**UNIVERSITY OF KENT AT CANTERBURY**

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| **Please note:** This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if he/she passes the programme. The accuracy of the information contained in this specification is reviewed by the University and may be checked by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education. |

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| **MA IN PHILOSOPHY** |

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| 1. **Awarding Institution/Body** | University of Kent |
| 1. **Teaching Institution** | University of Kent |
| 1. **Teaching Site** | Canterbury Campus |
| 1. **Programme accredited by:** | *n/a* |
| 1. **Final Award** | MA |
| 1. **Programme** | Philosophy |
| 1. **UCAS code (or other code)** |  |
| 1. **Relevant QAA subject benchmarking group** | Philosophy |
| 1. **Date of revision** | 2010 (revision) |
| 1. **Applicable cohort/s** | 2010 entry onwards |

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| 1. **Educational Aims of the Programme**   This programme is designed for students who wish to broaden their study of philosophy and make a gradual transition to research. It is ideally suited to students with previous philosophical training who would like to widen their knowledge of topics, gain more training in philosophical methodology, and/or narrow down their interests of specialization in preparation for an MPhil/PhD. The flexibility of this programme ensures that the student is able to negotiate his or her own path of study through a range of modules which take into account the student’s own background and reflects the research specialisms and publications of the teaching staff who are nationally and internationally recognised experts in their fields.  The programme aims to  1. Provide students with the knowledge and skills to prepare them for academic philosophical study at MPhil/PhD level;  2. Attract outstanding students, irrespective of race, background, gender, or physical disability from within the UK;  3. Further the University’s International Strategy by attracting students, as above, from abroad as well;  4. Enable students to deepen their knowledge of work in the key areas of theoretical and practical philosophy;  5. Enable students to begin to specialise in their areas of interest;  6. Provide students, consistent with 1 above, with a transition from undergraduate study to independent research in philosophy;  7. Provide students with a training that will culminate, if followed through to PhD level, in the ability to submit articles to refereed journals in academic philosophy. |

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| 1. **Programme Outcomes** | |
| The programme provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding, qualities, skills and other attributes in the following areas. The programme outcomes have references to the subject benchmarking statement for Philosophy (***SB***). | |
| **Knowledge and Understanding** | **Teaching/learning and assessment**  **methods and strategies used to enable outcomes to be achieved and demonstrated** |
| **A. Knowledge and understanding of:** | **Teaching/learning** |
| 1. Several specific areas of the discipline based on a critical study of the relevant literature; where the specific area of study must include some topic within the key areas of philosophy as set out by the benchmark standards for undergraduate study as below.   a) the ideas and arguments of some of the major philosophers in the history of the subject, encountered in their own  writings, from the ancient Greek  philosophers to the present day; ***SB***  b) central theories and arguments in the fields of logic, metaphysics,  epistemology, and philosophy of mind,  including such topics as existence,  truth, certainty , meaning, causality, free will, and the relation of mind and body; ***SB***  c) central theories and arguments in the fields of moral, political and social  philosophy, including such topics as  the nature of judgements about right  and wrong, human rights, duties and  obligations, the relation between the  individual and society, freedom, and  justice; ***SB***  d) the relevance of philosophical ideas to other disciplines and areas of enquiry such as literature, the arts, religion, law, politics, and social studies. ***SB*** | **Teaching and learning methods used to**  **enable outcomes in A-C to be achieved:**  Knowledge and understanding are promoted  by a range of teaching methods including mixed-level classes, lectures, seminars, essay supervisions, staff/student research seminar, and independent group work, to be arranged by the students.  You are given detailed comments on your written work, and the opportunity for individual discussion of your work with the MA convenor. When you write your dissertation you are entitled to 6 hours supervision during the summer term. |
| 1. A detailed understanding of the applicable techniques for research and advanced academic enquiry in philosophy, as well as the general ability to conceptualise, design and implement the final project (dissertation) and to adjust it in the light of unforeseen problems. |

