

Royal Holloway, University of London
Course specification for an undergraduate award
BA Ancient History and Philosophy (VV15)

Section 1 – Introduction to your course

This course specification is a formal document, which provides a summary of the main features of your course and the learning outcomes that you might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if you take full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. Further information is contained in the University prospectus, and in various handbooks, all of which you will be able to access online. Alternatively, further information on the University's academic regulations and policies can be found [here](#). Further information on the University's Admissions Policy can be found [here](#).

Your degree course in Ancient History and Philosophy is delivered over three years of full-time study or six years of part-time study. On successful completion of the course you should have an understanding of the area of the BA at a level appropriate for a graduate qualification. Whilst being a self-contained degree in its own right, the course provides suitable and recognised qualifications for entry to MA study in the same or closely related fields (notably Ancient History, History).

While Royal Holloway keeps all the information made available under review, courses and the availability of individual modules, especially optional modules are necessarily subject to change at any time, and you are therefore advised to seek confirmation of any factors which might affect your decision to follow a specific course. In turn, Royal Holloway will inform you as soon as is practicable of any significant changes which might affect your studies.

The following is a brief description for some of the most important terminology for understanding the content of this document:

Degree course – May also be referred to as 'degree programme' or simply 'programme', these terms refer to the qualification you will be awarded upon successful completion of your studies.

Module – May also be referred to as 'course', this refers to the individual units you will study each year to complete your degree course. Undergraduate degrees at Royal Holloway comprise a combination of modules in multiples of 15 credits to the value of 120 credits per year. On some degree courses a certain number of optional modules must be passed for a particular degree title.

Section 2 – Course details			
Date of specification update	October 2024	Location of study	Egham Campus
Course award and title	BA Ancient History and Philosophy	Level of study	Undergraduate
Course code	2410	UCAS code	VV15
Year of entry	2026/27		
Awarding body	Royal Holloway, University of London		
Department or school	Department of Classics School of Humanities	Other departments or schools involved in teaching the course	Department of History Department of Politics, International Relations and Philosophy
Mode(s) of attendance	Full-time or Part-time	Duration of the course	Three years or Six years
Accrediting Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body requirement(s)	N/A		
Link to Coursefinder for further information:	https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/studying-here/	For queries on admissions:	https://royalholloway.ac.uk/applicationquery

Section 3 – Degree course structure					
3.1 Mandatory module information					
The following table summarises the mandatory modules which students must take in each year of study					
Year	Module code	Module title	Credits	FHEQ level	Module status (Mandatory Condonable MC or Mandatory Non-Condonable MNC)
1	CL1550	Greek History and The City State	15	4	MC
1	CL1560	Key Themes in Roman History	15	4	MC
1	PY1002	Philosophy: Introduction to Modern Philosophy	15	4	MC
1	PY1101	Philosophy: Problems of Knowledge	15	4	MNC
1	PY1541	Philosophy: Introduction to Ancient Philosophy	15	4	MC
1	PY1202	Philosophical Methods	15	4	MC
3		Dissertation; either department	30	6	MC
This table sets out the most important information for the mandatory modules on your degree course. These modules are central to achieving your learning outcomes, so they are compulsory, and all students on your degree course will be required to take them. You will be automatically registered for these modules each year. Mandatory modules fall into two categories: 'condonable' or 'non-condonable'. In the case of mandatory 'non-condonable' (MNC) modules, you must pass the module before you can proceed to the next year of your course, or to successfully graduate with a particular degree title. In the case of mandatory 'condonable' (MC) modules, these must be taken but you can still progress or graduate even if you do not pass them. Please note that although Royal Holloway will keep changes to a minimum, changes to your degree course may be made where reasonable and necessary due to unexpected events. For example: where requirements of relevant Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Bodies have changed and course requirements must change accordingly, or where changes are deemed necessary on the basis of student feedback and/or the advice of external advisors, to enhance academic provision.					

3.2 Optional modules

In addition to mandatory modules, there will be a number of optional modules available during the course of your degree. Although Royal Holloway will keep changes to a minimum, new options may be offered or existing ones may be withdrawn. For example, where reasonable and necessary due to unexpected events, where requirements of relevant Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs) have changed and course requirements must change accordingly, or where changes are deemed necessary on the basis of student feedback and/or the advice of External Advisors, to enhance academic provision. There may be additional requirements around option selection; please contact the Department for further information.

For Ancient History:

In your **First Year**, in addition to the mandatory modules you will be required to take a 30 credit language module or two introductory 15 credit modules from Classics.

In your **Second Year** you will be required to take at least 4 optional modules.

In your **Final Year**, you will be required to take:

EITHER Two Year 3 modules (taught modules only, 60 credits) designated as Ancient History

OR One Year 3 module designated as Ancient History with a dissertation in Ancient History (60 credits)

By the end of this course a student must have completed 120 credits of Ancient History, with at least 60 credits at level 3.

