PHD/MPHIL HANDBOOK

PHILOSOPHY 2023

PUBLISHED BY THE GRADUATE STUDIES COMMITTEE

DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY AT UCC

Last revision: August 2023

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

Philosophy (www.ucc.ie/en/philosophy/) invites prospective students to apply for its currently offered Postgraduate Programmes in Philosophy. Faculty expertise includes, but is not limited, to the following fields: Political Philosophy, Phenomenology, Ethics, Meta-Ethics, Moral Philosophy, both theoretical and applied (esp. to climate change policy), Philosophy of Mind, Philosophy of Economics, Philosophy of Science, Philosophy and Public Policy, Social Ontology, Feminism, and Environmental Philosophy.

2. THE STRUCTURED PHD

During their programme of study students will normally take course work to the value of 30 credits, at least 20 of which must be taken from an approved list of modules by the Department of Philosophy, which can include, but does not require, taking PH7001 and other approved modules **(PH7001 will not be on offer in 2022/2023)**. Generic skills modules (e.g. as offered by the **CACSSS Graduate School**) or other relevant modules may be taken to the value of the remaining credits depending on departmental approval (see also UCC Calendar: https://www.ucc.ie/calendar/postgraduate/Doctor/page001.html)

Students are also encouraged to discuss their work with faculty members other than their supervisors and, in particular, to actively participate in various formal and informal academic activities of Postgraduate students in the Discipline, the School of Society, Politics, and Ethics, and the University as a whole.

In addition, all students will be supervised by a supervisory team, or have a sole supervisor and a PhD advisor.

If you are currently registered as a student and wish to take discipline specific academic modules in 2022/23, please complete the Discipline Specific Module Form 2023 (available online).

Generic skills modules (e.g. as offered by the CACSSS Graduate School) or other relevant modules may be taken to the value of the remaining credits depending on departmental approval.

3. NOTE ON OTHER POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMMES INVOLVING PHILOSOPHY:

In addition to the PhD and the MPhil programmes, there are currently

- Three Taught Post-Graduate Programmes in Philosophy:
    - MA in Philosophy; PG Diploma in Philosophy; HDip in Philosophy
- Three Postgraduate programmes involving coursework in Philosophy
    - MA in Health and Society; MA in Politics; LLM in Human Rights Law and Public Policy

4. APPLICATION PROCEDURE FOR RESEARCH POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMMES (PHD & MPHIL)

A) Contact

Research Postgraduate Degree Programmes in Philosophy include the PhD and MPhil degree programmes. All Candidates applying to research degree programmes need to contact the Director of Graduate Studies (Dr Salice: alessandro.salice@ucc.ie in Term 1 and Dr. Autzen: bengt.autzen@ucc.ie in term 2) and their Prospective Supervisor to discuss their proposed area of research prior to making a research application. It is not possible to make a research application without having a research topic naming a supervisor.

B) Apply Online

Visit https://www.ucc.ie/en/apply/

5. WRITING A PROPOSAL FOR A PHD IN PHILOSOPHY

A) GENERAL POINTS

It is important to remember that the principal criterion for the award of a PhD is that the submission constitutes an original contribution to knowledge. To establish your project in these terms you need to determine the area of philosophy into which you are contributing.

Having established the field of inquiry and what is 'known' about your topic already, you then need to demonstrate how your thesis will add something original and significant to the field.

It may do this in a variety of ways - for example, by redressing a bias or oversight in the existing literature, or by applying a new method (such as a practice based approach) to yield new insights to an established field, or by simply being the first to systematically study an important phenomenon.

There is no need to make your research conform to a rigid 'scientific' model. Think about how and why your work is innovative and important (e.g. culturally, socially, environmentally, historically, or in terms of a technical breakthrough or an aesthetic or conceptual development within a field of practice) and try to articulate this clearly, making reference to other significant research.

B) STRUCTURE OF THE PROPOSAL/SYNOPSIS

    i) Length: Approximately 1500 words.

ii) Working title: Give a working title that describes the nature of your project. You may use a 'poetic' title, but it is useful to indicate, after a colon, the nature of the study or your approach.

iii) Statement of topic and aims: Identify the general subject area and outline how your topic relates to the field. Establish why it is a significant topic and what contribution your work will make.

iv) Review of literature and relevant practice: The 'literature review' is a major part of a proposal. In order to demonstrate that your project makes a significant contribution to the field, you need to show that you are aware of the traditions and 'state of the art' research in that field.

The literature review should not be approached like an undergraduate essay, surveying a broad field. Its purpose is to set-up your particular research project, and it should therefore be focused and evaluative, rather than general. For example, if you are researching a topic such as 'body image', do not give a general account the work of Foucault, Freud, feminist theory etc. Try to focus on key concepts from earlier work and be aware of the way in which these have already been applied in your area. Indicate where earlier work – both theoretical and practical - has taken us and what remains to be done.

