A Level Philosophy

Exam board and specification: AQA (7172)

What you need to study this course: 6 in English, 6 in RE or History (other humanities may be considered)

Why you should consider this course

Philosophy is highly regarded by higher education institutions due to its rigorous academic demands. You will gain a thorough understanding of the key concepts and methods of philosophy and have the opportunity to engage with subjects that challenge your assumptions and sharpen your intellect. You will develop important skills you need to progress to higher education such as engaging with complex texts, analysing and evaluating others' arguments, constructing and defending your own arguments, along with developing clarity and precision in both your thinking and writing.

What you will study

Unit 1 Epistemology: Definitions, sources, and limits of knowledge

Unit 2 Moral philosophy: Ethical theories, applied ethics, and meta-ethics

Unit 3 Metaphysics of God: Religious language and the nature & existence of God

Unit 4 Metaphysics of mind: Theories of reality & perception

How you will be assessed:

Written Examinations:

Paper 1: Epistemology and moral philosophy – 3 hours, 100 marks, 50% of A-Level

Paper 2: Metaphysics of God and metaphysics of mind – 3 hours, 100 marks, 50% of A-Level

Each paper contains 5 questions on each unit, so 10 questions per paper.

All exams will assess you on:

AO1: Your ability to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the core concepts and methods of philosophy, including through the use of philosophical analysis

AO2: Your ability to analyse and evaluate philosophical arguments to form reasoned judgements

Where can it take you?

The top 5-degree courses taken by students who have the qualification are Philosophy, Philosophy, Politics and Economics (PPE), Law, Theology/Religious Studies, and Sociology. It also pairs well with History, Politics, and Psychology, and as a gateway to MA/PhD study.

Those who have studied Philosophy have gone on to careers in lots of different interesting areas, such as:

- Law: solicitors, barristers
- Business & management: HR, marketing, consultancy
- Public service & politics: civil service, local government, NGO work
- Media & publishing: journalists, writers, editors
- Education: teachers & lecturers