

STUDENT HANDBOOK



PPE PRELIMS



PPE Prelims Handbook 2020-21

1. Foreword

1.1 Statement of Coverage

This handbook applies to students starting the first year of PPE in Michaelmas term 2020. The information in this handbook may be different for students starting in other years.

1.2 Version

Version	Details	Date
Version 1.0	Handbook published	September 2020

1.3 Disclaimer

The *Examination Regulations* relating to this course are the “Preliminary Examination” regulations for PPE at <https://examregs.admin.ox.ac.uk/Home/RegulationSearch> (the version that applies to you is the 2020/21 version). If there is a conflict between information in this handbook and the *Examination Regulations* then you should follow the *Examination Regulations*. If you have any concerns please contact the PPE administrator (violet.brand@politics.ox.ac.uk).

The information in this handbook is accurate as at September 2020, however it may be necessary for changes to be made in certain circumstances, as explained at www.ox.ac.uk/coursechanges. If such changes are made the departments will publish a new version of the handbook together with a list of the changes and students will be informed.

1.4 List of Contents

1. Foreword.....	1
1.1 Statement of Coverage.....	1
1.2 Version.....	1
1.3 Disclaimer	1
1.4 List of Contents.....	2
1.5 Welcome	4
1.6 Useful Department Contacts	5
1.7 Buildings, Locations, Maps and Access	5
1.8 Important Dates.....	5
2. The Course Content and Structure.....	5
2.1 Overview	5
2.2 Course Aims	6
2.3 Intended Learning Outcomes.....	7
2.4 Course Structure.....	8
2.5 Syllabus.....	9
3. Teaching and Learning.....	9
3.1 Organisation of teaching and learning.....	9
3.2 Expectations of study and student workload	15
4. Assessment.....	15
4.1 Assessment Structure	15
4.2 Feedback on learning and assessment	16
4.3 Examination conventions.....	16
4.4 Good academic practice and avoiding plagiarism.....	16
4.5 Entering for University examinations	19
4.6 Examination dates.....	19
4.7 Sitting your examination.....	20
4.8 External examiner and examiners' reports.....	20
4.9 Prizes.....	20

5. Skills and learning development	20
5.1 Academic progress.....	20
5.2 Learning development and skills	21
5.3 Induction	21
5.4 Opportunities for skills training and development	21
5.5 Employability and careers information and advice	21
6. Student representation, evaluation and feedback	21
6.1 Department representation.....	22
6.2 Division and University representation.....	22
6.3 Opportunities to provide evaluation and feedback	22
7. Student life and support	23
7.1 Who to contact for help	23
7.2 Complaints and appeals.....	24
7.3 Policies and regulations	25
7.4 Equality and diversity	25
8. Facilities.....	27
8.1 Libraries and museums.....	27
8.2 IT.....	27
9. The Future.....	27
9.1 Taking your Degree	27
9.2 Proceeding to Further Study	28
Appendix A: Outline of Papers.....	29
A.1 The Preliminary Examination	29
A.2 The Final Honour School	31

1.5 Welcome

As Chair of the PPE Committee, I'm pleased to be able to welcome you to PPE at Oxford. PPE is a strong and engaging multidisciplinary degree programme that has been in existence in Oxford for just short of 100 years, and successful enough to have inspired many institutions all over the world to initiate similar programmes. We are very proud of our course here at Oxford which balances the empirical with the theoretical, and the practical with the abstract. Many students are drawn to one of the subjects when they apply only to find that it is another that ultimately interests them by the end of three years, although I hope you will find yourself drawing on elements of all three of the disciplines to which you will be exposed, both as you continue on with your studies, and in your chosen profession. PPE is unquestionably a challenging degree, but we believe strongly that the end result is a well-rounded intellect ready to face the future with an informed, critical and questioning mind. I very much hope you enjoy the next three years.

Professor Thomas Sinclair
Chair of the PPE Committee

Associate Professor of Philosophy & Fellow and Tutor in Philosophy, Wadham College

1.5.1 Purpose of the Handbook

This handbook contains useful information about the first year of PPE. Other useful sources of information are listed in the next section. The handbook for the second and third year will be published at the beginning of your second year.

1.5.2 Other Key Sources of Information

On department websites you will find the contact details of academic and administrative staff. See www.philosophy.ox.ac.uk and www.politics.ox.ac.uk and www.economics.ox.ac.uk. On WebLearn/Canvas you will find lecture lists, reading lists, and other course materials. You can access WebLearn/Canvas by clicking on "current students" at www.ppe.ox.ac.uk.

In the *Examination Regulations* you will find the formal rules that govern your course choices and examinations for Prelims and Finals: www.admin.ox.ac.uk/examregs. The *Examination Conventions* set out how examined work will be marked and how the resulting marks will be used to arrive at a final result and classification of an award. You will be notified by email when the conventions that apply to you become available, normally one term before the examination begins. Conventions from previous years are on PPE WebLearn/Canvas.

The Oxford Students website provides information about the services and resources available to you across the University: www.ox.ac.uk/students. For general information and guidance and formal notification and explanation of the University's codes, regulations, policies and procedures, refer to the University student handbook: www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/student-handbook. For college regulations, refer to your college handbook.

1.6 Useful Department Contacts

The Chair of the PPE committee or the PPE administrator can be contacted for questions about PPE as a whole. The Chair is Professor Thomas Sinclair (thomas.sinclair@philosophy.ox.ac.uk) and the PPE administrator is Violet Brand (violet.brand@politics.ox.ac.uk).

The Director of Undergraduate Studies (DUS) or the Undergraduate Administrator can be contacted for questions about each department. In Philosophy the DUS is Professor Thomas Sinclair (thomas.sinclair@philosophy.ox.ac.uk) and the administrator is James Knight (james.knight@philosophy.ox.ac.uk). In Politics the DUS is Professor James Tilley (james.tilley@politics.ox.ac.uk) and the administrator is Durga Sapre (durga.sapre@politics.ox.ac.uk). In Economics the DUS is Professor Chris Bowdler (email above) and the administrator is Katherine Cumming (econundergrad@economics.ox.ac.uk).

The student representatives can be found on the WebLearn/Canvas site of each department or by contacting the relevant undergraduate administrator. The disability contacts for each department can be found at www.ox.ac.uk/students/welfare/disability/aboutdas.

1.7 Buildings, Locations, Maps and Access

Most of your lectures and classes will take place in the Examination Schools on the High Street. You are also likely to visit the Manor Road Building on Manor Road (which houses the Politics and Economics Departments and the Social Science Library) and the Radcliffe Humanities building on the Woodstock Road (which houses the Philosophy Faculty and Library). The access guide website provides interactive maps, floor plans, and access information for all University buildings: www.admin.ox.ac.uk/access.

1.8 Important Dates

The Oxford year is divided into three terms and three vacations. Within each term, a full term of eight weeks is the main teaching period. The dates of full term for this year are below. Future term dates are at www.ox.ac.uk/about/facts-and-figures/dates-of-term.

Michaelmas Term 2020
Sunday 11 October – Saturday 5 December

Hilary Term 2020
Sunday 17 January – Saturday 13 March

Trinity Term 2020
Sunday 25 April – Saturday 19 June

2. The Course Content and Structure

2.1 Overview

PPE seeks to bring together some of the most important approaches to understanding the social and human world. It fosters intellectual capacities that you can apply across all three

disciplines and develops skills that you will find useful for a wide range of careers and activities after graduation. The degree is constructed on the belief that the parallel study of related disciplines significantly enhances your understanding of each discipline, bringing added dimensions of understanding and perspective.

The study of Philosophy develops analytical rigour and the ability to criticise and reason logically. It allows you to apply these skills to many contemporary and historical schools of philosophical thought and to questions concerning how we acquire knowledge and how we make ethical recommendations.

The study of Politics gives you an understanding of the issues dividing societies and of the impact of political institutions on the form of social interest articulation and aggregation and on the character and effects of government policies. Among the big issues considered in Politics is why democracies emerge and may be consolidated or why states go to war or seek peace.

The study of Economics aims to give you an understanding of the workings of contemporary economies. This includes the study of decisions of households, the behaviour of firms, and the functioning of markets under competition and monopoly, as well as the role of government policies in many areas. The course also looks at the determination of national income and employment, monetary institutions, inflation and exchange rates, and considers issues in macroeconomic policy, focusing in part on the UK economy. The course also provides a thorough grounding in the statistical and econometric methods needed to understand empirical research.

The UK Quality Assurance Agency is the independent body responsible for monitoring, and advising on, standards and quality in UK higher education. It publishes Subject Benchmark Statements which set out expectations about standards of degrees in a range of subject areas. They describe what gives a discipline its coherence and identity, and define what can be expected of a graduate in terms of the abilities and skills needed to develop understanding or competence in the subject. The statements for Philosophy, Politics, and Economics can be found at www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code/subject-benchmark-statements.

After successfully completing the PPE programme, which lasts three years, you will be awarded a Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Philosophy, Politics and Economics (FHEQ Level 6).

