



PHL 137

Critical Thinking

S3 External 2018

Dept of Philosophy

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Convenor

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By arrangement

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Tutor

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Credit points

3

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:

To learn how to recognise the structure of arguments, and how to 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 standardised form.

Construct your own well-reasoned arguments.

Apply your critical analysis skills to arguments from a variety of contexts and disciplines.

General Assessment Information

The final assessment is to be submitted through Turnitin, and will be electronically checked for plagiarism. It will be marked and returned via Grademark. For information about these tools, see:

http://www.mq.edu.au/iLearn/student_info/assignments.htm

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 accompanied by appropriate documentation, such as a medical certificate. Please see the Special Consideration policy in the list of policies at the end of this document for further details.

Read the policy 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 (***within five working days***)

Late Submission Penalty

Unless a Special Consideration request has been submitted and approved, (a) a penalty for lateness will apply – two (2) marks out of 100 will be deducted per day for assignments submitted after the due date – and (b) no assignment will be accepted more than seven (7) days (incl. weekends) after the original submission deadline. No late submissions will be accepted for timed assessments – e.g. quizzes, online tests.

Academic Honesty

In Philosophy, academic honesty is taken very seriously. 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 talk to one of the teaching staff and see also Academic Integrity Policy (see the Policies and Procedures section below).

Your assessments in this units are *individual assessments*, so the work you submit must be your own work. You may not work on the assignments with other students.

For information about extensions, late penalties and special consideration, see

the **Policies and Procedures** section below.

Any assessment problems should be discussed with the convenor as soon as they arise.

Submission times

All times referred to in due dates are Sydney time (Australian Eastern Daylight time, UTC+11).

See the "Policies and Procedures" section below for more detail about relevant policies.

Assessment Tasks

| Name | Weighting | Hurdle | Due |
|---|-----------|--------|------------------------|
| <u>Online quizzes</u> | 45% | No | 16/12, 13/1, 27/1 |
| <u>Final Assessment</u> | 35% | No | 11.59pm, Thursday 24/1 |
| <u>Participation 1</u> | 10% | No | Weeks 1-5 |
| <u>Participation 2</u> | 10% | No | 11.59pm, Sunday 6/1/19 |

Online quizzes

Due: **16/12, 13/1, 27/1**

Weighting: **45%**

The online quizzes are three one-hour multiple-choice quizzes which you will take through the unit website. You can make one attempt only on each quiz. They are timed, and cannot be paused once you start.

- **Quiz 1** covers material from week 1 (Topics 1 and 2) and will be open from Monday of week 2 (10/12) until Sunday of week 2 (16/12)
- **Quiz 2** covers material from weeks 2 and 3 (Topics 3-7) and will be open from the beginning of the mid-semester break (24/12) until Sunday of week 4 (13/1). (*This quiz is open for longer than the others to give you the option of doing it while it is fresh in your mind or leaving it until after the break*).
- **Quiz 3** covers material from weeks 4 and 5 (Topics 8-11) and will be open from Monday of week 6/assessment week (21/1) until Sunday of week 6/assessment week (27/1)

The criterion for assessment will be understanding of the unit content, as demonstrated by the correct selection of answers in a multiple choice quiz.

See the General Assessment Information section for information about Special Consideration.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- To learn how to recognise the structure of arguments, and how to 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 standardised form.
- Apply your critical analysis skills to arguments from a variety of contexts and disciplines.

Final Assessment

Due: **11.59pm, Thursday 24/1**

Weighting: **35%**

The written assignment requires you use all the skills you have acquired throughout the course to write a report analysing and responding to a pair of conflicting arguments.

The full assignment, a scenario, and a supplementary resources will be made available through the unit website. The assignment must be submitted no later than Thursday 24th of January.

Criteria for assessment include accuracy of standardisation, clarity of analysis, and strength of argumentation. A specific and detailed rubric will be available in iLearn.

See the General Assessment Information section for information about Special Consideration and penalties for lateness.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- To learn how to recognise the structure of arguments, and how to 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 standardised form.
- Construct your own well-reasoned arguments.
- Apply your critical analysis skills to arguments from a variety of contexts and disciplines.

Participation 1

Due: **Weeks 1-5**

Weighting: **10%**

Unit engagement: 10%

The website for this unit contains a lot of resources and activities designed to help you get the most out of the course material. The skills you will be developing in this unit require practice, so the exercises and activities provided are an important component on your work in this unit. To get the most out of the unit, you are expected to engage with these resources on a regular basis.

