

Philosophy and Religious Studies Department Curriculum Overview



Curriculum Overview:

Key Stage 3

Philosophy and Religious Studies students are provided with a basic understanding of all the major world religions, are encouraged to ask Philosophical questions and to create simple arguments for and against issues at Key Stage 3. Students will gain a vocabulary of key terms which will help them discuss religions more articulately and academically.

Key Stage 4

At GCSE the students' religious knowledge is built upon so they have an in depth understanding of Christianity and Buddhism. They are taught how to develop complex arguments for and against topical issues. A love of learning is fostered, and many students begin to explore academic ideas independently from the classroom.

Key Stage 5

Students move away from the study of religion but continue to develop the skills of developing arguments and understanding, memorising and explaining in detail abstract ideas. Students will also gain an appreciation of the history of Philosophy through studying philosophers from Plato to the present day.

The study of A level philosophy actively promotes critical thinking, reasoning and reading as intellectual independence: students are encouraged to develop personal views informed by careful reasoning as well as reflect critically on their own beliefs and assumptions.

Autumn 1

Autumn 2

Spring 1

Spring 2

Summer 1

Summer 2

<p>Y7</p>	<p><i>Worldviews and the World</i></p> <p>Students are encouraged to reflect on the different worldviews in and beyond their community, exploring how different lenses affect the views we hold about the world.</p> <p>Students will do this through a comparative study of creation stories and non-religious beliefs about the origin of the world.</p>	<p><i>Ancient Egyptian Religion</i></p> <p>Students will explore Ancient Egyptian beliefs, focusing on gods and goddesses, funerary practices, the afterlife, and the mummification process, uncovering the spiritual and cultural significance of these traditions. Students will also reflect on the golden thread that connects dead and living religions.</p>	<p><i>Religions in my community</i></p> <p>This module explores the diverse religious traditions present in our community focusing on faiths such as Zoroastrianism, Baha’i and Jainism. Students examine key aspects of these religions, including their sacred texts, core beliefs, practices, and the significance of festivals.</p>	<p><i>Judaism</i></p> <p>Introduction to the study of Judaism- students study the concept of monotheism and Jewish beliefs about God. Students also explore the importance of the Covenant through the prophets.</p>	<p><i>Christianity</i></p> <p>Introduction to the study of Christianity- Exploring Christianity through the life of Jesus. Students learn and evaluate the miracles of Jesus. They also learn key Christian teachings through his parables and crucifixion.</p> <p>Students will return to the study of Christianity in more depth in year 9 and year 11.</p>	<p><i>Islam</i></p> <p>Introduction to the study of Islam- Students continue their learning on prophethood. They will explore the 5 Pillars of Islam and reflect on their significance. They also explore different Islamic rites of passage and what these symbolise for Muslims.</p>
<p>Y8</p>	<p><i>The Odyssey</i></p> <p>Students read and discuss extracts</p>	<p><i>The Odyssey</i></p> <p>Students continue their</p>	<p><i>An introduction to Philosophy of Religion</i></p>	<p><i>Hinduism</i></p> <p>Introduction to the study of</p>	<p><i>Buddhism</i></p> <p>Introduction to the study of</p>	<p><i>Sikhism</i></p> <p>Introduction to the study of</p>

	<p>from Peter Worley's <i>The If Odyssey</i> to develop their cultural capital through the study of ancient Greek myths. Students are probed to discuss key moral and philosophical concepts.</p> <p>Key themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ethics of war • Beauty • Cultural relativism • Happiness 	<p>study of philosophical concepts through the <i>Odyssey</i>.</p> <p>Key themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Democracy • Free will and determinism 	<p>Students are introduced to key philosophical arguments and concepts, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Cosmological Argument • The Teleological Argument • Pascal's Wager <p>Students will return to these concepts in year 10 to deepen their understanding of these arguments and develop their expertise.</p>	<p>Hinduism- Students explore the concept of Brahman and how this is expressed through the Trimurti. Students will also analyse the concept of Atman and how it links to the cycle of reincarnation.</p>	<p>Buddhism- Exploring key teachings such as the four noble truths, eightfold path and the 5 precepts. Students will also explore stories from the Jataka Tales to learn about key concepts such as Karuna and Metta.</p> <p>Students will return to the study of Buddhism in year 10 to develop their expertise.</p>	<p>Sikhism- Students are encouraged to reflect on divine leadership through the stories of the Gurus. Students will also explore the importance of community through study of the Khalsa and Gurdwara.</p>
<p>Y9</p>	<p><i>The Big Questions</i> Students discuss, analyse and evaluate key philosophical concepts, with a view of helping them become</p>	<p><i>Critical Thinking</i> Students are taught the skills to become effective critical thinkers and problem solvers. Students are taught</p>	<p><i>Christianity: beliefs and Teachings</i></p> <p>Following AQA Religious Studies, Route A-</p>	<p><i>Christianity: Beliefs and Teachings</i></p> <p>Following AQA Religious Studies, Route A-</p>	<p><i>Religion and Life</i></p> <p>Following AQA Religious</p>	<p><i>Religion and Life</i></p> <p>Following AQA Religious Studies, Route A-</p>

