

BA English Literature and Philosophy



English Literature students question what is on the page and come to their own judgements and opinions about the text and the ways it represents the world. Philosophy asks some of the biggest questions concerning human existence; questions that are at the core of some of the world's greatest books.

The Department of Philosophy at Birmingham has a growing international reputation as a centre of excellence for research in analytic philosophy, especially in metaphysics and epistemology, philosophy of language and mind, and ethics and ethical theory.

In your English modules you will explore the written word from medieval to modern times. Whichever literature modules you choose from our broad range you will be supported by experts and a wealth of resources, for example at our world-renowned Shakespeare Institute in nearby Stratford-upon-Avon. It is a combination that develops sought-after graduates with key skills in clear thinking, analysing, argument and the use of spoken and written language

[Study here and find out why the University of Birmingham has been awarded The Times and The Sunday Times University of the Year 2013-14 \(http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/news/latest/2013/09/20-sep-Birmingham-announced-as-University-of-the-Year.aspx\)](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/news/latest/2013/09/20-sep-Birmingham-announced-as-University-of-the-Year.aspx)

Course fact file

UCAS code: QV3M

Duration: 3 Years

Places Available: 12

Applications in 2013: 116

Typical Offer: AAB (**[More detailed entry requirements and the international qualifications accepted can be found in the course details \(? OpenSection=EntryRequirements\)](#)**)

Start date: September

Contact

Admissions Tutor: **[Dr Mark Walker \(http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/staff/profiles/philosophy/walker-mark.aspx\)](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/staff/profiles/philosophy/walker-mark.aspx)**

Telephone enquiries: +44 (0)121 414 6059

Email: **[philosophy@bham.ac.uk \(mailto:philosophy@bham.ac.uk\)](mailto:philosophy@bham.ac.uk)**

[Department of Philosophy \(/schools/ptr/departments/philosophy/index.aspx\)](/schools/ptr/departments/philosophy/index.aspx)

[Birmingham Seminar for Environmental Humanities \(/schools/historycultures/departments/history/research/projects/bisemeh/index.aspx\)](/schools/historycultures/departments/history/research/projects/bisemeh/index.aspx)

[Department of English Literature \(/schools/edacs/departments/english/index.aspx\)](/schools/edacs/departments/english/index.aspx)

Details

In this programme, you study half of your modules (60 credits) in English Literature and half in Philosophy (60 credits).

First year

English Literature: The first-year literature foundation modules introduce students to a range of kinds and periods of literature, using a lively variety of critical and theoretical approaches. Modules include:

- Literary Aesthetics after 1800 (20 credits) introduces some key notions of form, style and genre in literary texts written after 1800. You will study three major focal texts (or groups of shorter texts) of different genres, and will develop skills in the close analysis of passages and in discursive essay writing.
- Literary Aesthetics before 1800(20 credits) introduces key notions of form, style and genre in texts written before 1800. You will study three major focal texts (or groups of shorter texts) of different genres, for example, Malory, *Morte D'Arthur*, revenge tragedies of the 16th and 17th centuries; selected verse satire of the 18th century.
- The Critical Practice module (10+10 credits) focuses on key knowledge and skills central to critical practice in English Studies. You will be introduced to strategies for engaging with primary and secondary sources for literary study and methodologies in literary criticism. This module is closely related to Literary Aesthetics after 1800 and Literary Aesthetics before 1800.

Philosophy: First year modules include: Knowledge and Reality (what is the world like, and how, if at all, do we come to know about it?); History of Philosophy; Logic; and The Individual and Society (covering moral and political philosophy). There are also two seminar only modules: Philosophical Texts I (where you learn how to analyse and criticise some texts on a variety of topics) and Independent Study I (where you learn essay writing and research skills and apply them by writing an essay on a philosophical topic of your choice).

