CONTENTS

1 THE DEPARTMENT

Accommodation 1

People 2
Philosophy Faculty
Research Fellows, Emeritus and Visiting Professors
The Administrative Staff
Chair of Department, MRes Tutor,
Chair of MRes Examinations, MRes Admissions Tutor

Enrolling and keeping in touch 4
Your email account
Your contact details

2. SUPERVISION, SEMINARS, CONFERENCES, ETC.

2.1 Supervisors and Supervisions 5
Your Principal Supervisor
Essay Supervisors
Supervisions

2.2 Lectures, Seminars, Conferences, Reading Groups 6
MRes Seminar
Research Seminar
Work-in-Progress Seminar
Saturday Workshops
Approaches to Philosophy Seminars
London Research Student Conferences
Dorothy Edgington Lectures and Graduate Workshops
Reading Groups
Other Seminars, Lectures, and Courses 8
SSHP and Department Support for Conference (etc.) Attendance Prizes
2.3 Resources/Assistance in Studies
Libraries
IT Services
Research Training
Research Student Web Pages
Monitoring and Progress
Changing your Supervisor, Complaints Procedure
Withdrawals and Breaks of Study
Student Representation

2.4 Philosophy Dept.'s Good Practice Policy

3 THE MRes COURSE
3.1 Overview of the MRes
3.2 Number of Essays & Essay Length
3.3 Nomination of Essay Topics
3.4 Assessment of Essays
3.5 Thesis
3.6 Assessment of Thesis

4 USEFUL INFORMATION
4.1 Postgraduate Funding
4.2 Philosophical Links
4.3 Personal Support Links

APPENDICES
Appendix A: Assessment of MRes Work
Appendix B: Plagiarism Policy & Guidance
THE DEPARTMENT

The Philosophy Department belongs to the College’s School of Social Sciences, History and Philosophy (SSHP). It is a leading centre for philosophical research in the United Kingdom. All our academic staff are active researchers. Our research excellence has consistently been recognised in British and international ranking exercises. We give high priority not only to research but also to providing the best possible teaching.

The Department's Accommodation is at 30 Russell Square

Most academic staff have their offices on the third floor of 30 Russell Square, with two members of staff in 26 Russell Square. Tutorials are often conducted in the room of the member of staff concerned. Room Bo1 in 30 Russell Square houses the Ruby Meager Library (see p.8) where tutorials, small seminars and reading group meetings are sometimes held.

The Department Office is Room G05 on the Ground Floor of 30 Russell Square. The Office will normally be the initial inquiry point for any queries you may have. It is open in term time from 10.00am to 6.00pm, and in vacations from 10.00 am until 5pm.

Faculty

Mr Cristian Constantinescu [on leave in terms 1 and 2]
  c.constantinescu@bbk.ac.uk 020 3073 8007 Room 304, 30 Russell Square
  Lecturer. Moral Philosophy, Philosophy of Language and Logic, Metaphysics

Prof Dorothy Edgington
  d.edgington@bbk.ac.uk 020 7631 6512 Room 305, 30 Russell Square
  Senior Research Professor. Logic, Philosophy of Language, Metaphysics and Epistemology: especially Conditionals, Modality, Probabilistic Reasoning, Vagueness

Dr Stacie Friend
  s.friend@bbk.ac.uk 020 7631 6280 Room: B26, 26 Russell Square
  Lecturer. Philosophy of Mind, Philosophy of Language, Aesthetics

Dr Michael Garnett [on leave in term 3]
  m.garnett@bbk.ac.uk 020 7631 6548 Room 309, 30 Russell Square
  Senior Lecturer. Political Philosophy, Ethics

Dr Alex Grzankowski
  a.grzankowski@bbk.ac.uk 020 7631 6533 Room 313, 30 Russell Square
  Lecturer, Metaphysics, Epistemology, Philosophy of mind, Philosophy of language

Prof Kenneth Gemes
  k.gemes@bbk.ac.uk 020 3073 8123 Room 305, 30 Russell Square
  Philosophy of Science, Philosophical Logic, Nietzsche
Prof Jennifer Hornsby (on leave in term 1)
j.hornsby@bbk.ac.uk 020 7631 6301  Room 310, 30 Russell Square
Philosophy of Mind and Action, Philosophy of Language, Feminist Philosophy

Dr Keith Hossack
k.hossack@bbk.ac.uk 020 7631 6399 Room 307, 30 Russell Square
Reader. Metaphysics, Epistemology, Philosophy of Mind, Philosophy of Mathematics

Dr Andrew Huddleston
a.c.huddleston@gmail.com 020 7631 6277 Room 330, 26, Russell Square
Lecturer. German Philosophy, Nietzsche, Aesthetics, Ethics, Foucault

Prof Susan James
s.james@bbk.ac.uk 020 7631 6219 Room 311, 30 Russell Square
17th and 18th century philosophy: especially ethics, political and social philosophy, psychology, philosophy of mind; political philosophy; feminist philosophy

Prof Hallvard Lillehammer (Chair of Department and Assistant Dean)
h.lillehammer@bbk.ac.uk 0207 631 6531 Room 308, 30 Russell Square
Ethics, Metaethics, History of Ethical Thought, Political Philosophy, Aesthetics

Dr Robert Northcott
r.northcott@bbk.ac.uk 020 3073 8006 Room 312, 30 Russell Square
Senior Lecturer. Philosophy of science, metaphysics, philosophy of biology

Dr Sarah Patterson
s.patterson@bbk.ac.uk 020 7631 6536 Room 306, 30 Russell Square
Senior Lecturer. Philosophy of Mind, Philosophy of Psychology, Early Modern Philosophy

