DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

ASSESSMENT POLICIES AND PRACTICES FOR MASTERS STUDENTS 2025/26

The guidance below concerns *summative* assessments, ie, those assessments which count towards the award of your degree. *Formative* assessments, written during the teaching of the module, are not covered by this guidance. Submission dates etc for *formative* work are agreed directly between students and their module tutors.

1. Academic Integrity

All students are required to successfully complete the University Online Academic Integrity Tutorial within the first year of their programme of study. **This applies even if they completed the Tutorial for previous degrees at the University of York**. Confirmation of successful completion is required for students on postgraduate taught programmes before their first assignment is marked, although submission of the assignment will be accepted regardless of whether the student has completed the tutorial. Please note that it is not necessary to hand in the Certificate of Completion to the Philosophy Department as we will be notified of any student who has not completed the Tutorial.

Further information about academic integrity, referencing and good academic practice can be found at the website : [Read more about Academic Integrity](#)**.**

2. Assessment Dates

The submission dates for MA summative assessments can be viewed on the Philosophy postgraduate webpage [Get more information on MA assessments](#)

3. Presentation and Submission of Assessed (Summative) Work

3.1 General Requirements:
- Use double-line spacing
- 12 point font
- Consistent use of **either** Harvard **or** MLA style referencing in the body of the text (not in footnotes). [Get more information on Referencing Styles](#)
- Bibliography at the end of the essay
- Word count **excludes** bibliography **but includes** footnotes, quotations, notes and appendices (see section 3.3 below for more information about word counts)
- Essays **do not need to include an abstract** but if you do provide one it must be included in the word count

Students are advised to keep a back-up of their work in a cloud system.

3.2 Specific Requirements:

With the exception of the Conference Presentation element of PHI00085M Research Skills and Dissemination Practice, and the Groupwork reports for PHI00104M Data Privacy Problem Based Learning: Surveillance Capitalism, all **summative work** is marked anonymously.

Summative essays are assessed in five categories:

1. Comprehension
2. Argumentation

3. Independent Thought
4. Structure
5. Writing

3.3 Word Counts/Limits

Word counts are required on all pieces of written work. Essays submitted without word counts will not be marked until a word count is supplied.

The word limit for MA assessments can be viewed on the Philosophy postgraduate webpage Get more information on MA assessments

 but is **normally** as follows:

- Essays: 4,000 words
- 60-credit dissertation: 10,000 words

The **word limit is the maximum number of words** you should write. No lower word limit is set though you are expected normally to submit essays within 500 words of the upper word limit.

Penalties will not be applied to assessments that exceed the specified limit. Please see section 4 in the Penalties for Summative Assessments - Policy document.

Markers will take into account work produced by a student that exceeds the specified marking limit. However, in the case of written work, only the specified number of words or pages shall be graded and anything written after the marking limit will be disregarded.

The word count of a submitted essay is the total number of words it contains **excluding the bibliography**: all other text must be included in the word count. This includes all quotations, footnotes, notes, references and any appendices. (To simplify the process of determining a word count for each essay, you may find it helpful to keep bibliographies as separate documents/files.)

3.4 Electronic Essay Submission

With the exception of the Conference Presentation element of PHI00085M Research Skills and Dissemination Practice, all work is to be submitted electronically via the module's VLE Turnitin system. Submission dates are listed on the Philosophy postgraduate webpage Get more information on MA assessments

It is the student's responsibility to check the submission dates for their assessed work.

Further details about how to submit your work will be sent to you nearer to the submission date.

The deadline for the submission of assessed (summative) essays online via the VLE is **before 10:00 am** (UK Time) on the essay deadline date. This means that the physical process of **submitting and uploading the essay must be completed by 10:00 am.**

The University advises that a submission should be attempted no later than 30 minutes before the official deadline in order to ensure that the work is received on time.

Essay submissions are 'time and date stamped' by the VLE Turnitin system upon receipt. The receipt issued will state the time the essay is received TO THE MINUTE.

For **a submission to be considered 'on-time' it must ALWAYS be made BEFORE the stated deadline**, eg **BEFORE** 10:00 am. A submission receipt that is timestamped at 09:59 am, for example, will be considered to be ON TIME. However, **a submission received at 10:00 am on the receipt timestamp will be deemed to be LATE, and late**

submission penalties will be applied unless an extension has already been agreed via the procedures for Exceptional Circumstances Affecting Assessments, Student Support Plans, or Self-certification. Please see Sections 5, 6 and 7 below.

