

Faculty of Arts and Humanities

School of Humanities

Philosophy Undergraduate Student Handbook

2019 – 20

Disclaimer

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This handbook is available in alternative formats on request.

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A Note on the Handbook

This Handbook is prepared in advance of the academic year to which it relates. Consequently, the information presented here may not always be as accurate or as up-to-date as we would hope. If you are in any doubt, please ask a member of staff.

We hope that this Handbook will be of use to you. But please note that it is not intended to be exhaustive; further important information can be found in literature provided by the University and the Faculty of Arts and Humanities. Please read the Philosophy Handbook in conjunction with this other material, in particular the Humanities Student Handbook, which you can find [here](#).

1. INTRODUCTION

Welcome from the Head of Philosophy

Welcome to Philosophy. We hope you will enjoy the course and will get a lot out of it. Philosophy will teach you to think critically and to express yourself clearly, providing you with key skills necessary for succeeding in any job.

With eighteen full-time members of staff, and about three hundred students, the department is small enough to sustain a friendly 'family' atmosphere, but also large enough to generate plenty of life and activity of its own.

We pride ourselves on the broad content of our philosophy course, which includes most of the areas of philosophy in the Western tradition. The course is designed to foster clarity of expression and high standards of critical thought. It is a core belief of our department that the debate and exchange of philosophical ideas is fundamental to the study of philosophy. We aim to encourage and sustain discussion in all of our classes, most obviously in tutorial and seminar groups, but also within larger lecture classes.

You will also have the opportunity to join the University of Southampton Philosophy Society (PhilSoc). This is an independent club which aims to provide social and academic opportunities for its members. PhilSoc is an incredibly active society which organises events throughout the year including talks from outside speakers, film nights, pub quizzes and by now legendary parties.

Studying Philosophy at Southampton

Effective teaching and learning in Higher Education is a collaborative endeavour: you will gain skills that will allow you to take responsibility for your own education and you will learn how to work closely and effectively with staff and with other students. Below is a brief set of principles describing the expectations that these reciprocal relations depend upon.

Staff will:

- Provide you with full documentation for each module that you take: this will include a statement of aims and objectives, a reading list, clearly defined assessment tasks, and marking criteria.
- Provide you with prompt and detailed feedback. Additional feedback is always available through consultation with individual members of staff.

- Provide you with personalized learning support: your module tutors will provide advice on individual items of assessment and your Personal Academic Tutor will work with you in developing your overall strengths.
- Respond to your emails, normally within three working days during term-time, and offer weekly Advice and Feedback Hours.
- Engage in ongoing critical reflection on our teaching practices to ensure that they meet the highest standards.
- Provide you with numerous opportunities to offer us feedback and to participate in our academic community.

You will:

- Read and observe the information we provide in this Handbook and elsewhere, including regarding academic integrity, essay presentation, proper referencing and deadlines.
- Treat staff and fellow students in a professional and courteous manner in all dealings with them. This includes, but is not limited to, treating the views of peers with respect during discussion and giving your full attention during classes. The use of a computer or smartphone for non-academic purposes in class, e.g. checking social media, is disrespectful to the lecturer, as well as a distraction for yourself and fellow students.
- Attend and prepare for all teaching sessions. Success at degree level assumes both attendance and effective and appropriate preparation (for instance, reading assigned material). In extreme cases, you may be asked to leave a class if it is judged that your lack of preparation is disadvantaging other students.
- Attend appointments that you have made to meet with academic staff. If you cannot attend, you should inform the relevant staff member in as timely a way as possible.
- Recognise that you are working with and alongside active researchers. Academic research sustains the relevance, vitality and prestige of your degree. In order to meet the commitments that the University expects of them, your tutors are required to prioritize research outside term-time, and to spend some time on it during term too.
- Give consideration to how, why and when you use email. Your tutors cannot be expected to answer emails at very short notice or outside the working day. Helpful guides on the use of email are available [here](#) and [here](#).

Philosophy Staff

At Southampton, you will be taught by internationally renowned philosophers actively engaged in philosophical research and working at the cutting-edge of the subject. See [here](#) for a current list of Philosophy staff and details of their administrative roles.

