

World class thinking. World class achieving.

St Mary's College

RELIGIOUS STUDIES A Level AQA 7062
Pre-course reading and guidance





A LEVEL RELIGIOUS STUDIES

WHY SHOULD I CHOOSE RELIGIOUS STUDIES?

- › Religious Education is a great course for those who are intrigued about how to understand and interpret the world around us. This happens through the study of Philosophy, which leads you to explore the likes of why the universe exists, why certain unexplained things occur such as miracles, and what happens in life after death. The study of Ethics allows you to question and consider the origins of right and wrong, what determines whether something is morally acceptable and why there is such variability in these views. Year 13 focuses on the study of Christianity, looking at topics which helps you build a clear knowledge of the foundations of Christianity, to then apply them to a range of topics such as science, gender & sexuality and secularisation.

WHAT IS THE COURSE STRUCTURE LIKE?

- › The course is a **two year** course. It consists of **two exams** which are worth 50% each. Paper 1 examines Philosophy and Ethics, with Paper 2 examining Christianity.

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A LEVEL RELIGIOUS STUDIES (Year 12)

Paper 1: Philosophy and Ethics

You will study the following **Philosophical** topics:

- Existence of God (which includes the design, cosmological and ontological arguments)
- Religious Experience
- Evil and Suffering
- Miracles
- Religious Language
- Self, death and afterlife

SET TEXTS SUITABLE FOR PRE-READING

- **Richard Swinburne 'Is there a god?'**
- **Richard Dawkins 'The God Delusion' (very controversial)**
- **Brian Davies 'Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion'**



A LEVEL RELIGIOUS STUDIES (Year 12)

Paper 1: Philosophy and Ethics

You will study the following **Ethics** topics:

- Normative Ethics (including Natural Law, Situation Ethics and Virtue Ethics)
- Application of Normative Ethics (the three theories stated above) to issues concerning human life and death (including abortion, assisted suicide & voluntary euthanasia, capital punishment and scientific procedures such as embryo research & designer babies)
- Application of Normative Ethics (the three theories stated above) to issues concerning non-human life and death (including blood sports, intensive farming, animals being used for transplant surgery and animals being used for cloning).
- Metaethics
- Conscience
- Kant & Bentham

SET TEXTS SUITABLE FOR PRE-READING

- **Peter Vardy & Paul Grosch 'The Puzzle of Ethics'**
- **Peter Vardy & Charlotte Vardy 'Ethics Matters'**



Assessment Objectives

In the A Level course you will be assessed on two assessment objectives.

AO1) 'Examine' – presenting key findings about a specified topic.

AO2) 'Evaluate' – providing arguments on both sides in accordance with a statement to reach a justified conclusion.

The question style always remains the same which allows you to develop strong exam technique throughout the course.



A LEVEL RELIGIOUS STUDIES

PHILOSOPHY (Year 12)

Paper 1: Philosophy and Ethics

Philosophy is a very different way of thinking compared to anything you will have experienced before.

Philosophy allows you to think outside of the box, consider scientific evidence and discoveries, consider the value of people's feelings and experiences, as well as looking at the way in which the world works to try and reach a valid answer. In Philosophy, you will never reach a conclusion that would be classed as 'conclusive' – it is impossible due to the nature of the topics we study. If you are interested in researching some topics further, why not try addressing these issues:

Pre study philosophy issues:

- **Evil and suffering in the world means that God cannot exist.**
- **The world has been designed, and the designer must be God.**
- **Individuals can experience God, but it can never be counted as evidence for his existence.**



A LEVEL RELIGIOUS STUDIES ETHICS (Year 12)

Paper 1: Philosophy and Ethics

Ethics is an excellent way to get to grips with how humans deal with decision making. Have you ever considered how we manage to make difficult moral decisions? Why is there a difference between what people believe to be right and wrong? In Ethics we explore the foundations of morality – should it be the action itself that holds moral value, or the consequences an action brings about? In Ethics you will find there are so many different ways to view morality – no wonder people have different opinions! Perhaps try research some of the issues below.

Pre study ethics issues:

- **An action is only right if the good consequences are brought about.**
- **Rules should be the same for all people in similar circumstances.**
- **The concept of good comes from God, humans do not have the authority to decide.**



Any further questions?:

Contact details of the lead teacher for Religious Studies:

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You can find the specification for the course here:

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/religious-studies/as-and-a-level/religious-studies-7062>