You should download and keep your submission receipt as proof of the date and time of submission in case of queries.

If you experience problems on the day submitting work via the VLE by the 10:00 am deadline, you should email your essay as an attachment to philosophy-pgt-assessments@york.ac.uk so that it arrives before 10:00 am on the essay deadline date. However, you must provide evidence that it was not possible to submit your assignment in the usual way. **Please note that problems submitting your work electronically are not normally grounds for claiming Exceptional Circumstances.**

If you have any queries about the submission process - for instance, queries about word limits, essay presentation, due dates, exceptional circumstances, acceptable file types, where in the VLE essays are to be submitted, etc - please email philosophy-pgt-assessments@york.ac.uk or call in at Philosophy Reception in Block A, Sally Baldwin Buildings. As the Assessment period is very busy, please do not risk leaving it until the essay deadline date to ask your questions.

If you have technical problems using the VLE - for instance, you cannot submit your essay, please email vle-support@york.ac.uk. Note that VLE Support will only respond to queries about technical problems, and will refer any queries about the submission process to the Philosophy Department.

3.4.1 Acceptable Formats and Recommended Technology

Format: Essays must be submitted as a PDF file.

Technology: Ideally, you should submit assignments using a modern Windows or Mac computer.

You are strongly advised against trying to submit assignments on a mobile device.

It is the student's responsibility to check that they have submitted the correct file and that it is readable/openable.

The system requirements and recommended software are as follows:

- An up-to-date operating system, ideally Windows or Mac OS
- An up-to-date web browser, ideally Google Chrome or Mozilla Firefox

Submitting Assignments on the VLE - Overview Student Guide should help cover most common queries you have around preparing and submitting a formative or summative assignment.

3.4.2 Submitting the correct file to the wrong module site
Students are responsible for submitting their assessments to the right submission point. The department has no responsibility to locate an assessment if it has not been correctly submitted and may award a mark of zero if submitted to the wrong submission point

3.4.3 Making more than one submission to a Turnitin submission point
We strongly recommend that you **only make one submission to Turnitin for your assessment, and you do this once you are confident that this will be your final submission.**

We do not advise students to submit their assessment multiple times - this is because your assessment will be automatically run through Turnitin text matching software. Please note that making similar submissions will be

flagged by the Turnitin Similarity report for overlapping with previous submissions: students will be sent an alert about this if they must submit more than once.

IMPORTANT PLEASE READ:
If you submit more than one version of an essay, **the last submission before the deadline overrides any earlier submissions and consequently is the version that will be marked.**

Turnitin will not allow you to submit an essay after the deadline if you have already submitted one before the deadline.

If you have not submitted any essay before the deadline, you will be allowed to make **ONE** submission after the deadline**. Late penalties will be applied after the submission deadline.**

3.5　　Penalties for Late Submission of Work

If the only version of the assessment the student submits is AFTER the submission deadline, this submission will be marked and late penalties will be applied as follows:

Work which is up to one hour late will have five percent of marks deducted.

For example, if an assignment is given a mark of 60 but is 30 minutes late, the final mark awarded would be 55.

Work which is over one hour late will have ten percent of marks deducted for each day (or part of each day) that the work is late, **up to a total of five days**, including weekends and bank holidays.

For example, an essay due at 10:00 am on a Monday but submitted between 11:00 am on the Monday and 09:59 am the next day, will be classed as being a day late and will lose 10% of the available marks as above. So if the assignment is given a mark of 60 out of 100, the final mark is 50.

After five days, the work is marked at zero. Note, however, that the penalty cannot result in a mark of less than zero.

NB for submission purposes a 'day' refers to a 24-hour period (including weekends and bank holidays) **rather than referring to working days.**

For example, an essay due at 10:00 am on a Friday but submitted at 11:00 am on the Saturday will be classed as being two days late and will lose 20% of the available marks. So if the assignment is given a mark of 60 out of 100, the final mark is 40.

If you need to request an extension please see Sections 5, 6 and 7 below.

In brief, the **deadline for requesting an extension is 4 pm two working days before the assessment deadlin**e. For example, where an essay is due at 10:00 am on a Monday the deadline for the extension request is 4 pm on the previous Thursday.