For details of our research activities, including key publications, see [here](#).

2. MARKING CRITERIA, GRADE BANDS AND REGULATIONS

Written work (including exams, essays, commentaries, and dissertations) is marked according to the extent to which it meets the criteria below. Marking criteria for other forms of assessment (e.g. presentations) will be made available to students on the relevant modules via Blackboard.

NB: It is important to recognise that the dimensions along which work is assessed are not wholly distinct. Failing to satisfy certain criteria (e.g., quality of organisation) is likely

to prevent you from satisfying other criteria (e.g., quality of critical engagement). Also, doing well along certain dimensions (e.g. quality of exposition) can compensate for falling short in other respects (e.g. quality of critical engagement).

Criteria

1. Quality of Exposition

Views and arguments relevant to the set topic should be expounded clearly, concisely, and accurately and the relations and interconnections among them clearly explained. It should be clear from the work when a view or argument is accepted by you, the author, and when it is merely proposed for discussion.

2. Quality of Critical Engagement

Views and arguments should be examined and critically discussed in a way which reflects an understanding of them. This involves, among other things, explaining the views and arguments, assessing their cogency or plausibility, identifying any presuppositions on which they rest or implications they may have, and questions they raise and, if possible, critically examining those presuppositions and implications and attempting to answer those questions. Merely reproducing comments and evaluations found in the literature or made by lecturers or tutors does not constitute good evidence of critical engagement.

3. Quality of Organisation

The material should be well-organised. There are different ways in which quality of organisation can be exhibited. Minimally, the work should give a clear indication of the central problem(s) examined and of how these problems are to be approached. The discussion should have a sense of direction, with clear signposting, and each part of the discussion should work towards a specific conclusion. A piece of work which strings together summaries of the literature without much argumentative structure or sense of direction would not meet this requirement.

4. Quality of Scholarship

The work should draw on appropriate and relevant literature, i.e. books and articles by professional philosophers. It should avoid overreliance on textbooks. You should use reading lists and other guidance provided in order to identify appropriate literature; use of non-scholarly sources, such as Wikipedia or Sparknotes, will be penalised. Sources (except for lecture material) should be acknowledged through referencing and a bibliography as specified in the Student Handbook. Presenting others' ideas as your own will be penalised and may constitute a breach of Academic Integrity.

5. Quality of Presentation

The work should be easily legible and conform to the guidelines for assessed work provided in the Student Handbook. It should be well written. This includes correct grammar, spelling and punctuation, though we will not generally penalise you for a small number of minor grammar or spelling errors. Note: when a student is registered as having Specific Learning Difficulties, allowances for writing errors in exams will be made in accordance with University guidance.

Significance of the Grade Bands

Work will be awarded a mark based on the degree to which it satisfies the above criteria. The following gives an indication of the qualities displayed by work which receives marks within the following ranges.

90-100

At this end of the marking scale, one could expect little to nothing more from undergraduate work in philosophy. It will typically display all or many of the following characteristics:

Exposition

- Outstanding understanding of the set topic demonstrated. Grasp of some highly advanced issues and arguments, which are successfully and accurately explained.

Critical Engagement

- The level of critical engagement is extremely high. Contains novel views and arguments which are not simply stated but motivated and defended.

Organisation

- Extremely clear, helpful and appropriate organisation and signposting. No extraneous material.

Scholarship

- Draws on and correctly references a range of appropriate literature, perhaps including advanced literature that has been independently identified.

Presentation

- Outstanding presentation. Extremely well written and easy to read.

80-89

Work in this range will typically display all or many of the following characteristics:

Exposition

- Excellent understanding of the set topic demonstrated in a very clear, accurate and concise presentation of the problem(s) under discussion and of the views and arguments examined, engaging with the more sophisticated and subtle points.

Critical Engagement

- In-depth and high-level critical engagement. The work engages with advanced ideas concerning the problem(s) under discussion, and shows considerable independence of thought both in expounding and in evaluating the views and arguments.

Organisation

- Very clear, helpful and appropriate organisation and signposting. No extraneous material.

