ROYAL HOLLOWAY
University of London

COURSE SPECIFICATION

This document describes the **Master of Arts and PGDip in Philosophy**. This specification is valid for new entrants from **September 2022**. The course consists of three streams: (1) European Philosophy; (2) Modern Philosophy; (3) Political Philosophy.

The aims of the MA European Philosophy stream are:
- to give students knowledge of some of the major theoretical positions that define the contemporary landscape of European philosophy
- to familiarise students with the different approaches to philosophy found in the European tradition
- to enable students to gain knowledge of the core texts and issues which form the framework for contemporary philosophical research
- to encourage an awareness of the connections between European philosophy and other disciplines and practices in the sciences and arts
- to provide training in research techniques in the field of study
- to foster an independent learning ability required for continuing professional development
- to develop key communications, IT and management skills relevant for postgraduate work
- to develop advanced writing skills

The aims of the MA Modern Philosophy stream are:
- to familiarise students with methods involved in both analytical and European approaches to modern philosophy
- to enable students to gain knowledge of the core texts and issues which form the framework for contemporary philosophical research
- to encourage an awareness of similarities and differences between analytical and European traditions of modern philosophy
- to provide training in research techniques in the field of study
- to foster an independent learning ability required for continuing professional development
- to develop key communications, IT and management skills relevant for postgraduate work
- to develop advanced writing skills

The aims of the MA Political Philosophy stream are:
- to give students knowledge of the main political implications of modern philosophy
- to familiarise students with methods involved in both analytical and European approaches to political philosophy
- to enable students to gain knowledge of the core texts and issues which form the framework for contemporary philosophical research
- to encourage an awareness of similarities and differences between analytical and European traditions of political philosophy
- to provide training in research techniques in the field of study
- to foster an independent learning ability required for continuing professional development
- to develop key communications, IT and management skills relevant for postgraduate work
- to develop advanced writing skills

The course is delivered over one year of full-time study (52 weeks) or up to five years of part-time study (260 weeks). On successful completion of the course a student should have an understanding of the area of the MA at a level appropriate for a postgraduate qualification. Whilst being a self-contained degree in its own right, the course provides suitable and recognised qualifications for entry to PhD study in the same or a closely related field.

Further information

This document provides a summary of the main features of the course(s), and of the outcomes which a student might reasonably be expected to achieve if full advantage is taken of the learning opportunities provided. Further information is contained in the College prospectus, the College Regulations and in various handbooks issued to students upon arrival. Whilst Royal Holloway keeps all its information for prospective applicants and students under review, courses and the availability of individual modules are necessarily subject to change at any time, and prospective applicants are therefore advised to seek confirmation of any factors which might affect their decision to follow a specific course. In turn, Royal Holloway will inform applicants and students as soon as is practicable of any substantial changes which might affect their studies.

Learning outcomes
Teaching and learning in the course are closely informed by the active research of staff. In general terms, the course provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate the following learning outcomes:

Knowledge and understanding
- an appreciation of the key concepts, debates, and approaches characteristic of the traditions of European, Modern (European and analytic), or Political philosophy;
- an understanding of the complex relationship between argument, experience and interpretation in European, European and analytic, or political philosophy;
- a familiarity with the history of European, European and analytic or political philosophy, and the way this history influences contemporary theorists;
- knowledge of how to critically appraise texts and theories in contexts beyond philosophy;
- awareness of the centrality of philosophical issues to all areas of endeavour
- an advanced knowledge of a variety of critical and new technology approaches applicable to the specific field;
- the articulation of knowledge and the understanding of texts, concepts and theories relating to the chosen area of European, European and analytic, or political philosophy at an advanced level;
- understanding of the appropriate critical and technological skills required in the specific field of study;
- the acquisition of knowledge of advanced scholarship in the chosen area of the discipline to a level appropriate for a MA degree.

