



Department of Philosophy

Assessment Practices and Guide for Undergraduates

Academic Year 2025/6

1 GENERAL

The information below applies to undergraduate programmes only.

All Philosophy assessments are subject to general University regulations, as documented in the [University's assessment policies and procedures](#) (formerly 'Guide to Assessment') and [Regulation 5, the Regulation on Assessment in the University's Ordinances and Regulations](#).

The University Standing Committee on Assessment may be required to introduce changes and adjustments to undergraduate assessments throughout the academic year. Where module assessment changes are required, the Philosophy Department will provide as much notice and clarification to students as possible. Students must ensure they read all emails relating to assessment, and are reminded that assessment guidance is on our [Assessment webpages](#).

Information concerning University online and 'open' examinations is available via the [Taking an Examination](#) webpages.

Information concerning University scheduled examinations is available via the [Student homepage, Assessment and examination](#). The Examinations Office publish the examination timetable for each assessment period via students' online Timetables.

The University has produced a web-based guide called [Rules for Progression and Award in Bachelor's UG programmes 2025/6](#) which explains what you need to achieve to progress through the stages of your degree and how your degree classification will be calculated. The document also explains the rules for re-assessment and compensation.

This document sets out other aspects of assessment policy that are relevant to students on Philosophy programmes including:

2. [Academic Integrity](#)
3. [Procedural Requirements](#)
4. [Assessment Dates](#)
5. [Examinations](#)
6. [Essays](#)
7. [Marking Procedures and a guide to marking criteria](#)
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11. [Results](#)
12. [Academic Appeals & Complaints](#)
13. [Re-assessments](#)
14. [Academic Misconduct](#)
15. [Self-Certification of Assessment & Exceptional Circumstances \(ECA\)](#)
16. [Criteria for the Awards with Distinctions](#)
17. [Prizes](#)
18. [Appendix 1 - Guidance for Students on the Use of AI in Philosophy](#)

2 ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

All students are required to successfully complete the [University Online Academic Integrity Tutorial](#) within the first year of their programme of study. Students **cannot** progress to the next year of academic study until the tutorial has been completed.

3 PROCEDURAL REQUIREMENTS

The Department asks students to fulfil the following procedural requirements. Please consult relevant module documents for any additional requirements set by a module tutor at the beginning of each module.

3.1 Attendance

Attendance at timetabled teaching sessions is an essential part of the student learning experience on all courses at the University. In the Philosophy Department, attendance at seminars is compulsory.

Attendance is monitored across the University for pastoral reasons. Repeated unexplained absences from seminars (or absences that do not have a satisfactory explanation), are a cause for concern. We want to make sure you are well and you engage in the right way with your programme of studies. The University of York uses Check-in to monitor student engagement. Please refer to the [Check-In student information webpage](#).

If you are unable to attend a seminar

- a) because you are unwell: please email your module tutor and/or your personal supervisor as soon as possible. Please refer to the University's procedure for sickness absence which is accessed via the [Self-certification of illness web pages](#) (NOT to be confused with self-certification for assessment Section 15.)
- b) on other compassionate grounds: please explain your circumstances to the module tutor and/or your personal supervisor. The Department is aware that students may find their studies affected by serious personal or family-related difficulties. If you are struggling to attend or to do required formative work you must contact your module tutor and/or your personal supervisor.

3.2 Formative work

Formative work is work that is not assessed. If it gets an indicative mark or some other indication of the level achieved, this serves only as feedback, and it does not determine the mark which will be used to calculate degree classes or the satisfaction of progression requirements. (This type of assessment is called 'summative assessment'.)

Formative assessment can take a variety of forms, which includes joint work, presentations, quizzes and others. Within some modules, you will be asked to submit formative *written* work, which the tutor undertakes to read and return with comments within 2 weeks. See also section 9 'Feedback' below. If the module is assessed by exam you may, for example, be asked to write one or two practice essays. If the module is assessed by an essay, you may be asked to write an essay plan.

All formative work must be submitted by the deadline specified by the module tutor or we won't be able to provide feedback. If there are extenuating circumstances and you have informed the module tutor of these **before** the deadline, then procedural work will be marked at the discretion of the tutor.

4 ASSESSMENT DATES

A list of [assessment dates for the current academic](#) year is available on the Department's Assessment web pages. The assessment date information is listed alphabetically by module, and separately for each year of study on these pages.

4.1 Examination Periods

Examinations (online exams) are centrally timetabled by the University Examinations Office and once published, students will be able to access the dates, times and venues for their individual examinations via their online Timetable.

It is entirely the responsibility of candidates to ascertain the date and time of their online examinations and to submit them by the deadline. All online examinations are submitted electronically and deadlines are strict. If there are no valid Exceptional Circumstances, failure to submit an examination will result in a mark of zero. Late submission penalties are regulated by the [University Policy on Penalties for Summative Assessments](#).

Examination period dates are strictly adhered to, and the Philosophy Department cannot offer students alternative exam dates other than those scheduled in the assessment periods by the University. Examinations scheduling is regulated by [University Policy on Scheduling Assessments](#). Please note that all Philosophy examinations will be online, and you will need to complete and submit them within a limited timeframe window (see the [Policy on Penalties for Summative Assessments, Section 12](#)). There are no closed examinations on Philosophy modules in the academic year 2025/6. However, if you are a joint-honours student, different examination arrangements might be in place for assessments administered by other departments: it is your responsibility to know exactly how and when each module is assessed.

The reassessment period for resit examinations or exams sat as-if-for-the-first-time is in August each year. Assessment dates are published on the [Philosophy Assessment pages](#).

4.2 Assessed Essay (or equivalent written, video or audio) Submission Dates

It is entirely the responsibility of candidates to ascertain the deadline date and time of their assessed written work submissions. All written assessments (audio/video/essay or poster) are submitted electronically and deadlines are strict. Penalties (via deduction of marks) are given for late submission if there are no valid Exceptional Circumstances.

