

(October 2017)

Guide to Courses (Syllabus) 2017–2018 – The Philosophy Tripos

Philosophy is the study of problems that are ultimate and general and which concern amongst other things the nature of human knowledge, the mind, language and value. University courses in philosophy lay special emphasis on precise and careful argument. In the earlier stages of the Cambridge course the central elements are metaphysics and the philosophy of mind, ethics and political philosophy, and logic. Later stages also cover the history of philosophy, philosophy of science and aesthetics. As the course proceeds the number of optional elements increases, so that in Part II there are no compulsory subjects.

The Tripos consists of three separate Parts, and it is possible for students to read the subject for one, two, or three years, and also either before or after reading another subject. It is not necessary for students to have done any work in philosophy before reading the subject at Cambridge and Part IA of the Tripos is taught on the assumption that they have not. Any combination of Arts and Science A levels is acceptable.

Part IA introduces the fundamental topics of metaphysics and philosophy of mind, ethics and political philosophy, and logic, together with detailed work on prescribed texts.

Part IB contains further study of metaphysics and logic. Candidates also take two further papers from a list comprising experimental psychology, ethics, Greek and Roman philosophy, early modern philosophy, philosophy of science, and political philosophy.

In Part II, the subjects covered are metaphysics, philosophy of mind, ethics, European philosophy from Kant, philosophy in the long Middle Ages, philosophy of science, mathematical logic, philosophical logic, political philosophy, aesthetics, and Wittgenstein. Each part of the Tripos also contains a general paper.

Please note that the Faculty does not undertake to lecture on every topic listed on the syllabus.

Change to philosophy after studying another subject

All students changing in to any part of the Philosophy Tripos are examined on the same number of papers per year as students who take the three year Philosophy Course, i.e. all students are examined in 4 areas of philosophy plus the General Paper, a total of 5 papers.

(1) Students who change to philosophy within their first year may take Part IA at the end of their first year.

(2) Students who change to philosophy at the end of their first year may attempt Part IB in one year. Alternatively, students who change to philosophy at the end of their first year may attempt Part II in two years.

(3) Students who change to philosophy at the end of their second year, after gaining honours in their previous subject, may

- (a) attempt Part IB in one year
- (b) attempt Part II in one year
- (c) attempt Part II in two years.

(4) A candidate who has previously taken any of Part IB of the Natural Sciences Tripos, Part II of the Classical Tripos or Part IIB of the Divinity Tripos may not offer any paper that he or she offered in that examination.

(5) Since 2013 it is no longer possible for candidates to get a BA after taking Part IB in their third and final year.

Affiliated students

Affiliated students normally take Part II over two years. In their first year they may take Part IB, and they must take Part II in their second year.

Parts IA, IB, and II of the Tripos

Details of the topics prescribed for the various papers in Parts IA, IB, and II of the Tripos are given below. Although students are not expected to have studied any philosophy before embarking on the Tripos, it is certainly useful for them to have read some books on the subject first, if only to enable them to get a better idea of what their work will be like. Any of the books in the following list, can be recommended:

R. Descartes, *Meditations*; G. Berkeley, *Principles of Human Knowledge*; D. Hume, *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*; J. S. Mill, *Utilitarianism*; B. Russell, *The Problems of Philosophy*; A. J. Ayer, *Language, Truth and Logic*; B. Williams, *Morality*; T. Nagel, *What Does It All Mean?*; S.W. Blackburn, *Think*; S.W. Blackburn, *Being Good*; E.J. Craig, *Philosophy: A very short introduction*.

Tripos Examinations (all parts of the Philosophy Tripos)

The Tripos Examination aims to test the breadth as well as the depth of candidates' knowledge. Accordingly candidates should in general **not receive additional credit for recycled material**.

Obviously this rule cannot be completely hard and fast. For instance, an argument that is well known in one area of the subject certainly merits credit when reused in some novel and interesting connection. However the rule does apply if in the examiners' judgement a candidate is using essentially the same content to make essentially the same point.