2.2 Course Aims

The course aims to enable PPE students to:

- acquire a good knowledge and understanding of the academic disciplines of Philosophy, Politics and Economics;
- engage and enhance their critical and analytical skills, to look for underlying principles, and to identify and analyse key concepts;
- develop the skill of independent thinking, good writing skills, a facility for independent learning and investigation and effective organisational skills;

- develop their ability to present their own critical understanding of the issues studied to tutors and peers, and to engage in dialogue with them;
- develop the ability to analyse topics in Philosophy, Politics and Economics on the basis of directed and independent reading, and to produce good quality essays and class assignments to deadline;
- promote skills of relevance to the continued professional development of philosophical understanding, and political and economic analysis, and which are transferable to a wide range of employment contexts and life experiences.

2.3 Intended Learning Outcomes

You will develop knowledge and understanding of:

- *Philosophy*: Selected philosophical texts and basic philosophical issues, concepts, theories and arguments, and the elementary techniques of formal logic.
- *Politics*: Key areas of the discipline, including empirical politics and political theory, as well as sociology and international relations.
- *Economics*: the basic principles of modern Economics, including appropriate mathematical techniques.

You will also develop knowledge and understanding, at a higher level, of at least two of the following:

- *Philosophy*: a higher-level knowledge and understanding of central philosophical texts of different ages and/or traditions, and of the interpretative controversies that surround them, and a deeper knowledge and understanding of philosophical issues, concepts, theories and arguments, and their application to a wide variety of different problems.
- *Politics*: a higher-level knowledge and understanding of the philosophical, theoretical, institutional, issue-based and methodological approaches to Politics and International Relations based on comparative study of societies, and higher level knowledge of some of the principal sub-areas of the discipline, different methods of data analysis, and the issues currently at the frontiers of debate and research.
- *Economics*: a higher-level knowledge and understanding of the principles of modern Economics, including appropriate mathematical and statistical techniques, a knowledge and appreciation of economic data and of the applications of economic principles and reasoning to a variety of applied topics.

In addition, you will acquire and develop a particular set of intellectual, practical and transferable skills:

- *Intellectual skills*: the ability to gather, organise and deploy evidence, data and information from a wide variety of secondary and some primary sources; interpret such material with sensitivity to context; identify precisely the underlying issues in a wide variety of academic debates, and to distinguish relevant and irrelevant considerations; recognise the logical structure of an argument, and assess its validity, to assess critically the arguments presented by others, and by oneself, and to identify methodological errors, rhetorical devices, unexamined conventional wisdom, unnoticed assumptions, vagueness and superficiality; construct and articulate sound arguments

with clarity and precision; engage in debate with others, to formulate and consider the best arguments for different views and to identify the weakest elements of the most persuasive views.

- *Practical skills*: the ability to listen attentively to complex presentations and identify the structure of the arguments presented; read with care a wide variety of written academic literature, and reflect clearly and critically on what is read; marshal a complex body of information in the form of essays, and to write well for a variety of audiences and in a variety of contexts; engage in oral discussion and argument with others, in a way that advances understanding of the problems at issue and the appropriate approaches and solutions to them.
- *Transferable skills*: the ability to find information, organise and deploy it; draw on such information, and thinking creatively, self-critically and independently, to consider and solve complex problems; apply the techniques and skills of philosophical argument to practical questions, including those arising in ethics and political life; apply concepts, theories and methods used in the study of Politics to the analysis of political ideas, institutions practices and issues; make strategic decisions with a sophisticated appreciation of the importance of costs, opportunities, expectations, outcomes, information and motivation; motivate oneself, to work well independently, with a strong sense of initiative and self-direction, and also with the ability to work constructively in co-operation with others; communicate effectively and fluently in speech and writing; plan and organise the use of time effectively; where relevant, make appropriate use of numerical, statistical and computing skills.

2.4 Course Structure

The PPE degree is divided into two parts. The first year is designed to give you a foundation in all three branches. You take three compulsory papers: *Introduction to Philosophy*, *Introduction to the Theory and Practice of Politics*, and *Introductory Economics*.

In Philosophy you have to answer at least one question from each of the three sections into which the paper is divided: that is, Logic, General Philosophy, and Moral Philosophy. In Politics, you are required to answer questions both on the empirical practice of Politics and Political Theory. The Economics paper has a range of questions covering Microeconomics, Macroeconomics and Quantitative Methods, and students are required to answer at least one question from each of those three areas.. In none of these cases are you forbidden to range over the whole syllabus; and your tutors may expect you to study more than the examination minimum. But if they do not, then you have early choices to make within the Prelims syllabus, with the help of advice from your tutors.

After the first year the choices are greater. First you must decide whether to select two branches from Philosophy, Politics, and Economics, which will make you 'bipartite', or to keep going with the third as well, making you 'tripartite'. This choice may be easy for you, if you were originally attracted to PPE for the sake of one or two of its branches and have not changed your priorities during your first year; or it may be difficult. If it is difficult, go by what interests you, provided that your tutors think you are suited to it; do not be too much affected by your marks in Prelims, which can differ greatly from Finals marks. A few sub-

jects are available under more than one branch. Refer to the *Examination Regulations* for lists of subjects and the combinations in which they can be taken. Further guidance on the choice of individual subjects within the three disciplines is given in Appendix A.

You will be exposed to current, research-informed teaching via lectures, classes and tutorials. You will be provided with experience of a research environment when you prepare work for classes and tutorials, and if you choose to do a thesis, supervised dissertation or project.

2.5 Syllabus

Detailed syllabus information (for example, dates and times of lectures or classes and reading lists) is given on the Canvas/WebLearn site of each department.

3. Teaching and Learning

3.1 Organisation of teaching and learning

You will learn through a mixture of lectures, classes, and tutorials, with the last playing a particularly important part. The syllabus is set by the University, which grants degrees and therefore examines for them; but most teaching, apart from lectures and some classes, is arranged by your college. Tutorials are what differentiates Oxford from most universities in the world. The following brief notes should help you understand the importance of tutors, tutorials, and University lectures and classes for the course. All of these learning experiences will enhance your knowledge of the subjects being studied and contribute to your performance in the final examinations in which your degree classification is determined. If you have any issues with teaching or supervision, please raise these as soon as possible so that they can be addressed promptly. Details of who to contact are provided in the complaints and appeals section.

There will be changes to the delivery of your teaching as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. For example, lectures may be delivered online or pre-recorded and tutorials may be delivered online rather than in person.

3.1.1 Tutors

Anyone to whom you go for tutorials or college classes counts as one of your tutors. In your preparation for PPE Prelims there are bound to be at least three of them, and over the whole course there may well be eight or ten. Some will be tutorial fellows or lecturers of your own college; some may be tutorial fellows or lecturers of other colleges, or research fellows, or graduate students. The overall responsibility for giving or arranging your tuition will lie with tutorial fellows or lecturers of your own college, probably one in each of Philosophy, Politics, and Economics. Behind them stands the Senior Tutor, who must see that proper arrangements are made if one of these people is absent through illness or on leave.

Tuition for a term is normally arranged at the end of the preceding term; so before going down each term you should make sure that you have received reading guidance and the names of your tutors for all the work you will be doing in the following term. (In the occa-

sional cases in which the name of the tutor is not yet known you should make sure you have received an explanation and that you are confident that arrangements will be in place by the beginning of term.) Some tutors like to see their pupils at the end of the preceding term to make detailed arrangements. Colleges have different rules about when term 'begins'. The official start is Sunday of First Week of Full Term, but you will almost certainly be required back before then, and you should try to ensure that by the Sunday at the very latest you know who your tutors for the term will be, have met or corresponded with them, and have been set work and assigned tutorial times by them.

If you would like to receive tuition from a particular person in Oxford, ask the in-college tutor concerned; do not approach the person yourself, who cannot take you on without a request from your college. If you would like a change of tutor, say so if it is not embarrassing; otherwise do not just do nothing, but take the problem to someone else in your college, such as your College Adviser, the Senior Tutor, or even the head of college, if your difficulty is serious. Most such problems arise from a personality clash that has proved intractable; but since in a university of Oxford's size there are almost certain to be alternative tutors for most of your subjects, there is no point in putting up with a relationship that is impeding your academic progress. In these circumstances you can usually expect a change, but not necessarily to the particular tutor whom you would prefer.

In Economics, the provision of classes and tutorials for courses other than Microeconomics, Macroeconomics, and Quantitative Economics is coordinated by the Department. Centrally nominated subject convenors will communicate with college tutors at the end of each term on the allocation of students to particular tutors for the forthcoming term.

3.1.2 Tutorials, Classes, Collections and Data Labs

What you are expected to bring to a tutorial is knowledge of the reading that was set for it (or a variant on your own initiative if some book or article proves really inaccessible) and any written work demanded. What you have a right to expect is your tutor's presence and scholarly attention throughout the hour agreed, plus guidance, e.g. a reading list, for next time. Beyond that, styles differ, depending on how many students are sharing the tutorial, the nature of the topic, and above all the habits and personality of your tutor. You must not expect uniformity, and you will gain most if you succeed in adapting to differences.

You will nearly always have more than one tutorial a week. You should not normally be expected to write more than twelve tutorial essays a term. All written work for a tutorial will receive either written or oral comments. Tutors submit written reports on the term's work as a whole, and you are entitled to see these. Many colleges have timetabled sessions at which college tutors discuss reports with their students.