4. Assessment Procedures

4.1 Marking Procedures

In keeping with University policy, summative assessment work is marked anonymously where possible.

For Philosophy Masters students, assessed work is normally moderated, which the University, in its [Policy on Assessment, Examiners, Marking and Feedback](), describes as:

Initial marking … completed by single markers, followed by analysis of mark distributions and by sample marking by appointed moderator or by a number of members of the marking team.

The exceptions to this are:

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1. The Conference Presentation (PHI00085M Research Skills and Dissemination Practice) which is jointly marked:

Marking is completed by two (or more) markers at the same time.

2. The Dissertation (PHI00017M) which is second marked:

1st markers mark and comment/ 2nd markers see the marks and comments and confirm or challenge. Markers agree on a final mark based on criteria and reasoned discussion based on evidence

4.2 Mark Scale and Marking Criteria

The University mark scale applied at taught postgraduate level (Masters, level 7) is as follows:

- Distinguished performance at postgraduate level   70-100
- Good performance at postgraduate level   60-69
- Satisfactory performance at postgraduate level   50-59
- Fail   0-49*

*Note that a fail mark of 40-49 is potentially compensatable (see below), and marks of 0-39 and fail marks on pass/fail modules are outright fails.

In order to make marking clear and transparent, for essay-based assessments, the Philosophy Department, along with a number of other departments across the University, employs **'stepped' or 'fixed point' marking**. This restricts the number of marks available in each class band to an agreed scale (e.g. low/medium/high) and avoids the issue of borderline results.

Mark Scale and Marking Criteria		
MA Distinction	100 / 95 / 90	Essays one would advise the student to revise for publication.
	85	Exceptional and outstanding work that presents original ideas and arguments which are clearly worked out and set in the context of a well-understood philosophical debate.
	80 / 75	Excellent work that shows a capacity for independent thought and clear evidence of critical reflection on the module material; clear and accurate presentation of the issues and arguments, and which shows a sophisticated grasp of the subtleties of the philosophical debate.
MA Merit	68 / 65 / 62	Very good work that is well-structured and which accurately presents philosophical positions, arguments, and problems, which shows a good solid grasp of the main elements of the philosophical debate, and which shows an ability to exercise philosophical judgement.

MA Pass	58 55 52	Solid work that reflects a sound understanding of the central issues and arguments, as well as a familiarity with a good range of module material.
Compensatable Fail	48 45 42	Fail but potentially compensatable (see section 4.6 Compensation below)
Fail	38 25 12 0	Outright Fail.

4.3 Penalties for Self-Plagiarism

In our marking, we will implement the principle that students cannot get credit for the same work twice. A piece of work for one summative assessment that wholly or substantially duplicates material submitted for a different summative assessment is considered to be an instance of self-plagiarism. It will be the duty of the Chair of the Board of Examiners to decide whether a student has committed self-plagiarism. If it is concluded that a student has committed self-plagiarism, then the student will receive a mark of 0 for one of the summative assessments. In order to determine which of the two affected pieces of work will receive a mark of zero, we will decide based on which submission was for the lesser number of credits and/or which submission came in later.

Please note that it is permissible to use material from a formative assessment in a summative assessment. Furthermore, students are allowed to build upon one of their essays submitted as summative assessment in their dissertation. If they do this, they need to keep the principle in mind that one cannot get credit for the same work twice.

Self-plagiarism is considered bad practice but it is not treated as academic misconduct.

Plagiarism and other violations of academic integrity are dealt with under 'Academic Misconduct' in Section 9.

4.4 PGT Compensation

If a student fails one or more modules in the taught stage, they may still be awarded the credit for the taught stage modules, as long as:

a. there are no more than 40 failed credits; and

b. there are no outright fails

c. the rounded credit-weighted mean over all taught modules taken in the stage that contribute to the award (including failed modules) is at least 50.

4.4.1 Compensation for Taught Modules

Compensation is only allowed between taught modules. The Capstone Project Module (CPM, formerly called the Independent Study Module ISM) cannot be compensated and an outright fail in the CPM will not prevent compensation of a taught module.

4.5 Reassessment of Taught Modules

4.5.1 Reassessment

If a student has failed one or more taught modules, and cannot be awarded the credit through compensation, they may, subject to the conditions below, be offered a reassessment opportunity.

Reassessment for a module is only allowed on one occasion.