Skills and other attributes
- the ability to evaluate relevant critical, theoretical and contextual research at the forefront of the field;
- the ability to analyse and critically interpret text and data;*
- the ability to conduct philosophical research independently at an advanced level using traditional and electronic resources;*
- to further develop skills of reflection on reading and learning, and skills in information handling and retrieval;*
- the ability to articulate knowledge and the understanding of texts, concepts and theories at an advanced level, demonstrating self-direction and originality;
- the ability to present logical and coherent written and oral arguments of varying lengths;*
- the ability to comprehend and develop sophisticated concepts and original critical ideas;*
- enhanced interpersonal skills, involving recognising and respecting the viewpoints, and interacting constructively with other people;*
- enhanced time management and organisational skills including working to deadlines, prioritising tasks, organising work-time;*

- in addition, the course fosters the development of a range of personal attributes that are important in the world of work, and that strengthens our postgraduates' abilities to engage in lifelong learning and contribute to the wider community. These include personal motivation; the ability to work autonomously and with others; self-awareness and self-management; empathy and insight; intellectual integrity; awareness of responsibility as a local, national and international citizen; interest in lifelong learning; flexibility and adaptability; creativity.*

* transferable skills

Teaching, learning and assessment

Teaching and learning is mostly by means of seminar discussions, oral presentations, guided independent research, guided independent study, coursework essays, and a dissertation. The basic strategies are to nurture the interest and enthusiasm of the students for the field, to develop the students' critical and communication skills and to develop critical, research and creative skills. Assessment of knowledge and understanding is typically by coursework essays, and a dissertation. Full details of the assessments for individual modules can be obtained from the Department.

Details of the course structure(s)

The full-time course lasts 52 weeks, beginning in September.

The brief outline of the course is shown below; however students can obtain further details from the Course Handbook.

The number of credits required for the MA is 180, for the PGDip the number required is 120 and for the PGCert it is 60 credits.

Credits are indicated in brackets, and indicate proportional weighting towards the MA, PGDip and PGCert classification grade. The course structure for the PgDip is as below, with the exception that students will not undertake the dissertation, while that for the PG Cert is that students are required to take modules worth only 60 credits.

European Philosophy stream

Students must take the following:
(i)   PY5000 - Advanced Topics in Philosophy (40 credits)
(ii)   Two modules from the following list:
         PY5002 - The European Philosophical Trajectory: from Kant to the Present (20 credits)
         PY5003 - Twentieth Century French Thought (20 credits)
         PR5418 - Contemporary Continental Political Theory (20 credits)
(iii)   40 credits of option modules
(iv)   PY5001 - Dissertation (60 credits)

Options will be chosen from the following list of modules:

PY5004 - Legacies of Wittgenstein (20 credits)
PY5005 - Continental Aesthetics (20 credits)
PY5006 - Adorno and Critical Theory (20 credits)
PY5007 - Issues in Normative Epistemology (20 credits)
PR5416 - Political Concepts (20 credits)
PR5445 - Identity, Power and Radical Political Theory (20 credits)
PR5916 - Human Rights (20 credits)
PR5936 - Anglo-American Political Theory (20 credits)
CL5669 - Neo-Platonism (40 credits)

Students may also take the remaining 20 credit unit not chosen in list (ii).

Modern Philosophy stream
Students must take the following:
(i)   PY5000 - Advanced Topics in Philosophy (40 credits)
(ii)   Both of the following modules:
         PY5002 - The European Philosophical Trajectory: from Kant to the Present (20 credits)
         PY5004 - Legacies of Wittgenstein (20 credits)
(iii)   40 credits of option modules
(iv)   PY5001 - Dissertation (60 credits)

Options will be chosen from the following list of modules:

PY5003 - Twentieth Century French Thought (20 credits)
PY5005 - Continental Aesthetics (20 credits)
PY5006 - Adorno and Critical Theory (20 credits)
PY5007 - Issues in Normative Epistemology (20 credits)
PR5416 - Political Concepts (20 credits)
PR5418 - Contemporary Continental Political Theory (20 credits)
PR5445 - Identity, Power and Radical Political Theory (20 credits)
PR5916 - Human Rights (20 credits)
PR5936 - Anglo-American Political Theory (20 credits)
CL5669 - Neo-Platonism (40 credits)