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| **Skills and Other Attributes** | Mixed-level classes. Students may, in consultation with the Programme Director, choose from a number of mixed undergraduate/graduate courses, which typically include:  Philosophy of Mind, Wittgenstein, Philosophy of Language, Paradoxes, Philosophical Logic, Logic, Descartes-Kant, Contemporary Theory of Knowledge, Aesthetics, Political Philosophy, Philosophy of Science, Philosophy of Cognitive Science and Artificial Intelligence, Meta-ethics, Normative Ethics, and Philosophy of Religion.  Small-group tutorials and essay supervisions. In addition to these mixed level classes, the student will have up to 3 hours per term, organised as small-group tutorials or one-on-one essay supervisions. Tutorials are meant to provide a rigorous and challenging learning environment which is active, not passive. Students are expected to be well prepared for them and to ask questions and engage in argumentation.  **Staff/ Student Research Seminar.** Members of staff offer weekly 2 hour seminars on topics of their current research interests (6 weeks each; 4 per academic year). All postgraduate students are expected to attend. These are available for credit to MA students.  Past seminars have included :  **Wittgenstein’s Lectures on the Foundations of Mathematics , Empiricism and Meaning , Crary’s “Beyond Moral Judgment”, Wittgenstein’s “On Certainty”, Global Justice, Moral Philosophy: Kant and Hume, Logic for Philosophers.** |
| B. Intellectual skills: |
| listening attentively to complex  presentations; using powers of analysis and imagination; |
| reading carefully a variety of technical  and non-technical material; |
| using libraries effectively; |
| reflecting clearly and critically on oral and written sources |
| marshalling a complex body of  information; |
| remembering relevant material and  bringing it to mind when needed; |
| constructing cogent arguments in the  evaluation of this material; |
| formulating independent ideas and  defending them with cogent arguments |  |
| **C. Subject-specific skills:** *These should include practice and professional skills* |  |
| Ability to conduct arguments about matters of the highest moment without recourse to insult or susceptibility to take offence. | Dissertation. Students are encouraged to base their dissertation work on research done for one of the other modules, using and extending the same bibliographical information, but without duplicating it. |
| Willingness to evaluate opposing arguments, to formulate and consider the best arguments for different views and to identify the weakest elements of the most persuasive view. |
| Honesty in recognising the force of the conclusions warranted by a careful assessment of pertinent arguments. |
| Articulacy in identifying underlying issues in all kinds of debate. | **Assessment methods used to demonstrate**  **achievement of outcomes in A-C:**  Your achievement is assessed through coursework and dissertation.  Except for certain subjects (e.g., Logic) the modules are evaluated by essays of 4000 words each. In each essay, students are expected to demonstrate in-depth knowledge and understanding of a particular philosophical topic and of the literature dealing with it, and to present and defend their own independent ideas on the topic. This method of assessment will improve and test their ability to engage in independent philosophical work and to produce a piece of writing which is appropriately presented and referenced in accordance with professional standards. Students must obtain all the credits for the taught components of the course by at least a pass mark of 40% in order to proceed to the Dissertation.  Attendance at the Staff/Student Research Seminar is expected of all postgraduate students. |
| Precision of thought and expression in the analysis and formulation of complex and controversial problems. |
| Sensitivity in interpretation of texts drawn from a variety of ages and/or traditions. |
| Clarity and rigour in the critical assessment of arguments presented in such texts. |
| Ability to use and criticise specialised philosophical terminology. |
| Ability to abstract, analyse and construct sound arguments and to identify logical fallacies. |
| Ability to recognise methodological errors, rhetorical devices, unexamined conventional wisdom, unnoticed assumptions, vagueness and superficiality. |
| Ability to move between generalisation and appropriately detailed discussion, inventing or discovering examples to support or challenge a position, and distinguishing relevant and irrelevant considerations. | **Dissertation of a suggested length of 8-10000 words.**  **See** [**http://www.kent.ac.uk/registry/quality/regulations/taught/cwkinstc.html**](http://www.kent.ac.uk/registry/quality/regulations/taught/cwkinstc.html) |
| Ability to consider unfamiliar ideas and ways of thinking, and to examine critically pre-suppositions and methods within the discipline itself. |  |
| **D. Transferable skills:** |  |
| *Working with others:* participating in  seminar discussions, responding to the  views of others and to criticisms of  your own views without giving or  taking offence; engaging in independent  group work, including the running of the graduate seminar. | Most modules will involve classes, seminars or tutorials in which you learn to work with others, to  contribute to discussions, and to produce  written work on which you receive  comments. The research seminar  provides special opportunities for working together with members of staff on cutting-edge philosophical research. Each student will be expected to engage in philosophical argument and discussion, thus to have the opportunity to practice responding to the views of others, criticising without giving or taking offense, etc.The dissertation enables you to develop further skills in independent study.  The School of European Culture and Languages provides seminars in research methodology for postgraduate students.  The University’s Information  Services and Student Learning Advisory  Service provide additional support in  helping you to improve your learning.  **Assessment of transferable skills**  All modules involve the assessment of  written work. Assessment of  written work takes account of presentation  skills including competence in literacy and word processing. |
| *Using information technology:*  using on-line information sources; word processing essays; using e-mail for  receiving and responding to communications. |
| *Communication:* producing focused  and cogent written presentations  summarising information and assessing  arguments; giving oral presentations,  using visual aids where appropriate. |
| *Problem-solving:* identifying problems;  assessing the strengths and weaknesses  of different solutions; defending your  own solutions with cogent arguments. |
| *Improving your learning:* identifying  your strengths and weaknesses;  assessing the quality of your own work;  managing your time and meeting  deadlines; learning to work  independently. |