Second year

English Literature: In this year, you take modules that address topics in three major periods of English literature, and which are informed by theoretical as well as textual and historical approaches. You will study:

- *One Option module in Medieval/Early Modern literature (20 credits) chosen from a list of options.*
- *One Option module in Modern literature (20 credits) chosen from a list of options. Examples might include Writing and the World in the Nineteenth Century or Victorian and Decadent Literature: The Modern, the Aesthetic, and the Gothic or Making it New: Modernism and Literary Innovation in the Early Twentieth Century or Literature in Britain Since 1945.*
- *One Transhistorical Literature Option (10 + 10 credits). Examples may include Satire or Colonial and Postcolonial Literature or Hacking the Book.*

Philosophy: In the second year, all students are given some freedom of choice, so you can pursue the topics and questions that interest and inspire you. Second year modules currently on offer include: Thought and Language; Topics in the History of Philosophy; Philosophy of Science; Philosophy of Mind; and Meta-ethics. There is also Philosophical Texts II, where you focus on a single classic book by a particular author (you will have a range of texts in different areas to choose from), and Independent Study II, which gives you the opportunity to further hone your essay writing skills and to write another essay on a question of your own devising.

Third year

English Literature: The final year is the culmination of your programme, in which you choose two from a number of special option modules, taught by experts in those specialisms, and also undertake a dissertation in which you demonstrate sophisticated understanding of the issues in literature that you have been studying over the last two years. You study:

- *Literature Dissertation (10 + 10 credits). You will write a 5,000 word dissertation on a subject of your choice.*
- *One choice from Literature Options (all 20 credits; see below)*
- *Either Shakespeare: Works, Time and Impact (10+10 credits) This course, running through the whole of your final year, allows you the opportunity to think widely across all Shakespeare's texts in their historical, cultural and theatrical contexts; it is taught, in the main, by staff from the University's Shakespeare Institute, and students are encouraged to draw on the resources of the Shakespeare Institute Library.*
- *Or a further Literature Option (20 credits)*

Literature Options available to final-year students have recently included: Ben Jonson; Chaucer: Pre-modern Writing and Post-modern Reading; Contemporary Irish Writing; Decadence and Aestheticism; English Reformed; ExtraOrdinary Bodies: Difference and Normalcy in Contemporary Literatures; Fantasy and Fandom; Gossip, Scandal, and Celebrity; Hardy and Wilde; Henry James; Literary Modernism; Literature and Politics in the 1930s; Literature, Sexuality, and the Body; Lyrical Ballads; Medieval Manuscripts; The Novels of Virginia Woolf; Paradise Lost: Text and Context; Viragos, Coquettes and Prudes; Voicing Women; Victoria's Secrets: Literature and Secrecy in the Nineteenth Century; The Works of T. S. Eliot; Utopia and its Discontents.

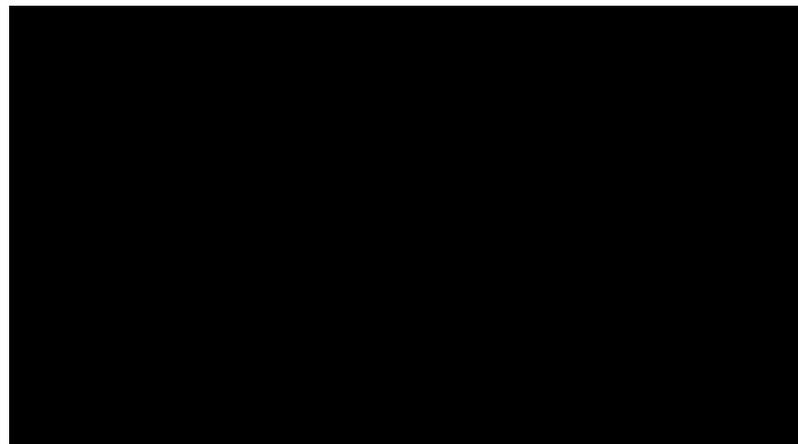
Not all third-year options run at all times: this information is offered for general guidance only. It may be necessary from time to time to vary timing, content and availability.

Philosophy: In the final year there is even more choice of modules. Some areas, like ethics and metaphysics, will be familiar to you, but will be studied at a more advanced level; others, like the philosophy of Schopenhauer, will be new to you. Final year modules currently on offer include:

- Contemporary Moral Theory
- Philosophy of Religion
- Philosophy of Psychology
- Issues in Contemporary Metaphysics
- Philosophy of Language
- Schopenhauer
- Global Bio-Ethics

Another option is the Philosophical Project module, for which you research and write a dissertation with the help of a supervisor who advises you and generally guides you through the process.

