Module Specification

Ancient Philosophy

Version: 2026-27, v4.0, 11 Apr 2025

Contents

Part 1: Information

Module title: Ancient Philosophy

Module code: UZRPMS-30-1

Level: Level 4

For implementation from: 2026-27

UWE credit rating: 30

ECTS credit rating: 15

College: College of Health, Science & Society

School: CHSS School of Social Sciences

Partner institutions: None

Field: Philosophy

Module type: Module

Pre-requisites: None

Excluded combinations: None

Co-requisites: None

Continuing professional development: No

Professional, statutory or regulatory body requirements: None

Part 2: Description

Overview: The module introduces students to the most significant authors, texts, and issues of Ancient Greek Philosophy, from its origin to Aristotle, stressing the unitary character of its metaphysical, ethical, and political breakthroughs.

Features: Not applicable

Educational aims: The aims of this module are to:

Examine selected topics in the philosophies of the Pre-Socratics, Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle.

Introduce students to a form of philosophy for which epistemology, metaphysics, ethics, politics, and aesthetics are highly connected endeavours.

Introduce students to the conceptual vocabulary of Ancient Philosophy, which in turn comprises a large part of contemporary philosophical terminology.

Outline syllabus: The aim of this module is to introduce students to the foundational authors, texts, and ideas of early Greek philosophy, thereby laying the groundwork for understanding the foundational ideas of Western philosophy as a whole. The module will likely consist of two parts, corresponding to the two terms. The first term will concentrate on the earliest philosophers up to and including Plato, while the second term will focus on the philosophy of Aristotle.

Topics covered in the module include the nature of knowledge, scepticism and certainty, virtue and morality, the nature of desire, the role of reason, dialectic and dialogue, the relationship between humans and nature, philosophy as a way of life, human nature, justice and society, and ethical training and the cultivation of virtues.

This module will establish a foundation for the study of philosophy, which can be further developed in subsequent study. Additionally, this historical and critical introduction to philosophy will provide a valuable counterpoint to the more problem-based introductions to philosophy offered in other modules.

Part 3: Teaching and learning methods

Teaching and learning methods: The module will employ a combination of lectures, seminars, and workshops. Our pedagogy is interactive, discussion-based, and student-facing. Students are an active part of the learning process, and will be asked to contribute ideas, questions, and critical standpoints. The learning environment is designed to promote peer-to-peer support and exchange.

While teaching and learning will be predominantly classroom based, appropriate use will be made of online resources and learning environments.

Module Learning outcomes: On successful completion of this module students will achieve the following learning outcomes.

MO1 Reflect critically on the origins, development and significance of philosophical thoughts and ideas in the ancient world.

MO2 Develop a well-reasoned and coherent philosophical argument, integrating insights from multiple sources, and effectively communicating ideas with clarity and precision.

MO3 Deploy critical thinking to reflect on the key topics in ancient philosophy and relate them to contemporary problems and concerns.

MO4 Demonstrate the ability to critically analyse and interpret primary philosophical texts, identifying key arguments, evaluating their coherence and validity.

Hours to be allocated: 300

Contact hours:

Independent study/self-guided study = 228 hours

Face-to-face learning = 72 hours

Reading list: The reading list for this module can be accessed at readinglists.uwe.ac.uk via the following link https://uwe.rl.talis.com/modules/uzrpms-30-1.html

Part 4: Assessment

Assessment strategy: Summative Assessments:

Assessment Task 1: 2000 word (maximum) essay

Assessment Task 2: 2000 word (maximum) primary source exercise

Rationale: Ancient Philosophy is a module that focuses on the interpretation and discussion of ancient texts and their contemporary relevance. The above assessments are the most effective way to test the skills necessary for this interpretative/critical exercise. They provide the opportunity to develop thinking from the first part of the module to the second, focusing on critical thinking and argument analysis skills, clarity and precision in interpreting complex ideas, analysing arguments, identifying premises and conclusions, and the ability to support claims with textual evidence.

The rationale for essay writing is that it emphasizes the development of arguments, the synthesis of ideas from multiple sources, and the structured articulation of complex thoughts.

The rationale for the source analysis is that it fosters close reading, critical thinking, and argumentation skills by requiring students to engage deeply with primary texts, evaluate arguments, and contextualize ideas, preparing them for advanced study and intellectual independence.

Plagiarism will be dealt with in the normal ways adopted for written assessments.

Assessment tasks:

Written Assignment (First Sit)
Description: 2000 word (maximum) essay
Weighting: 50 %
Final assessment: Yes
Group work: No
Learning outcomes tested: MO1, MO2

Primary Source Exercise (First Sit)
Description: Primary Source Exercise - 2000 words (maximum)
Weighting: 50 %
Final assessment: No

Group work: No

Learning outcomes tested: MO3, MO4

Written Assignment (Resit)

Description: 2000 word (maximum) essay

Weighting: 50 %

Final assessment: Yes

Group work: No

Learning outcomes tested: MO1, MO2

Primary Source Exercise (Resit)

Description: Primary Source Exercise - 2000 words (maximum)

Weighting: 50 %

Final assessment: No

Group work: No

Learning outcomes tested: MO3, MO4

Part 5: Contributes towards

This module contributes towards the following programmes of study:

Philosophy {Foundation}[Frenchay] BA (Hons) 2025-26

Philosophy {Foundation}[Frenchay] BA (Hons) 2025-26

Philosophy [Frenchay] BA (Hons) 2026-27

Philosophy [Frenchay] BA (Hons) 2026-27

Philosophy {Foundation}[Frenchay] BA (Hons) 2025-26

Philosophy [Frenchay] BA (Hons) 2026-27

Philosophy [Frenchay] BA (Hons) 2026-27