

Lancaster
University



Philosophy

Undergraduate Degrees 2026



Welcome

Explore fundamental questions relating to existence, truth and knowledge, right and wrong and more, and learn and experience how philosophy interacts with wider global, social and political challenges, in your BA (Hons) Philosophy degree at Lancaster.







At Lancaster, we view philosophy as a collective, ongoing, socially relevant practice. We foster a collaborative learning environment where ideas are shared and developed together. Through guided critical reasoning activities, regular lecture, seminar and workshop discussions, and scaffolded, supervised independent project work exploring your own philosophical interests, you will engage in discussion and careful critical engagement with ideas and arguments from the very first week of the degree.

Over the course of the programme you will gain both breadth and depth of philosophical knowledge. You will study methodological and culturally diverse subject-based content and perspectives, ranging from classical, critical and feminist perspectives within the western analytic and continental traditions, to comparative philosophy drawn from, for example, the Chinese and Indian traditions. And you will learn from philosophers who are actively shaping the contemporary landscape of philosophical research across a broad range of fields, including ethics, metaphysics, epistemology, feminist philosophy, philosophy of science, history of philosophy, global philosophy, and political philosophy.

As you progress through the degree, you will develop the skills to feel confident in increasingly independent study, and even have the opportunity to help shape the future of philosophical research and communication yourself. Through optional participation in a guided philosophy project in your second year, development of critical thinking and communication skills across the degree, and participation in a final year dissertation or portfolio of work, you will be supported in increasing pursuit of your own philosophical interests, whether your interests lie in further academic study, or in applying your philosophical skills and thoughts in the world beyond your degree.

Indeed, philosophy as an applied topic, with relevance to global politics, humanity and society, is at the heart of our programme at Lancaster. Throughout your degree, you will consider philosophy's relevance to and impact on the world, engaging with multiple philosophical traditions and critical perspectives from the very first year of your degree onwards, undertaking core applied philosophical study in your second year, and having the option to choose to study specialist cutting-edge research modules on socially-relevant debates and topics in your final year, on topics ranging from the philosophy of war and conflict, to understanding the structure and reality of the social world around us.



Degree title		Degree (Hons)	UCAS code	Course duration (years)	Typical A level offer
Philosophy		BA	V500	3	ABB
Philosophy (Placement Year)		BA	V501	4	ABB
Philosophy (Study Abroad)		BA	V502	4	ABB
Philosophy, Politics and Economics		BA	L0V0	3	AAB
Philosophy, Politics and Economics (Placement Year)		BA	L0V1	4	AAB
Philosophy, Politics and Economics (Study Abroad)		BA	L0V2	4	AAB
Philosophy and Politics		BA	VL52	3	ABB
Philosophy and Politics (Placement Year)		BA	VL53	4	ABB
Philosophy and Politics (Study Abroad)		BA	VL54	4	ABB

Visit our website for more information on degree options, scholarships and entry requirements lancaster.ac.uk



Made for *learning*

Our philosophy degree is designed to support you in developing the critical analytical skills, tools and philosophical knowledge required to navigate and shape an increasingly complex and challenging world.

To develop these skills and your confidence in their application we provide a curated and scaffolded degree programme designed to support you as you progress towards increasingly independent and self-directed work in your final year. Your time will be divided between timetabled learning, independent learning time for reading and research tasks, and meetings with academic staff, with different balances between these aspects to best support your learning across the different topics and stages of the programme.

We use a range of teaching methods and learning activities, appropriate for the wide variety of subject-knowledge and skills that you will develop throughout your degree:

- + Lectures provide overviews of the core theories, themes and ideas studied in your modules, demonstrate philosophical reasoning in action, and give you the signposts needed for you to continue your own independent study.
- + Discussion seminars and workshops provide you with a space to explore topics, practice your philosophical skills and test out your ideas with your peers and the support of subject experts, in a supported environment.
- + One-to-one meetings with your academic tutor and smaller group tutorials provide you with the opportunity to develop your philosophical skills and confidence with individualised support.



