IMPORTANT: It is the responsibility of each M.A. student to be aware of the contents of this Handbook and to ensure that they comply with all the rules, deadlines etc. which it contains.
THE DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

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Notice Boards, Moodle and Website:
The Department’s notice boards, Moodle and the website are important methods of communicating with students. Important information (e.g. changes in the timetable or in lecture times) will be posted there from time to time. **Students are required to consult these notice boards, Moodle and the website regularly.**

Student Emails:
Students should consult their email account regularly, as this is an important means of communication with the university. The personal student email account is received at registration.

Subject Librarian:
Pauline Murray Davies is the Subject Librarian for Philosophy.
Email: p.murraydavey@nuim.ie
Phone no: +353 1 708 6446

Postgraduate Coordinator: Dr Mette Lebech

Staff-Student Liaison Committee: Students from each year elect a representative for this committee. The Department is represented by Dr Denise Ryan, Dr Simon Nolan, and Dr Susan Gottlöber.
Students register for modules at the beginning of each semester online. They will not be allowed to graduate without having registered for the appropriate number of modules.

PROGRAMMES
(One year full-time, two years part-time)

GENERAL COURSE INFORMATION AND COURSE STRUCTURE

The M.A. degrees (Mode I) in Philosophy comprise 6 taught modules (including the Philosophical Seminar) and are taken by 100% continuous assessment and by minor thesis. The 90 credits for each individual M.A. will be made up of 60 ECTS credits awarded for taught modules and 30 credits for the dissertation. The dissertation comprises a maximum of 15,000 words, and is assessed by the supervisor and the external examiner.

M.A. IN PHILOSOPHY

This M.A. relates to discourses and developments in the history of Western philosophy up to the 21st century. It thus aims at carrying out a philosophical analysis of some of the underlying cultural themes and philosophical presuppositions of Western self understanding and contemporary society. Building upon the strengths of critical thinking, systematic reflection, and historical awareness developed at undergraduate level, the programme allows the student to explore thematic concerns of philosophers in the Western tradition from medieval times to the 21st century. Students may choose additional modules (where suitable) after consultation with the Head of Department and/or the Postgraduate Coordinator. The topic of the dissertation and the chosen modules must be approved by the Head of Department.

M.A. IN PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION

Similar to the M.A. in Philosophy, this M.A. relates to discourses and developments in the history in Western philosophy up to the 21st century. It aims at carrying out a philosophical analysis of some of the underlying cultural themes and philosophical presuppositions of Western self understanding and contemporary society in relation to the phenomenon of religion. Building upon the strengths of critical thinking, systematic reflection, and historical awareness developed at undergraduate level, the programme allows the student to explore thematic concerns of philosophers in the Western tradition from medieval times to the 21st century.

The topic of the dissertation must be in the subject area of Philosophy of Religion. Students may choose additional modules (where suitable) after consultation with the Head of Department and/or the Postgraduate Coordinator, including modules offered by St. Patrick’s College. The topic of the dissertation and the chosen modules must be approved by the Head of Department.

M.A. IN MEDIEVAL AND RENAISSANCE PHILOSOPHY

This M.A. offers students the opportunity to explore Western philosophical thought from the Middle Ages to the Renaissance. It should appeal both to those who want an overview of the foundations of modern European thought, and to those with more specialized interests in Medieval and Renaissance studies, philosophy, or the history of ideas. Building upon the strengths of critical thinking, systematic reflection, and historical awareness developed at undergraduate level, the programme allows the student to explore thematic concerns of philosophers in the Western tradition from medieval times to the 17th century.
Compulsory Modules include:
PH606 Reading Medieval Philosophy
PH610 Philosophical Seminar
PH630 New Politics in the Renaissance: Machiavelli
PH699 Dissertation

Students may choose 2 additional modules from the M.A. Philosophy programme or modules offered by St. Patrick's College or other Departments (applicable only if the modules are offered in agreement with the Philosophy Department. Please consult the Head of Department and/or the Postgraduate Coordinator for details). The topic of the dissertation must be in the subject areas of Medieval or Renaissance Philosophy. The topic of the dissertation and the chosen modules must be approved by the Head of Department.