Why study this course

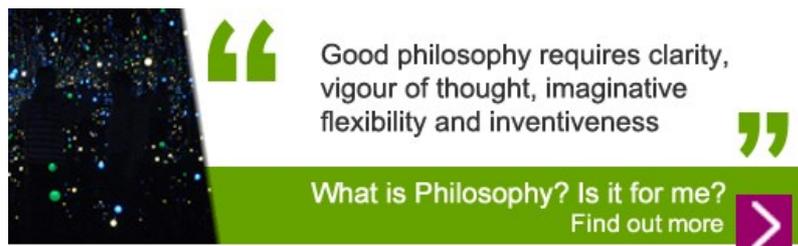


Philosophy is the ideal discipline for people who find they are bothered by questions that their friends can cheerfully ignore, and for people who don't want to settle for conventional answers and received wisdom, but want to arrive at answers that stand up to the most searching examination.

- **Friendly and relaxed atmosphere** – our academic staff within the **Department of Philosophy** (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/schools/ptr/departments/philosophy/index.aspx><http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/schools/ptr/departments/philosophy/index.aspx>) know

students by name and are always happy to talk about philosophical questions, provide additional feedback on academic performance and discuss any problems you might be having with your degree programme

- **Taught by experts in the field** (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/schools/ptr/departments/philosophy/staff/index.aspx>) - the Department of Philosophy has a growing international reputation as a centre of excellence for research in analytical philosophy, especially in metaphysics and epistemology, philosophy of language and mind, and ethics and ethical history
- **Intellectually challenging and stimulating environment** – focused on ensuring you're a fully supported and active learner
- **High-quality student support** You'll have your own personal tutor as well as the department's welfare tutor and the university's support services
- **Flexibility** – you will have the opportunity to specialise more and more as you progress, culminating in a final-year dissertation that allows you to carry out in-depth individually supervised research into topics of your choice
- **Study abroad** – in your third year there is the option to study at an overseas university
- **Extra-curricular activities** – we have a highly active Philosophy Society which runs a programme of social events, visiting speakers and debates throughout the academic year
- **Employability** – our unique degree programme is designed to provide both academic excellence and vocational development; a balance that's highly sought after by employers in today's intellectual and creative industries
- **Centre for the Study of Global Ethics** (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/research/activity/globalethics/index.aspx>) - the first of its kind in the UK where it addresses the practical and theoretical issues raised by globalisation
- **John Hick Centre for Philosophy of Religion** (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/research/activity/philosophyofreligion/index.aspx>) – dedicated to promoting critical thinking about the metaphysical, epistemological and moral questions concerning religion, belief and reality. The Centre is named after John Hick, Emeritus H.G. Wood Professor of Theology at the University of Birmingham and one of the most prominent philosophers of religion in our time

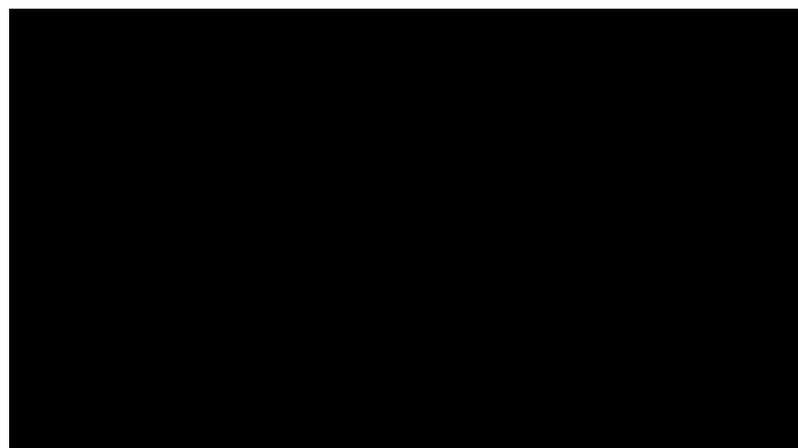


“ Good philosophy requires clarity, vigour of thought, imaginative flexibility and inventiveness ”

What is Philosophy? Is it for me?
Find out more >

(<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/undergraduate/courses/phil/what-is-philosophy.aspx>)

