Aims and Objectives

This foundation course aims to introduce students to the ideas and concepts used in the study of Public Administration.

- Identify characteristics of Public Administration as an academic study and a practitioner focus
- Describe the main changes in the structure, functioning and ethos of public administration systems since the mid-nineteenth century
- Explain the contributions of the foremost theorists associated with public administration
- Review the types of reform introduced in public administrations as a result of the New Public Management agenda
- Demonstrate independent work through course assessment, self-organisation and development of study skills.
- Use web-based information resources to research and evaluate career opportunities.

Contents

The module is divided into three parts. Part one introduces Public Administration as both a field of study and a professional practice. The differences between the public and private sectors, both in features and management, are discussed. A historical perspective of public administration is presented that aligns the public sector with developments in the growth and role of government in society. Part two focuses on the origins and theoretical pillars of the traditional model of public administration and examines Max Weber’s theory of bureaucracy, F.W. Taylor’s scientific management school and Woodrow Wilson’s dichotomy of politics and public administration. The third part of the module examines contemporary ideas about public management and governance, including New Public Management ideas and reforms, the role of information and communication technology (ICTs) in the public sector, ethics, values and public accountability.

Core Readings


