

Is There a 'Leeds School' of Southeast Asian Political Studies?

Over the past quarter-century, more than 25 students have successfully completed Leeds PhDs on different aspects over Southeast Asia's politics, international relations and development. Many of these theses were co-supervised or internally examined by Duncan McCargo, David Beetham, Ricardo Blaug, Gordon Crawford, Joern Dosch, Caroline Dyer, Hugh Dyer, Christine Harlen, Mike Parnwell, Ruth Pearson, Adam Tyson and Polly Wilding. This panel asks whether these doctoral theses, along with subsequent publications by their authors, work done by Leeds academics, and work published by students who studied for MAs at Leeds before pursuing doctorates elsewhere, amount to a 'Leeds School' of Southeast Asian political studies? Arguably, the Leeds School is characterised by an emphasis on empirical fieldwork, the use of qualitative methods including ethnographic approaches, and an emphasis on developing clear, comparative concepts rather than theorising for its own sake.

Paper submissions are welcome from past and present Leeds postgraduates and academic staff, as well as from anyone else interested in debating the existence, salience or value of a 'Leeds School' approach to the study of Southeast Asia's politics, broadly defined.

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