

# 0908989

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## Assignment Cover Sheet



<b>Student Number:</b>	<b>0908989</b>		
<b>Module Code:</b>	<b>CPT898</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>11-11-15</b>
<b>Essay Title:</b>	PROFORMA (Assessment 1)		
<b>Required Word Count:</b>	<b>1000</b>	<b>Actual Word Count:</b>	<b>996</b>

[Feedback](#)

## CPT898 Summative Assessment 1

### 1 Research Question (100 words) – 100 words

How can the European Union (EU) ensure that all forms of expertise involved in policy-making are successfully translated into final legislative or policy outcomes?

- Who is accredited as an expert in EU policy-making?
- Are stakeholders technical experts?
- How may experts influence the alleged legitimacy crisis of the EU?
- What are the bargaining powers of experts?
- How can different forms of expertise interact in policy-making?

In order to focus my research, I will be looking at two European policy areas (employment and competition) as they feature very different modes of EU governance and approaches to expertise.

### 2 Research Field (150 words) – 147 words

- This research is located within the field of EU Governance which explains the behaviour of EU institutional arrangements from decision-making to the implementation and evaluation of EU legislation and policy.
- This field adopts an interdisciplinary approach heavily influenced by law and political science.
- Some of the leading journals in this field include: European Public Law Journal, Journal of Common Market Studies, and Journal of European Public Policy.
- The European Commission (2001) published a White Paper outlining its vision for a democratically reformed model of EU Governance. This promised to increase transparency on the use of expertise.
- EU governance literature tends to focus on the effectiveness of European legislation and policy once it has been implemented (Mastenbroek et al. 2015). My research will also focus on pre-legislative measures for a more comprehensive understanding of the earlier stages of policy-making, particularly the interaction of experts during policy proposal procedures.

### 3 Epistemological perspective 1 (150 words) - 150 words

- Social constructionism formally entered sociological literature through Berger and Luckmann's *The Social Construction of Reality* (1966). Good
- Adopts a critical standpoint towards taken-for-granted knowledge of the world and thus opposes positivist epistemologies which assert that reality can be objectively understood through observation (Burr 2012, p. 2). Good
- One's understanding of the world is constructed through everyday social interactions (Burr 2012, p. 3). The meanings we attach to the world are therefore neither universal nor static, but develop alongside our relations with others (May 2001, p. 14). Excellent
- Social constructionists must appreciate that their own understandings of the social world are constructions – their research cannot be value-free (Bryman 2012, p. 33). Good
- Berger and Luckmann assert that human actions must be confined by a system of stability in order to avoid becoming chaotic (Alvesson and Skoldberg 2009, p. 26). Good
- Central to this system of stability is institutionalisation which is the creation of established patterns of thought and action through habitualisations and typifications; the development of routines, habits and categorisations within social relations (Alvesson and Skoldberg 2009, p. 26).

### 4 Epistemological Perspective 2 (150 words) – 149 words

- Post-structuralism questions Saussure's structuralism which proposes a scientific model of language independent from the subjectivities of its authors and readers (Radford and Radford 2005, p. 61). Good
- Foucault is a key figure:
  - In his archaeological work, Foucault believes that discourse (a group of statements) develops structured concepts that allow us to access certain parts of reality whilst veiling others (Assche et al 2014, p. 12). Excellent
  - Foucault does not deny the existence of reality outside discourse, but asserts that we are within discourse once we begin observing, reasoning or communicating (Assche et al 2014, p. 12). Excellent
  - In Foucault's genealogical work, discourse is decentralised by becoming secondary to power concepts. Foucault believes that the success of power is proportionate to its ability to hide itself within social practices (Fairclough 1992, p. 49-50). Good
  - Foucault's governmentality studies offer thought to governance in modern Europe by encouraging us to not only perceive power as a repressive force imposed from above, but as a force that emerges 'from below' within disciplinary institutions (Fairclough 1992, p. 50). Good

**5 How has the perspective identified in box 3, above been used in your field of research?**  
(150 words) – 150 words

- Social constructionism has been praised for discovering the subjective interests of actors involved in EU policy-making rather than perceiving them as unthinking automatons who blindly follow structures (Kauppi 2010):
  - Detailed case studies of Commission expert group members reflect their own personal experiences of the appointment process (Field 2013).
  - In-depth interviews with Directorate-Generals evidence that they are not single unified actors with the same social interests and goals (From 2002).
  - A sociological analysis reflecting how the representations and everyday practices of legal experts institutionalised policy-making at the European level (Megie 2014). This coincides with Berger and Luckmann's concept of institutionalisation defined in Box 3.
- Social constructionism asserts that EU policies are value-laden representations of the institutions in which they are created (Bacchi 1999):
  - Although this approach is scarce, there is demand for EU Governance scholars to deconstruct policies to identify which actors' interests and social preferences are being regarded as most legitimate during policy-making procedures (Servent et al 2013).