University rules governing progression, compensation and reassessment are set out in the [University's Guide to Assessment](#) and in [Rules for Progression and Awards 2025/26](#).

All reassessment exams and essays are held/submitted during the University's Later summer assessment period in August.   "Reassessment" includes all assessments in which students have been granted permission to sit again 'as if for the first time' (SAIFFT) as a result of Exceptional Circumstances, and RESIT (final attempt) assessments.

Students must ensure they are available during all of the August Resit weeks to be able to attend their reassessment examinations at the University in order to progress into the next stage of their degree, or to complete their degree. Reassessments will be submitted electronically.

IMPORTANT: **Students being reassessed are NOT permitted to submit a revised version of their original attempt essay for the reassessment. They must submit an essay that answers a different essay question.**

There may be particular reasons related to the assessment task (e.g. a reflective portfolio on activities undertaken) when a revised submission will be permitted. A revised submission (referral) of work already submitted may be permitted in such circumstances, but steps should be taken when assessing such work to ensure the student is not unduly advantaged by this relative to other students.

4.5.2 Purpose

The purpose of reassessment is to enable the student to be awarded the credit for failed modules, either through passing the module or meeting the criteria for compensation. Reassessment is not offered for any other purpose.

4.5.3 Reassessment Limits

Students will only be offered a reassessment opportunity for failed module(s) if the total number of failed credits in the taught modules does not exceed 60 credits.

4.5.4 Accepting a Reassessment Opportunity

If a student is offered a reassessment opportunity for a module and elects not to take the opportunity, the first attempt module mark will be used to calculate their progression towards an award.

4.6 Reassessment of Capstone Project Module (CPM)

4.6.1 Marginal Fail

In the case of a marginal fail of the CPM, reassessment is permitted. In this case, the student will be given the opportunity to make amendments to enable them to reach a pass threshold. The mark for the resubmitted CPM will be capped at the pass mark (50). There will only be one such reassessment opportunity.

4.6.2 Outright Fail

In the case of an outright fail of the CPM (mark of 39 or below), there is no reassessment opportunity.

4.7 Treatment of module marks after reassessment

4.7.1 For the purpose of awarding the module credits

The module mark(s) capped at the pass mark following reassessment will be used to determine if the student passes the module(s).

4.7.2 For the purpose of compensation

If, following reassessment, the student has still failed one or more taught modules, the compensation rules in 4.4 will be applied. For this purpose, the module reassessment mark will be used.

4.7.3 For the purpose of the award of merit or distinction

The following applies only for the purpose of calculations for the award of merits and distinctions (4.8). Where a reassessment is taken, the module mark following reassessment is capped at 50 for M-level modules.

4.8 Merits and distinctions for Masters degrees

4.8.1 Principles

a. Calculations for this purpose always use first-attempt module marks, or capped-reassessment marks (see 4.7.3).
b. Decisions on the award of merits or distinctions are performed numerically, based on module marks, without any further academic judgement.

4.8.2 Merit

To be eligible for the award of a Masters degree with merit, the student must have achieved:
a. a rounded credit weighted mean of at least 60 over all modules, and
b. a mark of at least 60 in the Capstone Project Module (where applicable).

4.8.3 Distinction

To be eligible for the award of a Masters degree with distinction, the student much have achieved:
a. a rounded credit weighted mean of at least 70 over all modules, and
b. a mark of at least 70 in the Capstone Project Module (where applicable).

4.9 Award criteria

4.9.1 Award of Masters

Award of the Masters degree requires that a student has been awarded all required credits for both the taught modules and the CPM (where applicable).

4.9.2 Award of lower-exit Postgraduate Diploma (PGDip) and Postgraduate Certificate (PGCert)

1. A student who has been awarded 60 credits as part of the programme, but fewer than 120 credits, will be considered for a PGCert.
2. A student who has been awarded 120 credits in the taught stage, but does not wish to proceed to the CPM, will be considered for a PGDip.
3. A student who, having completed the Masters programme, has not gained sufficient credit to meet the criteria for award of Masters degree, but has been awarded at least 120 credits on the programme (which can include the CPM), will be considered for a PGDip.
4. For the purposes of the application of the rules on lower exit awards, a student may receive compensation of up to 20 credits of failed modules for determining eligibility for a lower-exit PGCert or up to 40 credits of failed modules for a lower-exit PGDip so long as none of the failed modules are outright fails.