Scholarship

- Draws on and correctly references a range of appropriate literature.

Presentation

- Excellent presentation. Work in this range will be very well written and easy to read.

70-79

Work in this range will typically display all or many of the following characteristics:

Exposition

- Very good to excellent understanding of the set topic demonstrated in a clear, accurate and concise presentation of the problem(s) under discussion and of the views and arguments examined.

Critical Engagement

- A level of critical engagement with the material that goes beyond an accurate presentation of criticisms encountered in lectures or in the literature. Might display

some signs of originality that are evidence of independent thought (e.g. pushing further ideas or objections encountered, or suggesting new ones, or new aspects of familiar ones), and the capacity to relate the set topic to other philosophical topics and problems.

Organisation

- Clear, helpful and appropriate organisation and signposting. Little or no extraneous material.

Scholarship

- Draws on and correctly references appropriate literature.

Presentation

- Very good presentation. Work in this range will be well written and easy to read.

60-69

Work in this range will typically display all or many of the following characteristics:

Exposition

- Good understanding of the set topic demonstrated in explicit and mostly clear identification and explanation of the problem(s) under discussion and of the relevant views and arguments.

Critical Engagement

- While tending to rely heavily on lectures and introductory reading, nonetheless goes beyond mere reportage, displaying good critical engagement.

Organisation

- The material is basically well organised, with a fairly clear structure and helpful signposting that enable the reader to see where the discussion is going at any point.

Scholarship

- Draws on appropriate literature. Referencing mostly correct but may contain minor errors.

Presentation

- Broadly good presentation. Reasonably well written.

50-59

Work in this range will typically display all or many of the following characteristics:

Exposition

- Satisfactory exposition showing reasonable understanding of the set topic, though in places it might lack clarity, leave points unexplained, or contain significant errors or confusion.

Critical Engagement

- Relevant discussion and some critical engagement but tends to rely too much on lectures notes and/or introductory reading.

Organisation

- Reasonable organisation, with some sense of direction towards a conclusion, though some material might not be relevant.

Scholarship

- Mostly appropriate literature drawn on, but may rely too much on textbooks or other introductory sources and may include use of some inappropriate sources. Referencing may contain significant errors.

Presentation

- Broadly satisfactory presentation but may contain significant grammatical errors or not be well written.

40-49

Work in this range will typically display all or many of the following characteristics:

Exposition

- Though there might be some success at explaining the problem(s) under discussion and some views and arguments that are relevant to those problems, the work contains significant errors or confusion, or fails to explain important points, suggesting a poor understanding of the set topic.

Critical Engagement

- Not much evidence of critical engagement. Over-reliance on lecture notes, e.g. where the bulk of the discussion consists in regurgitating these or views encountered in introductory reading.

Organisation

- The discussion is not very well structured. The different parts are not clearly related to each other, and there may be some irrelevance or confusion. But there is still some sense of direction towards a conclusion that relates back to the problem(s) under discussion.

Scholarship

- Little use of appropriate literature. Referencing may be poor.

Presentation

- While there is some effort at appropriate presentation, work in this range is likely to contain significant errors and a poor standard of writing.

25-39

Work in this range will typically display all or many of the following characteristics:

Exposition

- Confused and/or confusing exposition showing a basic failure to identify and/or explain clearly the philosophical problem(s) under discussion.

Critical Engagement

- Little or no relevant critical discussion.

Organisation

- Lack of clear organisation. May contain irrelevant material and poorly connected points that read more like a list than an argument.

Scholarship

- Little or no use of appropriate literature. Poor referencing, if any.

Presentation

- Very poor presentation. May be very badly written.

0-24

Work in this range will typically display all or many of the following characteristics:

Exposition

- Largely confused or irrelevant exposition, showing very poor level of understanding of the set topic.

Critical Engagement

- No serious attempt to address the topic, showing either lack of effort or substantial and systematic confusion.

Organisation

- Little or no clear organisation or structure.

Scholarship

- No use of appropriate literature. Very poor referencing, if any.

Presentation

- Very poor or careless presentation. May be incomprehensible or very short.