- + Dedicated online programme and module pages provide all core learning materials, and a wide variety of additional written, AV, and interactive resources tailored to the topics and skills you are engaged with.

Assessments and feedback form a key part of your development, and offer opportunities to learn, not only to be measured. Our programme includes both traditional essay and exam-based assessments, alongside less traditional assessment methods, reflecting the diverse ways in which individuals learn and apply knowledge in their everyday lives and in the workplace. These methods of assessment vary each year and by module but typically include:

- + Public engagement pieces, exploring particular philosophical topics and controversies for a broader audience.
- + Applied philosophical policy-oriented documents aimed at specialists and decision-makers.
- + Presentations and oral examinations, individually and in work with your peers.
- + Critical commentaries on AI-generated texts.
- + Reflective learning diaries and portfolios.

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The course challenged my thinking in unexpected ways and sparked real curiosity.

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Kayleigh, final year

BA Hons Philosophy

My experience as a philosophy student has been incredibly rewarding. It is a welcoming environment where I can explore a wide range of topics and connect with like-minded students. I've been able to take modules I never imagined studying, which have broadened my academic interests. The work-life balance is one of the best aspects. Lectures and seminars are engaging without being overwhelming, giving me plenty of time for self-study and personal growth.

Two areas of study that particularly stood out for me were the philosophy of dreams and future generations. They challenged my thinking in unexpected ways and sparked real curiosity. I also stepped outside my comfort zone by exploring Indian philosophy, where I developed a newfound interest in feminist thought, largely thanks to the enthusiasm and support of my module conveners.

As a student from the Isle of Man, I was initially anxious about starting university in a new country. However, the atmosphere within was warm and welcoming. Everyone was open and inclusive, which made it easy to settle in and feel part of the community.

Gain *real world* experience

We know you want to graduate confident and ready to progress into your career. That's why we make it easy to incorporate work experience into your time at Lancaster.

Your ambitions are important to us, and we will help you build the skills you need to succeed by offering a range of placement and internship opportunities.



Placement year

You can opt to study your degree with a placement year (also known as a year in industry). On this degree you spend your third year working in a graduate-level, professional job in a sector of your choice before returning to complete your final year at Lancaster University. Securing a placement is a competitive process and we support you with personalised coaching and professional guidance.

Faculty of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences Internship Scheme

You'll gain sector-relevant work experience with these paid internships. Apply in all years of study for opportunities in areas such as public affairs, marketing, business development and events. The scheme is delivered by our faculty employability team who are here to support your access to direct work experience while you study.

Richardson Institute internships

Your faculty is home to the Richardson Institute, a peace and conflict research centre. Research themes include transnational repression, human rights, conflict resolution, and identity and belonging. The Institute runs an internship programme where you can gain research experience working alongside leading policy and research organisations such as NGOs, think tanks, charities and faith-based organisations. You'll develop analytical skills and put your academic learning into practice in real-world contexts.





Your global *experience*

Lancaster is a truly international university, with students and staff from over 100 different countries and partner institutions around the world. Your global experience is about living and learning with people from different cultures whether through your course, your college or your students' union.

Study abroad

You can choose to study your degree with a study abroad year. On these four-year degrees, you spend your third year studying at one of our partner universities abroad. Our current partners are in Australia, Canada, Hong Kong, the Netherlands, and the USA, although availability of destinations varies each year.

Living in another country and studying your subject from a different perspective enhances your subject knowledge and develops resourcefulness for life after university.

Vacation travel and overseas summer schools

You can also discover the world during your vacations. We run short trips to destinations such as China, Germany, Ghana, Malaysia and Switzerland. These trips include meeting local students and businesses as well as some academic study and cultural discovery.

In addition, you can attend summer schools at one of our many overseas partners.