4.10 Progression and Award Rules

This section sets out the rules relating to assessment, progression and award under the modular scheme at the University of York (UoY).

4.11 Procedures of the Board of Examiners

The **Board of Examiners** is responsible for the marking of all assessed work, and for the recommendation of Degree results to the University. It consists of Internal and External examiners. The Internal Examiners are appointed annually from the academic staff of the University by the Standing Committee on Assessment on the recommendation of the Philosophy Board of Studies. The External Examiners are nominated by the Department and approved by the Standing Committee on Assessment on behalf of the Senate.

5 Self-certification of Assessment & Exceptional Circumstances Affecting Assessment (ECA)

You can find more detailed information in the University's Exceptional Circumstances Affecting Assessment Policy. document.

5.1 Self-certification of Assessment

In a **limited** number of circumstances students will be able to self-certify for an assessment to have one-off mitigation applied to an essay submission deadline or online exam.   The policy will allow students to request:
- **a maximum of 3 self-certifications in one academic year** ie between September 2025 - September 2026;
- The limit of 3 **includes any self-certifications you may wish to use in the August 2026 reassessment period**;
- **Self-certification is available per assessment point not per module**. Where a module has multiple assessment points, i.e. an essay **and** an exam, then these would count as 2 self-certification opportunities.
- Once you have used your 3 self-certifications you will be expected to follow the evidence-based Exceptional Circumstances policy but see 5.1.6 'Bunched assessments' below.
- Students select which Philosophy assessment they are self-certifying for using eVision;
- You can withdraw your self-certification request on eVision at any point up until the start time of your exam or essay submission deadline.

5.1.1 What types of assessment you can self-certify for:
- a short **essay extension** of **4 calendar-days maximum** for essay or coursework submissions, **and this must be made in advance of the submission deadline.**

You <u>cannot</u> self-certify for:

- Group-based assessments;
- Assessed presentations.

5.1.2 Reasons for self-certifying:

Self-certification for essays or exam assessments cover **ONLY** the following circumstances:

1. Exceptional Medical Circumstances (Physical Health)
2. Exceptional Medical Circumstances (Mental Health)
3. Exceptional Medical Circumstances (Physical and Mental Health)
4. Exceptional Personal Circumstances
5. Inadequate IT resources

Students do not need to provide evidence to support a self-certified claim. However, please note that fabrication of the above circumstances using self-certification will be treated as **academic misconduct.**

Student Support Plans (SSPs):

Students who have assessment adjustments as detailed on their SSPs should use their SSP if they require mitigation for an assessment due to a disability-related issue (and not the self-cert process). They may, of course, use the self-cert process if their circumstance is not related to their SSP.

If a student finds that the above self-certified mitigation is not sufficient for the assessment in question then they **must** consult the full Exceptional Circumstances Affecting Assessment process (see below), **and if they submit an ECA claim then students MUST provide documentary evidence to support their claim**.

5.1.3 The self-certification process and approval:

If you complete a self-certification of Assessment request, the essay extension is AUTOMATICALLY approved. You can withdraw a self-cert request at any time **up until the start time of the essay submission deadline.** You must keep a record of which assessment and module you have self-certified for. The eVision system will keep track of how many self-certs you have made, and once you have reached your limit of 3, then you will not be able to select any further assessments on eVision. Only when the submission deadline has passed, will the Philosophy Assessments team send an email confirming the essay extension of 4 calendar days that you have selected.

5.1.4 Where do I self-certify?

Students must complete the self-certification task via their [eVision Assessment and Progression pages](#).

All the information you need is on the [University web pages under self-certification](#).

5.1.5 Bunched assessments

Where a student has used self-certification to seek an adjustment for a particular assessment and there are other assessment deadlines also falling within the 72 hours after that deadline, the student may seek further self-certification adjustments (i.e. 4-day extensions or deferral as appropriate) for each such assessment within that 72-hour period. **This now counts as the use of only 1 out of the 3 permitted self-certification applications per academic year**. The student is not obliged to seek adjustments for all such assessments.

To seek such an adjustment, the student should submit an ECA request. **The request under this process must be made before any such submission deadline to be extended or start of exam to be deferred**. The claim should be

evidenced using the acknowledgement email received for the initial self certification. Assessments that cannot be adjusted under the self-certification process cannot be adjusted using this process.

