

# Robert Fraser (né Knowles)

## Curriculum Vitae

Department of Politics, Philosophy, and International Relations  
Swansea University  
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**AOS:** Philosophy of mathematics, philosophy of language, metaphysics, epistemology.

**AOC:** Logic, philosophical logic, philosophy of religion, history of philosophy.

### Education

2011–2015	<b>PhD Philosophy</b> (No corrections)	University of Manchester
2010–2011	<b>MRes Philosophy</b> (Distinction)	University of Manchester
2007–2010	<b>BA(Hons) Philosophy</b> (2:1)	University of Manchester

### Employment

2021–	<b>Lecturer</b>	Swansea University, Grade 8 0.6 FTE
2023–2024	<b>Teaching Fellow</b>	Coventry University, Grade 8 0.2 FTE
2021–2022	<b>Lecturer</b>	University of Bristol, Level 7 1.0 FTE
2021	<b>Visiting Lecturer</b>	University of Lancaster, Level 7 0.2 FTE
2020	<b>Teaching Fellow</b>	University of Leeds, Level 7 1.0 FTE
2017–2020	<b>British Academy Postdoctoral Fellow</b>	University of Leeds, Level 7 1.0 FTE
2016–2017	<b>Teaching Fellow</b>	University of Leeds, Level 7 1.0 FTE

### Publications

In Press	<b>The Individuation of Mathematical Objects</b> <i>Synthese</i> (with Bahram Assadian)	(11)
2024	<b>The Social Reality of Virtual Worlds</b> <i>Metaphysics</i> 7: 85–98	(10)
2022	<b>No Grounds for Fictionalism</b> <i>Philosophical Studies</i> 179: 3679–3687	(9)
2021	<b>Unification and Mathematical Explanation</b> <i>Philosophical Studies</i> 178: 3923–3943	(8)
2021	<b>Platonic Relations and Mathematical Explanations</b> <i>The Philosophical Quarterly</i> 71: 623–644	(7)
2021	<b>Mathematics and Explanatory Generality: Nothing but Cognitive Salience</b> <i>Erkenntnis</i> 86: 1119–1137 (with Juha Saatsi)	(6)
2021	<b>The Uncanny Accuracy of God’s Mathematical Beliefs</b> <i>Religious Studies</i> 57: 333–352	(5)
2016	<b>Semantic Assumptions in the Philosophy of Mathematics</b> <i>Boston Studies in the Philosophy of Science</i> 318: 43–65	(4)
2015	<b>Good Weasel Hunting</b> <i>Synthese</i> 192: 3397–3412 (with David Liggins)	(3)

- 2015 **What ‘The Number of Planets is Eight’ Means** (2)  
*Philosophical Studies* 172: 2757–2775
- 2015 **Heavy Duty Platonism** (1)  
*Erkenntnis* 80: 1255–1270

## Teaching

### Module Coordinator & Lecturer & Tutor

Swansea University

- 2024– HUP319 Reality and Cognition: Topics in Metaphysics and Epistemology  
 2023– HUP127 Fundamental Issues in Philosophy  
 2023– HUP105 Critical Reasoning  
 2022– HUP243 Philosophy of the Enlightenment  
 2023 PO-127 Disinformation, Ideology, and Bias: Researching and Examining Political Data  
 2023 HUP242 Freedom, Angst, and the Embodied Self: Themes in Continental Philosophy

Coventry University

- 2024 4058HUM Ethics of Climate Change  
 2023 4060HUM Philosophical Methods

University of Bristol

- 2022 PHIL20039 Philosophy of Mathematics  
 2021 PHILM0021 Epistemology and Metaphysics

Lancaster University

- 2021 PPR307 Transformations and Revolutions in Twentieth Century Philosophy

University of Leeds

- 2020 PHIL3123 Philosophy of Logic and Mathematics  
 2020 PHIL2121 Introduction to Philosophy of Language  
 2019 PHIL2422 Topics in Epistemology: Knowledge and Justification  
 2016 PHIL2521 Realism and Antirealism  
 2016 PHIL2542 Introduction to Metaphysics  
 2016 PHIL2532 Philosophy of Religion

### Supervisor

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| 2022–     | PO-3317 Dissertation                   | University of Swansea |
| 2022–     | PO-M25 Dissertation                    | University of Swansea |
| 2022      | PHILM0001 Philosophy Dissertation      | University of Bristol |
| 2022      | PHIL30108 Second Extended Essay        | University of Bristol |
| 2021      | PHIL30107 First Extended Essay         | University of Bristol |
| 2021–2022 | PHILM0041 Supervised Independent Study | University of Bristol |
| 2016–2020 | PHIL3000 Independent Research Project  | University of Leeds   |
| 2017      | PHIL5170M Philosophy Dissertation      | University of Leeds   |

### Tutor

2022	PHIL20053 Space, Time, and Matter	University of Bristol
2021	PHIL30107 Writing Workshops	University of Bristol
2018–2020	PHIL5002M Analytic B: Mathematics and Empirical Evidence	University of Leeds
2016–2019	PHIL1250 How to Think Clearly and Argue Well	University of Leeds
2017	PHIL2122 Formal Logic	University of Leeds
2016	PHIL2422 Topics in Epistemology: Knowledge and Justification	University of Leeds
2016	PHIL1140 I Think Therefore I Am: The Philosophy of Descartes	University of Leeds
2016	PHIL1005 The Mind	University of Leeds
2013–2015	PHIL20021 Philosophy of Religion	University of Manchester
2012–2015	PHIL10041 Critical Thinking	University of Manchester
2015	PHIL10021 Values We Live By	University of Manchester
2015	PHIL10401 History of Philosophy	University of Manchester
2014	PHIL10641 Philosophy and Social Science	University of Manchester
2014	PHIL10622 Discovering Reality	University of Manchester