The intention is also that the rule be applied proportionately. Clearly then the reuse of, say, a few sentences cannot invalidate the answer where they reappear. And it is also acceptable for a student to report in one essay a point or argument from another, as a premise for then continuing and expanding on that idea. Examiners are asked (as always) to use their judgement, to ensure that withholding of marks only applies to cases of substantial recycling.

Part IA

Part IA may be taken only at the end of a student's first year as an undergraduate. All the following papers must be taken.

1. Metaphysics

Candidates are asked to answer three questions out of at least ten set.

- God: existence of; the problem of evil; miracles.
- Causation.
- Free will.
- Mind and matter
- Identity: persons and other objects

2. Ethics and political philosophy

Candidates are asked to answer three questions out of at least ten set.

- Metaethics; fact and value, objectivity and subjectivity

- Normative ethics, consequentialism, deontology, virtue ethics
- Moral psychology, egoism and altruism; empathy; cognitive and affective attitudes
- Political obligation and authority: classical and social contract theory; natural duty and fair play theory; anarchism
- Equality of opportunity: varieties of equality of opportunity; justifications and controversy; positive discrimination

3. Logic

Candidates are asked to answer three questions out of at least eight set, including at least one from each section.

Section A: Formal Logic

- Basic concepts: formalised languages; object-language and metalanguage; use and mention; validity, implication and consistency.
- Truth-functional logic: truth-functions, tautologies, proof.
- Introduction to first-order logic: the language of quantifiers and variables; validity and counterexamples; elements of the logic of identity.
- Classes and relations.
- Elements of probability calculus.

Section B: Philosophical logic

- Problems of translation between natural and formal languages.
- Names, variables and descriptions; referential and substitutional readings of the quantifiers.
- Necessity, analyticity and the a priori.
- Meaning, intention and conventions.

4. Set texts

The paper will be divided into three sections, one on each of the set authors. Candidates are asked to answer three questions out of at least twelve set, which must be chosen from at least two sections.

Plato, *Meno* (lectures provided by the Faculty of Classics).

Descartes, *Meditations on first philosophy*.

J. S. Mill, *On Liberty* and *The Subjection of Women*.

5. General Paper

Candidates are asked to write a philosophical essay on one of at least twelve questions set.

Part IB.

Candidates must take Part IB Papers 1, 2, and 9 and two other papers. Students taking Paper 8, Experimental Psychology, are exempt from taking the General Paper, Paper 9. (For candidates who have not done Part IA Philosophy, please see section 'Change to philosophy after studying another subject'.)

Essays

In place of any one of Papers 1–3 and 5–7 a candidate may submit two essays, each of not less than 3,000 words and not more than 4,000 words in length, including footnotes and appendices but excluding bibliography, on two topics proposed by the candidate and approved by the Chair of Examiners, which shall both fall within the syllabus of that paper, provided that a candidate who chooses to submit essays may not write in the General Paper, Paper 9 an essay on a subject that overlaps significantly with either of the submitted essays.

A candidate who chooses to offer two essays must submit the proposed titles of the essays, together with a statement of which paper they are intended to replace, and the papers that he

or she intends to offer in the examination, to the Faculty Office not later than two weeks before the end of Michaelmas Full Term. The Faculty Office passes these titles on to the Chair of Examiners for approval. The titles must be approved by the Chair of Examiners not later than the last day of Michaelmas Full Term.

Candidates must submit the essays to the Faculty Office so as to reach it not later than the last day of the Lent Term immediately preceding the examination. Each pair of essays must bear the examination number but not the candidate's name. The Faculty systematically uses text-matching software (currently "Turnitin") to screen all submitted work from students for possible plagiarism. The Examiners have power to examine a candidate *viva voce* on the essays.

The papers in Part IB are:

1. *Metaphysics and epistemology*

Candidates are asked to answer three questions out of at least ten set.

- Qualities: the primary and secondary distinction; response-dependence; dispositions
- Metaphysics of modality: modal realism and alternatives
- The nature of knowledge: externalism and internalism; theories of warrant and justification
- Scepticism: the problem of scepticism and responses
- Sources of knowledge: evidence; perception; a priori knowledge; testimony; induction

2. *Logic*

Candidates are asked to answer three questions out of at least ten set.

