



## 12 Master's degree programme in Philosophy: Philosophy of a Specific Scientific Discipline

### 12.1 Introduction

This chapter contains detailed information about the aims, learning outcomes and structure of the Master's degree programme in the Philosophy of a Specific Scientific Discipline. A study schedule is provided for each year of the programme, together with an overview of the course units (compulsory and elective).

### 12.2 Aims and learning outcomes of the Master's degree programme in the Philosophy of a Specific Scientific Discipline.

The aim of the degree programme is to:

- a. impart extensive knowledge and understanding of, and skills in, the philosophy of a specific scientific discipline, building on the Bachelor's degree in the Philosophy of a Specific Scientific Discipline
- b. enable students to independently apply the methodologies learned in logical analysis, empirical philosophy or the history of ideas
- c. provide further academic training
- d. teach independent academic thinking and conduct
- e. teach students to analyse complex problems
- f. teach the writing of academic/scientific reports
- g. teach students to apply their knowledge of the discipline, and to apply skills from a broader philosophical context
- h. to prepare for:
  - a profession relating to another degree programme, in which knowledge of the philosophy of a scientific discipline has added value
  - any profession in which knowledge and understanding of, and skills in philosophy have an added value
  - any profession in which general academic skills and training are required, with a particular focus on skills in logical analysis, the history of ideas, exegesis and empirical philosophy, and on expression skills in general
  - an academic career and further study, in particular the first programme of the Graduate School of Philosophy, namely the Research Master's degree programme in Philosophy: Knowledge and Knowledge Development (opportunity to enter Year 2 of this degree programme).

The learning outcomes of this programme are as follows:

1. With regard to knowledge and understanding:

On completion of the degree programme, students must have

- a. knowledge and understanding of the scientific discipline, building on and exceeding the level of the Bachelor's degree programme
- b. knowledge and understanding of the central elements of philosophy, in particular the core concepts, theories, problems and methodologies of the philosophy of a scientific discipline, building on and exceeding the level of the Bachelor's degree programme
- c. knowledge and understanding of the academic and social significance of philosophy in general, and of the philosophy of specific scientific disciplines in particular.

2. With regard to skills:

- a. the ability to place and evaluate research in a broader philosophical context than that of the scientific discipline
- b. the ability to creatively apply philosophy skills in logical analysis, the history of ideas and exegesis or empirical philosophy to problems, theories and debates relating to the scientific discipline
- c. the ability to independently formulate and carry out a philosophical/scientific research project relating to a scientific discipline (or cluster of disciplines).

### **12.3 Conditions of admission**

Students can qualify for admission on the basis of a

- Bachelor's degree in the Philosophy of a Specific Discipline
- Bachelor's degree in Philosophy. Students with this qualification should be aware that the Master's degree in the Philosophy of a Specific Scientific Discipline cannot be awarded until the student has also completed course units at Master's level with a total student workload of 60 ECTS credit points in the scientific discipline (see below). In practice, this may mean that the student must also be admitted to a University degree programme other than Philosophy. Conditions of admission also apply to these programmes.
- national or international equivalent of the above; equivalence will be assessed by the Admissions Board.

### **12.4 Programme structure**

The programme has the following components:

*Year 1*

1. Feyerabend: Against Method; three elective course units in Philosophy (5 ECTS credit points each) and two tutorials (5 ECTS each).
2. Course units with a total student workload of 30 ECTS credit points from the Master's programme in the Philosophy of a Specific Scientific Discipline. N.B. A Bachelor's degree in the scientific discipline is a requirement for admission to these course units.

