Philosophy
Welcome

Lancaster allows you to study philosophy, the oldest academic subject, in a flexible way, in a friendly and supportive campus environment.

Philosophy is the careful, critical, and reasoned engagement with a wide range of fundamental questions about human existence; about art, politics, justice, right and wrong, truth and knowledge, faith and reason.

Here at Lancaster we approach these questions not only through the history of philosophy, examining figures such as Plato, Descartes and Nietzsche, but also via contemporary philosophical discussion of a wide range of important and relevant topics.

There are ten philosophers in the Department and research from the Department was ranked 3rd overall in the UK in the 2014 Research Excellence Framework. Philosophy is also ranked 7th in the UK in the Times and Sunday Times Good University Guide 2016 subject tables.

Lancaster is distinctive in having a large proportion of applied philosophy experts within the Department; who provide philosophical input into public policy and the law, both nationally and internationally.

Lancaster offers a flexible degree system which allows you to take joint (or combined) honours degrees, and to study other subjects alongside Philosophy as a minor. This flexibility means you can tailor your studies to your interests and strengths rather than being constrained by the choices that you made before university, you can even change your degree course provided you have done the appropriate first year modules.

Please do contact us if you have any further questions about studying Philosophy at Lancaster.
Why study Philosophy at Lancaster?

RESEARCH
The Department is 1st for research impact, 2nd for research environment and 3rd overall in the most recent Research Excellence Framework. We have special expertise in the area of applied philosophy.

FLEXIBILITY
A high degree of flexibility in studying philosophy with other subjects, this allows you to change the focus of your studies at the end of the first year.

TEACHING
3rd in the UK for staff-student ratio in The Guardian 2017 rankings. 94% of our students are satisfied with their course. Third-year dissertation option offers one-to-one tutorials.

REPUTATION
Philosophy at Lancaster is ranked 8th in the UK in The Complete University Guide 2017 subject rankings.

STUDY ABROAD
There are opportunities to study philosophy in your second year in North America as part of the Study Abroad programme.

AFTER YOU GRADUATE
The Complete University Guide 2017 ranked our graduate prospects joint 2nd in the UK.
All of our academic staff are research-active which means that you will be studying the subject with those who have shaped the subject as it is today.

Many of our philosophers work in applied philosophy, where they seek to apply their philosophical expertise to real world problems. For example:

Professor Stephen Wilkinson is currently working with lawyers and policy makers on revising the UK law about gamete (sperm/egg) donation in light of various changes in biotechnology.

Dr Garrath Williams is involved in a large European research project on family health policy, and was a key researcher on another European project on policies to deal with childhood obesity.

Dr Neil Manson works on informed consent, has been part of NHS working groups on consent policy, and gave evidence to the Leveson Inquiry into the ethics of the press.

Dr Rachel Cooper’s research in philosophy of psychiatry critiques the way that psychiatric diagnoses are formulated especially in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders.

Most of our students study with us for all three years but there is also the great opportunity to study abroad in your second year, usually at a North American or Canadian university.

In recent years students have gone to Santa Cruz (California, USA), Illinois (USA), Carleton and Trent (Canada), Waikato (New Zealand). This is a fantastic opportunity, and is currently a financially attractive option too; you pay less than you would do studying in Lancaster.

Please be aware that places on the programme are not guaranteed, and depend upon your first year academic performance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree title</th>
<th>Degree</th>
<th>UCAS code</th>
<th>Degree length</th>
<th>Typical offer</th>
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<tr>
<td>Philosophy</td>
<td>BA</td>
<td>V500</td>
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<td>AAB-ABB</td>
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<td>Philosophy and Politics</td>
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<td>Mathematics and Philosophy</td>
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Teaching and assessment

Year 1
You will have 6 hours of lectures and 3 hours of small group seminars (10-12 students on average) per week. In addition to this you will study independently, prepare for your seminar discussions, and produce assessed pieces of work as directed by your tutors.

Years 2 and 3
You will have 6 hours of lectures and 4 hours of seminars per week. In addition to this you will study independently, prepare for your seminar discussions, and produce assessed pieces of work as directed by your tutors.

Specialisation in Year 3
In Year 3 there is a dissertation option, where you will work one-to-one with a tutor over two terms on a 10,000 word dissertation. There are also “special subject” modules, where you will work in small groups, focusing on specific topics, texts or issues in philosophy, with a member of academic staff.

Assessment
There is assessed coursework and exams throughout all three years. For most modules, exams count for 60% of your mark, coursework for 40%. First year marks do not contribute to your final degree classification.
**Modules in-depth**

**Single honours Philosophy**

**Year 1**

- **CORE MODULE** (Major)
- **OPTIONAL MODULE 1** (Minor)
- **OPTIONAL MODULE 2** (Minor)

**PHIL100: Introduction to Philosophy**
Made up of five blocks: epistemology; metaphysics; critical thinking; ethics; political philosophy. This module does not require prior study of philosophy.

