



PHIL2032

Science, Objectivity and Reality

Session 2, Special circumstance 2020

Department of Philosophy

Contents

| | |
|--|---|
| General Information | 2 |
| Learning Outcomes | 2 |
| Assessment Tasks | 3 |
| Delivery and Resources | 5 |
| Policies and Procedures | 5 |
| Changes from Previous Offering | 7 |

Disclaimer

Macquarie University has taken all reasonable measures to ensure the information in this publication is accurate and up-to-date. However, the information may change or become out-dated as a result of change in University policies, procedures or rules. The University reserves the right to make changes to any information in this publication without notice. Users of this publication are advised to check the website version of this publication [or the relevant faculty or department] before acting on any information in this publication.

Notice

As part of [Phase 3 of our return to campus plan](#), most units will now run tutorials, seminars and other small group learning activities on campus for the second half-year, while keeping an online version available for those students unable to return or those who choose to continue their studies online.

To check the availability of face-to-face and online activities for your unit, please go to [timetable viewer](#). To check detailed information on unit assessments visit your unit's iLearn space or consult your unit convenor.

General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Pierrick Bourrat

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Credit points

10

Prerequisites

40cp at 1000 level or above

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

Does science offer an objective perspective on reality? How does science work? Should scientific methods be privileged over other ways of knowing? Is the history of science an unfolding tale of intellectual and technological progress, or is it a messier process? This unit introduces central issues in the philosophy of science. We will discuss scientific revolutions, and whether they should be understood as fully rational. We will ask whether science describes the world as it "really is". We will also consider challenges to science from sociology of science, feminism, and science studies. Is science really value-free? Should we want it to be? This unit presumes no particular background in science - it is suitable for students with a background in arts disciplines as well as for students in the social, behavioural, biological, and physical sciences.

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: Understand the major issues connecting science and philosophy

ULO2: Critically evaluate various positions in philosophy of science

ULO3: Clearly and accurately communicate issues and arguments in the philosophy of science in both spoken and written form

ULO4: Develop your own philosophically informed views on the major issues in philosophy of science

ULO5: Offer constructive and courteous feedback to your peers

Assessment Tasks

| Name | Weighting | Hurdle | Due |
|------------------------------------|-----------|--------|---------------|
| <u>Research Essay</u> | 40% | No | Week 14 |
| <u>Weekly multiple choice quiz</u> | 30% | No | Week 4, 8, 12 |
| <u>Participation</u> | 20% | No | Weekly |
| <u>Research Essay Plan</u> | 10% | No | Week 10 |

Research Essay

Assessment Type ¹: Essay

Indicative Time on Task ²: 30 hours

Due: **Week 14**

Weighting: **40%**

Students will write an essay that provides a careful critical examination, based on reasons, argumentation and evidence, of a set topic.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Understand the major issues connecting science and philosophy
- Critically evaluate various positions in philosophy of science
- Clearly and accurately communicate issues and arguments in the philosophy of science in both spoken and written form
- Develop your own philosophically informed views on the major issues in philosophy of science

Weekly multiple choice quiz

Assessment Type ¹: Quiz/Test

Indicative Time on Task ²: 12 hours

Due: **Week 4, 8, 12**

Weighting: **30%**

Quizzes will be based on assigned readings and lecture materials.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Understand the major issues connecting science and philosophy

Participation

Assessment Type ¹: Participatory task

Indicative Time on Task ²: 26 hours

Due: **Weekly**

Weighting: **20%**

Students are required to contribute to the forum on the iLearn site, where discussion questions will be posted

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Understand the major issues connecting science and philosophy
- Critically evaluate various positions in philosophy of science
- Clearly and accurately communicate issues and arguments in the philosophy of science in both spoken and written form
- Develop your own philosophically informed views on the major issues in philosophy of science
- Offer constructive and courteous feedback to your peers

Research Essay Plan

Assessment Type ¹: Essay

Indicative Time on Task ²: 15 hours

Due: **Week 10**

Weighting: **10%**

Students will produce a detailed plan of the research paper for feedback.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Understand the major issues connecting science and philosophy
- Critically evaluate various positions in philosophy of science
- Clearly and accurately communicate issues and arguments in the philosophy of science in both spoken and written form

- Develop your own philosophically informed views on the major issues in philosophy of science

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

This unit uses an iLearn website and Echo360 lecture recordings (<https://ilearn.mq.edu.au/login/MQ/>). The website contains links to lecture notes, lecture recordings, and other learning materials. Tutorials will be run online. Students will, therefore, require access to a computer and a good internet connection to access all the material, and participate in the unit effectively.

Readings

All readings will be made available on iLearn. Some readings and topics are taken from this textbook:

Godfrey-Smith, Peter. *Theory and Reality: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Science*. University of Chicago Press, 2003.

Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central](https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policy-central) (<https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policy-central>). 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](#)
- [Grade Appeal Policy](#)
- [Complaint Management Procedure for Students and Members of the Public](#)
- [Special Consideration Policy](#) (**Note:** *The Special Consideration Policy is effective from 4 December 2017 and replaces the Disruption to Studies Policy.*)

Students seeking more policy resources can visit the [Student Policy Gateway](https://students.mq.edu.au/unit_offerings/128665/unit_guide/print) (https://students.mq.edu.au/unit_offerings/128665/unit_guide/print)

mq.edu.au/support/study/student-policy-gateway). It is your one-stop-shop for the key policies you need to know about throughout your undergraduate student journey.

If you would like to see all the policies relevant to Learning and Teaching visit [Policy Central](http://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policy-central) (<http://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policy-central>).

Student Code of Conduct

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: <https://students.mq.edu.au/study/getting-started/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

Student Support

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

Learning Skills

Learning Skills (mq.edu.au/learningskills) provides academic writing resources and study strategies to help you improve your marks and take control of your study.

- [Getting help with your assignment](#)
- [Workshops](#)
- [StudyWise](#)
- [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

Students with a disability are encouraged to contact the [Disability Service](#) who can provide appropriate help with any issues that arise during their studies.

Student Enquiries

For all student enquiries, visit Student Connect at ask.mq.edu.au

If you are a Global MBA student contact globalmba.support@mq.edu.au

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.

Changes from Previous Offering

Unit run fully online.