Programme Specification template

Programme Title MA (Philosophy)

Awarding Institution:	The University of Reading
Teaching Institution:	The University of Reading
Faculty of Letters	Programme length: 12 months f/t (24 months p/t)
For students entering in 2002	Date of specification:

Programme Director: Prof. G. Strawson
Board of Studies:
Accreditation:

Summary of programme aims

The MA programme in philosophy aims to enable students
- to build on their undergraduate studies, deepening their knowledge and understanding of chosen aspects of Philosophy;
- to discuss research issues with practising researchers, so as to become aware of current research in Philosophy;
- to develop their research skills and prepare them, where appropriate, for research degrees.

Transferable skills

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 research, communication of complex material (both written and oral), information handling, time management, problem-solving, self-directed learning and use of information technology. The MA in Philosophy will help students develop skills such as: synthesising information from a range of sources, providing a coherent overview of competing theories and positions on a topic; analysing and critically evaluating competing theories and positions, and arguing for the merits of one or another of these; planning and producing a substantial piece of research under supervision, as a foundation for further study; utilising, at a reasonably sophisticated level, the conceptual tools and problem-solving skills acquired as an undergraduate.

Programme content

The course is taught by means of individually supervised essays and a supervised dissertation.

MA (Philosophy) (180 credits):

- 3 x 6,000 word essays at 30 credits each
- 1 x seminar presentation at 10 credits
- 1 x 20,000 word dissertation at 80 credits

Two essays will be written during the Autumn term, one essay and one presentation during the Spring term, and the dissertation from Summer term onwards.

Postgraduate Diploma (Philosophy) (120 credits):

- 1 x 6,000 word essay at 30 credits
- 1 x seminar presentation at 10 credits
- 1 x 20,000 word dissertation at 80 credits

or

- 3 x 6,000 words essays at 30 credits each
- 1 x 5,000 word essay at 20 credits
- 1 x seminar presentation at 10 credits

or

- 4 x 6,000 word essays at 30 credits each

Postgraduate Certificate (Philosophy) (60 credits):

- 2 x 6,000 word essays at 30 credits each

Mod Code	*Module Title*	*Credits*	*Level*
PP/M/10	Philosophy of Mind	30	M
PP/M/15	Epistemology	30	M
PP/M/25	Metaphysics	30	M
PP/M/30	Philosophy of Science	30	M
PP/M/35	Wittgenstein	30	M
PP/M/40	Philosophy of Language	30	M
PP/M/45	Continental Philosophy	30	M
PP/M/50	Ethics	30	M
PP/M/55	Aesthetics	30	M
PP/M/60	Philosophy of Law	30	M
PP/M/65	Early Modern Philosophy	30	M
PP/M/70	Political Philosophy	30	M
PP/M/75	Philosophy of Religion	30	M
PP/M/80	Kant	30	M
PP/M/85	Plato and Aristotle	30	M
PP/M/100	Dissertation	80	M

Part-time/Modular arrangements

24 months part-time. Students will follow this schedule:

- one essay module due beginning Spring Term
- one essay module due beginning Summer Term
- one essay module due end Summer Term
- presentation during Autumn Term
- dissertation during year 2

Arrangements for Certificate and Diploma will be made as and when necessary.

Progression requirements

50% for pass
60%+ (merit) for progression to MPhil/PhD

Summary of teaching and assessment

Teaching is primarily by means of individually supervised essays and supervised dissertation, supplemented by classes when resources allow, on subjects of common interest to postgraduates.

Admission requirements

Entrants to this programme are normally required to have obtained:

A good degree in Philosophy or a related subject.

Admissions Tutor:

Prof. G. Strawson.

Support for students and their learning

University support for students and their learning falls into two categories. Learning support includes IT Services, which has several hundred computers and the University Library, which across its three sites holds over a million volumes, subscribes to around 4,000 current periodicals, has a range of electronic sources of information and houses 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 Programme Directors, the Careers Advisory Service, the University's Special Needs Advisor, Study Advisors, Hall Wardens and the Students' Union.

Career prospects

Over the years students who have followed this programme have gone into jobs in both the public and private sectors. Some go on to further study at PhD level and obtain academic and academic-related jobs (e.g. lectureships, administrative posts on research boards, schoolteaching). Some enter the civil service. In the private sector, recent jobs include law, business and IT. In general, there is 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

N/A

Educational aims of the programme

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- to discuss research issues with practising researchers, so as to become aware of current research in Philosophy;
- to develop their research skills and prepare them, where appropriate, for research degrees.

Programme Outcomes

Knowledge and Understanding

A. Knowledge and understanding of:

- a range of specific topics in Philosophy

- recent research on these topics, including contemporary literature, current debates, alternative theories and positions

- one particular topic in depth, through writing of a dissertation

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

- Individual supervision of essays and dissertation

- Small group discussion in seminars and classes led by one or more members of staff

- Seminar presentations prepared with assistance from supervisor

Assessment

- essays
- presentation
- dissertation

Skills and other attributes

B. Intellectual skills – able to:	**Teaching/learning methods and strategies**
- critically read, comprehend and evaluate a large range of philosophical texts - synthesise information from a range of sources, providing a coherent overview of competing theories and positions on a topic - analyse and critically evaluate competing theories and positions, and to argue for the merits of one or another of these - comprehend complex philosophical concepts at a reasonably sophisticated level - plan and produce a substantial piece of research under supervision, as a foundation for further study	As above, with emphasis on self-directed learning facilitated through the use of research-based teaching materials and methods *Assessment* As above, with extensive feedback on work in progress through regular meetings with supervisors, staff-led group discussion in seminar presentations, as well as written comments on work.

C. Practical skills – able to:	Teaching/learning methods and strategies
- produce fluent and structured pieces of written work, including an extended piece, with bibliography and footnotes - present a fluent and structured presentation, explaining material to staff and students who may or may not have extensive familiarity with the topic - critically discuss particular theories and positions both orally and in writing, and to engage in discussion of each other's work as well as articulating their own - utilise, at a reasonably sophisticated level, the conceptual tools and problem-solving skills acquired as an undergraduate	As above for B and C *Assessment* As above for B and C

D. Transferable skills – able to:	**Teaching/learning methods and strategies**
• 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 library and IT skills, e.g. word processing, e-mail, Internet-based research tools, bibliographical tools, CD ROMs (Philosophers' Index etc.).	As above for B and C, plus: special classes at the beginning of the course on research skills. *Assessment* As above for B and C

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 expect 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 module and programme handbooks.