**EPR100: Ethics, Philosophy and Religion**
Focuses on a range of issues in religion, ethics, science, and philosophy.

**POLI100: Introduction to Politics and Governance**
Examines political philosophy in-depth.

**Years 2 and 3**

In Philosophy there are no core requirements. Over the two years you have to make up a total of 240 credits. Single honours students must take at least 180 credits in Philosophy, from a mixture of single-term (15 credit) and two-term (30 credit) modules. You can also continue with one or more of your “minor” subjects.

**Year 2 example**

- **3 PHILOSOPHY MODULES** (30 credits each)
- **1 PHILOSOPHY MODULE** (15 credits)
- **SELECT A MODULE IN YOUR MINOR SUBJECT** (15 credits)

**Year 2 Philosophy modules (30 credits each, 2 terms)**

- **Ethics: Theory and Practice**
  Focuses on a selection of topics in ethics, meta-ethics, normative ethics and practical ethics. e.g., are there moral facts, or only opinions? Is there one correct account of how we should live?

- **History of Philosophy**
  Looks at some figures and debates from philosophy’s past and considers how they bear on philosophy in the present. Topics vary from year to year but may include Locke, Hume, Spinoza, Leibniz, Kant, Hegel.

- **Western Philosophy and Religious Thought**
  Focuses on key topics in philosophy of religion: the nature of theism, immortality, the problem of evil, religious experience and the implications of postmodern thought for religious belief.

- **Philosophy of the Mind**
  What is a mind? Is it part of the physical world, or something else? How do we know of our mental states? Is psychology a science?

- **Modern Political Thought**
  Explores a range of ideas which are central to any understanding of politics: Liberty, the Individual, Equality, and Community. It proceeds by reading and discussing some of the core-texts of modern political philosophers.

**Year 2 Philosophy modules (15 credits each, 1 term)**

- **Epistemology**
  Examines a range of topics to do with knowledge: what is knowledge, is it a good thing to have, how does it differ from simply having a true belief?

- **Metaphysics**
  Focuses on metaphysical issues to do with space, time and persons: is time real? Is time travel possible? What makes you the same person you were when you were a baby?

- **Philosophical Questions in the Study of Politics and Economics**
  Politics and economics are disciplines that are central to the organisation of society. This module critically examines the assumptions that underlie both, and exposes problems and issues with their methodologies.

- **Philosophy of Science**
  What is science and how does science relate to other kinds of knowledge? Is science an ideal model for inquiry in general? Does it describe reality as it really is?

Modules vary year on year, the modules above were taught in 2015.
Single honours Philosophy (continued)

Year 3

Year 3, like Year 2, has no core requirements. One difference is that you can elect to take the (10,000 word) dissertation option; there are also "special subjects" working on a specialised topic with a member of academic staff in small class teaching. Not only can you opt to carry on with your minor subject, you can take a second year module that you did not take in your second year.

Year 3 example

Term 1

Dissertation + Year 3 Philosophy Module 1 + Year 3 Philosophy Module 2 + Special Subject 1

Term 2

Dissertation + Year 2 Philosophy Module + Special Subject 2 + Minor Subject

Dissertation

Provides an opportunity for students to choose a philosophical topic that interests them, and to pursue it in depth. The topic may be related to work that is being done on a formally taught course, or it may be less directly linked to course work. This allows students to develop their research skills, and their ability to work at length under their own direction.

Year 3 Philosophy modules

Aesthetics

Questions in aesthetics include: what is art? What is the significance of tragedy? How does the “culture industry” shape our response to art?

Continental Philosophy

This module considers the work of three figures in nineteenth and twentieth century continental philosophy: Nietzsche, Foucault and Arendt, with a special focus on morality and political theory.

Darwinism and Philosophy

Examines philosophical issues that arise out of Darwin’s theory of evolution. These include questions about how best to understand the theory of evolution, and questions about what evolution implies for our view of the world.

Logic and Language

An introduction to formal logic together with an examination of various philosophical issues that arise out of it. Including, propositional and quantificational logic, and how to prove elementary results using formal techniques.

History of Twentieth Century Philosophy

A key question that shapes twentieth century philosophy is: what extent should philosophy align itself with natural science and mathematics? This leads us to examine the origins of analytic philosophy, to look at Wittgenstein’s critique of it, and the contrast with continental philosophy.

Indian Religious and Philosophical Thought

Introduces major themes and issues in Indian philosophy, focusing on the Hindu and Buddhist philosophical traditions. Throughout we will look at the dialogical relationship between the Hindu and Buddhist philosophical traditions, particularly the shared practice of debate.

Seminar in Contemporary Moral Philosophy

Develop skills in philosophy and scholarship by guided practice in close reading and reasoned discussion of selected works in contemporary moral philosophy. The module runs as a reading group on a small number of high-quality texts in moral philosophy.

