

Programme Specification

1	Awarding body	University of London
2	Teaching Institution	Birkbeck College
3	Programme Title(s)	BA Philosophy BA Philosophy with Foundation Year
4	Programme Code(s)	UBAPLPHY_C (4-year part-time) UUBAPLPH_C (3-year full-time) UUBFPLPH_C (4-year full-time with foundation Year) UBFPLPHY_C (6-year part-time with Foundation Year)
5	UCAS code	V500/V501 (with Foundation Year)
6	Home Department	Philosophy
7	Exit Award(s)	Dip HE, Cert HE
8	Duration of Study (number of years)	3 Years Full-Time, 4 Years Part-Time, 4 years full-time with Foundation Year, 6 years part-time with Foundation Year
9	Mode of Study (FT/PT/DL)	Full-Time or Part-Time
10	Level of Award (FHEQ)	6
11	Other teaching depts or institution	N/A
12	Professional, Statutory Regulatory Body (PSRB) details	N/A
13	QAA Benchmark Group	Philosophy

14	Programme Rationale & Aims
	<p>BA Philosophy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide a comprehensive grounding in Western philosophy and its history, in the broadly analytic tradition; • To foster the skills of clear logical thought and presentation, careful analysis of ideas and imaginative deployment of argument; • To develop intellectual curiosity and independent thinking. <p>BA Philosophy with Foundation Year:</p> <p>For the BA Philosophy with Foundation Year programmes, the purpose of the Foundation Year is to prepare students for successful completion of their undergraduate degree. The Foundation Year (one year FT or two years PT) provides students the opportunity to explore their interests and build on their study skills, and on successful completion of the Foundation Year, students may progress onto year one of the PT of FT programmes. The curriculum for the ‘with foundation year’</p>

	<p>programme after the completion of the foundation year modules is the same as the full-time or part-time BA programme. Students who successfully complete the versions of the degree programme 'with foundation year' are awarded the same final degree title as students on the full-time or part-time degree routes.</p>
15	<p>Entry Criteria</p>
	<p>For students who have recently undertaken qualifications with a UCAS tariff equivalence the standard offer is 120-128 UCAS tariff points or equivalent, although lower offers may be given to students of particular promise in philosophy.</p> <p>For other applicants will make our own assessment of skills, knowledge, and suitability to the course.</p> <p>The majority of applicants will be interviewed by our Admissions Tutors. Note that holders of Birkbeck's Certificate of Higher Education in Philosophy may apply for direct entry to the second year of the BA.</p> <p>BA Philosophy with Foundation Year:</p> <p>This programme is designed for people who can demonstrate the ability and motivation to complete the BA Philosophy but who do not currently meet the entry criteria for direct entrance onto the degree. Applicants will often be invited for interview to discuss their interests and future plans, and to assess their needs and aptitudes. For those students who already have Level 3 qualifications the expectation is that they will have qualifications equivalent to 48 UCAS tariff points. Given that students on the foundation year will be enrolled on degree programmes, applicants will be offered a place only if there is significant evidence to suggest they have the ability to complete the full degree.</p>
16	<p>Learning Outcomes</p>
	<p>Foundation Year:</p> <p>Students will have acquired:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A foundational understanding of the different disciplines offered by the School of Social Science, History and Philosophy 2. A foundational understanding of some key concepts in those disciplines 3. Key academic reading, writing, research and assessment skills appropriate to the study of those disciplines 4. An understanding of other key learning skills required for university-level study and knowledge of how to access support at Birkbeck to develop these. <p>All modes of study:</p> <p>On successful completion of this programme, you will be able:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To display a detailed grasp of a wide variety of historical and current philosophical debates in a broad range of subject areas • To critically employ philosophical concepts and distinctions

