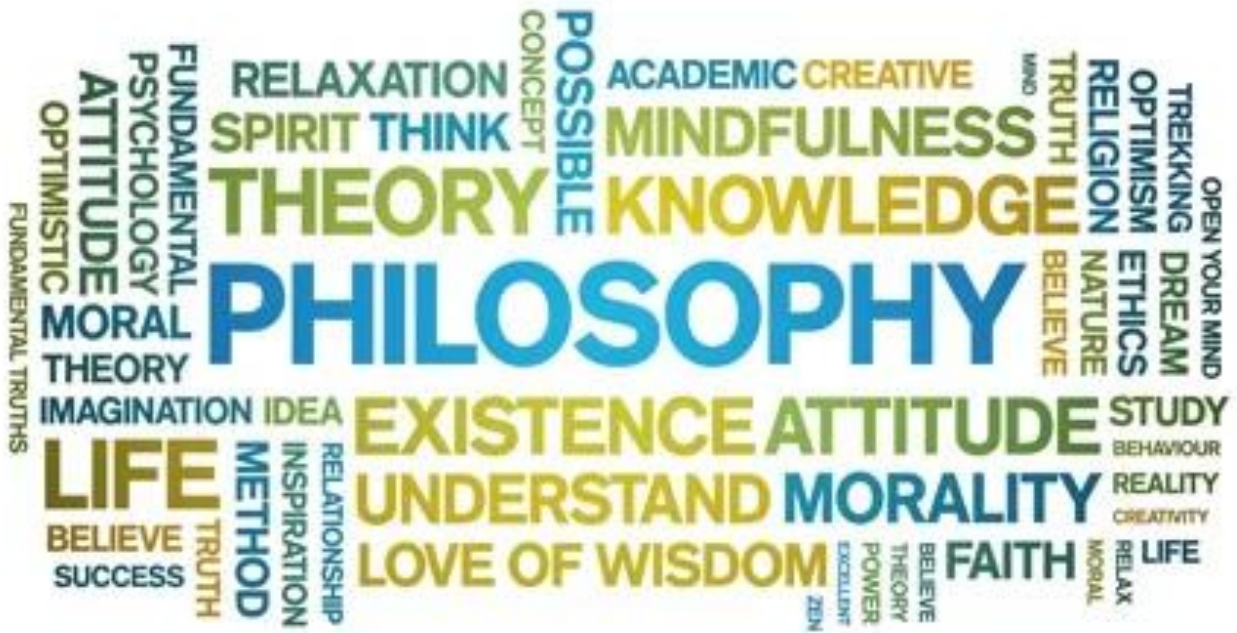




A Level Religious Studies



Introducing A Level Religious Studies

Why chose it?



1. Develop Critical Thinking Skills

- Religious Studies is about analysing arguments, evaluating evidence, and forming reasoned conclusions.

2. Explore Big Questions

- We explore, debate and critically examine, life's big fundamental questions. Such as: What is the meaning of life? Does God exist? How should we live ethically?

3. Understand Culture and Society

- Religion shapes history, politics, and culture. Studying it helps you understand global issues, diversity, and moral debates which can support your preparation in the wider global world and future careers. It is a chance to explore the past and debate the future.

4. Transferable Skills

- You'll gain a range of skills in: essay writing, logical reasoning, debate and discussion

Specification Content:

You will study three different papers, with each paper assessed at the end of Year 13 and exploring different aspect of philosophy, ethics and developments in Religion. The three exams consist of:



- Paper 1 – Philosophy of Religion – Mr. Saunders
- Paper 2 – Religion and Ethics – Miss. Thrower and Mr. Saunders
- Paper 3 (4) Study of Religion: Christianity – Miss. Thrower

You will study a range of topic across the three papers. You will be taught the skills to link topics synoptically across the three papers to show your logical and critical thinking of key themes. A breakdown of each topic, within each paper, can be seen below.

Paper 1 - Philosophy of Religion (TS)	
Topic Overview (Spec)	Date Taught/Notes
1. Philosophical Issues and Questions (Year 12)	
1.1 Teleological Argument	
1.2 Cosmological Argument	
1.3 Ontological Argument	
2. Religious Experience (Year 12)	
2.1 Types of RE	
2.2 Criticisms of RE	
3. The Problem of Evil and Suffering (Year 12)	
3.1 Nature	
3.2 Arguments	
4. Religious Language (Year 13)	
4.1 Analogy and Symbol	
4.2 Verification and Falsification	
4.3 Language Games	
5. Work of Scholars (Year 13)	
5.1 Dawkins and Westphal	
5.2 Russell and Caplesstone	
6. Influences and Developments in Religious Belief (Life After Death = LAD) (Year 13)	
6.1 LAD across traditions	
6.2 Discussions about LAD	
6.3 Religion and Science and their significance	