Prof Anthony Price
a.price@bbk.ac.uk 020 7631 6380 Room 303, 30 Russell Square
Ethics, Greek Philosophy

Dr Florian Steinberger:
f.steinberger@bbk.ac.uk 020 7631 6533 Room 313 30, Russell Square
Lecturer. Formal Epistemology, Philosophy of Language, Philosophy of Logic

Honorary and Associate Research Fellows, Emeritus and Visiting Professors

Professor Bob Hale
Professor David Hillel-Ruben
Professor Samuel Guttenplan
Dr. Charlotte Knowles
Dr Gudrun von Tevenar

Administrative Staff
The natural first port of call for research students is the Department’s Ad-
ministrator for Postgraduates (who looks after MRes students). MRes students who call at the Office can also seek help from our Administrator for Undergraduates. The Department’s Team Leader deals with such matters as expenses.

The administrative staff can all be contacted by email.

Postgraduate Administrator
Natasha Magennis
n.magennis@bbk.ac.uk
or
Simmi Pahwa (on medical leave at time of writing)
s.pahwa@bbk.ac.uk
020 7631 6383

Undergraduate Administrator
Hervé Lucas
h.lucas@bbk.ac.uk
020 7631 6385

Team Leader
020 7631 6005

They are housed in Room G05, 30 Russell Square.

If you wish to contact a member of faculty or administrative staff from inside the college, the last 4 digits work as extension numbers.

The Department email address is: office@philosophy.bbk.ac.uk

The website address is: www.bbk.ac.uk/phil/

**Chair of Department, Tutor for Research Students, Exam Board Chair, Admissions Tutor for Research Students**

**Chair of Department and Assistant Dean**
The Chair of the Department is Hallvard Lillehammer. He has overall responsibility for the Department, including the teaching, supervision, and examination of research students. If you feel that a matter needs his personal attention, you should email him.

**Tutor for Research Students**
The Tutor for MRes students is Sarah Patterson. She has responsibility for welfare and disciplinary matters concerning research students. As well as consulting your principal supervisor, you can consult Sarah about any academic or personal difficulties you may have. She will be pleased to receive suggestions for improvements.

**Chair of the Sub-Board of Examiners**
The Chair of the Sub-Board of Examiners for the MRes is Andrew Huddleston. He oversees the marking of MRes essays and theses. If you have any questions regarding these matters, do consult him.
Admissions Tutor for Research Students
Applications for the MRes are dealt with by Hallvard Lillehammer. The Admissions Tutor is also responsible for applications for funding to SSHP (i.e. to the School of Social Studies, History, and Philosophy), or for external funding.

Enrolling, Keeping in touch
Before the start of each academic year, you will need to enrol and pay your fees.
Until your fees are paid, you will not be permitted to attend classes or supervisions or access any college facilities, including the Library, computing resources and the Students’ Union.

The College’s website for students is http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/ From here which you can reach many other College webpages, including your personal 'My Birkbeck Profile' (see the screenshot below).

The registry emails new students their username and password once they have accepted a place on a Birkbeck course. (They use the email address you provided when you applied.) You can then log into your personal ‘My Birkbeck profile’ to find all your personal student information, check and amend your contact details, order an ID card, keep track of your financial status, and pay fees online.

Your email account
The Department will keep in touch with you by email. It is vital for speedy communication that all students have an active email address, and check their email regularly. If you wish, you can obtain a Birkbeck email address from IT Services. It is up to you whether you use your private email address or a Birkbeck address, but you MUST let the Office know your preferred email address. If your preferred email address changes, please notify the Office straightaway, in addition to amending your ‘mybirkbeck’ profile with the new address.
**Your other contact details**

In addition to your email address, please also update any other changes to your contact details (phone, mailing address) via your ‘mybirkbeck’ student profile. We cannot take change of contact details by email or over the phone.

The pages on Birkbeck’s website that you will need to visit most often are those under ‘My Birkbeck’ (as above) and the pages maintained by the Philosophy Dept., where you will find an online version of this handbook.

http://www.bbk.ac.uk/philosophy/current-students

---

## 2 SUPERVISION, SEMINARS, CONFERENCES, ETC.

### 2.1 Supervisors and Supervisions

#### 2.1.1 Your Principal Supervisor

At the start of your course a member of academic staff will be assigned to you as your principal supervisor. Principal supervisors are normally assigned on the basis of your intended thesis work; and normally you will have the same principal supervisor throughout your time at Birkbeck. He or she oversees your overall academic progress and ensures that you receive appropriate tuition and training.

All students should arrange a meeting with their principal supervisor at the beginning of each year. Your principal supervisor can provide advice about which lectures, seminars, conferences and training events you should attend. Additionally, you should meet with your supervisor at least once before the end of Terms 1 and 2 to monitor your progress in the course. It is the responsibility of the student as much as the supervisor to ensure that these meetings get scheduled.

If you need to discuss personal issues, your principal supervisor will be pleased to give you all the help, advice and support they can, in complete professional confidence. All other members of staff are also available to talk to you in professional confidence. They can be reached by email: if you write to set up an appointment, you should indicate what you would like to consult them about. You may make an appointment to see the Tutor for Research Students or Department Chair if you feel that they may be able to help you.

#### 2.1.2 Essay Supervisors

Students taking the MRes will have an essay supervisor, assigned based on the student’s chosen topic. Once again, it is as much the responsibility of student as the supervisor to arrange a first meeting. This should happen early in the term in which the student is writing the essay, so that the student and supervisor can discuss plans for it. Thus you should usually make contact with your essay supervisor ahead of the start of the term in which you will be meeting. If there should ever be any uncertainty about who your essay supervisor is at any point, or you have a problem reaching him or her, you should contact the Tutor for Research Students.