M.A. IN ANCIENT, MEDIEVAL AND RENAISSANCE THOUGHT

The MA offers the student the opportunity to explore early Western intellectual history through philosophical, literary and cultural approaches. It should appeal to students who want an overview of the foundations of modern European thought, and those who want to go on to further studies in Classics, Medieval and Renaissance studies, European studies, philosophy, or the history of ideas. The objective of this course is to provide students with a specialized knowledge in Ancient, Medieval and Renaissance thought, focusing on philosophical writers, literary and historical themes, and the history of thought. Building upon the strengths of critical thinking, systematic reflection and historical awareness developed by the student in their undergraduate studies, the MA in Ancient, Medieval and Renaissance Thought will allow the student to explore thematic concerns of writers in the Western tradition from Ancient Greece and Rome to the 16th century and the various revivals in scholastic thought into the seventeenth century. It will also prepare those students for research degrees in either one of these areas, allowing them to pursue further studies in Classics, Philosophy or related fields.

Compulsory Modules include:
PH626 Images of the Human Being in Ancient, Medieval and Renaissance Thought
PH699 OR GC698 Dissertation

At least one module must be taken from the Classics Department and at least one from the Philosophy Department

Optional Modules from the Classics Department include:
First semester
GC632 Ancient History: Problems and Methods (Dr Michael Williams)
GC641 Popular Culture in Classical Athens (Dr Kieran McGroarty)
GC644 Philosophy and Kingship in Antiquity (Dr William Desmond)
GR151 An Introduction to Ancient Greek I
LN151 An Introduction to Latin I

Second semester
GC634 Literature and Learning in the Second Century AD: Apuleius and his Contemporaries (Dr Maeve O’Brien)
GC638 Cosmology in Antiquity (Dr Gordon Campbell)
GR152 An Introduction to Ancient Greek II
LN152 An Introduction to Latin II

Semesters 1 and 2:
GC650 Seminar Report.

Optional Modules from the Philosophy Department are listed below.
Students may choose 3 (4 if you chose to do GC698) additional modules from the M.A. Philosophy programme or modules offered by the Classics Department (applicable only if the modules are offered in agreement with the Philosophy Department. Please consult the Head of Department and/or the Postgraduate Coordinator for details). The topic of the dissertation must be in the subject areas Ancient, Medieval or Renaissance Thought. The topic of the dissertation and the chosen modules must be approved by the Head of the Department.

**M.A. IN MODERN AND CONTEMPORARY PHILOSOPHY**

This M.A. relates discourses and developments in modern and contemporary philosophy to current debates regarding (but not restricted to) the challenges of globalization, post-secular societies (racism, toleration), and democratic development, etc., as well as to their philosophical foundations. Possible answers to these questions rely upon the philosophical notions of the nature of knowledge and human understanding, identity, plurality, and the human condition. This M.A. aims at carrying out a serious philosophical analysis of some of the underlying cultural themes and philosophical presuppositions of contemporary society.

**Compulsory Modules include:**
- PH602 Methods in Phenomenology
- PH604 The Early Philosophy of Edith Stein
- PH610 Philosophical Seminar
- PH635 Max Scheler's Personalism and His Political Theory
- PH699 Dissertation

Students may choose 2 additional modules from the M.A. Philosophy programme or modules offered by St. Patrick’s College or other Departments (applicable only if the modules are offered in agreement with the Philosophy Department. Please consult the Head of Department and/or the Postgraduate Coordinator for details). The topic of the dissertation must be in the subject areas of Modern or Contemporary Philosophy. The topic of the dissertation and the chosen modules must be approved by the Head of the Department.

**M.A. IN POLITICS, PHILOSOPHY AND ECONOMICS**

This MA relates discourses and developments in the history in Western philosophy up to the 21st century. It thus aims at carrying out a serious philosophical analysis of some of the underlying cultural themes and philosophical presuppositions of Western self understanding and contemporary society. Building upon the strengths of critical thinking, systematic reflection, and historical awareness developed at undergraduate level, the programme allows the student to explore thematic concerns of philosophers in the Western tradition from medieval times to the 21st century. The MA degree (Mode I) in Philosophy is taken by examination (100% continuous assessment) and by minor thesis, the topic of which must be approved by the Head of the Department. The dissertation comprises a maximum of 15,000 words, and is assessed by the supervisor and the external examiner.