Do not provide a reading list (though it may be useful to do this with your supervisor at some point). The proposal should demonstrate that you have a grasp of existing work – and that you know enough about the field to determine an area of inquiry or a starting point for research. (NB. The literature/area review will become more detailed and sophisticated in the synopses that you develop in the course of a PhD, and may form the basis of an introductory chapter.)

v) Method/ Approach: Outline how you will approach your topic. Your aim should be to demonstrate that your chosen method or approach will serve to advance your thesis or argument.

There are many established research 'methodologies'. In an initial proposal you need to give some indication of how your project will be realized.

Some theses take up a particular theoretical position, inspired by key philosophers, thinkers or practitioners. Rather than adopting an entire philosophy, you may propose to borrow specific concepts from certain writers and apply them to a particular area or within a particular practice. If you are doing this, identify which concepts are useful and how you will apply them in order to achieve a particular result.

6. SPECIFIC INFORMATION FOR PH.D. APPLICANTS

see: https://www.ucc.ie/en/cacsss/grads/future_postgrads/research_courses/phds/

In addition to the information included in this section, see also:
http://www.ucc.ie/calendar/postgraduate/Doctor/page001.html

A) ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

To be eligible for consideration for entry to a programme of study and research for the Degree of PhD, a candidate must have obtained a standard of at least Second Class Honours, Grade I, in an approved primary degree, or other such other evidence under the University's policy for *Recognition of Prior Learning for Admission to Research Degrees*.

B) APPLICATION DATES

Applications for PhD programmes are accepted throughout the year. Prospective students are advised to complete their applications at least two months in advance of their desired start date as all applications go through two different stages of approval: Department and College.

The four start dates during the year are January, April, July and October.

C) DURATION

Candidates normally pursue research for a period of three years full-time from the date of first registration for the programme.

7. ANNUAL PROGRESS REVIEW FOR PHD STUDENTS

The Annual Progress Review (APR) is managed by the Graduate Studies Committee (GSC) in Philosophy.

It is intended to assess whether:

- The student has knowledge and skills appropriate to the stage of his/her research programme;
- S/he has completed work of a quality to justify continuation, that the research methods are appropriate and practical
- A realistic plan is in place for progression and eventual completion of the research within the expected timeframe

The purpose of the APR is to support both student and supervisor(s) by giving an opportunity to reflect and report on progress and achievements in the year concerned, and plans for the subsequent year. Progress will be recognised and acknowledged and, when appropriate, constructive and detailed feedback and advice will be provided. In cases where problems with the progress of research are identified, local steps to resolving such problems will be identified during the review and followed up.

The GSC undertakes reviews of all students in Philosophy. If a student's supervisor(s) is (are) not on the GSC, the GSC will consult with the supervisor(s) to ensure that they have all relevant information in hand, particularly if a negative conclusion on student progress is reached.

The APR usually takes place in term one (September-December) of the academic year.

It takes the form of:

1. The submission of a minimum of 10,000 words of written work to the supervisor(s) after the first year of study, and of altogether 20,000 words of written work after the second year of study. This piece of work has to be submitted at least two weeks prior to the oral presentation (see no. 4 below).

2. The submission of an outline of the dissertation to the supervisor(s) including:

    a. a narrative (between 2000 and 2500 words) that provides the context for the thesis (its motivation, main topics, aims and methods) and envisages how each chapter will treat its

various sub-topics. This narrative can be an expanded version of the original 1500 words PhD proposal, revised in the light of the student's more recent thinking

b. a schematic chapter outline (Harvard Outline style) that mirrors the narrative described in (a), shows the number and titles of the projected chapters, and indicates by way of the section titles the sub-topics that will be treated in each chapter. This piece of work has to be submitted at least two weeks prior to the oral presentation (see no. 4 below).

3. A brief written statement by the student to the GSC (between 200 and 500 words) outlining progress of the thesis and a plan for completion.

4. An oral presentation of 15-20 minutes length (on the Ph.D. project) by the student to the GSC and interested Graduate Students and staff with additional 5-10 minutes discussion.

5. A formalized report (one page) by the supervisor containing a short description of the work (a minimum of 10,000 words of written work after the first year of study, and of altogether 20,000 words after the second year of study) that has been received, an assessment of the progress of the work and likelihood that the thesis will be completed as previously expected, and a recommendation as to whether progress should be deemed satisfactory or not satisfactory.

Following the review, the GSC will reach a recommendation concluding that the student's progress is either satisfactory or not satisfactory. If the recommendation is "satisfactory," the student will continue with his/her research.

