Department of Philosophy

Personal Tutorials...

For students on BA Philosophy.

Tutorials to take place in personal tutors’ offices in set weeks at
times to be confirmed

...and Study Skill Lectures

For all students taking modules in the Department of Philosophy

Lectures to take place in Weeks 3-8 of teaching in the autumn term
on Thursdays at 2pm – 3pm in the Queens Lecture Theatre

Programme Director for Philosophy
Henry Somers-Hall
Henry.Somers-Hall@rhul.ac.uk
PART 1: PERSONAL TUTORIALS AND STUDY SKILLS—AN OVERVIEW

This document contains information about the Personal Tutor System for students enrolled on BA Philosophy.

It also contains information about the supplementary study skills lectures provided by the School of Politics, International Relations and Philosophy that are of relevance to students taking the BA in Philosophy.

For students enrolled on other Joint Honours or combined programmes, where another department leads on that programme, personal tutorials will be provided by that department. Please note that different systems are likely to follow slightly different plans.

The programme of tutorials and supplementary study-skills lectures has three core goals:

(1) To help first-year undergraduate students develop the study skills necessary to make the most out of their programme of study in Philosophy
(2) To help first- and second undergraduate students develop those practical and critical skills that prepare them for life after university
(3) To provide general academic and pastoral support to students within the Department.

The remainder of the document provides:

(i) A brief overview of the Personal Tutor System
(ii) A detailed outline of personal tutorials for first years
(iii) A detailed outline of personal tutorials for second years
(iv) An outline of the supplementary study skills lectures

If you have any questions or concerns, please don’t hesitate to contact Dr Henry Somers-Hall, the programme director for philosophy.
PART 2: THE PERSONAL TUTOR SYSTEM

Our personal tutorials are designed to help first-year students in particular make the transition to university-level study. Making this transition is not always easy. Students are not only often unfamiliar with what to study; they are also often unfamiliar with how to study. For this reason, you will meet with your personal tutor more frequently during your first year than during your second year of study.

We also encourage students to see their personal tutor at other times to discuss issues that may be of concern.

Students enrolled on joint honours programmes with philosophy will have a dedicated point of contact within the Department of Philosophy whom you can approach with general academic queries. This information will be circulated separately. If you are not sure who this person is, please email Jayshree Dave, administrator for philosophy.

Unless otherwise agreed with your personal tutor, tutorials will take place in set weeks across the academic year. Meetings will take place in your tutor’s office.

If you are a first-year student, meetings will generally take one of two forms: hour-long small-group meetings; or shorter one-on-one meetings.

If you are a second-year student, your personal tutor will contact you to arrange a mutually convenient time for one-on-one meetings in those weeks when tutorials are scheduled.

The Department will remind you of the weeks when you will be meeting your personal tutors. But you will need to make a note of your group and, if you are a first year, the precise time when your tutorials will take place.

Most tutorials will involve practical, hands-on exercises that will help you to hone the key skills you need to succeed in your degree. Come to the tutorials ready to participate!

Attendance at personal tutorials is compulsory. Attendance at the supplementary study skills lectures is optional but recommended.

An outline of the tutorial programme—for first and second years—is set out on the next page. The second section of this document then provides more information about first-year tutorials, and the third section provides more information about the second-year tutorials. The final section sets out briefly the programme of supplementary study skills lectures.
Weekly schedule for personal tutorials

Please note that the specific times for your tutorials will be provided separately.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Week beginning</th>
<th>Tutorials taking place?</th>
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<td>Welcome Week (week 1)</td>
<td>18 Sep 2017</td>
<td>1st, 2nd and Final years, small groups</td>
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<td>Week 2</td>
<td>25 Sep 2017</td>
<td>1st, 2nd and Final years, small groups</td>
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<td>Week 3</td>
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<td>Week 4</td>
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<td>Week 5</td>
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<td>Week 6</td>
<td>23 Oct 2017</td>
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<td>Reading week (week 7)</td>
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<td>Week 8</td>
<td>6 Nov 2017</td>
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<td>Week 9</td>
<td>13 Nov 2017</td>
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<td>Week 10</td>
<td>20 Nov 2017</td>
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<td>Week 11</td>
<td>27 Nov 2017</td>
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<td>Week 12</td>
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<td>Christmas vacation (weeks 13-16)</td>
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<td>Week 17</td>
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<td>Week 19</td>
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<td>Week 20</td>
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<td>Week 21</td>
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<td>Reading week (week 22)</td>
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<td>Week 23</td>
<td>19 Feb 2018</td>
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<td>Week 24</td>
<td>26 Feb 2018</td>
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<td>Week 25</td>
<td>5 Mar 2018</td>
<td>1st years, one-on-one meetings</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 26</td>
<td>12 Mar 2018</td>
<td>2nd years, one-on-one meetings</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 27</td>
<td>19 Mar 2018</td>
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<td>Easter vacation</td>
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<td>Penultimate week of year</td>
<td>28 May 2018</td>
<td>1st and 2nd years, one-on-one meetings</td>
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PART 3: FIRST-YEAR PERSONAL TUTORIALS

Week beginning 18 September 2017, Welcome Week
Meeting your personal tutor

This is a relatively informal session for students to meet briefly with their personal tutor, individually, in pairs, or in small groups, depending on your time of arrival!