Regulations

For detailed and definitive information regarding the university regulations, you should consult the University calendar, which is available [here](#). The calendar covers topics such as what is required in order to progress to the next part of your degree (i.e. to 'pass each year'), what is required in order to be eligible for an honours degree, how final degree results are established, how the marks you receive relate to degree classifications (e.g. 'First', 'Upper Second', etc.), and the circumstances under which you may resit a module.

Here is a rough guide to these regulations. If you have questions, you should speak to your Personal Academic Tutor or the Exams Officer. See the [staff webpage](#) to find out the current Exams Officer.

- Students progress to the next part (i.e. 'pass the year') of their degree programme so long as (i) they fail no more than 30 credits that year, (ii) they have no module marks below 25% (the 'qualifying mark') and (iii) they fail no core modules.
- The only Philosophy programmes which include core modules are BA Economics and Philosophy, BA Philosophy and Mathematics, and BA Philosophy, Politics, and Economics. (This list excludes BA Film and Philosophy, and BA French and Philosophy and BA German and Philosophy, for which see the information provided by Film and Modern Languages respectively). Check the programme specification or online programme catalogue to see which modules are core.
- Students who fail to progress can take referral assessments (e.g. resitting exams) in up to 30 credits during the supplementary exam period in August. Marks for referral assessments are capped at 40%.
- Students who fail to progress after referral can repeat the year.
- Students who would need to take more than 30 credits of referral assessments in order to progress cannot take referral assessments and must repeat the year.
- Students who have progressed are not permitted to take referral assessments – e.g. students cannot take resit exams in order to improve a mark.
- Students who fail to progress after a repeat year have their degrees terminated.

Note: students who have to take resit exams **must** be available during the supplementary exam period in August.

Degree Classification Rules

The degree classification is based on the final degree average with a weighting of **0:1:2** for the first, second and final year, respectively:

70% and over	First Class (I)
60% - 69%	Second Class, Upper Division (Ii)
50% - 59%	Second Class, Lower Division (Iii)
40% - 49%	Third Class (III)
Less than 40%	Fail

The class awarded is either (i) that within which the rounded average falls or (ii) the next higher class, if the unrounded average is within 2% of the higher class and at least 50% of the credit points, weighted by part, are in the higher class or above.

3. ASSESSED WORK

Submitting your Work

Assessed written work must be word-processed. Please include page numbers, use a 12 point font, double space lines, and have page margins of one inch all round. Written work should be accompanied by a Philosophy cover sheet unless you are instructed otherwise. This will be circulated to students by email early in the year. It is also available from the Student Office: efphums@soton.ac.uk.

For submission instructions and deadlines for specific written assignments see the relevant module outlines.

Word Limits

Written assessment tasks typically have a word limit. You must state the word count of your submission on the cover sheet which accompanies your work. If your statement of the word count is false, this may be deemed a breach of academic integrity.

The word count excludes the bibliography but **includes** quotations. For further guidance on word counts, see the Humanities Student Handbook.

If your work exceeds the word limit, we may disregard parts of the material. That is to say, we may stop reading from the point at which your work exceeds the word limit and award a mark on the basis of the material we have read alone.

If you find it difficult to keep to the word limit, this is invariably a sign that something is going wrong—your essay might lack focus, include irrelevant material, repeat points, or lack a clear structure. For advice on this and other issues relating to essay-writing, please consult the guidance notes we provide and speak to your tutor or Personal Academic Tutor.

Forms of Assessed Work

Assessment tasks provide you with an opportunity to apply what you have learnt in the module, and demonstrate your knowledge and understanding of the issues it covers. Our modules employ a wide range of assessment tasks, in order to give you the chance to develop a diverse range of skills. Assessment tasks include in-class tests, essays, textual commentaries, examinations at the end of the semester, group projects, presentations, and (in the Final Year) dissertation.

Each module outline contains assessment details for that module. For many forms of assessment, including essays and presentations, Philosophy has prepared guidance notes which are made available to students on the relevant modules via Blackboard. You can also find help concerning how to write philosophical essays, how to manage your time, how to go about reading philosophy, and how to prepare and revise for examinations by downloading the 'Developing study skills in philosophy' document, available [here](#).