For Philosophy:

In your **Second Year**, you must take 60 credits of Stage 2 optional modules, choosing **at least** 30 credits from the following options basket:

PY2001 Kant (15 credits)

PY2002 Mind and World (15 credits)

PY2005 Philosophy and the Arts (15 credits)

PY2202 Empiricism and Rationalism (15 credits)

PY2900 Race, Gender and Queer Philosophy (15 credits)

In your **Final Year**, you must take either (a) 60 credits of available options or (b) 30 credits of options with a dissertation in Philosophy.

However, you are only able to **take one dissertation module** on your degree: **either** Ancient History **or** Philosophy.

Section 4 - Progressing through each year of your degree course

For further information on the progression and award requirements for your degree, please refer to Royal Holloway's [Academic Regulations](#).

Progression throughout the year/s is monitored through performance in summative or formative coursework assignments. Please note that if you hold a Student Visa and you choose to leave (or are required to leave because of non-progression) or complete early (before the course end date stated on your CAS), then this will be reported to UKVI.

All first year students on single, joint or combined honours courses offered all or in part by the School of Humanities, School of Performing and Digital Arts, or department of Politics, International Relations and Philosophy are required to pass a Moodle-based writing skills quiz in order to progress into the second year of study. The pass mark for the test is 60%. Students may attempt the quiz as often as they wish with no penalties or capping. Students who meet the requirements for progression as stipulated in the [Academic Taught Regulations](#) but fail to pass the Moodle-based Academic Integrity module will not be permitted to progress into their second year of academic study..

Section 5 – Educational aims of the course

The aims of this course are:

- to develop your knowledge of Ancient history;
- to introduce you to issues of methodology in relation to the study of Ancient history;
- to develop skills in research in Ancient history;
- to provide you with key skills, the ability to work independently and in a self-directed fashion; to devise and deliver a project; and an ability to set learning goals;
- to develop your transferable skills in studying at degree level, communicating ideas and information, information retrieval, and presentation, both written and oral, and team-working;
- to develop the range of skills necessary to pursue a further degree in historical studies;
- to develop your ability to derive information and ideas from fragmentary or imperfect sources.

Section 6 - Course learning outcomes

In general terms, the courses provide opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate the following learning outcomes. (*Categories – Knowledge and understanding (K), Skills and other attributes (S), and Transferable skills (*)*)

Theme	Course learning outcome	Level 4	Level 5	Level 6
K	the acquisition of knowledge of scholarship in the chosen areas of the discipline to a level appropriate for a BA degree.	1a Assemble and summarise scholarship relevant to the discipline.	1b Appropriately use and critique scholarship relevant to the discipline.	1c Critically synthesise and integrate scholarship relevant to the discipline.
K	2 Acquire a detailed understanding of the methodological questions and issues involved in studying Ancient History, including the application of relevant sources.	2a Demonstrate knowledge of different methodological approaches to studying the subject.	2b Apply different methodological approaches to a range of sources and contexts.	2c Critically reflect on scholarly theories and issues in the fields of Ancient History.
S	the ability to conduct archaeological and historical research independently.	3a Demonstrate and exercise knowledge and awareness of research skills.	3b Apply research skills to a range of tasks and objectives.	3c Generate research-led material that demonstrates the ability to collect and synthesize material gathered independently.
S	time management and organisational skills including working to deadlines, prioritising tasks, organising work-time.	Classify and prioritise relevant tasks with appropriate guidance.	Identify tasks and plan time independently to meet set goals.	Identify own academic objectives and organise priorities independently and efficiently to meet deadlines.
K	The ability to use information resources, libraries, websites, material and visual evidence, and original texts in translation, as appropriate to ancient history.	Obtain an awareness and experience of different information sources.	Practice generating outputs using a range of information sources relevant to the discipline.	Demonstrate the ability to smoothly integrate information sources into both independent and set tasks.
Knowledge and Understanding	Understand the core questions, theories, and specialist terminology in the central areas of philosophy.	Recall information about philosophical theories and understand the relevant terminology.	Discuss core philosophical questions and theories.	Explain the key issues in philosophical debates and theories.