Work on a tutorial essay involves library searches, reading, thinking, and writing. It should occupy a minimum of three days. Read attentively and thoughtfully. As your reading progresses, think up a structure for your essay (but do not write an elaborate plan which you will not have time to execute). Expect to have to sort out your thoughts, both during and after reading. Use essays to develop an argument, not as places to store information. You will learn a lot if you share ideas with fellow students, and if you try out ideas in tutorial discus-

sion. Remember that tutorials are not designed as a substitute for lectures, or for accumulating information, but to develop coherent verbal arguments and the capacity to think on one's feet, and to tackle specific difficulties and misunderstandings. This means that note-taking, if it occurs in a tutorial at all, should be very much incidental to the overriding dialogue. You should, however, leave time after the tutorial to make a record on paper of the discussion.

Students are broadly encouraged to use computers, though there are arguments for and against. On the one hand it makes one's notes and essays more 'inviting' to read later, and in writing an essay it becomes possible to postpone commitment to all the stages in an argument until the very end of the essay-writing process. On the other hand there is a danger of getting out of practice in hand-writing time-limited examinations, especially University examinations, in which computers may not be used without special reason.

Some tuition is by means of classes, a system specially suited to subjects in which written work is exercises rather than essays, for example econometrics or statistics. You have a right to expect that written work for a class will be returned to you with written or oral comments.

Most colleges will require you to sit college examinations, so-called 'collections', before the start of each term. Their object is to test your comprehension of work already covered, and to give you practice in sitting examinations. Make sure at the end of each term that you know the times and subjects of next term's collections.

Oxford trains you as a writer to deadlines; so equip yourself with a writer's tools – a dictionary, such as the Concise Oxford Dictionary, and, unless you are very confident, a thesaurus and Modern English Usage.

As mentioned in the intended learning outcomes section, you are expected to develop the ability to make appropriate use of numerical, statistical, and computing skills. This ability is provided for in both the economics and politics components of the course. In economics, opportunities to develop these skills are provided in the Prelims *Quantitative Methods* lectures and classes and the optional Finals papers in *Quantitative Economics* and *Econometrics* paper and the use of statistical techniques is examined in this paper. In politics, the quantitative methods component of the first year course provides students with experience of data manipulation, data handling, and data analysis. You can go on to further quantitative methods study in Politics if you choose either *International Relations* or *Political Sociology* or *Comparative Government* as a second year paper. Data labs are a core element of the course, especially in the first year. The labs provide you with an introduction to statistical software packages like STATA and R.

3.1.3 Lectures

While tutorials and classes will be mainly organised by your college, lectures are provided centrally by the University departments. A combined PPE lecture list is published each term. All three departments also publish lecture lists, as well as provisional programmes for lectures for the remainder of the academic year, which will help you to plan for the future. The

lists can be found via PPE WebLearn/Canvas. Take your copy of the lists to your meetings with tutors: all of them will have advice on which lectures to attend. Remember that printed lecture lists often go out of date and the most up-to-date versions will be online.

Do not expect lectures on a subject always to coincide with the term in which you are writing essays on that subject. Important lectures may come a term or two before or after your tutorials, and in the case of some less popular options they may come in your second year and not be repeated in your third year: consult your tutors early about this risk.

The importance of lectures varies from subject to subject within PPE. Some lectures give a personal analysis of a book or a set of books. Others provide an authoritative view on a fast developing subject, or an overview on a subject whose boundaries are not well recognised in the literature. It is perilous to miss the 'core' lectures on your chosen options: although in Oxford's system lecturers do not necessarily set the University examinations, they may be consulted by those who do.

3.1.3.1 Policy on the recording of lectures and other formal teaching sessions by students

Introduction

1. The University recognises that there are a number of reasons why students might wish to record lectures or other formal teaching sessions (such as seminars and classes) in order to support their learning. The University also recognises that in most cases copyright in lectures resides with the University or with the academic responsible for the lecture or formal teaching session, and that academics and students may have concerns about privacy and data protection. This policy sets out the circumstances in which such recordings may take place; the respective roles and responsibilities of those involved in such recordings; and the implications of breaches of this policy.

2. For the purposes of this policy, the term 'recording' refers to any audio or visual recording of a lecture or other formal teaching session, made with any type of audio or visual recorder.

Permission to record a lecture or other formal teaching session

3. Students who have been given permission to record lectures or other formal teaching sessions as a reasonable adjustment on disability-related grounds do not need to ask for permission to record from individual academics. Students who believe they have disability-related grounds for recording should contact the University's Disability Advisory Service (www.ox.ac.uk/students/welfare/disability/study or disability@admin.ox.ac.uk) for further information on the process for obtaining such permission.

4. Students may request permission to record any lectures or other formal teaching sessions. All such requests should be made in writing (including by email) prior to the lecture course or equivalent, to the academic responsible. Subject to paragraph 3 above, the decision on whether to grant permission is at the discretion of the academic. Students may only record lectures where the academic responsible for the session has given their consent prior to the

start of the lecture in writing (e.g. by email), and recordings of lectures may not be made by students unless this consent has been given. Retrospective requests are not permissible under this policy and covert recording of lectures will be treated as a disciplinary offence.

5. Students granted permission in writing to record a formal teaching session other than a lecture should ask the session leader to check at the start of the session that there are no objections from others present to a recording being made.

6. Where recordings are made available routinely by departments and faculties, students may not make personal recordings unless they have been given permission to record as a reasonable adjustment.

Use of recordings

7. Recordings of lectures or other formal teaching sessions may only be made for the personal and private use of the student.

8. Students may not:

- a) pass such recordings to any other person (except for the purposes of transcription, in which case they can be passed to one person only);
- b) publish such recordings in any form (this includes, but is not limited to, the internet and hard copy publication).

9. Students may store recordings of lectures for the duration of their programme of study. Once they have completed the programme of study, students should destroy all recordings of lectures or other formal teaching sessions.

Implementation

10. Where a student breaches this policy, the University will regard this as a disciplinary offence. All such breaches will be dealt with in accordance with Statute XI (<http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/statutes/352-051a.shtml>).

3.1.4 Teaching patterns

The recommended patterns of teaching for the first year of PPE are below. Lectures, classes, and tutorials typically last an hour.

Paper	Term	Faculty		College		Comments
		Lectures	Classes	Tutorials	Classes	
Philosophy						

Paper	Term	Faculty		College		Comments
		Lectures	Classes	Tutorials	Classes	
For the First Public Examination, the Philosophy paper <i>Introduction to Philosophy</i> covers logic, moral philosophy and general philosophy. Students are required to take all elements. College teaching for the Philosophy paper may consist of 8 tutorials and 4 classes, 6 tutorials and 6 classes, or a different configuration, as arranged by your tutor.						
Introduction to Logic	MT	8		12 sessions*		*College teaching for the Philosophy paper may consist of 8 tutorials and 4 classes, 6 tutorials and 6 classes, or a different configuration, as arranged by your tutor.
	HT					
	TT					
Moral Philosophy: Mill, Utilitarianism	MT	8				
	HT					
	TT					
General Philosophy (route A) 2	MT	8				
	HT					
	TT					
Politics						
All three Politics courses listed below are compulsory, but only the first two are assessed in the First Public Examination (one exam paper covering both theory and practice).						
Introduction to the Theory of Politics	MT	8		4		Colleges to arrange revision classes.
	HT	8				
	TT					
Introduction to the Practice of Politics	MT	16		7		Colleges to arrange revision classes.
	HT	14				
	TT					
Political Analysis	MT					The political analysis component will consist of 8 lectures and 4 x 1-hour data labs. Optional drop-in sessions take place at the start of Trinity.
	HT	8	4			
	TT					
Economics						
Both of the Economics courses listed below are compulsory for the First Public Examination (one exam paper covering both Microeconomics and Macroeconomics).						

Paper	Term	Faculty		College		Comments
		Lectures	Classes	Tutorials	Classes	
Introduction to Microeconomics	MT	20		7		Introductory Microeconomics and mathematics (20 lectures): An additional course of 8 classes is provided for students who have not previously studied mathematics beyond GCSE level.
	HT					
	TT					
Introduction to Macroeconomics	MT					
	HT	18		6		
	TT					
Quantitative Methods	MT, HT	12		3		

3.2 Expectations of study and student workload

UK degree courses are among the shortest in the world. They hold their own in international competition only because they are full-time courses, covering vacation as well as term. This is perhaps particularly true of Oxford, where the eight-week terms (technically called Full Terms) occupy less than half the year.

Vacations have to include holiday time; and everyone recognises that for very many students they also have to include money-earning time. The University's guidance on paid work is at www.ox.ac.uk/students/life/experience. Nevertheless vacation study is vital, and students are responsible for their own academic progress.

You are said to 'read' for an Oxford degree, and PPE is certainly a reading course: its 'study' is mainly the study of material obtained from books and other documents. In term you will mostly rush from one article or chapter to another, pick their bones, and write out your reactions. There are typically six to eight lectures, and two tutorials (or one tutorial and one class) a week.

Vacations are the time for less hectic attention to complete books. Tutorials break a subject up; vacations allow consolidation. They give depth and time for serious thought. They are also particularly important for reading set or core texts.

4. Assessment

4.1 Assessment Structure

There are two University examinations for PPE: the Preliminary Examination ('Prelims'), normally taken at the end of your first year; and the Final Honour School ('Finals'), normally

taken at the end of your third year. Prelims consist of three subjects, Finals of eight. The structure, types and weighting of assessments are set out in the *Examination Regulations*.