Further sources of useful information include the Study Skills section of Blackboard.

For details of the processes involved in writing your dissertation, see the section devoted to this below.

Summative and Formative Assessment

'Summative' assessed work will determine the mark that you get at the end of a module.

'Formative' assessment doesn't count towards your mark but will help you judge how well you are coping with the material to be discussed. It may also serve as useful preparation for your summative assessed work. All modules include some formative assessment. For example, in some modules, module co-ordinators will read and provide feedback on optional essay plans provided that those plans are submitted by the stated deadlines. Other kinds of formative assessment include practice commentaries or mock exams.

Note that most first- and second-year modules include mandatory submission of formative assessed work such as an essay draft. In these modules, non-submission or incorrect submission of the formative work, or receiving a failing mark for it, incurs a penalty to your mark for the module.

References and Bibliography

There are established academic conventions governing both the quotation of original work and the acknowledgement of ideas, hints and guidance acquired from secondary sources. Quotations from original and critical works that are *not more* than two or three lines long may be kept in the main body of the essay and distinguished by single quotation marks. Double quotation marks should be used for quotations within quotation or for quoted speech. All longer quotations must be indented and separated from the preceding and subsequent sections of the essay by a double space; in this case quotation marks are not required. In general, quotations should not be in italics (unless the original text is italicized).

All quotations or paraphrases must be referred to their source. (There is no need to acknowledge material drawn from lectures or tutorial discussions.). It is important that the sources of your ideas are properly acknowledged. If you paraphrase or draw ideas from some work, you should explicitly acknowledge this in your text, even if you do not quote that work. That work should then be included in the Bibliography. For example, 'As Smith points out, we need to distinguish between P and Q (see Smith, 1987:34-41)'. You may also include a footnote after discussing a particular issue, explaining that you have especially relied on someone's work in that passage, e.g. 'Footnote 7. My understanding of these issues was much helped by Smith, 1987, chapter 3.' In both cases your bibliography should include that work by Smith.

Philosophy recommends references to be given using the Harvard system but you may use another recognised system so long as you do so consistently. On the Harvard system of referencing, one gives the author's surname, the year of publication and the page number in brackets [e.g. (Smith 1987: 34)] immediately after the quoted or paraphrased material (there is no need to put this in a footnote), and gives the full details in the bibliography at the end of the essay. Where there are two or more works by one author in the same year, distinguish them as 1988a, 1988b, etc.

All assessed essays must include at the end a bibliography listing in alphabetical order all the works quoted or paraphrased in the essay, both of which should be duly acknowledged with a citation. Do not include any other works. We suggest that you type each item in the bibliography in the following order: author, initials, date, title, place of publication, publisher, as in the examples below, but you may use another recognised

system so long as you do so consistently:

Allen, R and Smith, M. (eds) (1997) *Film Theory and Philosophy*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Aristotle. (1987) *Poetics*, trans. S. Halliwell, London: Duckworth.

Hume, D. (1998) *An Enquiry concerning the Principles of Morals*, ed. T.L. Beauchamp, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Schier, F. (1983) "Tragedy and the Community of Sentiment", in P. Lamarque (ed.) *Philosophy and Fiction: Essays in Literary Aesthetics*, Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press.

— (1989) "The Claims of Tragedy: An Essay in Moral Psychology and Aesthetic Theory," *Philosophical Papers* 18: 7-26.

Williams, B. (1993) *Shame and Necessity*, Berkeley: University of California Press.

When referring to websites, the following format should be followed.

Author's family name, first initial(s) (year as appearing on site), Title. Date accessed.
Available from: <url of site>

For example ...

Beaney, M. (2003) "Analysis", in E. Zalta (ed.) *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Summer 2003 edition). Date accessed: 12th December 2005. Available from: <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/analysis/>.

References to Web material in the text should be as described above, though without page numbers. If, however, the web-page in question has numbered sections, section numbers should be given. When websites lack a named author, references are to be given in the bibliography in the format described here (but without author details, of course). References in the text should take the format of an abbreviated page title, followed by year.

