

HEYTHROP COLLEGE, UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

Programme Specification

1. Title: MA Philosophy	
2. Awarding institution	University of London
3. Teaching institution	Heythrop College, University of London
4. Final Award	MA Philosophy
5. Interim Awards (if applicable)	Postgraduate Diploma in Philosophy <i>To receive a postgraduate diploma students must complete four taught modules.</i> Postgraduate Certificate in Philosophy
6. Mode(s) of study	Full time and part-time
7. Normal duration of Programme	One year full-time, two years part-time
8.	
9. External reference points used to develop this programme	The Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland 2008
10. Date of production or revision of this specification	April 2013
11. Programme Convenor	Dr Patrick Riordan
12. Brief description of this programme	
<p>The MA Philosophy is designed to meet the needs of those who wish to explore philosophical issues either as a development of undergraduate study or following a first degree in a suitable subject other than Philosophy. This carefully-focused programme both deepens students' earlier philosophical work and functions as a demanding but effective introduction to this fascinating subject.</p> <p>The Heythrop MA Philosophy is a coherent presentation of the central questions of philosophy. It provides opportunities to consider a range of philosophical topics including contemporary and ancient philosophy, philosophy of religion, Arabic philosophy and ethics.</p> <p>The MA consists of four modules and a dissertation. All students study a core module in Knowledge and Reality, and also either a module in Ethics or in Political Philosophy – each of which runs in alternate years, so that full-time students do not normally have a choice between these. Students who have not previously studied Philosophy at degree level must also take the module Introduction to Philosophy.</p> <p>Students choose the remaining one or two modules from a set of options which will take them further into the central themes and methods of Philosophy. By agreement, if so desired, it may be possible to select a module from one of the other MA programmes at Heythrop, such as the MA in Philosophy and Religion.</p> <p>The dissertation involves a substantial independent investigation of a topic selected by you with the approval of your supervisor. Usually, it will build on one or more of your previous modules.</p>	
13. Relationship to staff research	
<p>A very substantial proportion of staff are active researchers within the disciplines in which they teach. Many optional modules directly reflect the research interests of the module teacher.</p>	

14. Programme Aims

The programmes aims:

1. to promote critical understanding and knowledge of the core aspects of philosophy;
2. to explore and evaluate selected contemporary trends in philosophy, with special emphasis on this discipline within the English-speaking world;
3. to understand, gain and develop the analytical, interpretative and communicative skills appropriate to this area of study;
4. to offer an accessible conversion programme for those who do not have a first degree in philosophy but who wish to achieve the same level as graduates in that discipline;
5. to provide those who do have a first degree in philosophy with a path to the PhD degree and to further research in philosophy;
6. to address the needs of those who teach Philosophy or Religious Studies in schools, by covering topics directly related to the AS and A level syllabus.

15. Learning outcomes

The **MA Philosophy (Level 7)** provides opportunities for students to achieve and demonstrate the following learning outcomes:

Knowledge and Understanding

By the end of the programme, competent and diligent students can expect to attain the following:

LO1	A critical appreciation of the variety of approaches to the study of philosophy and of key assumptions and arguments characteristic of its core subjects
LO2	A demonstrably competent knowledge of the content of current philosophical debates, with due attention to their historical sources
LO3	An understanding of the relevant links between philosophy and its neighbouring disciplines, such as psychology, natural science, linguistics, political theory, and theology
LO4	The ability to start undertaking research in philosophy (the review of recently published journal articles is the main instrument of initiation in this area)

Intellectual and Cognitive Skills

A student will be able to:

LO5	Analyse and synthesise key concepts and ideas
LO6	Apply, with insight, key concepts in particular situations
LO7	Identify, gather and analyse material from a range of sources to inform research
LO8	Make sound judgments concerning research findings and the relevance of their application

Practical and transferable skills

The practical and *transferable skills* which are fostered are:

LO9	The ability for independent thought, expressed in writing
LO10	The ability to discuss in groups, in an open-minded way, issues where there are deeply held differences of opinion
LO11	The ability to analyse, evaluate and present clearly both one's own and others' ideas, including the work of original philosophical thinkers
LO12	The ability to use bibliographical resources, including electronic resources, and to conduct research (the dissertation is the main instrument for training in this area)
LO13	The ability to act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks where there are a wide variety of resources and approaches available.

