

Exam Board: OCR
Qualification: H573
Assessment Information: 3 exams each
120 minutes
[Link to official specification](#)

Department Information:
Philosophy and Religion at A Level will encourage you to think more deeply about some of the most important questions in the world. We follow OCR syllabus, exploring philosophy, ethics and the development of Christian thought. A-Level Religious Studies allows you to develop the skills of analytical, critical and logical thinking.

ACHIEVE in the curriculum:
The OCR specification allows students to develop their ambition as they learn the skills to complete 40 mark essay questions. Students will build up endurance as they tackle some tricky content such as Meta-Ethics and the Ontological argument. And versatility as students are gaining a breadth of knowledge from Philosophy, Ethics and Developments in Christian Thought.

Curriculum Aims & Intent:
This qualification is designed to develop a greater understanding and appreciation of religious beliefs and teachings, as well as the disciplines of ethics and philosophy of religion. Students will develop their skills of critical analysis in order to construct balanced, informed arguments and responses to religious, philosophical and ethical ideas. The course will encourage students to develop their interest in a rigorous study of religion and belief and relate it to the wider world; adopt an enquiring, critical and reflective approach to the study of religion; and reflect on and develop their own values, opinions and attitudes in the light of their study. Throughout the year students will have the opportunity to build upon on the depth of the knowledge they studied at GCSE, as well as exploring some new and more complex concepts.

Resources:
Oxford A Level Religious Studies for OCR: L Ahluwalia and R Bowie OCR. ISBN: 978-0-19-837533-3
Philosophy of Religion for AS and A2: M Taylor. ISBN 9781138127081
The Philosophy of Religion: P Cole. ISBN-10: 0340724919
OCR Philosophy and Ethics AS: Taylor, Eyre, Knight. ISBN: 9780435303624
OCR Religious Ethics for AS and A2: J Mayled Ethical Theory: M Thompson. ISBN-10: 0415468256
<http://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/as-a-level-gce-religious-studies-h173-h573-from-2016/>
<https://peped.org/>
<https://divinityphilosophy.net/>
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/>
<https://thepanpsycast.com/>
<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/plato/>
<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/ancient-soul/>
www.teachphilosophy101.org
www.reddit.com/r/philosophy
www.philosophybites.com

How we keep parents informed:
Year 13 - Progress reports are published 4 times per year, in October, November and February, with a face-to-face parents' evening in December.

How parents can help their child:
Students should be completing their own independent reading and learning to accommodate what is being taught/set by their teachers – therefore ensuring your child has access to some of the above resources and are frequently using them.

Ensuring that students are rewriting and improving their essays based on feedback.

Encouraging your child to complete extra essays in their own time alongside what is set in class, good practice is also timing these in 40 minutes without notes, especially as we progress throughout the year. Students should also be encouraged to attend the revision clinics offered to them regularly throughout the year, to support their own revision.

What we study and when:					
Term	Unit, Topic Or Summary Of Work Covered	Knowledge, Understanding & Skills Developed	ACHIEVE / Personal Development Focus	How The Work Is Assessed	Careers Links
1	DCT: Religious Pluralism and Theology/Society	<p>The unit of Religious pluralism and theology explores the teaching of contemporary Christian theology of religion on exclusivism, inclusivism and pluralism. Students then explore the evaluation of whether or not if Christ is the 'truth' there can be any other means of salvation; whether or not a loving God would ultimately deny any human being salvation; whether or not all good people will be saved; and whether or not theological pluralism undermines central Christian beliefs .</p> <p>The topic of Pluralism and society then explores the development of contemporary multi-faith Societies, responses of Christian communities to inter-faith dialogue and the scriptural reasoning movement. Students will then explore the evaluative points of whether or not inter-faith dialogue has contributed practically towards social Cohesion, whether or not Christian communities should seek to convert people from other Faiths, whether or not scriptural reasoning relativises religious beliefs, whether or not Christians should have a mission to those of no faith.</p>	<p>Ambition as students cover some complex and large topics from the course.</p> <p>Versatility as students explore differing approaches to the ideas of conscience, for example.</p>	Timed 40 mark essay without revision notes.	Understand how a multi-faith society may impact different careers and practice in the work place.
	Philosophy: Arguments based on reason	<p>This unit covers the Ontological argument through the scholars of Anselm, Gaunilo's criticisms and Kant's criticisms. Students then explore evaluation points of whether a posteriori or a priori is the more persuasive style of argument; whether or not existence can be treated as a predicate; whether or not the</p>		Timed 40 mark essay without revision notes.	

		ontological argument justifies belief; whether or not there are logical fallacies in this argument that cannot be overcome.			
	Ethics: Conscience	<p>This unit explores the differing approaches to conscience of Aquinas' theological approach and Freud's psychological approach.</p> <p>Students will explore the comparison on the aspects of the concept of guilt, on the presence or absence of God within the workings of the conscience and super-ego and on the process of moral decision-making.</p> <p>Students will also explore the evaluation of whether conscience is linked to, or separate from, reason and the unconscious mind; and whether conscience exists at all or is instead an umbrella term covering various factors involved in moral decision-making, such as culture, environment, genetic predisposition and education.</p>		Timed 40 mark essay without revision notes.	
2	DCT: Finish Religious Pluralism	See the content above from term 1.	<p>Collaboration as students explore various debates, such as throughout gender. Ambition and endurance as students look at complex theories such as meta-ethics.</p>	Timed 40 mark essay without revision notes.	<p>Understanding the role of gender in society and how that applies to different careers.</p>
	DCT: Gender and Society & Gender and Theology	<p>Gender and society explores the effects of changing views of gender and gender roles on Christian thought and practice, including: Christian teaching on the roles of men and women in the family and society; and Christian responses to contemporary secular views about the roles of men and women in the family and society.</p> <p>Students then explore the evaluation of points through whether or not official Christian teaching should resist current secular views of Gender; whether or not secular views of gender equality have undermined Christian gender Roles; whether or not motherhood is liberating or restricting; and whether or not the idea of family is entirely culturally determined.</p> <p>Gender and theology then studies the reinterpretation of God by feminist theologians, including the teaching of Rosemary Radford Ruether and Mary Daly on gender and its implications for the Christian idea of God.</p>		Timed 40 mark essay without revision notes.	

