



Philosophy
Postgraduate programmes

Royal Holloway
University of London



Philosophy at Royal Holloway offers an exciting, diverse and unique way to study one of the oldest and most fundamental forms of human enquiry. We have a distinctive programme that works across the traditional divisions between analytic and continental philosophy, contemporary philosophy and the history of philosophy, and that connects the study of philosophy to related disciplines across the arts, humanities and social sciences.

Philosophy teaching was introduced to Royal Holloway in 2007 with the intention of establishing it as a discipline that would link together subjects across the arts, humanities and social sciences. The result has been the creation of a truly interdisciplinary and collaborative programme that brings together academic staff from departments across the College – including scholars working in drama and theatre, literature, and political philosophy – working alongside a core of philosophy staff whose research specialisms include ancient and Hellenistic philosophy, nineteenth and twentieth century French and German philosophy, contemporary analytic philosophy, and American pragmatism.

Research facilities

All postgraduates have access to central computing facilities, and doctoral students have their own computer rooms with networked computers within the department. In addition to the substantial library collections on campus, postgraduates also have access to other libraries of the University of London, including Senate House and the London School of Economics. Philosophy students also benefit from our collaboration with and support from the Institute of Philosophy in the School of Advanced Study in central London, which offers a very wide range of seminars and lectures throughout the academic year. Research activities in philosophy are also supported by



Royal Holloway's Humanities and Arts Research Centre and the Contemporary Political Theory Research Group in the Department of Politics & International Relations.

Contact details

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Masters programmes

MA/PGDip Modern Philosophy

Our MA offers a unique approach to postgraduate study of philosophy by bringing into conversation Anglo-American ‘analytic’ philosophy on the one hand and ‘European’ or ‘continental’ philosophy on the other. It is designed for students to investigate both notional traditions of philosophy, incorporating the analytical focus on technical philosophical problems and the European focus on textual exegesis, and bringing these to bear on an exploration of the future of philosophy as a means of understanding what is at stake in today’s social, political, and economic upheavals.

The programme is open both to those who have studied on a predominantly analytical first degree course and wish to find out more about Kant, Nietzsche, and others, and to those who have either studied European philosophy or have become interested in philosophy via other subjects in the arts, humanities and social sciences, and who wish to gain more philosophical expertise. The MA offers both the chance to extend your study of philosophy without regard to many of the constraints found in other philosophy programmes, and is ideal preparation for those who wish to pursue research in philosophy, offering both conceptual rigour and sensitivity to historical and textual issues.



Core courses

The European Philosophical Trajectory: from Kant to the Present: This course explores the main developments in modern European philosophy from both a European and an analytical philosophical perspective. It will familiarise you with canonical texts in the European tradition of philosophy, and allow you to explore the differences of interpretation which arise from more historically-oriented and more argument-oriented approaches to texts in the history of philosophy.

The Analytical Trajectory: from Frege and Wittgenstein to the Present: “Not empiricism and yet realism in philosophy, that is the hardest thing” (Wittgenstein). This course takes as its starting point the confluence of ideas from the anti-psychologism of Frege and Husserl and the tradition of empiricism that marked the first half of the twentieth century. Through a series of detailed readings of canonical texts and a more general analysis of the philosophical terrain, it seeks to explore, firstly, the extent to which the criticism of empiricism and of its correlative understanding of the role of experience in our accounts of the world developed from within the discourse of empiricism itself; and secondly whether or not pragmatism works ‘hard’ enough to capture our realist intuitions and thereby articulate a philosophically satisfying account of our place in nature.

Option courses

- Foundations of Contemporary Political Theory
- Political Concepts
- Contemporary Continental Political Theory
- Post-Holocaust Philosophy
- Identity, Power and Radical Political Theory
- The Future of Phenomenology

Research opportunities

The MA (by Research) Philosophy

The MA (by Research) in Philosophy offers the opportunity to conduct independent research on a topic of interest, culminating with a dissertation of up to 35,000 words. There are no required courses, but research is supported by an advanced seminar run by core Philosophy staff as well as one-to-one supervision, with additional seminars offered by Royal Holloway's Humanities and Arts Research Centre and the Institute of Philosophy at the School of Advanced Study in central London.