- To display a critical understanding of key philosophical texts
- To formulate philosophical questions with precision and clarity
- To summarize philosophical arguments with precision and clarity
- To support and challenge philosophical views by constructing arguments and citing relevant considerations
- To display a critical understanding of philosophy as a unified discipline together with an appreciation of the relatedness of its subject areas
- To assess the strengths and weaknesses of a thinker's position
- To formulate your own thoughts concisely with clarity and precision
- To form, analyze and criticize arguments cogently
- To extract information from complex presentations
- To summarize key points from presented material
- To analyse complex thoughts and arguments
- To draw information together in written work
- To articulate and evaluate the specific questions underlying a more general question
- To present well-structured thoughts orally
- To use libraries and electronic sources of information
- To construct cogent arguments in the course of discussion
- To assess the validity of arguments
- To form your philosophical views, argue for those views, and defend or amend them in the light of criticism
- To read philosophy independently
- To formulate your thoughts clearly and concisely
- To think independently and critically

17 Learning, teaching and assessment methods

Learning philosophy involves acquiring two things: (i) knowledge and understanding of various philosophical questions, theories, and arguments, and (ii) skills relating to the analysis, criticism, and evaluation of different philosophical positions. Our BA is carefully designed to teach both.

Lectures are designed to introduce students to a wide range of philosophical topics, methods and arguments, and to serve as a stimulus to independent reading. The lecturers will provide an overview of the topics students are studying, explaining and clarifying their more complex parts, and will demonstrate how to begin challenging and assessing the philosophical positions in question.

Seminars are designed to enable students to develop your philosophical skills. Each seminar has a set topic, and provides an opportunity for students to try out their own

	<p>philosophical arguments in discussion with other students, under the guidance of a course tutor.</p> <p>Teaching occurs over three terms. Most modules are 15 credits. Each 15-credit module is supported by 10 lectures, with each lecture followed the same evening by a seminar, in a single term, except Level 4 Logic A and Logic B, for which each lecture is preceded on the same evening by a class. The Level 6 Dissertation is 30 credits. The Dissertation is taught through one-to-one supervisions.</p> <p>At Level 4, assessment is by an assignment and an exam. In Logic A and Logic B, the assignment and exam consist of logic exercises, and the exam is given in-college. In the other modules, the assignments are short writing tasks designed to help students develop and improve philosophical writing skills, and the exam is a take-home exam which consists of a range of questions requiring short answers.</p> <p>At Level 5, assessment is by a short-answer take-home exam and an essay. Students will have an opportunity to write a practice essay during the term, on which they will receive feedback from their tutor, in preparation for the assessed essay.</p> <p>At Level 6, assessment is by a longer essay. Students will have an opportunity to write a practice essay during the term, on which they will receive feedback from your tutor, in preparation for the assessed essay. As we expect students to improve as a philosopher over the course of their studies, Level 6 modules are double-weighted against Level 5 modules, and Level 4 modules are not included in the calculation of their final degree class.</p>
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18	<p>Programme Structure</p> <p>BA Philosophy:</p> <p>The BA aims to give students a systematic education in the central areas of philosophy, while also allowing them to follow their own interests in exploring a broad range of subject areas. At Level 4 students take compulsory modules that introduce core areas of philosophy, including logic, epistemology, metaphysics, ethics, political philosophy and the history of philosophy, for a total of 120 credits. In subsequent years students choose from a range of 15-credit optional modules, though they may replace two of those modules in their final year with a 30-credit dissertation. Students will take a total of 120 credits at Level 5, and 120 credits at Level 6. Optional modules are available at either Level 5 or 6. To ensure breadth, students are required to take at least two optional modules in each of three groups: Fact, Value and History. This requirement can be satisfied by a combination of Level 5 and Level 6 modules. Students at Level 6 who choose to write a dissertation will have a chance to investigate a philosophical issue in depth, aided by one-to-one supervisions with an expert in the field.</p>
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The following is a representative list of optional modules, along with their classifications (please note that not all modules are taught every year, and that the list is subject to change):