Because of the importance of regular active engagement, you will be awarded participation marks for engagement.

Your mark for unit engagement will be based on your active engagement with the resources in iLearn. A rubric and full details of this assessment will be available in the 'Assessment and Guides' block in iLearn.

See the General Assessment Information section for information about Special Consideration.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- To learn how to recognise the structure of arguments, and how to represent that structure in a clear, standardised form.
- Differentiate between types of reasoning and the methods of evaluation appropriate to each.
- Apply your critical analysis skills to arguments from a variety of contexts and disciplines.

Participation 2

Due: **11.59pm, Sunday 6/1/19**

Weighting: **10%**

Participation 2: Implicit Association Test and associated activities. Harvard Implicit Association Tests will be discussed in Topic 5 in Week 3. By the end of the mid-semester break you will need to take one of these online tests, take a screen-shot of your results, and submit it along with a short 50-100 word reflection and responses to five multiple choice questions to the "IAT Reflection Quiz". Further instructions will be available in iLearn.

The criteria for participation 2 assessment are understanding and reflection, as demonstrated by your quiz responses and engagement with relevant tasks.

See the General Assessment Information section for information about Special Consideration.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Construct your own well-reasoned arguments.
- Apply your critical analysis skills to arguments from a variety of contexts and disciplines.

Delivery and Resources

PHL137/PHIX137 is run as an integrated unit for students enrolled directly through Macquarie University (PHL137) and students enrolled through Open Universities Australia (PHIX137). It is fully online, and is delivered through the unit *iLearn* site, which contains a wide range of resources including lectures, course notes, exercises with solutions, online discussion facilities and so on. You are expected to keep up with the unit material on a weekly basis, making use of the facilities available, and are strongly encouraged to seek help from your tutor or convenor if you are having any problems. Many of you will be taking this as one of your first units, and we

are keen to support you to make it as useful and enjoyable an experience as possible.

All students are encouraged to make use of the discussion facilities within the iLearn site to discuss course material. The discussion forum will be monitored by your tutor, who will try to answer questions as needed, but we encourage you all to help each other out on the board as well.

You are expected to complete all assessment tasks, as detailed above.

Please remember that as the Session 3 unit is run intensively, you will need to allow at least twice as much time to work on it as you would for an ordinary unit. In most weeks, two ordinary weeks of content are covered in one week. If you find you are having trouble, please contact one of the teaching staff.

Unit Schedule

| WEEK | DATES | TOPICS |
|--|---------------|---|
| Week 1 | 3/12-9/12 | Introduction and standardisation (Topics 1 and 2) |
| Week 2 | 10/12 – 16/12 | Deductive and Inductive Reasoning (Topics 3 and 4) |
| Week 3 | 17/12 – 23/12 | Critical Thinking and the Human Mind (Topics 5 to 7) |
| <i>2 week mid-semester break (24/12 – 6/1)</i> | | |
| Week 4 | 7/1 – 13/1 | The Power of language and rhetoric (Topics 8 and 9) |
| Week 5 | 14/1 – 20/1 | Pseudo-Reasoning (Topics 10 and 11) |
| Week 6 | 21/1 – 27/1 | Assessment-writing week. There is no new content this week. Topic 12 contains a worked sample assignment, with guidance for completing the assignment which is due on Thursday 24/1 . Your final quiz is due by Sunday 27/1 . |

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.*)

Undergraduate students seeking more policy resources can visit the [Student Policy Gateway](https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/student-policy-gateway) (<https://students.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 shown in *iLearn*, 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.

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 improve your marks and take control of your study.

- [Workshops](#)
- [StudyWise](#)
- [Academic Integrity Module for Students](#)
- [Ask a Learning Adviser](#)

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

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.

Graduate Capabilities

Creative and Innovative

Our graduates will also be capable of creative thinking and of creating knowledge. They will be imaginative and open to experience and capable of innovation at work and in the community. We want them to be engaged in applying their critical, creative thinking.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- To learn how to recognise the structure of arguments, and how to 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 standardised form.
- Construct your own well-reasoned arguments.
- Apply your critical analysis skills to arguments from a variety of contexts and disciplines.

