

## Programme specification

*(Notes on how to complete this template are provide in Annexe 3)*

### 1. Overview/ factual information

<b>Programme/award title(s)</b>	BA (Hons) in Philosophy and the Catholic Tradition
<b>Teaching Institution</b>	Maryvale Institute
<b>Awarding Institution</b>	The Open University (OU)
<b>Date of first OU validation</b>	2008
<b>Date of latest OU (re)validation</b>	June 2019
<b>Next revalidation</b>	2024
<b>Credit points for the award</b>	360
<b>UCAS Code</b>	N/A
<b>JACS Code</b>	V500
<b>Programme start date and cycle of starts if appropriate.</b>	January each year
<b>Underpinning QAA subject benchmark(s)</b>	Philosophy//TRS
<b>Other external and internal reference points used to inform programme outcomes. For apprenticeships, the standard or framework against which it will be delivered.</b>	
<b>Professional/statutory recognition</b>	
<b>For apprenticeships fully or partially integrated Assessment.</b>	
<b>Mode(s) of Study (PT, FT, DL, Mix of DL &amp; Face-to-Face) Apprenticeship</b>	PT, FT, DL Mix of DL & Face to Face
<b>Duration of the programme for each mode of study</b>	HE Cert 2 years part-time, distance HE Dip 3 <sup>1/2</sup> years part-time, distance BA Hons 5 years part-time, distance learning
<b>Dual accreditation (if applicable)</b>	
<b>Date of production/revision of this specification</b>	July 2019

**Please note: This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if s/he takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided.**

**More detailed information on the learning outcomes, content, and teaching, learning and assessment methods of each module can be found in student module guide(s) and the students handbook.**

**The accuracy of the information contained in this document is reviewed by the University and may be verified by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education.**

**2.1 Educational aims and objectives**

The BA Hons in Philosophy and the Catholic Tradition aims to:

- Enable students to engage in an informed, systematic manner with key areas of philosophical enquiry as these relate to the philosophical theological traditions of Christianity, with special attention to analysis of the document, *Fides et Ratio*
- Equip students with subject knowledge and understanding in classic philosophical topics such as logic, epistemology, metaphysics and the relationship of these with the principles of Christian theology
- Engage students with the complexity of debate in topics which address contemporary issues regarding personal and social behaviour
- Develop in students an ability to conduct personal study at the level of an informed and independent scholar, suitable for an Honours level graduate
- Enable students to develop self-awareness in aspects of personal effectiveness

**2.2 Relationship to other programmes and awards**

(Where the award is part of a hierarchy of awards/programmes, this section describes the articulation between them, opportunities for progression upon completion of the programme, and arrangements for bridging modules or induction)

This programme provides an opportunity for students to exit with HE awards at Certificate and Diploma levels, as indicated below.

**2.3 For Foundation Degrees, please list where the 60 credit work-related learning takes place. For apprenticeships an articulation of how the work based learning and academic content are organised with the award.**

N/A

**2.4 List of all exit awards**

Higher Education Certificate Philosophy and the Catholic Tradition  
Higher Education Diploma Philosophy and the Catholic Tradition

### 3. Programme structure and learning outcomes

<b><u>Programme Structure - LEVEL 4</u></b>					
<b>Compulsory modules</b>	<b>Credit points</b>	<b>Optional modules</b>	<b>Credit points</b>	<b>Is module compensatable?</b>	<b>Semester runs in</b>
Introduction to philosophy	20			No	1
Philosophy of the Human Person and Ethics	20			No	2
History of philosophy	20			No	3
Epistemology	20			No	4
Logic	20			No	5
Metaphysics	20			No	6

#### [Exit award Cert HE]

<b><u>Programme Structure - LEVEL 5</u></b>					
<b>Compulsory modules</b>	<b>Credit points</b>	<b>Optional modules</b>	<b>Credit points</b>	<b>Is module compensatable?</b>	<b>Semester runs in</b>
Philosophy of Science	20			No	7
Issues in Contemporary Philosophy	20			No	8
Social and Political Philosophy	20			No	9
The Philosophy of Culture and Evangelisation	20			No	10
Philosophy of God and Cosmology	20			No	11
Philosophy of History and the Arts	20			No	12

