

**BA Philosophy and English Literature**  
**For students entering Part 1 in 2015/6**

**UCAS code: VQ53**

Awarding Institution:	University of Reading
Teaching Institution:	University of Reading
Relevant QAA subject Benchmarking group(s):	Philosophy and English.
Faculty:	Arts, Humanities and Social Science Faculty
Programme length:	3 years
Date of specification:	24/Aug/2015
Programme Director:	Prof Maximilian De Gaynesford
Programme Advisor:	Dr Stephen Thomson Dr Madeleine Davies
Board of Studies:	Philosophy
Accreditation:	

**Summary of programme aims**

This is a multi-disciplinary programme which aims to provide students with subject specific knowledge and more general skills, including knowledge of a variety of different kinds of philosophical and literary texts, from a range of different periods, as well as perspectives on different methods of philosophical, logical and critical analysis. The course also aims to foster an independent approach to formulating problems and arguments, using the close reading and analytical skills that are fundamental to the disciplines of Philosophy and English. The Philosophy part of the programme aims 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. To 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. Bridge modules such as Language & Reality, Philosophy of Language, and Aesthetics offer students an opportunity to reflect on philosophical issues concerning language or literature. The English part of the programme introduces students to debate about approaches to the study of literature through close study of selected texts from a number of different periods. Part 2 provides greater breadth of coverage in preparation for more specialised options and independent work in Part 3.

**Transferable skills**

During the course of their studies at Reading, all students will be expected to enhance their academic and personal transferable skills. In following this programme, students will have had the opportunity to develop such skills, in particular relating to communication, interpersonal skills, learning skills, numeracy, self-management, use of IT and problem-solving and will have been encouraged to further develop and enhance the full set of skills through a variety of opportunities available outside their curriculum. From their studies in Philosophy and English students are also expected to gain skills such as: effective time-management; presenting a coherent talk delivered from notes, producing concise and accurate written reports; the ability to critically discuss particular issues and arguments; to engage in discussion of each other's responses as well as articulate the student's own views; the ability to handle abstract ideas and utilise problem-solving skills, to access and deploy relevant information resources and to translate subject-specific knowledge and skills to new environments.

**Programme content**

The programme which follows states which modules must be taken (the compulsory part), together with one or more lists of modules from which the student must make a selection (the selected modules). Students must choose such additional modules as they wish, in consultation with their programme adviser, to make 120 credits in each Part. The number of credits in each module is shown in column after its title, and the credit requirements in Philosophy and English Literature are indicated for each Part.

**Part 1 (three terms)**

*Compulsory modules*

PP1RA	Reason and Argument	20	4
EN1GC	Genre and Context	20	4

EN1PE	Poetry in English	20	4
EN1RC	Research and Criticism	20	4

In Part 1 students must take PP1RA and also acquire a minimum of 20, or a maximum of 40 credits from the Philosophy modules listed below, and 60 credits from the English modules.

PP1MW	Mind & World	20	4
PP1HN	Human Nature	20	4
PP1VV	Values & Virtues	20	4

Optional Module in English Literature (20 credits)

EN1TCL	Twentieth-Century American Literature	20	4
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## Part 2 (three terms)

### In Philosophy:

Students must acquire 60 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. Part 2 optional modules include Philosophy of Mind, Logic and modules in the history of Philosophy.

### In English Literature

Students choose three optional modules in Part 2, at least one in the Autumn and one in the Spring terms. At least one module must be chosen from a list of pre-1800 modules. Optional modules may vary from year to year. A full list is available from the Programme Adviser and can also be found in the Part 2 Module Supplement.

## Part 3 (three terms)

### Compulsory modules

#### Dissertation

Students must do a dissertation, which is worth 40 credits, but may choose to do it either in Philosophy or English

PP3DIS	Dissertation (in Philosophy)	6	40
Or			
EN3DIS	Dissertation (in English)	6	40

### Optional modules

#### In Philosophy

Students must acquire at least 40 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.

