



PHIL1037

Critical Thinking

Session 1, In person-scheduled-weekday, North Ryde 2024

Department of Philosophy

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff
Lecturer (Wks 1-6) and Co-Convenor
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By arrangement

Lecturer (Wks 7-12) and Co-Convenor
Alexander Gillett
alexander.gillett@mq.edu.au
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By arrangement

Details of other staff members, and information about consultation times, will be available in iLearn.

Credit points
10

Prerequisites

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

This unit aims to teach the fundamentals of critical thinking and reasoning. Students learn how to construct, analyse and critically evaluate arguments; how to detect common fallacies in reasoning; and how to think logically and creatively. We teach these skills by developing practical techniques for the evaluation of reasoning, and applying them to arguments from business, law, science, politics, philosophy and the media. Critical thinking skills are invaluable across all disciplines, and will benefit students in academic contexts and in life beyond university.

Important Academic Dates

Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at <https://www.mq.edu.au/study/calendar-of-dates>

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

ULO1: Recognise the structure of arguments, and represent that structure in a clear standardised form.

ULO2: Differentiate between types of reasoning and the methods of evaluation appropriate to each.

ULO3: Appraise the arguments of others and represent them in a clear and standardised form.

ULO4: Construct well-reasoned arguments of your own.

ULO5: Apply the skills of critical analysis to arguments from a variety of contexts and disciplines.

General Assessment Information

Detailed assessment information and rubrics

Detailed information about each of the assessments, including rubrics and submission instructions will be available in the Assessment block in iLearn. Please make sure you read the assessment information carefully, watch the Guide to Assessment video, and post a message in the relevant Assessment forum if you have any questions.

Special Consideration

Requests for extensions should be submitted via a Special Consideration request, which is available in the <http://ask.mq.edu.au> portal. Your request should be submitted no later than five days after the due date and should be accompanied by appropriate documentation. Please see <https://students.mq.edu.au/study/assessment-exams/special-consideration> for further details and instructions. Read this information closely as your request may be turned down if you have not followed procedure, or if you have not submitted a request in a timely manner. The Macquarie University Special Consideration Policy can be found at the end of this document.

Late Assessment Submission Penalty

Unless a Special Consideration request has been submitted and approved, **a 5% penalty (of the total possible mark) will be applied each day a written assessment is not submitted**, up until the 7th day (including weekends). After the 7th day, a mark of '0' (zero) will be awarded even if the assessment is submitted. Submission time for all written assessments is set at 11.55pm. A 1-hour grace period is provided to students who experience a technical issue.

This late penalty will apply to non-timed sensitive assessment (incl essays, reports, posters, portfolios, journals, recordings etc). **Late submission of time sensitive tasks** (such as tests/exams, performance assessments/presentations, scheduled practical assessments/labs etc) **will only be addressed by the unit convenor in a Special consideration application. Special Consideration outcome may result in a new question or topic.**

Academic Integrity

In Philosophy, academic honesty is taken very seriously, and a range of methods, including but

not restricted to the use of Turnitin, are used to detect plagiarism. Misrepresenting someone else's work as your own may be grounds for referral to the Faculty Disciplinary Committee. If you have questions about how to properly cite work or how to credit sources, please ask the convenor for help and see also the Academic Integrity Policy <https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policies/academic-integrity>

Note: All assignments in this unit are individual assignments. Collusion (unauthorised collaboration on individual assignments) is a breach of the Academic Integrity Policy. This includes sharing or making use of shared assignments, in person or online, including through file-sharing websites. If in doubt, contact a member of teaching staff.

A helpful resource if you would like to know more about referencing and avoiding plagiarism is Macquarie's Academic Integrity Module, available here: <https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/skills-development>. You will need to complete this Module before accessing the unit content, if you have not already done so. More information is available in iLearn.

Policy on the use of ChatGTP and other Generative AI tools

We will say more about Generative AI over the semester, and about how to think about the use of AI in a critical way. For now, though, a few warnings are in order about content generated by ChatGPT or similar tools:

1. It's not your work, so you can't submit it, or adapt it a bit and then submit it. This will count as a breach of the Academic Integrity Policy. This applies to any assessments.
2. It's not reliable. It gets a lot of things right, but it also gets things wrong, and its outputs tend to be shallow and generic. You will need to demonstrate your understanding of the content and methods taught in this unit, and Generative AI tools do not do this well.

Academic Writing and Study Support

Macquarie University offers a number of services to help with academic writing, referencing and study skills. For details, see: <https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/skills/assignments>

For information about policies related to Assessment, see *Policies and Procedures* section below.