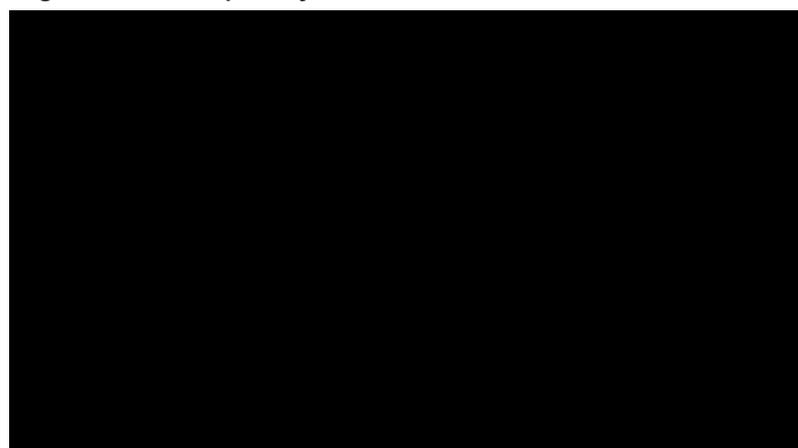
Dr Darragh Byrne gives the Philosophy talk at the Undergraduate Open Day September 2014



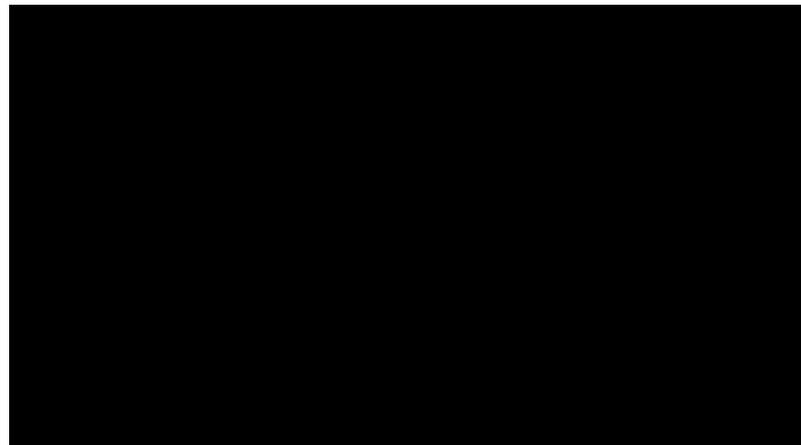
In English you have an unparalleled opportunity, not only to engage with the materials of a broad and diverse cultural, textual and linguistic discipline, but also to develop skills in intellectual analysis, critical thinking and articulate expression. We believe that we are partners in learning with our students, and our programme is designed to ensure that you are a fully supported and an active learner.

- All English Literature students take a year-long Shakespeare course, drawing on the unique resources of our internationally-renowned Shakespeare Institute in Stratford-upon-Avon.
- BEDSOC (Birmingham English Department Society) is very active in organising social events, for example trips to the theatre and theme nights out such as Hawaii night.
- ? Students at Birmingham will also benefit from frequent lectures and readings from award-winning writers and industry professionals. Speakers in recent years have included novelist David Lodge, poet and writer Jackie Kay, poet Simon Armitage, playwright Simon Stephens and theatre director Greg Doran.
- English literature graduates from the University of Birmingham have a higher than average rate for employability for the subject and are ranked in the top 10 universities nationally for graduate employability.

English Literature open day talk



Joint honours open day talk



Dr Craig Blunt delivers an undergraduate open day talk about studying Joint Honours at the university.

Fees and funding

Standard fees (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/ug/courses/fees/standard>) apply

Learn more about **fees and funding** (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/fees/undergraduate/loans.aspx>).

Scholarships

Learn more about our **scholarships and awards** (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/fees/undergraduate/funding/index.aspx>).

Entry requirements

Number of A levels required: 3

Typical offer: AAB

Required subjects and grades: A level English Literature or English Language and Literature grade A

Additional information: Other qualifications are considered - learn more about **entry requirements** (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/ug/requirements>).