#### [Exit award Dip HE]

<b>Programme Structure - LEVEL 6</b>					
<b>Compulsory modules</b>	<b>Credit points</b>	<b>Optional modules</b>	<b>Credit points</b>	<b>Is module compensatable?</b>	<b>Semester runs in</b>
The thought of St. Thomas Aquinas	20	One of the following:	20	No	
Philosophy of Religion	20	Thomas More and Renaissance			
Philosophy and Contemporary Catholic Theology	20	Philosophy			
Extended essay	20	Husserl Phenomenology			
Long module	20	The Philosophy of Meister Eckhart			
		Aquinas and Newman in Modernity			

<b><u>Learning Outcomes</u></b>	
<b>3A. Knowledge and understanding</b>	
<b>Learning outcomes:</b>	<b>Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods</b>
A1 A developed knowledge of the subject areas of philosophy of religion and Catholic theology	Course materials, tutorials, lecture input provide the basic platform for achieving this outcome. The threefold assessment pattern of Text Analysis, Essay and Examination used in this programme demonstrates ability to embed knowledge and successfully manage that knowledge base for analytical purposes.
A2 An ability to make inter-connections between philosophical and theological topics	The use of the document <i>Fides et Ratio</i> provides a tool for exploring the interconnections of faith and reason in the Christian tradition. This sets the method of philosophical enquiry in place as a measure by which students can evaluate their ownership of the skills of logical analysis. The combination of classic areas of philosophy with theological interests in the field of ethics enables inter-disciplinary exploration in which religious belief is seen to have its foundations in philosophical models of thought.

<b>3B. Cognitive skills</b>	
<b>Learning outcomes:</b>	<b>Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods</b>
B1 An ability to analyse conceptual frameworks within the subject fields	The use of a coursebook to develop individual understanding in each module provides the spine for student appropriation of subject knowledge. This is supported by the regular use of textual analysis, supported by the course reader, where selected texts are used as a teaching and learning tool. The summative use of text analysis reinforces this learning strategy.
B2 An ability to critically analyse the wider interface between philosophy and theology.	Group work and lecture input during residential sessions strengthens this embedding of analytical skills in student understanding while also encouraging the skills of critical enquiry as a tool of philosophical theology.
<b>3C. Practical and professional skills</b>	
<b>Learning outcomes:</b>	<b>Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods</b>
C1 An ability to bring their knowledge and understanding to bear on issues of debate in contemporary life	This aspect of the skills set developed by the programme is delivered especially in the modules which contextualise philosophical debate with regard to historical cultures and personal and social ethics. The practical exercises set out in course books and the encouragement to public debate found in residential group work aid student growth in this area.
C2 An ability to reflect on the links between faith and reason in order to further personal and professional development	This skill is built up from the start of the programme in its introductory module on the nature of philosophy and further developed by the way in which the programme provides shorter modules which focus students on knowledge of how different thinkers have articulated the faith and culture linkage in different time periods. Personal reflection on the meaning of primary texts aids this process.

<b>3D. Key/transferable skills</b>	
<b>Learning outcomes:</b>	<b>Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods</b>
<p>D1 An ability to critically evaluate arguments from different perspectives and formulate conclusions and / or solutions creatively</p>	<p>This skill is addressed constantly in the programme both by providing students with materials which challenge simplistic approaches to meaning and by assisting them to develop the ability to think carefully and logically and to articulate complexity of meaning both orally and in formal written tasks.</p>
<p>D2 Demonstrate skills of personal engagement and management of time in order to complete study activity successfully, thus developing skills relevant to employability and to the effective organisation of daily life events</p>	<p>These skills are shown in the commitment of the student to distance learning mode, in the ability to seek suitable tutorial advice and are gathered together as skills which underpin the successful production of the Extended Essay at honours level.</p>

#### 4. Distinctive features of the programme structure

- **Where applicable, this section provides details on distinctive features such as:**
  - where in the structure above a professional/placement year fits in and how it may affect progression
  - any restrictions regarding the availability of elective modules
  - where in the programme structure students must make a choice of pathway/route
- **Additional considerations for apprenticeships:**
  - how the delivery of the academic award fits in with the wider apprenticeship
  - the integration of the 'on the job' and 'off the job' training
  - how the academic award fits within the assessment of the apprenticeship

The key learning system is that of Distance Learning, supported by course books, linked with a series of residential events which allow for discursive and collaborative work within the cohorts. This individual and group work profile is managed by the Course Director and Module Tutors who give advice and guidance outside residential times through the use of emails, Skype and phone contacts.