Return of work policy

Philosophy is committed to returning assessed work to you within 20 working days of submission. Working days are Mondays-Fridays, excluding Bank Holidays and University Closure days. Thus 20 working days will ordinarily be four weeks but may be longer if it includes bank holidays or closure days (e.g. around Christmas or Easter). Actual turnaround time may be shorter.

The turnaround period ensures that you receive prompt feedback on your work while allowing us to maintain rigorous standards of assessment. The assessment procedure involves the initial provision of marks and feedback by the relevant tutor, moderation or, in the case of dissertations, second-marking by a different member of staff, and scrutiny by an external examiner who holds a post in Philosophy at a different institution.

Dissertations

Single Honours students and Joint Honours students who elect to do a dissertation in Philosophy must register for PHIL3013 in the second semester of the year prior to their final year. Full details concerning supervision, assignments, and the production and submission of the Dissertation will be provided in the module outline. Meetings giving information about the dissertation process will be held in Semester Two of your second year.

Special Circumstances

If you have problems that significantly affect your ability to submit assessed work by the given deadlines, or your ability to take or complete an examination, you should let your Personal Academic Tutor know IMMEDIATELY (i.e. before the examination or the deadline).

- You can also contact Philosophy's **Senior Tutor**, who is responsible for overseeing the special considerations procedures. To find out who this is, see [here](#).
- You will need to complete a special considerations form. The form, together with guidance on the special considerations policy, is available [here](#). You can also get the form from the Student Office, who will also be able to explain what to do if you are in doubt. (The Student Office can be contacted through: efphums@soton.ac.uk.)
- It is your responsibility to submit the form and the evidence by the required date (normally, the end of the semester where work has been affected).
- The relevant Special Considerations Committee, which meets at the end of each semester, will consider the forms and evidence submitted and make an appropriate recommendation to the Exam Board, e.g. to waive all or part of a lateness penalty, to let a student sit an exam as if for the first time, etc. and it will inform the student soon after the meeting of the decisions.

NB: Marks for individual pieces of coursework cannot be adjusted (e.g. raised) in light of special considerations.

4. TEACHING, GUIDANCE AND FEEDBACK

Teaching in Higher Education is not constrained by a generic national curriculum or strict syllabuses. At an intensive research institution such as Southampton, teaching in Philosophy is informed by the individual scholarship and research of the academic staff who design and deliver the courses you can take. Scholarly activity at university is open-ended and often concerns issues with respect to which no agreed answer has been reached or questions for which there is no established procedure for answering them. Our teaching does not aim merely to pass on information but to give you the tools to think about the complex and unresolved issues it concerns for yourself.

Feedback

As a Philosophy student you will receive plenty of feedback on your progress, participation and performance. It is important to recognize that the forms of feedback that

you receive at University differ from those that you will have become used to at school or college. Given the nature of academic study at university level, feedback is not intended to specify what you must do in order to achieve a certain grade; instead, it is intended to help you gauge how you are doing in your studies, to give you pointers and suggestions for how to develop your ideas and to improve your presentation of them, and to indicate new avenues for exploration.

It is important to be proactive with respect to feedback. A great deal of feedback is provided automatically but much more is available, should you choose to take advantage of it. Members of staff are always happy to discuss feedback they have provided with students, to ensure that it is as effective as possible.

You may receive feedback, which may be written or verbal, in a variety of forms, including:

- comments and advice on essay plans
- comments on your assessed essays, commentaries, and exams
- verbal and written feedback on presentations
- verbal feedback on contributions to class discussion
- feedback on 'practice' presentations, mock exams and other formative assessment tasks
- verbal feedback on any piece of work in one-to-one voluntary meetings with the relevant module coordinator
- feedback in informal discussions with any member of staff during their Advice and Feedback Hours or by appointment on any aspect of your academic performance
- written and verbal feedback on sections and drafts of your dissertation, etc.