International students:

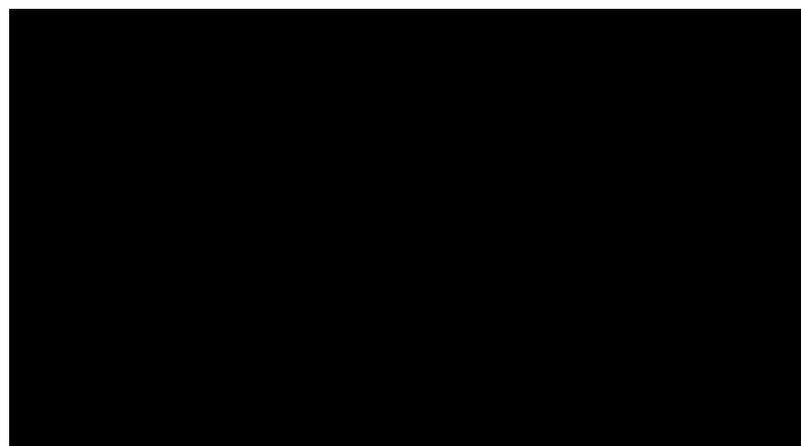
We welcome applications from international students and invite you to join our vibrant community of over 4500 international students who represent 150 different countries. We accept a range of qualifications, our **country pages** (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/international/students/country/index.aspx>) show you what qualifications we accept from your country.

Depending on your chosen course of study, you may also be interested in the Birmingham Foundation Academy, a specially structured programme for international students whose qualifications are not accepted for direct entry to UK universities. Further details can be found on the **foundation academy web pages** (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/foundation-academy/Pathways/index.aspx>).

How to apply

Apply through UCAS at **www.ucas.com** (<http://www.ucas.com/>)

Learn more about **applying** (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/ug/courses/apply>).



Key Information Set (KIS)

Key Information Sets (KIS) are comparable sets of information about full- or part-time undergraduate courses and are designed to meet the information needs of prospective students.

All KIS information has been published on the Unistats website and can also be accessed via the small advert, or 'widget', below. On the **Unistats website** (<http://unistats.direct.gov.uk>) you are able to compare all the KIS data for each course with data for other courses.

The development of Key Information Sets (KIS) formed part of HEFCE's work to enhance the information that is available about higher education. They give you access to reliable and comparable information in order to help you make informed decisions about what and where to study.

The KIS contains information which prospective students have identified as useful, such as student satisfaction, graduate outcomes, learning and teaching activities, assessment methods, tuition fees and student finance, accommodation and professional accreditation.

Learning and teaching

As a Birmingham student you are part of an academic elite and will learn from world-leading experts. At Birmingham we advocate an enquiry based learning approach, from the outset you will be encouraged to become an independent and self-motivated learner, qualities that are highly sought after by employers. We want you to be challenged and will encourage you to think for yourself.

Your learning will take place in a range of different settings, from scheduled teaching in lectures and small group tutorials, to self-study and peer group learning (for example preparing and delivering presentations with your classmates).

Support

To begin with you may find this way of working challenging, but rest assured that we will enable you to make this transition. You will have access to a comprehensive support system that will assist and encourage you, including personal tutors and welfare tutors who can help with both academic and welfare issues, and a formal transition review during your first year to check on your progress and offer you help for any particular areas where you need support.

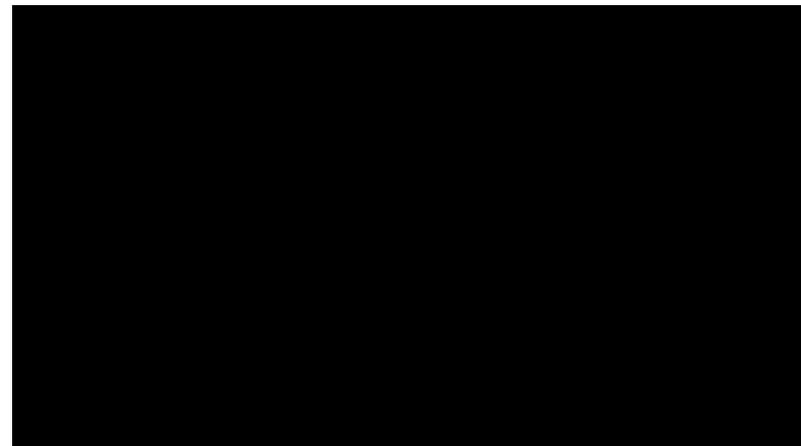
Our **Academic Skills Centre** also offers you support with your learning. The centre is a place where you can develop your mathematical, academic writing and general academic skills. It is the centre's aim to help you to become a more effective and independent learner through the use of a range of high-quality and appropriate learning support services. These range from drop-in sessions to workshops on a range of topics including note taking, reading, writing and presentation skills.

