

Programme Specification

BA Philosophy, Business and Ethics

For students entering Part 1 in September 2025

UCAS Code: VN51

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This document sets out key information about your Programme and forms part of your Terms and Conditions with the University of Reading.

Awarding Institution	University of Reading
Teaching Institution	University of Reading
Length of Programme	3 years
Length of Programme with placement/year abroad	BA Philosophy, Business and Ethics with Placement Experience - 4 years (UCAS Code: VN52) BA Philosophy, Business and Ethics with Year Abroad - 4 years (internal transfer only)
Accreditation	N/A
QAA Subject Benchmarking Group	Philosophy; Business and Management

Programme information and content

In this programme, you will be required to think deeply and critically about the big ideas that lie behind the behaviours and values of people and organisations. The programme combines rigorous analysis of core philosophical and ethical theory, with practical and real-world applications in business contexts. The Philosophy side of the programme will encourage you to confront your deepest beliefs and assumptions in a characteristically philosophical way, to inform you about current debates in philosophy, and to develop a sense of the significance of philosophical thinking in dealing with contemporary issues.

The Business side will provide you with a firm understanding of the practice, concepts and theories of business management as well as the skills and competencies which will help you apply them. Ethics forms an integral component of both sides of the programme, and graduates will be exceptionally well prepared to think through the ethical and commercial dilemmas facing decision-makers in the coming decades.

Key features of the programme are as follows:

- The programme can be taken over either three or four years. Students opting to take the four-year programme can undertake a work placement and/or study abroad in their third year.
- While the programme ensures that you will acquire knowledge in core areas of Philosophy and Business, it also offers a high degree of flexibility. Students will be able to choose from a wide range optional modules throughout the programme, and

will also have the possibility to tilt the balance of the programme slightly further towards Philosophy, or towards Business, if they wish.

The programme has a strong focus on employability. The world is constantly evolving, and we believe that equipping students with a strong philosophical grounding, as well as developing their business oriented and personal skills, will ensure that they are well equipped to succeed in a rapidly changing environment. The skills required to secure graduate roles, and then succeed in them, is embedded in the curriculum.

Part 1:	Introduces you to core ideas in the fields of Philosophy and to the basic concepts and methods of critical thinking, basic logic, and the psychology of reasoning. Business modules provide a strong foundation in strategy, marketing and organisational behaviour as well as either accounting or data analytics. In the Summer Term, you have the opportunity to focus on developing your own business and personal skill set – this will prepare you not only for your remaining time at University, but also for the external market as you apply for internships, placements or full-time employment.
Part 2:	Provides you with a deeper awareness of current philosophers, of the skills of argument and presentation, and of the epistemology and methodology of Philosophy. Business Ethics is specifically introduced, and you have the opportunity to select from a range of other Business School modules. In the Summer Term students will work with organisations on live projects linked to the theme of social responsibility.
Placement/Study abroad year:	Students can choose to transfer straight into Part 3 or undertake an additional year. This will typically involve either a professional work placement or study at an overseas University. A one-year work placement aims at developing professional practice skills that form the basis for students' future careers. It provides hands-on experience in a business or professional practice and develops transferrable skills. A year studying abroad allows students to gain life experiences and skills that are actively sought out by employers. These can be a talking point at interviews or part of a CV that makes you stand out from the crowd. It is possible for students to combine a shorter work placement with a single semester of study at an overseas University, subject to the appropriate timing of work and study elements.
Part 3:	Gives you the opportunity to develop full mastery of the disciplines across a broad range of different conceptions of what counts as 'Philosophy', 'Business' or 'Ethics'. The emphasis is on developing independent learning, personal effectiveness and self-awareness as well as the ability to reflect effectively on your progress and strengths and on the goals you wish to achieve.