4.2 Feedback on learning and assessment

The mechanisms for providing you with feedback on your learning and assessment exist mostly at the college level. Each PPE undergraduate has at least two and sometimes more meetings each week with a college tutor. At least one of these meetings will be a tutorial focused on the discussion of the student's reading and of an essay completed by the student before the tutorial. Feedback is given both in written comments on the essay and verbally in the tutorial. In addition, students normally sit practice examinations (known as 'collections') in each paper at the start of the term following the tutorials which are marked and returned with comments.

Feedback on your progress is also given termly through individual reports provided through the college reporting system: OxCORT. The reports are discussed in a termly meeting with your college tutors and/or academic officers of your college. Problems that arise at other times are dealt with by college tutors and other college officers. Most colleges have special procedures to deal with academic under-performance or issues concerning fitness to study.

Feedback on your Prelims and Finals is given via marks and generic feedback on cohort performance through examiners' reports.

4.3 Examination conventions

Examination conventions are the formal record of the specific assessment standards for the course or courses to which they apply. They set out how your examined work will be marked and how the resulting marks will be used to arrive at a final result and classification of your award. They include information on: marking scales, marking and classification criteria, scaling of marks, progression, resits, use of viva voce examinations, penalties for late submission, and penalties for over-length work.

Examination conventions are published at least one term before the examination takes place, on the exams page of PPE WebLearn/Canvas. You will be notified by email when they are available. The examination conventions from previous years are also on the exams page of PPE WebLearn/Canvas.

4.4 Good academic practice and avoiding plagiarism

Plagiarism is presenting someone else's work or ideas as your own, with or without their consent, by incorporating it into your work without full acknowledgement. All published and unpublished material, whether in manuscript, printed or electronic form, is covered under this definition.

Plagiarism may be intentional or reckless, or unintentional. Under the regulations for examinations, intentional or reckless plagiarism is a disciplinary offence. The University website provides guidance on plagiarism at

www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/skills/plagiarism and on how to develop academic good practice at www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/skills. What follows is subject-specific advice and a range of examples of plagiarism.

To avoid plagiarism, it is important for all students within individual subject areas to be aware of, and to follow, good practice in the use of sources and making appropriate reference. You will need to exercise judgement in determining when reference is required, and when material may be taken to be so much a part of the 'general knowledge' of your particular subject that formal citation would not be expected. The basis on which such judgements are made is likely to vary slightly between subject areas, as may also the style and format of making references, and your tutor or course organiser, where appropriate, will be in the best position to advise you on such matters; in addition, these may be covered, along with other aspects of academic writing, in your induction. By following good practice in your subject area you should develop a rigorous approach to academic referencing, and avoid inadvertent plagiarism.

Cases of apparently deliberate plagiarism are taken extremely seriously, and where examiners suspect that this has occurred, they bring the matter to the attention of the Proctors. The University employs a series of sophisticated software applications to detect plagiarism in submitted examination work, both in terms of copying and collusion. It regularly monitors online essay banks, essay-writing services, and other potential sources of material. It reserves the right to check samples of submitted essays for plagiarism. Although the University strongly encourages the use of electronic resources by students in their academic work, any attempt to draw on third-party material without proper attribution may well attract severe disciplinary sanctions.

Cases of plagiarism range from the culpably fraudulent to the carelessly inadvertent. Honesty is all you need to avoid the first, the cultivation of academic good practice will ensure that you do not fall foul of the second.

You must avoid:

- *The submission of other people's work as your own.* You should not use professional essay writing agencies nor submit any work which has been written in full or in part by any other person. It is also forbidden to submit work which you have already submitted (partially or in full) for another degree course or examination.
- *The verbatim quotation of other people's work without clear indication and due acknowledgement* (i.e. quotation marks or indentation, together with a full citation). Inadvertency in this may be avoided by scrupulous note-taking. Whenever taking notes always write down the full details of the source (author, title, page numbers, lecturer's name and date of lecture, URL). Where exact words are copied or taken down quotation marks should be used; your notes should make it completely clear, in case your memory does not, which of its words and ideas are your own and which other people's. The risk of plagiarism is increased where material is 'cut and pasted' from electronic resources. If you copy material in this way make sure it is fully referenced and

does not become confused with your own work. You should be aware that there exist sophisticated systems to detect such copying.

- *Close paraphrase.* Linking together phrases from a source with just a few words changed here and there is not enough to avoid the charge of plagiarism
- *The reporting of ideas without acknowledging them as your own.* When you write, there should be no room for doubt which are your ideas and which are other people's. Note that where an idea is unattributed it will naturally be taken as the author's own. How often you provide references must to some extent be a matter of style and judgment; to begin each sentence of a paragraph of exposition with "Davidson says that..." would be redundant, but where you are substantially indebted to a particular author it may well not be enough to cite his or her work once in a footnote at the start or the end of the essay.

The surest way to avoid suspicion of plagiarism is by careful referencing. Tutors may be more concerned to check that you understand than that your essays display scholarly references, and no examiner expects full references in a three hour exam, but it is good practice to give proper references. There are many ways to do this (footnotes, author and date, bibliography, etc.). In general there is no one preferred system. Tutors and style guides are a source of advice. Note that some electronic sources explicitly tell you how to make references to their articles. You should not reference anything that you have not actually consulted. Where your knowledge of a primary source is via a secondary one this should be made clear (e.g. R.Descartes, *The Principles of Philosophy*, quoted in J.Cottingham, *Descartes* (Blackwell, 1986) p.92). Some ideas may be taken as part of the 'general knowledge' of a particular subject and, as such, do not call for a formal reference. You will need to exercise judgment in determining when this is the case. If in doubt, seek advice or err on the side of caution.

4.4.1 Examples of plagiarism

Source text

"Even more important, however, and certainly more generally applicable, is the argument from queerness. This has two parts, one metaphysical, the other epistemological. If there were objective values, then they would be entities or qualities or relations of a very strange sort, utterly different from anything else in the universe. Correspondingly, if we were aware of them, it would have to be by some special faculty of moral intuition, utterly different from our ordinary ways of knowing everything else."

(J.L.Mackie, *Ethics, Inventing Right and Wrong* (Penguin, 1977) p.38)

Examples

(1) An important argument is that from queerness. It has two parts, one metaphysical and one epistemological. Metaphysically, if objective values existed, then they would be very strange entities, unlike anything else in the universe. Epistemologically, if we were aware of

them, it would have to be by some strange faculty of moral intuition, quite different from our ordinary awareness.

Without reference of any kind to any source, this would be taken as the author's own words and ideas; when in fact it simply copies phrases verbatim from the source with just a few words changed here and there.

(2) It has been argued against objective values on the grounds of queerness. The case can be made in either metaphysical or epistemological terms. If objective values existed, they would be strange things, utterly different from anything else in the universe, and they would have to be known in an equally strange way, utterly different from our ordinary ways of knowing everything else.

This is a mixture of verbatim copying and close paraphrase. Two phrases have been copied from the source, but no quotation marks or reference provided. The phrase 'It has been argued' is insufficient for this purpose.

(3) 'The argument from queerness' (Mackie, 1977, p.38) has been stated as follows. 'If there were objective values, then they would be entities or qualities or relations of a very strange sort, utterly different from anything else in the universe.' Correspondingly, if we were aware of them, it would have to be by some special faculty of moral intuition, utterly different from our ordinary ways of knowing everything else.

By selective use of quotation marks and referencing this suggests that the second point here is the writer's own, when it is in fact just as heavily indebted to the source as the material explicitly acknowledged. All quoted material must be enclosed in quotation marks and adequately referenced.

Remember:

- Always make clear the extent of your borrowing. A text reference, such as (Mackie, 1977, p.38), can leave it unclear whether the debt you wish to acknowledge is with regard to a clause, a sentence, a few sentences or an entire paragraph that you have written.
- Try always to express the ideas and arguments you encounter in your own words; this is part of what it means to really understand them.

4.5 Entering for University examinations

You will be entered for your Prelims exams automatically, but must enter yourself for your Finals during Michaelmas Term of your third year. Further information, including on alternative exam arrangements, is at www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/exams.

4.6 Examination dates

Your exam timetable will be published as early as possible and no later than five weeks before the start of the examination at www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/exams/timetables. Pre-

lims exams are normally in week 9 and Finals exams are normally from week 5 to week 7 in Trinity Term.

4.7 Sitting your examination

Information on (a) the standards of conduct expected in examinations and (b) what to do if you would like examiners to be aware of any factors that may have affected your performance before or during an examination (such as illness, accident, or bereavement) are available on the Oxford Students website www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/exams/guidance.

When planning your examination strategy, it is sensible to keep in mind the nature of the examination method which the University uses (the conventional method in UK higher education over the past two centuries). If the examiners allowed you to set the questions, you could prepare good answers in a few months; by setting the questions themselves, they ensure that a candidate cannot be adequately prepared without study over a broad area. They will therefore not be interested in answers which are in any way off the point, and they will severely penalise 'short weight' - too few properly written out answers. The examiners are looking for your own ideas and convictions and you mustn't be shy of presenting them. When you have selected a question, work out what it means and decide what you think is the answer to it. Then, putting pen to paper, state the answer and defend it; or, if you think there is no answer, explain why not. Abstain from presenting background material. Do not write too much: most of those who run out of time have themselves to blame for being distracted into irrelevance. Good examinees emerge from the examination room with most of their knowledge undisplayed. Examiners' reports can be helpful in identifying the characteristics of good and bad answers in the various papers.