From the outset, you will be assigned your own **Personal Tutor** who will get to know you as you progress through your studies, providing academic and welfare advice, encouraging you and offering assistance in any areas you may feel you need extra support to make the most of your potential and your time here at Birmingham.

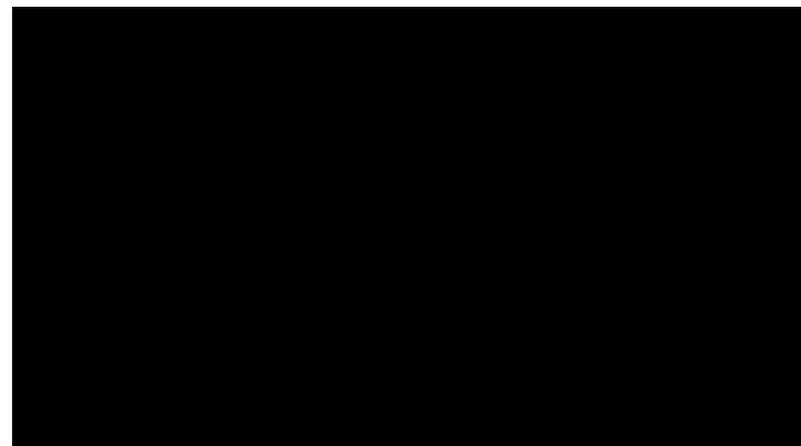
The **Academic Writing Advisory Service (AWAS)** will provide you with individual support from an academic writing advisor and postgraduate subject-specialist writing tutors. You will receive guidance on writing essays and dissertations at University-level which can be quite different from your previous experiences of writing. Support is given in a variety of ways, such as small-group workshops, online activities, feedback through email and tutorials.

Student experience

Supporting you throughout your transition to University, offering research opportunities and study skills support and helping you develop and prepare for your post-University careers - our **Arts and Law Student Experience Team** (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/university/colleges/artslaw/student-experience/index.aspx>) strive to help you get the most out of your academic experience.



Interactive classes are offered in modules which don't feature separate seminars. Here, lecturing time and discussion time are part of the same session and the structure of the classes can be very flexible.



Assessment methods

Studying at degree-level is likely to be very different from your previous experience of learning and teaching. You will be expected to think, discuss and engage critically with the subject and find things out for yourself. We will enable you to make this transition to a new style of learning, and the way that you are assessed during your studies will help you develop the essential skills you need to make a success of your time at Birmingham.

You will be assessed in a variety of ways, and these may be different with each module that you take. You will be assessed through coursework which may take the form of essays, group and individual presentations and formal exams (depending on your chosen degree).

During your first year you will undergo a formal 'transition' review to see how you are getting on and if there are particular areas where you need support. This is in addition to the personal tutor who is based in your school or department and can help with any academic issues you encounter.

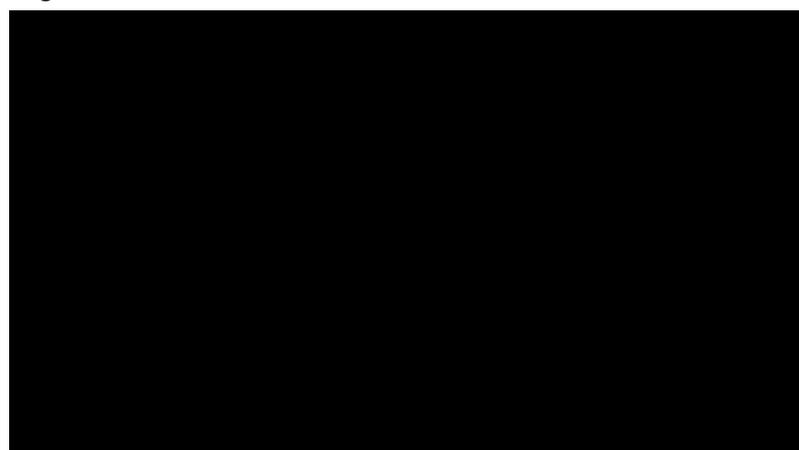
At the beginning of each module, you will be given information on how and when you will be assessed for that particular programme of study. You will receive feedback on each assessment within four weeks, so that you can learn from and build on what you have done. You will be given feedback on any exams that you take; if you should fail an exam we will ensure that particularly detailed feedback is made available to enable you to learn for the future.

