

Existentialism: Philosophy and Literature

Section A: Headline Information	
Module title	Existentialism: Philosophy and Literature
Module NFQ level (only if an NFQ level can be demonstrated)	7/8
Module number/reference	TBC
Module Co-ordinator	Noel Kavanagh/Eoghan Smith
Parent programme(s)	BA (Honours) in Arts and Humanities
Stage of parent programme	3
Semester (semester1/semester2 if applicable)	1
Module credit units (FET/HET/ECTS)	ECTS
Module credit number of units	5
List the teaching and learning modes	Lectures
Entry requirements (statement of knowledge, skill and competence)	Successful completion of Stage 2 of the programme or equivalent is required.
Pre-requisite module titles	N/A
Co-requisite module titles	N/A
Is this a capstone module? (Yes or No)	No
Specification of the qualifications (academic, pedagogical and professional/occupational) and experience required of staff (staff includes workplace personnel who are responsible for learners such as apprentices, trainees and learners in clinical placements)	Module co-ordinators and lecturers must have a minimum Level 9 qualification in Philosophy and/or a minimum Level 9 qualification in a literature-based discipline and a research interest and/or recognisable competency in teaching Existentialism.
Maximum number of learners per module	60
Duration of the module	1 Semester
Average (over the duration of the module) of the contact hours per week (see * below)	2
Module-specific physical resources and support required per centre (or instance of the module)	Lecture Hall
Analysis of required learning effort	
*Effort while in contact with staff	

Module Aims and Objectives	<p>The aim of the module is to survey canonical philosophers and texts of twentieth-century existentialism and its major precursors. The module traces Existentialist themes (such as authenticity, freedom, anxiety, death) in later twentieth-century works of philosophy and literature.</p> <p>The objectives of the module are to acquire knowledge of the range of Existentialist-inflected thought in philosophy and literature; to foster an ability to synthesise the study of this key movement in continental philosophical and literary culture in an interdisciplinary way; and to learn how to identify existentialist themes in philosophy, literature and modern culture.</p>
Minimum Module Learning Outcomes	<p>On successful completion of this module, learners should be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Demonstrate knowledge of the core philosophical texts and ideas of individual Existentialist thinkers and writers (MIPLO 1, 2, 3). 2. Utilise appropriate terminology pertaining to Existentialism and in the analysis of Existentialist texts (MIPLO 1, 4). 3. Interpret cultural texts (novels, poems, plays, films, etc.) and works of philosophy from an Existentialist perspective (MIPLO 3, 4, 8).
Information Provided to Learners about the Module	<p>College Prospectus specifies module name, stage and ECTS.</p> <p>College website and programme handbook to contain (in addition to above) short description of module content, module learning outcomes, prerequisite modules, and assessment mechanisms.</p> <p>Module handbook to contain (in addition to above) schedule of classes and topics, detailed assessment information with titles and submission dates, full bibliography and list of learning resources.</p> <p>Diploma Supplement contains module name, code, stage and ECTS.</p>
Module Content, Organisation and Structure	<p>Learners begin the module by engaging with selected existentialist writings by Kierkegaard and Nietzsche. Classes on Sartre and Camus examine both the philosophy and literary writings of those two writers as the high point of European existentialism in the mid-twentieth century. The drama of Samuel Beckett is studied in an existentialist context. An indicative outline of the course content is as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soren Kierkegaard, selected writings • Friedrich Nietzsche, selected writings • Jean-Paul Sartre, <i>Being and Nothingness</i> and <i>Nausea</i> • Albert Camus, <i>The Myth of Sisyphus</i> and <i>The Outsider</i> • Samuel Beckett, <i>Waiting for Godot</i>
Module Teaching and Learning Strategy	<p>Lectures: Lectures are the primary method for teaching module content to large groups. Learners are encouraged to contribute to lectures through dialogue with the lecturer.</p>
Work-Based Learning and Practice-Placement	

E-Learning	Moodle used for teaching resources and for learners to upload and share, PowerPoint, presentations and videos.
Specifications for Module Staffing Requirements	<p>Staff:Learner ratio is typical of the overall programme approach with a maximum of 60 learners</p> <p>Staffing requirements: a minimum of 1 lecturer with teaching and/or research competence in the relevant area.</p> <p>However, as a cross-programme module, additional staff will be required where the maximum number of learners exceed the resources available.</p>
Module Summative and Formative Assessment Strategy	<p><u>Proctored examination (summative): 70% (MIMLOs 1, 2, 3, 4, 8)</u></p> <p>Learners will answer two questions from a selection of five. The questions will typically encourage interdisciplinary answers.</p> <p><u>Continuous Assessment (summative): 30%</u></p> <p>Learners will complete an 800 word reflective piece.</p>
Sample Assessment Materials	<p><u>Sample exam questions:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Discuss the extent to which the thought of <i>either</i> Nietzsche <i>or</i> Kierkegaard on the issue of subjective knowledge influenced later existentialist philosophy and/or literature. 2. When Sartre tells us that existence precedes essence he confers absolute freedom and responsibility on the individual to carve out a life-project of their own making. Chart his thinking with regard to <i>Being and Nothingness</i> and/or <i>Nausea</i> 3. Albert Camus argues that human existence is fundamentally meaningless. Write an essay that outlines and critiques Camus’s position with reference to any works you have studied by him on this module. 4. Write an essay that argues for Samuel Beckett’s <i>Waiting for Godot</i> as an existentialist play. In your answer you may wish to concentrate on some of the following themes: boredom; repetition; anxiety; death; authenticity; the absurd; the (in)existence of God; freedom.
Reading Lists and Other Information Resources	<p><u>Essential Reading:</u></p> <p>Beckett, Samuel, <i>Waiting for Godot</i> (any reputable edition)</p> <p>Camus, Albert, <i>The Myth of Sisyphus</i>, trans. by Justin O’Brien (London: Penguin, 2005)</p> <p>— <i>The Outsider</i>, trans. by Justin O’Brien (London: Penguin, 2005)</p> <p>Dostoevsky, Fyodor, <i>Notes from Underground</i> (any reputable edition)</p> <p>Rilke, Rainer Maria, <i>The Duino Elegies</i>, trans. by Stephen Mitchell (London: Vintage, 2009)</p>

	<p>Sartre, Jean-Paul, <i>Being and Nothingness</i>, trans. by Hazel E. Barnes (London: Routledge, 2003)</p> <p>—<i>Nausea</i>, trans. by Robert Baldick (London: Penguin, 2000)</p> <p>Other Reading: Kaufmann, Walter, <i>Existentialism from Dostoevsky to Sartre</i> (New York: New York American Library, 1975)</p> <p>Macquarrie, John, <i>Existentialism</i> (London: Hutchinson, 1972)</p> <p>Olsen, Robert, <i>An Introduction to Existentialism</i> (Dover: Constable, 1962)</p>
<p>Module Physical Resource Requirements</p>	<p>Large lecture hall.</p> <p>Small room suitable for group work</p> <p>Moodle VLE</p> <p>Library resources</p>