5 EXAMINATIONS

5.1 Examinations

Examinations for Philosophy modules in 2025/26 will take the form of Recommended Duration Online Exams (under 24 hours) and Short-Duration Coursework (over 24 hours) during the Semester 2 assessment period and the August 2026 reassessment period. All examinations in the Philosophy department are 'open book', meaning that students are allowed to consult notes and resources during the assessment period.

5.2 Online examinations and Open examinations

5.2.1 Definition

Our examination types are defined in accordance with the [University's Policy on Assessment Types and Formats](#).

5.2.2 Timing of online examinations

Students taking online examinations will have a limited timeframe to complete an examination. However, students will only be expected to spend the nominal length of time on the exam questions as they would for a closed-exam, for example, 1 - 3hrs. The recommended timeframe should reflect the period a student would usually have to complete the assessment if this were the equivalent closed exam (the 'exam length').

Online examination papers will be made available to students via the VLE at the scheduled start time for the exam, and students will be notified when the paper is available. As a backup, the Philosophy Department will additionally distribute the exam paper to all students taking the exam by email when the exam is due to start.

5.2.3 Extra-time in examinations

Students who have extra-time as approved by their Student Support Plan will be granted additional time in which to submit their completed exam answers for marking. The extra-time allowances **differ** depending on the length of your examination and are detailed in the [University's assessment policies and procedures](#) 18.3. A student who has extra-time in scheduled university examinations should have the extra-time allowance displayed on their online timetable for their specific exam.

5.2.4 Submission process for online examination answers

Students are advised of the electronic submission process via Turnitin. The submission deadline date and time, as well as the process for submission, will be published to students well in advance of the exam. All summative assessments will be submitted via the VLE Turnitin system, see 6.4.2

5.2.5 Late or non-submission of online examinations

The exam submission deadline is shown on the students' timetable, and additionally students will be reminded by email prior to the deadline date.

Late submissions: penalties are regulated by the [University Policy on Assessment, Examiners, Marking and Feedback](#); section 18.12. If there are no valid Exceptional Circumstances, failure to submit an examination will result in a mark of zero.

5.2.6 Academic Integrity and misconduct in online examinations

Online and open examinations are limited-timeframe assessments. Therefore it is permitted to refer to written and online materials unless any restrictions are specified. Students, however, must ensure that the work submitted is entirely their own, and while the assessment is live must not:

- communicate with other students on the topic of this assessment.
- use ChatGPT or any other AI assistive technology.
- communicate with departmental staff on the topic of the assessment (other than to highlight an error or issue with the assessment which needs amendment or clarification)
- seek assistance with the assessment from academic support services, such as the Writing and Language Skills Centre or Maths Skills Centre, or from Disability Services (unless the student has been recommended an exam support worker in a Student Support Plan)
- seek advice or contribution from any other third party, including proof-readers, friends, or family members.

Where there is evidence of academic misconduct this will be addressed in line with the University's [Academic Misconduct Policy](#), and if proven it will be penalised in line with the appropriate penalty table. Given the nature of these assessments, any collusion identified will normally be treated as cheating/breach of assessment regulations and penalised appropriately according to the policy.

5.3 Students Requiring Individual Arrangements in Examinations

Individual examination arrangements (IAs) may be approved for students who are unable to sit formal University examinations under normal exam conditions due to a disability or other long-standing condition. IAs are to ensure that equitable examination conditions are provided, and to enable students to demonstrate their knowledge and competence notwithstanding their disability. There are two main groups of students who need alternative examination arrangements:

1. Students with a medically diagnosed **disability** (as defined by the Equality Act) **or any other diagnosed long-standing condition**, and have undertaken a formal assessment after the age of 16. If you believe you qualify for this assessment then you must book an appointment with Disability Services as soon as possible.
2. Students with a temporary injury, condition or illness, e.g., a broken wrist on the writing hand. Students should contact their academic department in this instance.

5.3.1 *Making an application for individual assessment arrangements (IAs)*

Students have to formally request individual examination or written assessment arrangements they need, and these will be detailed on their Student Support Plan. Student Support Plans are not created automatically. Students should note that arrangements that were in place at school or college are **not** automatically carried forward when at University. Applications for IAs, on the basis of a diagnosed disability or other long-standing condition, must be made via the [University's Disability Services](#). In the first instance email your disability evidence to disabilityservices@york.ac.uk. Once they have received evidence a Disability or SpLD Practitioner, or a Student Wellbeing Officer will be in touch to complete a Student Support Plan, and this is where assessment and examination adjustments will be agreed and listed.

A [step-by-step guide](#) to making individual arrangement requests is available via the Disability Services web pages.

Once examination IAs are in place and the exam timetable is published then your specific arrangements for a given exam will be detailed on your [online Timetable](#).

5.4 *Procedure for identifying assessments with dispensation for spelling or grammatical mistakes on examination scripts*

When a student has a certified disability and their Student Support Plan (SSP) recommends that they should not be penalised for errors in spelling or grammar in their examination script, the following procedure will be adopted:

- A 'flag' with standard wording is provided by the Examinations Office. The flag wording will alert the marker that the student has a disability such that errors of spelling or grammar should be ignored.
- A 'flag' will be applied by the Department to each summative marksheet prior to anonymous marking, alerting the marker that errors of spelling or grammar should be ignored.

5.5 *Rubric (Exam Instructions)*

Examinations vary in length and in the number of questions that candidates are required to answer. The rubric (instructions) on the examination paper will give candidates clear information about what is required.

Examination papers are designed to test a candidate's understanding of a subject as defined in the module outline and learning outcomes. The questions will draw on topics treated in lectures and seminars but need not be restricted to them. The marking scheme for the examination, i.e. how much weight is given to each task, is specified in the rubric on the front cover of the exam paper. The default is that all questions count equally. While it is recognised that some candidates will devote more effort to some questions than to others, the examiners will expect sufficiently full answers to be given to all the questions chosen. If, however, a candidate does run out of time, they are advised to provide clear notes, as full as possible, indicating how the answer would have been developed.

Candidates should display that they have a good understanding of what the questions ask. However, if a candidate is in doubt about the precise meaning of a question, then they should explain how they have understood the question.