- Theories of meaning: compositionality of meaning; verificationism.
- Truth: semantic, redundancy, correspondence and coherence theories of truth.
- Logical form: the purposes of formalisation; logical form and theories of meaning.
- Names and descriptions: sense and reference; Russell's theory of descriptions; descriptive versus causal theory of names; identity.
- Variants of classical logic: elements of modal logic; intuitionistic logic.
- Theories: the axiomatic method; informal and formal theories; examples.
- Metatheory of propositional calculus: the method of proof by induction; normal form; expressive adequacy; soundness and completeness.

3. *Ethics*

Candidates are asked to answer three questions out of at least ten set.

- Helping and harming; beneficence I: demands; beneficence II: aggregation; normative powers I: consent, normative powers II: promise; contractualism
- Early modern moral philosophy: voluntarism; rationalism; sentimentalism
- Moral psychology: moral motivation: virtues, vices and moral learning; practical reasoning

4. *Greek and Roman philosophy* (Paper 8 of Part IB of the Classical Tripos).
Examination by three hour set examination.

5. *Early Modern philosophy*

Candidates are asked to answer three questions out of at least twelve set.

- Leibniz, *Discourse on Metaphysics* and *Monadology* and *New Essays on Human Understanding*.
- Locke, *Essay Concerning Human Understanding Books I & II*.

- Berkeley, *The Principles of Human Knowledge* and *Three Dialogues between Hylas and Philonous*.
- Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, Book I and Appendix.

Some comparative questions may be set.

6. *Philosophy of science*

Candidates are asked to answer three questions out of at least ten set.

- Realism, for and against: underdetermination of theory by data; the pessimistic induction; constructive empiricism; structural realism, incommensurability.
- Confirmation: the hypothetico-deductive model; the paradoxes of confirmation; Bayesianism; falsificationism.
- Scientific explanation and laws: what, if anything, distinguishes scientific explanation?; the deductive-nomological model of explanation and its rivals; 'best system' vs anti-reductionist views of laws.
- Concepts of probability: subjective probability; logical probability; frequency interpretation; propensity interpretation.
- Introduction to Philosophy of physics: spacetime and relativity; time and thermodynamics; puzzles of quantum theory.

7. *Political philosophy*

Candidates are asked to answer three questions out of at least ten set.

- Democracy: justifications of democracy; forms of democracy.
- Equality: egalitarianism; labour, property and theft; the value of equality
- Liberty: classical theories of liberty; contemporary theories of liberty

8. *Experimental psychology*

(The subject Experimental Psychology in Part IB of the Natural Sciences Tripos, for which the examination consists of two papers.) Students taking this paper are exempt from taking the General Paper, Paper 9. Paper 8 is worth 40% of the total marks, and each of the remaining three papers 20%.

9. *General Paper*

Candidates are asked to write a philosophical essay on one of at least sixteen questions set.

Part II

Candidates must take four Part II papers from among Papers 1–11 and the papers borrowed from other Triposes. All candidates must offer either Paper 12 (General Paper) or a Dissertation in lieu of Paper 12.

Part II may be taken in one year after Part IB of the Philosophy Tripos or in two years or one after any other Honours Examination except Part IA of the Philosophy Tripos. For candidates who have not done Part IB Philosophy, please see section 'Change to Philosophy after studying another subject'.

Dissertation

A candidate for Part II has the option of offering a dissertation in place of Paper 12 on a topic of philosophical interest proposed by him or herself and approved by the Chair of Examiners. A dissertation must be of not more than 8,000 words and (except with the permission of the

Chair of Examiners) not less than 6,000 words in length, including footnotes and appendices but excluding bibliography.

Essays

In place of any one of Papers 1–11, and the papers borrowed from the Classical Tripos, a candidate may submit two essays, each of not less than 3,000 words and not more than 4,000 words in length, including footnotes and appendices but excluding bibliography, on two topics proposed by him or herself and approved by the Chair of Examiners, which shall both fall within the syllabus of that paper, provided that

- i) **a candidate who chooses to submit essays may not write in the General Paper, Paper 12 an essay on a subject that overlaps significantly with either of his or her submitted essays,**
and that
- ii) **a candidate who chooses to submit essays may not write in place of the General Paper, Paper 12 a dissertation on a subject that overlaps significantly with either of his or her submitted essays.**

Dissertations and Essays: General rules

A candidate may submit both a dissertation in place of the General Paper (Paper 12) AND extended essays in lieu of a subject paper, and thus have the option of submitting 40% coursework.