The assessment package is based on formative work provided by the opportunities for intellectual dialogue at residential events and a structure of summative assessment which uses three main tasks: textual analysis, essay and examination.

The use of close reading and analysis of primary texts is a special feature of this programme. This is delivered mainly through a unique "Long" module, which feeds through each year of the programme, to ensure a continuity of reading. The focus each year will be focused on a particular theme through which students will also gain in-depth and understanding of the significant philosophical texts that influenced Augustine's or contemporary thinking about the issues Augustine grappled with. The module concludes with an oral examination in year 5.

#### 5. Support for students and their learning.

*(For apprenticeships this should include details of how student learning is supported in the work place)*

The essential mode of distance learning is student commitment to their own learning programme. That skill is engaged and developed in this programme through the use of course books and readers which supply foundational knowledge and also take the students through subject enquiry by providing practical exercises to test understanding and an ability to formulate responses to critical questions.

The individual student activity is contextualised within the framework of fixed residential sessions each academic year. These give specialist lecture input and space for group work and seminars which build up an academic community of enquiry. During residential attendances students are strongly recommended to use the dedicated Library for essential books and online access to a database of journal articles suitable.

Academic counselling is provided by the Programme Director in his role as personal tutor, assisted by the teams of Associate Staff, Academic Tutors/Markers. Study support guidance is provided via lecturer sessions during residentials, on how to study, research and prepare for writing their assessment to the final submissions stage and in addition to undertaking examinations. The Undergraduate Academic Administrator delivers a practical session on management of submission of work, examination procedure and residential bookings.

In *June of 2016*, Maryvale Institute appointed an Accessibility Coordinator who, primarily, supports all students living with a disability, learning difficulty (such as dyslexia) or health condition that impacts upon their ability to study. At application stage the student is asked to declare if they have any accessibility need and if so are referred to the coordinator. The student will meet the accessibility coordinator at their first residential and be contacted prior to make any feasible adjustments. A support page for this facilities is provided via our VLE Moodle service.

## 6. Criteria for admission

*(For apprenticeships this should include details of how the criteria will be used with employers who will be recruiting apprentices.)*

In general, entry to this degree programme is “open” in the sense that no specific previous qualifications are needed but evidence will be sought of ability for degree level work. Candidates are asked to complete an application form, together with a 400 word statement of their reasons for applying for the course.

- An application form must be completed and, if relevant, a separate accessibility form to be submitted to the Accessibility Co-ordinator.
- A 400-word explanation of the reasons for the student’s decision to apply for the programme. This statement will assist in assessing the suitability of candidates for the programme in the case that they do not already possess a higher education qualification.
- The applicant is also required to submit two references which must be sent by the referee directly to Maryvale (these will be treated with the strictest of confidence)
- The application fee payment.

The application will then be considered by the Programme Director. The applicant may be invited for an interview, or the Programme Director may phone the applicant in order to clarify any details in the application.

The applicant then be informed whether or not he/she is accepted for the program within six weeks of receiving the application.

## 7. Language of study

English



8. Information about non-OU standard assessment regulations (including PSRB requirements)

The assessment regulations are indicated in the Module specifications and the timeframe for submission of assignments is provided in the Student Handbook.

9. For apprenticeships in England End Point Assessment (EPA).

*(Summary of the approved assessment plan and how the academic award fits within this and the EPA)*

N/A

10. Methods for evaluating and improving the quality and standards of teaching and learning.

At institutional level, the QAE systems of Maryvale Institute apply to the delivery and evaluation of PGR, M level and B (Hons) programmes of study.