4.8 External examiner and examiners' reports

Internal and external examiners' reports for Prelims and Finals can be found on the exams page of PPE WebLearn/Canvas. The name, position and institution of the external examiners for PPE can be found in the examination conventions, also on PPE WebLearn/Canvas. Students are strictly prohibited from contacting external examiners directly. If you are unhappy with an aspect of your assessment you may make a complaint or appeal (see the complaints and appeals section).

4.9 Prizes

After your first year you will be eligible for a scholarship or exhibition from your college, on academic criteria which the college decides and applies. Other prizes for which you may be eligible include the various PPE examination prizes, which are listed on PPE WebLearn/Canvas. A central list of all prizes is at: www.ox.ac.uk/students/fees-funding/prizes-and-awards.

5. Skills and learning development

5.1 Academic progress

Your academic progress will be monitored mostly at college level. Feedback will be given via OxCORT, via termly meetings with your college tutors and/or academic officers of your

college, via collections, and in tutorials. Refer to your college handbook for further information.

5.2 Learning development and skills

The skills you are expected to develop through the course are summarised in section 2.3.

5.3 Induction

First year students are invited to a department induction in week 0 of Michaelmas Term. The session is led by the Directors of Undergraduate Studies for Philosophy, Politics and Economics.

5.4 Opportunities for skills training and development

A wide range of information and training materials are available to help you develop your academic skills – including time management, research and library skills, referencing, revision skills and academic writing – through the Oxford Students website www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/skills.

5.5 Employability and careers information and advice

The academic and college environment at Oxford University is rich with opportunities for you to develop many transferable skills that are eagerly sought by employers. Undertaking an intellectually demanding academic course (often incorporating professional body requirements) will equip you for the demands of many jobs. Your course will enable you to research, summarise, present and defend an argument with some of the best scholars in their subject. Under the direction of an experienced researcher, you will extend your skills and experiences through practical or project work, placements or fieldwork, writing extended essays or dissertations. In college and university sports teams, clubs and societies you will have the chance to take the lead and play an active part within and outside the University.

Surveys of our employers report that they find Oxford students better or much better than the average UK student at key employability skills such as problem solving, leadership, and communication. Hundreds of recruiters visit the University each year, demonstrating their demand for Oxford undergraduate and postgraduate students, fewer than 5% of whom are unemployed and seeking work six months after leaving.

Comprehensive careers advice and guidance is available from the Oxford University Careers Service, and not just while you are here: our careers support is for life. We offer tailored individual advice, job fairs and workshops to inform your job search and application process, whether your next steps are within academia or beyond. You will also have access to thousands of UK-based and international internships, work experience and job vacancies available on the Careers Service website at www.careers.ox.ac.uk. Further information can be found at www.ox.ac.uk/students/life/experience.

6. Student representation, evaluation and feedback

Consultation of students takes a number of forms. It is important that you give us your views and feel free to do so, in order that we may deal with problems that arise both relating to you personally and to the course. Confidentiality is preserved when we seek feedback and will be maintained if you wish it when you discuss issues of concern to you. Both the college and the departments will seek and welcome your feedback in various ways.

6.1 Department representation

Each department has an Undergraduate Joint Consultative Committee (UJCC). Typical agenda items for UJCC meetings include course developments, lecture arrangements, library provision, and IT. The department will look to UJCC student members for comments and suggestions which may bring beneficial changes. The UJCC is also the forum in which you should raise any matters of concern to you relating to the organisation, content, and delivery of the course.

The Politics UJCC comprises the Director of Undergraduate Studies, the Undergraduate Studies Coordinator or Academic Administrator, and an undergraduate representative from each College. Politics WebLearn/Canvas has a page with the committee membership, meeting times and further information.

The Economics UJCC has several department members, including the Director of Undergraduate Studies, and a student member from each college. The student representatives must be reading for one of the Honour Schools involving Economics. The UJCC meets once per term. It elects one of its student representatives as chair. Economics WebLearn/Canvas has a page with the meeting times and further information.

The Philosophy UJCC is currently being reinstated. You will be contacted once it is operational to invite your participation. Until then you can contact the Director of Undergraduate Studies or the Undergraduate Studies Administrator to raise any issues of concern.

If you need further information about one of the UJCCs please approach the undergraduate administrator for the department.

6.2 Division and University representation

Student representatives sitting on the Divisional Board are selected through a process organised by the Oxford University Student Union (Oxford SU). Details can be found on the SU website www.oxfordsu.org along with information about student representation at the University level.

6.3 Opportunities to provide evaluation and feedback

The feedback which you provide to lecturers and tutors is valued and is taken seriously. It has an important contribution toward maintaining the quality of the education you receive at Oxford.

You will be asked to comment on each set of lectures via questionnaires, which will be distributed either electronically or as paper copies. Paper copies will be handed out by the lec-

turer towards the middle or end of his or her set of lectures, and further copies will be available from the department. Completed forms may either be given to the lecturer at the end of the lecture or sent to the department office. The results of the questionnaire are seen by the lecturer and also by the Director of Undergraduate Studies or Teaching/Lectures Committee or panel. The DUS and/or committee or panel are responsible for ensuring that any problems reported through the questionnaires are addressed. These are reported on to the UJCC and the department.

You will also be asked to provide feedback on tutorial teaching to your college, and although colleges may differ in the exact ways in which they provide for this, in general they will ask your views on the amount and quality of teaching, reading materials, timeliness of comments on essays and tutorial performance, and feedback on your progress on the course. Colleges also arrange for you to hear or read reports written by your tutor and to make comments on them, and also for you to submit your own self-assessment of your progress to date and your academic goals.

Students on full-time and part-time matriculated courses are surveyed once per year on all aspects of their course (learning, living, pastoral support, college) through the Student Barometer. Previous results can be viewed by students, staff and the general public at www.ox.ac.uk/students/life/feedback. Final year undergraduate students are surveyed through the National Student Survey. Results from previous NSS can be found at www.unistats.com. Results from the NSS and the Student Barometer are monitored by the PPE Committee and the Undergraduate Studies Committees in the three departments.

7. Student life and support

7.1 Who to contact for help

If illness, or other personal issues such as bereavement, seriously affect your academic work, make sure that your tutors know this. Help may involve: excusing you tutorials for a while; sending you home; asking the University to grant you dispensation from that term's residence; or permitting you to go out of residence for a number of terms, with consequent negotiations with your funding body as appropriate. If illness or other issues have interfered with preparation for a University examination, or have affected you during the exam itself, you can apply for alternative examination arrangements (www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/exams/arrangements) or make the examiners aware of the factors that have impacted your performance (www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/exams/guidance).

The University has a range of support and advice to help you manage your finances during your studies. Please see www.ox.ac.uk/students/fees-funding/assistance for further information, including on hardship funding for students who experience financial difficulties.

Every college has their own systems of academic and pastoral support for students. Please refer to your college handbook or website for more information on who to contact and what support is available through your college.

Details of the wide range of sources of support available more widely in the University are available from the Oxford Students website (www.ox.ac.uk/students/welfare), including in relation to mental and physical health and disability.

7.2 Complaints and appeals

The University, the Divisions and the three departments all hope that provision made for students at all stages of their course of study will make the need for complaints (about that provision) or appeals (against the outcomes of any form of assessment) infrequent.

Where such a need arises, an informal discussion with the person immediately responsible for the issue that you wish to complain about (and who may not be one of the individuals identified below) is often the simplest way to achieve a satisfactory resolution.

Many sources of advice are available from colleges, faculties/departments and bodies like the Counselling Service or the Oxford SU Student Advice Service, which have extensive experience in advising students. You may wish to take advice from one of these sources before pursuing your complaint.

General areas of concern about provision affecting students as a whole should be raised through Joint Consultative Committees or via student representation on the faculty/department's committees.

Complaints

If your concern or complaint relates to teaching or other provision made by the faculty/department, then you should raise it with Director of Undergraduate Studies or with the Director of Graduate Studies as appropriate. If your concern relates to the course as a whole, rather than to teaching or provision made by one of the departments/faculties, you should raise it with the Chair of the PPE Committee. Complaints about departmental facilities should be made to the Departmental Administrator. If you feel unable to approach one of those individuals, you may contact the Head of Department/Faculty. The officer concerned will attempt to resolve your concern/complaint informally. The names and contact details of these officers can be found on department websites, or by contacting the relevant undergraduate administrator.

If you are dissatisfied with the outcome, you may take your concern further by making a formal complaint to the Proctors under the University Student Complaints Procedure (<https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/complaints>).

If your concern or complaint relates to teaching or other provision made by your college, you should raise it either with your tutor or with one of the college officers, Senior Tutor, Tutor for Graduates (as appropriate). Your college will also be able to explain how to take your complaint further if you are dissatisfied with the outcome of its consideration.

Academic appeals

An academic appeal is an appeal against the decision of an academic body (e.g. boards of examiners, transfer and confirmation decisions etc.), on grounds such as procedural error or evidence of bias. There is no right of appeal against academic judgement.

If you have any concerns about your assessment process or outcome it is advisable to discuss these first with your subject or college tutor, Senior Tutor, course director, director of studies, supervisor or college or departmental administrator as appropriate. They will be able to explain the assessment process that was undertaken and may be able to address your concerns. Queries must not be raised directly with the examiners.

If you still have concerns you can make a formal appeal to the Proctors who will consider appeals under the University Academic Appeals Procedure (<https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/complaints>).

