

**BA Philosophy**  
**For students entering Part 1 in 2009/0**

**UCAS code:**

Awarding Institution:	University of Reading
Teaching Institution:	University of Reading
Relevant QAA subject Benchmarking group(s):	Philosophy
Faculty:	Arts and Humanities Faculty
Programme length:	5 years
Date of specification:	14/Apr/2011
Programme Director:	Dr John Preston
Programme Advisor:	
Board of Studies:	Philosophy
Accreditation:	

**Summary of programme aims**

The Department's part-time undergraduate programme aims, within a flexible structure of study designed to broaden access to philosophy, to give students an understanding of central philosophical principles, concepts, problems, texts and figures, and to provide a programme of study which introduces progressive intellectual challenges and consolidates previous experience at each new level allow students to study in depth some aspects of Philosophy in which they have greater interest and to develop students' aptitude for Philosophy engender a sense of belonging to a community of inquiry, and encourage intellectual development also to prepare students, where appropriate, for possible postgraduate study and provide a supportive learning environment with full access to welfare, pastoral and careers support.

**Transferable skills**

During the course of their studies at Reading, all students will be expected to enhance their academic and personal transferable skills in line with the University's Strategy for Learning and Teaching. In following this programme, students will have had the opportunity to develop such skills, in particular relating to career management, communication (both written and oral), information handling, numeracy, problem-solving, team working and use of information technology and will have been encouraged to further develop and enhance the full set of skills through a variety of opportunities available outside their curriculum.

The University's Strategy for Teaching and Learning has identified a number of generic transferable skills which all students are expected to have developed by the end of their degree programme. In following this programme, students will have had the opportunity to enhance their skills relating to career management, communication (both written and oral), information handling, numeracy, problem-solving, team working and use of information technology.

The Philosophy degree will help students develop skills such as: presenting a coherent talk delivered from notes, producing concise and accurate written reports, the ability to critically discuss particular issues and arguments, and to engage in discussion of each other's responses as well as articulate the student's own views. The Philosophy degree also encourages the ability to handle abstract ideas and utilise problem-solving skills.

**Programme content**

Part-time degree programmes, like full-time programmes, are made up of study elements called modules. The size of a module is measured in terms of credits. For a full-time programme, a typical year contains modules totalling 120 credits. Some modules are 20 credits in size, others are 10 credits and others are multiples of 20 credits (for example the Philosophy Dissertation is 40 credits in size).

Modules are offered at one of three levels. In ascending order these are:

- Level 4
- Level 5
- Level 6

All part-time degree programmes entail study of modules totalling a minimum of 360 credits. Students must take the compulsory and optional modules required for their degree programme, the following minimum number of credits being required at the levels indicated:

- Level 4 100 credits minimum
- Level 5 100 credits minimum
- Level 6 100 credits minimum

Part-time programmes are divided into two sections:

Part 1 (Level 4) involves studying modules totalling at least 80 credits and no more than 120 level 4 credits (120 credits are equivalent to one year of full-time study), then taking the Part 1 Examination. After Part 1 (Levels 5 and 6), students take the remaining modules needed to complete their degree programme. Students must take at level 4 those modules required for progression to one or more degree subjects, but may take individual modules from any available programme to make up the necessary minimum total of 100 credits at level 4. Of the 100 or more credits taken at level 5, 5 are taken up with Career Management Skills. Students must complete at least 80 credits at I level before they can proceed to study any level 6 modules.

The content of this programme is:

Part 1 introduces some major figures from the history of philosophy and introduces students to philosophical examinations of our most fundamental beliefs, for instance about truth and reality, or right and wrong. Level 5 provides students with the opportunity to explore the ideas and approaches emerging in Part 1 in greater depth, including a range of primarily historical courses (e.g. studying Classical Greek thought or the ideas of the British Empiricists) and more topic driven courses (e.g. studying theories of knowledge, or critical thinking and logic). Level 6 encourages increasing specialisation in the subject, allowing students to choose more advanced courses from an extremely wide range of options. Independent research is also encouraged through the provision of a dissertation option at this level.

### **Part 1 (three terms)**

#### *Compulsory modules*

Since most of our students will not have pursued the study of Philosophy before, the Part 1 course has a distinctive set of aims, including: to introduce students to terms and concepts essential for philosophical investigation, to expose students to the distinctive nature of philosophical inquiry and to develop a basic understanding of, and interest in, some central philosophical problems.

Single honours Philosophy students must acquire a minimum of 40 credits, or a maximum of 60 credits, from any below, taken over two years.