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| 1. **Programme structures and requirements, levels, modules, credits and awards** | | | | |
| The programme consists of four MA philosophy modules (for a total of 120 credits) a staff/student research seminar, and a dissertation (60 credits). All students (including part-timers) taking the course will be expected to have Wednesdays 1-3 free for the research seminar. The flexibility offered by our mixed-level class structure allows students to choose from a number of subjects to suit their individual interests and time schedules.    The programme is offered on a full-time basis, with completion of the programme in one year, or on a part-time basis, with completion of the programme in two years.  Study at the University is organised in two 12-week terms (in which it is not uncommon to have one or two “reading weeks”) and a 6-week “examination” term for undergraduates but in which graduate students will receive supervision for their dissertations to be written up in the summer vacation.  Students are automatically enrolled in four, PL800-series modules (two each term for full-time students; one for part-time students) as follows:  PL855 Theoretical Philosophy (30 credits)  PL856 Practical Philosophy (30 credits)  PL805 Special Topics 1 (30 credits)  PL806 Special Topics 2 (30 credits)  These PL800-series modules can be ‘satisfied’ by a wide variety of mixed-level modules which the student chooses in consultation with the Programme Director (see module specifications).  In addition, members of staff offer seminars on topics of their current research interests, available to all postgraduates as well as to other members of staff, which are available for credit as part of the PL800-series to MA students and normally assessed by a 4,000 word essay.  Research Seminars in the past have included:  Wittgenstein’s Lectures on the Foundations of Mathematics; Moral Philosophy: Hume and Kant; Global Justice; Further Logic for Philosophers, Alice Crary’s *Beyond Moral Judgment*, Wittgenstein’s *On Certainty*, Special Topics in the Philosophy of Science, etc. | | | | |
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| 1. **Support for Students and Their Learning** |
| * The MA Programme Director, the Director of Graduate Studies for Philosophy, and finally the Director of Graduate Studies for the School are available for consultation about academic or non-academic matters. * All staff have regular published office hours and are contactable by e-mail. Appointments may be made outside of office hours. * All students are encouraged to seek advice from any member of staff to discuss any matters of academic or non-academic concern.   In addition to support with the department the following services are available within the University.   * University Medical Centre for health related issues.. * Counselling Service * Careers Advisory Service * Disability Support Unit * The Student Learning Advisory Support Service on campus offers for advice on many learning activities: revision, essay writing, making presentations, effective learning in lecturers and seminars, time management. * The Library runs induction courses in how to use its facilities * The Students’ Union particularly offers advice on welfare. |