The principal means of assessment for English are coursework essays and written exams.

Each module is assessed independently by exams, essays or other forms of written assignment. Some modules are completely assessed by coursework. Most first-year modules are assessed by both an essay written during the year and an exam at the end of the year, with each given equal weight. The assessment for second- and third-year modules also varies. Many modules are assessed by two essays, while some are assessed by an essay and an exam. The Philosophical Project module is assessed by a single long essay of about 6,000 words.

Employability

English Literature



[Video above - Dr Kate Rumbold discusses careers and employability during the English Literature open day presentation]

Studying for an English BA at Birmingham is an unparalleled opportunity, not only to engage with a diverse cultural, textual and linguistic discipline, but also to develop skills in intellectual analysis, critical thinking and articulate expression – skills that last a lifetime and qualify you for many possible careers. You will also be encouraged to acquire practical skills that you will find just as useful in your future career, including oral presentation, professional documentation, group work and the uses of information technology.

50% of vacancies advertised for new and recent graduates don't specify a degree subject, and English graduates enter a wide range of careers including advertising, journalism and media, government, law, publishing and teaching at every level. About 25% of English graduates pursue postgraduate study to specialise in an academic area or prepare for careers such as law and teaching.

English graduates from Birmingham have a high rate for employability for the subject, and we are ranked in the top ten universities nationally for graduate employability. 93% of our English graduates go into work or study within six months of graduation. Our graduates have started careers with employers including the BBC, Headline Publishing Group, Mirror Group Newspapers and Oxford University Press, in roles such as account executive, editorial assistant, marketing assistant and sales and events coordinator.

Whether you have a clear idea of where your future aspirations lie or want to consider the broad range of opportunities available once you have a Birmingham degree, **our Careers Network** (<https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/as/employability/careers/index.aspx>) can help you achieve your goal. This is a unique careers guidance service tailored to your academic subject area, offering a specialised team who can give you expert advice. This includes individual careers advice and events to give you insight into the professions and employers of interest to arts graduates. Our 'Creative careers' series is always popular with our students, and features events with employers and professionals from areas such as advertising, PR and communications, careers in journalism, publishing and writing, and careers in the theatre.

English alumni profiles



(<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/schools/edacs/departments/english/undergraduate/alumni-profiles.aspx>)

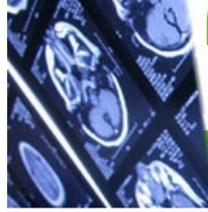
Careers events

We also hold events covering careers in teaching, event management, marketing and working with charities; we're developing links with local arts organisations to create some amazing opportunities for students; and you can even apply for our 'Global Challenge' to work overseas on an expenses paid placement during your summer vacation. We also encourage all our students to apply their skills in the workplace by undertaking internships in the summer; the work experience bursary scheme enables students to apply for funding for placements in those career fields where they are often unpaid.

Philosophy



(<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/undergraduate/courses/phil/why-do->



Philosophy students have for decades had an impressive employability record.

Why not do something practical like Philosophy?
Find out more

[philosophy.aspx](#)

As a student of Philosophy you will have an excellent opportunity to develop skills that are highly prized by employers. Our graduates understand complex information, write clearly and effectively, can build a case for a particular view, strategy or course of action, respect the views of others even if they disagree with them, and generally think for themselves. If you're taking the year abroad option, you'll develop real confidence and independence that's valued in the working world.

50% of job vacancies advertised for new and recent graduates don't specify a degree subject, so as a graduate of Philosophy you've a vast potential to enter a wide range of careers, including law, journalism and teaching, as well as commerce and industry. Some also decide to pursue postgraduate study.

University of Birmingham Philosophy graduates are very successful after graduation. Our Philosophy graduates have a high average starting salary of £18,000 per year. Recent graduates have started careers with employers including Government departments, local councils, charities and companies in many business sectors, in roles as diverse as Assistant Literary Agent, Management Consultant, Marketing Assistant and Programmes Officer.