#### 2.1.3 Supervisions

Students meet with their essay supervisors 3 times. One meeting is an initial planning meeting, and the later two are full supervisions. Students meet with their dis-
sertation supervisors 4 times. A supervision is usually between 1 and 1½ hours in duration. Students are expected to submit a written piece of work before any supervision in order to provide a focus for discussion. These meetings ordinarily happen only during term time. Students working on theses should bear this in mind in planning the timing of their supervisions.

2.2 Lectures, Seminars, Conferences and Reading Groups

2.2.1 MRes Seminar

The MRes Seminar takes place every Monday evening in Terms 1 and 2. Each session is led by a member of staff, and centers on the discussion of a piece of his or her work, either already published or in progress. This reading will be the set text for the session, and students should have read it and be prepared to discuss it. It will be available for downloading on Moodle.

The MRes Seminar comprises two modules, which run concurrently. One of these (meeting in weeks 1, 3, 5, 7, 9 of each term) is focused on ‘practical philosophy’ (ethics, political philosophy, aesthetics, philosophy of action). The other (meeting in weeks 2, 4, 6, 8, and 10 of each term) is focused on ‘theoretical philosophy’ (metaphysics, epistemology, logic, philosophy of mind, language, and science). Both modules include a mixture of contemporary and historical approaches to these philosophical areas. A wide range of philosophical topics will be covered within and across these two modules.

Full-time MRes students should attend all sessions. Part-time MRes students should do either practical or theoretical philosophy in their first year, and then the one of these they haven’t yet done in their second year. Because practical and theoretical philosophy alternate week-by-week, part-time students would thus be attending the MRes seminar every other week.

2.2.2 Research Seminar

Learning to present and defend your own work, and critically discuss the ideas of others, is essential to your development as a philosopher. The Research Seminar is dedicated to the presentation and discussion of the work of Birkbeck research students. It takes place once a week during term time, on Thursday at 6pm, and normally lasts between 1½ and 2 hours. It provides an excellent opportunity to meet and talk philosophy with other research students. The programme is posted on the website (updated as the year progresses). Full-time students are expected to attend each week. Part-time students are expected to attend as often as they can.

The programme for the Research Seminar is drawn up by the Tutor for Research Students. Research students are encouraged to present their work to the Research Seminar at least once a year. Presentations are of draft essays or thesis chapters, followed by a discussion chaired by a member of staff. Presentations should not last longer than 45 minutes: it is important not to overrun so that there is time for discussion; and it is quite all right to speak for only 30 minutes. The use of handouts is encouraged.

2.2.3 Work in Progress Seminar

Most weeks during term (usually at lunchtime on a Wednesday), the Department holds a seminar at which members of the Department take turns to present their work. Research students are sent details: they are welcome and strongly encouraged to attend.
2.2.4 Saturday Workshops

In 2016-17, Saturday workshops—one each in term 1, and term 2—will be held in conjunction with the SSHP School, under the heading “Research: Means and Ends”. Pre-lunch training sessions will be School-wide, and lunch will be for students from all Departments in the School. Post-lunch sessions will be Department by Department.

In philosophy, we have used these Saturday afternoons to give research students practice at commenting on philosophical papers. Two speakers are invited by the research student reps., who try to find two or three students for each invited paper, each to make about 5 minutes’ worth of comments on the paper. However, instead of or in addition to this, there may also be a training session, led by the Philosophy Dept. and focusing on skills specific to work in philosophy. Dates and details will be circulated and posted on the Department website.

2.2.5 Approaches to Philosophy Seminars

These seminars enable students to meet a variety of professional philosophers in an informal setting. Visiting speakers, chosen to represent a wide range of different philosophical areas and methodologies present their work. Some students join with the speaker for drinks and/or dinner following each seminar.

2.2.6 London Research Student Conferences

The Institute of Philosophy (see below) hosts an Intercollegiate Graduate Conference once a term in terms 1 and 2, and the London-Berkeley Conference (whose venue alternates between London and Berkeley) in term 3. Typically two Birkbeck research students contribute to Intercollegiate Conferences, one presenting a paper, and the other offering a short reply to a paper presented by a student from one of the other Colleges.

The Tutor for Research Students is responsible for inviting students to speak at these conferences. Usually students are invited once they have acquired sufficient experience by contributing to the Thursday Research Seminar. When it comes to the London-Berkeley Conference, students are selected to speak in an open competition run by the Institute. In 2017, the conference will be held in Berkeley, probably late May.

2.2.7 The Dorothy Edgington Lectures and Graduate Workshops

A lecture series, named in honour of Professor Dorothy Edgington, was inaugurated in 2012 and is held every two years. See: http://edgingtonlectures.org/ The lectures coincide with an international graduate workshop on the work of the invited Lecturer, for which (of course) we encourage our own students to submit papers. Student organizers (the research student representatives afforced by a couple of students specializing in the area of the Lecturer arrange a call for papers. The 2018 Lecturer will be invited (following soundings from staff and students) in the course of 2016–17.

