



# PHIX2026

## The Ethics and Moral Psychology of Good and Evil

Session 1, Online-flexible 2024

*Department of Philosophy*

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#### **Disclaimer**

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## General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Convenor, Lecturer, Tutor

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Lecturer, Tutor

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Credit points

10

Prerequisites

40cp at 1000 level or above

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

What is it that makes us good or evil, virtuous or vicious? What does it mean to be a competent agent who can be held responsible for moral as well as immoral action? And what does morality and moral theory require of us as agents? Thinking about what motivates morality raises important questions about the role played by reason, will, emotion and intuition in bringing about moral behaviour. It also offers a basis for critically examining prominent ethical theories to see how well they can accommodate the lived realities of human agency and motivation. And it invites further questions about the contribution of social context and psychopathic conditions in explaining ordinary and extreme forms of wrongdoing. This unit will critically examine the philosophical and psychological literature on moral agency, virtue, goodness, and evil, as well as exploring historical and contemporary philosophical accounts of the importance of such things as integrity, character, autonomy and respect for others in moral life and moral relations.

## 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:** draw on sources used in the unit to give clear accounts of the relevant philosophical moral concepts and theories

**ULO2:** demonstrate a good general understanding of how contemporary philosophical and psychological research contributes to our understanding of moral agency, judgement and motivation

**ULO3:** analyse and critically evaluate relevant competing philosophical theories and arguments.

**ULO4:** apply the theoretical knowledge gained to analysis and evaluation of selected case studies in moral psychology

**ULO5:** construct sound arguments in support of your own ethical positions, judgements and values

## General Assessment Information

*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-time 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.*

*For further details about assessment, including academic integrity and use of large language models such as chat GPT please see the unit iLearn.*

## Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
<a href="#">Participation</a>	20%	No	Ongoing until 02/06/2024
<a href="#">Research essay</a>	45%	No	30/05/2024

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
<a href="#">Annotated bibliography task</a>	35%	No	07/04/2024

## Participation

Assessment Type <sup>1</sup>: Participatory task

Indicative Time on Task <sup>2</sup>: 15 hours

Due: **Ongoing until 02/06/2024**

Weighting: **20%**

Participation in online forums and activities. Students are expected to be well-prepared and make a constructive contribution.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- draw on sources used in the unit to give clear accounts of the relevant philosophical moral concepts and theories
- demonstrate a good general understanding of how contemporary philosophical and psychological research contributes to our understanding of moral agency, judgement and motivation
- analyse and critically evaluate relevant competing philosophical theories and arguments.
- apply the theoretical knowledge gained to analysis and evaluation of selected case studies in moral psychology
- construct sound arguments in support of your own ethical positions, judgements and values

## Research essay

Assessment Type <sup>1</sup>: Essay

Indicative Time on Task <sup>2</sup>: 35 hours

Due: **30/05/2024**

Weighting: **45%**

A major essay applying relevant concepts and theories introduced in the unit

On successful completion you will be able to:

- draw on sources used in the unit to give clear accounts of the relevant philosophical

moral concepts and theories

- demonstrate a good general understanding of how contemporary philosophical and psychological research contributes to our understanding of moral agency, judgement and motivation
- analyse and critically evaluate relevant competing philosophical theories and arguments.
- apply the theoretical knowledge gained to analysis and evaluation of selected case studies in moral psychology
- construct sound arguments in support of your own ethical positions, judgements and values

## Annotated bibliography task

Assessment Type <sup>1</sup>: Literature review

Indicative Time on Task <sup>2</sup>: 25 hours

Due: **07/04/2024**

Weighting: **35%**

Annotated bibliography

On successful completion you will be able to:

- draw on sources used in the unit to give clear accounts of the relevant philosophical moral concepts and theories
- demonstrate a good general understanding of how contemporary philosophical and psychological research contributes to our understanding of moral agency, judgement and motivation

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> 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 will run weekly from weeks 1-12, and will available live online via Echo360 and recorded (except week 7 which is only available as a recorded lecture). Recordings will be made

available via Echo/iLearn.

Full descriptions of assessment tasks will be available via iLearn.

Readings will be available via Leganto.

Forum participation is weekly from week 2 through 12 inclusive, via iLearn. There is no forum engagement required in Week 7.

## Unit Schedule

### Unit Schedule (optional)

Part 1: Moral Psychology and Moral Goodness: Consequentialism and Virtue Ethics. Lecturer A/ Prof Mianna Lotz

Week 1: Consequentialism and moral goodness

Week 2: Consequentialism and moral psychology: challenges

Week 3: Virtue ethics and moral goodness

Week 4: Virtue ethics and moral psychology: challenges

Part 2: Evil. Lecturer A/Prof Mark Alfano

Week 5: Evil and otherness

Week 6: The barrier theory of evil

Week 7: Nightmare people

Week 8: Reconciliation

Part III: Ethics, Emotions and Reason. Lecturer Dr Katrina Hutchison

Week 9: Moral Anger: Resentment, Disgust and Contempt

Week 10: Empathy and Ethics

Week 11: Emotion and Morality

Week 12: Reason and Morality

For further details of these topics, and the assigned readings please see iLearn / Leganto

## 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](http://ask.mq.edu.au) or if you are a Global MBA student contact [globalmba.support@mq.edu.au](mailto: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/](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.

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