

|                               |                                                    |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Module code:</b> MOD011197 | <b>Version:</b> 1 <b>Date Amended:</b> 17/Jun/2025 |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|

|                                                 |
|-------------------------------------------------|
| <b>1. Module Title</b>                          |
| Political and Economic Contexts of Value Chains |

|                          |
|--------------------------|
| <b>2a. Module Leader</b> |
| Robin Gowers             |

|                                                                  |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>2b. School</b>                                                |
| Writtle School of Agriculture, Animal and Environmental Sciences |

|                                    |
|------------------------------------|
| <b>2c. Faculty</b>                 |
| Faculty of Science and Engineering |

|                  |
|------------------|
| <b>3a. Level</b> |
| 5                |

|                        |
|------------------------|
| <b>3b. Module Type</b> |
| Standard (fine graded) |

|                    |
|--------------------|
| <b>4a. Credits</b> |
| 15                 |

|                        |
|------------------------|
| <b>4b. Study Hours</b> |
| 150                    |

| <b>5. Restrictions</b>                             |             |             |           |
|----------------------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-----------|
| Type                                               | Module Code | Module Name | Condition |
| Pre-requisites:                                    | None        |             |           |
| Co-requisites:                                     | None        |             |           |
| Exclusions:                                        | None        |             |           |
| <b>Courses to which this module is restricted:</b> | None        |             |           |

## LEARNING, TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT INFORMATION

### 6a. Module Description

This course delves into the key political and economic factors that shape the agricultural and horticultural value chains at both national and global levels. Students will explore how trade agreements, tariffs, subsidies, and international legislation impact food production, distribution, and market access. The course examines the role of governments and international bodies in regulating agricultural practices, with a focus on policies related to climate change, environmental sustainability, and resource management. Additionally, students will analyse consumer demands, packaging and labelling regulations, and assurance schemes that ensure food safety and quality.

This course also addresses critical issues surrounding energy use, sustainability, and economic viability within the agricultural and horticultural supply chains. Key topics include the influence of policy drivers on biodiversity conservation, climate action, and human well-being, alongside the growing emphasis on renewable energy and sustainable resource management. Through case studies and real-world examples, students will critically assess the challenges and opportunities presented by political decisions and economic policies, preparing them to navigate the complexities of modern agricultural business in a rapidly changing global environment.

### 6b. Outline Content

- Overview of political systems and their influence on value chains.
- Key economic concepts: supply and demand, market access, and global trade.
- Changing consumer demands and their impact on agricultural production.
- Food miles, sustainability, and consumer values in food sourcing.
- Case studies: Organic, local, and ethical consumer trends.
- Impact of climate change legislation on agricultural practices.
- Environmental regulations: packaging, labelling, and waste management.
- Agricultural impacts on biodiversity and ecosystem services.
- Role of government policies in promoting biodiversity conservation.
- Anticipated changes in global agricultural policies.
- Economic trends influencing the future of agriculture and horticulture.
- Role of technology and digital transformation in shaping agricultural policy and practice.

### 6c. Key Texts/Literature

The reading list to support this module is available at: <https://readinglists.aru.ac.uk/>

### 6d. Specialist Learning Resources

None

| 7. Learning Outcomes (threshold standards) |                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|--------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| No.                                        | Type                                                        | On successful completion of this module the student will be expected to be able to:                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 1                                          | Knowledge and Understanding                                 | Evaluate the economic and political factors that influence the development and management of sustainable agricultural and horticultural systems and value chains, considering the principles of food security, social inclusion, and environmental sustainability. |
| 2                                          | Knowledge and Understanding                                 | Analyse the role of policy, legislation, and international agreements in shaping agricultural and horticultural practices, land use, and environmental management, with particular focus on the regulation of the environment and value chains.                    |
| 3                                          | Intellectual, practical, affective and transferrable skills | Apply business management theories and techniques to assess the economic viability of farm and horticulture based enterprises, integrating principles of economic sustainability and carbon management towards achieving net zero in their practices.              |

| 8a. Module Occurrence to which this MDF Refers |            |                                             |          |                  |
|------------------------------------------------|------------|---------------------------------------------|----------|------------------|
| Year                                           | Occurrence | Period                                      | Location | Mode of Delivery |
| 2026/7                                         | ZZF        | Template For Face To Face Learning Delivery |          | Face to Face     |

| 8b. Learning Activities for the above Module Occurrence |       |                   |                                                                                                            |
|---------------------------------------------------------|-------|-------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Learning Activities                                     | Hours | Learning Outcomes | Details of Duration, frequency and other comments                                                          |
| Lectures                                                | 24    | 1-3               | 2 hour lecture x 12                                                                                        |
| Other teacher managed learning                          | 12    | 1-3               | Directed reading and case studies.                                                                         |
| Student managed learning                                | 114   | 1-3               | Self-directed learning, set reading, background reading, assignments and engaging with Farm Team business. |
| TOTAL:                                                  | 150   |                   |                                                                                                            |

| 9. Assessment for the above Module Occurrence                                                                                                                                   |                   |                   |               |                         |                     |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|---------------|-------------------------|---------------------|
| Assessment No.                                                                                                                                                                  | Assessment Method | Learning Outcomes | Weighting (%) | Fine Grade or Pass/Fail | Qualifying Mark (%) |
| 010                                                                                                                                                                             | Coursework        | 1,3               | 50 (%)        | Fine Grade              | 30 (%)              |
| Report identifying and evaluating a current political and/or economic issue in the supply of an agricultural/horticultural product relevant at the time of the module delivery. |                   |                   |               |                         |                     |
| Assessment No.                                                                                                                                                                  | Assessment Method | Learning Outcomes | Weighting (%) | Fine Grade or Pass/Fail | Qualifying Mark (%) |
| 011                                                                                                                                                                             | Practical         | 2                 | 50 (%)        | Fine Grade              | 30 (%)              |
| 10 minute. Individual 12 slide PowerPoint presentation on crop/scenario relevant at the time of module delivery.                                                                |                   |                   |               |                         |                     |

In order to pass this module, students are required to achieve an overall mark of 40% (for modules at levels 3, 4, 5 and 6) or 50% (for modules at level 7\*).

In addition, students are required to:

(a) achieve the qualifying mark for each element of fine graded assessment as specified above

(b) pass any pass/fail elements

[\* the pass mark of 50% applies for all module occurrences from the academic year 2024/25 – see Section 3a of this MDF to check the level of the module and Section 8a of this MDF to check the academic year]