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| 1. **Entry Profile** *Examples of entry profiles are available at: http://www.ucas.ac.uk/profiles/index.html* | |
| Candidates for admission to programmes of study leading to the award of a Masters in Philosophy will normally be expected to have a degree awarded by a British university. Holders of other qualifications will be considered individually.  Candidates for admission to the “Taught MA” programme of study will normally be expected to have an Honours degree in an appropriate subject awarded by a British university and, for registration for the degree of Master, will normally be expected to have been awarded such a degree with First Class or good Second Class honours. Holders of other qualifications will be considered individually  For fuller information, please refer to the University prospectus. | |
| * **Minimum requirements:** | * An Honours degree (or equivalent) in a relevant subject, normally Philosophy, and normally of at least 2:1 level. |
|  | * See the following for English requirements:   http://www.kent.ac.uk/studying/postgrad/apply/entry.html |
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| **What does this programme have to offer?** | |
| * **The programme is recommended both for students who merely wish to continue their studies in Philosophy for their own enjoyment and for those who are contemplating an academic career in Philosophy.** | |
| **Personal Profile** | |
| * **An interest in academic Philosophy** * **A willingness to engage in philosophical analysis and debate** * **Knowledge of Philosophy at undergraduate level** | |

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| 1. **Methods for evaluating and enhancing the quality and standards of teaching and learning** |
| **Mechanisms for review and evaluation of teaching, learning, assessment, the curriculum and outcome standards** |
| * Student evaluations (see Mechanisms for gaining student feedback, below) * Annual Monitoring Report * External Examiner’s Report * Periodic Programme Review * Annual Staff Appraisal * Peer Observation of Teaching * Mentoring of new and part-time lecturers |
| **Committees with responsibility for monitoring and evaluating quality and standards** |
| * Philosophy Board of Studies * Staff/Student Consultative Committee * School of European Culture and Languages Learning and Teaching Committee * Humanities Learning and Teaching Committee * University Learning and Teaching Board * Board of Examiners |
| **Mechanisms for gaining student feedback on the quality of teaching and their learning experience** |
| * Student Feedback. A number of discussions will be scheduled through the year to provide non-anonymous student feedback to the convenor of the MA who will feed this anonymously to the Board of Studies. * Staff/Student Consultative Committee. There will be one representative from the ‘Taught MA’ on the staff/student consultative committee who will also be invited to attend Board of Studies meetings and consult on a regular basis with other graduate students. * Student representation for SECL and Faculty. There may be an opportunity to represent postgraduate students from the School and from the Faculty. |
| **Staff development priorities include:** |
| * Research-led teaching * All new members of staff are expected to have Ph.D. in Philosophyand a substantial list of publications * All new members of staff are required to have/achieve a postgraduate certificate in higher education * All staff are required to be appraised on a yearly basis * All staff are required to attend staff development events related to teaching, research, and administration * Support for research including supporting attendance at conferences and providing appropriately covered leave to support staff on research projects (often resulting in publication), thus enhancing their body of knowledge in the field, their teaching and their career. * Many staff are members of the *Higher Education Academy* (formerly the *Institute for Learning and Teaching*); many are members of the *British Philosophical Association*; some are also members of the *Aristotelian Society* and the *American Philosophical Association*. * All staff are required to attend Philosophy and School awaydays * There is a work in progress seminar that meets roughly every other week * All staff are expected to attend/organise conferences, workshops, and other collaborative projects in Philosophy. |

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| 1. **Indicators of quality and standards** |
| * Independent review of the quality of educational provision in Philosophy by the Quality Assurance Agency subject review process in 1997 achieving an excellent grading of 24 out of a maximum 24 points.   Curriculum Design Content and Organisation = 4  Teaching Learning and Assessment = 4  Student Support and Guidance = 4  Student Progression and Achievement = 4  Learning Resources = 4  Quality Management and Enhancement = 4   * An award of 4 in the 2001 Research Assessment Exercise. A national audit which measures the quality and quantity of research undertaken by a department. A score of 4 indicates international significance in some of the research submitted, and national significance in the remainder. |
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| The following reference points were used in creating these specifications: |
| * The Philosophy Benchmark Statement published by Higher Education Funding Council of England * The University Mission Statement *(*http://www.kent.ac.uk/about/mission.html) * University Regulations for Taught Programmes [**http://www.kent.ac.uk/registry/quality/regulations/taught/cwkinstc.html**](http://www.kent.ac.uk/registry/quality/regulations/taught/cwkinstc.html) * University Plan/Learning and Teaching Strategy * Programme Specifications for Philosophy Single Honours and for MDrama. |

Programme Specification Template

Annex 1

9 May 2001