Good

Excellent

Good

**6 How has the perspective identified in box 4, above been used in your field of research?**  
(150 words) – 150 words

- Foucauldian discourse analysis has been utilised to analyse structures of meaning in the EU's choice of legitimisation strategies:
  - The White Paper on EU Governance was analysed to conclude that the Commission is trapped between two contrasting legitimacy claims, weakening its own institutional position (Tsakatika 2005).
  - Speeches and documents published by the Commission between 1973-1994 reflected a line of continuity in which a lack of European demos was perceived to be the core reason behind the legitimacy deficit (Biegon 2012).
- Since the late 1990s, post-structuralism has influenced analyses of new decentralised models of EU governance:
  - The EU governance model introduced in 2000 has been compared to Foucault's work on biopolitics because of its extended power to shape the population through health and education control (Diez 2008, p. 267; Shore 2011, p. 299).
  - Significant parallels drawn between Foucault's punishment reform and the reform proposed in the White Paper on EU Governance which promises better governance, rather than less (Sokhi-Bulley 2011).

Excellent

Good

Excellent

Excellent

**7 Choice and justification of epistemological framework selected for research question in box 1, above. (150 words) – 150 words**

- I will approach my research from both epistemologies because of the different yet complementary perspectives they offer:
- Social constructionism will allow me to appreciate the perceptions of experts at the micro-level of a supranational institution:
  - I will conduct in-depth interviews with members from employment and competition expert groups to determine their own interests and preferences towards certain social problems debated at EU level. Excellent
  - My own preconceptions of expertise use in policy-making must be recognised.
- Foucauldian discourse analysis will be used to scrutinise Commission's speeches and policy documents to deduce how the relationship between different types of experts has been described:
  - In part, this seeks to determine whether the Commission depicts stakeholders as being on an equal footing with other forms of expertise (e.g. scientific). Excellent
  - The discourse will cover a relevant time span to determine whether the Commission's approach to expertise changed post-Lisbon Treaty.



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Excellent



## FINAL GRADE

# 78

/100

## GENERAL COMMENTS

**Instructor**

This is an excellent assessment. Well done. You clearly specify the epistemological perspectives in boxes three and four and demonstrate a critical engagement with the literature. Boxes five and six reveal a close reading of papers grounded in both epistemologies in your own field.

You demonstrate a high level of critical understanding and thus score highly in relation to the learning outcomes for this part of the module.

You can improve you mark by:

Noting my comments here and in the text.

Paying specific attention to my comments in box one, about the specification of your research problem and in box two, concerning the identification of your research field.

For instance: Are stakeholders technical experts – should this read: 'considered to be / treated as experts?' How may(?) experts influence the alleged legitimacy crisis – not clear what this means – seems very open? What are the bargaining powers of experts? – In relation to what, gain very open. How can different forms of expertise interact – do you mean how do they interact as determined by examination of policy documents..?

Despite this this is a well written, focused, critical and well researched answer. Well done.

**Feedback**

See "General Comments" at end of the print-ready version of this paper for general feedback on your assessment - note that I am using a grading form which is visible if you click on the far right icon at the bottom of the window (it looks like a tiny office block)



### Comment 1

How is this defined? is there a finite list of experts and expertise?



### Comment 2

A little vague. How can this be measured?



### Comment 3

Is this a specific field of research? Is this a subfield of governance research? Are there key journals, papers or debates which you can point to here?



### Comment 4

Good: see my comment above.



### Comment 5

Is this policy-making focus necessarily specific to research on the EU?

PAGE 3

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QM

**Good**

Good

QM

**Good**

Good

QM

**Excellent**

Excellent

QM

**Good**

Good

QM

**Good**

Good

QM

**Good**

Good

QM

**Excellent**

Excellent

QM

**Excellent**

Excellent

QM

**Good**

Good

QM

**Awk.**

Awkward:

The expression or construction is cumbersome or difficult to read. Consider rewriting.

QM

**Good**

Good

PAGE 4

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QM

**Good**

Good

QM

**Excellent**

Excellent

QM

**Good**

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QM

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QM

**Excellent**

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QM

**Excellent**

Excellent

PAGE 5

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QM

**Excellent**

Excellent

QM

**Excellent**

Excellent

PAGE 6

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QM

**Improper Citation**

Improper citation:

Improperly cited material. Please use the link below to find links to information regarding specific citation styles: [http://www.plagiarism.org/plag\\_article\\_citation\\_styles.html](http://www.plagiarism.org/plag_article_citation_styles.html)

***Additional Comment*** All authors should be listed in your bibliography

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**Excellent**

Excellent