Different questions may lead to similar answers. There can be no objection in principle to some overlap between answers, but marks will not be given for any element of outright repetition. Points developed fully in one answer can legitimately be referred to briefly in an answer to a different question; though here, as always, candidates should make clear what they are doing. Generally, a candidate will be given no credit for direct repetition of material in any assessed work. This means that students should not repeat material in an examination that they have used, or are planning to use, in a summative essay, or vice-versa (see 6.5 Penalties).

5.5.1 Failure to follow the rubric

Scripts that deviate from the rubric will be marked in accordance with the principles outlined in the [University's How to Mark Policy, Section 49](#).

5.6 Illness during, or immediately prior to, a closed examination

5.9.1 Illness prior to a closed examination

If you are taken ill **before** an examination and are not well enough to sit it then you must inform philosophy-ug-assessment@york.ac.uk **before the exam starts**. You should then refer to the procedures on our web pages in order to apply for [a self-certified Deferral of an examination, or apply for Exceptional Circumstances affecting Assessment \(ECA\)](#) to sit-as-if-for-the-first-time. Students have 7 days from the date of the assessment in which to submit an ECA claim to the Department.

5.9.2 Health and wellbeing, exams and written assessments

It is recognised that the summative assessment process itself can cause students to be more anxious or pressured than at other times of the academic year, and this should be considered to be one of the normal challenges that academic study presents. Except in a very small number of cases, where the impact is serious and incapacitating, this would **not** be considered a valid exceptional circumstance. As it is particularly important to look after yourself ahead of, and during, examination periods students are encouraged to access the information and resources available to them on the web pages relating to [health and wellbeing](#).

6 ESSAYS

Summative essay assessments take place for all year groups of students. Essays are assessed in four categories:

1. the level of **understanding** of the module material;
2. the quality of the **argument** presented;
3. the **organisation** of the essay;
4. the quality of the **writing**.

All of these categories will be assessed in relation to the module's learning outcomes. You can find a detailed explanation of our marking criteria in our [Guide to Marking Criteria and Marking Procedures](#).

6.1 Essay questions

For some module essays students will be asked to select a question to answer or topic from a list provided by the module convenor. In these cases a list of essay questions will be supplied by the convenor in Semester 1 and 2 by the end of Week 5 at the latest. Where students are **required** to answer one from a prescribed list of set questions, **essays that do not address one of the set questions will be penalised**, and may also receive a mark of zero.

For some module essays students are allowed to formulate their own essay question. If so, students should be made aware of this at the start of the module (and it should be restated on any document listing recommended essay titles). Where the option to set one's own essay title is offered, students should be aware that there are good reasons to check with the module tutor that their proposed title is suitable. Devising a question without consulting with the module tutor or another academic carries significant risks: you will only produce a good essay if it is a response to a good, properly philosophical question of appropriate scope for the length of essay you are preparing. However, students should also be aware that consulting their tutor about their essay title may compromise their anonymity. If students are concerned about this, then they can consult via a third party, who will anonymise their emails. The default go-between is the Chair of Board of Examiners. You may also ask your personal supervisor to assist in such a case.

For all essay-based assessments, essays that fail to address, either in whole or in part, relevant module material and/or fail to demonstrate achievement of the module's learning outcomes will be penalised and may receive a mark of zero.

6.2 Maximum word limits on summative assessment

Most Philosophy summative assessments will specify a maximum permitted word limit. It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that they know the maximum word limit for every assessment where a limit is specified. The maximum permitted word limit for a Philosophy essay assessment will be advertised on the [Assessment](#) web pages. The maximum permitted word limit for an examination will be shown on the exam rubric.

The word limit includes ALL text, **except** for the assessment title, the word count number, and the bibliography. **EVERYTHING else is included in the word count.**

Students must be clear that no leeway is given for exceeding a word limit for a Philosophy assessment. In line with the [University's policy on Penalties for Summative Assessments](#), markers are only permitted to grade the specified number of words or pages. While no set overlength penalty will be applied, anything written beyond the word limit will be disregarded, and this is likely to negatively impact your grade. Material coming after the cut-off but exempted from the word limit (eg. bibliographies) will still be taken into account.

Students must declare the word count on all open forms of assessment. If it is suspected that a limit has been inaccurately declared with intent to deceive, this will be investigated as cheating under Academic Misconduct regulations.

6.2.1 Lower word limits on essays

Under-length assignments are not to be penalised under this policy; such work is to be marked on its academic merit only and taken into account in the marking criteria.

6.3 Essay presentation

The Department has rules about the presentation of written assessments, which you must follow. These are to help us mark and give feedback on the work, to ensure fairness and to prevent cheating.

The essay presentation rules are as follows:

- NO identifying information on the assessment submission - DO NOT provide your student number, do not write your 'Y' candidate number, or name, anywhere on or within the submission.
- Word count must be displayed on the top right of the first page. The word count of a submission is the total number of words it contains excluding the bibliography, the word count number, and the assessment title. ALL other text is counted.
- Essay / assessment title before the main body of the assessment text
- Turnitin will not accept any submission unless it has a minimum of 20 typed words in the document
- Word-processed
- Use an A4 page with 25mm margins. All pages to be numbered.
- Ideally double line spaced (i.e. Line and paragraph spacing 2.0)
- 12pt font, preferably Arial or similar
- Footnotes: you do not have to include footnotes, however if you do, then these must be included in the word count. Do not use footnotes for referencing (see below).
- Endnotes are not permitted.
- Use Harvard or MLA style referencing in the body of the text. [Students should refer to the Referencing guidance on the University's Academic Integrity web pages.](#)
- Full bibliography at the end of the essay.
- Essays do not need to include an abstract; if you do include an abstract, you must include it in your word count.
- Save and submit as a Word .doc .docx or PDF format only. Alternative formats (including but not limited to .pages, .odt, or .txt) will not be marked, and neither will links to cloud-hosted documents. Files that appear to be in the correct format but are corrupt, access-restricted, or otherwise unopenable will not be marked.