A candidate who chooses to offer a dissertation and/or two essays must submit the proposed title of the dissertation and/or the proposed titles of the essays, together with a statement of the Papers that he or she intends to offer in the examination, and in the case of essays a statement of the Paper that they are intended to replace, to the Faculty Office not later than two weeks before the end of Michaelmas Full Term. The Faculty Office passes these titles on to the Chair of Examiners for approval. These titles must be approved by the Chair of Examiners not later than the last day of Michaelmas Full Term.

Candidates must submit extended essays to the Faculty Office so as to reach it not later than the last day of the Lent Term immediately preceding the examination. Dissertations must be submitted so as to reach the Faculty Office not later than the second Friday of the Easter Term. Each dissertation or pair of essays must bear the examination number but not the candidate's name. The Faculty systematically uses text-matching software (currently "Turnitin") to screen all submitted work from students for possible plagiarism. The Examiners will have power to examine a candidate *viva voce* on the dissertation or the essays. The papers in Part II are:

1. *Metaphysics*

Candidates are asked to answer three questions out of at least ten set.

- Realism and idealism: varieties of realism; conceptual schemes; transcendental arguments
- Particulars and properties: the contrast of particular and universal, and of abstract and concrete, realism about universals and alternatives.
- Causation: causation and agency; realism about causation, for and against; direction of causation
- Time: dynamic versus block conceptions; the direction of time; the existence and persistence of entities in time
- Persons: their persistence and unity; animalism and alternatives

2. *Philosophy of mind*

Candidates are asked to answer three questions out of at least ten set.

- Epistemology of mind: knowledge of one's own mind; knowledge of other minds
- Consciousness: varieties of consciousness; intentional theories of consciousness; the explanatory gap
- Intentionality and mental representation: the nature of intentionality; intentional objects; reductive theories of content; externalism and internalism
- Mental faculties: intention and the will; emotion; imagination

3. Ethics

Candidates are asked to answer three questions out of at least ten set.

- Theories of the good: Sidgwick's method of ethics, goodness and axiology, well-being
- Metaethics: realism; metaphysical foundations of ethics, moral epistemology
- Kant's ethics and Kantian ethics: the categorical imperative, duty and motive, morality and freedom, autonomy
- Topics in moral psychology: trust, ethics of knowing, responsibility

4. European philosophy from Kant

Candidates are asked to answer three questions out of at least ten set.

- Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason* to the end of the Transcendental Dialectic (A704, B732).
- Hegel, *The Phenomenology of Spirit*, Introduction, Consciousness, Self-consciousness (paragraphs 73-230); *Hegel's Logic: being part of the Encyclopaedia of the Philosophical Sciences*, paragraphs 1-111; *Introduction to Lectures on the Philosophy of History*, as far as (but not including) *The Geographical Basis of World History*; *Introduction to the Philosophy of Right*, paragraphs 1-40, 104-114, 141-157 and 257-259
- Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morality*, *The Birth of Tragedy*, *Beyond Good and Evil*.

5. Philosophy in the Long Middle Ages

This paper covers philosophy in the period from c. 400 to c. 1700, in the Latin, Arabic and Hebrew traditions. All texts are studied in translation. For 2017 - 2018, the two set themes will be (a) Universals and (b) Scientific Truth and Revelation. The examination will consist of fifteen questions on the set texts below. Of these, two will be commentary questions, one on an extract from each of the two asterisked texts under Theme 1, the other one on extract from each of the two asterisked texts under Theme 2. Candidates must answer **three** questions, **including one or both** of the commentary questions. They may answer essay questions using texts on which they have commented in a commentary question, so long as any substantial repetition of material is avoided.