16. PROGRAMME STRUCTURE

Module Title	Code	Level	Credit tariff
Compulsory Core Module			
Knowledge and Reality	PHH410	7	30
Either: Ethics (taught every other year)	PHH412	7	30
Or: Political Philosophy (taught every other year)	PHH411	7	30
Dissertation	PHH599	7	60
<i>The topic of the dissertation is chosen by the student, subject to approval by the supervisor.</i>			
Optional Modules (choose 2)			
Introduction to Philosophy (compulsory for those who do not have a first degree in Philosophy)	PHH502	7	30
Logic and Language	PHH503	7	30
Mind and Psychology	PHH504	7	30
Reason and Religion	PHH505	7	30

17. Admissions requirements

An honours degree, (normally 2.1 or above) or equivalent, in an appropriate subject
For mature students, academic ability to undertake the programme may be considered on the basis of other evidence, including learning from experience, evidence of prior study or work at an appropriate level, references and interview.
Applicants whose first language is not English should have an IELTS score of 7.0 or equivalent.

18. Indicative Learning and Teaching activities

May include:

Lectures, interactive lectures, seminars enabling group work and group discussions, individual or small group academic tutorials, individual learning, research and study, use of film or other audio visual aids, group activities, external visits, guest speakers.

19. Assessment strategy and indicative activities

Students are assessed by means of a range of tasks which may include book reviews, essays of various lengths, essays written under examination conditions, unseen examinations and presentations. Essays are structured to allow students to demonstrate that they have acquired appropriate knowledge and understanding. The manner in which students pursue original thoughts and ideas and question opinions, and the organisational skills used to structure answers allows the transferable skills to be assessed.

Students submit coursework through the Virtual Learning Environment (Helios) and receive detailed on-line feedback or oral feedback in a tutorial

All coursework is moderated in accordance with College published procedures. All end-of-year essays are blind doubled marked and all are subject to review by the external examiner.

20. Support for students and their learning

Students can also access a range of support mechanisms through the college. The Student Development Manager can offer personal and academic support, including study skills and access to a range of student welfare provision, either in College or through the University of London. Support and guidance on academic matters is available from module convenors and programme convenors and also from the Heythrop Students' Union.

21. Student evaluation opportunities

Students have a range of opportunities, both formal and informal, to evaluate their learning experiences. Informal means includes consulting individual members of staff, including the module

leader, programme convener or staff in the Student Services Centre. Issues can be raised with the Heythrop Students' Union who can raise issues with the College on behalf of individuals or groups or students. Formal module evaluations are carried out. Taught postgraduate and research students have termly meetings to provide feedback to staff. Occasional consultations or evaluation exercises gain views on aspects of the student experience, and the College participates in external surveys such as the NSS, PRES and PTES.

22. Indicative time commitments

Each module usually involves a weekly 2-hour seminar for one term, with the exception of a reading week in the middle of the term. There are therefore normally 11 x 2 class hours.

Student effort hours which are not spent in classes or tutorials are used for directed personal study – e.g. preparing for seminars, and some coursework tasks – and self-directed work – e.g. wider reading, some coursework tasks, the dissertation, and preparing for examinations.

23. Opportunities for graduates of this programme

Some graduates progress to teacher training programmes or postgraduate study. Others use their knowledge of religion in the public or voluntary sectors. The transferable skills gained are invaluable in many professions. Achieving a Masters degree in Philosophy demonstrates to an employer in any field your capacity to apply formal approaches to analysing complex and widely relevant issues: it is thus a highly transferable postgraduate qualification.