually, as new primary and secondary source material emerges and guest speakers

offer original contributions to our understanding of these tumultuous years. It makes great use of speeches, government documents where publicly available, and memoirs, alongside quality reporting, to build a framework for understanding the inner workings of central government since 2010.

Guest speakers from within government are invited to join seminars, allowing students to interrogate their sources directly and in person.

A photograph of a man with a beard and glasses, wearing a dark suit and tie, speaking at a podium. The background is a blue screen with white text that is partially visible and out of focus. The text on the screen includes "The Uni", "ecture at Ne", and "h The Str".

Optional module 5

The History of The Civil Service: Evolution of the Machinery of Government

Former Cabinet Secretary Lord Case giving the
Cabinet Secretary's Annual Lecture

This innovative module, delivered in partnership with the Cabinet Office, focuses on the evolution of the British Civil Service and how its role has developed alongside the changing role of the state. World wars, the creation of the welfare state, as well as technological, economic and societal change has carved new functions and expectations of what government is there to do.

Much of the focus of the study of British government centres on the politicians the powerful individuals who lead government for a period. Though they are powerful and vital, Prime Ministers and their Cabinet are temporary. There is however a permanent side of the coin in British government – the Civil Service. The Civil Service acts as a repository of influence and institutional power in government. At present there are close to 500,000 civil servants based in Whitehall and around the country. The Civil Service has historically been a place where many people spend much of their careers, and work for governments of several different political hues. Yet there is a lack of understanding of how this enduring institution has shaped the history and workings of statecraft. This module will be led by **Dr Michelle Clement** and **Professor Jon Davis**.

The module includes innovative teaching techniques that centre on individual, small group and whole class learning to debate and develop our critical understanding of how and why the Civil Service works. We also utilise our proximity to the heart of British government to conduct special guest classes with practitioners. Students gain a strategic understanding of how the British Civil Service has developed, how the most senior civil servant position of Cabinet Secretary was established and how it has evolved, how successive prime ministers have shaped this permanent part of the state, and how public services have been shaped by governments since 1945. This strategic foundation sets students in excellent stead for careers and further study in and around British government.

Howard Dawber OBE, Deputy Mayor, Business and Growth, with Strand Group students at City Hall



Optional module 6

London: Governing the Global City



Mayor of London Sadiq Khan with Strand Group student and London module Essay Prize winner

This module explores the recent history and government of London.

Taught by **Dr Jack Brown**, “London: Governing the Global City”, uses the city’s history to examine how to best run a globally competitive “world city” such as London, and takes full advantage of King’s’ position at the heart of the capital, offering students a unique educational experience, firmly rooted in place.

The module deals with London-wide and local government, but also explores the significant role of the private sector in the city’s governance. Finally, it engages directly with the huge past and current challenges that face not only London but other world cities and devolved city and city-region governments across the country.

The module makes great use of practitioner-led teaching, with students getting a chance to engage directly with key London leaders. Previous special guests included current Mayor of London **Sadiq Khan**; former mayor Boris Johnson’s Chief Strategic Adviser and Mayoral

Chief of Staff **Lord Lister**; former Metropolitan Police Commissioner **Dame Cressida Dick**; former Transport for London Commissioner **Sir Peter Hendy**, and many more.

Alongside seminars at King’s, classes have also taken place at City Hall, the City of London’s ancient Guildhall, One Canada Square in Canary Wharf and 22 Bishopsgate. There can surely be no better way for students to understand how this world-leading city works than by engaging directly with those who have been responsible for running it and experiencing it for themselves.

MA

ANCE & PUBLIC POLICY

Optional module 7

Making modern Britain: Pivotal Prime Ministerial Decisions

Former Prime Minister Sir Tony Blair speaking to
Strand Group students

This unique module focuses on the pivotal moments for Prime Ministers, using case studies to examine the decision making process.