2.2.8 Reading Groups

Research students sometimes get together to form a Reading Group, to which they may invite students from other Colleges who are interested in the specific material the Group plans to discuss. A Reading Group usually meets weekly or fortnightly for discussion—whether taking a particular book chapter by chapter, or a series of papers on a chosen theme. If you want to arrange a Group, the Department can help. (1) You could ask the Tutor for Research Students or a member of the academic staff whose work fell in the relevant area for advice on what to read in some area. (2) The Postgraduate Administrator can help you with booking a room for the appropriate day and time, and can publicize the Group.
2.2.9 Other Seminars, Lectures, and Courses

As a member of the Department you are automatically a member of the **Institute of Philosophy** which hosts a wide range of events, including lectures, conferences, and seminars—some of these held at lunchtimes, some of these intended specifically for London postgraduates. The Institute is housed in Stewart House, next to the Senate House Library, with its front door directly opposite the side of 30, Russell Square. It provides a focus for a great deal of the research activity in the University of London where you may meet with staff and research students from other Colleges. You should keep an eye on the Institute website: [http://www.philosophysas.ac.uk/](http://www.philosophysas.ac.uk/) And they have a calendar at [http://www.sas.ac.uk/support-research/public-event-search/institute/institute-of-philosophy](http://www.sas.ac.uk/support-research/public-event-search/institute/institute-of-philosophy).

See ‘4.2 Philosophical Links’ below for the many other philosophy research-related events you might join in on.

It is strongly recommended that MRes students attend some B.A. and M.A. lectures. Timetables and descriptions of B.A. and M.A. modules are available on the Department’s website. You are eligible to attend any Birkbeck lectures. But research students must seek permission from the lecturer when they wish to attend an M.A. seminar—usually held immediately following a lecture. If you would like guidance about what lectures to attend, consult with your supervisor.

2.2.10 SSHP School, Department and B.S.A. Support for Conference Attendance

In 2014, the **School of Social Sciences, History and Philosophy** established a Postgraduate Support Fund, thanks to a very generous benefactor’s donation from the estate of Ms Evelyn Pullin. New and existing postgraduate research students within SSHP are invited to apply for financial assistance for research-related costs. But applicants must apply for support for conference attendance before applying for funding from the School’s fund. The School’s fund may give assistance for expenses associated with specific training needs, research trips, and conferences, workshops or other academic events where the applicant is presenting a paper or chairing a session. The maximum award for which a student is eligible in any year is £500. Details of how to apply, with deadlines for application (usually earlyish in November and latish in May) can be found at: [http://www.bbk.ac.uk/sshp/research/current-research-students/postgraduatesupport-fund](http://www.bbk.ac.uk/sshp/research/current-research-students/postgraduatesupport-fund)

The **Department** has limited funds to help cover the costs of attending conferences (and for priming the pump for an application to the School’s Postgraduate Support Fund).

The maximum award for which a student is eligible in any one year is £200. To apply for an award, send a brief statement to the Tutor for Research Students explaining how attendance at the conference will help your research, and giving precise details of travel and other costs. You can apply throughout the financial year, which ends on 31 July. The Team Leader in Philosophy deals with the forms needed for claiming the expenses. She will ask you for confirmation of approval of your application from the Tutor for Research Students. And you will need receipts for everything for which you claim, so be sure to keep these.

The **British Society of Aesthetics** invites postgraduate students in the UK to apply for stipends of up to £800 towards travel and accommodation costs for participation in conferences or research visits to other universities on topics in aesthetics and philosophy of art. See: [http://british-aesthetics.org/portfolio/postgraduate-travel-stipends/](http://british-aesthetics.org/portfolio/postgraduate-travel-stipends/).
2.2.11 Prizes
The annual Jacobsen Philosophy Essay Prize is worth £500 and is open to all students in the University of London. Submitted essays of up to 4,000 words may be on topics in any area of philosophy. Details of the competition are published by the Institute of Philosophy.

Several journals award prizes for student essays, and often publish winning contributions. You should look out for these.

2.3 Resources

2.3.1 Libraries
The College Library (http://www.bbk.ac.uk/lib/) is situated in the main building on Malet Street. Your College ID card gives you automatic use of the Library and eLibrary: http://www.bbk.ac.uk/lib/elib/

As a research student, you are also entitled to use Senate House, which is the main University of London Library, with a large philosophy collection (http://wwwull.ac.uk). This library is located in the Senate House on Malet Street. In order to obtain a Senate House library card you will need to show your Birkbeck Student ID card.

Our own Department Library—housed in B01, 30 Russell Square—is named after Ruby Meager (1916–1992). Ruby Meager was a Reader in the Philosophy Department at Birkbeck from 1967 to 1981. She was widely known to, and highly respected by, an international community of scholars and students of aesthetics.

2.3.2 IT Services
In addition to the facilities in the SSHP Doctoral Students’ Centre (see p.1 above), there are a number of computer rooms in the College that students can use.

IT Services give all students a password for the computers and the email system, and these can then be personalised at http://www.bbk.ac.uk/its

2.3.3 Research Training
The Department contributes to the Birkbeck Graduate Research School, by joining in the training sessions at each of the SSHP School’s two Saturday Workshops. It is envisaged that the sessions will be in two parts—one suited to recently registered students (taking such topics as “Starting on a dissertation”, “Working with your supervisor”, and “Presenting work to an audience”), the other suited to those some way on with PhD work (taking such topics as “Writing an academic CV, choosing referees, preparing for interviews” and “Preparing written work with publication in mind, and getting work published”).

Research students are encouraged to attend other generic training courses organised by the College’s Graduate Research School. You can find a calendar and register for sessions here: http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/global/workshop_timetable?orgunit=GRS

2.3.4 Research Student Web Pages
A list of research students and their interests, the programme for the Philosophy Research Seminar, the MRes Seminar, and other conferences, seminars and reading groups are posted on the research student section of the Philosophy Department website, which we keep up to date insofar as students supply information.