### **Philosophy in Schools (The Royal Institute of Philosophy)**

2015	Metaphysics	Xaverian Sixth Form College
2014	Intro to Western Philosophy	Xaverian Sixth Form College
2014	Think	Xaverian Sixth Form College
2013	Philosophy of Language	Xaverian Sixth Form College
2013	Philosophy of Language	Blessed Thomas Holford Catholic College

### **Grants and Awards**

2019	BSPS Conference Grant	£500
2019	Aristotelian Society Conference Grant	£235
2017	British Academy Postdoctoral Fellowship	£319,196
2015	Manchester Doctoral College Best Outstanding Output Award	
2014	Royal Institute of Philosophy's Jacobsen Studentship	
2013	Mind Association Minor Conference Grant	
2013	Analysis Trust Conference Grant	
2011	AHRC Studentship	

### **Research Events**

#### **Organiser & Host**

2024	Philosophy Research Group Launch Event	Swansea University
2022–	Philosophy Research Group Seminar	Swansea University
Sept 2019	Mathematics and its Applications: Philosophical Issues	University of Leeds
Nov 2018	Epistemology of Mathematics	University of Leeds
Dec 2017	Applicability of Mathematics	University of Leeds
July 2013	Open Minds VIII Graduate Conference	University of Manchester

## Assistant

July 2015 BSPS Annual Conference

University of Manchester

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## Selected Presentations

- Dec 2023 The Problem of Mathematical Explanation  
Explanation and Understanding in Philosophy and Science, University of Belgrade and Serbian Academy of Sciences
- May 2022 Distinctively Mathematical Explanation: A Deflationary Proposal  
Mathematics as/in Science, University of Ghent
- Dec 2021 Distinctively Mathematical Explanation: A Deflationary Proposal  
Departmental Seminar, University of Bristol
- Dec 2021 On the Alleged Necessity of Mathematical Nominalism (with Bahram Assadian  
Foundational Studies Bristol (FSB), University of Bristol
- June 2018 Alethic Appearances  
Context, Cognition, and Communication, University of Warsaw
- April 2018 Explanatory Mathematical Abstraction in Science  
Varieties of Mathematical Abstraction, University of Vienna
- March 2017 Non-Optimal Support for Mathematical Platonism  
The Explanatory Function of Abstract Objects, University of Santiago de Compostela
- May 2016 Non-Optimal Support for Mathematical Realism  
FilMat: Truth, Existence, and Explanation, University of Chieti-Pescara
- July 2014 The Indispensability Argument Dispensed With  
88th Joint Session of the Aristotelian Society and the Mind Association, University of Cambridge
- May 2014 What 'The Number of Planets is Eight' Means  
FilMat: Objectivity, Cognition, and Proof, Vita-Salute San Raffaele University
- Jan 2014 Heavy Duty Platonism  
6th Conference of the Dutch-Flemish Association for Analytic Philosophy, University of Groningen
- June 2013 The Problem of Mathematical Communication  
Graduate Conference on Ontology, University of Warsaw
- Jan 2013 Reply to Liggins  
Ethics and Explanation, University of Nottingham

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## Academic Service

### Research Group Leader

Founder and lead for the Philosophy Research Group at Swansea University

### External Subject Specialist

Consultant in the development of the BA(Hons) in Philosophy at Coventry University

### Referee

*Analysis, Australasian Journal of Philosophy, Erkenntnis, Synthese, British Journal for the Philosophy of Science, Philosophy of Science, Canadian Journal of Philosophy, Journal of the American Philosophical Association, Religious Studies, Disputatio*

2017 **REF Grade Internal Peer-Review Committee**

School of PRHS, University of Leeds

2012–2013 **Graduate Representative**

Department of Philosophy, University of Manchester

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## Outreach and Public Engagement

- 2024 **The Problem of Mathematical Explanation**  
Kant's Cave Lecture, Philosophy for All, London
- 2020 **Double Check: Is Math Real?**  
Interview by Edie Miller: <https://www.logically.ai/articles/double-check-is-math-real>
- 2018 **Mathematics: Invented, Discovered, or Neither?**  
With Jack Woods and Simon Hewitt. Café Scientifique, Leeds
- 2013–2015 **Philosophy Club Coordinator**, (Royal Institute of Philosophy)  
Xaverian Sixth-Form College, Blessed Thomas Holford Sixth-Form College, Manchester

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## Referees

### **Dr. Matthew Wall**

Associate Professor of Politics  
Swansea University  
m.t.wall@swansea.ac.uk  
+44 1792 602987  
Head of Department

### **Professor James Ladyman**

Professor of Philosophy  
University of Bristol  
james.ladyman@bristol.ac.uk  
+44 117 331 0934  
Head of Department

### **Dr. Scott A. Shalkowski**

Senior Lecturer in Philosophy  
University of Leeds  
s.shalkowski@leeds.ac.uk  
+44 113 343 3280  
Deputy Head of School

### **Dr. Juha Saatsi**

Associate Professor of Philosophy  
University of Leeds  
j.t.saatsi@leeds.ac.uk  
+44 113 343 3383  
Research Mentor

### **Dr. Anthony Everett**

Senior Lecturer in Philosophy  
University of Bristol  
anthony.everett@bristol.ac.uk  
+44 117 954 6796  
PhD External Examiner

### **Professor Mary Leng**

Senior Lecturer in Philosophy  
University of York  
mary.leng@york.ac.uk  
+44 190 432 3256  
PhD External Examiner

### **Dr. David Liggins**

Senior Lecturer in Philosophy  
University of Manchester  
david.liggins@manchester.ac.uk  
+44 161 306 6947  
PhD Supervisor