#### In English Literature

Students choose two optional 20-credit modules, one in each term, to make a total of 40 credits. Optional modules: A complete list of options is available from the Programme Advisor in English and in the English Part 3 Module Supplement. Admission to optional modules will be at the discretion of the Programme Advisor in English.

## Progression requirements

To progress from Part 1 to Part 2, students must achieve each of the following:

- (i) an overall average of at least 40% across the 120 credits in Part 1;
- (ii) a mark of at least 30% in individual modules amounting to not less than 100 credits taken in Part 1;
- (iii) obtain marks of at least 40% in PP1RA and 20 more credits from PP1 modules
- (iv) obtain a weighted average of at least 40% across the PP1 modules taken

(v) a mark of at least 40% in all compulsory English Literature modules taken at Part 1.

To gain a threshold performance at Part 2, a student shall normally be required to achieve:

(i) a weighted average of 40% over 120 credits taken at Part 2;

(ii) marks of at least 40% in individual modules amounting to not less than 80 credits; and

(iii) marks of at least 30% in individual modules amounting to not less than 120 credits.

In order to progress from Part 2 to Part 3, a student must achieve a threshold performance

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

The University's honours classification scheme is:

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

For the University-wide framework for classification, which includes details of the classification method, please see: <http://www.reading.ac.uk/internal/exams/Policies/exa-class.aspx>.

The weighting of the Parts/Years in the calculation of the degree classification is

### **Three-year programmes**

Part 2 one-third

Part 3 two-thirds

Teaching within the Philosophy programme combines lectures, small group seminars and essay supervisions, with appropriate visual aides 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. See the Philosophy BA handbook for further details.

The final assessment for all English modules in all Parts is by a combination of assessed coursework and unseen examination.

Weighted Finals:

To reflect the notion of progression through the programme, Part 3 examinations will have a greater impact on a students Final Degree Classification, with Part 2 examinations contributing 33% of the Final grade and Part 3 examinations contributing 67%. The conventions for classification are included in the Programme Handbook Assessment criteria for each of the Parts are given in the appropriate Departmental Handbook.

### **Admission requirements**

Entrants to the Joint Degree programme are normally required to have obtained:

UCAS Tariff: ABB/AAC including B in Higher English Literature or related subject. International Baccalaureate: 32 points including 5 in English Higher Scottish Highers: AABBB including English Irish Leaving Certificate: AAABB at Higher Level including English All applications are considered on their individual merits. Mature candidates will be usually expected to have a B at A level English Literature, or equivalent qualification. In other respects generous concessions may be made to reflect the value of other qualifications and experience.

**Admissions Tutor:** Dr James Stazicker (Philosophy) and Dr Mary Morrissey (English)

### **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 Careers, Placement and Experience Centre (CPEC), In-session 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, academic issues (eg problems with module selection) and exam related queries. 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)

The Department of English Literature also offers students specific help to improve and develop their essay writing skills through the Royal Literary Fund Fellowship scheme, which provides a resident professional writer whose role is to advise students individually, from first-year to postgraduate level, on raising the level of their academic writing.

Within the Philosophy and English Departments additional support is provided through individual essay tutorials, and through PARS and the personal tutor system.

### **Career learning**

Career learning starts in Part 1 with the skills-focused module EN1RC Research and Criticism, in whose Summer Term students work on and submit a career learning exercise. Feedback on this exercise is provided at the start of Part 2 through the Personal Tutor system. Students are also regularly reminded that they may make an appointment with the Department's Careers Tutor at any time. They may also consult the Placement Tutor at regular drop-in sessions. All of this information is summarised in a Career Development folder on Blackboard, which provides links to the Careers Centre, the RED (Reading Experience and Development) award, the UROP (Undergraduate Research Opportunities) Programme and other University resources and opportunities, as well as the Department's own graduate database which outlines the career paths and provides contact details of past students who have agreed to be contactable by present undergraduates.