Political Philosophy Stream
Students must take the following:
(i)   PY5000 - Advanced Topics in Philosophy (40 credits)
(ii)   Two modules from the following list:
         PR5416 - Political Concepts (20 credits)
         PR5418 - Contemporary Continental Political Theory (20 credits)
         PR5936 - Anglo American Political Theory (20 credits)
(iii)   40 credits of option modules
(iv)   PY5001 - Dissertation (60 credits)

Options will be chosen from the following list of modules:

PY5002 - The European Philosophical Trajectory: from Kant to the Present (20 credits)
PY5003 - Twentieth Century French Thought (20 credits)
PY5004 - Legacies of Wittgenstein (20 credits)
PY5005 - Continental Aesthetics (20 credits)
PY5006 - Adorno and Critical Theory (20 credits)
PY5007 - Issues in Normative Epistemology (20 credits)
PR5445 - Identity, Power and Radical Political Theory (20 credits)
PR5916 - Human Rights (20 credits)
CL5669 - Neo-Platonism (40 credits)

Please note that not all modules run each year and option modules may be added or deleted due to staff changes. A full list of modules including optional modules for the current academic year can be obtained from http://www.rhul.ac.uk/philosophy/home.aspx

Part-time course structure
The course can be taken part-time over two to five years, beginning in September of year one. Part-time students studying over two years normally take elements (i), an option from (ii), and (iii) in their first year, and the remaining option from (ii), (iv), and (v) in their second year.

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Progression and award requirements

Progression throughout the year/s is monitored through performance in oral presentations, contributions to seminar discussion and coursework.

Please note: all postgraduate taught students are required to take and pass the non-credit bearing Moodle-based Academic Integrity module SS1001 in order to be awarded. The pass mark for the module assessment is stated in the on-line Academic Integrity Moodle module. Students may attempt the assessment as often as they wish with no penalties or capping. Students who otherwise meet the requirements for award as stipulated in the College's Postgraduate Taught Regulations (Section 15: Consideration and classification of candidates for the award) but fail to pass the Moodle-based Academic Integrity module will not be awarded.

Please note that if you hold a Tier 4 (General) Student Visa and you choose to leave (or are required to leave because of non-progression) or complete early (before the module end date stated on your CAS), then this will be reported to UKVI.

To pass the **Masters** course a student must achieve an overall weighted average of at least 50.00%, with no mark in any module which counts towards the final assessment falling below 50%. Failure marks between 40-49% can be condoned in modules which constitute up to a maximum of 40 credits, provided that the overall weighted average is at least 50.00%, but a failure mark (i.e. below 50%) in the dissertation cannot be condoned.

The Masters degree with Merit may be awarded if a student achieves an overall weighted average of 60.00%.

The Masters degree with Distinction may be awarded if a student achieves an overall weighted average of 70.00% or above.

The **Postgraduate Diploma** may be awarded if a student achieves an overall weighted average of at least 50.00% *and* has either chosen not to proceed to the dissertation, or has failed the dissertation on either the first or second attempt. Failure marks in the region 40-49% are not usually condoned for the award of a Postgraduate Diploma, but if they are, such condoned fails would be in modules which do not constitute more than 40 credits.

The Postgraduate Diploma with Merit may be awarded if a student achieves an overall weighted average of 60.00% or above.

The Postgraduate Diploma with Distinction may be awarded if a student achieves an overall weighted average of 70.00% or above, with no mark in any module which counts towards the final assessment falling below 50%. A Distinction will not normally be awarded if a student re-sits or re-takes any module. In exceptional circumstances a viva may be held for a student at the request of the Examiners.