Programme Learning Outcomes - BA Philosophy, Business and Ethics

During the course of the Programme, you will have the opportunity to develop a range of skills, knowledge and attributes (known as learning outcomes) For this programme, these are:

Learning outcomes	
1	Critically read, comprehend and evaluate a range of philosophical texts.
2	Explain and evaluate ideas, theories, schools of thought and arguments of the key philosophers and major fields of philosophy.
3	Explain and evaluate various approaches to philosophy across a range of different philosophical traditions.
4	Apply philosophical principles to contemporary issues and real-world situations.
5	Construct and communicate complex, rational and persuasive arguments in a philosophical way for a variety of purposes and audiences.
6	Understand and appreciate the global context in which organisations operate and have an understanding of the importance of international business and the drivers of change in business in the UK and abroad.
7	Appreciate the need for continuing professional learning and development throughout their career.
8	Demonstrate confident, credible communication regardless of the mode of transmission.
9	Demonstrate flexibility and a readiness to change.
10	Engage with and be knowledgeable about the leading-edge practices and current developments in the practice and theory of business management.
11	Be knowledgeable about the business and management career paths that are open to them.
12	Engage with and be knowledgeable about sound business practice.

You will be expected to engage in learning activities to achieve these Programme learning outcomes. Assessment of your modules will reflect these learning outcomes and test how far you have met the requirements for your degree.

To pass the Programme, you will be required to meet the progression or accreditation and award criteria set out below.

In addition to the learning outcomes stated above if you are on a placement or study abroad programme you will have the opportunity to develop the following learning outcome:

Additional Learning outcomes
Study Abroad By the end of the Study Abroad Programme, students will have adapted to international study contexts in order to achieve the required academic outcomes determined by the host institution.
Placement

By the end of the Placement Year Programme, students will have explored and developed their professional experience, skills and knowledge, contributing significantly towards their continuous learning and career prospects as graduates.

Module information

Each part comprises 120 credits, allocated across a range of compulsory and optional modules as shown below. Compulsory modules are listed.

Part 1 Modules:

Module	Name	Credits	Level
MM1F20	Business in Practice: Markets, Marketing and Management	20	4
MM1F29	Developing Professional Excellence	20	4
PP1ML	The Meaning of Life	20	4
PP1RA	Reason and Argument	20	4

Remaining credits will be made up of 20 credit optional modules available in the Department of Philosophy and the Henley Business School.

Part 2 Modules:

Module	Name	Credits	Level
MM295	Business Ethics 1	20	5
MM298	Social Responsibility in Action	20	5
PP2EA	Ethical Argument	20	5

Remaining credits will be made up of optional modules available in the Department of Philosophy and the Henley Business School. Of these remaining modules, at least 20 credits must be chosen from the Department of Philosophy.

Modules during a placement year or study year (if applicable):

Students enrolled on a 4-year programme will take one 120 credit module in either Study Abroad or Professional Placement Year.

Students may be permitted to undertake a placement year or a study abroad year between Part 2 and Part 3 of the programme. In such cases students will transfer to a 4-year programme. The placement or study abroad year should not normally be shorter than nine months full-time.

If you take a year-long placement or study abroad, Part 3 as described below may be subject to variation.

Part 3 Modules:

Module	Name	Credits	Level
MM304	Developing Personal Leadership	20	6

In addition to the compulsory module above, at Part 3, students will take one of two pathways:

On the first pathway, students will take a 40-credit Dissertation module in either Philosophy or Management, with the remaining credits taken from modules available in the Department of Philosophy and the Henley Business School. At least 40 credits must be taken in each department, but students can choose to tilt the balance of credits to Philosophy or Business, if they wish.

On the second pathway, students will take a 20-credit Independent Learning module within the Department of Philosophy with the remaining credits taken from modules available in the Department of Philosophy and the Henley Business School. At least 40 credits must be taken in each department, but students can choose to tilt the balance of credits to Philosophy or Business, if they wish.

Placement opportunities

Placements:

You may be provided with the opportunity to undertake a credit-bearing placement as part of your Programme. This will form all or part of an optional module. You will be required to find and secure a placement opportunity, with the support of the University.

Study Abroad:

You may be provided with the opportunity to undertake a Study Abroad placement during your Programme. This is subject to you meeting academic conditions detailed in the Programme Handbook, including obtaining the relevant permissions from your School, and the availability of a suitable Study Abroad placement. If you undertake a Study Abroad placement, further arrangements will be discussed and agreed with you.