**There is one compulsory module for this MA:**
- PH636 Power, Wealth and Corruption

Optional modules from the Politics, Law, Sociology, Philosophy and Economics Departments include:
- First Semester
- EC601A Microeconomics
- EC603B Macroeconomics
- EC605D Fundamentals of Econometrics
- LW452 Economic Analyses of Law
- LW631 Criminology and Criminal Justice
- LW647 Information Privacy Law
- PH635 Max Scheler’s Personalism and his Political Theory
- SO601A Societies in Transition: Debating Big Ideas
SO602A Political Economy
SO610 Analytical Reasoning in the Social Sciences

Second Semester
EC602A Microeconomics 2
EC618A International Trade
EC619A Labour Economics
LW646 Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
PH622 Aquinas and the Emergence of Rights
PH630 New Politics in the Renaissance: Maciavelli

First and Second Semester
EC690 Thesis OR
PH699 Dissertation OR
SO690 Thesis

POSTGRADUATE DIPLOMA

The Postgraduate Diploma comprises six taught modules (including the compulsory Philosophical Seminar), but not the M.A. dissertation. This may also be an option for students who have initially registered for one of the M.A. programmes but, for various reasons, choose not to complete the module PH699 (Dissertation). If you wish to consider this option, please consult the Head of Department and/or the Postgraduate Coordinator.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Candidates applying for M.A. Programmes/ Postgraduate Diploma in Philosophy should normally have a B.A. Honours degree with at least Second Class Honours Grade 2 in Philosophy or its equivalent.

CREDIT REQUIREMENTS

Students will be expected to take 60 ECTS credits in Taught Modules, including PH610 (Philosophical Seminar) which is compulsory for all M.A.s except the M.A. in Ancient, Medieval and Renaissance Thought. Each M.A. module is equal to 10 ECTS credits and the thesis is equal to 30 ECTS credits.

TAUGHT MODULES

FIRST SEMESTER

PH604: THE EARLY PHILOSOPHY OF EDITH STEIN (Dr Mette Lebech) (10 ECTS credits)

This module aims to introduce the phenomenology of Edith Stein by reading one of her early, translated works in detail. A close reading of the work and discussion of its basic concepts opens up for a discussion of her contribution to phenomenology and to an appraisal of her specific style of phenomenological investigation. Typical topics such as empathy, the psycho-physical individual, the person, community, society and state are discussed so far as they are relevant to the work in question with a view to understand the direction of her later philosophy as phenomenological ontology. Stein's phenomenology is sought understood in relation to other types of phenomenology and particular emphasis is laid on her contribution to the phenomenology of intersubjectivity.
Learning outcomes: On successful completion of the module, students should be able to:

1. Discuss Stein’s contribution to Phenomenology.
2. Critically assess the work studied and discuss the topics treated in it in the light of Stein’s understanding of them.
3. Explain the central concepts of the work studied, and situate these in the context of the phenomenological movement.
4. Explain the structure of the work.
5. Critically address the question of the interpretation of the work studied.
6. Critically assess Stein’s understanding and use of phenomenology.

PH606: READING MEDIEVAL PHILOSOPHY (Dr Simon Nolan) (10 ECTS credits)

This module examines some of the more enduring contributions to philosophy by medieval thinkers, especially in their interaction with classical thought on various perennial questions. Through the reading of texts in English translation, the student will be in a position to examine and analyse how different medieval authors looked at such themes as language, knowledge, time and eternity, causality, essence and existence, body and soul, freedom of the will and the role of the philosopher. By means of presentations and discussion the student will be encouraged to assess the contemporary relevance of medieval philosophical debates.

Learning Outcomes: On successful completion of the module, students should be able to:

1. Appraise philosophically basic tenets of medieval philosophy beginning with Augustine and touching on most of the major thinkers up to the fourteenth century.
2. Discriminate between various philosophical movements and methods employed in the historical development of medieval philosophy, such as: Neoplatonism, Aristotelianism, nominalism and realism.
3. Recognise different phases and schools of medieval philosophy through an examination of some of the main protagonists and turning points, in particular the implications of the condemnations of 1277 for later medieval thought.
4. Compare pre- and post 1277 attitudes towards philosophy, and examine emerging trends in later medieval scholasticism that lead to the birth of modern thought.
5. Assess the accuracy or otherwise of a medieval thinker’s use of ancient philosophy and their direct evaluation of another medieval philosopher’s central positions as explaining the development of different positions throughout the era.
6. Describe the historical development of medieval philosophy and judge the value of key concepts elaborated throughout the era.
7. Evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the different philosophical methods used and positions adopted in medieval philosophy.
8. Demonstrate, through advanced critical written communication skills and argument style in philosophy, what were the significant influences on the development of medieval philosophy.

PH623: MAX SCHELER’S PERSONALISM AND HIS POLITICAL THEORY (Dr Susan Gottlöber) (10 ECTS credits)

The aim of this module is to study Scheler’s political and social concepts in the light of his personalism. After developing the main features of Scheler’s personalism and value theory, we will analyze some of the most important concepts in his political thinking such as, e.g., the role of the idea of the collective person in his concept of the nation, pacifism, the role of resentment in the social sphere, or his critique of capitalism.