5.1.6 Adjustments for students in 'vulnerable' categories

A student in one of the following groups will be able to make an application for either a 4-day extension or deferral of assessment as set out above using as evidence a letter produced by the University that identifies them as eligible for such an adjustment during the whole academic year:

a) Students in receipt of hardship funding or University Bursaries;

b) Estranged Students;

c) Care Experienced students;

d) Students with caring responsibilities;

e) Students with children;

f) Students being supported by Sexual Violence Liaison Officers; and

g) Students on active Support to Study cases.

Students in the following groups will be eligible for similar adjustments but only during the term specified in the letter:

h) Students subject to or bringing disciplinary action;

i) Students who are actively seeking disability support adjustments but who have not yet been able to have an SSP put in place.

Students in these categories will receive a letter confirming their eligibility for this adjustment and may seek the adjustment by making an exceptional circumstances application. No further evidence needs to be produced for a 4-day extension or deferral (if appropriate for the particular assessment) although additional evidence may be required if the student requests more substantial adjustment.

6. Exceptional Circumstances affecting Assessment (ECA)

Where a candidate's academic performance during an assessment period has been adversely affected by circumstances that are covered by the University's Exceptional Circumstances affecting Assessment (ECA) policy and a 4-day extension via Self-certification is insufficient or not possible, students may apply for an extension on the grounds of Exceptional Circumstances. Students are strongly advised at all times to refer to the University Exceptional Circumstances affecting Assessment web pages which clearly details the policy and guidance in relation to ECA claims. Please note the following:

- Students must **submit an ECA application and supporting evidence as soon as possible.** The supporting evidence should be **'independent, objective and reasonably contemporaneous'.** ECA claims will NOT be approved unless satisfactory evidence is provided, and the ECA Committee has the right to withdraw any conditional offer made to a student if evidence is not submitted by the required deadline.
- All Philosophy students are provided with clear information about how to apply for ECA prior to each Philosophy module assessment.
- Essays: where a student requires a short extension to an assessed essay deadline they must submit an ECA application, and supporting documentary evidence from an independent professional, to the relevant academic department **before** the assessment submission deadline. Retrospective essay extension requests will not be approved by the Philosophy Department.

- Exams: extension requests are not permitted for online exams and students must apply for a SAIFFT (sit as-if-for-the-first-time).
- All claims are considered by an ECA Committee, and the decision by the Committee whether to approve or reject an ECA claim is final.

6.1 How do I apply for Exceptional Circumstances affecting Assessment (ECA)?

Students should apply online via the University [ECA web portal](#).

6.2. If an ECA claim is successful, what mitigation might I be offered?

If an ECA application and evidence is approved by the Committee, then mitigation for an assessment(s) may be offered in the form of either:

- a summative essay extension of usually 1 or 2 weeks;

or

- the opportunity for the student to sit the assessment 'as-if-for-the-first-time' in the August reassessment period.

6.3 Limits on forms of mitigation available

Students should be aware that the University's ECA policy can never permit mitigation for assessments in the form of:

- substitution of marks;
- changing of marks;
- repeating tuition from a previous stage once the next stage has commenced.

The ECA policy does not cover damaged/missed teaching or learning, <u>only damaged assessments</u>.

7. Student Support Plans (SSPs)

Students who require teaching support and assessment adjustments for a disability or long-standing physical or mental health conditions which have a negative impact on their ability to study, should contact [Disability Services](#) in the first instance. As a result of this consultation, students may be given a Student Support Plan (SSP).

7.1 Extensions for students with Student Support Plans who require flexibility in deadlines

Where flexible deadlines have been recommended as part of a Student's Support Plan (SSP), a student may request an **occasional** extension to a standard assignment deadline where, for disability related reasons, the student will be unable to meet a deadline. In this case, supporting evidence is not required. Students should [complete the SSP application form via the University's web-based SSP application portal](#) in **advance** of the essay submission deadline, stating the reason for your request.

Please note: All essay extension requests are considered on a case-by-case basis and do not guarantee the successful outcome of a claim, **nor do they permit automatic extensions for all essays**. Essay extensions should be requested **occasionally**, and should we become concerned about the use or frequency of these requests you will be asked to review your SSP adjustments with Disability Services and the Department.