### **Career prospects**

Philosophy (like many other academic disciplines) is not a directly vocational subject such as law or medicine. But a training in Philosophy develops the ability to think clearly and reason logically, to expound and evaluate arguments, to organise ideas, to be aware of the logical and practical implications of our assertions, to be alert to alternative explanations and solutions, to reject facile assumptions and search for coherent principles of thought and action. The structured development of student's presentation skills and of the clarity and precision of their written work are also invaluable in any area of work. So, philosophical training is highly prized by employers in every area of business and professional life, where these vitally important general transferable skills are at a premium. We include among our former graduates those who have gone on to follow careers in business and management, social work, the probation service, the armed forces, the police, insurance, banking, librarianship, the Civil Service, journalism and accountancy.

In recent years students who have gained an English degree from the Department have gone into a wide variety of jobs, including teaching, publishing, journalism, the media, management, administration, and public relations. A Reading English degree provides graduates with a range of communication and analytical skills that will serve them in good stead in the marketplace. A number of graduates each year go on to further academic study and research. In addition to the help provided by the Careers, Placement and Experience Centre (CPEC), SEAL has a Careers Tutor available to advise students in English on researching and planning their career choices.

### **Opportunities for study abroad**

As part of the degree programme students have the opportunity to study abroad at an institution with which the University has a valid agreement.

There are opportunities for Single and Joint Honours Philosophy students to undertake academic placements for credit in Part 3. Students will work with module convenors to identify issues from particular modules which can be well-studied in the workplace and to identify appropriate hosts for the placement (for instance, work with an MP, an NGO, a health authority, police, legal firm, voluntary sector, etc.). Students are then responsible for securing their own placement. Assessed work will take the form of a report on the placement and on the outcomes of the study. Students undertaking an academic placement will benefit both intellectually (from applying their studies to issues in the workplace and thus illuminating the connections between their degree and the world beyond the University) and from a career perspective (gaining relevant and valuable work experience).

Students may, with permission, opt to spend the Autumn or Spring Term of Part 2 at one of the European universities with which the Department has an ERASMUS exchange agreement, or with one of the universities in North America or Australia with which the University has an exchange agreement. Students taking this option

will select courses at the host university for the relevant term equivalent to 60 Reading credits (30ECTS) at Intermediate level which will count towards final degree classification. As well as experience of the teaching and learning processes of another institution, this option gives students the chance to experience daily life in another culture, to learn or improve their knowledge of a European language, and to enhance their curriculum

### **Placement opportunities**

There are opportunities for Single and Joint Honours Philosophy students to undertake academic placements for credit in Part 3. Students will work with module convenors to identify issues from particular modules which can be well-studied in the workplace and to identify appropriate hosts for the placement (for instance, work with an MP, an NGO, a health authority, police, legal firm, voluntary sector, etc.). Students are then responsible for securing their own placement. Assessed work will take the form of a report on the placement and on the outcomes of the study. Students undertaking an academic placement will benefit both intellectually (from applying their studies to issues in the workplace and thus illuminating the connections between their degree and the world beyond the University) and from a career perspective (gaining relevant and valuable work experience).

In addition to the Part 2 module EN2CAW Communications at work, which involves a placement, all modules at Parts 2 and 3 come with the option of an 'academic placement' which complements and develops the learning on a module. These academic placements may take place either before or after the teaching of the module. They will normally be assessed by a placement report in lieu of one element from the normal assessment pattern, but students may also elect not to have their placement report contribute towards assessment for the module. Students have the chance to discuss and develop their placement ideas at regular drop-in sessions held by the Placement Tutor. Students may take a maximum of two placements over the course of their degree.