7.3 Policies and regulations

The University has a wide range of policies and regulations that apply to students. These are easily accessible through the A-Z of University regulations, codes of conduct and policies available on the Oxford Students website www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/regulations/a-z.

7.4 Equality and diversity

“The University of Oxford is committed to fostering an inclusive culture which promotes equality, values diversity and maintains a working, learning and social environment in which the rights and dignity of all its staff and students are respected. We recognise that the broad range of experiences that a diverse staff and student body brings strengthens our research and enhances our teaching, and that in order for Oxford to remain a world-leading institution we must continue to provide a diverse, inclusive, fair and open environment that allows everyone to grow and flourish.”

– University of Oxford Equality Policy (<https://edu.web.ox.ac.uk/equality-policy>)

As a member of the University you contribute towards making it an inclusive environment and we ask that you treat other members of the University community with respect, courtesy and consideration.

The Equality and Diversity Unit works with all parts of the collegiate University to develop and promote an understanding of equality and diversity and ensure that this is reflected in all its processes. The Unit also supports the University in meeting the legal requirements of the Equality Act 2010, including eliminating unlawful discrimination, promoting equality of opportunity and fostering good relations between people with and without the ‘protected characteristics’ of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and/or belief, sex and sexual orientation. Visit our website for further details or contact us directly for advice: www.edu.web.ox.ac.uk or equality@admin.ox.ac.uk.

The Equality and Diversity Unit also supports a broad network of harassment advisors in departments/faculties and colleges and a central Harassment Advisory Service. For more information on the University's Harassment and Bullying policy and the support available for students visit: edu.web.ox.ac.uk/harassment-advice.

There are a range of faith societies, belief groups, and religious centres within Oxford University that are open to students. For more information visit: edu.admin.ox.ac.uk/religion-and-belief-0.

Student Welfare and Support Services

The Disability Advisory Service (DAS) can provide information, advice and guidance on the way in which a particular disability may impact on your student experience at the University and assist with organising disability-related study support. For more information visit: www.ox.ac.uk/students/shw/das.

The Counselling Service is here to help you address personal or emotional problems that get in the way of having a good experience at Oxford and realising your full academic and personal potential. They offer a free and confidential service. For more information visit: www.ox.ac.uk/students/shw/counselling.

While working remotely due to the pandemic, the Disability Advisory Service and the Counselling Service are both offering virtual consultations.

A range of services led by students are available to help provide support to other students, including the peer supporter network, the Oxford SU's Student Advice Service and Night-line. For more information visit: www.ox.ac.uk/students/shw/peer.

Oxford SU also runs a series of campaigns to raise awareness and promote causes that matter to students. For full details, visit: www.oxfordsu.org/communities/campaigns/.

There is a wide range of student clubs and societies to get involved in. For more details visit: www.ox.ac.uk/students/life/clubs.

7.5 Freedom of speech

Free speech is the lifeblood of a university.

It enables the pursuit of knowledge. It helps us approach truth. It allows students, teachers and researchers to become better acquainted with the variety of beliefs, theories and opinions in the world. Recognising the vital importance of free expression for the life of the mind, a university may make rules concerning the conduct of debate but should never prevent speech that is lawful.

Inevitably, this will mean that members of the University are confronted with views that some find unsettling, extreme or offensive. The University must therefore foster freedom of expression within a framework of robust civility. Not all theories deserve equal respect. A university values expertise and intellectual achievement as well as openness. But, within the bounds set by law, all voices or views which any member of our community considers relevant should be given the chance of a hearing. Wherever possible, they should also be exposed to evidence, questioning and argument. As an integral part of this commitment to freedom of expression, we will take steps to ensure that all such exchanges happen peacefully. With appropriate regulation of the time, place and manner of events, neither speakers nor listeners should have any reasonable grounds to feel intimidated or censored.

It is this understanding of the central importance and specific roles of free speech in a university that underlies the detailed procedures of the University of Oxford.

<https://compliance.admin.ox.ac.uk/prevent/freedom-of-speech>

8. Facilities

8.1 Libraries and museums

A list of museums that you may wish to visit while you are here is at www.ox.ac.uk/visitors/visiting-oxford/visiting-museums-libraries-places. A comprehensive list of all libraries associated with the University of Oxford, their locations, subject areas, and opening hours is at www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/subjects-and-libraries/libraries. Your blue University Card provides you with access to the libraries. If your card is lost, stolen, or damaged, inform your college. They will advise you on how to replace it.

8.2 IT

A wide range of IT facilities and training is available to Oxford students. For further information see www.ox.ac.uk/students/life/it.

9. The Future

9.1 Taking your Degree

University of Oxford degrees are conferred at degree ceremonies, held in the Sheldonian Theatre. You may graduate in person or in absentia, either straight after you've finished your degree, or many years later. If you choose to graduate in person, you will be presented by your college, hall or society. Once your degree has been conferred at a degree ceremony either in person or in absentia, you will automatically receive a degree certificate. This will be either presented to you by your college on the day of the graduation ceremony, or posted to you after the event. You will automatically receive one paper copy of your final transcript (an official summary of your academic performance, including final marks) upon completing your degree. This will be sent to the 'home address' listed in Student Self Service. Electronic copies of transcripts (final and on-course) are not available. Further information on

your degree ceremony, certificate, transcript, and preparing to leave the University is at www.ox.ac.uk/students/graduation.

9.2 Proceeding to Further Study

If you are considering graduate study, the beginning of your final year is the latest time by which you should research the various degrees on offer and choose the ones that appeal to you. At that time you might also discuss the options with your tutors. Most applications for graduate study, particularly to institutions in the northern hemisphere, must be submitted by December or January. Deadlines are often strictly enforced and the competition for a place on a particular degree may be intensive. Your initiatives are likely to fail if they are not completed in good time. Further advice on proceeding from undergraduate to postgraduate study is at www.ox.ac.uk/students/graduation/continuing.

Every year a number of PPE finalists apply to continue their studies at Oxford. You will be able to find a comprehensive list of courses and application deadlines at www.ox.ac.uk/graduate. Graduate students must secure their own funding to cover fees and maintenance, both of which can be costly. The closing dates for some fellowships and scholarships, especially those overseas, may fall in advance of the application deadline for your chosen degree programme, and the competition for funding can also be fierce, so it is important to research the deadlines for these opportunities and to plan your applications in a timely manner. Further information and advice is at www.ox.ac.uk/graduate/fees-and-funding.

Appendix A: Outline of Papers

A.1 The Preliminary Examination

A.1.1 Introduction to Philosophy

The purpose of the course is to introduce you to some central philosophical issues and to help you to acquire some concepts and ways of thinking which will be useful if you continue with the study of Philosophy, or even if you do not.

The course has three parts, I General Philosophy, a topic-based introduction to key issues in epistemology and metaphysics, II Moral Philosophy, studied in connection with J. S. Mill: *Utilitarianism*, and III Logic, studied in connection with a course designed especially for Oxford students, based on a manual by Prof Volker Halbach of New College, *the Logic Manual*. In the preliminary examination you are required to answer four questions, including at least one question from each of the three parts. Lectures are provided on all three parts and you should be sure to attend them.

Logic (usually taught in college classes) is the study of patterns of valid inference, and involves some study of a formal system. Students are required to do exercises and proofs in a formal system, and also to understand the relation between the elements of the formal system and the kinds of inference and argument used in ordinary language. Even if you do not go on to further study of logic, you are likely to find it useful in further philosophical study to have some familiarity with a formal logical language and the ability to use it to investigate logical relationships and to understand its use by others.

In parts I and II (usually taught in tutorials or small groups) students are introduced to central issues in philosophy. General Philosophy introduces students to key topics in epistemology and metaphysics, including knowledge and scepticism, induction, mind and body, personal identity, free will, and God and evil. Moral Philosophy is studied in conjunction with J. S. Mill's *Utilitarianism* and involves the study of an influential but controversial moral theory, with discussions of subjects such as happiness and pleasure, the criterion of right action, the role and foundation of moral principles, and justice. Students learn how to read and to evaluate philosophical writings, how to identify the author's arguments and conclusions, and are encouraged to think critically and write lucidly about the issues discussed.

In the preliminary examination you are required to answer four questions, including at least one question from each of the three parts. Work in each of the three parts is marked by separate markers, and so you must use separate booklets for your work in each part, to be sure that all of your work is marked and you receive appropriate credit.

A.1.2 Introduction to the Theory and Practice of Politics

This course introduces students to the empirical and theoretical study of Politics, to some of the key concepts of the discipline and to major methods of contemporary analysis. The paper will be divided into two sections. Candidates are required to answer four questions, of

which at least one must be from section (a) and at least two from section (b). See the *Examination Regulations* for the syllabus for each section.

Candidates are also expected to complete the course of study in political analysis. The political analysis component of the course introduces students to quantitative methods by means of an 8-week route through the empirical research process. Using a running example from the literature on political institutions, it goes through each step in the research process from defining a research question to preliminary statistical analysis. The objective is to learn how quantitative methods help political scientists to address questions of theoretical and empirical interest. In order to improve students' understanding of quantitative methods, this component also includes four data labs where students will be introduced to a powerful statistical software called R Studio. After completing the political analysis component, students will be able to:

- i. critically read and evaluate statements about causal relationships based on data analysis;
- ii. demonstrate knowledge of some of the core threats to causal inference, such as endogeneity, spuriousness, selection effects or issues with the validity and reliability of measurement, etc.;
- iii. summarise quantitative information and assess the level of uncertainty accompanying these summary statistics.