Learning Outcomes: On successful completion of the module, students should be able to:

1. Identify the main features of Scheler’s personalism and value theory.
2. Describe Scheler’s concept of the person and the collective person.
3. Establish the impact of Scheler’s personalism and value theory on his concepts of the nation, his critique of capitalism etc.
4. Evaluate the potential relevance of the main ideas discussed in the module for contemporary political problems.
5. Discuss the role of resentment in the personal and social sphere.
6. Present and articulate, in written and oral format, coherent arguments for positions taken in relation to different philosophical topics discussed in the module.

PH626: IMAGES OF THE HUMAN BEING IN ANCIENT, MEDIEVAL AND RENAISSANCE THOUGHT (Dr Michael Dunne, Dr Susan Gottlöber and Dr William Desmond) (10 ECTS credits) Compulsory module for students doing the MA in Ancient, Medieval and Renaissance Philosophy, but available to other students with the approval of the Head of Department

This module, team-taught by members of the two departments, provides an overview of approaches to the human being from early Greek philosophy to the Renaissance. It confronts in particular the question ‘What are human beings?’, considering a range of answers offered during these periods: are they rational animals, political animals, favoured or fallen creatures of God, independent creators in their own right, or what? What are the fundamental relationships that define the human experience (whether to the body and emotions, to others and the community, or to temporal change and God)? The module focuses on select passages from a wide spread of authors and texts, such as Plato’s Republic, Aristotle’s De Anima and Politics, Augustine’s Confessions, Aquinas’ Summa Theologicae, Eriugena’s Periphyseon, Nicholas of Cusa’s De Coniecturis and Pico della Mirandola’s Oration on the Dignity of Man, opening up in the process further lines of enquiry.

1. Analyse critically the intellectual continuities and discontinuities in approaches to the human phenomenon across two millennia, from classical Greece to the Renaissance.
2. Outline the main ideas of key thinkers studied in the module, and their influence.
3. Demonstrate research skills appropriate to the course material.
4. Evaluate different scholarly methodologies employed in the investigation of the central questions of the module, and apply them appropriately.
5. Demonstrate the ability to communicate original ideas in both written and oral form.

SECOND SEMESTER

PH602: SCIENTIFIC AND HERMENEUTIC METHODS IN PHENOMENOLOGY (Dr Cyril McDonnell) (10 ECTS credits)

This module examines the development of the twentieth century phenomenological movement in philosophy, concentrating in particular on the different methods (both ‘scientific’ and ‘hermeneutic’) that were devised and used by various thinkers who originated and spearheaded this development. Selected extracts from texts by Franz Brentano (1838–1917), Edmund Husserl (1859–1938), Wilhelm Dilthey (1833–1911), Martin Heidegger (1889–1976) and Emmanuel Levinas (1906–1995) will be identified and serve as the central focus of analysis and discussion for this module.

Learning Outcomes: On successful completion of the module, students should be able to:

1. Appraise philosophically the development of Husserl’s thought, with particular focus on basic tenets of his phenomenology (e.g., the intentionality of consciousness, the natural attitude, eidetic ideation, transcendental reduction, and transcendental epoch ).
2. Discriminate between various types of philosophical methods deployed in the development of twentieth-century phenomenology: Brentano’s distinction between genetic (natural-scientific) and descriptive psychology; descriptive [hermeneutic] psychology (Dilthey); Husserl’s early descriptive-eidetic psychology and later transcendental phenomenology; Heidegger’s existential-hermeneutic method in phenomenology; Levinas’s ethical-transcendental phenomenology).
3. Recognise different definitions of phenomenology through an examination of some of the main rejecters of Husserl's method, in particular Heidegger's alternative existential-hermeneutic method and Levinas's later dialogic ethical-transcendental phenomenological method.

4. Compare ‘hermeneutic’ and ‘scientific’ strands within the development of phenomenology in twentieth century phenomenological movement in philosophy and debate the relevance of this to evaluating contemporary European thought.

5. Assess the accuracy of one’s philosopher’s direct evaluation of another philosopher’s central philosophical position and the significance of this for explaining the developments of different definitions of phenomenology in the twentieth century.

6. Describe the historical development of twentieth century phenomenology and judge the value of key concepts elaborated in different definitions of phenomenology from the perspective of phenomenological methods.

7. Evaluate the merits and demerits of different philosophical methods deployed in twentieth century phenomenology.

8. Demonstrate, through advanced critical written and oral communication skills and argument style in philosophy, significant methodological influences and differences in the philosophical origins of the development of twentieth-century phenomenology.