- Ancient Philosophy (History)
- Aristotle's Biology (History)
- Art and Value (Value)
- Biology of Evil (History)
- Early Modern Philosophy of Mind (History)
- Epistemology (Fact)
- Ethics (Value)
- Evolution and Philosophy (Fact)
- Idea of Freedom (Value)
- Kant and German Idealism (History)
- Metaethics (Value)
- Metaphysics (Fact)
- Philosophy of Mind (Fact)
- Morality, Nature and Evolution (Value)
- Modern Philosophy (History)
- Moral Responsibility (Value)
- Nietzsche (History)
- Philosophy, Business and Society (Value)
- Philosophy and Gender (Value)
- Rationality: Formal and Theoretical Approaches (Fact)
- Political Philosophy (Value)
- Power of Art: Historical Themes (History)
- Philosophy of Science (Fact)
- Social Epistemology (Fact)
- Spinoza (History)

Note that it is sometimes possible for students to take one or two optional modules offered by the Philosophy Department at King's College London (KCL).

BA Philosophy with Foundation Year

Students in the BA Philosophy with Foundation year take 120 credits at Level 3 in the foundation year(s) (one year FT, two years PT). There are four core modules:

1. Fundamentals of Study: Learning through the Global City
2. Breaking Boundaries of Knowledge
3. Crossing Borders: Studying in SSHP
4. Contemporary Global Issues: Approaches in Social Science, History and Philosophy

Students who successfully pass all modules with grades of 40% or higher may **progress** onto Year one of BA Philosophy with Foundation Year.

3-year programme (full-time)				
Year 1				
Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Status*
4	SSPL012H4	Knowledge and Faith	15	Compulsory
4	SSPL009H4	Morality and Society	15	Compulsory
4	SSPL015H4	Philosophy as the Art of Living: Ancient Views	15	Compulsory
4	SSPL011H4	Identity, Mind and Free Will	15	Compulsory
4	SSPL010H4	Politics and Society	15	Compulsory
4	SSPL016H4	Philosophy as the Art of Living: Modern Views	15	Compulsory
4	SSPL013H4	Logic A – The Philosopher’s Toolbox	15	Compulsory
4	SSPL014H4	Logic B – The Languages of Logic	15	Compulsory
Year 2				
Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Status*
5		Option 1	15	Optional
5		Option 2	15	Optional
5		Option 3	15	Optional
5		Option 4	15	Optional
5		Option 5	15	Optional
5		Option 6	15	Optional
5		Option 7	15	Optional
5		Option 8	15	Optional
Year 3				
Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Status*
6		Option 9	15	Optional
6		Option 10	15	Optional
6		Option 11	15	Optional
6		Option 12	15	Optional
6		Option 13	15	Optional
6		Option 14	15	Optional
6		<i>Either a Dissertation (30 credits) or two further Options (15 credits each)</i>	30	Optional
4-year programme (part-time)				
Year 1				
Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Status*
4	SSPL012H4	Knowledge and Faith	15	Compulsory
4	SSPL009H4	Morality and Society	15	Compulsory
4	SSPL015H4	Philosophy as the Art of Living: Ancient Views	15	Compulsory
4	SSPL011H4	Identity, Mind and Free Will	15	Compulsory
4	SSPL010H4	Society and Politics	15	Compulsory
4	SSPL016H4	Philosophy as the Art of Living: Modern Views	15	Compulsory