The political analysis component will consist of 8 lectures and 4 data labs. Both lectures and data labs are taught in Hilary Term. For more information on political analysis and how it is taught see www.oqc.ox.ac.uk.

The political analysis component will not be assessed in the Prelims examination paper. Instead, students will be required to submit one methods essay during Trinity Term. Information about the timing, format, and content of the essay will be sent to you by email during your first year.

A.1.3 Introductory Economics

This course is shared with students taking Prelims in *Economics and Management*, and *History and Economics*. For those who are intending to continue with Economics it provides an introduction to economic analysis, equipping you with the concepts and tools which will be developed further in the later years of the course. The course covers both microeconomics, macroeconomics and quantitative methods, and includes the mathematical techniques used in Economics, mainly simple algebra and calculus. For those who will not carry the study of Economics beyond Prelims it is designed to provide a reasonably complete perspective, at an introductory level, of microeconomic and macroeconomic issues and how economic analysis tackles them. While A-level economics and A-level maths may be helpful, many students will not have one or other, or even either, of these. The microeconomics part of the course covers the functioning of the market economy: the decisions of households, who have wants and budget constraints; the behaviour of firms, who employ labour and capital and choose their level of output; and the functioning of markets under competition and monopoly. The macroeconomics part of the course looks at the determination of national income and employment, monetary institutions and the money supply, inflation and exchange rates, and

macroeconomic policy. The quantitative methods part covers statistics and causal inference. The paper is divided into three sections and you must answer at least one from each section.

A.2 The Final Honour School

For your second and third years you may continue with all three subjects or pursue only two of them. This is a matter you should discuss with your college tutors. There are various requirements to take particular papers and restrictions on the option papers you can take. These are listed in detail in the *Examination Regulations*. Course outlines, teaching arrangements, and reading lists are on the WebLearn/Canvas sites for each department.

What follows here is an outline of what the papers in each of the three branches involve. You may well find it helpful to look at recent examination papers on OXAM help build up a picture of these papers. If you find the examination questions interesting you are more likely to find working on the paper engaging.

For a list of the current options available, see the latest version of the FHS Handbook on PPE WebLearn/Canvas. You will be sent the version of the FHS Handbook that applies to you at the beginning of the second year. This will include provisional lists of options open to you. Economics options will be finalised at the Economics options fair in Hilary Term of your second year. Politics and Philosophy special subjects and Politics supervised dissertations (if offered) will be finalised and confirmed by email during your second year. You can only take one special subject within Philosophy or Politics, but you can take more than one special subject in different disciplines (so for example, you can take one Philosophy special subject and one Politics special subject). Contact the relevant undergraduate administrator if you have any questions about the papers on offer.

A.2.1 Philosophy

Formal requirements

Students must take two core subjects: 103 Ethics, and one of papers 101 Early Modern Philosophy, 102 Knowledge and Reality, 115 Plato: *Republic*, or 116 Aristotle: *Nicomachean Ethics*. In your choice of further subjects you should be guided by the normal prerequisites: see the *Examination Regulations*, Philosophy in All Honour Schools including Philosophy. For example, you may only take 199 (Philosophy Thesis) if you are taking at least three other Philosophy subjects. You may take only one from 106 (Philosophy of Science and of Social Science) and 124 (Philosophy of Science). You may not take both of 110 (Aquinas) and 111 (Duns Scotus and Ockham).

The official syllabuses for subjects may be found in the *Examination Regulations*, and it is these which form the framework within which exam questions on a paper must be set. But to help your initial choices, see below brief, informal descriptions of the core subjects, followed in some cases by a suggested introductory reading. You should always consult your tutor about your choice of options.

101. Early Modern Philosophy

The purpose of this subject is to enable you to gain a critical understanding of some of the metaphysical and epistemological ideas of some of the most important philosophers of the early modern period, between the 1630s and the 1780s.

This period saw a great flowering of philosophy in Europe. Descartes, Spinoza and Leibniz, often collectively referred to as "the rationalists", placed the new "corpuscularian" science within grand metaphysical systems which certified our God-given capacity to reason our way to the laws of nature (as well as to many other, often astonishing conclusions about the world). Locke wrote in a different, empiricist tradition. He argued that, since our concepts all ultimately derive from experience, our knowledge is necessarily limited.

Berkeley and Hume developed this empiricism in the direction of a kind of idealism, according to which the world studied by science is in some sense mind-dependent and mind-constructed. (Kant subsequently sought to arbitrate between the rationalists and the empiricists, by rooting out some assumptions common to them and trying thereby to salvage and to reconcile some of their apparently irreconcilable insights.) Reading the primary texts is of great importance.

The examination paper is divided into two sections and students are required to answer at least one question from Section A (Descartes, Spinoza, Leibniz) and at least one from Section B (Locke, Berkeley, Hume). NB: previously this paper was known as "History of Philosophy from Descartes to Kant" and further allowed study of Kant (who remains available within paper 112).

Introductory Reading:

- R.S.Woolhouse, *The Empiricists*
- J.Cottingham, *The Rationalists* (both O.U.P. Opus series)

102. Knowledge and Reality

The purpose of this subject is to enable you to examine some central questions about the nature of the world and the extent to which we can have knowledge of it.

In considering knowledge you will examine whether it is possible to attain knowledge of what the world is really like. Is our knowledge of the world necessarily limited to what we can observe to be the case? Indeed, are even our observational beliefs about the world around us justified? Can we have knowledge of what will happen based on what has happened? Is our understanding of the world necessarily limited to what we can prove to be the case? Or can we understand claims about the remote past or distant future which we cannot in principle prove to be true?

In considering reality you will focus on questions such as the following. Does the world really contain the three-dimensional objects and their properties - such as red buses or black horses - which we appear to encounter in everyday life? Or is it made up rather of the somewhat different entities studied by science, such as colourless atoms or four-dimensional space-time worms? What is the relation between the common sense picture of the world and

that provided by contemporary science? Is it correct to think of the objects and their properties that make up the world as being what they are independently of our preferred ways of dividing up reality? These issues are discussed with reference to a variety of specific questions such as 'What is time?', 'What is the nature of causation?', and 'What are substances?' There is an opportunity in this subject to study such topics as reference, truth and definition, but candidates taking 102 and 108 should avoid repetition of material across examinations. However, if your answers are well-crafted and relevant to the specific question set, this is unlikely to be a problem.

Introductory Reading:

- Jonathan Dancy, *Introduction to Contemporary Epistemology* (Oxford), chs. 1-3
- Michael J. Loux, *Metaphysics* (Routledge)

103. Ethics

The purpose of this subject is to enable you to come to grips with some questions which exercise many people, philosophers and non-philosophers alike. How should we decide what is best to do, and how best to lead our lives? Are our value judgments on these and other matters objective or do they merely reflect our subjective preferences and viewpoints? Are we in fact free to make these choices, or have our decisions already been determined by antecedent features of our environment and genetic endowment? In considering these issues you will examine a variety of ethical concepts, such as those of justice, rights, equality, virtue, and happiness, which are widely used in moral and political argument. There is also opportunity to discuss some applied ethical issues. Knowledge of major historical thinkers, e.g. Aristotle and Hume and Kant, will be encouraged, but not required in the examination.

Introductory Reading:

- John Mackie, *Ethics* (Penguin), chs. 1-2

115. Plato, Republic

Plato's influence on the history of philosophy is enormous. The purpose of this subject is to enable you to make a critical study of the *Republic*, which is perhaps his most important and most influential work. Written as a dialogue between Socrates and others including the outspoken immoralist Thrasymachus, it is primarily concerned with questions of the nature of justice and of what is the best kind of life to lead. These questions prompt discussions of the ideal city - which Karl Popper criticised as totalitarian -, of education and art, of the nature of knowledge, the Theory of Forms and the immortality of the soul. In studying it you will encounter a work of philosophy of unusual literary merit, one in which philosophy is presented through debates, through analogies and images, including the famous simile of the Cave, as well as rigorous argument, and you will encounter some of Plato's important contributions to ethics, political theory, metaphysics, philosophy of mind and aesthetics. You are expected to study the work in detail; the examination contains a question requiring comments on chosen passages, as well as a choice of essay questions.

Introductory Reading:

- Julia Annas, *An Introduction to Plato's Republic*, Introduction and ch. 1

- Set translation: Plato: *Republic*, trans. Grube, revised Reeve (Hackett)

116. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*

The purpose of this subject is to give you the opportunity to make a critical study of one of the most important works in the history of philosophy. Like Plato in the *Republic*, Aristotle is concerned with the question, what is the best possible sort of life? Whereas this leads Plato to pose grand questions in metaphysics and political theory, it leads Aristotle to offer close analyses of the structure of human action, responsibility, the virtues, the nature of moral knowledge, weakness of will, pleasure, friendship, and other related issues. Much of what Aristotle has to say on these is ground-breaking, highly perceptive, and still of importance in contemporary debate in ethics and moral psychology.

You are expected to study the work in detail; the examination contains a question requiring comments on chosen passages, as well as a choice of essay questions.

Introductory Reading:

- J. L. Ackrill, *Aristotle the Philosopher*, ch. 10.
- Set translation: Aristotle: *Nicomachean Ethics* translated and with notes by T.H. Irwin (Hackett) second edition.