2.3.5 Monitoring and Progress
The Department closely monitors the progress of its students. Your essay supervisors will be asked to report to the Tutor for MRes Students on your progress after
each term of supervision. The Tutor for MRes Students will provide guidance if need be.

### 2.3.6 Changing Your Supervisor, Complaints Procedure

Sometimes, a student and his or her supervisor may decide that it would help the student to be supervised by someone else (perhaps because the student’s research interests have shifted, or because a change of perspective would be useful). You are always free to discuss this possibility with your principal supervisor or, should you feel uncomfortable about this, with the Tutor for MRes Students. (If she or he is your supervisor then you should feel free to contact the Chair of the Department instead.) However, for staffing reasons, the Department cannot guarantee that a student who wishes to change supervisor will be transferred to the person of their choice.

If you have any other concerns that you do not feel able to raise directly with your supervisor then you may speak in complete confidence with the Tutor for MRes Students (or, as above, the Chair of the Department).

If you have any complaints about your treatment by the Department, you can discuss the matter with your principal supervisor. You might alternatively choose to approach the Tutor for MRes Students or the Department Chair. Should you remain unsatisfied, there is a College Complaints Procedure, see [http://www.bbk.ac.uk/reg/regs/](http://www.bbk.ac.uk/reg/regs/)

### 2.3.7 Withdrawals and Breaks in Study

It is sometimes necessary for research students to intermit or terminate their studies, for example, because of ill health, work or family commitments. If you find yourself in this position, you should contact your principal supervisor immediately. He or she will discuss your circumstances in strict confidence and will endeavour to give you the best possible advice and support, whatever your decision.

If you decide to withdraw or to take a Break in Study then you must email the Tutor for MRes Students and the Postgraduate Administrator, briefly stating the reasons for your decision. Fees are charged pro rata for the amount of the course you have attended.

### 2.3.8 Student Representation

In addition to informal channels of communication, there is a formal system of student-staff consultation. Research students are asked to elect class representatives (usually MPhil/PhD students) when there is a vacancy, or when there is felt to be a need for more representatives. Their role is to represent the special concerns of research students on the Department Student-Staff Exchange Committee that meets with the Tutor for the Research Students once a term. Student reps also play an important role in organising workshops and other events. Their names, with contact details, are posted on the Department’s web site.

### 2.4 Philosophy’s Good Practice Policy

The Department has a Good Practice Policy as recommended by the British Philosophical Association and the Society for Women in Philosophy (U.K.).

Our aim in having the policy is to do our best to eliminate bias of any sort in how students, colleagues and job candidates are treated, how students’ work is marked, what is said in academic references, and so on. Such a policy is recommended on the basis of evidence that even the most well-intentioned people—male and female—can exhibit unconscious biases in the ways they deal with women. Gender biases interact with biases related to race, ethnicity, gender identity, age, disability and other stigmatized or under-represented groups.

The aspects of the policy which might affect students directly are the following:
(a) We ask anyone in charge of periods of discussion (whether in tutorials, in seminars or in reading groups) to facilitate broad participation, if necessary by inhibiting particular individuals from dominating discussion.
(b) We invite everyone to show no tolerance for insulting, aggressive or unprofessional behaviour whether from staff members, other teachers or students. (In connection with teaching occasions, such behaviour includes, but is not limited to, dismissive remarks about the intellectual abilities of people of certain sorts, hostile questioning and/or excessive interruption of speakers. In connection with social events [e.g. drinks after seminars or at Cumberland Lodge weekend; parties at induction, Christmas, end of year] such behaviour could include anything that falls under the definition of bullying or harassment or victimization in the College's Guide to Dignity at Work and Study.)

We hope that if any student suffered from or witnessed conduct out of line with the Department’s policy, they would take their concerns to a member of staff in the Department. And we note that anyone who wanted to speak in confidence to someone outside the Department could arrange to meet with one of the College’s D@W&S (Dignity at Work and Study) Contacts.

3 THE MRES DEGREE

3.1. Overview of MRes Degree
The MRes programme (one year full-time and two years part-time) consists of two core modules—one in practical, the other in theoretical philosophy, and both including some history of philosophy. It also includes a thesis of between 15,000 and 20,000 words.

3.2 Number of Essays & Essay Length
Each module is examined by an essay of around 5,000 words. These are due on the first Monday of Term 3. One essay is on theoretical philosophy, and the other is on practical philosophy. Full-time students write both essays in the same year. Part-time students do one of the essays each year. Whether the essay is on practical or theoretical philosophy depends on which of these two modules they have done in the given year.

3.3 Nomination of Essay Topics
Students nominate essay topics at least one week before the end of Term 1. They will be assigned a supervisor on the basis of their nominated topic. Although students may request a particular supervisor, it will not always be possible to be assigned to one’s choice of supervisor, given the need to distribute teaching among various members of staff.

When choosing essay and thesis topics it is very important to ensure that there is no overlap between essays, or between essays and thesis. However, it is also advisable to pick some essay topics that will provide relevant background to your thesis and between which there is the possibility of cross-fertilisation. This is a matter of judgement on which you should consult carefully with your supervisor(s).

3.4 Assessment of Essays
Essays must be submitted via Moodle by the first Monday of Term 3. Full-time students will submit both essays at the same time. Part-time students submit one essay at this time in year 1, one essay at this time in year 2.