Paper 2 - Religion and Ethics (DT & TS)	
Topic Overview (Spec)	Date Taught/Notes
1. Significant Concepts in Issues of Debates in Religion and Ethics (Year 12)	
1.1 Environmental Issues	
1.2 Equality	
2. A Study of Three Ethical Theories (Year 12)	
2.1 Utilitarianism	
2.2 Situation Ethics	
2.3 Natural Moral Law	
3. Application of Ethical Theories (Year 12)	
3.1 War and Peace	
3.2 Sexual Ethics	
4. Ethical Language (Year 13)	
4.1 Meta-Ethics	
4.2 The Relationship Between Religion and Morality	
5. Deontology, Virtue Ethics and the Works of Scholars (Year 13)	
5.1 Comparison of Kant and Aristotle	
6. Medical Ethics: Beginning and End of Life Issues (Year 13)	
6.1 Issues in Medical Ethics, Focus on Beginning and End of Life Debates	

Paper 3 - Christianity (DT)	
Topic Overview (Spec)	Date Taught/Notes
1. Beliefs, Values and Teachings (Year 12)	
1.1 Nature of God as a person and creator	
1.2 The Trinity	
1.3 The Nature of the Church	
1.4 Key Moral Principles	
2. Wisdom (Year 12)	
2.1 The Bible	
2.2 The Nature and Role of Jesus	
3. Practise and Identity (Year 12)	
3.1 The Diversity is Practise in the Eucharist	
3.2 The Diversity of Practice in Creative Expressions of Religious Identity	
4. Social and Historical Developments (Year 13)	
4.1 Science	
4.2 Secularisation	
4.3 New Movements in Theology	
5. Works of Scholars (Year 13)	
5.1 Atonement Theory	
5.2 A Comparison of Key Ideas in the Work of Karl Barh and John Hick	
6. Religion and Society (Year 13)	
6.1 Pluralism & Diversity	
6.2 Equality and Discrimination	

Teaching & Learning in Religious



A Level Religious Studies explores philosophy, ethics, and theology, focusing on big questions about existence, morality, and the role of religion in society. It is taught through discussion-based lessons, analysis of texts, and independent research, with a strong emphasis on critical thinking and essay writing. Assessment is mainly through essays that require reasoned arguments and evaluation of different viewpoints, helping students develop analytical and communication skills useful for higher education and beyond.

So, what does learning in A Level Religious Studies look like?

1. Seminar-Style Lessons

- Classes often involve debate and discussion rather than just being taught the content.
- You'll explore philosophical and ethical questions, encouraging critical thinking and reasoned argument.

2. Textual and Conceptual Study

- You'll study primary sources (e.g., religious texts, theologians' writings) and academic commentary.
- You'll study an anthology for specific topics.

3. Essay Writing

- Assessment is mainly through extended essays, which are regularly practiced and developed based on feedback.
- You'll learn to structure arguments, evaluate different viewpoints, and use evidence effectively to appraise your judgements.

4. Independent Research

- You'll be encouraged to read beyond the specification content and engage in wider reading.
- This helps develop analytical depth and prepares you for university-level study.

Religious Studies Assessment

Students will be assessed by...

Each exam paper is two hours in duration and is 33.3% of the A Level exam. Each paper contains five questions, split into three sections and is out of 80 marks.		
Section A – Two questions. Q1 is to 'explore' and worth 8 marks. Q2 is to 'assess' and worth 12 marks.	Section B – Two parts; A/B, referring to the anthology. 3A) is to 'clarify' and worth 10 marks. 3B) is to 'analyse' and worth 20 marks.	Section C – One question and requires you to synoptically link to the other three papers. Q4 is to 'evaluate' worth 30 marks.

Subject Combinations

A Level Religious Studies can be studied alongside subjects such as History, English Literature, Philosophy, Psychology, Sociology, Politics, Law, and Classics, as these subjects complement its focus on critical thinking, ethical reasoning, and understanding cultural and historical contexts.

Progression Routes

Your Future Studies:



A Level Religious Studies provides an excellent foundation for a wide range of degree courses. Its emphasis on critical thinking, ethical reasoning, and cultural understanding makes it ideal for subjects such as Philosophy, Theology, and Religious Studies, where students can deepen their exploration of belief systems and moral frameworks. It also complements degrees in Law, Politics, and International Relations, as these fields require strong analytical skills and an understanding of diverse perspectives. Additionally, RS supports progression into Psychology, Sociology, and History, offering valuable insights into human behaviour, society, and historical contexts.

Career Pathways:

Studying Religious Studies at A Level opens doors to careers that value analytical ability, ethical judgment, and cultural awareness. Graduates often pursue roles in teaching and education, where they can share knowledge and foster critical thinking in others. The subject's focus on argumentation and moral reasoning is highly relevant for careers in law and public policy, while its exploration of global issues and belief systems benefits journalism, media, and international relations. RS also equips students for roles in social work, community engagement, and the charity sector, where understanding diverse worldviews is essential for making a positive impact.



Entry and skill requirements

Students wanting to study A Level are required to have a Grade 5 in Religious Studies if previously studied for GCSE. In addition to a Grade 5 in English Literature or Language.

What do our students think?



“Religious Studies really makes you think about life’s big questions and challenges you to see things from different perspectives. It feels relevant to real life, not just exams.”

“I love how RS combines philosophy, ethics, and theology it’s never boring and always thought-provoking as it gets me thinking about things that I have never thought of in that way before.”

“RS has improved my essay writing and critical thinking skills more than anything else.”

“RS helps me understand the world better, from cultural diversity to moral debates. Studying RS has opened so many career options I hadn’t considered before.”

Contact us

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