	<p>critical thinking and to develop their cultural capital; synoptic links with other subjects is integral to the content of the big questions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are rights? • What makes a good state? • What is person? • Can animals be persons? • Can computers be minded? • What is the value of art? • What is morality? 	<p>to build effective thinking routines and analytical habits of mind, which are transferable skills. The course focuses on the following content:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The difference between arguments, factual claims and opinions. • Inductive and deductive arguments • Assumptions in arguments • Fallacies in reasoning • How to assess the credibility of evidence 	<p><i>Building on knowledge KS3,</i> Students study key Christian beliefs and teachings and reflect on their impact on Christians today. Students must evaluate a variety of Christian views on topics such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation • Life after death • Salvation <p>Students also build on argumentation skills from Big Questions and Critical Thinking, applying these skills to demands of the exam.</p> <p>EXAMINED MODULE</p>	<p>Students study key Christian beliefs and teachings and their impact on Christians today. Students must evaluate a variety of Christian views on topics such as:</p> <p>Creation Life after death Salvation</p> <p>EXAMINED MODULE</p>	<p>Studies, Route A- Students explore religious, philosophical, and ethical views on issues pertaining to life and death such as abortion, euthanasia, animal testing, and environmental issues, considering Christian and other perspectives.</p> <p>EXAMINED MODULE</p>	<p>Students explore religious, philosophical, and ethical views on issues pertaining to life and death such as abortion, euthanasia, animal testing, and environmental issues, considering Christian and other religious and non-religious perspectives.</p>
<p>Y10</p>	<p><i>Buddhism Beliefs and Teachings</i></p>	<p><i>Buddhism Practices</i></p>	<p><i>Existence of God and Revelation</i></p>	<p><i>Existence of God and Revelation</i></p>	<p><i>Religion, Peace and Conflict</i></p> <p><i>Following AQA Religious</i></p>	<p><i>Religion, Peace and Conflict</i></p>

<p>Following AQA Religious Studies, Route A-</p> <p>Building on knowledge from KS3, students deepen their understanding of key Buddhist beliefs and teachings and their impact on Buddhists today. Students will engage with the Tripitaka to evaluate a variety of Buddhist views on topics such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three Marks of Existence • Personhood • Human Destiny <p>EXAMINED MODULE</p>	<p>Following AQA Religious Studies, Route A -</p> <p>Students reflect on what Buddhist beliefs look like in practice. They will explore important qualities such as Metta and Karuna and the importance of Karma. Students will also evaluate the varying practices for worship, meditation, festivals and funerals.</p> <p>EXAMINED MODULE</p>	<p>Following AQA Religious Studies, Route A-</p> <p>Building on knowledge from KS3, Students evaluate religious and non-religious beliefs about visions, miracles, revelation, and arguments for and against God's existence, exploring their impact on society.</p> <p>EXAMINED MODULE</p>	<p>Following AQA Religious Studies, Route A-</p> <p>Building on knowledge from KS3, Students evaluate religious and non-religious beliefs about visions, miracles, revelation, and arguments for and against God's existence, exploring their impact on society.</p> <p>EXAMINED MODULE</p>	<p>Studies, Route A-</p> <p>Students examine a variety of religious and ethical views on issues such as war, terrorism and weapons of mass destruction.</p> <p>EXAMINED MODULE</p>	<p>Following AQA Religious Studies, Route A-</p> <p>Students examine a variety of religious and ethical views on issues such as war, terrorism and weapons of mass destruction.</p>
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<p>Y11</p>	<p>Christianity Practices</p> <p>Students will return to Christianity to explore what Christian beliefs look like in practice. Students will compare contrasting ways Christian practices are carried out. For example, they look at the sacraments and festivals are carried out.</p> <p>EXAMINED MODULE</p>	<p>Religion, Human Rights and Social Justice</p> <p>For their final module, students reflect on the relationship between religion and human rights. They will evaluate religious attitudes towards gender sexuality. They will also explore religious attitudes towards wealth, poverty and charity as well as looking at how the poor are exploited.</p> <p>EXAMINED MODULE</p>	<p>Religion, Human Rights and Social Justice</p> <p>For their final module, students reflect on the relationship between religion and human rights. They will evaluate religious attitudes towards gender sexuality. They will also explore religious attitudes towards wealth, poverty and charity as well as looking at how the poor are exploited.</p> <p>EXAMINED MODULE</p>	<p>Revision</p> <p>Upon completion of the course, students will begin a review of learning, retrieval and exam practice to prepare for summer exams.</p>	<p>GCSE EXAMS</p>	<p>GCSE EXAMS</p>
<p>Y12</p>	<p><i>Two sections of the A level AQA philosophy course are taught side by side: ethics (moral philosophy) and epistemology (theory of knowledge)</i></p>	<p>Ethics</p> <p>Deontology: key question: is morality about duty and</p>	<p>Ethics</p> <p>Virtue ethics, key question: is morality about developing</p>	<p>Ethics</p> <p>Meta ethics: realism and anti realism.</p>	<p>Applied ethics Exams</p> <p>In this section, we consider how ethical theories can</p>	<p>Philosophy project</p> <p>This is an opportunity for students to go beyond the</p>