<i>Mod Code</i>	<i>Module Title</i>	<i>Credit</i>	<i>Level</i>
PP1HN	Human Nature	20	4
PP1VV	Values & Virtues	20	4
PP1MW	Mind & World	20	4
PP1CT	Critical Thinking	20	4

### **Part 2 (three terms)**

#### *Compulsory modules*

<i>Mod Code</i>	<i>Module Title</i>	<i>Credit</i>	<i>Level</i>
PP2CMS	Career Management Skills	5	5

In addition, single honours Philosophy students must take modules totalling 120 credits, at least 100 credits worth of which should be from the list of Part 2 Philosophy modules available from the Philosophy BA Programme Coordinator. (A list of current modules can also be found in the BA Programme Handbook). Up to 20 credits may be acquired from modules outside the Philosophy programme

### **Part 3 (three terms)**

Single Honours Philosophy students must acquire a minimum of 100 credits from the list of options in Philosophy available from the Philosophy BA Programme Coordinator. A list of current options can also be found in the BA Programme Handbook. A wide variety of part 3 options will be available each year, reflecting the research interests of teaching staff. Other credits may be acquired from modules outside the Philosophy Programme

### **Progression requirements**

The structure of part-time degrees is that students first of all take the degree subject(s) they want to study at level 4. The subject(s) form Part 1 (Level 4) of the programme. Part 1 must contain at least 80 credits, so that, if the modules for a student's chosen subject (s) add up to less than 80 credits, an additional module or two will need to be taken to achieve that total. There is a Part 1 Examination in May or June, which students have to pass in order to go on to their degree choice at levels 5 and 6.

To proceed from Part 1 students must have passed modules totalling at least 80 credits at level 4 and must also have passed those modules required for progression to their chosen degree, with a minimum mark of 40%. To pass the Part 1 Examination a student must have a minimum average of 40% in at least 80 credits and no more than 20 credits with a mark of less than 30%. Students who do not qualify to proceed from Part 1 at the first attempt may re-sit the required modules in a re-examination held in September. Students must complete at least 80 credits at level 5 before they can proceed to any module at level 6.

Re-examinations for level 4, 5 and 6 modules are held annually in September. Students who do not qualify for a degree will be entitled to the following qualification provided they have obtained the minimum number of credits indicated:

- Certificate of Higher Education 100 credits at level 4 and 20 credits at any level.
- Diploma of Higher Education 240 credits, with at least 100 credits at level 5 or above.

The specific progression requirements for this programme are as follows:

To proceed from Part 1 students must:

- obtain at least 40% average in the Philosophy modules taken;
- obtain a mark of at least 40% in individual Philosophy modules amounting to not less than 40 credits in Part 1

### **Summary of Teaching and Assessment**

Teaching within this programme combines lectures and small group seminars, with appropriate visual aids and course materials being provided throughout. The final assessment for the majority of Philosophy modules in all Parts is by a combination of assessed coursework and unseen examination. The dissertation at Level H comprises a piece of work based on supervised independent study.

The conventions for classification are included in the Programme Handbook but you should note that weighting between Level I and Level H for classification purposes is 33% and 67%. The conventions for classification are included in the Programme Handbook

The University's honours classification is as follows:

Mark: Interpretation 70%-100% First class

60%-69% Upper Second class

50%-59% Lower Second class

40%-49% Third class

35%-39% Below Honours standard

0%-34% Fail

### **Admission requirements**

No previous experience of Philosophy is required for admission.

Entrants to this programme are normally required to have obtained:

- Grade C or better in Maths in GCSE and
- UCAS Tariff: Either: 320 points from 3 A levels and 1 AS level, or: 300 points from 3 A levels.  
International Baccalaureate: complete diploma with a minimum score of 6,6,5 in at least three Higher Level subjects.
- Advanced GNVQ: either B in one A-Level plus GNVQ (Advanced) in twelve modules passed with distinction, or GNVQ (Advanced) Distinction plus pass in four additional modules  
Scottish Highers: BBBB or above
- Irish Leaving Certificate: at least BBBB in five higher-level subjects

**Mature Students:** Applications from mature students are welcomed. A mature applicant is more likely to receive an offer of a place if he or she has undertaken recent study, for example two or more A levels or an Access course, but each case is assessed on its relative merits. We recommend you contact the admissions tutor as soon as possible to discuss your individual circumstances.

**International Students:** Applications from international candidates are welcomed. If you are not offering A levels we advise you to contact either the EU or the international admissions tutor before applying in order to discuss the acceptability of your qualifications.

