



## Philosophy of Science | PIU22022

Year	Senior Freshman
ECTS Credits	5
Contact Hours	22 hours of lectures and 4-5 hours of tutorials
Pre-requisite	None
Semester	2
Module Leader & Lecturer	Professor Alison Fernandes
Contact Email	asfernan@tcd.ie

### Module Outline:

Science looks to be our best hope of discovering the way the world is. We use it to predict climate change, map the human genome and identify the Higgs boson. Science seems to give us an objective view on the world. How does it manage to do this? Does it succeed in its aims? How can we tell? This course will examine the workings of science through four core topics: what is science and the scientific method; how science explains; the unity of science; what scientific theories tell us about the world.

### Learning Outcomes:

On successful completion of this module students will be able to:

- Explain major issues in philosophy of science concerning what science is, how it works, and why should we believe it.
- Think critically about philosophical problems relating to scientific practice and knowledge.
- Communicate their own ideas effectively to others, both in discussion and in writing.

### Assessment:

For the module, each student must complete:

1 Essay (1000 words) (40%)

1 In-person Exam (1 hour) (60%)

#### Essay:

Essays are due **Monday 13<sup>th</sup> April 2026 by 11:59pm**. Essays are a **maximum of 1000 words** (including footnotes but not including the bibliography).

Coursework will be marked using the following classifications:



I	70–100	III	40–49
II.1	60–69	F1	30–39
II.2	50–59	F2	0–29

Further information on what level of work is expected for each grade can be found on the 'School Marking Scale', available in your student handbook.

## Recommended Reading List:

See Blackboard for reading list.

## Penalties:

Essays over the word limit will be penalised by a 5-mark deduction. This is to encourage you to write concisely, allow your work to be compared fairly and to keep TA workload manageable. Late responses will be penalised, unless an extension is granted. Up to one week late on an essay receives a 5-mark penalty, with a further 5-mark penalty for each additional week late. Failure to attend at least half your tutorial sessions also receives a 5-mark penalty on your essay.

**Extensions:** If you need an **extension**, contact your College Tutor and ask them to email me, Alison Fernandes [ASFERNAN@tcd.ie](mailto:ASFERNAN@tcd.ie).

Ask your tutor to state the following in their request: a) the assignment, b) the medical or other reasons c) how long the extension is requested for. Extensions must be sought prior to the submission date.

**Referencing:** You'll need to use a consistent and complete citation style such as APA, Chicago, Harvard, or MLA. APA is a good place to start. You must include both in-text citations for all directly quoted material, to paraphrase material or to attribute an idea, argument or claim. You must also include a reference list or bibliography of all cited sources. Further advice on referencing will be provided in the lectures and tutorials. You're welcome to use articles from the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, but please cite them correctly. There's a link 'how to cite this article' on every page.

**Academic Integrity:** Plagiarism is interpreted by the University as the act of presenting the work of others as one's own work without acknowledgement, and is considered to be academically fraudulent. The University considers plagiarism to be a major offence, and it is subject to the disciplinary procedures of the University. It is the responsibility of the author of any work to ensure that he/she does not commit plagiarism. Plagiarism can arise from actions such as: (a) copying another student's work; (b) enlisting another person or persons to complete an assignment on the student's behalf; (c) procuring, whether with payment or otherwise, the work or ideas of another; (d) quoting directly, without acknowledgement, from books, articles or other sources, either in printed,



recorded or electronic format, including websites and social media; (e) paraphrasing, without acknowledgement, the writings of other authors. A general set of guidelines for students on avoiding plagiarism is available on <http://tcd-ie.libguides.com/plagiarism>.

You must include the following statement at the start of your written work (either on a coversheet or as text):

"I have read and I understand the plagiarism provisions in the General Regulations of the University Calendar for the current year, found at <http://www.tcd.ie/calendar>. I have also completed the Online Tutorial on avoiding plagiarism 'Ready Steady Write', located at <http://tcd-ie.libguides.com/plagiarism/ready-steady-write>."

**Use of AI tools:** The use of AI tools for the completion of coursework essays or for exam preparation is, in general, not allowed. There are several problems with the use of AI tools: they are unreliable, aren't traceable to other sources and cannot generally be adequately referenced or retrieved. AI is not allowed, for example, to rewrite one's sentences or paragraphs or to generate content, including references. (You might think of AI as your Uncle Al, who studied philosophy many years ago, and is sometimes fun to talk to—but who is not an academic source, has been known to make things up and who cannot stand in for you as the author of your work.) Only very minimal uses of AI are permitted, including a) using AI in the preliminary research stages for getting ideas about a topic and the appropriate use of terms, b) using AI for suggestions on how particular uses of language can be clarified c), using AI to check whether referencing is complete. In all these permitted uses, AI text is not allowed to be copied directly from a dialogue box to your essay—you must evaluate whether what the AI suggests is something you yourself want to say and write the words afresh. Any textual references or definitions suggested by the AI must be verified by yourself, using appropriate sources.

**Attendance:** Attendance at tutorials is mandatory. If you have a valid medical or other reason for missing the tutorial, email your TA to ask to be excused. Tutorials are always more beneficial for all when you participate.

**Accessibility:** All students are entitled to a meaningful and stimulating learning experience. You are encouraged to talk with me about how the module and assessment can be structured to provide this. If you believe that you might have a disability that requires accommodation, please contact Trinity Disability Service (<https://www.tcd.ie/disability/> Room 2054, Arts Building) at +353 1 896 3111 or [askds@tcd.ie](mailto:askds@tcd.ie). Students with disabilities, medical or mental health issues are also encouraged to contact their Tutors. Trinity's Student Counselling Service can also be reached at [student-counselling@tcd.ie](mailto:student-counselling@tcd.ie), [https://www.tcd.ie/Student\\_Counselling/](https://www.tcd.ie/Student_Counselling/), +353 1896 1407 or by calling at the 3rd floor of 7–9 South Leinster Street.

### **Re-Assessment (Supplemental Assessment):**

Re-assessment on this module will require completion of work in August 2026. The work required of each student and submission deadlines will be published on the Blackboard pages for the module.



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## **Schedule:**

See Syllabus on Blackboard.