Module Definition Form (MDF)

Module code: MOD007346	**Version:** 2 **Date Amended:** 06/Feb/2025

1. Module Title
Philosophical Texts: From Descartes to Kant

2a. Module Leader
Michael Wilby

2b. School
School of Humanities and Social Sciences

2c. Faculty
Faculty of Arts, Humanities, Education and Social Sciences

3a. Level
5

3b. Module Type
Standard (fine graded)

4a. Credits
15

4b. Study Hours
150

5. Restrictions

Type	Module Code	Module Name	Condition
Pre-requisites:	None		
Co-requisites:	None		
Exclusions:	None		
Courses to which this module is restricted:			

LEARNING, TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT INFORMATION

6a. Module Description

This module examines some of the key philosophical texts of the early modern period and places those texts within their historical context, showing how philosophical ideas engage with key events in history. Starting with Descartes' *Meditations* and its role in the overturning medieval thought and establishing the scientific revolution, we will proceed to look at the works of Spinoza, Leibniz, Cavendish, Wollstonecraft, Hume, Amo and Kant, examining what they had to say and how those ideas fed into and influenced key movements in history from atheism to feminism to the abolition of slavery. Through this module you will gain an idea of how abstract ideas in philosophy can be influenced by and have effects on key historical events and movements.

6b. Outline Content

- Descartes and the scientific revolution
- Spinoza and the rise of atheism
- Leibniz and the wars of religion
- Cavendish and the development of modern culture
- Hume and the human subject
- Amo and slavery
- Kant and enlightenment thinking
- Wollstonecraft and women's rights

6c. Key Texts/Literature

The reading list to support this module is available at: https://readinglists.aru.ac.uk/

6d. Specialist Learning Resources

Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy
Early Modern Texts (online resource)

7. Learning Outcomes (threshold standards)		
No.	**Type**	**On successful completion of this module the student will be expected to be able to:**
1	Knowledge and Understanding	Demonstrate knowledge of the similarities and differences between Descartes, Spinoza and Leibniz on core questions relating to God, nature and mind.
2	Knowledge and Understanding	Develop an understanding of the contributions of women philosophers to the debates surrounding philosophy and natural science in the 17th Century.
3	Intellectual, practical, affective and transferrable skills	Critically analyse, and judge the effectiveness of, ideas and solutions to complex problems.
4	Intellectual, practical, affective and transferrable skills	Provide clear and accurate outlines of complex philosophical ideas and arguments.

8a. Module Occurrence to which this MDF Refers				
Year	**Occurrence**	**Period**	**Location**	**Mode of Delivery**
2026/7	ZZF	Template For Face To Face Learning Delivery		Face to Face

8b. Learning Activities for the above Module Occurrence			
Learning Activities	**Hours**	**Learning Outcomes**	**Details of Duration, frequency and other comments**
Lectures	22	1-4	Weekly 2 hour interactive sessions
Other teacher managed learning	2	1-4	2 hour workshop
Student managed learning	126	1-4	Activities on Canvas, group work, reading and researching and preparing assignments
TOTAL:	150		

9. Assessment for the above Module Occurrence

The assessment for some modules includes a presentation (see below for details on how this particular module is assessed). We recognise that presenting, especially to a large group, can cause significant anxiety or distress for some students. If this may affect you, please contact your Module Leader or the Disability and Neurodiversity Service as early as possible. We will work with you to consider appropriate reasonable adjustments. Depending on your individual needs, these might include, for example, presenting to a smaller group or presenting only to a member of academic staff.

Assessment No.	Assessment Method	Learning Outcomes	Weighting (%)	Fine Grade or Pass/Fail	Qualifying Mark (%)
010	Coursework	1-4	100 (%)	Fine Grade	30 (%)

3000 Word Essay.

In order to pass this module, students are required to achieve an overall mark of 40% (for modules at levels 3, 4, 5 and 6) or 50% (for modules at level 7*).

In addition, students are required to:
(a) achieve the qualifying mark for each element of fine graded assessment as specified above
(b) pass any pass/fail elements

[* the pass mark of 50% applies for all module occurrences from the academic year 2024/25 – see Section 3a of this MDF to check the level of the module and Section 8a of this MDF to check the academic year]