The following provide points of reference for adaptation and development of the BA (Hons) philosophy programme:

- Annual Monitoring of the Programme by the Programme Team provides a Report which goes to the ASSC of Maryvale Institute as well as to the auditing processes of the OU.
- Annual Examination Boards and the advice of the External Examiner are encapsulated in the EE report to Maryvale which is addressed by the programme Team and by the ASC of Maryvale Institute.
- Student feedback from residential events and student comments as part of Course Committee meetings provides formal occasions for student input to their own programme of study for the programme cohorts.
- Regular re-validation events with the accrediting body (OU) provide opportunity for external comment to enhance the programme and its delivery.
- Liaison with the OU Academic Reviewer offers an ongoing mechanism for seeking external academic support.

## 11. Changes made to the programme since last (re)validation

### OU advised amendment to Module: Introduction to Philosophy March 2018

The assessments weighting should be revised to reflect the increased word count in the essay component of 3,000 words, compared to the 2,000 word textual analysis. A weighting of 40% for the textual analysis and 60% for the essay is suggested in place of the current weighting of 50% each. This was completed.

### ICT – Assessment submission

An electronic assessment platform was introduced in 2016 that moved the system from paper copy to online. The student is able to review their submission and check the similarity report the system provides which demonstrates matches to resources or other work giving a percentage rating indicating the level of matches or if plagiarism has taken place. This tool is useful to both the student and institution to identify such cases or lack of knowledge in referencing or quotations etc.

In 2018 a full roll out was completed for all years to submitted electronically. The student also receives feedback on their work electronically via the same system Turnitin. The academic tutors mark via this system accordingly to the grading system set out in the Student Handbook.

### ICT –Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) and Student peer to peer engagement

Whilst the original aim was to allocate a VLE via the Maryvale Institute website and this was indeed trialled for another programme, it proved to be too administrative. Therefore, in January 2018 the VLE platform called Moodle was introduced and is facilitated by programme administrators. This area is dedicated to the student's year on year programme with supporting materials and accessible areas, such as Accessible Support Co-ordinator, Exams etc.

The decision was made to make use of a private group via Facebook area for peer to peer support and this was created in the July of 2017 for students. A small number took up this service however, it has not been used as envisaged, with only a small number of peer to peer communications occurring. Students can and do view general information added by admins, so this is a positive move for communications.

### Accessibility Support Coordinator

In 2016, the existing administrator Miss Melissa Pearce became the Accessibility Support Co-ordinator who supports those individuals who identify from their application form or during the programme that they have an additional need for example; disability, medical etc and indeed to date has supported at least one student.

### Administration change

Administratively, the team has become a two person facilitated provision with one full-time and one part-time who support students and the programme and this has developed well.

## Annexe 1 - Curriculum map

This table indicates which study units assume responsibility for delivering (shaded) and assessing (✓) particular programme learning outcomes.

Level	Study module/unit	A1	A2	B1	B2	C1	C2	D1	D2
4	Introduction to Philosophy	x	x	x	x		x		
	Philosophy of the Human Person and Ethics	x	x	x		x	x		x
	History of Philosophy I	x	x	x				x	x
	History of Philosophy II	x	x	x				x	x
	Epistemology	x	x	x				x	x
	Logic	x	x	x		x	x		
	Metaphysics	x	x	x				x	x

Level	Study module/unit	A1	A2	B1	B2	C1	C2	D1	D2
5	Philosophy of Science I	x	x	x		x		x	x
	Issues in Contemporary Philosophy	x	x	x		x	x	x	x
	Social and Political Philosophy	x	x		x		x	x	
	Philosophy of Culture and Evangelisation	x	x		x		x		x
	Philosophy of God and Cosmology	x	x	x	x	x		x	x
	Philosophy of History and the Arts	x		x	x		x	x	x

Level	Study module/unit	A1	A2	B1	B2	C1	C2	D1	D2
6	The thought of St. Thomas Aquinas	x	x	x	x	x		x	
	Philosophy of Religion	x	x		x		x	x	
	Philosophy and Contemporary Catholic theology	x		x	x		x		x
	Thomas More and Renaissance philosophy		x	x	x	x	x	x	x
	Phenomenology		x	x	x	x	x	x	x
	Extended essay	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
	Long Module	x		x		x		x	