6.4 Electronic Turnitin submission for written assessments

6.4.1 Submission location

Assessed essays (or equivalent assessed written work) for Philosophy modules must be submitted online via the VLE Turnitin submission points on their VLE module site.

6.4.2 Submission deadlines

Submission deadlines are strict and submissions are 'time and date stamped' by the VLE Turnitin system upon receipt. Give yourself plenty of time to submit. The University recommends that assessments have finished the Turnitin submission process not later than 30 minutes **before** the official deadline to ensure the work is received in time and does not incur a lateness penalty.

The Turnitin receipt issued to the student following the successful upload of their assessment will state the time it is received TO THE MINUTE. The deadline for work is on the hour, that is if the deadline is 10 am, work submitted at 10:00:01 is late. A submission receipt that is timestamped at 10:00, for example, will be considered to be ON TIME. However, **a submission received at 10:00:01 on the receipt timestamp will be deemed to be LATE, and late submission penalties will be applied** [unless the student has an approved extension] (See [University Policy on Penalties for Summative Assessments](#)).

6.4.3 *Written assessment submission process*

All students on a Philosophy module are notified in advance by email of the submission deadline date and time, with clear instructions as to how and where to submit summative written assessments. Submission points are set up for each module, and these are clearly labelled.

Students who have questions about the submission process – i.e. word limits, essay presentation, due dates, exceptional circumstances – should contact the undergraduate assessment administrators in the first instance, philosophy-ug-assessment@york.ac.uk. Note that the VLE team will **only** look into technical queries, and will refer any submission process queries back to the Department, however if you need to contact the VLE team directly due to a technical issue please email vle-support@york.ac.uk.

All students will be able to access the [instructional video](#) and guidance documents about how to submit via Turnitin via their VLE module site and Assessment information.

Students who experience problems locating or using their submission point on the day of submission may alternatively email their submission to philosophy-ug-assessment@york.ac.uk **before** the deadline expires. Essays submitted after the deadline without approved Exceptional Circumstances will be subject to late penalties (See [University Policy on Penalties for Summative Assessments](#)).

6.4.4 *Submission rules*

Assessments must be submitted using recommended technology as instructed via the [University's web guidance](#).

Files should be submitted as a .doc, .docx, or PDF (unless otherwise specified ie audio or video file types). Other file types, including links to cloud-hosted files, **will not be marked**, and it is your responsibility to ensure that you are submitting the correct file type.

Submission of a draft version, incorrect document or corrupt file (even if accidentally submitted) will never be considered as an [Exceptional Circumstance](#). Computer (or other technology) and internet issues cannot be considered an Exceptional Circumstance.

Submission of the correct assessment, but to the wrong submission point, but within the deadline for submission, **will** be treated as correctly submitted. If a student realises that they have made such an error, it is their responsibility to alert the Department and to explain where the submission has been made.

In submitting your work, you confirm that it is your work and that you have not engaged in any Academic Misconduct. Be aware that any submitted assessments may be investigated for evidence of academic misconduct using Turnitin text-matching software. The University

regards any form of Academic Misconduct as a very serious matter. (See section 14. Academic Misconduct)

6.4.5 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: if you have already made a submission to a submission point you will not be able to submit again AFTER the Due Date and Time for that submission point has passed. If you've yet to make a submission when the Due Date and Time for that submission point has passed you can only submit ONCE.

- o If you need to make a superseding submission to a submission point where the Due Date and Time has passed, you will need to email us at: philosophy-ug-assessment@york.ac.uk to clear the current submission so that you can submit again. When making such a request you must include the digital receipt for the submission you wish to be cleared along with the name of the VLE site the submission point is located within. [The digital receipt can be downloaded from the submission point itself](#). Please note that such requests are only likely to be acted upon during standard Monday to Friday University office hours and, even within office hours, may involve some delay particularly during the assessment periods when support staff are at their busiest. If you need to make a superseding submission then please allow us sufficient time to respond to you.

IMPORTANT: if you have already submitted to a submission point you will not be able to submit again AFTER the Due Date and Time for that submission point has passed.

- If you've yet to make a submission when the Due Date and Time for that submission point has passed you can only submit ONCE. Only in the following situations department office will intervene:
 - 1) If you hold an extension for the assessment (via Self-certification, ECA or SSP) and you need to make a superseding submission to a submission point where the original Due Date and Time has passed, but before your revised Deadline.
 - 2) If you realize that you have submitted an incorrect file (eg submitted cover sheet only) - within the first 30 minutes past your deadline. This is not an opportunity to extend your assignment time. Department staff will review such requests.

In both cases - you will need to email us at: philosophy-ug-assessment@york.ac.uk to clear the current submission so that you can submit again. When making such a request you must include:

- Document you want to include as your final submission AND
- the name of the VLE site the submission point is located within AND
- the digital receipt for the submission you wish to be cleared. The digital receipt can be downloaded from the submission point itself. Please note that such requests are only likely to be acted upon during standard Monday to Friday University office hours and, even within office hours, may involve some delay, particularly during the assessment periods when support staff are at their busiest.

6.4.6 Making a late submission to a Turnitin submission point

If the only version of the assessment the student submits is AFTER the submission deadline then this submission will be marked and late penalties will be applied.

IMPORTANT: Turnitin DOES NOT allow students to submit more than one version of an assessment AFTER the deadline.

This is especially important to note for students who self-certify for a short essay extension, or who have approved exceptional circumstances for a longer extension as **only ONE submission will be accepted after the Turnitin submission deadline**. Students must email philosophy-ug-assessment@york.ac.uk if they have a query about submitting their assessment after the deadline, and also see 6.4.5 about making a superceding submission if appropriate.

6.4.7 Requesting an extension for an essay

Short essay extensions may be requested by students who either Self-certify for the automatic 4-day essay extension, or via the evidenced [Exceptional Circumstances](#) affecting Assessment procedures. **All extension requests must be made in advance of the submission date**, and by the published deadline. Requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis and students will be notified of the decision in writing. Extensions to submission deadlines are **not** permitted for online exam submissions (see 5.4 Online examinations).