By the end of this meeting, you will have:
• Met your personal tutor
• Discussed the contents of the UG handbook, email etiquette, how to ask for extensions, and who to speak to if you need help
• Familiarised yourself with the organisation of the Personal Tutor System
• Taken note of where you can find general help with study skills from the College’s Centre for the Development of Academic Skills or CeDAS
• Taken note of your next tutorial, including which group you have been allocated to, and what preparation is needed.

Please take a look at the CeDAS resources for Academic Skills, especially the ‘Study Skills’ section: https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/ecampus/cedas/onlineresources/home.aspx.

Note: These meetings will not take place in scheduled personal-tutor hours

Week beginning 25 September 2017, week 2
‘Safety-net’ meeting for new tutees

This session is an opportunity for students to meet with their personal tutor if they were unable to do so in Welcome Week. Please see above for details.

Note: This and all subsequent meetings will take place in scheduled hours, details to be confirmed.
Week beginning 2 October 2017, week 3
Settling in, note-taking and participation in seminars: small groups

For this session, you will meet with your tutor and other students in small groups for one hour. You will need to prepare by bringing with you copies of the notes you have taken for this week’s seminars. You will be expected to discuss how you are settling in, your current note-taking practice, and your experience of participating in seminars.

By the end of this meeting, you will have:
• Discussed how you are settling in
• Reflected on how you take notes in preparation for seminars
• Talked about how you might take notes more effectively
• Discussed what steps you might take to get the most out of seminar discussions.

The CeDAS resource set, ‘Library and online search skills’, is very useful and can be found at: https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/ecampus/cedas/onlineresources/home.aspx

Week beginning 23 October 2017, week 6
Writing essays and Philosophy’s marking criteria: small groups

For this session, you will meet with your tutor and other students in small groups for one hour. You will need to prepare by reading in advance three old essays (to be provided by the Department), as well as a copy of the departmental marking criteria. You will be expected to discuss each essay and how you would grade it according to the marking criteria. The tutor will then facilitate a discussion about what makes a good essay i.e. structure, answering the question, how to write paragraphs, and so on.

By the end of this meeting, you will have:
• Become familiar with the Department’s marking criteria
• Read examples of essays and related them to the Department’s marking criteria
• Reflected on what makes a good essay
• Discussed with your tutor and other students some common essay-writing errors.

You may also want to consult the CeDAS resource set, ‘Essay Writing’: https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/ecampus/cedas/onlineresources/home.aspx
Week beginning 6 November 2017, week 8
How to reference and avoid plagiarism: small groups

For this session, you will meet with your tutor and other students in small groups for one hour. You will need to prepare by reading in advance a copy of the Department’s referencing guide and familiarising yourself with it.

During the session, you will be expected to complete individually a short referencing test (to be provided), that will require you to identify errors in referencing according to the Department’s referencing guide.

You will then have an opportunity to discuss the errors you found and referencing more generally.

The tutor will also facilitate a discussion about what you understand by plagiarism, and help you to ensure how to avoid it.

By the end of this meeting, you will have:
- Become familiar with the Department’s referencing guide
- Been tested on your ability to spot common referencing errors
- Discussed plagiarism
- Reflected on what you can do to reference correctly and avoid plagiarism.

You are also advised to consult the CeDAS resource set, ‘Avoiding Plagiarism’: https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/ecampus/cedas/onlineresources/home.aspx

Week beginning 20 November 2017, week 10
Touching base: one-on-one meetings

For this session, you will meet your tutor individually for 10 minutes to discuss your progress so far. You will not need to prepare for this session!

During this session, you will have a chance to speak to your personal tutor about how you are finding your programme, what has gone well and not so well, and how you are coping with balancing the social and academic demands on your time.
**Week beginning 15 January 2018, week 18**

**Essay feedback: small groups**

For this session, you will meet with your tutor and other students in small groups for one hour. You will need to prepare by bringing with you a short summary of the feedback you have received on your autumn-term essays and three specific changes you plan to make to your essay writing in order to improve your spring-term essays.

Every student will be expected to summarise their experience of feedback to other members of the group, and to say what they will do to improve. There will then be a general discussion about getting the most out of feedback.

By the end of this meeting, you will have:

- Summarised the feedback on your autumn-term essays
- Reflected on the feedback
- Set yourself specific goals to improve your spring-term essays.

You may want to consult again the CeDAS resource set, ‘Essay Writing’:
[https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/ecampus/cedas/onlineresources/home.aspx](https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/ecampus/cedas/onlineresources/home.aspx)

**Week beginning 5 March 2018, week 25**

**Second-year course options: one-on-one meetings**

For this session, you will meet your tutor individually for 10 minutes to discuss your course options for next year. You will need to prepare by familiarising yourself with the course options for next year and thinking about which option you might wish to study.