All essays are anonymously marked and double-marked (that is, marked by two different markers who must agree a mark).
To attain a pass mark a candidate must present their work professionally; they must demonstrate advanced knowledge of the subject area, informed by relevant research and displaying either a clear and critical understanding of the topic under discussion, or originality in addressing the stated problem. Higher marks will be awarded to answers showing greater critical insight, presenting additional arguments, or displaying greater originality. Marks below the pass mark of 50 will be awarded to papers which display insufficient understanding of the philosophical problem or topic under discussion, show inadequate knowledge of relevant research, or exhibit poor argument and unclear exposition. There is a Guideline on Marking Standards for the MRes and information about how the examination of options proceeds at Appendix A below.

3.5 The Thesis

Your thesis is due on Sept. 1, at the end of the summer of your first year if you are a full-time student and at the end of summer of your second year if you are part-time student.

The topic for your thesis must be agreed with your principal supervisor.

The thesis for the MRes shall:

(i) consist of the candidate’s own account of his/her investigations; and
(ii) be either a record of original work or an ordered and critical exposition of existing knowledge, and provide evidence that the field has been thoroughly surveyed; and
(iii) be an integrated whole and present a coherent argument; and
(iv) give a critical assessment of the relevant literature, present the findings of research and include a discussion of those findings; and
(v) be written in English, with a satisfactory literary presentation; and
(vi) not exceed 20,000 words, including notes and appendices, but excluding bibliography.

Be aware, however, that you should plan towards your thesis throughout your course, and that your last supervision meeting for the thesis will be before the end of the academic year (early July).

3.6 Assessment of the Thesis

The thesis is assessed by two members of staff at Birkbeck who act as first and second examiner.

4 USEFUL INFORMATION

4.1 Future Postgraduate Funding

College Awards

College funding, in the form of School Studentships, may be available to new students, or to students who intend, after completing one degree, to advance to a further degree. They are intended to help students of high academic ability who might otherwise be unable to pursue their studies, and cover either fees, or the difference between home and overseas fees. The College will define a deadline for
applications, which will be advertised nationally, and published on the School website.

**Chase Consortium**

CHASE is one of the Arts and Humanities Research Council’s (AHRC’s) doctoral training partnership consortia. It brings together nine institutions engaged in collaborative interdisciplinary research activities within the arts and humanities. These are the Universities of East Anglia, Essex, Kent, Sussex, and the Open University, and, within London, The Courtauld Institute of Art, Birkbeck and SOAS. British and EU graduate students in Departments within institutions of AHRC consortia are eligible for funded studentships. We shall alert research students if there should be projects under whose heads Birkbeck Philosophy students might be able to apply for studentships.

**Jacobsen Graduate Fellowships and RIP Bursaries**

The Royal Institute of Philosophy has a number of fellowships and bursaries for research students in philosophy. For further details go to: [http://www.royalinstitutephilosophy.org](http://www.royalinstitutephilosophy.org)

### 4.2 Philosophical Links

**The Institute of Philosophy**

[http://www.philosophysas.ac.uk](http://www.philosophysas.ac.uk), See 2.2.10, at p.7 above.

**The Aristotelian Society**

[http://www.aristoteliansociety.org.uk](http://www.aristoteliansociety.org.uk)

We strongly recommend that you join the Aristotelian Society. There is a reduced membership fee for students. The society arranges a programme of distinguished speakers every academic year. Meetings are held fortnightly on Monday afternoons in Senate House. The Programme for the year is available on the Society’s website, where members can also obtain an advance copy of the paper for the next meeting. Speakers introduce their papers and then answer questions from the audience.

**The Royal Institute of Philosophy**

[http://www.royalinstitutephilosophy.org](http://www.royalinstitutephilosophy.org)

Each year, the Royal Institute of Philosophy puts on a lecture series in which distinguished speakers address a common theme. Information about the current lecture series and its location can be found on the RIP website.

**The Jacobsen Lecture**

The University of London Jacobsen Lecture is held annually and is given by a specially invited philosopher of international standing. The 2017 lecture will be announced on the Institute of Philosophy’s website. Admission is free.

**The Birkbeck Philosophy Society**

[http://www.bbke.ac.uk/philosophy/current-students/birkbeck-college-philosophy-society](http://www.bbke.ac.uk/philosophy/current-students/birkbeck-college-philosophy-society)

The students of the Department run a Philosophy Society. We encourage all students to join. Information about the programme of events, which is arranged by the Society’s officers, can be found on the Philosophy Society’s webpage.

**Birkbeck Institute for the Humanities**

[http://www.bbk.ac.uk/bih](http://www.bbk.ac.uk/bih)

The Birkbeck Institute for the Humanities arranges a programme of conferences and workshops on current intellectual issues in the Humanities. Sometimes events are arranged jointly with the Department and BIH. And BIH often invites prominent philosophers to speak. You can find its programme on its website.
4.3 Personal Support Links

Disability and Dyslexia Support
The Disability and Dyslexia Service provides advice and support to students with conditions that affect their ability to study. You can contact the Service by emailing disability@bbk.ac.uk or by calling 020 7631 6316, where you will be able to speak to one of Birkbeck's Wellbeing Service Administrators. You can find more information about the services at: http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/facilities/disability

The Department's Disability Liaison Officer is Dr Stacie Friend. If you experience any difficulties or require additional support from the Department, then she may be able to assist you. She may be contacted at s.friend@bbk.ac.uk.