7.2 Procedure for Spelling/Grammar Stickers for Essays

If a student's Support Plan recommends that they should not be penalised for errors of grammar or spelling in their assessments, this will be flagged up on their assessment submissions and feedback form and the markers made aware.

Please also refer to the University's pages on Student Support Plans

8. Release of Marks/Feedback on Assessed Work

In accordance with University policy, marks (provisional until they have been ratified by the Board of Studies) will **normally** be released with feedback within 5 weeks of the deadline for the submission of the assignment.

9. Academic Misconduct

9.1 Principles

The University is committed to developing high standards of academic practice among its students and to safeguarding the standards of its academic awards. The University regards any form of academic misconduct as a very serious matter.

 a) All students on taught programmes are required to successfully complete the online University Academic Integrity Tutorial before the end of the first stage or year of their programme of study. Failure to comply with this regulation may result in termination of enrolment with the University.
 b) Plagiarism detection software packages may be used at the University's discretion to detect unfair practice in student submissions. As part of the academic community, students accept that work they submit for assessment may be submitted to these software packages.
 c) Procedures for investigating academic misconduct and the penalties applied where it has been committed can be found on the Academic Misconduct webpage.

The following are considered to be forms of academic misconduct:

9.2 Assessment Offences

1. **Plagiarism** – the presentation of ideas, material, or scholarship sourced from the work of another individual or group available in a public or private source without sufficient acknowledgement via appropriate referencing and citation.
2. **Collusion between students taking the same assessment** – is the process whereby two or more students work together – without official approval – and share ideas, solutions or material in work submitted for assessment.
3. **(a) Breach and/or (b) Cheating** – failure to comply with the rules of an assessment e.g. unauthorised access to materials in a closed assessment/use of software in an open assessment which has been specifically prohibited in the assessment specifications/breaches of ethical rules relating to an assessment/misrepresentation of word counts.
4. **False Authorship** is the production or adaptation of academic work (for example writing, computer code, images, data), in whole or part, for academic credit, progression and award whether or not a payment or other favour is involved, using unapproved, undeclared or falsely declared human (eg family members, friends, essay mills or other students not taking the same assessment) or technological assistance (eg generative AI or software).
5. **Fabrication** – to seek to gain advantage by incorporating falsified or fabricated material or data in work submitted for assessment or publication.

9.3 Disciplinary Offences

6. **Personation** – one, or both of, a) to produce work for another student with the reasonable

expectation that the incorporation of that work is intended to deceive an examiner, such as appearing as another student in an assessment(s) or students providing material to commercial assignment writing services, or b) to appear as another student in an assessment(s).

7. **Deception** – presenting fabricated or misleading evidence to gain advantage in assessment arrangements (e.g. exceptional circumstances affecting assessment), in making research proposals or providing false evidence of qualifications.

8. **Unethical research behaviour** – unethical behaviour in the undertaking of research or in seeking funding e.g. including failure to obtain appropriate permission to conduct research, unauthorised use of information which was acquired confidentially, failure to acknowledge work conducted in collaboration, fraud or misuse of research funds or equipment.

9.4 What happens if Academic Misconduct is suspected?

Offences 1-5 (assessment offences) are dealt with within schools, departments and faculties through Standing Academic Misconduct Investigatory Panels (StAMP).

Offences 6-8 (disciplinary offences) are dealt with by University Regulation 7 Disciplinary Procedures or other existing mechanisms.

Full details of the procedures and penalties for academic misconduct can be found online here.

10. Roger Woolhouse Prize

Professor Roger Woolhouse was an eminent scholar, known especially for his work on Locke and Leibniz, who taught at the University of York from 1969 until his retirement in 2001. He died in 2011 and his obituaries can be read below:

Roger Woolhouse The Times obituary

His widow decided to give the royalties from all his many books to the Department, in perpetuity, to fund a Prize for students on a taught Philosophy MA programme. Other members of his family have also donated to the fund.

Each year a prize of £500 is awarded to the student on one of the 4 taught Philosophy programmes (MA Philosophy,, MA Political & Legal Philosophy, MA Philosophy of AI, MA Applied Ethics & Governance of Data Privacy) who submits the best essay in the January assessment period. Students may only be awarded the prize once. In the event of a tie, the Prize will normally be shared.

11. Support if things go wrong

If you are encountering problems which may affect your ability to study and/or if you are considering taking a period of leave of absence **you are advised to contact your supervisor for support**.