By the end of this meeting, you will have:

- Discussed the course options available for next year
- Developed a clearer sense of you might choose to study next year.

There will also be a departmental ‘Course Options Fair’ on Wednesday 14 March at 3.30pm in the Windsor Building Room W-02/0-03.

This will be an opportunity for you to talk to module convenors about their specific courses.
Week beginning 28 May 2018, penultimate week of year
End-of-year reflections: one-on-one meetings

For this session, you will meet your tutor individually for 10 minutes to discuss how your exams went and your reflections on the year overall.

By the end of this meeting, you will have:
• Reflected on the exams
• Reflected on the year
• Discuss the challenges you have overcome
• Considered your plans for the summer
• Talked about your aspirations for next year.

Note: These meetings may not take place in scheduled personal-tutor hours
PART 4: SECOND-YEAR PERSONAL TUTORIALS

Week beginning 18 September 2017, Welcome Week
Meeting your personal tutor

This is a relatively informal session for students to meet briefly with their personal tutor, individually, in pairs, or in small groups, depending on the time of your arrival!

By the end of this meeting, you will have:
• Met your personal tutor
• Reminded yourself of the contents of the UG handbook
• Discussed the organisation of the Personal Tutor System.

Week beginning 25 September 2017, week 2
‘Safety-net’ meeting for returning tutees

This session is an opportunity for students to meet with their personal tutor if they were unable to do so in Welcome Week. Please see above for details!

Week beginning 12 March 2018, week 26
Final-year course options: one-on-one meetings

For this session, you will meet your tutor individually for 10 minutes to discuss your course options for next year. You will need to prepare by familiarising yourself with the options for next year and thinking about which options you might wish to study.

By the end of this meeting, you will have:
• Discussed the course options available for next year
• Developed a clearer sense of you might choose to study.

There will also be a departmental ‘Course Options Fair’ on Wednesday 14 March at 3.30pm in the Windsor Building Room W-02/0-03.

This will be an opportunity for you to talk to module convenors about their specific courses.
**Week beginning 28 May 2018, penultimate week of year**

End-of-year reflections: one-on-one meetings

For this session, you will meet your tutor individually for 10 minutes to discuss how your exams went and your reflections on the year overall.

By the end of this meeting, you will have:
- Reflected on the exams
- Reflected on the year
- Discussed the challenges you have overcome
- Considered your plans for the summer
- Talked about your aspirations for next year.

*Note: These meetings may not take place in scheduled personal-tutor hours*
PART 5: SUPPLEMENTARY STUDY SKILLS LECTURES

The department of Politics and International Relations provides a short series of six lectures meant to complement the personal tutorials. Much of the material in these lectures is covered on your Tutorial Special Study course, but we recommend you attend the sessions on library use and using the turnitin submission programme.

All sessions will take place in the Queens Lecture Theatre on Thursdays at 2pm–3pm. Although they are called lectures, the sessions will be interactive—so come prepared to learn by doing!

Further information about each session appears on the following pages.

There are no texts for this course—like most things in life, you learn best how to be a good student by studying! However, you may find the following books useful, both of which are available in the library:


You are encouraged to browse the online resources provided by Royal Holloway’s Centre for the Development of Academic Skills (CeDAS).

These include Essential Academic Skills, open lectures on relevant topics, English for international students, and a range of online resources to help you with all aspects of academic study skills.

Its website is: https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/ecampus/cedas/home.aspx
Thursday 19 October 2017
Session 2: Library training: Finding, selecting and evaluating sources

This session focuses on finding, selecting and evaluating a range of academic and non-academic sources. It will be led by Emma Burnett of the RHUL Library Liaison Team. Emma is the expert Information Consultant for Politics and International Relations and Philosophy who will cover: identifying and finding material on your reading lists; searching effectively to find material for your essays; evaluating the information that you find; and managing your references.

Royal Holloway’s Library Services provide a wealth of advice and support for all students: http://royalholloway.ac.uk/library

Of particular interest to Philosophy students should be the subject-specific guide to the library’s resources for Philosophy: http://libguides.rhul.ac.uk/Philosophy

The Library also has a YouTube channel that provides a range of tutorials showing you how to use specific aspects of the library system: https://www.youtube.com/user/LibraryRHUL

Lastly, please consult the CeDAS resource set, ‘Library and online search skills’: https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/ecampus/cedas/onlineresources/home.aspx

Thursday 9 November 2017
Session 4: Submitting essays: why you cannot have any excuses!

This session will be led by members of the Department’s administrative team. They will walk you carefully through the nuts and bolts of submitting coursework through Turnitin.

All students should attend this session so that they know how to submit coursework. Any questions you might have will be answered.

There will also be an opportunity for you to practice submitting coursework.

You will have no excuses if you miss the deadline by failing to submit your work correctly.