



NEWNHAM COLLEGE
UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

The Newnham Philosophy Essay Prize 2021-22

The Newnham Philosophy Essay Prize is open to all **female students currently in Year 12** (Lower Sixth) at a **UK state school**. It is designed to give students the opportunity to think and write about philosophy and philosophical matters in the broadest sense, while developing their independent study and writing skills. Through exposure to the type of work they might be expected to do at Cambridge, we hope high flying students will be encouraged to consider applying to the University – and hopefully to Newnham, where women’s history and educational excellence are, of course, central.

This prize may be of particular interest to those either currently studying, or considering studying, Philosophy, but we welcome entries from interested students studying any combination of subjects. Entrants are invited to submit a response to the question overleaf, which should be between 1,500 and 2,000 words (including footnotes and captions). All sources must be appropriately acknowledged and cited, and a bibliography – including websites consulted – should be attached (though excluded from the word count). Up to **four** entries may be submitted per school.

Newnham will be running a programme of essay writing skills advice and guidance webinars in the new year. Dates and information can be found [here](#).

Each of the Newnham Essay Prizes have a first prize of £400, a second prize of £200 and a third prize of £100. Prize money is split 50:50 between the Essay Prize winner and the funding of resources for their school.

The [completed cover sheet](#) must also be submitted. Please ensure that a school/college representative has completed the appropriate section before submission. Entries without an appropriately completed coversheet will be invalid.

Entrants should submit their entry to the webform, found here:
https://cambridge.eu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_cHgegW9EBBIKTpY

The deadline for submission is **12pm on Friday 11 March 2022**. For any queries not answered here, please contact essayprizes@newn.cam.ac.uk.



The Philosophy Essay Prize 2021-22 Question

'Sentences such as "A good oak tree has deep roots" can be true, and true irrespective of anybody's opinion. In other words, such sentences can be *objectively* true. Now, the word "good" doesn't change its meaning just because it's being applied to members of one species rather than another. So, sentences such as "A good human being is kind" can be objectively true as well.'

Should we be convinced by this kind of argument for the objectivity of ethical judgements?

See Philippa Foot (2001), 'Transition to Human Beings', in *Natural Goodness* (Oxford University Press, 2001).

Philippa Foot (3 October 1920 – 3 October 2010) was one of the world's leading moral philosophers. She was a member of a pioneering generation of women philosophers that also included Iris Murdoch and Elizabeth Anscombe (both Newnham alumnae). She is known for her pioneering work on the objectivity of ethics and her contributions to practical ethics.