

# AS/A2 RELIGIOUS STUDIES: specialising in Philosophy and Ethics

## Entry requirements:

5 GCSE passes at grade C or above. You do not need to have studied the subject at GCSE level but an open and enquiring mind is essential.

## Examination board:

AQA

## Teachers:

H Bower, P Wilson, J Irwin

## Timetable organisation

Teaching time is 5 hours and will be divided between two teachers.

## Main Syllabus areas

This is essentially a Philosophy and Ethics course leading to a qualification in Religious Studies. The two year A Level Course is made up of four modules. An AS qualification can be gained at the end of Y12 on completion of the first two modules. The modules chosen build on knowledge gained at GCSE Level, both Full and Short Courses, but is not dependent on previous experience.

**AS:** In Ethics candidates will study Utilitarianism and Situation Ethics and will apply these ethical theories to an ethical issue of their own choice. They will consider the strengths and weaknesses of these theories and assess their validity as ethical systems for modern society. They will also consider religious perspectives on the nature and value of human life and apply this and the ethical theories to the issues of Abortion and Euthanasia.

**AS:** In Philosophy candidates will consider the relationship between Religion and Science by exploring the Origins of the Universe from both a religious and scientific perspective; Miracles as an apparent violation of or exception to Natural Laws and Evidence of Design in the Natural World. They will also consider Quantum Mechanics and its impact on a religious world view.

**A2:** Pupils will extend their knowledge of Philosophy or Ethics by either a study of Free Will and Determinism; Virtue Ethics; Sexual Ethics; and the ethical

## Main Syllabus area (cont..)

challenges of advances in modern scientific technology; **or** an examination of the Ontological Argument; Religious Language; and the problem of Suffering and Evil. All candidates will prepare for an extended essay question on the issue of Religious Authority.

## Method of assessment

Assessment is entirely by written Examination. There is one paper per unit; 1 hr 15 mins for each AS Unit and 1 hr 30 mins for each A2 Unit.

## Qualities required

An open and enquiring mind and a willingness to examine issues in a rigorous and logical fashion.

## Links with other subjects

A Level Religious Studies is an academic discipline which aims to promote an enquiring, critical and sympathetic approach to the study of religious, philosophical and ethical issues. It combines well with both arts and science A Levels and is highly regarded by universities and College Admissions Tutors.

## Career prospects

A Level Religious Studies and in particular the Philosophy and Ethics options places emphasis on problem solving and a rigorous examination of evidence together with the development of sustained and well supported arguments. While it is a perfect choice for students hoping to pursue degrees in Philosophy, Theology or Religious Studies, it is also particularly useful for students considering careers in medicine, social work, personnel management, education, public relations, the police force, journalism and the legal professions.

## Extension and enrichment opportunities

Trips to conferences organised by examinations boards and Higher Education Providers are offered to students as and when they are available.