<i>Course units</i>	<i>Student workload</i>
Course units from the Master's programme in the scientific discipline	30
Feyerabend: Against Method	5
Two elective course units in the cluster of the scientific discipline (N, S or H)	10
One elective course unit within or outside the student's cluster	5
Two tutorials	10

### *Year 2*

1. Course units with a total student workload of 30 ECTS credit points from the Master's programme in the scientific discipline
2. Colloquia (5 ECTS)
3. Master's thesis (25 ECTS)

<i>Course units</i>	<i>Student workload</i>
Course units from the Master's programme in the scientific discipline	30
Colloquium attendance	5
Master's thesis	25

N.B. In principle, Master's programmes of the Faculty of Philosophy are English-taught. See the relevant regulations on p. **Error! Bookmark not defined..**

Important: first read the general introduction to Philosophy programmes on p. **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

For the **part-time** variant of this degree programme, see also p. **Error! Bookmark not defined..**

### *List of elective course units*

Students of the Master's programme in the Philosophy of a Specific Scientific Discipline choose at least two elective course units from this list, based on the cluster for the scientific discipline. Regarding the other elective course units, at least one of these must be selected from one of the other clusters. Students who require advice on

the cohesiveness of their study package are asked to consult the contact person for their subject area.

As far as possible, final papers for the elective course units must be written on a theme in the student's own subject area. The lecturer for the relevant elective course unit monitors this.

## 12.5 Overview of Master's course units

Details of the Bachelor's thesis course unit can be found in Chapter 19 - Course Units, from page **Error! Bookmark not defined.** onwards. The numbering in the table corresponds to the numbering in that chapter.

Quarter		Cluster	Number
1	Feyerabend: Against Method		
<b>Master's course units in <i>History of Philosophy</i>:</b>			
1	Scientific Revolution and Secularization	N/H	37
1	Reading Group: Ockham's Summa Logicae	N/H	69
2	Locke's <i>Essay</i> in Context	H	41
2	Thought Experiments in the History of Philosophy	H	81
3	Aristotle's Ethics	H/S	3
4	Differences: Levinas and Derrida	G	13
<b>Master's course units in <i>Ethics, Social and Political Philosophy</i></b>			
2	Material Culture	N/S/H	47
2	Tolerance: From Locke to Lessing to Latitude in What?	S/H	82
3	Power and Justice	S	67
4	Philosophy, Politics and Economics (tba)	S	65
4	Advanced Meta Ethics	S	2
4	Social Contract Theory	S	76
<b>Master's course units in <i>Theoretical Philosophy</i>:</b>			
1	Philosophy of Argumentation: Dialogue and Fallacy	N/S	55
2	Philosophy of Neuroscience	N/S	60
3	Modal Logic	N	48
3	Multi-Agent Systems	N/S	49
3	Wittgenstein on the barest essentials: logic, language, and mathematics	N/S	89

Clusters:

- N = Natural Sciences in the broad sense (Physics, Astronomy, Chemistry, Pharmacy, Biology, Medicine, Psychology, Artificial Intelligence)
- S = Social Sciences in the broad sense (Sociology, Spatial Sciences, Economics, Business, Law, Medicine)
- H = Humanities in the broad sense (Psychology, Literature, History, Culture)

#### *List of contact persons*

Each discipline has a designated staff member who can advise on the composition of the study package, which is subject to the approval of the Board of Examiners.

Students are asked to contact the study advisor for more information.

<b>Natural Sciences</b>	Romeijn
<b>Life Sciences</b>	Keijzer
<b>Economics and Social Sciences</b>	Hindriks
<b>History</b>	Evink
<b>Arts and Culture</b>	Evink
<b>Political Sciences</b>	Vega
<b>Cognitive Science</b>	Tamminga

#### *Tutorials in the scientific disciplines*

A tutorial is a course unit that mainly involves independent study of the material, under the supervision of a staff member. Tutorials are not lectures; they often take the form of a seminar.

Tutorials can serve to add further depth, by means of additional literature and a paper (or additional paper), to a course unit that the student has completed (or will complete). Students who are taking a degree programme in which tutorials are a requirement are responsible for contacting a supervising lecturer in good time. The content of the tutorial is usually determined in consultation between the lecturer and student, but staff members are free to offer fixed subjects and literature lists. Students do not need to register for tutorials via ProgRESS WWW. Once the tutorial has been completed (usually concluding with a paper), the lecturer will inform the administration office of the mark.

