Module Definition Form (MDF)

Module code: MOD007347	**Version:** 3 **Date Amended:** 27/Jan/2025

1. Module Title
Ethics in Theory

2a. Module Leader
Tristan Moyle

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
30

4b. Study Hours
300

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

In this module we will be debating foundational questions in theoretical ethics: What should I do? What duties do I have? What kind of things have moral value?

We will examine answers to these questions offered by historical and contemporary forms of utilitarianism, deontology, and virtue ethics. Along the way, we will interrogate the relationship between religion and morality, and ask whether feelings and emotions have a role to play in ethical deliberation. Is it permissible or required to give preferential treatment to our nearest and dearest? Alternatively, does morality obligate us to act impartially at all times? In the second part of the module, our attention will turn to fundamental questions about the relationship between morality and human beings. Is morality socially and culturally relative? Do moral truths exist independently of the human mind? Is moral knowledge akin to scientific knowledge? The module concludes with an examination of influential critics of conventional morality, including Nietzsche.

Group-work and class debates will also enhance teamworking skills. Presentations will help the development of communication skills, and a peer-led question and answer session after each presentation will help to develop your ability to seek and act on constructive criticism. The module as a whole will aid development of critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

6b. Outline Content

- Normative ethics
- Metaethics
- The role of emotions in moral reasoning
- Animal ethics
- Ethics and contemporary society

6c. Key Texts/Literature

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

6d. Specialist Learning Resources

None.

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	Identify and analyse key arguments in ethics
2	Knowledge and Understanding	Discuss the distinctive questions to which different moral positions offer answers
3	Knowledge and Understanding	Relate historical arguments to contemporary positions in ethics
4	Intellectual, practical, affective and transferrable skills	Apply theoretical, philosophical knowledge to contemporary issues and real-world problems
5	Intellectual, practical, affective and transferrable skills	Present ideas and arguments clearly and concisely in written and verbal formats
6	Intellectual, practical, affective and transferrable skills	Show project management skills by planning and helping deliver a group presentation on a topic developed from the module content

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	24	1,2,3,5	Two hour weekly lecture seminars
Other teacher managed learning	12	4,5,6	Weekly one hour seminar
Student managed learning	264	1-6	Interacting with materials on Canvas, reading, researching and preparing assignments
TOTAL:	300		

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	1-2	50 (%)	Fine Grade	30 (%)
Essay 2,500 words					
Assessment No.	**Assessment Method**	**Learning Outcomes**	**Weighting (%)**	**Fine Grade or Pass/Fail**	**Qualifying Mark (%)**
011	Coursework	2-3	50 (%)	Fine Grade	30 (%)
Essay 2,500 words					
Assessment No.	**Assessment Method**	**Learning Outcomes**	**Weighting (%)**	**Fine Grade or Pass/Fail**	**Qualifying Mark (%)**
012	Practical	4-6	0 (%)	Pass/Fail	100 (%)
10- presentation offering a critical, contemporary perspective on one of the module's themes - equivalent to 1,000 words					

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]