### PH622: AQUINAS AND THE CONCEPT OF RIGHTS (Dr Michael Dunne) (10 ECTS credits)

Aquinas, together with Karl Marx, is regarded as one of the most influential and formative thinkers on contemporary European society. In this module we will learn to critically read Aquinas through an examination of selected texts in translation. Among the topics we shall look at are the following: how Aquinas thought through his sources; his use of Neoplatonism; his decisive role in the reception of Aristotle; perennial philosophy; the limits of philosophical thinking; justice and the state; conscience and human rights.

**Learning Outcomes:** On successful completion of the module, students should be able to:

1. Situate Aquinas within the history of philosophy and the cultural movements of his times.
2. Individuate and show the use Aquinas makes of his sources.
3. Identify the various literary modes in which Aquinas presents his thinking and the challenges they pose to interpreting his thought.
4. Discuss some the main features of Aquinas’s philosophical system.
5. Identify some central contributions of Aquinas to the historical development of Western philosophy.
6. Critically reflect on the strengths and weaknesses of Aquinas’s philosophical ideas.
7. Discuss why Aquinas holds that some questions in philosophy must remain open.
8. Relate Aquinas’s thinking on ethics and politics to contemporary concerns (e.g., justice and the state, conscience and human rights).

### PH630: NEW POLITICS IN THE RENAISSANCE: MACHIAVELLI (Dr Amos Edelheit) (10 ECTS credits)

The dramatic changes in the philosophical discussions of politics found in the writings of Niccolò Machiavelli (1469-1527) will stand at the centre of this module. We shall examine some of the fundamental political concepts such as authority and power, the common good and freedom, just and unjust ruler, leadership and citizenship, through a close reading of Machiavelli’s political and historical writings. One of the many questions we shall address is: does Machiavelli’s reputation is justified?

**Learning Outcomes:** On successful completion of the module, students should be able to:

1. Point out the break in philosophical accounts of politics after Machiavelli while dealing with the question: is there any connection between morality and politics in Machiavelli?
2. Identify the relevant philosophical contexts for Renaissance philosophy (e.g., Greek and Roman pagan philosophy; philosophical and theological works of the Church’s Fathers; scholastic philosophy; late
scholastic schools), thus answering the question: what should we know in order to understand Renaissance philosophy in general and Machiavelli in particular?

3. Identify the unique patterns of Machiavelli’s political discourse and the essential relations between historical and contemporary events.

4. Distinguish rhetorical statements and philosophical arguments and focusing on the new approach to language, style and rhetoric in Machiavelli.

5. Analyse the manner in which Machiavelli is using his sources.

6. Apply the methods of critical reading of a philosophical text in the Renaissance to any other philosophical context, while paying attention to the relevant contexts and background, the relevant philosophical questions, the scholarly skills required for a competent reading, key terms and issues, style, genre, and rhetoric.

PH636: POWER, WEALTH AND CORRUPTION (Dr Susan Gottlöber – team-taught) (10 ECTS credits)

This module, team-taught by members of the three departments, provides an overview of the approaches by various thinkers to the question of how power and wealth are intertwined and the perennial problem of corruption as ‘the abuse of power by a public official for private gain’.

The module will start with a historico-critical survey in the first part, followed by a thematic and critical examination in the second part based on contemporary theories. The latter will include topics such as: Against excess – idealized forms of government vs. tyranny, economic and political explanations and consequences of corruption and means of institutional and democratic control, opening up in the process further lines of enquiry using contemporary approaches in formal and normative political theory and economic theory.

Learning Outcomes: On successful completion of the module, students should be able to:

1. Analyse critically the intellectual continuities and discontinuities in approaches to wealth and power across two millennia, from classical Greece to modern times.

2. Discuss the concept of corruption in the different approaches in both historical and contemporary contexts.

3. Outline the main ideas of key thinkers studied in the module, and their influence.

4. Demonstrate research skills appropriate to the course material.

5. Evaluate different scholarly methodologies employed in the investigation of the central questions of the module, and apply them appropriately.

6. Demonstrate the ability to communicate original ideas in both written and oral form.

In both semesters there might be further modules on offer from other Departments and from the Pontifical University, St Patrick’s College Maynooth. Please check the registration website for details.

