



University of  
St Andrews

---

**600**  
YEARS

# Philosophy at St Andrews

## Guide for New Students 2011/12

### Welcome to St Andrews!

Before classes begin, you will have the opportunity to discuss your module choices with a personal adviser, and to get more information at subject talks and the academic fayre. In the meantime, here is some information to get you started.

<b>Frequently Asked Questions</b>
-----------------------------------

**Q: What Modules are Available in Philosophy?**

A: Two first-year Philosophy modules are available in each semester:

PY1005 Mind and Reality (semester 1, 11am)

PY1105 Ethical Controversies (semester 1, 5pm)

PY1106 Society, Authority and Freedom (semester 2, 11am)

PY1006 Reasoning and Knowledge (semester 2, 5pm)

**Q: What do These Modules Involve?**

A: There are more details overleaf, but each module carries 20 credits (you need 60 credits each semester), involves 3 lectures and a tutorial each week, and is assessed 50% coursework, 50% exam.

**Q: I Want to Take Single (or Joint) Honours Philosophy: What Modules Should I Choose?**

A: If you want to take Philosophy as part of your final degree, either single honours or with another subject (including Logic and Philosophy of Science with a science subject), you must take PY1006 Reasoning and Knowledge, and it would be a good idea to take at least one other first-year Philosophy module. If you're not sure what you want to do, taking PY1006 will keep your options open.

**Q: I don't Plan to Take Honours Philosophy: What Modules Should I Choose?**

A: You can take any or all of these modules, in any permutation. Take a look at the descriptions overleaf, to see which catches your interest.

**Q: How Many Philosophy Modules Can I Take?**

A: You can take just one, or up to four if you like, but bear in mind that taking more than two may reduce your options for changing direction later.

**Q: I Studied Philosophy at School: Can I Take these Modules?**

A: Yes you can. If you already have Higher, A-Level, or AS-Level Philosophy, or if you studied Philosophy as an element in another subject, like Religious Studies, you will probably recognize parts of our syllabus. But you will study them in more depth and with more rigour at university, and should gain new insights into these ancient problems.

**Q: I Found Some Information about Other Philosophy Modules: Do these Really Exist?**

A: PY1901 is a special module for the part-time Evening Degree, while PY1801, PY1802, PY2801 and PY2802 are special distance-learning modules. None of these are open to Undergraduates taking an Honours degree. (By the way, if you're interested in questions about what really exists, then philosophy is definitely for you).

**Q: Do I Need to be Good at Maths to Do Philosophy?**

A: No. Taking a degree in Philosophy at St Andrews gives you an opportunity to study logic to an advanced level, but this is not compulsory. We do require you to study very elementary logic as part of PY1006, but if you show up to classes and take the work seriously, you should be fine, even if you previously struggled with maths.

## Module Information

### **PY1005 MIND and REALITY (20 credits - semester 1)**

**Course Coordinator:** Dr Simon Prosser (sjp7)

**Class Hour:** Monday, Tuesday, Thursday 11-12, plus one tutorial per week.

**Location:** School III, St Salvator's Quad

What am I, and what is reality? Am I part of the scientific, law-governed material world? If so, can I really act freely? How could a material thing be conscious? Am I the same person I was 10 years ago? What, fundamentally, are material things and their properties? This module will enable students to understand and begin to answer such fundamental philosophical questions, and to gain valuable skills in reasoning and abstract thought.

### **PY1105 ETHICAL CONTROVERSIES (20 credits - semester 1)**

**Course Coordinator:** Dr Lisa Jones (lj14)

**Class Hour:** Monday, Tuesday, Thursday 5-6, plus one tutorial per week

**Location:** Buchanan Lecture Theatre, Union St

This module provides an accessible and comprehensive introduction to the philosophical significance of the most pressing moral problems of today, e.g. euthanasia, abortion, world poverty and the moral status of animals and the environment; as well as a guide to the rival theoretical approaches used to reflect upon these issues: consequentialism, Kantian ethics, virtue theories, theological ethics and moral skepticism.

### **PY1006 REASONING and KNOWLEDGE (20 credits - semester 2)**

**Course Coordinator:** Dr Ephraim Glick (eg35)

**Class Hour:** Monday, Tuesday, Thursday 5-6, plus one tutorial per week

**Location:** Buchanan Lecture Theatre, Union St

What should we believe? How should we think? This module provides an introduction to informal and formal modes of reasoning, and to philosophical ideas about the differences between good and bad arguments. We will discuss induction and deduction, justification and knowledge, and will study elementary features of propositional and predicate logic. The module is an essential foundation for further study in philosophy, and teaches skills that are central to many other academic disciplines.

**PY1106 SOCIETY, AUTHORITY and FREEDOM (20 credits – semester 2)**

**Course Coordinator:** Dr Craig Smith (cs210)

**Class Hour:** Monday, Tuesday, Thursday 11-12, plus one tutorial per week

**Location:** School III, St Salvator's Quad

This module provides a critical and historical overview of the concepts central to the philosophical study of politics, as well as an introduction to the various theories that inform and influence political events. We will study the works of major political philosophers from the 17<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> centuries (including Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, John Stuart Mill and John Rawls), and examine concepts such as authority, democracy, liberty and equality and the role of religion in society. The module serves as a foundation for further study in Philosophy, but it is also a valuable component of a degree in the Social Sciences, e.g. International Relations.

**'WELCOME' WINE RECEPTION  
from 4.30pm Friday 23 September**

Edgecliffe foyer, Edgecliffe building, The Scores (next to MUSA)

Come along and meet some of the philosophy lecturers and tutors, and members of PHILSOC (the Philosophy Society). All new philosophy students welcome!