6.5 Penalties

Penalties will be applied to essay marks in the following circumstances:

a) A student exceeds the stated upper word limit

In line with the [University's policy on Penalties for Summative Assessments](#), markers are only permitted to grade the specified number of words or pages. While no set overlength penalty will be applied, anything written beyond the word limit will be disregarded, and this is likely to negatively impact your grade. Material coming after the cut-off but exempted from the word limit (eg. bibliographies) will still be taken into account.

b) An essay is submitted late (and does not have approved Exceptional Circumstances)

Students should not submit work late. All work submitted late, without valid Exceptional Circumstances, will be penalised and have a percentage of the marks deducted. **All Philosophy essays are marked out of 100.** The deadline for work is on the hour, that is if the deadline is 10 am, work submitted at 10:00:01 is late. A submission receipt that is timestamped at 10:00, for example, will be considered to be ON TIME. However, **a submission received at 10:00:01 on the receipt timestamp will be deemed to be LATE, and late submission penalties will be applied** [unless the student has an approved extension] (See [University Policy on Penalties for Summative Assessments](#)).

Work that is submitted one hour late (i.e. submitted between 10:00.01 and 11:00.00) will have a 5% (or 5 mark) penalty applied to their mark.

After one hour, for example from 11:00.01 on the deadline date, and up to 10:00.00 the following day (i.e. 24 hours after the original deadline), 10% (or 10 marks) will be deducted from their mark.

A further 10% of the awarded marks are deducted for each 24-hour period of late submission (or part of each day) that the work is late up to a total of five consecutive days (including weekends and bank holidays). For example, if work is awarded a mark of 60 out of 100, and the work is submitted up to 2 days late, 20% or 20 marks are deducted, and the final mark will be 40. After five days of non-submission, the work is marked at zero. Note, however, that the penalty cannot result in a mark less than zero.

c) An essay wholly or substantially duplicates material submitted for a different summative assessment.

It is not permissible to submit a piece of work for one summative assessment **that wholly or substantially duplicates material submitted for a different summative assessment**. This is considered self-plagiarism. (It is, of course, permissible to use material from a formative assessment in a summative assessment. Also, for the purposes of this rule, any summative assessment that is explicitly preparatory towards another does not count — e.g. the Dissertation Outline can and should be drawn on in the Long Dissertation.) 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: if the summative assessments have different deadlines, then the student will receive a mark of 0 for the summative assessment with the later deadline; if the summative assessments have the same deadline, then the Chair of the Board of Examiners will decide which assessment will be marked at 0.

Importantly, if a student is suspected of plagiarising anyone other than themselves, then their case will be handed over to the University's Academic Misconduct procedures (see Section 14.2 Plagiarism).

6.6 Guidance on writing essays

Writing philosophy well does not come easily; it is a skill that everyone has to learn, and even experienced philosophers find it hard at times! There should be guidance for undergraduates on your VLE module site, and on our web pages on [Writing Philosophy Essays](#).

6.7 Procedure for identifying written assessments with dispensation for extra time to submit essays (or equivalent)

Students who have been professionally assessed and found to have a relevant disability or long-standing condition will be provided with a Student Support Plan (SSP) from Disability Services, and copies will be held in the relevant academic Department(s). The SSP will confirm that the student may **occasionally** require additional time (extensions) to submit their essays for disability-related reasons. The following procedure will be adopted:

- Essay extensions are not automatic. Students must formally request an essay extension, stating the reason for the request (which must be for disability-related reasons) and this must be made in advance of the submission deadline. Requests must be made electronically via the [University's Exceptional Circumstances affecting assessment pages](#).
- Each request is considered on a case-by-case basis and does not guarantee the successful outcome of an extension application, nor does the department permit automatic extensions for all essays.

- The student will be notified in writing (usually by email) of the decision as soon as possible after this.
- The Philosophy Department will note the number of SSP extensions requested by students during their studies, and should we become concerned about the frequency and use of extensions, then the student, Department and Disability Services may be called to review the SPP recommendation.

6.8 Procedure for identifying assessments with dispensation for spelling or grammatical errors on written assessments

When a student has a certified disability and their Student Support Plan (SSP) recommends that they should not be penalised for errors in spelling or grammar in their written assessments, the following procedure will be adopted:

- Closed Exams: A 'flag' with standard wording is provided by the Examinations Office. The wording will alert the marker that the student has a disability such that errors of spelling or grammar should be ignored.
- On line submissions: A 'flag' will be applied by the Department to each anonymous marksheet prior to marking, alerting the marker that errors of spelling or grammar should be ignored. Submissions for students with this accommodation will be grouped in a 'flagged' marking group

7 MARKING PROCEDURES AND A GUIDE TO OUR MARKING CRITERIA

To enhance usability, [Section 7 - A Guide to Our Marking Criteria and Marking Procedures](#) has been extracted and compiled into a separate document.

The most recent version will always be located in the [Assessment Guides](#) section of Philosophy department pages.

8 MARKS OBTAINED BY PARTICIPATING IN STUDY ABROAD SCHEMES

Marks obtained while participating in a University exchange programme, or at a previous institution, are given a credit weighting and are then treated in the same way as other York marks. Sometimes, students choose to spend one or two semesters at another University on the exchange programme as part of their 3 year degree programme. The Philosophy Department follows the University Grade Conversion Tables for marks awarded at Partner Universities. Prior to participation in the Exchange Programme, all students must agree a plan of studies with the International Officer. The plan of studies determines the weight courses taken will be given in terms of York credits as well as the conversion of marks into marks on the University's marking scale. Marks awarded at other institutions will not be re-marked by internal examiners.

Study abroad will be incorporated into programmes as either 'replacement' or 'additional' credit. Where it is 'additional', this will lengthen the normal period of study required for an award. Students on the Philosophy with an additional Year Abroad degree programme (4-year programme) will spend a full academic year at their participating institution, where they will be required to take the equivalent amount of modules during the year (120 credits equivalent). A condition of passing the year will be to sit all the summative assessments. Students on the Year Abroad degree programme will receive a Pass or Fail result in eVision for the academic year they study abroad. After the Year

Abroad the student returns to complete their final year of modules and assessments at the University of York.