Student Union
Birkbeck Students' Union promotes welfare issues, represents students' interests on College committees and provides social activities via events and societies. All degree students are automatically members of the union and are entitled to use the facilities and services. Birkbeck Union is affiliated to the National Union of Students (NUS) and the Mature Students' Union. http://www.birkbeckunion.org/

Counselling
The Counselling Service provides assistance to students who are experiencing emotional difficulties which may be affecting their studies or overall experience at Birkbeck. It is completely confidential: no one in College or in the Department of Philosophy need know if you use its services. To see the range of services it offers and to book an appointment, visit: http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/facilities/well-being-service/counselling-service

Student Health
Birkbeck subscribes to the Gower Street Practice, located just around the corner from the Malet Street main building at 20 Gower Street. Students living in central London can register with the doctors for full NHS general practitioner services, but other students can also benefit from the facilities. The Practice is experienced in helping students. For further information, call the health centre on 020 7636 7628, or visit http://www.gowerstreetpractice.org.uk/

Chaplaincy
The London University Chaplaincy serves the University community by offering pastoral counselling, and support and guidance in matters of faith and spiritual development for all students and staff from different religious traditions, as well as those with no religious background. The Senior Chaplains will be happy to take your initial enquiries and refer you to a specific College Chaplain should that be appropriate. See http://www.london.ac.uk/chaplaincy.html

Nursery
For Birkbeck students who find evening attendance difficult because they have young children, the College operates a well-equipped evening nursery at moderate cost.
For further details see: http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/facilities/nursery

Careers Services
Birkbeck's in-house Careers and Employability Service is designed to enhance career development and employability throughout students' time at Birkbeck. See http://www.bbk.ac.uk/careers/careers-service
In addition, the College hosts a professional recruitment service (Birkbeck Talent) linking employers with Birkbeck students and graduates. [Birkbeck Talent](http://www.bbk.ac.uk/careers/birkbeck-talent/birkbeck-talent-service)

**Birkbeck’s Policies, Procedures and Rules**
[http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/rules](http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/rules)

**Dignity at work and study**
[http://www.bbk.ac.uk/hr/policies_services/Dignity_at_work_and_study](http://www.bbk.ac.uk/hr/policies_services/Dignity_at_work_and_study)

Birkbeck tolerates no form of harassment or bullying within the College community. It has trained D@W&S Contacts who are available to all employees and students of Birkbeck. For a list of Contacts and links to the Guide to Dignity at Work and Study, go to the website.
Appendix A: Examination of MRes Work

The marking range for all components of the MRes is from 0 to 100. The mark of 50 is the pass mark on both essays and the dissertation.

To achieve a mark of between 60 and 69, a student must demonstrate: 1. A sound understanding of the nature and significance of the question under consideration. 2. Familiarity with the relevant philosophical literature. 3. An ability to bring independent thought to bear on the philosophical issues raised, and to discuss them in a coherently organized manner.

To achieve a mark of 70 or above on an essay a student must satisfy the above conditions and in addition demonstrate: 4. A detailed knowledge of some existing attempts to resolve the issues, including some or all of the following: an appreciation of the complexities of the views discussed; an ability to judge the merits of the views discussed; an ability to argue cogently in support of the judgements made; an ability to offer an independent resolution of the issues, with the help of relevant, coherent, sustained and systematic argument, and to anticipate and respond to potential difficulties or objections. Essays that approach a question from an unexpected angle, contain unusually elegant, illuminating or original passages, or are especially well illustrated in a relevant fashion may be awarded a mark of 80 or above.

Marks of between 50 and 59 will be awarded on an essay if the student demonstrates each of the following: 1. Some understanding of the nature and significance of the questions under consideration; 2. Some familiarity with the relevant philosophical literature; 3. An ability to discuss some of the philosophical issues raised in an intelligent and informed manner.

Marks of below 50, which are not pass marks, will be awarded on an essay if the student fails to demonstrate one or more of 1-3 above.

**Distinction on the MRes**

A Distinction on the MRes will normally be awarded to a candidate who attains an average of 70 or more across the two modules and the dissertation.

**Merit on the MRes**

A Merit on the MRes will normally be awarded to a candidate who attains an average between 60 and 69 across the two modules and the dissertation.

**Pass on the MRes**

A Pass on the MRes will normally be awarded to a candidate who attains an average between 50 and 59 across the two modules and the dissertation.

**Fail on the MRes**

A Pass on the MRes will normally be awarded to a candidate who attains an
average of less than 50 across the two modules and the dissertation.

**Proceeding to the MPhil/PhD from the MRes**

An high Merit overall on the MRes (67 or above) will normally be regarded as a necessary, but not sufficient condition for proceeding to the MPhil/PhD. Candidates wishing to proceed to the MPhil/PhD will need to submit an application in the normal way, which will be assessed on the basis of research proposal, and academic record, and the availability of a suitable supervisor.

**Appendix B: Plagiarism**

Students should be aware that all submitted work is scanned for plagiarism by TurnItIn software and that several cases of plagiarism have been found over the past few years. Students must be vigilant about this.

In most cases, plagiarism is taking someone else’s ideas or phrasing and presenting them as your own, without proper citation. However, plagiarism can also consist in reusing your own work from another assignment and resubmitting it for assessment in a different context, without indicating your work for the current assignment is not original. Further guidance on this is given under the heading ‘Self-Plagiarism’ below.

It is possible to plagiarise accidentally. You must be careful in taking notes to indicate where you are quoting and paraphrasing and where the ideas are your own. Sometimes students plagiarise accidentally through not being careful enough in their note-taking or in the process of drawing upon their notes.

It is plagiarism to reproduce someone else’s wording, but not cite them for it. It is also plagiarism if you express ideas in your own words, if those ideas were generated by someone else (lecturer, fellow student, great philosopher from the past or whoever) and you have not clearly said so. Of course you may independently come up with ideas that someone else has already had in the past, without realising it; in that case writing them down is not plagiarism. Care is clearly required when directly or indirectly quoting other people so as to avoid the danger of plagiarising accidentally.

