Royal Holloway, University of London
Course specification for an undergraduate award
BA Philosophy with International Relations (V5L9)

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 polices can be found here. Further information on the University's Admissions Policy can be found here. Your degree course in BA Philosophy with International Relations provides progressive structures in which you will be able to gain ever-wider knowledge and understanding, and appropriate skills. Your course contains a combination of mandatory modules. In stage two and three, you are encouraged to develop your own interests through informed choice among specialist options. In stage three, are also required to write a dissertation and/or long essays. Your courses aims to equip you with a range of personal attributes relevant to the world beyond higher education (HE), allowing you to engage in lifelong learning, to consider ethics and values, and to contribute to the wider community. Your degree courses at Royal Holloway, University of London, will be delivered over three years, each of which normally involves modules to the value of 120 credits. 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	March 2024	**Location of study**	Egham Campus
Course award and title	BA Philosophy with International Relations	**Level of study**	Undergraduate
Course code	3517	**UCAS code**	V5L9
Year of entry	2026/27		
Awarding body	Royal Holloway, University of London		
Department or school	School of Law and Social Science	**Other departments or schools involved in teaching the course**	N/A
Mode(s) of attendance	Full-time	**Duration of the course**	3 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	PY1002	Introduction to Modern Philosophy	15	4	MC
1	PY1101	Problems of Knowledge	15	4	MNC
1	PY1202	Philosophical Methods	15	4	MC
1	PY1203	Issues in Ethics	15	4	MC
1	PY1104	Introduction to Political Philosophy	15	4	MC
1	PY1541	Introduction to Ancient Philosophy	15	4	MC
1	PR1500	Introduction to International Relations	30	4	MNC
3	PY3001	Dissertation	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 **Philosophy**, in the **Second Year**, students must choose **at least** 30 credits from the following options basket:

PY2001 Kant (15 credits)
PY2002 Mind and World (15 credits)
PY2202 Empiricism and Rationalism (15 credits)
PY2900 Race, Gender and Queer Philosophy (15 credits)

And their remaining Philosophy credits from a list of other options.

In the Third Year, students must take PY3001 Dissertation in Philosophy, plus 60-credits from a list of options in Philosophy and 30-credits from a list options in PIR.

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 expose you to a broad and coherent philosophical curriculum that draws on both the European and Anglo-American traditions; • to present an appreciation of philosophy that stresses its pertinence to other areas of intellectual inquiry; • to provide you with sufficient choice to allow you to pursue your philosophical interests where possible; • to engender a range of subject-specific and general intellectual skills through a variety of learning activities geared to the study and practice of philosophy; • to provide a systematic understanding and knowledge of political theory and institutions in both a domestic and international context; • to encourage critical awareness of current political problems at national and international levels; • to provide theoretical insights and methodological techniques relevant to the development and interpretation of knowledge in Politics and International Relations and to the evaluation of current research and scholarship in the field

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
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.
	Demonstrate and understanding of developments in and the principal theories of international relations.			
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.
	Using theory, assess the merits of new developments in international affairs and apply theories to new cases.			
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 theoretical 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.

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 Philosophy and International Relations. In general terms, the course provides an opportunity for you to develop and demonstrate the learning outcomes detailed herein.

Teaching, learning and assessment methods serve the course aims by recognising your expanding knowledge and command of correlated skills as you progress from stage one to stage three and both acknowledging and encouraging your increased intellectual independence. Consequently, at stages one and two the primary method of teaching is to combine lectures, which are used to map out a conceptual area and help orientate you in it, with small-group seminars where you are able to test your developing understanding through presentations and discussion and focussed learning tasks (précis, timed analysis, etc). These formative modes are supplemented with summative essays and examinations. From stage two onwards the emphasis on independent learning arising from your growing knowledge, and your desire to follow your interests is reflected in more specialised modules for which a formal distinction between lecture and seminar is no longer entirely appropriate. Here the shift in formative assessment is towards presentations of work-in-progress and one-to-one advice on essay planning at both the conceptual and structural level.

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