Depending on your specific programme requirements, study abroad or a work placement may require you to submit a written assessment in the form of a reflective piece. Students are responsible for checking the requirements of their study abroad period with their home department. Joint Honours students must consult both of their departments.

If you undertake study abroad or a work placement as additional credit but do not achieve that credit, you will usually be permitted to transfer to the relevant (three year) variant of the programme.

If you undertake study abroad or a work placement as replacement credit but do not achieve that credit, you are likely to be required to leave the University but may be eligible for a lower exit award.

9 FEEDBACK

'Feedback' at a University level can be understood as any part of the learning process which is designed to guide your progress through your degree programme. We aim to help you reflect on your own learning and help you feel clearer about your progress through clarifying what is expected of you in both formative and summative assessments. The [guidelines for feedback](#) are available in the University's assessment policies and procedures web pages.

9.1 Feedback on formative (unassessed) work

All students are given feedback on formative(unassessed) work they have submitted in relation to modules they are taking; this offers comments on the work's strengths and weaknesses and how it might be improved. Such comments may refer to the Department's Marking Criteria (See 7.2 Marking criteria. Feedback on formative submissions may carry an indicative mark but this is less important than the advice on areas of strength and weakness, and guidance on how work may be improved. Both formative marks and feedback carry the proviso that higher standards are expected in summative assessment.

Students are given the opportunity to discuss aspects of the module and their progress at weekly [Feedback and Advice Hours](#) with module tutors.

Feedback may be written, verbal, or electronic (via the VLE). Tutors often have large quantities of written work to mark. In every case feedback will be provided in good time for students to benefit from this before submitting assessed work, and tutors will advise when feedback will be available. Where possible, we aim to provide written feedback on formative work within two weeks of submission.

9.2 Feedback on summative (assessed) work

All students are given written feedback on assessed essays and examinations. In accordance with the [University's assessment policies and procedures](#) and its policy on Feedback, students should usually receive feedback within twenty-five working days of the submission deadline for the assessment. Working days exclude University closure days ('customary leave' days between Christmas and New Year and public holidays/statutory holidays.').

Summative feedback comments will be made available to you electronically, via the specific Turnitin submission point. If a student has a query regarding the feedback they should first contact the tutor who wrote the feedback to seek clarification on the comments given.

Some assessments, for example, 1st year Reason & Argument exam assessments, will not provide detailed feedback; in these cases students will receive at least a breakdown of marks by topic.

All assessment tasks, students' completed work, associated grades, marksheets/marker feedback for assessment contributing to an award of the University from the academic year 2024/25 will be kept for 5 years after the end date of a student's course, before being securely destroyed. Assessments submitted electronically via the [VLE](#) will be stored in accordance with this requirement.

10 BOARD OF EXAMINERS

The Board of Examiners consists of all teaching members of the Department Education Committee, External Examiner for the undergraduate programme in Philosophy, any members of the academic and academic-related staff of the University who have assessed any of the students under consideration, and any other individuals recommended by the Department Education Committee to and approved by the Standing Committee on Assessment.

10.1 The role of the Board of Examiners

The University's assessment policies and procedures 6.2.1 states that the functions of the Board of Examiners include:

- a) ensuring the University's principles of assessment underpin assessment processes and decisions;
- b) taking an overview of the array of marks in relation to both mark distribution from individual modules, and the performance of individual students, in the presence of the External Examiner(s);
- c) ratifying provisional marks;
- d) recommend to SCA (which has the delegated authority of Senate), on behalf of the BoS, award, progression and reassessment decisions;
- e) ensuring documentation is completed.

10.2 Examiners' meetings and procedures

The Philosophy Board of Examiners meets twice, with one additional sub-committee meeting. The 'Internal' Board of Examiners Meeting is preceded by a Scrutiny panel, which includes the Chair of the Exam Board and others, to consider runs of module marks in preparation for the 'Internal' Examiners' Meeting.

10.2.1 The Scrutiny panel

The members of the Scrutiny Panel include the Chair of Examiners, Professional Services staff, and other examiners as appropriate. The job of the Scrutiny Panel is to check that marks have been received and processed for all modules and that any penalties (lateness or academic misconduct) have been applied. They should also give initial consideration to any

issues raised by External Examiners on particular modules, and to check for any further inconsistencies or irregularities which might be brought to External Examiners' attention.

10.2.2 The 'Internal' meeting of the Board of Examiners

The 'Internal' Meeting of the Board of Examiners takes place in the Summer Semester Week 3, and its role is to oversee and evaluate the marking for stages 1, 2, and 3. All members of the Board of Examiners are asked to attend.

The Board of Examiners will have oversight of the mark distributions on individual modules, but will not consider the marks of individual students directly.

Module Review: in the case of individual modules, the Internal Board is looking for mark distributions that are anomalous in relation to the mark distributions for other modules offered by the Philosophy Department. The mark distribution for a module will be considered anomalous if the mean or median mark for the module is at least 5 marks above or below the mean or median mark for all Philosophy modules offered that year, at that level. The Board can also consider potential anomalies in mark distributions in specific regions of the marking scale, particularly the lower and higher ends. Where the mark distribution for a module is considered anomalous, the Board will consider whether there is a plausible explanation of why the marks for the module are anomalous. If there is no plausible explanation, then the Board of Examiners has the right to systematically raise or lower the module marks (or some subset thereof, if an anomaly is only discovered in a specific region of the marking scale). The Board of Examiners may choose to refer the module marks to an internal third marker for moderation where there is lack of consensus over whether to make a systematic adjustment of marks. In this case, the results of the third marking will be considered by the sub-committee of the Board of Examiners.

10.2.3 The Sub-Committee of the Board of Examiners

The Sub-Committee of the Board of Examiners will meet on Thursday of the Summer Semester week 3, to consider and approve the recommendations made following moderation or third marking of assessments. Any decisions will be confirmed with the External Examiner by email.