		Students will then explore the evaluation through the comparison of Ruether's and Daly's feminist theologies: sexism and patriarchy in Christianity, as it has developed in the mainstream Churches and whether Christianity can be changed or should be abandoned. As well as whether or not Christianity is essentially sexist; whether or not a male saviour can save women; whether or not only women can develop a genuine spirituality; whether or not the Christian God can be presented in female terms.		
	Ethics: Meta-Ethics	This unit explores three different branches of theory: naturalism, intuitionism and emotivism. Students will then evaluate whether or not what is meant by the word 'good' is the defining question in the study of ethics. Whether or not ethical terms such as good, bad, right and wrong: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o have an objective factual basis that makes them true or false in describing something o reflect only what is in the mind of the person using such terms o can be said to be meaningful or meaningless And finally whether or not, from a common sense approach, people just know within themselves what is good, bad, right and wrong.		Timed 40 mark essay without revision notes.
3	Philosophy: Religious Language	This topic explores different approaches to religious language: the apophatic way – the via negative; the cataphatic way – the via positive; and symbolic. Students will then evaluate through a comparison of the usefulness of the above approaches to religious language; whether or not the apophatic way enables effective understanding of theological Discussion; whether or not Aquinas' analogical approaches support effective expression of language about God; and whether or not religious discourse is comprehensible if religious language is understood as symbolic.	Ambition and endurance as students continue to learn year 2 content whilst recalling year 1 content for the PPEs in this half term.	Timed 40 mark essay without revision notes.
	Philosophy: Twentieth Century Perspectives	This topic will look at logical positivism, Wittgenstein's views on language games and forms of life, discussion about the factual quality of religious language in the falsification symposium.		Timed 40 mark essay without revision notes.

		Students will then evaluate through whether or not any version of the verification principle successfully renders religious language as meaningless; whether or not any participant in the falsification symposium presented a convincing approach to the understanding of religious language; and a comparison of the ideas of Aquinas and Wittgenstein.		
	Ethics: Sexual Ethics	This unit looks at consideration of the following areas of sexual ethics: premarital and extramarital sex, and homosexuality. It explores the influence of developments in religious beliefs and practices on debates about the morality, legality and tolerability of these areas of sexual ethics. And also expects an application of the following theories to these areas of sexual ethics: natural law, situation ethics, Kantian ethics and utilitarianism. Students will then explore evaluation points of whether or not religious beliefs and practices concerning sex and relationships have a continuing role in the area of sexual ethics; whether choices in the area of sexual behaviour should be entirely private and personal, or whether they should be subject to societal norms and legislation; and whether normative theories are useful in what they might say about sexual ethics.		PPEs will also take place this half term in which students will complete two exam papers which will both consist of three 40 mark essays.
4	DCT: The Challenge of Secularism	This unit looks at the rise of secularism and secularisation and the views that God is an illusion and the result of wish fulfilment and that Christianity should play no part in public life. Students will then explore the evaluation of whether or not spiritual values are just human values; whether or not there is evidence that Christianity is a major cause of personal and social problems; whether secularism and secularisation are opportunities for Christianity to develop new ways of thinking and acting; and whether Christianity is, or should be, a significant contributor to society's culture and values.	Versatility as students explore beliefs from society that may differ from their own. Ambition and endurance as students look at some complex topics such as Marx.	Timed 40 mark essay without revision notes.
	DCT: Liberation Theology and Marx	This topic explores the relationship of liberation theology and Marx, including Marx's teaching on alienation and exploitation, liberation theology's use of Marx to analyse social sin and liberation theology's teaching on the 'preferential option for the poor'.		Timed 40 mark essay without revision notes.

		Students will then explore evaluation points of whether or not Christian theology should engage with atheist secular ideologies; whether or not Christianity tackles social issues more effectively than Marxism; whether or not liberation theology has engaged with Marxism fully enough; whether or not it is right for Christians to prioritise one group over another.		
	Ethics: Finish Sexual Ethics	See content above from term 3.		Timed 40 mark essay without revision notes.
5	Philosophy: Nature or attributes of God	<p>This topic explores developments in the understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o omnipotence o omniscience o (omni)benevolence o eternity o free will <p>Students will then evaluate through whether or not it is possible, or necessary, to resolve the apparent conflicts between divine attributes; whether Boethius, Anselm or Swinburne provides the most useful understanding of the relationship between divinity and time; whether or not any of these thinkers are successful in resolving the problems of divine knowledge, benevolence, justice, eternity and human free will; whether the attributes should be understood as subject to the limits of logical possibility or of divine self-limitation.</p>	Ambition and endurance as students explore the tricky philosophy concepts of the nature of God and prepare for the final exams.	Timed exam practice in lesson. Students should also be completing extra essays in their own time as revision to submit for marking.
	Revision	Students will cover revision in lessons of key content, exam skills and exam practice.		
6	Exams			