Nottingham Trent University
Module Specification

	Basic module information	
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1	Module Title:	Introduction to the Philosophy of Mind
2	Module Code:	PHIL20407
3	Credit Points:	20
4	Duration:	Half Year
5	School:	Arts and Humanities
6	Campus:	Clifton
7	Date this version first approved to run:	September 2013

8	**Pre, post and co-requisites:**

These are modules that you must have studied previously in order to take this module, or

modules that you must study simultaneously or in a subsequent academic session

Pre, Co, Post	Module Code	Module Title
Pre	PHIL10111	The Basic Problems of Philosophy
Pre	PHIL10211	Philosophy: Ancient & Modern

9	**Courses containing the module**				
	Level	Core/Option	Mode	Code	Course Title
			FT	HUMA008	BA (H) Communication & Society and Philosophy
			FT	HUMA016	BA (H) English and Philosophy
			FT	HUMA023	BA (H) European Studies and Philosophy
			FT	HUMA028	BA (H) Film & TV and Philosophy
			FT	HUMA033	BA (H) Global Studies and Philosophy
			FT	HUMA038	BA (H) History and Philosophy
			FT	HUMA042	BA (H) Linguistics and Philosophy
			FT	HUMA045	BA (H) Philosophy and International Relations
			SW	MODL014	BA (H) French and Philosophy
			SW	MODL027	BA (H) German and Philosophy
			SW	MODL039	BA (H) Italian and Philosophy
			SW	MODL058	BA (H) Spanish and Philosophy
			FT	EURX001	European Exchange (First Half Year)
			FT	EURX003	European Exchange (Full Year)

	FT	INTX001	International Exchange (First Half Year)
	FT	INTX003	International Exchange (Full Year)

10	**Overview and aims**

The overall aim of this module is to introduce you the key concepts involved in contemporary philosophical debates about the nature of the mind. The module examines critically the Cartesian idea that the mind is distinct substance separate from the body, via discussion of the way that psychoanalysis and behaviourism have posed important challenges to this conception. This will examination form the basis for a discussion of the contemporary idea, now dominant in scientific approaches, that the mind is simply a sophisticated computer programme running on the hardware of the brain.

Also discussed is the relationship between language and thought, the nature of skilled behaviour and its relationship to expertise, the possibility of animal cognition and also how consciousness and awareness create problems for a scientific understanding of human nature. The module concludes by considering why the debate about the nature of the mind has helped to define the contours and trajectory of modern philosophy.

11	**Module content**

The lectures will discuss the idea of 'mindedness' in the work Descartes and the later rationalists with specific reference to the way in which their ideas supported the notion that the mind is fundamentally a 'thinking' rather than a 'feeling' thing or system. The ideas of Freud and the psychoanalytic conception of the mind will also be discussed in this context.
The idea of the mind as a computational device will also be discussed at length with particular consideration paid to the foundations of so-called artificial intelligence – the project to build intelligent thinking machines - in the work of Alan Turing, David Marr and Marvin Minsky. The philosophical charges levelled at this account will also be raised, through a close reading of the texts of John Searle, Hubert Dreyfus and Joseph Weizenbaum. The lectures will conclude with a discussion of contemporary neurological understandings of the mind and the extent to which recent research into the workings of the brain is likely to change the way that we view ourselves and each other.

12	**Indicative reading**

Bennett, M.R. (2009) 'Neuroscience and Philosophy: Mind, Brain and Language' New York: Columbia University Press

Carter, M. (2007) 'Minds and Computers: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Artificial Intelligence' Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press

Dreyfus, H. (1992) 'What Computers *Still* Can't Do: A Critique of Artificial Reason' Cambridge Ma: MIT Press

Friedenberg, J and Silverman, G. (2012) 'Cognitive Science: An Introduction to the

Study of the Mind' Thousand Oaks Ca: Sage University Press.

Searle, J. (1990) 'Minds, Brains and Programs' Harmondsworth: Penguin

Stainton, R.J. (2006) 'Contemporary Debates in Cognitive Science' Oxford: Blackwell

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13   Learning outcomes

Learning outcomes describe what you should know and be able to do by the end of the module

Knowledge and understanding. After studying this module you should be able to:

- Evaluate the significance of the key arguments of the major philosophers from the western philosophical canon, encountered in their own writings and demonstrate some awareness of important areas of interpretative controversy concerning the major philosophers

- Assess some of the central theories in contemporary logic, metaphysics, epistemology and the philosophy of mind

- Apply doctrines from the history of philosophy in order make sense of contemporary philosophical debates

- Understand how and why mental processes and structures can be conceived in computational terms

- Describe the relation between the mind and its material and social contexts.

- Show a basic familiarity with arguments in the field of philosophy of mind, broadly understood

Skills, qualities and attributes. After studying this module you should be able to:

- Appreciate how to construct a cogent argument in relation to philosophical debates and organise a complex body of information into meaningful prose

- Show an awareness of how generalisations can be supported or weakened by detailed discussion

- Understand the basic sense and significance of philosophical terminology and

demonstrate a basic familiarity with the key assumptions underlying contemporary philosophical debates

- Engage in debate about philosophical issues without recourse to insult or susceptibility to take offence and collaborate with others in intellectual tasks

- Recognise the contemporary significance of philosophical problems and the arguments for and against their solution

- Begin to interpret texts drawn from a variety of ages and/or traditions with sensitivity to context

- Evaluate, in outline, the success of standard arguments

14	**Teaching and learning**
	Range of modes of direct contact
	This indicates the range of direct contact teaching and learning methods used on this module,
	e.g. lectures, seminars

Lectures	
Seminars with discussion groups organised around led by reading and live debates with reference to key philosophical texts.	
Total contact hours:	39

Range of other learning methods	
This indicates the range of other teaching and learning methods used on this module, e.g.	
directed reading, research	

Total non-contact hours:	161

15	**Assessment methods**			
	This indicates the type and weighting of assessment elements in the module			
Element number	Weighting	Type	Description	
1	100%	Coursework	A 3,000 word critical synopsis on the ideas of an allocated philosopher	

Diagnostic/formative assessment

This indicates if there are any assessments that do not contribute directly to the final module mark

You will be offered opportunities to submit and discuss an essay outline, which will help you develop a feasible approach to the necessary research for the essay as well to improve the structure and content of the writing.

Participation and engagement in seminar work and workshops on a group and an individual basis.

Further information on assessment

This section provides further information on the module's assessment where appropriate

See module handbook and NOW learning room for further information

	Document management		
16	Module Title:	Introduction to the Philosophy of Mind	
17	Module Code:	PHIL20407	
18	Subject (JACS) Code	V500	
19	Cost Centre	141	
20	School:	AAH	
21	Academic Team	ECM	
22	Campus	2 (Clifton)	
23	Other institutions providing teaching	*Please complete in box 23 a-d - if applicable*	
		Institution	%
23a	Other UK Higher Education or Further Education Institution- Please name Percentage not taught by NTU		
23b	Other public organisation in the UK- Percentage not taught by NTU		
23c	Other private organisation in the UK - Percentage not taught by NTU		
23d	Any other Non-UK organisation - Percentage not taught by NTU		
24	Date this version was formally approved by SASQC/DAG:		