A.2.2 Politics

You should choose your core subjects with care. The choice of two from five core subjects is deliberately permissive. In the first year, you acquire the basic tools of political analysis, but the discipline of Politics consists of several distinct schools of analysis, none of which is self-evidently more fundamental than the others.

The core papers are each designed to enhance your ability to conceptualise, to compare, and to develop analytical skills. In a joint honours degree, to require you to take papers covering all approaches would leave no space for choice and specialisation. Your choice of core subjects will however have a bearing on your subsequent work in Politics, and you are strongly advised to consult your college tutor and option-paper tutors before selecting any optional subject.

For a number of options, it is helpful, though not essential, already to have taken a related core subject. Thus the study of political systems in particular areas or countries is based on issues that are raised in *Comparative Government and Political Sociology*; several subjects in the area of political theory are most readily tackled with the background provided by *Theory of Politics*; the two optional subjects in *International Relations* follow most naturally from the core paper, as to a lesser degree, do those in *Sociology* from the core paper in *Political Sociology*.

The Department sets no 'normal prerequisites' (papers you should normally have studied before studying others) similar to those in Philosophy. It prefers to leave final decisions on the appropriateness of particular choices to the individual, in conjunction with college tutors, and to leave open the possibility, where you might otherwise lack sufficient back-

ground, that you attend additional lectures or follow a course of directed vacation reading covering important material from the relevant core subject.

Three of the five core papers contain a further Political Analysis component. These are papers 201, 214 and 220. Candidates taking these papers are expected to complete the course of study in Political Analysis, which consists of further lectures and data labs. They are also expected to submit an assessed methods essay in each of the papers they propose to take in the Final Honour School.

201. Comparative Government

This course is a comparative study of the main political institutions through which contemporary societies are governed. It focuses on the origins and effects of democratic institutions and attempts to understand the differences between forms of government and what effects they have within the polity. As such, topics studied include those such as state-building, judiciaries, bureaucracies, the origins of parties, interest groups and the nature of political activism. Through reference to the distinct methodological approach used by different scholars in studying these phenomena, students acquire an understanding of the utility and limits of different means of analysis.

The course builds on material covered at Prelims, for instance by developing on conceptual ideas about regimes to move towards causal theories of democratization and factors sustaining authoritarian regimes. It provides students with an understanding of key concepts and tools of empirical political analysis, and in this way also prepares them for the more specialised study of specific regions or single countries that follow as options later in the PPE syllabus. While the main instruction is via the usual mixture of lectures and tutorials, students should note that the range of knowledge covered makes the lectures even more vital than they might be for some courses. The lecture course is formed of sixteen lectures, and students are expected to treat it as a commitment running right through the academic year.

202. British Politics and Government Since 1900

This course consists of the close study of political developments in Britain since 1900 and the major academic debates surrounding them. It allows students to study a single political system in depth, over a period long enough both to make visible long-run processes of social, economic and political change, and to permit comparisons and contrasts to be drawn between the situations of political actors at different times.

It is also a period with an extraordinarily rich and rewarding academic literature, which encourages students to explore problems of evidence and interpretation, and to consider a range of explanations, based on different scholarly traditions, for the same events. These include techniques and methods as diverse as archivally-based historical analysis, political biography and political science modelling. Among the topics covered are the decline of the Liberal Party and the rise of the Labour Party; the political effects of the two world wars and the widening franchise; the development of the institutions and procedures of modern government; the changing party system under mass democracy; the challenges and failures of political extremism; the domestic impact of foreign policies such as appeasement, decoloni-

sation and European integration; the challenges posed to modern governments by relative economic decline, and efforts to transform the system such as tariff reform, social democracy and Thatcherism.

203. Theory of Politics

The course is designed to acquaint students with the political concepts central to the theoretical, normative and interpretative analysis of politics. The study of concepts such as liberty, justice, authority or power provides the foundation for understanding the nature of political thought. These concepts underpin the study of politics in general and are therefore crucial to enhancing the awareness of the relation between political thought and action. Students are also directed towards discursive ideologies displaying complex conceptual arrangements such as liberalism or socialism.

The course is devised so as to develop a manifold range of skills necessary for constructing critical arguments in political theory, for working with problems of consistency and justification, for analysing the complexities of the usage of political language, for understanding the principal forms through which political thought presents itself, both as theory and as ideology, and for appreciating the main current and recent debates that command attention in the field. To those ends philosophical, ideological and historical analyses are all appropriate, and the merits of each type may be assessed and contrasted. Students are therefore encouraged to explore different ways of approaching these issues, though they are also enabled, if they so wish, to choose a specific strategy from among these approaches. Students are also invited, in consultation with their tutors, to balance a broad appreciation of the field with a development of their own interests within the wide choice of available concepts and ideologies. The literature to which they are directed is therefore diverse, encompassing classical texts, seminal philosophers and theorists, significant journal articles, and typical examples of ideological debate. Both substantive arguments and methodological issues are consequently aired. By extending the initial understanding of political thought gained by students in the first year introduction to politics, or by building on other related introductory lectures and subjects, the course provides the basis for specialization in political theory, as well as tools that other specializations may draw upon. It will enable students to reflect on the principles underlying politics, to make reasoned assessments of political discourse, and to develop their own arguments at a requisite degree of sophistication.

214. International Relations

The aim of this core subject is to introduce PPE students to the academic study of international relations and to develop a broad knowledge and understanding of the major issues in international relations, concentrating on the period since 1990. The subject seeks to strike a balance between empirical knowledge and theoretical understanding.

Those taking the subject will have the opportunity to study some of the major questions in contemporary international relations (e.g. the role of the United Nations and of alliances such as NATO; the impact on international relations of globalization and of democratization; the development of European integration; the international impact of civil wars and humanitarian disasters; and problems that arise from national self-determination and attempts to

promote human rights). But they will also develop a broad knowledge of the most important analytical and theoretical tools that are needed to make sense of these questions.

This knowledge of the principal theories and concepts is intended to tie in closely with work for the further subjects in international relations (*International Relations in the Era of the Cold War, International Relations in the Era of the Two World Wars, and International Security and Conflict*).

220. Political Sociology

The course builds on some of the concepts, theories and knowledge introduced in the Politics Prelims syllabus – notably the study of electorates, parties and interest groups, and the study of the interaction of political ideas such as democracy with political processes. In this Final Honour School subject students will study in more detail the major theoretical approaches to social class, race and ethnicity, gender, religion, nationality, states, interest groups including unions, parties, movements and single issue campaigns, and the interrelationships between culture, economy, social structure, and political processes and institutions. The theoretical approaches will be critically assessed in the light of empirical evidence from a range of countries, and also put in the context of the philosophically rigorous analysis of power and change. To aid students in attaining a comprehensive grasp of the field of study, they will have the opportunity to look at ‘approaches’ such as structuralism, rational choice theory, political culture theory, and the historical and comparative perspective as such, as well as studying the application of these to the specific topics mentioned. Thus by the end of the course students should have an understanding of recent sociological explanations of political processes and events, a grasp of the competing approaches in the field, an understanding of the main methods of data collection and analysis, and an appreciation of the role of models and theories in sociological knowledge.

A.2.3 Economics

There are no compulsory core subjects. Students continuing with Economics must take at least two papers in Economics if tripartite, or at least three if bipartite, as set out in the *Examination Regulations*.

Microeconomics, Macroeconomics, Quantitative Economics and Development of the World Economy since 1800 must be studied in your second year (the first year of your work for Finals). The rest of the papers may only be studied in your third year (the second year of your work for Finals). Some third year papers can only be studied in combination with certain second year papers. For example, to study *Econometrics* in your third year, you will need to have studied *Quantitative Economics* in your second year.

Selecting *Microeconomics, Macroeconomics and Quantitative Economics* in your second year will maximise your choice of third year options.

Second year papers:

- Microeconomics
- Macroeconomics

- Quantitative Economics
- Development of the World Economy since 1800

Third year papers:

- Econometrics (you must also take *Quantitative Economics*)
- Economics of Developing Countries (you must also take *Quantitative Economics* and *Microeconomics*)
- Game Theory (you must also take *Microeconomics*)
- Money and Banking (you must also take *Macroeconomics*)
- Thesis in Economics

A number of further third year options will be offered as special subjects. In Hilary Term of your second year, before making your choice, you should attend the options fair, where the list of options available to you will be announced. This is an opportunity to find out more about which options are on offer, their content and who teaches them. Some of these options may only be studied in combination with *Microeconomics*, *Macroeconomics* and/or *Quantitative Economics*.

As an example, the current list of further options available is:

- Behavioural and Experimental Economics
- Economics of Industry
- International Economics
- Labour Economics and Inequality
- Microeconomic Analysis
- Public Economics

As in the first year, teaching will take place in lectures, tutorials and classes. Trinity Term of the third year is generally devoted to revision and taking examinations.

Thesis

You may also offer a thesis of up to 15,000 words in place of one of the optional Finals papers. We encourage you to consider this possibility, which provides the opportunity to undertake in-depth research into a topic. Further information can be found in the thesis section of the FHS handbook.

Further information about second and third year papers

An outline of the syllabus for each paper, called the rubric, is given in the *Examination Regulations*. Further information and resources, teaching arrangements, and the names of faculty members involved in teaching each paper, can be found on Economics WebLearn/Canvas.

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