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
Online Engagement	15%	No	11.55pm 28/4 (for wks 1-6); 11.55pm 2/6 (for wks 7-12)
Standardisation task	25%	No	11.55pm, Monday 1/4 (wk 7)

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
Peer Review	20%	No	11.55pm, Sunday 28/4 (end of break)
Final Scenario Report	40%	No	11.55pm, Friday 31/5 (Wk 13)

Online Engagement

Assessment Type ¹: Participatory task

Indicative Time on Task ²: 25 hours

Due: **11.55pm 28/4 (for wks 1-6); 11.55pm 2/6 (for wks 7-12)**

Weighting: **15%**

Students will review their understanding of particular topics by participating in short online “self assessment” and engagement tasks.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Recognise the structure of arguments, and represent that structure in a clear standardised form.
- Differentiate between types of reasoning and the methods of evaluation appropriate to each.
- Appraise the arguments of others and represent them in a clear and standardised form.
- Construct well-reasoned arguments of your own.
- Apply the skills of critical analysis to arguments from a variety of contexts and disciplines.

Standardisation task

Assessment Type ¹: Problem set

Indicative Time on Task ²: 25 hours

Due: **11.55pm, Monday 1/4 (wk 7)**

Weighting: **25%**

Argument standardisation exercise

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Recognise the structure of arguments, and represent that structure in a clear

standardised form.

- Appraise the arguments of others and represent them in a clear and standardised form.
- Construct well-reasoned arguments of your own.

Peer Review

Assessment Type ¹: Participatory task

Indicative Time on Task ²: 12 hours

Due: **11.55pm, Sunday 28/4 (end of break)**

Weighting: **20%**

You will review the anonymised submissions (from the Standardisation Task assignment) of some of your fellow students. You will answer a series of multiple choice questions about each of these submissions, and give a short comment on each paper. Your mark will be determined by the accuracy of your assessment of the peer submissions.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Recognise the structure of arguments, and represent that structure in a clear standardised form.
- Appraise the arguments of others and represent them in a clear and standardised form.

Final Scenario Report

Assessment Type ¹: Report

Indicative Time on Task ²: 40 hours

Due: **11.55pm, Friday 31/5 (Wk 13)**

Weighting: **40%**

The Final Scenario Report assignment requires you use all the skills you have acquired throughout the course from Topics 1-12 to write a report analysing arguments and providing guidance and material for a response.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Recognise the structure of arguments, and represent that structure in a clear standardised form.
- Differentiate between types of reasoning and the methods of evaluation appropriate to each.
- Appraise the arguments of others and represent them in a clear and standardised form.

- Construct well-reasoned arguments of your own.
 - Apply the skills of critical analysis to arguments from a variety of contexts and disciplines.
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¹ If you need help with your assignment, please contact:

- the academic teaching staff in your unit for guidance in understanding or completing this type of assessment
- the [Writing Centre](#) for academic skills support.

² Indicative time-on-task is an estimate of the time required for completion of the assessment task and is subject to individual variation

Delivery and Resources

Lectures

Lectures will be delivered live on campus from 4-6 on Monday of each week in the Lotus Theatre (27WW), and lectures will also be streamed and recorded for online students, and those unable to attend. **You will need to attend or watch the lectures before engaging in tutorial discussion and activities each week.** Further instructions about accessing the lectures will be available in iLearn.

Tutorials and online forums

Students will enrol in PHIL1037 in either the **in-person scheduled offering**, the **online scheduled offering** or the **online flexible offering**.

- 'In-person scheduled' students will register for a tutorial when enrolling. Tutorials will be held **on campus** every fortnight, in odd numbered weeks (Weeks 1,3,5,7,9 and 11, with additional tutor consultations in weeks 12 and 13).
- 'Online scheduled' students will register for a tutorial when enrolling. Tutorials will be held **Zoom** every fortnight, in odd numbered weeks (Weeks 1,3,5,7,9 and 11 with additional tutor consultations in weeks 12 and 13). Tutorial links will be available in iLearn.
- 'Online flexible' students will discuss the content through weekly asynchronous forums in iLearn, rather than in scheduled tutorials. Online flexible students will be allocated to a forum group with a member of staff as group leader at the beginning of semester.

Because the way you engage in the unit will depend on which offering you're enrolled in, please make sure you've enrolled in whichever one you would prefer at the beginning of semester. If you have enrolled in the 'in person' offering but decide you would rather participate via forums, for example, you will need to withdraw and reenrol in the 'online flexible' version as soon as

possible and no later than week 1.

Course Texts

The Course Notes available through the PHIL/PHIX 1037 iLearn site constitute a text for the course. No other text is required.