	<p>In Ethics, students explore, analyse and evaluate key philosophical theories and arguments in order to reflect on our status as ethical beings. Students also discuss a range of ethical scenarios where there is not a clear right/wrong course of action and are encouraged to develop their own ethical stance.</p> <p>In epistemology, students consider and discuss fundamental questions about the nature and limits of knowledge.</p> <p>Ethics: Utilitarianism; is morality about maximising good consequences? <i>key thinkers: Bentham, Mill,</i></p>	<p>intentions rather than consequences? <i>Key thinkers: Kant, Foot</i></p> <p>Epistemology: Theories of perception: Key question: can we have knowledge of the world through perception? idealism. <i>Key thinkers: Berkeley, Russell.</i></p>	<p>one's moral character? <i>Key thinker Aristotle Hursthouse.</i></p> <p>Epistemology: The intuition deduction thesis. Key question: Can we achieve certain knowledge of the world through pure reason? <i>Key thinkers: Descartes, Kant, Hume.</i></p>	<p><i>Key thinkers: Bentham, Mill, Moore, Mackie, Ayer, Hume, Hare.</i></p> <p>Epistemology Definition of knowledge What is knowledge? Is it possible to have a definition of knowledge that fits with our rational intuitions?</p>	<p>help us give us guidance on the following practical ethics issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Is it moral to eat animals? - Is it ever moral to lie? - Is it ever moral to steal? - Does simulated killing have moral value? <p><i>Key thinkers: Diamond,</i></p>	<p>curriculum and explore their own interests in philosophy. Students will undergo research and create and deliver an in-depth presentation on a topic of their choice.</p> <p><i>Students are also encouraged to enter essay competitions run by higher education institutions and to read beyond</i></p>
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	<p><i>Singer, Williams and Nozick.</i></p> <p>Epistemology:</p> <p>Introduction to theories of perception.</p> <p>Key question: can we have knowledge of the world through perception?</p> <p>Realist theories: direct and indirect realism.</p> <p><i>Key thinkers: Austin, Locke, Russell, Berkeley.</i></p>	<p>Innatism and empiricism.</p> <p><i>Key thinkers: Plato, Locke and Hume</i></p>		<p><i>Key thinkers: Plato, Gettier, Goldman</i></p>	<p>Epistemology Scepticism.</p> <p>Can we know other people have minds? Does the fact that no claim is beyond doubt mean that knowledge is impossible?</p>	<p><i>the demands of the specification.</i></p>
<p>Y 13</p>	<p>Metaphysics of God</p> <p>In this section, students investigate the concept of God and whether his existence can be proved through experience or reason. they consider theological and philosophical arguments and do</p>	<p>Arguments relating to the existence of God</p> <p>The design argument The cosmological argument The ontological argument.</p> <p><i>Key thinkers: Paley, Kant, Hume,</i></p>	<p>Religious Language</p> <p>Do religious claim describe the nature of reality? Or do they rather say something about how we view the world?</p>	<p>Revision</p> <p>Revision focuses on going over key arguments, making synoptic links between areas of the course and scaffolding and</p>		

	<p>not focus on specific religious beliefs</p> <p>Attributes of God</p> <p>What is the entailed by the concept of God? Is the concept of God coherent?</p> <p>Metaphysics of mind In this section we consider the question of what the mind is: is it the brain? Can the mind and our subjective experience be reduced to physical processes?</p> <p>Substance dualism: the mind is an immaterial substance distinct from the body. Behaviourism: propositions about the mind are propositions about the behaviour of the body. Key thinkers: Descartes, Ryle, Hempel</p>	<p><i>Aquinas, Anselm, Gaunilo</i></p> <p>Mind</p> <p>Identity theory: the mind is identical to the brain Eliminative materialism: there is no mind, claims about the mind are "folk psychology". Key thinkers: Churchland, Smart</p>	<p>Can religious claims be knowledge claims?</p> <p><i>Key thinkers: Ayer, Mitchell, Hick, Hare</i></p> <p>Mind</p> <p>Functionalism: the mind is reducible to its functional roles which can be realised in non human entities. Property dualism: the mind and mental states originate in the brain but are not reducible to it.</p> <p><i>Key thinkers Chalmers, Jackson, Block</i></p>	<p>modelling essay writing.</p> <p><i>Staff use their experience as examiners to support students' learning and examination skills.</i></p>		
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