

Programme Specification

1	Awarding body	University of London				
2	Teaching Institution	Birkbeck College				
3	Programme Title(s)	Postgraduate Diploma Philosophy				
4	Programme Code(s)	TPDPLPHY_C				
5	UCAS code	N/A				
6	Home Department	Philosophy				
7	Exit Award(s)	Postgraduate Certificate				
8	Duration of Study (number of years)	1 year FT / 2 years PT				
9	Mode of Study	FT	X	PT	X	DL
10	Level of Award (FHEQ)	7				
11	Other teaching depts or institution	N/A				
12	Professional, Statutory Regulatory Body(PSRB) details	N/A				
13	QAA Benchmark Group					

14	Programme Rationale & Aims
	<p>This programme provides students with postgraduate-level training in central areas of philosophy. Students may, if they wish, apply to upgrade to the full MA prior to completion. Teaching is research-led, delivered by core staff.</p>

15	Entry Criteria
	<p>At least a second-class honours degree (2:2), or equivalent, not necessarily in philosophy. (see below). Admission decisions are made on the basis of (a) academic references; (b) a writing sample; and (c) an interview (by telephone for overseas candidates).</p>

16	Learning Outcomes
	<p>Subject Specific: <i>Students will have:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A basic grasp of a variety of historical and current philosophical debates across more than one philosophical subject area; 2. A command of philosophical concepts and distinctions; 3. An ability to read closely and understand key philosophical texts; 4. An ability to formulate philosophical questions with precision and clarity; 5. An ability to summarise philosophical arguments and positions; 6. An ability to support and challenge philosophical views by constructing arguments and citing relevant considerations;