Led by **Dr Chetun Patel** and **Professor Jon Davis**, this module builds on the successful implementation of case study learning across our suite of modules. Students explore the pivotal moments of decision making faced by Prime Ministers since 1945.

It will explore issues such as:

- The decision to build an independent nuclear deterrent
- Suez Crisis
- The decision to build Concorde
- The withdrawal of the UK from “East of Suez”
- The EEC referendum
- 1981 Budget
- The Falklands War
- The Euro
- Huawei and 5G security
- AI Safety Summit

Students make full use of specially created case studies, putting forward the arguments for courses of action having weighed the issues of the day. They will also prepare briefing papers. Based on the approach of Harvard Professors Richard E. Neustadt and Ernest R. May the module seeks to help decision-makers become more attentive to the proper “uses of history.”

Guest speakers and experts will be invited to join the sessions.

Strand Group studentship holders outside
No.10 Downing Street after a class



Studentships



Former Chancellor of the Exchequer Jeremy Hunt MP speaking to
Strand Group students

The MA in Government Studies has a strong social mobility focus, with places provided on the programme from businesses such as Amazon Web Services and others.

Studentships provide an incredible opportunity to students from underrepresented backgrounds to access this exceptional programme without financial constraints. In 24/25 and 25/26 8 places on the MA Programme were funded through social mobility full-fee studentships.



Please contact martin.stolliday@kcl.ac.uk for further information.

A photograph of three young adults standing in front of a night-time cityscape of London. On the left is a Black woman with braided hair, wearing a grey button-up cardigan. In the center is a white woman with long brown hair and bangs, also wearing a grey button-up cardigan. On the right is a young man with glasses and brown hair, wearing a dark suit jacket over a white shirt. The background shows the Shard on the left, several lit-up buildings, and a bridge over a river. A red sign with a white Union Jack and the letters 'CAT' is partially visible on the right. The word 'Careers' is written in large white letters across the middle of the image, with a thin white horizontal line above it.

Careers

MA Government Students completing their two week paid internships in the Department for Business and Trade

The Programme is specially designed with student career paths in mind. The MA Government Studies utilises its prestigious networks to provide students with a variety of bespoke internship opportunities. We focus on improving student knowledge, attributes and skills so alumni can flourish in a variety of roles.

- In 24/25 students were placed in a variety of internship programmes. These opportunities were only available for students on the MA Government Studies.
- Employability is hard-wired into every aspect of this programme. Students use historical analysis to shape their thinking.
- Students also gain knowledge of public-service ethos and the skills needed to pursue public sector career paths.
- Case study teaching with a focus on skills gives students more practical skills that will be applicable in all workplaces.
- Small group tutorials further enable formative assessment and help students develop the skills they need for future work.
- Through our contacts and support from industry and government we have created an employability ecosystem around the programme.
- The programme features industry driven content reflecting governmental and political sectors.
- We bring in former students who have taken our modules and provide a system through which our alumni can provide formal and informal mentoring opportunities.



Visiting faculty

The Strand Group has a number of Visiting Professors and Fellows who contribute to its research, teaching and events.

Baroness MacLeod of Camusdarach at a Policy Institute event

Visiting professors

Lord Barber

Sir Michael Barber is a senior adviser to the Prime Minister, delivering the five national missions.

Lord Case

Lord Case was the Cabinet Secretary and Head of the Civil Service from 2020-2024.

Gordon Corera

Gordon Corera is a journalist and author specialising in security and intelligence issues.

Gareth Davies

Gareth Davies is Permanent Secretary of the Department for Business and Trade.

Baroness Jay of Paddington

Baroness Jay of Paddington was a Minister in the Department of Health, Minister for Women, Leader of the House of Lords, and has chaired the Lords Select Committee on the Constitution.

Sir Iain Lobban

Sir Iain Lobban KCMG CB was the Director of the UK's intelligence and security agency, GCHQ, from mid 2008 to late 2014, having previously served as its Director General for Operations from 2004.

