

Philosophy & Ethics

UCAS Code: Combined Honours only (please see website for details)

Duration: 3 years | Full-time | Hope Park | 2025/2026

Placement year opportunities available



Course Overview

Philosophy and Ethics explores the big questions of life and morality: on what basis do we judge things good or evil? It challenges you to examine your assumptions, opinions and worldview. Do we need to believe in God for life to have meaning – or have the arguments for the existence of God broken down? What does it mean to be human? Do we have free will, or is our life completely determined?

Through close attention to the primary texts of philosophers such as Plato, Aquinas, Descartes, Hume, Kant and Nietzsche, our Philosophy and Ethics degree will help you learn to analyse and evaluate arguments, and to compose and communicate your own ideas in a reasoned way. You will have a grounding in the foundational questions of philosophy. As you progress, you will look in depth at philosophy of religion, political philosophy, applied ethics and issues of human personhood, artificial intelligence, ecology and animality.

Liverpool is a great place to study philosophy: the city famously wears its heart on its sleeve, and is home to a rich web of cultures that explore the human condition through humour, art and performance. The Liverpool Hope team have developed a programme that aims to be contemporary and timely, especially in the field of applied ethics. And in a city that has been riven with sectarian strife in its past, the innovative approaches that the team takes to thinking about religion in the modern world are highly topical.

This degree will help you to develop your professional capacity by equipping you with the intellectual skills and perspectives needed to face the ethical and ideological challenges of the contemporary world. Such skills are essential for careers that require you to grasp with complex and often conflicting ideas across a whole range of professions.

Entry Requirements

This course follows the standard University entry requirements. Please see the website for further information.

Fees and Additional Costs

The tuition fees for 2025/2026 are £9,535 for full-time undergraduate courses.

On top of tuition fees, you will also need approximately £200 to purchase key textbooks that will be used throughout your studies.

You will also need to consider the cost of your accommodation each year whilst you study at university.

Visit our accommodation webpages for further details about our Halls of Residence: www.hope.ac.uk/halls

Applicants will need access to a computer if course delivery is switched to online. The University has a laptop lending service if remote study is necessary.



**LIVERPOOL
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Philosophy & Ethics Curriculum

Year One

Your first year of study builds the foundation of your philosophy and ethics knowledge.

Normative Ethics and Meta-Ethics

You will begin by studying normative ethics, including utilitarianism, virtue ethics, and deontological ethics. These theories will be discussed within the context of animal ethics, and will include a study visit to Chester Zoo. This will be followed by a study of meta-ethics, which explores the meaning of moral statements.

Free-will and Determinism

This unit will explore theories and debates with the context of free-will and determinism, including: libertarianism, determinism, indeterminism, compatibilism, and deep-self compatibilism. Topics will include: mind-body dualism, the noumenal self, agent-causation, and neuroscience.

Epistemology and Existentialism

In this unit we will examine different areas within philosophy of knowledge (epistemology) such as empiricism, rationalism, and transcendental idealism. Key figures explored will include: Plato, Aristotle, René Descartes, John Locke, David Hume, George Berkeley, and Immanuel Kant, as well as feminist epistemologists like Sandra Harding.

Year Two

Themes in Philosophy of Religion

Our second year philosophy of religion course opens up new perspectives in long-running debates about the relationship between faith and reason.

Phenomenological Aesthetics

This course begins with an introduction to philosophical aesthetics, before exploring how phenomenology

informs, influences, and even critiques aesthetics.

Political Philosophy

Questions of justice, representation and government are as crucial now as they have ever been. This course engages with key debates about liberty, the limits of democracy, socialism, anarchism and global justice.

Environmental Ethics

Using the so-called death of nature as a starting point, this course will explore pressing contemporary issues including how and why we ought to value the nonhuman environment (if at all), and the ethics of climate change and rewilding.

Applied Ethics

Building on normative ethics and meta-ethics studied in the first year, this course will explore the following prominent issues in applied ethics: abortion, euthanasia, capital punishment, sexual perversion, homosexuality, pornography, love and fidelity.

Year Three

The Limits of Personhood

What is a person? What gives us identity over time? What is the relationship between individual, society and nature? This course is an in-depth study of these questions in modern thought.

God after the Death of God: Modern and Contemporary Philosophy of Religion

In the 19th century, Friedrich Nietzsche proclaimed 'the death of God'. But since then, thinkers have constantly returned to the idea of God and the nature of religion. You will study understandings of God in continental philosophy and phenomenology.

COURSE STRUCTURE

Teaching on this degree is structured into lectures, where all students are taught together, seminars of smaller groups of around 15-20 students, and tutorials which typically have no more than 10 students. You will also utilise online resources such as the University's Virtual Learning Environment, Moodle, and you have an opportunity to have a one-to-one meeting with your tutor each week.

For the Philosophy & Ethics part of your Combined Honours degree, in your first year of study there are approximately 6 teaching hours each week, which reduces to approximately 5 teaching hours each week in your second and third years. On top of teaching hours, you are also expected to spend a number of hours studying independently each week, as well as studying in groups to prepare for any group assessments you may have.

ASSESSMENT AND FEEDBACK

During your three years of study, you will have a number of assessments, including portfolios, essays, group presentations and written exams. In your final year, you will complete a dissertation on a research topic of your choice.

You will receive your feedback via the University's Virtual Online Learning Environment (Moodle), and you are also welcome to discuss the feedback with your tutors.



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