



## Mind and Reality Course Descriptor

Course Title	Mind and Reality	Faculty	Philosophy
Course Code	NCHPH731	Course Leader	Dr Brian Ball
Credit Points	20	Teaching Period	Any
FHEQ Level	Level 7	Date Approved	June 2020
Compulsory/ Optional	Compulsory		
Pre-requisites	None		
Co-requisites	None		

### COURSE SUMMARY

This course in theoretical philosophy is specially designed to cultivate the research, thinking, and writing skills that are requisite for a career in the philosophy profession as well as supportive of an informed, reflective and thoughtful approach to life. It also helps prepare students for their dissertation. The student's summative work can be on a topic of their choice from a wide selection offered at the start of each term by the Course Leader.

### COURSE AIMS

The aims of this course are:

- To enhance students' research skills.
- To expose students to a range of topics in theoretical philosophy and provide an opportunity for a deeper exploration of at least one of them.
- To develop students' skills in the interpretation and analysis of diverse philosophical theories and arguments, and enable them to form and defend their own estimates of the merits of alternative positions on a wide range of issues in philosophy.
- To promote students' ability to present their ideas clearly, especially in a written format.
- To prepare students for doctoral studies in philosophy as well as a wide range of careers and roles in society.

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

On successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

### KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING

- K1d Demonstrate wide-ranging knowledge of, and recognition of systematic connections between in key questions and debates in theoretical philosophy.
- K2d Engage critically and constructively with the texts and theories of contemporary theoretical philosophy and its history.
- K3d Demonstrate comprehensive understanding of logical structure and truth-preserving patterns of inference.

### SUBJECT-SPECIFIC SKILLS

- S1d Effectively navigate scholarly philosophical resources and institutions, including the Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy, Academia.edu, the Institute of Philosophy, PhilPapers, and Google Scholar.
- S2d Interpret, present, and evaluate philosophical positions and arguments clearly, especially in writing.
- S3d Identify and employ a range of philosophical devices to articulate, develop and defend a philosophical thesis in written form.

### TRANSFERABLE AND PROFESSIONAL SKILLS

- T1d Show self-direction in working independently or collaboratively, creatively, and to deadlines.
- T2d Source, organize, and synthesize information, question assumptions, and engage constructively with competing arguments.
- T3d Show self-direction in producing clear, sophisticated, and persuasive written presentations on complex topics.
- T3d Consistently apply an excellent level of technical proficiency in written English, using an advanced application of scholarly terminology, that demonstrates the ability to deal with complex issues both systematically and with sophistication.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching and learning strategies for this course will include:

- 20 hours of full-cohort seminars

Course-specific learning and teaching will be by means of:

- Seminars
- (Structured) independent study and research
- Individual feedback on written assignments
- Online discussion forum

Course information and supplementary materials are available on the College's Virtual Learning Environment (VLE).

Students are required to attend and participate in all the formal and timetabled sessions for this course. Students are also expected to manage their directed learning and independent study in support of the course.

### EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS

The Mind and Reality core course cultivates skills that are employable across a range of sectors. These include the abilities to:

- Work independently, creatively, and to deadlines.
- Conduct research and explore relevant existing knowledge.
- Analyse, contextualise, and interpret complex ideas and materials.
- Synthesise and evaluate information against a backdrop of uncertainty.
- Solve problems through logical reasoning.
- Present findings and opinions in a clear, structured manner, whether orally or in writing.
- Engage in collaborative and constructive discussion.

### ASSESSMENT

#### FORMATIVE

Students will be formatively assessed during the course by means of set assignments. These do not count towards the end of year results, but will provide students with developmental feedback, both written and oral.

#### SUMMATIVE

Assessment will be in two forms:

AE:	Assessment Activity	Weighting (%)	Online submission	Duration	Length
1	Written assignment	40%	Yes	N/A	1000 words
2	Written assignment	60%	Yes	N/A	2500 words

The written assignments will be assessed in accordance with the assessment aims set out in the Programme Specification.

### FEEDBACK

Students will receive formal feedback in a variety of ways: written (on assignments, and in some cases via email correspondence); oral (in discussion phases of seminars, and on an *ad hoc* basis). Students will also attend the formal meeting, Collections, in which they will receive constructive and developmental feedback on their performance.

Feedback is provided on summative assessment and is made available to the student either via email, the VLE or another appropriate method.

**INDICATIVE READING**

Note: Comprehensive and current reading lists for courses are produced annually in the Course Syllabus or other documentation provided to students; the indicative reading list provided below is used as part of the approval/modification process only.

**BOOKS**

Ball, B. (2013) 'Knowledge is Normal Belief', *Analysis*, vol. 73(1): 69-76.

Chalmers (1995) 'Facing up to the Problem of Consciousness', *Journal of Consciousness Studies*, vol. 2(3): 200-219.

Papineau, D (2012) *Philosophical Devices*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Thomasson, A. (2008) 'Existence Questions', *Philosophical Studies*, vol. 141(1): 63-78.

Votsis, I. (2012) 'Putting Realism in Perspectivism', *Philosophica*, vol. 84: 85-122.

Worrall, J. (1989) 'Structural Realism: The Best of both Worlds?' repr. in D. Papineau (ed.), *The Philosophy of Science*, Oxford: Oxford University Press. 1996.

**INDICATIVE TOPICS**

A selection of classic philosophy papers on specific themes, institutions and practices of academic philosophy.

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<b>Title: NCHPH731 Mind and Reality Course Descriptor</b>					
<b>Approved by: Academic Board</b>					
<b>Location: Academic Handbook/Programme specifications and Handbooks/ Postgraduate Programme Specifications/MA Philosophy Programme Specification/Philosophy Course Descriptors</b>					
Version number	Date approved	Date published	Owner	Proposed next review date	Modification (As per AQF4) & category number
2.0	January 2022	April 2022	Brian Ball	April 2025	Category 3: Changes to Course Learning Outcomes
1.0	June 2020	June 2020	Brian Ball	April 2025	