If the recommendation is "not satisfactory," another review meeting within a minimum of three months and a maximum of six months will be requested with a full report addressing concerns. In such cases, detailed and clear feedback on the type of achievements which are expected in this period will be provided in writing to the student (e.g. a target of a chapter or piece of work which should be completed in the time concerned).

Following a second unsatisfactory review of progress, the GSC may advise a student that it is in their best interest to choose to change their registration or deregister from their research degree programme. However, if a student wishes to continue in their programme despite this advice, this will result in the initiation of an adjudication process to determine the student's likelihood of successful progression which will be commenced in accordance with the university-wide Academic Council guidelines on the "Adjudication Process for Progression of Ph.D. Students."

APR results should not lead students to assume that their thesis examination is in any way pre-determined, as the examination process will be conducted in a manner that is entirely independent of preceding reviews and commences on submission of the thesis.

The GSC ensures that accurate records of all relevant procedures, activities, and meetings regarding the APR are kept within the unit.

8. FEES AND GRANTS

A) GENERAL INFORMATION

For updated information on fees and grants see:

https://www.ucc.ie/en/study/postgrad/studytaught/apply/

On acceptance to a postgraduate programme, students are liable to pay tuition fees to the University. University fees are set each year and include the registration fee, tuition fee and examination fee. For full time programmes, membership of the Mardyke Arena Sports and Leisure Complex is also included in the course fee. (www.mardykearena.com)

A student's classification as EU or non-EU will be determined by the Fees Office. For further information on how fee status is determined, please contact the Fees Office.

In addition to programme fees students should budget for their own living costs, including accommodation.

The Postgraduate Fee Schedule by programme is available to view (https://www.ucc.ie/en/financeoffice/fees/).

The fee quoted refers to the cost of attending a programme on a full time basis. Fees for part-time study are normally charged at half the full time fee.

B) STUDENT ASSISTANCE FUND

As part of an initiative to tackle educational disadvantage, an European Structural Fund aided Student Assistance Fund has been made available to University College Cork by the Department of Education and Science. The Student Assistance Fund is funded by the Department of Education and Science, with assistance from the European Social Fund. All full-time registered students, undergraduate and postgraduate are eligible to apply for assistance from the fund. Resources will be targeted at those disadvantaged students most in need. In order to be eligible to apply for student assistance, you must be registered on a full-time undergraduate or postgraduate course of not less than one year's duration in a participating college. Unlike the maintenance grant schemes, you cannot be considered for Student Assistance prior to registering in a participating college.

For further information please contact:

Finance Office, University College Cork

Tel: +353 21-4903929/2365

Email: fees@fin.ucc.ie

C) CURRENT FEES FOR PHD CANDIDATES IN THE COLLEGE OF ARTS, CELTIC STUDIES, AND SOCIALS SCIENCES

Yearly fees in 2022/2023 are for EU students: 5,770 Euro and for Non-EU students 13,000 Euro. Non-EU PhD students may be eligible for a fee waiver scholarship to reduce the fee to EU level and should contact their Discipline/School for further information. PhD students are liable for the full fee for three years. For Year 4 and beyond, current fees are 1,700 Euro for both EU and Non-EU students. (See: https://www.ucc.ie/en/financeoffice/fees/schedules/#fees-schedules-2022-2023)

9. FUNDING AND SCHOLARSHIPS

The Philosophy Department strives to support its student with several different kinds of funding opportunities. Many students are supported throughout their PhD experience through studentships paying part or all of their tuition and fees.

A. FUNDING FROM OUTSIDE OF THE PHILOSOPHY DEPARTMENT

There a number of internal and external funding opportunities available. See:

https://www.ucc.ie/en/scholarships/postgraduate/artspg/

http://www.research.ie/

http://www.findaphd.com/funding/

http://www.scholarshipportal.eu/

http://www.jpf.org.uk/japanesestudies/funding.php

for details on Irish and European funding opportunities including the Erasmus Mobility Scholarship Scheme, the William J Leen Postgraduate Scholarships, and IRC scholarships.

Students from countries other than Ireland are strongly encouraged to look into possibilities to be funded through scholarship programmes in their home countries (such as Fulbright Scholarships, Chinese Government Scholarships, Canadian Postgraduate Scholarships, etc.)

We also strongly recommend that you join the PHILOS-L list serve. http://listserv.liv.ac.uk/archives/philos-l.html. It is based in Europe, and serves as the largest notice board for all events and opportunities in Philosophy internationally.

B. TRAVEL AND RESEARCH FUNDS

The department has a limited amount of funds to help students pay for travel to and from conferences where they are presenting, or to perform similar kinds of professional-development activities.

10. FAQ'S FOR RESEARCH PROGRAMMES

https://www.ucc.ie/en/emt/covid19/prospective-faq/