Whether you have a clear idea of where your future aspirations lie or want to consider the broad range of opportunities available once you have a Birmingham degree, our **Careers Network** (<https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/as/employability/careers/index.aspx>) can help you achieve your goal. This is a unique careers guidance service tailored to your academic subject area, offering a specialised team who can give you expert advice. This includes individual careers advice and events to give you insight into the professions and employers of interest to arts graduates.

Our 'Creative careers' series is always popular with our students, and features events with employers and professionals from areas such as advertising, PR and communications, media, journalism, publishing, advertising and politics. We also hold events covering careers in teaching, event management, marketing and working with charities, and our internship officer develops links with local arts organisations to create some amazing opportunities for students.

Philosophy alumni profiles



I would recommend it to anyone who wants a varied, challenging, academic and thought-provoking degree.

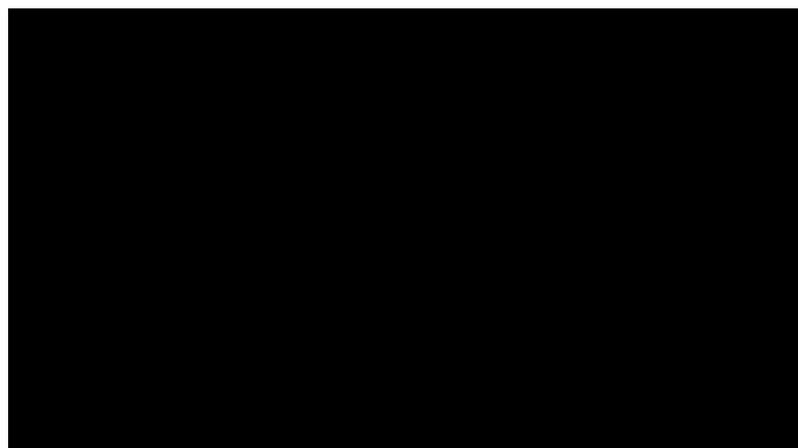
Vanessa Lipman
H R Management Graduate Trainee

<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/schools/ptr/departments/philosophy/alumni/index.aspx>

Extra-curricular activities

To enhance your career prospects even further, you will need to think about engaging in some extra-curricular activities while you're at university to broaden your skills and your network of contacts. This can include the many societies at the Guild of Students and also the many voluntary opportunities offered with local arts organisations. Our employer-endorsed award-winning **Personal Skills Award** (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/careers/psa.aspx>) (PSA) recognises your extra-curricular activities, and provides an accredited employability programme designed to improve your career prospects.

Our College of Arts and Law **undergraduate research scholarship scheme** (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/university/colleges/artslaw/studentexperience/urs/index.aspx>) enables interested students to work on a current academic research project being run by one of the College's academic researchers. Undergraduate research scholars gain work experience over the summer after their first or second year and have the chance to develop skills in both collaborative and independent research.



Cultural Internships

Our innovative **Cultural Internships** (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/culture/volunteering/regionally.aspx>) offer graduates the opportunity for a six month paid internship at a leading cultural institution in the West Midlands. These internships are a unique opportunity to learn fundamental, transferable business and interpersonal skills, through experience of real work in an established cultural institution. Our current partners include Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery, Birmingham REP, Birmingham Royal Ballet, the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Ironbridge Gorge Museums Trust and the Library of Birmingham. We have plans to expand the scheme to include our own major cultural assets, such as Winterbourne House, the Lapworth Museum, and the Barber Institute of Fine Arts. This scheme will give you professional experience to set you apart in a competitive graduate market.

We also offer voluntary work which complements your studies by helping you gain practical experiences in occupational settings while contributing back to society. This can bring new skills that will be useful throughout your future and can make a positive impact on your learning whilst at university. Volunteering enables you to develop skills such as communication, interpersonal skills, teamwork, self-confidence and self-discipline all of which can be transferred into your studies.

Your Birmingham degree is evidence of your ability to succeed in a demanding academic environment. Employers target Birmingham students for their drive, diversity, communication and problem-solving skills, their team-working abilities and cultural awareness, and our graduate employment statistics have continued to climb at a rate well above national trends. If you make the most of the wide range of services you will be able to develop your career from the moment you arrive.

Additional accreditation

No



To see more details and compare with other courses

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