Tutorials are scheduled in consultation between the student, staff member, and possibly a member of the timetabling staff as depending on the number of students in the tutorial, a room booking may be required.

Where possible, tutorials should be conducted by a staff member other than the thesis supervisor. For tutorials that conclude with a paper, there is a fixed number of supervision hours, i.e. 5. A non-exhaustive list of possible tutorial supervisors:

<b>Natural Sciences</b>	Romeijn, Keijzer
<b>Life Sciences</b>	Keijzer, Romeijn
<b>Economics and Social Sciences</b>	Hindriks, Harbers, Boele, Vega, Stahl
<b>History</b>	Evink, Nauta, Adriaenssen, Lenz, De Boer, Nawar, Sangiacomo
<b>Arts and Culture</b>	Evink, Vega, Stahl
<b>Political Sciences</b>	Vega, Streumer, Stahl, Harbers
<b>Cognitive Science</b>	Keijzer, Kooi, Tamminga, Dutilh Novaes

### *Colloquium*

Each student attends at least 5 colloquia; these may be Faculty lectures held for students of the programme in the Philosophy of a Specific Scientific Discipline.

It is also possible for students to attend colloquia elsewhere in the University or country instead, provided these relate to the scientific discipline. Students who are uncertain about this are asked to consult the contact person for the scientific discipline. Visit the site of the Dutch Research School of Philosophy (OZSW; [www.ozsw.nl](http://www.ozsw.nl)) for the range of available course units and colloquia etc.

Students can also sign up to the national FILOS list. This is a mailing list that distributes invitations for colloquia throughout the Netherlands:

<http://list.vu.nl/mailman/listinfo/filos-nl>

Assessment is by means of three journalistic or popularizing reports (approx. 1,500 words each) on the colloquia attended. The reports should constitute a translation from the academic context to the philosophical or public context. Students choose one tutorial supervisor to assess the three reports.

## **12.6 Thesis on the Philosophy of a Specific Scientific Discipline**

The learning outcomes of the Master's thesis are as follows. In the Master's thesis, students demonstrate

- their ability to carry out independent research in the philosophy of a specific scientific discipline and compile a written report of the research
- that they have the knowledge, understanding and skills relating to the philosophy of a specific scientific discipline that are required to participate in

academic/scientific discussion.

- their ability to formulate and delineate a problem
- their ability to gather, study, evaluate and organize relevant material
- their ability to choose and justify an appropriate research method
- their ability to formulate a clear and systematic argument
- their ability to apply bibliographical skills
- their ability to draw conclusions from their own research
- their ability to make an original contribution to the subject area
- their ability to communicate orally about the various aspects of the thesis.

In the Master's programme in the Philosophy of a Specific Scientific Discipline, the general rule is that the second supervisor must be from the faculty of the scientific discipline. If this is not the case, the third supervisor must be from the the scientific discipline.

A substantial part of the thesis must deal with a subject in the student's subject area. In addition, the student must also develop a full philosophical argument in the thesis. The fact that the thesis combines these two requirements explains why the related student workload is 5 ECTS credit points more than for the regular M.A. thesis. Given the nature of this degree programme, students may wish to write a single thesis to serve as the final thesis for the Faculty of Philosophy programme *and* the programme at the faculty of the scientific discipline. The Board of Examiners for the degree programme in the Philosophy of a Specific Scientific Discipline has ruled that this is permissible, provided the thesis meets the requirements set by both faculties. This degree programme is also subject to the thesis regulations for the Master's degree programme in Philosophy, see p. **Error! Bookmark not defined.** ff. Unlike students of the Master's programme in Philosophy, students of the Master's programme in the Philosophy of a Specific Scientific Discipline are not required to choose a specialization or department. However, these students must ensure that they choose Philosophy course units that relate to their scientific discipline.

See the Faculty website for the Teaching and Examination Regulations (OER) for the Master's degree programme in the Philosophy of a Specific Discipline.