10.2.3 Board of Examiners Ratification Meeting

This Meeting of the Board of Examiners includes the Chair of Board of Examiners, the External Examiner(s) (via Zoom or similar), with a minimum of 3 people present to be quorate. It will take place on Friday of the Summer Semester week 3. Its role is to confirm the accuracy of the Progression outcomes and Degree classification decisions for students. The decisions are signed off by the External Examiner and Chair of Board of Examiners. The outcomes are then ratified on behalf of Senate by a member of the Standing Committee on Assessment.

10.3 The role of the External Examiner

The University's assessment policies and procedures 8.1. states that in broad terms, External Examiners are asked to:

- to ensure that its assessment policies and procedures are fair and fairly operated, and that the principles of clarity, equity, consistency and openness are observed;

- to ensure that assessment methods are appropriate;
- to ensure that the structure and content of programmes of study are appropriate;
- to ensure comparability of standards with other similar institutions.

11 RESULTS

Provisional marks for all summative assessments will be available for students to view on eVision within twenty-five working days of the submission deadline for the assessment. **Please note that the twenty-five working day limit excludes weekends, bank holidays, and University closure days.** Provisional marks are subject to change by the Board of Examiners in consultation with the External Examiner.

Final Degree classifications, which are subject to ratification from Senate, will be published on eVision. After the Board has ratified marks and award decisions students will receive an email from Registry Services with a link to eVision where they will be able to view their degree classification result, subject to ratification from the University Standing Committee on Assessment. Students can also view a breakdown of their final stage module marks on the same screen. University Transcripts are now provided electronically following their Graduation Ceremony.

Students Progressing from Stage 1 to 2, and from Stage 2 to 3 etc, will also receive official confirmation on eVision of their progression outcomes and can view their stage module marks.

12 ACADEMIC APPEALS

In accordance with University Procedures Students can submit an academic appeal to the University in relation to:

- Failure of academic programme
- Degree classification
- Exceptional Circumstances Committee decisions
- Academic misconduct decisions

Students can appeal against a **procedural error** in arriving at an academic decision, **or** on the basis of **exceptional circumstances** if they have a good reason for not declaring these at the appropriate time. In all cases, students have 28 days in which to submit an appeal to the university following receipt of official notification of an academic decision.

Important: Students **cannot** appeal against the academic judgement of examiners regarding their work (please see below).

For more information on the University's Policy on appeals and complaints, and for details of how to submit an Academic Appeal to the Special Cases Committee please refer to the [University web pages on Complaints and Appeals](#).

12.1 Students wishing to appeal against their marks

Students cannot appeal against the academic judgement of the examiners regarding their work.

Students should note that a variation of up to 15 marks between their lowest and highest marks is normal in Philosophy, and poor performance in a module is not an adequate basis for appeal. Please note that members of staff are not permitted to advise students that they either should or should not submit an Academic Appeal to the University.

In the first instance students should seek guidance from the [University's Appeals and Complaints web pages](#) and are also strongly advised to contact [York SU and look at their Advice and Support web pages](#).

If students are still unable to resolve their query after accessing the above information and contacting York SU, please contact the [Student Hub](#).

13 REASSESSMENT

University rules governing progression, compensation and reassessment are set out in the [University's Rules for Progression and Award in Undergraduate Programmes](#).

All reassessment exams and essays are held/submitted during the University Late Summer Assessment Period (August Resit); 10th–24th August 2026. The department will provide a minimum of 3 weeks' notice of reassessment deadlines. "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.

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.

13.1 Repeat study

Undergraduate students whose stage 1 results, after compensation and reassessment, do not meet the requirement for progression into stage 2 may be permitted to repeat the whole of stage 1 of the initial programme of study or an equivalent programme in a subject related to their original programme of study, provided they have a minimum credit weighted mean of 10 marks. Tuition fees are charged for the repeat year. Assessment marks from the repeat year only are then used to judge whether the student can progress into stage 2. Marks from the first attempt at stage 1 are disregarded, though all marks are recorded on the transcript. A student normally has only one opportunity for repeat study. **Students may not re-submit summative assessments they have previously submitted at the first attempt.**

13.2 Resit marks

Students may be eligible for Resits in assessments for modules that they have failed – although there is a limit to the number of Resits you may take.

It is important to note that Resit marks (i.e. marks from a reassessment taken as a second “final” attempt) are capped. For degree classification, the module mark following reassessment will be capped at 40 for C-level, I-level, H-level modules. If you receive a mark of 30 - 39 then it *might* be possible to be compensated according to the [University’s Rules for Progression and Award in Undergraduate Programmes](#).

In your first year (Stage 1) your marks do not count towards your degree classification result, you just need to pass all your first year modules to be able to progress from Stage 1 to Stage 2. In your 2nd and subsequent years, your marks DO count towards your final degree classification result.

Full details about how your degree award result is calculated (and the weightings used for Stage 2 and 3 marks); the rules regarding progression, compensation and reassessment; are given in the [University’s Rules for Progression and Award in Undergraduate Programmes](#).

14 ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

The University takes all forms of academic misconduct very seriously, and the penalties for committing academic misconduct can be severe. Information for students regarding [Academic Misconduct](#) is available on university web Pages.

The department’s position in the use of Generative AI is very simple: you should not use generative AI on Philosophy modules, either when you are already working on your assessments, or at the pre-assessment stage of your work. You can find further clarification on the department’s stance under the ‘Assessment’ tab on each module VLE site, and in the [appendix to this document](#). Work suspected of AI use in breach of the department’s policy will be subject to the Academic Misconduct procedures outlined below.

14.1 Academic misconduct: your responsibilities

The student shall be considered responsible for the academic integrity of all work they submit for assessment, including group assessments. If insufficiently acknowledged material is discovered in open assessments by examiners, the question of whether the student has behaved (or intended to behave) dishonestly or unethically must not be a factor in the decision to report the case to the relevant assessment officer. Expressions of a lack of intent are not a valid justification for misconduct. The principle that the student is responsible for their actions also applies to the reporting of any illicit material brought into closed examinations by students. (See [Academic Misconduct](#) policy and procedures for all programmes of study.)

