

Programme Specification 2016-17

ADVANCED DIPLOMA IN PHILOSOPHY

1	Awarding body	University of Cambridge
2	Teaching institution	University of Cambridge Institute of Continuing Education*
3	Accreditation details	none
4	Name of final award	Advanced Diploma in Philosophy
5	Programme title	Advanced Diploma in Philosophy
6	UCAS code	N/A
7	JACS code(s)	V500
8	Relevant QAA benchmark statement(s)	2007 Subject benchmark for Philosophy
9	Qualifications framework level	FHEQ Level 6 part-time
10	Date specification produced	August 2016

* Cognate Faculty endorsement provided by: Faculty of Philosophy

The Undergraduate Advanced Diploma in Philosophy is part of the Institute of Continuing Education's credit-bearing programme at FHEQ levels 4, 5 and 6, offered to part-time adult students.

ICE is a General Board, non-School institution whose purpose can be defined in two complementary ways. It is a conduit both for transmission of the University's knowledge and research on the one hand and for enabling members of the public to access higher education courses, whether for personal interest or professional development, on the other. In these ways it contributes significantly to the University's public engagement and widening participation commitments.

Educational aims

The Advanced Diploma in Philosophy aims to:

- develop the student's research skills in Philosophy to third-year undergraduate level
- support the student in conducting independent research and developing their understanding of the subject area
- enable the student to situate their work within the existing debate
- develop the student's ability to analyse and evaluate arguments
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- provide opportunities for potential progression to further study (e.g. a Master's degree) in Philosophy *

* Note that a student who has successfully completed the Advanced Diploma in Philosophy and has taken no other courses in philosophy would have studied less philosophy than the Faculty would normally require for entry on to the Cambridge MPhil in Philosophy. There should, therefore, be no expectation that someone who passed the Advanced Diploma in Philosophy would normally be eligible to apply for the Cambridge MPhil. The entrance requirements of many other Master's level courses will, similarly, require more previous study of philosophy than the Advanced Diploma alone. Applicants who are aiming to progress to Master's study are advised to look carefully at the entrance requirements of the

various postgraduate courses they may be interested in.

Learning outcomes

By the end of the Advanced Diploma in Philosophy, within the constraints of the course, the student should be able to demonstrate the following:

Knowledge and understanding:

- an in-depth knowledge of the topics they have chosen to research, and especially of their dissertation topic;
- an awareness of the existing literature on their topics and of where their work fits into the debate;
- an ability to argue for their conclusions and to identify potential objections

Skills and other attributes

Intellectual skills:

- an ability to plan, design and execute research projects of various lengths;
- an ability to select relevant material and present it accurately;
- a grasp of the methods of the discipline, i.e., of how to formulate and evaluate philosophical arguments;
- an ability to write about a philosophical topic in a clear and engaging way;
- confidence and accuracy in using philosophical terminology where appropriate;
- confidence and clarity in discussing philosophical ideas with their supervisor.

Practical skills:

- an ability to use research resources effectively;
- use of IT in supporting research

Other transferable skills:

- clear presentation and organisation of information;
- structure, coherence, clarity and fluency in written communication;
- independence of thought;
- an ability to understand and evaluate arguments and ideas;
- accurate representation of others' views;
- an ability to reflect on one's own ideas;
- an ability to identify flaws in arguments and positions, and to seek solutions;
- research skills, including effective and discriminating use of resources;
- an ability to work independently;
- planning and time management.

Programme structure

The Advanced Diploma in Philosophy is part-time and equivalent to 120 credits at FHEQ level 6, the third year of an undergraduate degree and is undertaken over two years with the support and guidance of a supervisor.

Programme Overview

In the first part of the Advanced Diploma in Philosophy, the student writes two assignments of 1500-2000 words, and one assignment of 3000-4000 words. In the second part of the course, the student writes a dissertation of 10000-12000 words.

The structure of the course is designed to cater for the different backgrounds in Philosophy which students may have. Assignments 1-3 offer those with less experience the opportunity to acquire a broader base in the subject, while also allowing those with more experience to pursue topics in which they have developed an interest, or to study new topics.

Programme Details

Over the course of the Advanced Diploma in Philosophy the student completes three assignments and a dissertation for assessment.

Assignment 1: a 1500-2000 word critical introduction to a topic.

Assignment 2: a 1500-2000 word summary and evaluation of a journal article or self-contained book chapter, drawing on other literature in the area to assess the significance of, and consider potential objections to, the piece chosen.