RESEARCH MODULES
FIRST AND SECOND SEMESTER

PH610: PHILOSOPHICAL SEMINAR (module Coordinator Dr Mette Lebech) (Compulsory module – except for the students in Ancient, Medieval and Renaissance Philosophy programme – running over two semesters, with M.A. Seminar on Methodology to take place in the second semester) (10 ECTS credits)

The aim of this module is to develop students’ methodological research skills in philosophy for the purposes of undertaking a postgraduate dissertation in philosophy and to introduce students to the practice of contemporary philosophical discussion as exemplified in the Philosophical Seminar. The module consists of a number of special lectures given by invited speakers during both semesters; an introduction to research methods and methodological issues in philosophy; and a presentation by each student to fellow students and staff on a topic related to their own research. The identified reading material will be circulated by each student to others in the class (including the module co-ordinator and the supervisor) at least one week in advance of that student’s individual presentation. Students are also expected to devise a research proposal within the first half of semester
one and to submit a revised version of the proposal before the end of the study week (mid-half) of the second semester.

Learning Outcomes: On successful completion of the module, students should be able to:
1. Identify and choose a topic for a postgraduate research project in philosophy.
2. Outline the way this research topic will be thought-through in a consistent and methodological manner, identifying primary and secondary sources.
3. Develop skills of independent learning and self-evaluation.
4. Engage with peers in philosophical discussion of topics and demonstrate comprehension and compression of textual material as well as tolerance and respect for diverse viewpoints.
5. Evaluate philosophical viewpoints that differ from their own and make out a reasoned case in support of their own views.
6. Present clearly, in an organized manner, in both written and spoken format, a review of a philosophical article or chapter of a book, and respond appropriately to questions from fellow students and staff on that review.
7. Demonstrate the ability to engage in well-reasoned discourse on the topic that is relevant to the seminars and invited guest lecture series.
8. Follow University submission guidelines for postgraduate theses at Maynooth University.

PH699: DISsertation (Compulsory module running over two semesters for all M.A. students except students in the Ancient, Medieval and Renaissance Philosophy programme) (30 ECTS credits)

The aim of this module is to develop students’ independent research methods in philosophy and to deepen their critical awareness and writing ability on a significant topic in philosophy. The module requires students to select: (a) a significant topic of research for a Minor M.A. thesis in philosophy; (b) think this topic through; and (c) present it (c. 12,000-15,000 words) adhering to normal academic-scholarly written conventions. Appointment of supervisors for each student’s thesis-topic proposal will follow upon a consideration and review of the theses’ proposals that have been submitted to the Department of Philosophy and as approved by the Head of the Department. Revision and refinement of theses’ proposals are necessary, and such will be conducted, in due course over the first semester, between appointed supervisor and student. It is the responsibility of both supervisor and supervisee to arrange and fix appointment times during both the First and Second Semesters, and to discuss the progress, or lack of progress made in the researching and in the writing of the thesis. The format of the dissertation must conform to the guidelines set out in the Departmental Handbook for Students and the University’s Submission Procedures.

Learning Outcomes: On successful completion of the module, students should be able to:
1. Identify and choose a topic for masters research in philosophy.
2. Think this topic through in a consistent manner, identifying primary and secondary sources.
3. Express accurately and evaluate properly, in written format, the viewpoints, opinions and beliefs of others and of oneself relevant to the topic selected, in a reasonable, fair, consistent and critical fashion.
4. Develop skills of independent learning and self-evaluation.
5. Demonstrate control, through argumentation and line of argument, over the material researched.
6. Present, in written format, a scholarly academic thesis in philosophy following academic standards of referencing (as laid out by the MHRA Style Book).
7. Write clearly for the reader, displaying critical written communication skills and argument style in philosophy.
8. Follow University submission guidelines for M.A. theses at NUIM.

ASSESSMENT
For all modules on the Taught M.A. Programmes/Postgraduate Diploma in Philosophy offered by the Philosophy Department (except the Philosophical Seminar PH610), assessment is as follows:

(1) 10% Attendance at seminars
(2) 20% Seminar Presentation: 15 minutes oral & written presentation (c. 1,500 words) (10% allocated for content of presentation; 10% allocated for delivery and grasp of subject-matter as evidenced in the seminar discussion)
(3) 70% Essay-Assignment (c. 4,000 words, from choice of usually 3-4 essay topics) (for PH602, PH604, PH626, PH630 and PH636) OR Final Exam (for PH606) OR a choice between Essay-Assignment and Final Exam (for PH622 and PH623)

The Philosophical Seminar Module (PH610) is assessed in the following manner:

(1) 10% = Attendance at invited speakers, at student presentations and at seminars on methodology.
(2) 70% = Presentation: 15 minutes oral & written presentation [c. 2,000 words]) on an article/chapter relating to student’s research topic — article/chapter to be given, a week in advance, to students and to moderator of seminar to read — and 10 minutes questions-response.
(3) 20% = Attendance at Supervisory Meetings and drawing up and revision of ‘research topic proposal’ (revised research topic proposal should include: revised bibliography, a preliminary Table of Contents (TOC) and ca. two pages describing the TOC). The revised research proposal should be emailed to the supervisor and the module Coordinator for PH610 and cc’d to philosophy.department@nuim.ie

Students who do not submit the revised research proposal by the deadline may be advised in consultation with their supervisor and Postgraduate Coordinator to choose to opt for the Postgraduate Diploma.

All essay assignments should be submitted through Turnitin via Moodle by the published deadline. Students should note that the Head of Department may impose penalties for the late submission of essays.

For assessment of the modules offered by St. Patrick’s College or other Departments (if applicable) contact the module lecturer and see the individual Departments for details.

### EXAMINATION MARKING SYSTEM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Descriptive Heading</th>
<th>Representative Point %</th>
<th>Class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A++</td>
<td>Answer which could not be bettered.</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>Exceptional answer displaying unexpected insight.</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Undoubtedly first class, flawless answer, demonstrating originality.</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>Almost flawless answer demonstrating some originality</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>Extremely high competence, perhaps displaying limited originality or technical flaws or minor errors</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>II-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Fundamentally correct and demonstrating overall competence.</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>II-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Score</td>
<td>Grade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Competent performance, substantially correct answer but possibly containing minor flaws or omissions.</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>II-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>Awarded on the basis of the answer being somewhat better than a C but below a B-.</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>II-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>Basically correct, answer with minor errors or one major error/omission.</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>II-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Awarded on the basis of the answer being somewhat below a C but better than a D+.</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>II-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>No more than adequate answer.</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>II-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Adequate answer with serious errors or omissions.</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>III</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>Lowest passing grade, barely deserving to pass.</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E+</td>
<td>The answer is inadequate and does not deserve to pass.</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>The answer fails to address the question properly but displays some knowledge of the material.</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-</td>
<td>Fails to address the question.</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F+</td>
<td>Little relevant or correct material but some evidence of engagement with question.</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Very little relevant or correct material.</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F-</td>
<td>Totally irrelevant answer.</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**M.A. DISSERTATION**

The dissertation comprises c. 12,000-15,000 words, and is assessed by the supervisor and the external examiner.

The M.A. dissertation is the feature of the M.A. Programme that affords students the highest opportunity for academic growth. Each candidate selects a topic in consultation with a potential supervisor, as soon as possible after beginning the programme. **The subject of the thesis must be approved by the Head of the Department and the Supervisor.** 

You should decide on the general area of interest by November. Make sure that it concurs with an area of research interest of one of the members of the Department. During the month of November, you should approach one or more members of staff to discuss the general shape of your project, and to ask for advice in arriving at a firm decision regarding the topic of your work. You should communicate your choice to the Head of Department, who may wish to achieve a desirable spread of supervised students among staff. In the normal case, the Department will respect your choice of supervisor. **During the month of December,** you should draw up a bibliography which represents an attainable research goal. You should settle on a working-title for your dissertation, and write a thesis-research project proposal (2 pages) which should be submitted before the end of term. During the month of January, when there are no seminars, you should make significant progress. Students should aim at completing a first draft of the thesis by the end of April in order to make the final deadline at the beginning of July. Students who wish to make use of the second deadline of the 31st of October (see also submission procedure) need to be aware that supervisors might be on annual leave and therefore not available to provide supervision during the months of July and August.
See also examples of the M.A. Thesis Research Proposal and the Initial Meeting Record Form in the appendix. Both documents will be available on Moodle (PH610).

FORMAL REQUIREMENTS

The thesis must include:

1. Title page
2. Table of Contents
3. Author’s Declaration:

   ‘I hereby declare that this project represents my own work and has not been submitted, in whole or in part, by me or by another person, for the purpose of obtaining any credit/grade. I agree that this project may be made available to future students of the College.’ (The declaration should be signed and dated.)

4. Bibliography
5. Abstract (ca. 300 words)

The title page shall give the following information in the order listed:

(1) The full title of the theses and the sub-title if any.
(2) The total number of volumes if more than one, and the number of the particular volume.
(3) The full name of the author, followed, if desired, by any qualifications and distinctions.
(4) The qualification for which the thesis is submitted.
(5) The name of the institution to which the thesis is submitted.
(6) The department, faculty or organisation in which research was conducted.
(7) The month and year of submission.
(8) Name of the Head of the Department concerned.
(9) Name of the Supervisor of the research.
(10) The title should describe the content of the thesis accurately and concisely.