Further postgraduate research opportunities

We welcome highly-qualified and well-motivated applicants for MPhil/PhD study who wish to pursue research in either the analytic or Continental traditions, or who wish to bridge the divide between them. We are very keen to

encourage interdisciplinary research in which philosophy is used to illuminate other subjects, and vice versa, and so are particularly interested in research relating philosophy to the arts, and to politics and history.

Topics of current and recent postgraduate research include Brandom's inferentialism and ethnomethodology; music's relationship to other human practices; reification, music and modern philosophy; philosophy and jazz; language in German philosophy from Herder to Gadamer; Plato's account of memory; Epictetus and anger; the relationship between physics and ethics in Stoicism and Epicureanism; remembrance and the Holocaust; the event in Marxist philosophy; post-existentialist political philosophy; Adorno and the truth of the subject, and God and textuality in Derrida's later work.



Staff research interests

Professor Andrew Bowie, MA (Cambridge),

PhD (UEA): Modern German philosophy, the relationship of European to analytical philosophy, literature and music. Andrew is author of numerous books, including *Aesthetics and Subjectivity: From Kant to Nietzsche* (1990), *Schelling and Modern European Philosophy* (1993), *Introduction to German Philosophy from Kant to Habermas* (2003), *Music, Philosophy and Modernity* (2007), *Philosophical Variations: Music as Philosophical Language* (2010) and the forthcoming *Adorno and the Ends of Contemporary Philosophy*.

Dr Michael Bacon, BSc (Econ.), MSc, PhD

(LSE): Contemporary political theory, in particular political liberalism, pragmatism, and theories of democracy. Michael is author of *Richard Rorty: Pragmatism and Political Liberalism* (2007) and *Pragmatism: An Introduction* (2012).

Dr Neil Gascoigne, B.Eng. (Leeds),

MPhil, PhD (Cambridge): Pragmatism, metaphilosophy, autobiography and epistemology. Neil is author of *Scepticism* (2002), *Richard Rorty: Liberalism, Idealism and the Ends of Philosophy* (2008) and (with Tim Thornton) *Tacit Knowledge* (2013).

Professor Adam Roberts, MA (Aberdeen),

PhD (Cambridge): Ancient Greeks, nineteenth- and twentieth-century philosophy and postmodern thought, and philosophy and science fiction. Adam is author of *Robert Browning Revisited* (1997), *Silk and Potatoes: Postwar Arthurian Fantasy* (1998), *Science Fiction* (2000), *Frederic Jameson* (2000) and *Victorian Culture and Society: the Essential Glossary* (2003).

Professor Dan Rebellato, PhD (Royal

Holloway): Post-war British theatre, post-structuralist and critical philosophy. Dan's academic works include *1956 and All That:*

The Making of Modern British Drama (1999), *Theatre and Globalization* (2009) and (with M. M. Delgado) *Contemporary European Theatre Directors* (2010).

Dr Jonathan Seglow, BA (Oxford), MSc

(LSE), PhD (Manchester): Contemporary liberal political philosophy, particularly multiculturalism, theories of recognition, altruism and the ethics of immigration restrictions. Jonathan is co-author (with Niall Scott) of *Altruism* (2007) and author of *Defending Associative Duties* (2013).

Professor Anne Sheppard, MA, DPhil

(Oxford): Greek philosophy, especially Neoplatonism, and ancient literary criticism. Anne is author of *Aesthetics: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Art* (1987), co-editor of *Greek and Roman Aesthetics* (2010) and is currently completing *Pictures of the Mind: The Poetics of Phantasia*.

Dr Henry Somers-Hall, BA, MA, PhD

(Warwick): Nineteenth and twentieth century German and French philosophy, and in particular Kant, Hegel, Deleuze, Merleau-Ponty and Sartre. Henry is author of *Hegel, Deleuze and the Critique of Representation: Dialectics of Negation and Difference* (2012) and *Deleuze's Difference and Repetition* (2013), and is co-editor (with Daniel W. Smith) and contributor to *The Cambridge Companion to Deleuze* (2012)

Dr Nathan Widder, BA (Johns Hopkins),

MSc (LSE), PhD (Essex): Modern and contemporary continental philosophy, particularly Hegel, Nietzsche, Foucault and Deleuze, and the history of Western thought, including major and marginal figures in ancient, early Christian and medieval philosophy. Nathan is author of *Genealogies of Difference* (2002), *Reflections on Time and Politics* (2008) and *Political Theory after Deleuze* (2012).



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