Plagiarism is problematic in any circumstances, but if it is done deliberately in order to obtain a qualification, it constitutes a serious fraud. This also includes cases where students copy or buy whole essays online or have others write essays for them. The Exam Board takes a very hard line on cases of deliberate plagiarism of this sort.

If plagiarism is suspected, you may be asked for evidence that what you have submitted is indeed your own work: it is therefore advisable to retain the rough drafts and notes you made for your submitted essays and dissertation.

You should consult the MRes Tutor if you are in any doubt about what is permissible.
The College guidance on plagiarism may be consulted at: http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/facilities/support/plagiarism/plagiarism-guide

PLAGIARISM: SOME EXAMPLES

As further guidance, here follows a useful set of examples concerning what is, and what is not, plagiarism. This reproduces a document written by Richard Dennis of the Geography Department at UCL (and therefore is not the work of the authors of this Handbook!). You should pay particular attention to Example 2, which includes what tends to be the most common form of plagiarism.

Example 1. The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles. Society as a whole is more and more splitting up into two great hostile camps, into two great classes directly facing each other: Bourgeoisie and Proletariat. Masses of labourers, crowded into the factory, are organised like soldiers. Not only are they slaves of the bourgeois class, and of the bourgeois State; they are daily and hourly enslaved by the machine, by the overseer, and, above all, by the individual bourgeois manufacturer himself. The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win.

THIS IS PLAGIARISM. THERE IS NO ATTEMPT TO INDICATE THAT THESE ARE NOT THE AUTHOR'S OWN THOUGHTS BUT ARE WORDS TAKEN DIRECT FROM DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE COMMUNIST MANIFESTO.

Example 2. Marx and Engels noted that the history of all hitherto existing society had been the history of class struggles. Society as a whole was more and more splitting up into two great hostile camps, into two great classes directly facing each other: Bourgeoisie and Proletariat. They observed that proletarians had nothing to lose but their chains. They had a world to win.

THIS IS STILL PLAGIARISM. ALTHOUGH THE IDEAS ARE ATTRIBUTED TO MARX AND ENGELS, THERE IS NO INDICATION THAT THE FORM OF WORDS ARE NOT ORIGINAL TO THE ESSAY'S AUTHOR. JUST CHANGING IT INTO THE PAST TENSE DOESN'T MAKE IT ORIGINAL.

Example 3. In The Communist Manifesto, Marx and Engels (1973 edn., p. 40) noted that 'The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles'. They argued that society was 'more and more splitting up into two great hostile camps, into two great classes directly facing each other: Bourgeoisie and Proletariat' (p. 41). 'Masses of labourers, crowded into the factory' were 'organised like soldiers ... slaves of the bourgeois class, and of the bourgeois State' (p. 52). They concluded that 'The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win' (p. 96).

THIS IS NOT PLAGIARISM, BUT IF ALL YOUR ESSAY CONSISTS OF IS A SET OF QUOTATIONS STITCHED TOGETHER, IT
Example 4. In one of the most famous first sentences ever written, Marx and Engels (1973 edn., p 40) began The Communist Manifesto thus: ‘The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles.’ They went on to exemplify this claim by showing how the structure of society had, in their view, developed into two interdependent but antagonistic classes: bourgeoisie and proletariat. The latter comprised factory operatives, who had been reduced to no more than slave labour; but as they became concentrated geographically, in the great factory towns of the industrial revolution, so they had the opportunity to organise themselves politically. Hence, the authors’ conclusion that a communist revolution was not only desirable, but possible, leading them to issue their equally famous final exhortation (p. 96): ‘Working men of all countries, unite!’

'DOESN'T SUGGEST THAT YOU HAVE THOUGHT ABOUT OR UNDERSTOOD THE CONTENTS OF THE QUOTATIONS. SO THE ESSAY WRITER WOULDN'T EARN HIGH MARKS FOR THIS EFFORT!

'This may not be a very profound commentary, but this avoids plagiarism.'

'Self-plagiarism'

According to the College’s plagiarism policy (linked above), ‘[a]nother form of plagiarism is submitting work you previously submitted before for another assignment. While this is obviously not the same as representing someone else’s ideas as your own, it is a form of self-plagiarism and is another form of cheating.’

The basic principle here is that candidates cannot receive academic credit for the same work twice over. That is, you cannot submit the same work twice and expect to be rewarded for it both times. For this reason, any material submitted for final assessment (whether at Birkbeck or elsewhere) that reproduces or duplicates material previously submitted for final assessment will be treated as plagiarised and dealt with as such.

There are four very important points to note with respect to this policy:

• The prohibition on duplication applies not only to work submitted for final assessment on the MA, but to all work submitted for final assessment for any degree at any institution. This means, for example, that you cannot reproduce work submitted as part of an undergraduate dissertation—even if it was submitted at a different university.

• The prohibition applies only to work submitted for final assessment. It does not include work that does not contribute directly towards your final mark on a module, such as formative essays or drafts.

• The purpose of this restriction is not to prevent you from submitting multiple essays on the same topics, but to prevent you from reproducing the same work. The fact that you have previously submitted an essay on free will, for example, does not preclude you from submitting another essay on free will, so long as the new essay does not merely repeat material contained in the previous one. Indeed, it is normal for students to develop their ideas on a topic over a number of pieces of submitted work.
• The best way to proceed is to treat one’s previously submitted work as though it were the published work of someone else. You may refer to your previous work—and even quote from it—just as you do the work of others.

If you are concerned about the possibility of self-plagiarism with respect to a specific piece of work, you should seek the advice of your lecturer, your supervisor, or the MRes Tutor.