PPR in Education

Gives students experience of classroom observation and experience, teacher assistance, as well as teaching small groups (under supervision). The module is organised and delivered collaboratively between LUSU Involve, the school/college where the placement is based, and the department.

Special subjects

Philosophy of Medicine

Are psychopaths evil or sick? Is it right for shy people to take character-altering drugs? Whether a condition is considered a disease often has social, economic and ethical implications: this module examines key concepts like normality, disease, illness, mental illness, and disability.

Future Generations

Focuses on the question of what moral obligations do we have towards future generations – to people who are yet to be born, and to merely possible people whose very existence (or non-existence) depends on how we act now?

Ethics and Genetics

Focuses on a range of complex ethical and social issues that arise from advances in genetic research and medical technology: should we allow parents to "design" their babies? Do “criminal genes” provide an excuse for crime?

The Imagination

Examines philosophical accounts of the imagination, focusing on theories of the nature of the imagination and its connections to other mental states, such as attention, emotion, memory, beliefs, intentions, and desires.

Feminist Philosophy

Provides an introduction to key debates in feminist philosophy. We focus on the work of three philosophers, Simone de Beauvoir, Luce Irigaray, and Judith Butler, who represent different directions in feminist thought.

Third year modules vary slightly from year to year. To give you some idea, the modules above are the 2015-16 modules.
Joint honours with Philosophy

Year 1

**MAJOR 1**
PHIL100: Introduction to Philosophy.
Made up of five blocks: epistemology; metaphysics; critical thinking; ethics; political philosophy. This module does not require prior study of philosophy.

**MAJOR 2**
Year 1 module for joint major subject.

**OPTIONAL MODULE (Minor)**
Choose a module from within the Department that has a Philosophy component.

Or

**MINOR SUBJECT**
Select a module from another department in the University: e.g., History; Criminology; Sociology; Media, Film and Cultural Studies.

Years 2 and 3
Joint honours students must take at least 90 credits in each of their major subjects (e.g., two 30 credit modules in Year 2, then two 15 credit modules in Year 3). Joint honours students in Philosophy select from the same Philosophy module options as single honours students.

Triple honours - Philosophy, Politics, Economics (PPE)

Year 1

**MAJOR 1**
PHIL100 Introduction to Philosophy (see above).

**MAJOR 2**
POLI100 Introduction to Politics and Governance

**MAJOR 3**
ECON 100 Principles of Economics

Years 2 and 3
In years 2 and 3, PPE students must take at least 60 credits worth of modules in each of their three subjects, the remaining 60 credits worth can be spread across the subjects as the student chooses. See pages 9–10 for the Philosophy modules and see the PPR website for the Politics and Economics module options in Years 2 and 3.

“My course at Lancaster has been great; the flexibility and choice of modules is fantastic and it means you can do something you really enjoy. The lecturers are interesting, helpful and passionate about their subject and both staff and students in the Department are all really friendly - you can’t really ask more than that!”

Rebecca Swindell, Politics and Philosophy
Placement opportunities
Third year major and joint major students within the Department can take a special placement module, PPR in Education. This module gives students experience in a classroom, including classroom observation, teacher assistance, as well as teaching small groups under supervision. Students develop transferable skills and will be required to reflect on how their own subject area is experienced by learners, delivered in other parts of the educational sector, and applied in a classroom setting.

Lancaster Award
Many graduate employers like official confirmation of students’ non-academic activities that are relevant to employability, things like voluntary work, training undertaken, and career workshops attended. The Lancaster Award is a programme of activities and tasks which, when completed, gives the student an additional certificate of their achievements.

Find out more about the Lancaster Award at:
www.lancaster.ac.uk/careers/students-graduates/lancaster-award

Philosophy Society
This society explores, analyses, and discusses the multitude of topics surrounding philosophy and encourages free thinking, critical reasoning and passionate debating. Diversity and cross-discipline thinking is encouraged, from the use of philosophy in films, to psychology, politics and art. Anyone is welcome to join regardless of what they are studying. The society hosts a variety of events such as trips, guest speakers and socials throughout the year and is committed to making people feel comfortable enough to voice their views and opinions.

Careers
Philosophy is not a vocational degree but remember that over 40% of graduate vacancies are for graduates from any discipline. Employers are less interested in the knowledge you have acquired than in the intellectual skills, clear communication and ability to learn quickly that your degree has taught you. Studying philosophy provides all of these, more so, perhaps, than other humanities subjects.

Recent graduates have gone on to work in: accountancy, local government, banking, the civil service, teaching, nursing, aviation, fashion, NGOs, and journalism. Others have pursued postgraduate degrees at Lancaster or elsewhere.

After one open day visit, I knew Lancaster University was the place for me. The lecturers are dedicated to their research and this really stands out. I feel like philosophy has taught me the skills needed for any career because I have learnt to be logical, fair and to reason properly. I will be very sad to leave!

Victoria White, Philosophy