



UK

## SYLLABUS 2025-2026

Elective: General Knowledge - the UK

### MODULE SPECIFICATION

<b>Module Code</b>	2526_LNG_1_EN_009
<b>Campus</b>	Oxford
<b>Department(s)</b>	Foreign Languages and Humanities
<b>Level / Semester</b>	Undergraduate Year 2 (U2); Equivalent to FHEQ level 5 Semester 03
<b>Language of Instruction</b>	English
<b>Teaching Method</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> In-person (face-to-face) <input type="checkbox"/> Distance learning (live online) <input type="checkbox"/> e-Learning (asynchronous) <input type="checkbox"/> Hybrid: _____
<b>Pre-requisite(s)?</b>	None
<b>ECTS</b> <i>Reminder: 1 ECTS = between 20 and 30hr- student workload</i>	5
<b>Equivalent FHEQ credits</b>	10
<b>Study Hours</b>	100 hours which comprise of 30 directed learning and 70 independent learning/assessment hours

### MODULE DESCRIPTION

<b>Module Aims</b>	This module provides an overview of the political, social, and cultural landscape of the UK, with a focus on contemporary and historical developments. Students examine key events such as Brexit and explore the connections between national identity, heritage, and current societal debates.
<b>Teaching Arrangement</b>	Teaching will be through lectures, group work and presentations. It is hoped to include a fieldtrip within the module.

<b>Learning Outcomes</b>	<p>By the end of this module, students should be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Analyse the political, cultural, and social landscape of the United Kingdom, with a particular focus on England and Oxford.</li> <li>2. Evaluate the historical and contemporary impact of major events, including Brexit, on the UK's position in the world.</li> <li>3. Assess the connections between cultural heritage and contemporary societal issues, demonstrating awareness of historical influences.</li> <li>4. Construct well-reasoned and contextually informed arguments on key political, social, and cultural topics in the UK.</li> </ol>
<b>Competency Goals</b> <i>(Knowledge, expertise and interpersonal skills)</i>	PGE_U_CG06 - Evolve in a globalised world
<b>Alignment with Programme Learning Goals</b>	PGE_U_CG06_LO01 - Work in a multicultural team and/or environment

## SESSION TOPICS / MODULE SCHEDULE

*(Please note, a session/sequence may be more than one scheduled class)*

<p><u>Session 1: An Introduction to the UK</u></p> <p><b>Content:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quiz: geographical, political, national distinctions, national identity</li> <li>• Timeline on Brexit</li> <li>• Oxford 'dreaming spires'</li> </ul> <p><b>References:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oakland, J. (2019) <i>British civilization: An introduction</i>. 9th edn. London: Routledge.</li> </ul> <p><b>Assignments:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read: Oakland, J. (2019) <i>British civilization: An introduction</i>. 9th edn. London: Routledge. (Chapter 1)</li> </ul>
<p><u>Session 2: The UK Parliamentary Tradition and the Legal System</u></p> <p><b>Content:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contemporary British political framework</li> <li>• The G7 meeting, 2021</li> <li>• UK and Europe: Brexit</li> <li>• Oxford: the University and politics</li> </ul> <p><b>References:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oakland, J. (2019) <i>British civilization: An introduction</i>. 9th edn. London: Routledge.</li> </ul> <p><b>Assignments:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read: Oakland, J. (2019) <i>British civilization: An introduction</i>. 9th edn. London: Routledge. (pp. 138-155)</li> </ul>
<p><u>Session 3: The Union, Monarchy, and Religion</u></p>

*Last reviewed: 18/07/2025*

**Content:**

- Four countries, one nation?
- The Role of the Monarch/Impact of Brexit and nationalism
  - Northern Ireland, the Good Friday Agreement
- Presentation assignment briefing and team set-up.
- Oxford: the Oxford Group; Oxford Movement

**Assignments:**

- Read handouts

**Session 4: Society, Social Issues**

**Content:**

- Health: NHS, Covid 19
- Welfare System: funding social care
- Immigration: Black Lives Matter, Windrush
- Climate Change: Extinction Rebellion, UN Climate Change Conference (Glasgow, November 2021)
- Oxford: Jenner, Oxford vaccine, Oxfam

**References:**

- Oakland, J. (2019) *British civilization: An introduction*. 9th edn. London: Routledge.

**Assignments:**

- Read: Oakland, J. (2019) *British civilization: An introduction*. 9th edn. London: Routledge. (Chapter 9)

**Session 5: Education and Privilege, Social Mobility**

**Content:**

- A meritocracy or a class issue?: State, private and religious education and social mobility
- Oxbridge, the Russell Group and the new universities
- Student financing
  - Rhodes scholars include: Bill Clinton, Lord Nuffield
- Since Winston Churchill, every British PM who went to university attended the University of Oxford, except Gordon Brown (Edinburgh)

**References:**

- Bulmer, S. and Quaglia, L. (2020) *The politics and economics of Brexit*. London: Routledge.

**Assignments:**

- Read: Bulmer, S. and Quaglia, L. (2020) *The politics and economics of Brexit*. London: Routledge.

**Session 6: Field Trip**

**Content:**

- Attend field trip

**Session 7: Culture, the Arts and Media**

**Content:**

- Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport
- The Arts Council
- 'The Season'
- Opera, dance, orchestras, festivals, theatre, museums, libraries and galleries.

- Film industry and the BBC
- The media
  - Social media: influencers
- Impact of Brexit and Covid
- Oxford: Ashmolean, Bodleian Library, Museum of the History of Science, Botanic Gardens
  - TV and film locations: Harry Potter, etc.
  - University of Oxford alumni include: Oscar Wilde, JRR Tolkien, CS Lewis, John Le Carré

**Assignments:**

- Watch video referenced in lecture

**Session 8: The Economy**

**Content:**

- Colonies, Empire, Commonwealth, Europe
- Bank of England, The City, Brexit: future trade deals and the UK outside the EU
- Oxford: car industry - Mini and Unipart, publishing – OUP, science and technology, Oxford Instruments, Research Machines, Sophos, Centre of Digital Innovation Digital Oxford, Education, Brewing

**References:**

- Bulmer, S. and Quaglia, L. (2020) *The politics and economics of Brexit*. London: Routledge.

**Assignments:**

- Read: Bulmer, S. and Quaglia, L. (2020) *The politics and economics of Brexit*. London: Routledge. (Chapter 8)

**Session 9: Britain in the World Today**

**Content:**

- Future of the UK as an entity
- Relationship with the USA, Europe and Commonwealth
- Review of the module
- Oxford: what does the future hold?

**Assignments:**

- Preparation of presentations

**Session 10: Assignment Presentations**

**Content:**

- Presentation of assignments

**KEY TEXTS**

1. Bulmer, S. and Quaglia, L. (2020) *The politics and economics of Brexit*. London: Routledge.
2. Oakland, J. (2019) *British civilization: An introduction*. 9th edn. London: Routledge.

**SUPPLEMENTARY TEXTS**

1. N/A

## MODES OF ASSESSMENT

<b>Continuous Assessment (40%)</b>	Essay
<b>Final Exam (60%)</b>	Closed book written exam

## MODULE DESIGN TEAM

- Author: *Michael Surguy*
- Reviewer: *Bernard Carey*
- External Reviewer: *Sudiappu Kankanamalage Premaratne Perera*