Assessment tasks

- Online quizzes
- Final Assessment
- Participation 1
- Participation 2

Capable of Professional and Personal Judgement and Initiative

We want our graduates to have emotional intelligence and sound interpersonal skills and to demonstrate discernment and common sense in their professional and personal judgement. They will exercise initiative as needed. They will be capable of risk assessment, and be able to handle ambiguity and complexity, enabling them to be adaptable in diverse and changing environments.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

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

Assessment tasks

- Online quizzes
- Final Assessment
- Participation 1
- Participation 2

Commitment to Continuous Learning

Our graduates will have enquiring minds and a literate curiosity which will lead them to pursue knowledge for its own sake. They will continue to pursue learning in their careers and as they participate in the world. They will be capable of reflecting on their experiences and relationships with others and the environment, learning from them, and growing - personally, professionally and socially.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Construct your own well-reasoned arguments.
- Apply your critical analysis skills to arguments from a variety of contexts and disciplines.

Assessment tasks

- Online quizzes
- Final Assessment
- Participation 1
- Participation 2

Discipline Specific Knowledge and Skills

Our graduates will take with them the intellectual development, depth and breadth of knowledge, scholarly understanding, and specific subject content in their chosen fields to make them competent and confident in their subject or profession. They will be able to demonstrate, where relevant, professional technical competence and meet professional standards. They will be able to articulate the structure of knowledge of their discipline, be able to adapt discipline-specific

knowledge to novel situations, and be able to contribute from their discipline to inter-disciplinary solutions to problems.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- To learn how to recognise the structure of arguments, and how to 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 standardised form.
- Construct your own well-reasoned arguments.
- Apply your critical analysis skills to arguments from a variety of contexts and disciplines.

Assessment tasks

- Online quizzes
- Final Assessment
- Participation 1
- Participation 2

Critical, Analytical and Integrative Thinking

We want our graduates to be capable of reasoning, questioning and analysing, and to integrate and synthesise learning and knowledge from a range of sources and environments; to be able to critique constraints, assumptions and limitations; to be able to think independently and systemically in relation to scholarly activity, in the workplace, and in the world. We want them to have a level of scientific and information technology literacy.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- To learn how to recognise the structure of arguments, and how to 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 standardised form.
- Construct your own well-reasoned arguments.
- Apply your critical analysis skills to arguments from a variety of contexts and disciplines.

Assessment tasks

- Online quizzes
- Final Assessment

- Participation 1
- Participation 2

Problem Solving and Research Capability

Our graduates should be capable of researching; of analysing, and interpreting and assessing data and information in various forms; of drawing connections across fields of knowledge; and they should be able to relate their knowledge to complex situations at work or in the world, in order to diagnose and solve problems. We want them to have the confidence to take the initiative in doing so, within an awareness of their own limitations.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- To learn how to recognise the structure of arguments, and how to 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 standardised form.
- Construct your own well-reasoned arguments.
- Apply your critical analysis skills to arguments from a variety of contexts and disciplines.

Assessment tasks

- Online quizzes
- Final Assessment
- Participation 1
- Participation 2

Effective Communication

We want to develop in our students the ability to communicate and convey their views in forms effective with different audiences. We want our graduates to take with them the capability to read, listen, question, gather and evaluate information resources in a variety of formats, assess, write clearly, speak effectively, and to use visual communication and communication technologies as appropriate.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- To learn how to recognise the structure of arguments, and how to 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 standardised form.
- Construct your own well-reasoned arguments.
- Apply your critical analysis skills to arguments from a variety of contexts and disciplines.

Assessment tasks

- Online quizzes
- Final Assessment
- Participation 1
- Participation 2

Engaged and Ethical Local and Global citizens

As local citizens our graduates will be aware of indigenous perspectives and of the nation's historical context. They will be engaged with the challenges of contemporary society and with knowledge and ideas. We want our graduates to have respect for diversity, to be open-minded, sensitive to others and inclusive, and to be open to other cultures and perspectives: they should have a level of cultural literacy. Our graduates should be aware of disadvantage and social justice, and be willing to participate to help create a wiser and better society.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Construct your own well-reasoned arguments.
- Apply your critical analysis skills to arguments from a variety of contexts and disciplines.

Assessment tasks

- Online quizzes
- Final Assessment
- Participation 1
- Participation 2

Socially and Environmentally Active and Responsible

We want our graduates to be aware of and have respect for self and others; to be able to work with others as a leader and a team player; to have a sense of connectedness with others and country; and to have a sense of mutual obligation. Our graduates should be informed and active participants in moving society towards sustainability.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Construct your own well-reasoned arguments.
- Apply your critical analysis skills to arguments from a variety of contexts and disciplines.

Assessment tasks

- Online quizzes
- Final Assessment
- Participation 1
- Participation 2