



<b>Head of Department :</b>	Mr T Wade	<b>Exam Board :</b>	OCR	<b>Level:</b>	A
-----------------------------	-----------	---------------------	-----	---------------	---

### **Course Outline: What is Religious Studies: Philosophy and Ethics?**

Religious Studies: Philosophy and Ethics is a broad subject that covers a wide range of Philosophical, theological, and ethical ideas and beliefs. Philosophically there are a variety of topics including an exploration of early Greek 'founding fathers' Philosophers such as Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle. The nature of the mind, body and soul is explored as well as if it is possible to prove or disprove the existence of God. The problem of evil is debated and its implications for those who claim to believe in a God. In Ethics we study 'normative' ethics, different theories that have been developed in order for us to understand what the 'right' way is to act in different situations. Along with this we will apply these theories to contemporary issues such as euthanasia and business ethics. Later we look at the idea of 'conscience' and if we have one, and sexual ethics and the influence on ethical thought of developments in religious belief. In the theology part of the course we will be studying Christianity, looking at key figures in its history such as Dietrich Bonhoeffer, the different Christian beliefs on death and the afterlife, Christian moral principles and how they've been formed and how Christians claim to have knowledge of God's existence.

### **Do I need to have studied Philosophy and Ethics or RS at GCSE?**

It will help, but so long as you meet the entry requirements all are welcome. If you did not study RS at GCSE level we would expect that you have good qualifications in other essay based subjects. We particularly encourage students that have enjoyed an RS at GCSE to consider the subject.

### **Why should I study Religious studies: Philosophy and Ethics?**

RS: Philosophy and Ethics is an exciting subject that links in with questions and topics that are a part of our everyday existence. Euthanasia, why we suffer, genetic engineering, sexual ethics, or whether or not God exists, are issues we can't hide from. On a practical level, Philosophy and Ethics is a traditional subject, respected by old and new universities alike. The Russell Group of top universities has made it clear that Religious Studies A level provides 'suitable preparation for University generally', with transferable skills such as essay writing, analysis, argument and independent research that are useful for a number of jobs/qualifications.

### **What kind of jobs/qualifications does Religious Studies: Philosophy and Ethics lend itself to?**

RS and Philosophy and Ethics will specifically lend itself well to any of the arts at University (i.e. Philosophy, RS, History, Geography, Theology, Classics etc.) but it is also useful for a number of other subjects such as Sociology, Psychology and together with Politics and economics. It also fits well with the sciences and medicine due to the consideration of medical ethics or the contrasting perceptions that exist of the very fabric of our existence. In fact, Philosophy and Ethics fits with virtually everything. This is because you can essentially have the "Philosophy of" anything – such as the Philosophy of Art, Philosophy of Sport, Media Ethics, Business Ethics – the list of overlapping areas is endless!

### **What other subjects does Religious studies: Philosophy and Ethics "fit" with at A-Level?**

Typically Philosophy and Ethics would go well with subjects such as Humanities, English, Sociology, Business Studies and Psychology, however, the subject has content and skills that are transferrable across the entire school. The sciences are often also studied alongside it due to the links between areas such as medical ethics or using physics to compose arguments about God's existence, miracles etc. Currently we have students studying the course who are taking part in a wide curriculum of varied subjects and skills.

### **Method of Assessment:**

A2: There are three two hour papers at the end of Year 13. There is no coursework.