Argumentation	Identify and analyse arguments made in a variety of contexts, both theoretical and practical.	Recognize an argument and understand the difference between good and bad arguments.	Assess the quality of arguments as used in a wide range of contexts.	Deploy arguments effectively and explain why poor arguments are ineffective.
Critical Thinking	Critically evaluate philosophical ideas from both historical and contemporary sources.	Begin to appreciate both the strengths and weakness of philosophical ideas.	Recognize strengths and weakness of philosophical ideas.	Explain fully the strengths and weakness of philosophical ideas.
Textual Analysis	Interpret complex philosophical texts, paying attention to different modes of argumentation and the variety of literary forms that philosophical writing can take.	Appreciate the variety of literary forms in which philosophy has and can been written.	Understand the different criteria used to assess the claims made if different types of philosophical text.	Critically assess a variety of different types of philosophical text and understand the strengths and weakness of different genres of writing.
Research	Gather, organise, and deploy evidence from a variety of sources, assessing its nature and value.	Know how to identify and locate scholarly literature relevant to a given research topic.	Organize and assess sources of information relevant to a research topic.	Critically assess and make effective use of previous literature on a research topic in their own work.
Communication	Express philosophical ideas and arguments clearly and precisely, both in written work and orally.	Understand the importance of clarity and precision in philosophical discussion and writing.	Deploy well-formed arguments in discussion and written work.	Effectively argue for or against a view in a wide variety of contexts, both orally and in written work.
K	Engaged Humanities K6 display a breadth and depth of subject knowledge, and engage with developing subject conversations and their currency in cultural discourse now.	recall foundational knowledge of the subject area, and use core subject skills.	recognise and classify focussed sub-fields within the subject area, and identify and respond to relevant critical materials and contexts.	select and apply specific debates/theories/conceptual frameworks within specialist areas of the subject field and critically identify the potential for new ideas and subject directions.
S	Applied Humanities S1 understand the relevance of subject skills to professional and applied contexts, and how to apply that knowledge in the future.	recognise and identify subject skills as transferable to work-based situations and competencies.	generate outputs in a variety of formats which have application to work-based uses and/or particular audiences and/or functions.	plan and manage an extended project/essay, using ADAPTIVE skills, INITIATIVE and SELF-MANAGEMENT to ensure successful task completion.
S	Global Humanities S2 understand and enact intercultural awareness and competencies.	identify and respond to diverse cultural contexts and viewpoints.	understand and differentiate the circumstances and contexts that give	reflect on bias including one's own: operate within, appreciate, and evaluate different cultural context.

			rise to diverse viewpoints and world views.	
S	Critical S₃	FOCUS in detail to FILTER, summarise and classify a range of information (issues, texts, contexts.)	objectively evaluate information (issues, texts, contexts) demonstrating INTEGRITY and evidence-based reasoning.	synthesise and evaluate information from disparate and potentially conflicting sources to reach INDEPENDENT JUDGEMENT with the capacity to deconstruct the conditions pertaining to the construction of knowledge.
S	Collaborative S₄	reflect on current experience and identify the potential to ADAPT and modify in response to that experience.	carry out collaborative activity with RESILIENCE and provide an individual contribution to a collective goal/task.	co-work and/or co-create in partnership with others in achievement of collective goals and recognise acknowledge the importance of collaborative practice in knowledge production.
S	Communicative S₅	recall basic subject vocabulary and present information with FOCUS and ACCURACY.	structure and organise the presentation of information in a variety of communicative modes with RELEVANCE, LOGIC and COHERENCE.	design a presentation of information that can argue, influence or persuade, and/or can deploy a specialised vocabulary or creative/compositional technique.

Section 7 - Teaching, learning and assessment

Teaching and learning on your course is closely informed by the active research of staff, particularly in the areas of Classics, History and Philosophy. In general terms, the course provides an opportunity for you to develop and demonstrate the learning outcomes detailed herein.

Teaching and learning will be through a mix of formal lectures, seminar discussions and oral presentations, guided independent research, guided independent study, coursework essays, and a dissertation. The basic strategies are to nurture your interest and enthusiasm for the field, to develop your critical and communication skills and to develop critical, research and creative skills. Assessment of knowledge and understanding is typically through written work. Formative feedback will be provided continuously through informal oral feedback in seminars and more formally through written feedback on essays. Full details of the assessments for individual module elements can be obtained from the [Department of Classics](#), the [Department of History](#) and the [Philosophy Department](#).

Contact hours come in various forms and may take the form of time spent with a member of staff in a lecture or seminar with other students. Contact hours may also be laboratory or, studio-based sessions, project supervision with a member of staff, or discussion through a virtual learning environment (VLE). These contact hours may be with a lecturer or teaching assistant, but they may also be with a technician, or specialist support staff.

The way in which each module on your degree course is assessed will also vary. Assessments designated as 'summative' will receive a mark which will count towards your overall mark for the module, and potentially your degree classification, depending on your year of study. On successful completion of the module you will gain the credits listed.

More detailed information on modules, including teaching and learning methods, and methods of assessment, can be found via the online [Royal Holloway Curriculum Catalogue](#). The accuracy of the information contained in this document is reviewed regularly by the university, and may also be checked routinely by external agencies.

Section 8 – Additional costs

There are no single associated costs greater than £50 per item on this course.

These estimated costs relate to studying this particular degree course at Royal Holloway. General costs such as accommodation, food, books and other learning materials and printing etc., have not been included, but further information is available on our website.

Section 9 – Indicators of quality and standards	
QAA Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) Level	4-6
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 courses of study.	
QAA Subject benchmark statement(s)	http://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code/subject-benchmark-statements
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.	

Section 10– Intermediate exit awards (where available)		
You may be eligible for an intermediate exit award if you complete part of the course as detailed in this document. Any additional criteria (e.g. mandatory modules, credit requirements) for intermediate awards is outlined in the sections below.		
Award	Criteria	Awarding body
Diploma in Higher Education (DipHE)	Pass in 210 credits of which at least 90 must be at or above FHEQ Level 4 and at least 120 of which must be at or above FHEQ Level 5	Royal Holloway and Bedford New College
Certificate in Higher Education (CertHE)	Pass in 120 credits of which at least 90 must be at or above FHEQ Level 4	Royal Holloway and Bedford New College