

RELIGIOUS STUDIES DEPARTMENT

Head of Department: Mr I Harris

Why choose the subject?

Philosophy is not primarily a list of ideas to memorise, but an activity. In studying philosophy, we are seeking an understanding of ourselves and of the world in which we live. We do philosophy by studying the arguments of philosophers and, in so doing, learn to construct our own arguments. Philosophers use a toolkit of concepts, arguments and methods, which can be applied across a wide range of topics, both philosophical and non-philosophical. If you want to study and respond to complex and fascinating questions about yourself and how you experience the world in a stimulating way, then this course could be for you!

This toolkit of skills are highly valued by both employers and universities. '...it's surprising just how many career paths a philosophy degree can help with. In a nutshell, doing philosophy can make a significant contribution to any job that requires you to think well, that is clearly and rigorously. Big business - the City firms, the banks, the management consultancies, the chartered accountants - are enthusiastic about people who've done philosophy, because they know how to think clearly. Philosophy students also go into law, politics, and the civil service. Journalism is a logical career path, since you have to be able to write well and present ideas logically and clearly. Advertising is another choice, and of course, last in this very incomplete list, but never least, there's always education! Philosophy students do better in verbal and writing skills than students with any other degree in the standard 'GRE' entrance examination for post-graduate study in the USA. They even do better on mathematical skills than everyone except those, such as maths and physics, with a heavily mathematical degree. So....philosophy opens doors, it doesn't close them'.

Dr Michael Lacewing (Uv. Of London)

This philosophy course asks these questions:

- What can we know?
- Can the existence of god be proved?
- How do we make moral decisions?
- Are my mind and body separate?

These questions are thought to be fundamental to understanding ourselves and the material covered in the specification not only provides students with a good understanding of how these debates have, so far, been framed, but also acts as a springboard for consideration and discussion of students' own ideas.

Who is eligible?

Anyone with an interest in the subject, and the questions mentioned (above) would be welcome to take up this course. A GCSE in Religious Studies is not a prerequisite, but as a rough guide, good grades (B or higher) in essay based subjects such as English (grade 6), History or Religious Studies would be an indication of suitability for the course. If students want to get the most benefit out of the course, in terms of progressing their thinking and understanding of a philosophical approach to life, then a significant amount of reading, thinking and talking/justifying their ideas will be required.

A LEVEL QUALIFICATION

Year 2017/19 A Level Award Exam Board: AGA	1. Epistemology	Written Exam: 3 hours
	2. Moral Philosophy	100 marks
		50% of A level
		Section A: Five questions on epistemology
		Section B: Five questions on moral philosophy
	3. Metaphysics of God	Written exam: 3 hours
	4. Metaphysics of mind	100 marks
		50% of A level
		Section A: Five questions on the metaphysics of God
		Section B: Five questions on the metaphysics of mind

AS LEVEL QUALIFICATION

Year 2017/2018 A Level Award Exam Board: AGA	1 Epistemology	Written Exam: 3 hours
	2 Moral Philosophy	100 marks
		50% of A level
		Section A: Five questions on epistemology
		Section B: Five questions on moral philosophy

STUDENT VIEW

Philosophy



I chose Philosophy as I wanted a subject that challenged everything I felt comfortable with, be it the way in which we perceive objects or where our knowledge originates from. I was keen to be mentally challenged and question my assumptions. I really enjoyed Religious Studies at GCSE and was keen to take this further in order to extend my knowledge. The subject itself is wonderful and I enjoy the lessons as they are always varied and never fail to leave you marginally mind-blown!

Katelyn Lewis

I took Philosophy because it challenges my thinking. It also develops a wide range of skills and keeps your mind active. I can honestly say that it has expanded my view of life.

Olivia Mastalerz Cribb