Find out more at lancaster.ac.uk/your-global-experience

Philosophy

BA (Hons)

On this degree you'll study content from a broad spectrum of sub-discipline areas – metaphysics, epistemology, ethics, history of philosophy and more – and also apply philosophy in real-world scenarios, examining philosophy's role in addressing global, social and political challenges.

In the first year of your degree, you will study ethics, metaphysics, epistemology, critical thinking, history of philosophy, global philosophy, and political thought, developing strong foundational knowledge and a sense of confidence in mapping out some of the key areas of our discipline.

In your second year, alongside core study in applied philosophy, you will choose subjects to study in greater depth, developing a richer picture of key questions and debates in philosophy. Past and anticipated future subjects offered include, for example the philosophy of science, Buddhist philosophy, 19th century analytic philosophy, and philosophy of mind. And you will take part in a guided philosophy project, developing an assessed portfolio of work in a scaffolded and supported way, working independently and in small groups guided by a member of staff on a text, group of texts, or problem.

This depth of knowledge and study will prepare you for your final year of the degree. Here, you will have the opportunity to study specialised, cutting-edge research-led questions on topics from the philosophy of the social world, to philosophy of mental disorder, to the philosophy of war and conflict. And you will choose to undertake either an independent dissertation topic, or the development of a portfolio of work aimed at the public and wider dissemination of philosophy beyond the university – in politics, the community and more.

Enhancing your curriculum

We continually review and enhance our course curricula to ensure we are delivering the best possible learning experience, and to make sure that the subject knowledge and transferable skills you develop will prepare you for your future. Information within this publication with respect to courses and modules is correct at the time of publication, and the University will make every reasonable effort to offer courses and modules as advertised. In some cases, changes may be necessary and may result in new modules or some modules and combinations being unavailable, for example as a result of student feedback, timetabling, staff changes and new research.

Year 1

Core Modules

Knowledge and Reality

Develop philosophical tools for reasoning and arguing (critical thinking and logic) and discover fundamental philosophical questions about knowledge (epistemology) and the nature of reality (metaphysics).

History of Western Philosophy

Critically explore the thought of some of the key philosophers whose thinking has defined the contours of the western philosophical tradition. How did these thinkers conceive of philosophy and its task? How did they conceive of being and reality? How did they understand truth and how did they think it could be discovered?

Ethics

Consider foundational questions regarding the nature of moral statements and the content of our moral obligations towards others in this introduction to philosophical ethics.

Global Philosophy

Encounter and engage with the rich philosophical traditions and thinkers that have, until recently, been excluded from study in western universities. Reflect on your own (and the discipline's) preconceptions and biases, and take on the challenge of studying philosophy from different cultural contexts and time periods.

Political Philosophy

Explore fundamental questions regarding politics, power, and the arrangement of our collective lives, engaging with critical debates faced by both historical and contemporary communities: what are the boundaries, rights and duties of the state? What do the concepts of justice, freedom, equality, sovereignty, rights and power mean?

Thinking Globally

What does it mean to think in and about the world? This module will draw on disciplines from across the School of Global Affairs to think about the very different ways in which the world can be imagined.

Year 2

Core Modules

Philosophy Guided Project

Create a portfolio of investigative and critical writing which explores a particular philosophical topic in depth. In this module you will be guided with expert support from a contemporary philosopher to develop your philosophical and independent study skills. Through deep engagement with a narrow topic you will develop your ability to assess philosophical arguments and make independent judgements, informed by reasoning and evidence.

Applied Philosophy

Consider the relevance of philosophy to contemporary problems, and questions of how to apply philosophical knowledge and reasoning in these contexts. In this module you will explore the application of philosophy within a range of real-world settings such as professional ethics (for example, in business, communications, medicine, the media, the sciences and the armed forces), law, policy-making, economics, education and the social sciences.