- You can see your supervisor during his/her office hour or email to make an appointment. Staff contact details are available on the Philosophy Department webpages.
- Philosophy has access to a Student Wellbeing Officer, Lauren Bramley, who is able to talk through any issues you may be having. She is based in Philosophy on Wednesdays but can be seen elsewhere on other days. Please contact her to arrange an appointment.
- Philosophy also has access to an Open Door Practitioner, Kate Rose, who is based in Philosophy on Thursdays.
- You can also find further help on the university of York website Visit our If things go wrong page

- If you're not sure where to start, Student Hub can help

Further sources of help are:

- Student Support and networks

AI Appendix for MA Philosophy Assessment Guides

We believe that use of generative AI software, such as Chat GPT, is harmful to the development of the skills we are trying to help you develop during your degree. It degrades students' learning and undermines critical analysis and creativity, preventing students from getting the most out of their degree. For this reason, it is prohibited on all Philosophy department modules to use generative AI.

Some Potentially Asked Questions:

Isn't it a good idea to ask AI to generate ideas or arguments for me to critically respond to, thus still honing my critical skills?

You already have access to more ideas and arguments to respond to critically than you will be able to develop your responses to at length, in the items on your reading lists (including further reading) and from your lectures and seminar discussions. There is no need to use AI to generate ideas to respond to, instead of responding to ideas from lectures, seminars and reading lists. There is no pedagogical advantage to thinking critically about something generated by AI compared to thinking critically about the ideas from those other sources.

I already use YouTube videos and similar online resources which simplify and explain things for me; why is AI technology worse than those?

You shouldn't be relying on YouTube videos and other similar resources either. For University level study, you should be engaging with demanding and complex material, developing the skills to work through it. Only by doing that will you get the most out of what your Philosophy degree has to offer.

Why is using e.g. Chat GPT worse than using Google to find resources when I am researching a topic?

Simple Google searches are not very good, either: you should at least be using Google Scholar or a resource such as PhilPapers. Google searches might e.g. give you a lot of results which *seem* to be about the right topic, but which aren't because they are from very different disciplines, or the wrong bits of philosophy. (For example, quite a few people in recent years have written about the wrong kind of 'possibilism' (i.e. the position in metaphysics, rather than the position in moral theory) in assessments, as a result of Googling 'possibilism' and not spotting that what

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they get is not on the right topic!) Even worse, AI technology like Chat GPT is notorious for inventing 'phantom' references, to works which don't exist or to works which are irrelevant or don't say what the AI reports them as saying. So, this is a *particularly* bad tool to use for finding sources on a particular topic.

I've seen University Guidance on use of AI which suggests that it can be good to use it.

The University Guidance on Generative AI needs to be broad enough to cover what all departments in the University do. So, it makes some suggestions about what AI technology can be good for which apply to some disciplines but not others. For example, the general guidance suggest 'generating ideas' as a good use of the technology; but in *philosophy*, where thinking things through is the essence of the discipline, outsourcing coming up with ideas rather than trying to do it yourself is unhelpful (and you get plenty of ideas suggested in lectures, reading which is set for you, further reading of papers and books which you can do, and in seminars). .

I will need to use AI in the workplace, so why shouldn't I develop the skills to use it in my work at university, which is supposed to prepare me for the workplace?

Some of the most important skills you need for using AI are critical thinking skills, which allow you to tell which results of AI technology are likely to be trustworthy, and which are likely to be problematic: even the most enthusiastic proponents of AI in education and in the workplace recognise that blindly trusting it is bad practice. As a philosophy student, working in the traditional way without employing AI, you are very well placed to develop excellent critical thinking skills. You can augment these with information about prompt engineering and other AI skills which is centrally provided by the University, if you wish

What about use of GenAI tools embedded within software for structure suggestions, checking spelling, grammar and referencing?

You can use Gen tools embedded within software for suggestions about sentence structure (grammatical structure) and formatting structure (e.g. titles, sub-titles and text-alignment) only. But you cannot use it for suggestions about the organization of philosophical material. Being able to organize your philosophical ideas is a core philosophical skill, and should not be outsourced to generative AI.

What if I am studying gen AI as part of a module or dissertation? This may require me to use gen AI tools to get a better sense of how they work. Is this acceptable?

Yes, if gen AI is something you are studying, you may have to use it as part of that study. You should be guided here by your module leader or dissertation supervisor.