### **Programme Outcomes**

The programme provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding, skills, qualities and other attributes in the following areas:

#### **Knowledge and Understanding**

##### **A. Knowledge and understanding of:**

1. Literary texts in English from selected periods between the Middle Ages and the present day
2. A range of kinds of texts including fiction, poetry and drama
3. Methods of critical textual analysis
4. Ways in which social, cultural and historical issues relate to texts
5. A range of approaches in English studies
6. Selected special fields of English
7. The main areas of Philosophy and of the views of great figures in the history of Philosophy
8. Particular issues in Philosophy, and at the forefront of philosophical debate reflecting the research interests and professional activities of staff

##### **Teaching/learning methods and strategies**

Knowledge and understanding are gained through formal teaching (lectures, seminar discussions, and individual essay feedback), prescribed and recommended reading, and the writing of essays and a dissertation. Part 1 offers a broad introduction to 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 7. In Part 2 the understanding and skills acquired in Part 1 are developed with particular emphasis on 1, 2, 4 and 7 through seminars, lectures, individual feedback and in Philosophy through tutorials. Part 3 introduces more specialized study, particularly in relation to 3, 5, 6 and 8, through a choice of seminar-based modules (and in Philosophy through additional tutorials) together with supervised, independent study leading to a dissertation.

##### *Assessment*

In Parts 1 and 2, knowledge and understanding of 1 - 5 and 7 are tested through a combination of essays and unseen written examinations. In Part 3, assessment is through a mixture of methods, such as extended essays, essays plus unseen exams, and the dissertation.

#### **Skills and other attributes**

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

1. Capacity for independent analysis and research
2. Identification of problems and issues
3. The ability to read closely and critically
4. An ability to reflect on one's own positions
5. The ability to think clearly and reason logically
6. The capacity to critically evaluate arguments and to question assumptions of any given viewpoint

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

1. The ability to criticize and formulate interpretations of texts
2. An ability to engage in critical argument using relevant theoretical approaches
3. An awareness of the rhetorical resources of the English language
4. Bibliographical and research skills
5. A knowledge of appropriate conventions in the presentation of written work
6. An ability to relate the study of English to cultural and social issues
7. An ability to criticize and formulate philosophical arguments

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

1. Fluency in written and oral communication
2. The ability to formulate and present arguments
3. Assessing the merits of competing approaches
4. The ability to translate subject-specific knowledge and skills into other environments
5. The ability to find and use relevant information resources
6. Time-management skills
7. A creative approach to problem-solving
8. Group and interpersonal skills
9. An ability to self-evaluate and self-reflect
10. Use of information technology, especially word-processing
11. the opportunity to develop skills relating to career management

### **Teaching/learning methods and strategies**

Intellectual skills are acquired through independent reading (1), seminar preparation and discussion, and essay writing (1, 2, 3, 5 and 6) and essay feedback through tutorials (2, 3, 4, 5 and 6).

#### *Assessment*

1 - 3, 5 and 6 are assessed summatively in essays and unseen exams. 1- 6 are assessed formatively through seminar discussion and essay feedback and tutorials.

### **Teaching/learning methods and strategies**

1 - 3, 6 and 7 are developed in seminars, essays and essay tutorials. 2, 4, 5 and 7 are developed through essays, essay feedback and dissertation guidance and supervision.

#### *Assessment*

All the subject specific practical skills are assessed through formative and summative essays. 1 - 3, 6 and 7 are also tested in unseen examinations.

### **Teaching/learning methods and strategies**

Transferable skills are developed through seminar discussions(1, 2, 3, 4, 7 and 9), through seminar presentations, essay writing, tutorial feedback and unseen examinations (1 - 9). 4 and 7 particularly are developed through requiring students to draw on acquired knowledge and skills when analyzing new material in essays and unseen examinations. 5 and 10 are developed through use of the library and other sources of information, for seminar preparation, essay writing and research for the dissertation. We require that all summatively assessed essays are word-processed (10). 11 is assessed in the PP1CT module.

#### *Assessment*

1 - 7 and 9 are assessed through essays, unseen examinations, and the dissertation. 9 is encouraged through essay feedback and essay tutorials. 8 is encouraged through seminars and in tutorials.

**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.**