Clare Lombardelli

Clare Lombardelli is the Deputy Governor for Monetary Policy at the Bank of England.

Baroness MacLeod of Camusdarach

Catherine MacLeod was a special adviser to Alistair Darling when he was Chancellor of the Exchequer, political editor of The Herald, and Chair of the Lobby in the UK's Parliamentary Press Gallery.

Lord Macpherson of Earl's Court

Lord Macpherson GCB was Permanent Secretary to the Treasury from 2005 to 2016.

Ciaran Martin

Ciaran Martin was the first CEO of the National Cyber Security Centre.

Baroness Morgan of Huyton

Baroness Morgan of Huyton (born 28 June 1959) is a British Labour life peer who served as Tony Blair's Director of Government Relations (2001–2005), former Chair of Ofsted, and is presently Master of Fitzwilliam College, Cambridge.

Mario Pisani

Mario Pisani is Deputy Director, Debt & Reserves Management, HM Treasury.

Sir Dave Ramsden

Sir Dave Ramsden is Deputy Governor at the Bank of England for Markets and Banking.

John Rentoul

John Rentoul is Chief Political Commentator for the Independent, having joined in 1995.

Sir Kevin Tebbit

Sir Kevin Tebbit was Permanent Under Secretary of State for the Ministry of Defence, 1998-2005.

Visiting fellows

Commodore John Aitken

Commodore John Aitken is a career submarine warfare officer with 31 years of service.

Stuart Glassborow

Stuart Glassborow is a highly experienced civil servant having worked in HM Treasury and No.10 Downing street in a variety of roles.

James Johns

James Johns is a consultant, strategist and digital policy advisor, who spent 15 years at roles with Hewlett Packard, Amazon Web Services, and Workday.

Jessica Pulay

Jessica Pulay is Chief Executive Officer of the UK Debt Management Office

A man with grey hair, wearing a dark blue suit, white shirt, and patterned tie, is seated at a table. He is resting his chin on his hand, looking thoughtfully towards the camera. In front of him is a water bottle and a laptop. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

Core team

Strand Group Director Professor Jon Davis OBE

The Strand Group team runs the MA Programme, undertakes professional education, manages events and produces research.



Professor Jon Davis OBE

Professor Jon Davis OBE is Director of the Strand Group at King's College London. His research and work focuses on the contemporary history of British central government.



Martin Stolliday

Martin is the manager for the whole of The Strand Group's activities. He supports all aspects of The Strand Group's work across teaching, research, events and executive education.



Dr Michelle Clement

Dr Clement is a Lecturer on reform and delivery in government and Researcher in Residence at No.10 Downing Street.



Dr Jack Brown

Dr Jack Brown is Lecturer with the Strand Group, his work focuses on No.10 Downing Street and London governance.



Professor Ed Balls

Former shadow chancellor Ed Balls is a Professor of Political Economy. Working with the Strand Group he continues to build on the teaching he has been doing as visiting professor since 2015.



Dr Chetun Patel

Dr Patel is a postgraduate lecturer within the Strand Group teaching team, specialising in contemporary British political economy history.



Dr Can Gökçen

Dr Can Gökçen is Lecturer with the Strand Group, his research interests include the historical development of Britain's secret state, international relations and geopolitics.

The Strand Group

The Strand Group examines the contemporary history of the institutions of British Government.

The Group delivers the MA Government Studies Programme, and undertakes professional education, along with a number of Visiting Professors and Fellows who contribute to its research, teaching and events, and partners with various government departments and businesses.

The Policy Institute

The Policy Institute at King's College London works to solve society's challenges with evidence and expertise.

We combine the rigour of academia with the agility of a consultancy and the connectedness of a think tank.

Our research draws on many disciplines and methods, making use of the skills, expertise and resources of not only the institute, but the university and its wider network too.



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