**Admissions Tutor:** Prof B. Hooker

### **Support for students and their learning**

University support for students and their learning falls into two categories. Learning support is provided by a wide array of services across the University, including: the University Library, the Student Employment, Experience and Careers Centre (SEEC), In-sessional English Support Programme, the Study Advice and Mathematics Support Centre teams, IT Services and the Student Access to Independent Learning (S@il) computer-based teaching and learning facilities. There are language laboratory facilities both for those students studying on a language degree and for those taking modules offered by the Institution-wide Language Programme. Student guidance and welfare support is provided by Personal Tutors, School Senior Tutors, the Students' Union, the Medical Practice and advisers in the Student Services Centre. The Student Services Centre is housed in the Carrington Building and offers advice on accommodation, careers, disability, finance, and wellbeing. Students can get key information and guidance from the team of Helpdesk Advisers, or make an appointment with a specialist adviser; Student Services also offer drop-in sessions and runs workshops and seminars on a range of topics. For more information see [www.reading.ac.uk/student](http://www.reading.ac.uk/student)

Within the Department, information and guidance is offered through the Part 1 Handbook, and the B.A Course Handbook (covering Levels 5 and 6). There is also a Part 1 Co-ordinator and an Honours Course Co-ordinator who can be consulted on module choices within each part of the programme. Finally, the Part-time Programme Co-ordinator is available to assist with all issues relating to the Part-time course.

### **Career prospects**

Over the years students who have followed this programme have gone into jobs in both the public and private sectors. In the public sector, jobs include academic and academic related jobs (e.g. lectureships, administrative posts on research boards), and the civil service. In the private sector, recent jobs include working for computer firms and large finance and insurance companies. In general, there is some evidence that IT firms appreciate the logical and analytic skills of the Philosophy graduate. Furthermore, a survey by the Royal Institute of Philosophy found that graduates with British Philosophy degrees consider their degree course to have been very relevant to their jobs, and report a very high level of job satisfaction

### **Opportunities for study abroad or for placements**

Students have the opportunity to study abroad for a term (normally in the autumn term of Part 3) either within Europe via the ERASMUS programme, or at one of the University of Reading's non-European partner institutions. They will require the consent of the departmental study abroad coordinator in order to participate. Full details of potential destinations can be found on the ERASMUS & Study Abroad website.

### **Programme Outcomes**

On successful completion of a BA course, students will have: gained a knowledge and understanding of the main areas of Philosophy and of the views of great figures in the history of Philosophy gained a deeper appreciation of particular issues in Philosophy, and at the forefront of philosophical debate, through studying a range of units informed by the research interests and professional activities of staff acquired the abilities to think clearly and reason logically, critically to evaluate arguments, and to question the assumptions of any given viewpoint acquired transferable skills of use in a wide variety of employment, thus enhancing their career opportunities developed the skills necessary to pursue academic research or further study. Knowledge and Understanding

## Knowledge and Understanding

### A. Knowledge and understanding of:

Key historical aspects of Philosophy  
An appreciation of philosophical ideas and approaches  
Awareness of philosophical terms and concepts  
Awareness of current research in the field and its direction.

### Teaching/learning methods and strategies

Lectures; supervisor-led small group discussions; seminar groups with facilitator.

#### *Assessment*

Guidance on student progress is given by feedback on coursework essays and seminar presentations; while the module grade is determined by the results of written unseen exams.

## Skills and other attributes

### B. Intellectual skills - *able to*:

critically read, comprehend and evaluate a large range of philosophical texts  
synthesise information from a range of sources, providing a coherent overview of positions in logical space  
analyse the logical construction of arguments  
produce and defend positions in response to critical pressure

### Teaching/learning methods and strategies

As above, plus: self-directed learning facilitated through the use of research-based teaching materials and methods, and logical exercises.

#### *Assessment*

Guidance on student progress is given by feedback on coursework essays and seminar presentations, plus discussion in supervisor-led small groups and seminars. Logical exercises will also be evaluated in the Logic & Critical Thinking module. The module grade is determined by the results of written unseen exams.

### C. Practical skills - *able to*:

present a coherent talk delivered from notes  
produce concise and accurate written reports  
critically discuss particular issues and arguments, and to engage in discussion of each other's responses as well as articulate their own.  
utilise problem-solving skills

### Teaching/learning methods and strategies

Lectures; supervisor-led small group discussions; seminar groups with facilitator.

#### *Assessment*

Guidance on student progress is given by feedback on coursework essays and seminar presentations; while the module grade is determined by the results of written unseen exams, or assessed coursework where relevant.

### D. Transferable skills - *able to*:

manage time effectively and prioritise workloads  
communicate effectively with a wide range of individuals using a wide range of means  
evaluate his/her own performance, and recognise the steps required for improvement.  
Utilise problem-solving skills in a variety of theoretical and more practical situations.  
use some IT skills, e.g. word processing and e-mail

### Teaching/learning methods and strategies

Lectures; supervisor-led small group discussions; seminar groups with facilitator.

#### *Assessment*

Coursework; written unseen exams; seminar presentations.

**Please note - This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if he/she takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information on the learning outcomes, content and teaching, learning and assessment methods of each module can be found in the module description and in the programme handbook. The University reserves the right to modify this specification in unforeseen circumstances, or where the process of academic development and**

**feedback from students, quality assurance process or external sources, such as professional bodies, requires a change to be made. In such circumstances, a revised specification will be issued.**