Theme 1: Thinking and the Self

- *1. Avicenna: 'On the Soul' from *Al-Najat*; the 'Flying Man' argument in its different versions
2. Averroes: Long Commentary on Aristotle's '*De Anima*', extracts from Book III
- *3. Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* I, qq. 84-85, 87
4. Gersonides: *Wars of the Lord* Book I (perhaps with some chapters cut to make it more manageable)
5. Descartes, *Meditations* II and VI, with the Objections and Replies to those parts.
6. Spinoza, *Ethics*, Part II and Part V

Theme 2: Scientific Truth and Revelation

1. Averroes *Decisive Treatise*
2. Maimonides *Guide of the Perplexed*, II 15-27
- *3. Boethius of Dacia *On the Eternity of the World*

4. Peter Abelard, *Collationes Collatio II* (The Dialogue between a Philosopher, a Jew and a Christian)
5. Pietro Pomponazzi *On the Immortality of the Soul*
6. Spinoza *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus*

6. Philosophy of Science

Candidates are asked to answer three questions out of at least ten set.

- Philosophy of Physics I: the metaphysics of space and space-time: absolute and relational theories of space and space-time; geometry and conventionalism.
- Philosophy of Physics II: the interpretation of quantum mechanics; non-locality.
- Philosophy of Biology: biological kinds, the nature of species; biological laws; functional and causal explanation in biology.
- Philosophy of Social Science: social science versus natural science; rational choice theory and social science; social ontology.
- Special topic (2017-18): Philosophy of cognitive science: folk psychology; eliminative materialism; explanation in psychology and neuroscience; embodied and extended cognition.

7. Mathematical logic

Candidates are asked to answer three questions out of at least ten set.

- First and second order logic: completeness, compactness, conservativeness, expressive power, and Löwenheim-Skolem theorems.
- First and second order theories: categoricity, non-standard models of arithmetic.
- Set theory: embedding mathematics in set theory, the cumulative iterative hierarchy, elements of cardinal and ordinal arithmetic, the axiom of choice.
- Recursive functions and computability: decidability, axiomatizability, Church's thesis, Gödel's incompleteness theorems, Hilbert's programme.

8. Philosophical logic

Candidates are asked to answer three questions out of at least ten set.

Philosophy of language:

- Understanding and truth-conditions; realism and anti-realism.
- Indeterminacy of meaning; rule-following.

Topics in logic:

- Conditionals.
- The logic of plurals

The nature of logic and mathematics:

- Logic: analytic versus empirical.
- Conventionalism about logic and mathematics.
- Logicism: traditional and contemporary.
- Intuitionism: traditional and contemporary.
- Structuralism and fictionalism.

9. Wittgenstein

Candidates are asked to answer three questions out of at least ten set.

- *Tractatus*
- *Philosophical Investigations*
- *On Certainty*
- Study of the following topics is also included: the development throughout Wittgenstein's work of his views on solipsism and the self, and the nature of philosophy.

10. Political philosophy

Candidates are asked to answer three questions out of at least ten set.

- Global political issues: immigration; international justice, nationalism and cosmopolitanism, global environment
- Community and culture: political liberalism; communitarianism; multiculturalism
- Feminism: economic justice and gender; the ethics of care; gender and difference/intersectionality; pornography; rape; masculinity and femininity.
- Radical political theory; Marxism, Power, Realism vs moralism/ideal and non-ideal theory; the limits of markets

11. Aesthetics

Candidates are asked to answer three questions out of at least ten set.

Thematic: Aesthetic experience; realism and anti-realism; imagination and originality; art and morality; the nature of art and ontology of art; understanding, interpretation and criticism; representation, artistic value.

Set texts: Plato, *Ion*, *Symposium*, and *Republic* (Books II, III, X).

Hume, 'On the Standard of Taste' in *Essays, Moral, Political and Literary*.

12. General Paper

Candidates are asked to write a philosophical essay on one of at least twenty questions set.

PAPERS FROM OTHER TRIPOSES THAT MAY BE TAKEN IN PART II

As well as the papers listed for Part II above, Part II students may also take a maximum of two papers from the following:

Classical Tripos:

- B1 Plato

Divinity Tripos:

- C11 God, Metaphysics and the Modern Challenge (Examination by three hour set examination)