Assignment 3: a 3000-4000 word essay, helping to develop the research skills involved in writing an in-depth extended piece on a self-contained topic, in preparation for the dissertation.

Submission deadlines for assignments 1, 2 and 3 are staggered through the first part of the course.

Assignments 1-3 are designed to develop the skills essential to producing a good dissertation: ability to identify and summarise key points (assignment 1); close study of individual arguments (assignment 2); sustained writing (assignment 3), critical evaluation (assignments 1, 2 and 3) and forming arguments (assignments 1, 2 and 3).

Dissertation: 10000-12000 words, to be submitted at the end of the course.

The student's supervisor is assigned on the basis of the research proposal submitted by the student as part of the application process. The student decides the titles for their dissertation and three assignments with guidance from their supervisor. Titles are approved by the Course Director.

Supervisors ensure that no more than two pieces of assessed work fall within the same sub-discipline of philosophy. For example, if a student is writing their dissertation in political philosophy, then at most one of assignments 1, 2 and 3 should focus on a topic in political philosophy. Guidance is provided to supervisors and students on choosing assignment topics.

There must not be substantial overlap in material between pieces of assessed work.

The first three of the eight supervisions are dedicated to the student's work for assignments 1, 2 and 3, and the remaining five supervisions are dedicated to the dissertation.

Teaching methods

The course begins with a mandatory induction day including introduction and guidance to both subject specific and generic research and study skills. Teaching and learning on the course is delivered through a combination of eight supervisions supplemented by communication through the Institute's virtual learning environment and progression through written formative and summative assignments. (See also Assessment Methods, below.) Supervisions are given on a one-to-one or group basis. Group members are determined by the theme of the supervision which could be subject based or on general research methodology.

Students are expected to attend all supervisions.

In addition to the supervisions, the supervisor provides written comments on the work submitted for each supervision.

Assessment methods

Students are awarded a course grade on the basis of:

1. Formative assignments, all of which must be completed
2. Summative assignments and a dissertation totalling 16,000-20,000 words or their equivalent

Students who encounter difficulties affecting their performance in one or more of the above points may submit a claim of mitigating circumstances to be considered at the end of the course.

The final grade is a composite of the grades for the assignments and the dissertation, weighted 30% and 70% respectively. A student's overall performance on the course will determine whether any work needs to be resubmitted.

The formative assignments in the Advanced Diploma in Philosophy involve preparing the material for the summative assignments and dissertation. Before each supervision the student submits work, as agreed with their supervisor, and that work forms the basis of the supervision. The level of guidance given by the supervisor in setting a formative assignment reflects the stage the relevant summative assignment is at.

Formative assignments are geared towards the direction of the student's summative assignments. For example, a formative assignment may involve investigating potential responses to an objection raised in the previous supervision, or developing an aspect of the topic which the student has not yet looked into in detail. For the last five of the eight supervisions each formative assignment requires the student to further develop the written material for their dissertation.

Progression

The Advanced Diploma equips students for further study in the field of Philosophy, or related disciplines. Students who have completed an Undergraduate Advanced Diploma to an appropriate standard may be able to progress to Master's degrees but would need to follow the standard admissions procedures for any such programme of study.

Credit awarded by the Institute may be transferred into the degree programmes of some

other higher education providers. The amount of credit which can be transferred into degree programmes varies from institution to institution and is always at the discretion of the receiving institution.

Graduate employability and career destinations

Students completing the Advanced Diploma in Philosophy will have demonstrated high levels of motivation and personal commitment through part-time study. They will also have gained and demonstrated a number of valuable transferable skills, listed above under **Learning Outcomes**.

Management of teaching quality and standards

The teaching quality and standards of the course are monitored throughout by the appropriate member of academic staff who reports annually to the Subject Moderation Panel, consisting of the internal assessor, internal examiner, external examiners and other Faculty and ICE members as agreed by the Education Committee. The report of the moderating External Examiner is made available to all students on the course via the Institute's virtual learning environment.

Quality indicators

The teaching quality and standards of the unit will be monitored throughout by the Course Director in line with the QAA 2007 Subject Benchmark Statement for Philosophy.

Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information in this programme specification. At the time of publication, the programme specification has been approved by the relevant Faculty Board (or equivalent). Programme specifications are reviewed annually, however, during the course of the academical year any approved changes to the programme will be communicated to enrolled students through email notification or publication in the Reporter. The relevant faculty or department will endeavour to update the programme specification accordingly, and prior to the start of the next academical year.

Further information about specifications and an archive of programme specifications for all awards of the University is available online at: www.admin.cam.ac.uk/univ/camdata/archive.html