Feedback Week

During each semester there is a designated 'Feedback Week'. During this time, you can sign up to receive verbal feedback on assessment tasks, especially examinations, from the previous semester. The aim of Feedback Week is to encourage students to take advantage of the support on offer. It is, however, important to note that feedback on any aspect of your performance is available on request at any point during the academic year.

Annual Review of Feedback

At the beginning of your second and final years, you will meet with your Personal Academic Tutor to review the feedback you received in the previous academic year. In preparation for that meeting, you should complete an Annual Review of Feedback form, which will be sent to you at the beginning of the semester. It is very important that you retain for this meeting all feedback coversheets that you receive over the previous year.

Learning and Study Skills

Philosophy provides help and advice on the development of your study skills throughout your time here. You may also like to consult the 'Study Skills in Philosophy' document on the [Philosophy Study Support site](#).

You can find help here concerning how to manage your time, how to go about reading philosophy, how to write philosophical essays and how to prepare and revise for examinations.

In addition, Philosophy provides written guidance notes on preparing and writing or giving essays, textual commentaries, and presentations. These will be made available via the module pages on Blackboard.

More generic, but still useful, guidance is available from the Study Skills section on Blackboard.

All modules offered by Philosophy, if taken seriously, will enhance your abilities to interpret, synthesise and criticise complex texts and positions; to present and debate ideas, both orally and in writing, in an open-minded but rigorous way; to undertake, with appropriate supervision, independent work, including identifying and using appropriate resources; to work effectively to deadlines; to take notes effectively from talks and written materials. Not all of these abilities will be explicitly assessed.

Discussion

Studying Philosophy at Southampton is not a passive affair; you cannot succeed simply by absorbing information. Accordingly, a great deal of teaching is carried out through discussion in lectures, seminars and tutorials. It is important that you actively participate, both by contributing to the discussion and by engaging constructively with the contributions others make.

Discussion with academic staff and fellow students provides you with the opportunity to explore lines of argument and to check your understanding of the issues. Engaging critically but sympathetically with the views of your peers, and modifying your views and arguments in light of them, is one of the crucial skills that you have come to university to develop. Philosophy is not a solo enterprise and it is vital that you are receptive to what others have to say while working hard to communicate your views to them.

Given the importance of discussion to Philosophy, it is especially important that you come adequately prepared to classes. The effectiveness of seminars and tutorials depends in part on your contribution. If you have not prepared the work set, or have given it little thought, or are unwilling to enter into dialogue, you are letting down not only yourself but the other members of your group.

Consultation Week

In each semester, usually mid-semester or after an exam period, one week is designated *Consultation Week*. The date will appear on module profiles and you will be reminded of it via email.

There is typically no teaching during Consultation Week. However, it is NOT a holiday. The purpose of Consultation Week is to provide you with some breathing space in which to catch up or make a start on reading, look back over work so far and think about what can learn from it, make progress on coursework or dissertations, work through notes and reflect on the issues you have covered, meet with academic staff for discussion, and so on.

Occasionally, the tutor for a certain module will need to teach during Consultation Week to make up for absences earlier or later in the semester. The tutor will inform you in

advance if you should expect to have classes during Consultation Week.

Recording Lectures

Students may request lecturers' permission to make audio recordings of lectures using their own personal devices. Permission is granted at the lecturer's discretion.

Some students registered with Enabling Services may have Student Support Recommendations supporting audio recording of lectures. Lecturers will be made aware of such Recommendations and will normally permit the student(s) concerned to make personal recordings. Where this is not possible the lecturer will discuss alternative arrangements with the student(s).

Students must not:

- record classes without permission;
- make video recordings of classes;
- share their personal recordings with anyone else.

5. COMMUNICATION

Hearing from us

Email is our primary mode of communicating with you. You must check your university email account regularly to collect messages from us. We may also contact students individually using email. If we have emailed you, we consider the information to have been passed on. If you miss an important deadline, for example, failure to have read the email in which the deadline was stated is no excuse.

It is your responsibility to register for email and it is essential that new students do so as soon as they arrive.

Phil-talk Philosophy uses several email lists to distribute general information and announcements. There is a list for each year (phil-talk1, phil-talk2, phil-talk3) and one for postgraduate students (phil-talkpg). You will be automatically added to the relevant list.