The **Postgraduate Certificate** may be awarded if a student achieves an overall weighted average of at least 50.00%, with no mark in any taught module which counts towards the final assessment falling below 50%. Failure marks in the region 40-49% will not be condoned for the award of a Postgraduate Certificate.

The Postgraduate Certificate with Merit may be awarded if a student achieves an overall weighted average of 60.00% or above, with no mark in any module which counts towards the final assessment falling below 50%.

The Postgraduate Certificate with Distinction may be awarded if a student achieves an overall weighted average of 70.00% or above, with no mark in any module which counts towards the final assessment falling below 50%.

Student support and guidance

- The Course Director meets with the students on a regular basis to advise on academic, pastoral and welfare issues. The Course Director acts as a point of contact for pastoral support and any questions about the course throughout the year.
- Module coordinators, tutors and dissertation supervisors provide a back-up system of academic, pastoral and welfare advice.
- All students are allocated a personal adviser, with whom they meet at least once a term, and more regularly if required, to discuss all matters relating to their course and for pastoral support.
- Induction courses for orientation and introduction to the Department and College by the Director of Graduate Studies.
- All staff available and accessible through an office-hour system.
- Representation on the Student-Staff Committee.
- Detailed MA handbook and module booklets.
- Extensive supporting materials and learning resources in College and University libraries, as well as the Computer Centre.
- Computing equipment and office space at Bedford Square.
- Dedicated Departmental computing facilities and study room in Egham.
- Dedicated College Doctoral School.
- College Careers Service and Departmental Careers Service liaison officer.
- Access to all College and University support services, including Student Counselling Service, Health Centre, Students' Union and the Dyslexia and Neurodiversity Services for students with additional needs.
- Membership of the Institute of Philosophy; access to further research seminars and modules.

Admission requirements

For details of admissions requirements please refer to the Module Finder.

Further learning and career opportunities

Graduates from Philosophy MA courses successfully progress into a wide range of professions which include journalism, publishing and the media, computing, advertising and marketing, the creative industries, the public sector, and teaching. For other graduates, completing an MA is the precursor to embarking on research, ultimately leading to a PhD. For more details on further learning and career opportunities please refer to the Careers Service.

Indicators of quality and standards	
QAA Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) Level	7

Your course is designed in accordance with the FHEQ to ensure your qualification is awarded on the basis of nationally established standards of achievement, for both outcomes and attainment. The qualification descriptors within the FHEQ set out the generic outcomes and attributes expected for the award of individual qualifications. The qualification descriptors contained in the FHEQ exemplify the outcomes and attributes expected of learning that results in the award of higher education qualifications. These outcomes represent the integration of various learning experiences resulting from designated and coherent programmes of study.

QAA Characteristics Statement (Master's Degrees) – September 2015	https://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/quality-code/supporting-resources

Subject benchmark statements provide a means for the academic community to describe the nature and characteristics of courses in a specific subject or subject area. They also represent general expectations about standards for the award of qualifications at a given level in terms of the attributes and capabilities that those possessing qualifications should have demonstrated.

List of courses with details of awards, teaching arrangements and accreditation
The courses are taught entirely by staff at Royal Holloway, University of London, and the Masters leads to an award of the University of London. The Postgraduate Diploma and Postgraduate Certificate lead to awards of Royal Holloway and Bedford New College. Courses in Philosophy are not subject to accreditation by a professional body. The Banner course codes are given in parentheses.

Master of Arts Course in European Philosophy

> MA in European Philosophy (2745)
> MA in Modern Philosophy (2492)
> MA in Political Philosophy (2748)

Postgraduate Diploma in Philosophy

> PG Diploma in European Philosophy (2746)
> PG Diploma in Modern Philosophy (2493)
> PG Diploma in Political Philosophy (2749)

Postgraduate Certificate in Philosophy

> PG Certificate in European Philosophy (3005)
> PG Certificate in Modern Philosophy (2744)
> PG Certificate in Political Philosophy (3006)