Year 2				
Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Status
4	SSPL013H4	Logic A – The Philosopher’s Toolbox	15	Compulsory
4	SSPL014H4	Logic B – The Languages of Logic	15	Compulsory
5		Option 1	15	Optional
5		Option 2	15	Optional
5		Option 3	15	Optional
5		Option 4	15	Optional
Year 3				
Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Status*
5		Option 5	15	Optional
5		Option 6	15	Optional
5		Option 7	15	Optional
5		Option 8	15	Optional
6		Option 9	15	Optional
6		Option 10	15	Optional
Year 4				
Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Status*
6		Option 11	15	Optional
6		Option 12	15	Optional
6		Option 13	15	Optional
6		Option 14	15	Optional
6		<i>Either a Dissertation (30 credits) or two further Options (15 credits each)</i>	30	Optional
BA Philosophy with Foundation Year (Full-time 4 years)				
FOUNDATION Year (0)				
Level	Module code	Module title	Credits	Status*
3	CASE002S3	Fundamentals of Study: Learning through the Global City	30	Core
3	CASE001S3	Breaking Boundaries of Knowledge	30	Core
3	SSSS001S3	Crossing Borders: Studying in SSHP	30	Core
3	SSSS002S3	Contemporary Global Issues: Approaches in Social Science, History and Philosophy	30	Core
Year 1				
Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Status*
4	SSPL012H4	Knowledge and Faith	15	Compulsory
4	SSPL009H4	Morality and Society	15	Compulsory
4	SSPL015H4	Philosophy as the Art of Living: Ancient Views	15	Compulsory
4	SSPL011H4	Identity, Mind and Free Will	15	Compulsory
4	SSPL010H4	Politics and Society	15	Compulsory
4	SSPL016H4	Philosophy as the Art of Living: Modern Views	15	Compulsory
4	SSPL013H4	Logic A – The Philosopher’s Toolbox	15	Compulsory
4	SSPL014H4	Logic B – The Languages of Logic	15	Compulsory

Year 2				
Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Status*
5		Option 1	15	Optional
5		Option 2	15	Optional
5		Option 3	15	Optional
5		Option 4	15	Optional
5		Option 5	15	Optional
5		Option 6	15	Optional
5		Option 7	15	Optional
5		Option 8	15	Optional
Year 3				
Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Status*
6		Option 9	15	Optional
6		Option 10	15	Optional
6		Option 11	15	Optional
6		Option 12	15	Optional
6		Option 13	15	Optional
6		Option 14	15	Optional
6		<i>Either a Dissertation (30 credits) or two further Options (15 credits each)</i>	30	Optional
BA Philosophy with Foundation Year (Part-time 6 years)				
FOUNDATION Year (0a)				
Level	Module code	Module title	Credits	Status*
3	CASE002S3	Fundamentals of Study: Learning through the Global City	30	Core
3	CASE001S3	Breaking Boundaries of Knowledge	30	Core
FOUNDATION Year (0b)				
Level	Module code	Module title	Credits	Status*
3	SSSS001S3	Crossing Borders: Studying in SSHP	30	Core
3	SSSS002S3	Contemporary Global Issues: Approaches in Social Science, History and Philosophy	30	Core
Year 1				
Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Status*
4	SSPL012H4	Knowledge and Faith	15	Compulsory
4	SSPL009H4	Morality and Society	15	Compulsory
4	SSPL015H4	Philosophy as the Art of Living: Ancient Views	15	Compulsory
4	SSPL011H4	Identity, Mind and Free Will	15	Compulsory
4	SSPL010H4	Society and Politics	15	Compulsory
4	SSPL016H4	Philosophy as the Art of Living: Modern Views	15	Compulsory

Year 2				
Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Status*
4	SSPL013H4	Logic A – The Philosopher’s Toolbox	15	Compulsory
4	SSPL014H4	Logic B – The Languages of Logic	15	Compulsory
5		Option 1	15	Optional
5		Option 2	15	Optional
5		Option 3	15	Optional
5		Option 4	15	Optional
Year 3				
Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Status*
5		Option 5	15	Optional
5		Option 6	15	Optional
5		Option 7	15	Optional
5		Option 8	15	Optional
6		Option 9	15	Optional
6		Option 10	15	Optional
Year 4				
Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Status*
6		Option 11	15	Optional
6		Option 12	15	Optional
6		Option 13	15	Optional
6		Option 14	15	Optional
6		<i>Either a Dissertation (30 credits) or two further Options (15 credits each)</i>	30	Optional

Status*

CORE – Module must be taken and passed by student; COMPULSORY – Module must be taken, mark can be reviewed at sub-exam board; OPTIONAL – Student can choose to take this module

23	Programme Director	Dr Stacie Friend
24	Start Date (term/year)	September 2012
25	Date approved by TQEC	Spring 2011
26	Date approved by Academic Board	Summer 2011
27	Date(s) updated/amended	12 April 2021 (for 2021/22)