This course introduces students to major topics in philosophy of science, aiming to address the central question: "What makes science special?"

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**Lectures available online**

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<tr>
<th>Day</th>
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<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
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<td>Thursday</td>
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**Lecture Topics and Readings**

**Week 1: Historical Background**

**Recommended Reading:**


**Week 2: The Problem of Induction**

**Essential Reading:**

**Recommended Reading:**

**Week 3: Logical Empiricism**

**Essential Readings:**


**Recommended Reading:**
Stanford Encyclopedia Article: [https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/logical-empiricism/](https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/logical-empiricism/)

**Week 4: Kuhn: Revolutions and Progress**

**Essential Reading**


**Recommended Reading**


**Week 5: Values in Science**

**Essential Reading:**

Week 6: Realism

**Essential Reading:**


**Recommended reading**


Week 7: Models

**Essential Reading:**

**Recommended Reading:**


Week 8: Laws & Causation

**Essential reading**


**Recommended reading**


**Week 9: Explanation & Understanding**

**Essential Reading**


**Recommended reading**


**Further reading**


**Week 10: Reduction & Emergence**

**Essential reading**


**Recommended reading**


**Further Reading**


**Week 11: Review**

Lecture notes and other materials will be available on Learn.
Further advice on Readings
Encyclopaedias are a very good source of extra reading. Avoid Wikipedia (it is often inaccurate on philosophy) but there are good internet encyclopaedias that can be useful:

The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (SEP)
The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy (IEP)

Websites
We also recommend the following as starting points for your research:

PhilPapers
Philosophy Compass
The Diversity Reading List

You will need to know how to track down sources, including electronic journals, using the library search engine DiscoverED.

Tutorials
In addition to three course lectures per week, you will have weekly tutorials. These give you a chance to further discuss topics and issues in the course and its lectures. Tutorials will take place, at times and places to be arranged, during weeks 2 through 11 of the semester.

Attendance at tutorials is compulsory for all students on this course. The class tutor will maintain a register of attendance. Unexplained absences will be brought to the attention of your Personal Tutor.

You will be allocated a suitable tutorial group by the Timetabling Department based on your timetable. Should you wish to change the group you have been allocated to, you will need to fill in the Group Change Request Form on the Timetabling Department’s webpage. This form will be open until the end of Week 3 – if you wish to change groups after this time please contact the Teaching Office directly (philinfo@ed.ac.uk).

Please inform your tutor and the Teaching Office of any absences. Students who miss tutorials may be required to do additional written work.

Assessment

The course assessment is broken down into three components:
Participation (5%)
Midterm essay, 1500 words (25%)
End of semester take-home test (75%)
Participation
Class participation is assessed through short quizzes following each lecture. These quizzes are designed to assess attention during the lecture video and to reinforce the lecture material. It is recommended to take each quiz immediately after you finish watching the lecture videos. Feel free to consult the lecture slides that are available in pdf as you take the quiz. **Deadlines:** You have 2 weeks from the initial lecture posting to take each quiz.

Mid-term essay
The deadline for the midterm essay is by **12pm (mid-day), Wednesday 28th October.**

You should submit your essay via Turnitin on the Learn page. Please contact the Course Secretary if you are having problems uploading your essay.

The word count of your essay, including footnotes but excluding bibliography, must not exceed the specified word limit of 1500 words. The precise word count must be written on the coversheet. Overlong essays will be penalised according to the following rule: 1% of the maximum obtainable mark will be deducted for every 100 words, or part thereof, over the word limit. So, exceeding the word limit by 1-100 words incurs a deduction of 1%; exceeding by 101-200 words incurs a deduction of 2%; and so on.

End of semester test
There will be a comprehensive take-home test at the end of the semester, released Monday 14th December and due by **12pm (mid-day), Thursday 17th December.** Exact details of the format and release date of the take-home test will be released later in the semester.

Resit
The resit for this course is a take-home test worth 100%. This will take place in the April/May exam diet. Students will be informed of the exact dates closer to the time.

Visiting undergraduates
The assessment arrangements for visiting undergraduates are the same as for other students.

Mark Schemes
For Philosophy-specific marking guidelines go here: [Grade-related marking guidelines for Philosophy](#)
For the University’s general marking scheme go here: [Common Marking Scheme](#)
Learning Resources

Learn
You should regularly check your university email and check for announcements on the course Learn page.

The course Learn page will provide information concerning:
- General information and announcement about the course
- Lecture notes and slides
- Tutorial arrangements
- Information about assessment arrangements

University of Edinburgh Library
The library’s hard-copy and online resources can be searched online via DiscoverEd.

Exemplar essays
Anonymised exemplar essays will be on the Learn pages. These are essays written by past students that they have kindly agreed for us to use. We encourage you to read these essays in conjunction with the Philosophy-specific marking guidelines. In doing so think about the strengths and weaknesses of the essay, why the essays fell into their grade-band, and how they could have been improved.

There are many ways for an essay to fall into a particular grade-band. The Philosophy-specific marking guidelines provide explanation of the many, diverse, ways in which an essay can be a 1st, 2.i, 2.ii, and so on. The exemplar essays only show one way to achieve a certain grade; it is not the only way.

Autonomous Learning Groups
Each course has dedicated Autonomous Learning Groups. It is up to you, the members of the ALG, to organise the meetings. You decide how often to meet and what to do in your ALG. ALGs are designed to help you learn and get to know your classmates; they are not a formal requirement of the course. It is important to note that assessment in your courses is non-competitive: you aren’t competing against your classmates, only against the general grade criteria. It is in your interests to help each other.

You could use ALG meetings to:
- Read and discuss the papers together
- Discuss essay-writing and time-management techniques
- Constructively critique draft essays or plans
- Work on presentations or discussion posts that the class may involve
- Share tips on career advice

Please email the Course Organiser if you feel that it would be useful for the group if they joined one of your sessions. Please contact the course secretary if you find it necessary during the semester to transfer into a different group.
Getting in Touch
If you have a question regarding lecture content you should ask it in your tutorial group and/or visit the relevant lecturer to discuss it during their office hour.

For other specifically academic matters, you can contact the Course Organiser.

If you have questions not specifically about lecture content, you should contact the Course Secretary.

Prizes
Students who excel in Philosophy of Science may be eligible for the Daniel Garrad Prize.

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