	<p>7. An awareness of the strengths and weaknesses of opposing views, and an ability to formulate the best arguments for those views;</p> <p>8. Developed abilities in writing, reading and discussing philosophy.</p> <p>Intellectual: <i>Students will have:</i></p> <p>9. The ability to assess the strengths and weaknesses of a thinker’s position;</p> <p>10. The ability to formulate their thoughts concisely with clarity and precision;</p> <p>11. The ability to form, analyse and criticize arguments cogently.</p> <p>Practical: <i>Students will have:</i></p> <p>12. The ability to draw information from the presentation of complex material;</p> <p>13. The ability to summarise key points from presented material;</p> <p>14. The ability to analyse complex thought and argument;</p> <p>15. The ability to draw information together in what they write;</p> <p>16. The ability to articulate and evaluate the specific questions underlying a more general question;</p> <p>17. The ability to present well-structured thought orally;</p> <p>18. The ability to construct cogent arguments in the course of discussion;</p> <p>19. The ability to use libraries and, where they have facilities, electronic sources of information;</p> <p>20. The ability to assess the validity of arguments.</p> <p>Personal and Social: <i>Students will have:</i></p> <p>21. The ability to form their own philosophical views, argue for those views, and be prepared to defend or amend them in the light of criticism;</p> <p>22. The ability to read philosophy independently;</p> <p>23. The ability to formulate one’s thoughts clearly and concisely;</p> <p>24. A developed capacity for independent thought.</p>
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17	<p>Learning, teaching and assessment methods</p> <p>Learning and Teaching on the Postgraduate Diploma consists of a combination of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lectures and Seminars • Individual Supervision • Class Discussion and Student Presentations • Independent Reading • Essay Writing <p>Assessment is predominantly by submitted essays on set topics (though see below for exceptions.) The marking scheme for each module, and for the Diploma as a whole, is: Fail (49 and below); Pass (50-59); Merit (60-69); Distinction (70 and above).</p>
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	<p>More specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Each of our <i>optional</i> modules consists in ten lectures, each followed by a seminar, with set readings to be completed before each session. All optional modules are assessed by submitted essays. Optional modules are taught in all three terms. — <i>Introduction to Philosophy</i>, which is a compulsory module for Diploma students who do not have a first degree in philosophy, consists in twenty lectures, each followed by a seminar. It meets twice a week in the Autumn Term. Assessment is by an essay (worth 50% of the module mark) and a take-home, short-answer exam (worth 50%). The exam is due the week after term ends; the essay is due at the start of Term 2. Students can write a formative (practice) essay during the term, on which they receive written feedback. — <i>Introduction to Philosophical Argument</i>, which is also compulsory for Diploma students who do not have a first degree in philosophy, consists in ten lectures and ten classes. It meets once a week in the Spring Term. Assessment is by a written exam which takes place in class in the week after term ends. — <i>Philosophy Proseminar</i>, which is a compulsory module for Diploma students who do have a first degree in philosophy, consists in ten intensive seminar sessions, each focused on a set reading. It meets fortnightly throughout the Autumn and Spring Terms. Assessment is by student presentations and participation.
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18	<p>Programme Description</p> <p>There are two routes through the programme: a ‘standard’ route for students who already have an academic background in philosophy, and a ‘conversion’ route for students looking to transfer into the discipline.</p> <p>‘Standard’ Route:</p> <p>Full-Time Y1: Any 6 optional modules (each 15 credits, L7) across the three terms, with a maximum of 3 optional modules in Autumn and Spring terms, and a maximum of 2 optional modules in Summer term; plus the Philosophy Proseminar (30 credits, L6).</p> <p>Part-Time Y1: Any 4 optional modules across the three terms, with a maximum of 3 in any one term.</p> <p>Part-Time Y2: Any 2 optional modules across the three terms, plus the Philosophy Proseminar.</p> <p>‘Conversion’ Route:</p> <p>Full-Time Y1: Any 4 optional modules (each 15 credits, L7) across the three terms, with a maximum of 2 in any one term, plus Introduction to Philosophy (30 credits, L7) in Autumn Term and Introduction to Philosophical Argument (30 credits, L6) in Spring Term.</p> <p>Part-Time Y1: Introduction to Philosophy in Autumn Term and Introduction to Philosophical Argument in Spring Term, plus 1 or 2 optional modules across the Spring and Summer Terms (toward a total of 4 in the two years).</p> <p>Part-Time Y2: Any 2 or 3 optional modules across the three terms (to complete the total of four).</p>
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¹⁹	Programme Structure			
Full-Time programme – 1 year				
'Standard' Route				
Year 1				
Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Status*
7		Option 1	15	Optional
7		Option 2	15	Optional
7		Option 3	15	Optional
7		Option 4	15	Optional
7		Option 5	15	Optional
7		Option 6	15	Optional
7	SSPL160S7	Philosophy Proseminar	30	Compulsory
'Conversion' Route				
Year 1				
Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Status*
7	SSPL074S7	Introduction to Philosophy	30	Compulsory
6	SSPL076S6	Introduction to Philosophical Argument	30	Compulsory
7		Option 1	15	Optional
7		Option 2	15	Optional
7		Option 3	15	Optional
7		Option 4	15	Optional
Part Time programme – 2 years				
'Standard' Route				
Year 1				
Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Status*
7		Option 1	15	Optional
7		Option 2	15	Optional
7		Option 3	15	Optional
7		Option 4	15	Optional
Year 2				
Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Status*
7		Option 5	15	Optional
7		Option 6	15	Optional
7	SSPL160S7	Philosophy Proseminar	30	Compulsory
'Conversion' Route				
Year 1				
Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Status*
7	SSPL074S7	Introduction to Philosophy	30	Compulsory
6	SSPL076S6	Introduction to Philosophical Argument	30	Compulsory
7		Option 1	15	Optional

Year of entry: 2021/22



Year 2				
Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Status*
7		Option 2	15	Optional
7		Option 3	15	Optional
7		Option 4	15	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

²⁰	Programme Director	Dr Sarah Patterson
²¹	Start Date (<i>term/year</i>)	Autumn Term 2016
²²	Date approved by TQEC	9 February 2016
²³	Date approved by Academic Board	3 March 2016
²⁴	Date(s) updated/amended	10 February 2020 (for 2020/21)