Philosophy – a highly interdisciplinary subject – is concerned with trying to make sense of ourselves and the world we live in through rational argument.

- A Philosophy degree from St Andrews is held in high regard throughout the academic world.
- Our graduating students have given us 100% satisfaction scores for the last two years in the National Student Survey 2017 and 2016.
- Philosophy can be pursued as a Single Honours degree, but it also combines naturally with many other subjects, such as Classics, History, International Relations, Psychology, and Theology. You can also combine it with a science and Mathematics.
- Philosophy staff at St Andrews work in a broad spectrum of disciplines, from logic and metaphysics to moral and political philosophy and beyond. As a result, we offer a wider variety of study areas than you might find elsewhere, within a flexible modular system.
- Significant numbers of our Philosophy graduates secure places on graduate programmes at St Andrews, or at other leading universities in the UK and the United States.

**Entry requirements**

We consider all aspects of every application, including context, equivalent qualifications and the Personal Statement. Offers may be higher or lower than the grades stated here. See also page 169. 

[www.st-andrews.ac.uk/subjects/entry](http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/subjects/entry)

**SQA Highers**: AABB

**GCE A-Levels**: AAB

**International Baccalaureate Points**: 35

**Previous knowledge of subject required? No**

**Available degree options**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MA</th>
<th>MA</th>
<th>BSc</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Single Honours Philosophy</td>
<td>Joint Honours Philosophy and one of 29 other subjects</td>
<td>Joint Honours Philosophy and one of 5 other subjects</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

See Cross-Faculty subjects, page 7

See Arts combinations, pages 172-173

See Science combinations, page 174

**What will I study?**

The Philosophy degree pathway is extremely flexible with several options and only one compulsory course in the first year. This allows you to explore the areas of philosophy you find appealing, while receiving a good grounding in the discipline and its methodology. Once you begin to specialise on entering Honours, you can tailor your degree to your interests thanks to the variety of options that are available each year. Overall, the makeup of your Philosophy degree is largely determined by you – though you will of course be guided by your advisers.

Our staff are at the forefront of research in their varied fields, and their expertise and enthusiasm is conveyed at all levels of teaching.

**Teaching and learning** is carried out via a variety of methods. At first and second year, it involves both formal lectures and informal tutorials, in which you discuss your ideas, problems and questions with your tutor and fellow students. There are also examples classes, to support the learning of logic. At Honours level, courses are delivered workshop-style, with an emphasis on presentation and discussion, to further develop your skills of critical reading and analysis.

Assessment in first and second year is equal measures coursework and written examinations, but at Honours the majority of assessment is coursework only and often incorporates alternative methods (presentations, research projects, blogs) alongside the more traditional essay writing. Throughout your degree, teaching and assessment methods will enable you to develop a range of skills, from precise and effective reading to clear and critical thinking and cogent articulation of complex problems and arguments.

At St Andrews, we familiarise you with views put forward by

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“**My diverse background (I was born in Korea and have lived in China) has always made me question my identity and this was the very beginning of being interested in metaphysics. Then, I eventually realised that I wanted to study Philosophy. The size of the Department makes for a friendly and focused environment, and our lecturers and tutors are always ready to help students.”**

Youngju (Seoul, South Korea)
Philosophy

www.st-andrews.ac.uk/subjects/philosophy
philosophy@st-andrews.ac.uk

the principal figures of the philosophical tradition, and provide you with the means to rationally evaluate these views. We encourage you to develop your own informed views on these issues, and teach you how to independently assess your own arguments. Learning philosophy is therefore as much about acquiring skills of criticism and analysis, clear thinking and principled debate, as it is about learning a specific subject matter.

**First year**
You will study some of the great texts in philosophy, from the beginnings of Greek antiquity right up until the present day. Philosophical questions can be abstract and theoretical, for example, how to define knowledge or how to relate the mind and the body, or practical, for example, what kinds of obligations we have to others, and how we ought to live. There are specific topics you have to cover if you want to continue with Philosophy, but there are several options to choose from, even at the introductory level, covering metaphysics, philosophy of mind, moral and political philosophy, reasoning, and the history of philosophy.

**Second year**
There is further opportunity to study the history of philosophy and to learn more about logic. Epistemology (the study of knowledge), the philosophy of language, aesthetics, and metaethics are also introduced. You will be able to explore more deeply some of the questions you were introduced to in first year. You will be able to choose between options, and will attend lectures and small-group tutorials while reading independently.

**Third and fourth years (Honours)**
You will take at least one course with a focus on reading core texts in a wide range of philosophical topics. You will also choose from a wide variety of topics in epistemology, metaphysics, formal logic, the philosophies of logic, mind, and language, applied ethics, ethical and political theory, metaethics, aesthetics, the philosophies of film, literature, creativity, law, economics, and religion, feminist philosophy, and texts in the history of philosophy, such as Scottish philosophy, Kant, or twentieth-century philosophy. There is also the option to combine a mini-dissertation with a practical, vocational course that will involve you visiting a local school to communicate your subject to pupils.

**Study abroad**
Philosophy students participate in the University-wide St Andrews Abroad programme. You may also have the opportunity to participate in our School Abroad exchange programme. For information about study abroad options, please see: www.st-andrews.ac.uk/study-abroad

**Careers**
Training in the sort of precise and effective reading, and clear thinking and writing, required for all philosophical study makes a good preparation for many careers. The critical thinking developed by the study of philosophy is highly valued by many employers.

Recent Philosophy graduates have entered careers in: non-profit organisations (campaign coordinator for Oxfam, graduate trainee at Charityworks), banking, management consultancy, retail area management, local government and government organisations (including the NHS), television production, publishing, and teaching.

Some graduates have also decided to pursue academic careers, either in philosophy or in other fields.

Many Philosophy graduates go on to study in other areas, for example, law conversion courses, and teacher training.

A significant number have gone on to pursue academic careers by enrolling in Masters, and then doctoral, programmes around the world.

“Studying Philosophy at St Andrews will make you think about things you may never have thought of before and question things you will never have questioned before. These skills will help you to thrive both academically and socially. At St Andrews you are fully supported in a way that allows you to focus on your own learning, all under the supervision of leading academics. It is a truly inspiring Department to be a part of.”

Anna (Glasgow, Scotland)