

The Course

The new AQA A Level course is divided into two components:

Component 1: Christianity and Philosophy

Component 2: Christianity and Ethics

Students will explore philosophical issues such as the nature and existence of God, the problem of evil, life after death, the role of religion in society and the challenges to religion from science and from secularism. We will also explore a range of ethical theories, and apply them to crucial ethical issues such as medical ethics, sexual ethics, abortion, euthanasia, capital punishment and animal rights.

Students will also consider the ideas and impact of key thinkers in the history of philosophy and ethics such as Aristotle, Thomas Aquinas, William James, David Hume, Jeremy Bentham, Immanuel Kant and Richard Dawkins.

The course allows students to explore Christianity in depth, looking at the diversity of views within Christian belief and focusing particularly on areas such as authority, morality and the nature of faith. Can the Bible be trusted? Does God command what is good or is goodness what is commanded by God? Is Christianity irredeemably sexist?

Does Christianity still have a role to play in today's increasingly secular world? Throughout the course, the focus is on Christian perspectives, but students are encouraged to think critically about all the issues from all possible points of view and to think about how religion, philosophy and ethics interact with each other and with wider society.

Why choose Religious Studies?

Religious Studies (Philosophy and Ethics) is of particular relevance to aspiring students of Philosophy, Theology, Sociology, PPE, Law, International Relations or Anthropology and it can also lead to a wide range of other degree courses and career paths. Universities and employers require people who are empathetic, think logically, are able to analyse and critique arguments and who can express their views with clarity. You will develop all these skills in A Level Religious Studies. The Russell Group universities, as well as Oxford and Cambridge, consider Religious Studies to be a suitable subject for university preparation.

What do I need to study Religious Studies?

A minimum Grade 6 in GCSE Religious Studies or another analytical essay based subject such as English Literature or History is required and a Grade 7 is strongly recommended.

The course is suitable for students of all faiths and none. All that is required is an open, enquiring mind and a willingness to engage fully with the issues. It is not necessary to have studied Religious Studies at GCSE in order to study the A Level course.

A Level subject choice video can be found here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w59LsYX3xg>