Optional modules:

The optional modules available can vary from year to year. An indicative list of the range of optional modules for your programme can be found online in the Course Catalogue. Details of optional modules for each part, including any additional costs associated with the optional modules, will be made available to you prior to the beginning of the Part in which they are to be taken and you will be given an opportunity to express interest in the optional modules that you would like to take. Entry to optional modules will be at the discretion of the University and subject to availability and may be subject to pre-requisites, such as completion of another module. Although the University tries to ensure you are able to take the optional modules in which you have expressed interest this cannot be guaranteed.

Teaching and learning delivery:

You will be taught primarily through a mixture of lectures and seminars, depending on the modules you choose. Some modules may include group work, including marked presentations. Further information on the delivery of module content is contained in the individual module descriptions.

Elements of your programme will be delivered via digital technology.

The scheduled teaching and learning activity hours and amount of technology enhanced learning activity for your programme will depend upon your module combination. In addition, you will undertake some self-scheduled teaching and learning activities, designed by and/or involving staff, which give some flexibility for you to choose when to complete them. You will also be expected to undertake guided independent study. Information about module study hours including contact hours and the amount of independent study which a student is normally expected to undertake for a module is indicated in the relevant module description.

Accreditation details

N/A

Assessment

The programme will be assessed through a variety of means, including written coursework, class tests, and written and oral examinations. Further information is contained in the individual module descriptions.

Progression

Part 1

To achieve a threshold performance at Part 1, a student will normally be required to:

- (i) Obtain an overall average of 40% over 120 credits taken in Part 1;
- (ii) Obtain a mark of at least 40% in individual modules amounting to not less than 80 credits taken in Part 1; and
- (iii) Obtain marks of at least 30% in modules amounting to 120 credits.

In order to progress from Part 1 to Part 2, a student must achieve a threshold performance;

The achievement of a threshold performance at Part 1 qualifies a student for a Certificate of Higher Education if they leave the University before completing the subsequent Part.

Students on Joint Honours programmes who achieve the University threshold standard for progression at Part 1 may transfer to a Single Honours degree in one of their joint subject areas if they have achieved at least 40% in 40 or more credits (i.e. 2 x 20 credit modules) of modules in the programme they wish to transfer. In addition, students must also have met any programme specific requirements on the Single Honours programme to which they may

wish to transfer. Students should seek advice about the titles of programmes they may be eligible to transfer to.

Part 2

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

- (i) Obtain a weighted average of 40% over 120 credits taken in Part 2; and
- (ii) Obtain marks of at least 40% in individual modules amounting to at least 80 credits taken in Part 2; and
- (iii) Obtain marks of at least 30% in individual modules amounting to at least 120 credits, except that a mark below 30% may be condoned in no more than 20 credits of modules owned by the Department of Mathematics and Statistics.

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

The achievement of a threshold performance at Part 2 qualifies a student for a Diploma of Higher Education if they leave the University before completing the subsequent Part.

Professional/placement year

Students are required to pass the professional placement year/study abroad year in order to progress on the programme which incorporates the professional placement year/study abroad year. Students who fail the professional placement year/study abroad year transfer to the non-placement year version of the programme.

Classification

Bachelors' degrees

The University's honours classification scheme is based on the following:

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

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

Four year programmes, including study abroad/professional placement:

Part 2: one-third

Study abroad/Professional placement: not included in the classification

Part 3: two-thirds

The classification method is given in detail in Section 17 of the Assessment Handbook.

Additional costs of the programme

During your programme of study you may incur some additional costs. A range of resources to support your curriculum, including textbooks and electronic resources, are available through the library. In Philosophy, there are no textbooks which you must buy and students are encouraged to discuss the purchase of textbooks or other resources with the module convenor before purchasing.

Reading lists and module specific costs are listed on the individual module descriptions.

Costs are indicative and may vary according to optional modules chosen and are subject to inflation and other price fluctuations. Estimates were calculated in 2024.

For further information about your Programme please refer to the Programme Handbook and the relevant module descriptions, which are available at <http://www.reading.ac.uk/module/>. The Programme Handbook and the relevant module descriptions do not form part of your Terms and Conditions with the University of Reading.

BA Philosophy, Business and Ethics for students entering Part 1 in session 2025/26
1 August 2024

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