Plus one from:

Employability, Purpose and Social Impact
Global Challenges and Collaborative Solutions
Cultural Diversity and Professional Contexts
Taking an Idea and Making it Happen

Optional Modules

- + Philosophy, Politics and Economics: Issues and Intersections
- + Philosophy of Science
- + Buddhist Philosophy
- + 19th Century Philosophy
- + Philosophy of Mind

Study abroad degrees

You will study abroad at a partner university in your third year. The grades you achieve at your host university will be translated back and be credited to your Lancaster degree.

Placement year degrees

In your third year you will undertake as core the 'Placement Year Work Based Learning Module'.

Final Year

Core Modules

Choose one from:

Philosophy Dissertation

Develop a philosophical dissertation: a substantial piece of independent research that demonstrates critical thinking, deep analysis, and original insight. In this module, supported by an expert in your chosen topic you will demonstrate your advanced philosophical skills developed throughout your degree and prepare for both further academic study in philosophy and for professional roles that require skills in research, critical thinking and independent thought.

Philosophy Communication and Engagement Portfolio

Explore the impact that philosophy can have outside of academia. Academic philosophers regularly engage with, inform and persuade diverse audiences outside the academic field. To do so, they need to provide compelling, clearly-stated arguments; understand their target audience; and tailor their material to the audience they seek to impact. In this module you will learn how to communicate complex arguments and ideas effectively in non-academic contexts and apply these to discourse and debates on contemporary problems.

Plus one from:

Technology and Social Justice
Queer Futures
People Power, Community Engagement and Collective Action
Confronting the Climate Crisis
The Power of Ideas
Artistic Fusions
Futures Beyond Borders

Optional Modules

- + Continental Philosophy
- + Philosophy of the Social World
- + Frontiers of Philosophical Research
- + Comparative Political Philosophy
- + Personhood, the Self and Ethics
- + Philosophy of War

Combined degrees

You can study a combined degree including Philosophy:

- + BA (Hons) Philosophy, Politics and Economics (PPE)
- + BA (Hons) Philosophy and Politics

More information on these can be found in the Politics, and the Philosophy, Politics and Economics subject guides or online.



Careers and *employability*

You will be able to gain valuable work experience on our degrees through a range of opportunities.

Support for your career

We offer life-long careers support for our students. Our career advisers are available to support you with specialist careers guidance, as well as application and interview practice. You can take part in the Lancaster Award, which is a formal recognition of extra-curricular activity that enhances your employability, for example volunteer work, training and attending careers workshops.

Graduate destinations

Studying philosophy opens the door to a wide range of graduate careers. Graduate employers seek individuals with keen intellectual and critical skills, independence of mind, and clarity of communication. Studying philosophy provides all of these skills. Some of our graduates choose to continue to further study with us, taking a master's degree or a PhD.

Here are some examples of the diverse and varied careers that are open to philosophy graduates:

- + Media, journalism and public relations
- + Teaching and education
- + Consultancy
- + Legal research
- + Logistics and project management
- + Civil and diplomatic services
- + Politics and government
- + International charities and non-government organisations (NGOs)



John Garman, *graduated 2020*

**Philanthropy Manager,
Great Ormond Street Hospital**

My time at Lancaster University helped shape my career in the charity sector, where I now work as Philanthropy Manager for Great Ormond Street Hospital Children's Charity. My role involves working with individuals and organisations who support the hospital, building meaningful donor relationships.

My degree taught me key communication skills and to think critically, helping me to understand ethical motivations that drive donors – skills that allow me to engage with our supporters meaningfully whilst also making a difference!

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lancaster.ac.uk/philosophy

The information provided in this publication relates primarily to 2026 entry to the University and every effort has been taken to ensure the information is correct at the time of printing in June 2025. The University will use all reasonable effort to deliver the course as described but the University reserves the right to make changes after going to print. You are advised to consult our website at: lancaster.ac.uk/study for up-to-date information before you submit your application. Further legal information may be found at: lancaster.ac.uk/compliance/legalnotice.