14.2 Plagiarism

The practice of examination by essays written by candidates in their own time depends on the honesty of candidates. Plagiarism threatens to undermine this common and often most appropriate way of assessment. Thus, both the university and the department view plagiarism with the utmost seriousness. ***At no stage in your studies will plagiarism be tolerated.***

The Detection of Plagiarism is easy. All examiners are experienced in detecting plagiarism. There are also efficient electronic and internet-based tools for checking whether any part of an essay comes from the public domain (eg Turnitin).

14.3 What is plagiarism?

Plagiarism is 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. All students must complete and pass the on-line Academic Integrity tutorial prior to submission of their first assessment. Please see the [Academic Integrity web pages](#) for information about how and when to complete this.

Students should note the following important information:

- Both direct quotation and close paraphrase need to be acknowledged.
- Each instance of direct quotation or close paraphrase needs to be acknowledged **separately**.
- The most common form of plagiarism is plagiarism of material from the public domain, i.e. unacknowledged use of published articles or books, of papers available on the internet, or of distributed course material.
- Using another student's work without proper acknowledgement constitutes plagiarism from sources outside the public domain.

14.4 Other forms of Academic Misconduct

- **Collusion between students taking the same assessment:** this is the process whereby two or more students work together – without official approval – and share ideas, solutions or material in work submitted for assessment.
- **Breach and/or Cheating:** failure to comply with the rules of closed assessments e.g. unauthorised access to materials in a closed assessment.
- **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 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). This allows us to treat generative AI cases under this offence.
- **Fabrication:** to seek to gain advantage by incorporating falsified or fabricated material or data in work submitted for assessment or publication.

In addition to these 'assessment offences', there are also a number of 'disciplinary offences', including:

- **Soliciting:** where a student asks a third party to produce work for them or for the third party to inappropriately assist, or act as them, in undertaking an assessment(s).
- **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, b) to appear as another student in an assessment(s).
- **Deception:** presenting fabricated or misleading evidence to gain advantage in assessment arrangements (e.g. mitigating circumstances).

- **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.
- **Academic misconduct alleged subsequent to the conferment of an award:** any offence, as defined above, alleged or discovered after the award of a degree from the University of York.

14.5 What happens if Academic Misconduct is suspected?

Where Academic Misconduct is suspected in a Philosophy module, the examiner(s) concerned will bring the matter to the immediate attention of departmental StAMP (Standing Academic Misconduct Panel) members. Assessment offences, including plagiarism, are dealt with within academic departments or, in serious cases, escalated to StAMP. Disciplinary offences are dealt with by University disciplinary procedures or other existing mechanisms. Students can access the University's [Academic Misconduct Policy and Procedures](#) for all programmes of study via the web pages. These web pages and the policy document fully outline the processes for dealing with cases of suspected Academic Misconduct.

14.6 Marks penalties and stepped marking

Academic Misconduct penalties are as described in the [Academic Misconduct Policy and Procedures](#) document. Penalties can include marks being capped. In cases where an assessment is capped at a mark that is not one of the Departments marking steps, the assessment can be awarded this mark even though it is not a marking step. For example, an essay originally marked 63 is capped at 59 for Academic Misconduct. This essay gets a 59, the cap, rather than a 58, the highest marking step within the cap.

15 SELF-CERTIFICATION OF ASSESSMENT & EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES (ECA)

If your performance in or completion of a summative assessment has been seriously impaired by medical or other unforeseen circumstances, then you may be able to claim exceptional circumstances through this policy using Self-certification or Exceptional Circumstances application. For details please refer to University [Exceptional circumstances affecting assessment](#) pages.

16 CRITERIA FOR THE AWARD OF DISTINCTION

The criteria for the recommendation of a first class degree with distinction are as follows:

Philosophy single-subject (Starred First Degree): candidates must have an overall credit-weighted mean of at least 75% or above (rounded) in marks contributing to the final award.

Mathematics/Philosophy:

1. candidates must have an overall rounded award mark of 80%

Physics/Philosophy:

1. candidates must meet the Department of Physics' criteria for a distinction for modules taken in Physics;
2. candidates must meet the Department of Philosophy's criteria for a distinction of at least 75% (rounded) in marks for modules taken in Philosophy.

Philosophy/Sociology:

1. candidates must meet the Department of Sociology's criteria for a distinction for modules taken in Sociology;
2. candidates must meet the Department of Philosophy's criteria for a distinction of at least 75% (rounded) in marks for modules taken in Philosophy.
3. candidates must have an overall credit-weighted mean of at least 75% (unrounded) in marks contributing to the final award.

English/Philosophy:

1. candidates must have an overall credit-weighted mean of at least 75% (rounded up) in marks contributing to the final award;
2. explicit approval of the external examiners;
3. candidates must have a maximum of 20 credits below 65;
4. there are no borderlines in reaching the criteria for a starred first.

Linguistics/Philosophy:

5. candidates must have an overall credit-weighted mean of at least 75% (rounded) in marks contributing to the final award;
6. subject to the explicit approval of the external examiners;
7. candidates must have a maximum of 20 credits below 65;
8. there are no borderlines in reaching the criteria for a starred first.

History/Philosophy:

1. Award of First Class Honours with Distinction requires the explicit approval of the External Examiners.
2. Candidate must have received a minimum final award mark (rounded) of 75%.
3. Candidate must have received a mark below 65 for no more than 20 credits in modules which contribute towards the final award mark (i.e. Stages 2 and 3).

Politics/Philosophy; Economics/Philosophy; Philosophy, Politics and Economics: students should check with the PPE Department.

17 PRIZES

17.1 J L Mackie First Year Prize

£100 awarded to the Single Honours student with the best performance overall in Philosophy modules.

17.2 Marie McGinn Second Year Prize

£100 is awarded to the student with the best performance on a minimum of 60 credits of Philosophy modules (excluding PPE).

17.3 Thomas Baldwin Third Year Prize

£100 is awarded to the student with the best performance on a minimum of 60 credits of Philosophy modules (excluding PPE).

18 Appendix 1 - Guidance for Students on the Use of AI in Philosophy

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 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.