SUBMISSION PROCEDURE

The dissertation must be sent by the student in electronic format to Turnitin, the anti-plagiarism website, and a copy of the report must be sent to the Department. A link will be set up on Moodle for PH610 by the module coordinator. The thesis will not be corrected until the thesis has been submitted to Turnitin. Two hardbound copies are to be submitted to the Examinations Office. The dissertation should be submitted no later than the beginning of July, if you wish to graduate within the year (i.e. at the September Conferring). Please check with the Department and the Examinations Office for the precise date. In order that the student will not incur another year's fees the thesis has to be submitted by 31st October but the student will then not be able to graduate until the following year. Beyond this date the student will incur another year’s fees. If the thesis is submitted by 1st February of the following year, half of the fee will, however, be refunded.
It is important to also consult and to comply with the Minor Thesis Regulations, which can be obtained from the Maynooth University Examinations Office, or downloaded from its web site:

https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/sites/default/files/assets/document/MINORTHESISV2_001_0.pdf

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**SUPERVISION**

The role of the supervisor is an advisory one, with the aim of helping the student to plan the student's own research and to present it. It is the responsibility of the student to maintain regular contact with the supervisor and to make satisfactory progress in their research and writing of the dissertation. Before submitting their dissertations the students are **strongly** advised to obtain confirmation from the supervisor that the work is ready to be submitted.

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**NOTE ON PLAGIARISM**

The following definition has been taken from the Policy on Plagiarism of the Examinations Office, Maynooth University:

> Plagiarism involves an attempt to use an element of another person’s work, without appropriate acknowledgement in order to gain academic credit. It may include the unacknowledged verbatim reproduction of material, unsanctioned collusion, but is not limited to these matters; it may also include the unacknowledged adoption of an argumentative structure, or the unacknowledged use of a source or of research materials, including computer code or elements of mathematical formulae in an inappropriate manner.

Plagiarism is, however to be distinguished from incorrect citation which is where a student has not acknowledged sources correctly as part of a learning process whereas plagiarism is the deliberate attempt to gain academic credit dishonestly. Instances of incorrect citation will be dealt with by markers in the ordinary course of the assessment process on the same basis as would be the case if the work showed problems relating to incorrect expression, factual errors, analytical mistakes, or other features of a similar nature. However, where a marker believes that a case of plagiarism has been identified, the matter shall be referred to the Head of Department who will deal with the matter following the process outlined in the **Maynooth University Policy on Plagiarism**, available at:

APPENDIX I: M.A. THESIS RESEARCH PROPOSAL FORM

Maynooth University, Department of Philosophy 2016–2017

The form must be filled in by the student and agreed by the supervisor and thereafter sent to the supervisor with cc to the Co-ordinator of PH610 and the Department. Both the student and the supervisor should each retain a copy.

Date Sent: ____________________ Date Received: ____________________

(i) Student’s Name: ________________________________

(ii) Topic/ Working-Title of Thesis:


(iii) Thesis Proposal

(c.300–500 words, indicating the purpose, aim and particular issues to be addressed in your proposed thesis research)


(A) Sources:

(B) Modern Scholarly Literature:

Agreement

Student: ______________________________ Date: ________________

Supervisor: ________________________ Date: ________________

Approval by HOD: ________________ Date: ________________

PG Co-Ordinator: ________________ Date: ________________
APPENDIX II: INITIAL MEETING RECORD FORM

This is to be filled in by the student and the supervisor. It is **strongly recommended** that both the student and the supervisor each retain a copy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Last Name</th>
<th>First Name</th>
<th>Student no</th>
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<th>Full-time/Part-time</th>
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**Programme:**

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<th>Provisional Title of Thesis / Area of Research</th>
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<tr>
<th>Supervisor</th>
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<th>Co-Supervisor (if applicable)</th>
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<th>Supervisory Team (if applicable)</th>
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<th>External Supervisor (if applicable)</th>
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**Specific Programme**

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<th>Proposed Modules to be undertaken during the Programme</th>
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Meetings during the Academic Year
Proposed Frequency:

<table>
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<th>Dates</th>
<th>Venue</th>
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Agreement

Student: _____________________  Date: ________________

Supervisor: __________________  Date: ________________

Approved

HoD: _________________________  Date: ________________

PG Co-ordinator: ______________  Date: ________________