Teaching staff consultation times

Teaching staff will be available for regular consultation times throughout the week on Zoom. See iLearn for details. You are strongly encouraged to make use of these consultation times, if you are having any trouble or if you would like to discuss the unit content. If you can't make any of those times, please contact Jenny Duke-Yonge (jennifer.duke-yonge@mq.edu.au) to arrange an appointment.

Unit Webpages and E-Resources

This unit is delivered online through iLearn (<http://ilearn.mq.edu.au>). PC and Internet access are required. Basic computer skills (e.g., internet browsing) and skills in word processing are also a requirement. Please consult teaching staff for any further, more specific requirements.

Unit Schedule

Week 1 (week beginning 19/2)	Introduction to Critical Thinking	
Week 2 (w/b 26/2)	Building and Representing Arguments	
Week 3 (w/b 4/3)	Deconstructing Arguments	
Week 4 (w/b 11/3)	Critical Thinking and the Human Mind	
Week 5 (w/b 18/3)	Types of arguments (I)	
Week 6 (w/b 25/3)	Types of arguments (II)	
Week 7 (w/b 1/4)	The Impact of Cognitive Biases	Standardisation Task due Monday 1/4

Week 8 (w/b 8/4)	The Language We Use: the power to persuade	
	Mid semester break (13/4-28/4)	Peer Review Task and Online Engagement tasks for Weeks 1-6 due Sunday 28/4
Week 9 (w/b 29/4)	The Language We Use: When words lead us astray	
Week 10 (w/b 6/5)	The Rules of Engagement, and what happens when they're broken (fallacies and pseudo-reasoning)	
Week 11 (w/b 13/5)	Thinking critically about AI; Thinking critically using AI	
Week 12 (w/b 20/5)	Putting it all together: An extended example	
Week 13 (w/b 27/5)	No lectures: assignment writing week	Final Scenario Report due Friday 31/5 Online engagement tasks for weeks 7-12 due Sunday 2/6

Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central \(https://policies.mq.edu.au\)](https://policies.mq.edu.au). Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

- [Academic Appeals Policy](#)
- [Academic Integrity Policy](#)
- [Academic Progression Policy](#)
- [Assessment Policy](#)
- [Fitness to Practice Procedure](#)
- [Assessment Procedure](#)
- [Complaints Resolution Procedure for Students and Members of the Public](#)
- [Special Consideration Policy](#)

Students seeking more policy resources can visit [Student Policies \(https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/policies\)](https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/policies). It is your one-stop-shop for the key policies you need to know about

throughout your undergraduate student journey.

To find other policies relating to Teaching and Learning, visit [Policy Central \(https://policies.mq.edu.au\)](https://policies.mq.edu.au) and use the [search tool](#).

Student Code of Conduct

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: <https://students.mq.edu.au/admin/other-resources/student-conduct>

Results

Results published on platform other than [eStudent](#), (eg. iLearn, Coursera etc.) or released directly by your Unit Convenor, are not confirmed as they are subject to final approval by the University. Once approved, final results will be sent to your student email address and will be made available in [eStudent](#). For more information visit ask.mq.edu.au or if you are a Global MBA student contact globalmba.support@mq.edu.au

Academic Integrity

At Macquarie, we believe [academic integrity](#) – honesty, respect, trust, responsibility, fairness and courage – is at the core of learning, teaching and research. We recognise that meeting the expectations required to complete your assessments can be challenging. So, we offer you a range of resources and services to help you reach your potential, including free [online writing and maths support](#), [academic skills development](#) and [wellbeing consultations](#).

Student Support

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit <http://students.mq.edu.au/support/>

The Writing Centre

[The Writing Centre](#) provides resources to develop your English language proficiency, academic writing, and communication skills.

- [Workshops](#)
- [Chat with a WriteWISE peer writing leader](#)
- [Access StudyWISE](#)
- [Upload an assignment to Studiosity](#)
- [Complete the Academic Integrity Module](#)

The Library provides online and face to face support to help you find and use relevant information resources.

- [Subject and Research Guides](#)
- [Ask a Librarian](#)

Student Services and Support

Macquarie University offers a range of [Student Support Services](#) including:

- [IT Support](#)
- [Accessibility and disability support](#) with study
- Mental health [support](#)
- [Safety support](#) to respond to bullying, harassment, sexual harassment and sexual assault
- [Social support including information about finances, tenancy and legal issues](#)
- [Student Advocacy](#) provides independent advice on MQ policies, procedures, and processes

Student Enquiries

Got a question? Ask us via [AskMQ](#), or contact [Service Connect](#).

IT Help

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit http://www.mq.edu.au/about_us/offices_and_units/information_technology/help/.

When using the University's IT, you must adhere to the [Acceptable Use of IT Resources Policy](#). The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.

Unit information based on version 2024.02 of the [Handbook](#)