You will receive a welcome message to the appropriate list within Week One. If you do not receive such a message, check that you have registered successfully for email. If you have registered successfully, but have still not received the welcome message, contact the Student Office.

Social Media Philosophy at Southampton has a [Facebook page](#) and a [Twitter account](#). We use these to pass on information about the achievements and successes of our staff and students. We hope you will keep up to date with this news by following them.

Hearing from you

Feedback from you plays an important role in our efforts to maintain the quality of our teaching provision and to ensure that your learning experience is as rewarding as possible.

Revision of programmes of study and individual modules is informed by the feedback obtained through student representatives on the Staff-Student Liaison Committee (see below), mid- and end-of-semester module questionnaires, and results of the National Student Survey completed at the end of the final year of your degree.

We take your views very seriously. Your representatives will communicate to you how we have responded to the feedback you provide at Staff-Student Liaison Committee meetings. In addition, we circulate to students a summary of the module evaluations we receive and, where relevant, explain the changes that have been made in response to them.

We also welcome feedback on the handbook that you are reading right now. If you feel that there are ways in which it could be improved (for example, does it cover the topics you want to have covered? Is there too much information here?), then please let us know.

Philosophy's Staff-Student Liaison Committee meets regularly during the academic year. Students elect representatives to speak on their behalf at Committee meetings and to report information back to them. To ensure that the complete student body is properly represented, we try to ensure that the Committee includes representatives from each year for Single Honours students, Joint Honours students whose other subject is in the Humanities, and Joint Honours students whose other subject is outside the Humanities, as well as representatives of the postgraduate students. Students also elect a Department President who takes a leading role in student representation. Details of elections will be announced early in the academic year.

The Department President is also invited to Humanities Staff-Student meetings and Philosophy Board meetings.

Advice and Feedback hours

All members of staff not on leave are available for consultation. You can see them during their Advice and Feedback Hours (these are posted on staff webpages, outside their offices, on Blackboard, and in module outlines). You do not need to email the member of staff to see him/her at these times—just knock on his/her door.

Advice and Feedback Hours are an opportunity to discuss with your lecturers and tutors the philosophical issues raised in lectures or in your research, to clarify your understanding of those issues, to ask for advice, or to receive support. You are encouraged to make use of them.

If you cannot make an Advice and Feedback Hour, contact the member of staff to make an appointment. You can do this in person or by emailing the staff member with some times/dates at which you are available.

Staff hold Advice and Feedback Hours throughout the semester, including Consultation Weeks and during the exam period (until the exams for the modules they teach have taken place). During vacation periods, students who wish to meet with staff may contact the relevant member of staff to arrange an appointment.

6. VARIOUS

Discipline Prizes

Thanks to the generosity of our former students, Philosophy offers a number of prizes each academic year. We award alumni prizes for:

- contribution to the Philosophy community;
- the best dissertation;

the best performance by a Single Honours student in each year of study;
the best performance by a Joint Honours student whose other subject is in the Humanities in each year of study;
and the best performance by a Joint Honours student whose other subject is not in the Humanities in each year of study.

We also offer a number of commendations for strong performances in these areas.

Postgraduate Study

Students considering further academic study should feel free to consult any of the academic staff for help and advice. Information on our own postgraduate programmes is available on the [postgraduate pages](#) of the Philosophy website.

Philosophy Society

The University of Southampton Philosophy Society—or PhilSoc—is a vibrant independent club run by Philosophy students. It aims to provide social and academic opportunities for its members and organises events throughout the year.

Research events

Philosophy hosts regular research seminars throughout the year. These involve Southampton staff presenting their own work or visiting speakers from across the world giving talks on a diverse range of philosophical issues. All seminars are open to undergraduate students. Details can be found [here](#).

In addition, Philosophy at Southampton hosts many other events, including conferences, workshops, and public lectures, many of which you are welcome to attend. For details, see [here](#).

Joint Honours Liaisons

If you are a Joint Honours student and have any questions which specifically concern your other subject, you can speak to the liaison tutor in that subject. Contact details below.

ENGLISH

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