

Religion, Philosophy and Ethics

This new A Level course is designed to give our students a grounding in the key concepts and methods of philosophy, theology and ethical study. They will explore and evaluate a wide variety of philosophical questions, including how we know what is good, why people are moving away from religion in the western world, can euthanasia ever be ethical, whether all religions are paths to the same God. They will be expected to study the writings of many influential scholars including Plato, Aristotle, George Berkley, David Hume and Immanuel Kant. From the evaluation of these scholarly texts students will begin to generate their own arguments. Students will apply secular ethical theories to the moral issues of business ethics, euthanasia and sexual ethics. This is a thought provoking subject that results in lively discussion and dialogue that often continues beyond the classroom, and results in students who are confident in their essay writing and ability to construct solid, persuasive arguments.

The programme of study – over two years

Philosophy

- Ancient Greek influences
- Soul, mind and body
- Arguments for God's existence
- Religious experience
- The problem of evil
- God's attributes
- Religious Language

Ethics

- Normative ethical theories
- Euthanasia
- Business ethics
- Sexual ethics
- Meta ethics
- The conscience

Developments in Christian Thought

- Pluralism
- Gender and theology
- The challenge of secularism
- Liberation theology and Marx
- The person of Jesus
- Augustine on human nature
- Christian moral principles and action
- Death and the afterlife
- Knowledge of God

Assessment: 100% exam

Exam board: OCR

Higher Education and Career Opportunities

RPE holds a good reputation as an academic subject at the top universities in the country, and prepares you well for a range of essay subjects at university that relate directly to the subject such as theology and philosophy, but also history, English, geography, law and many others as we develop strong essay writing and discussion skills throughout the course. It connects well to a career in law or politics through developing skills in debating and constructing arguments, as well as careers in caring or medicine as we study medical ethics. It also provides wider benefits which prepare for the world of work, as in an increasingly multicultural and global society, understanding others' points of view and ethical standpoints is a highly valued personal skill in all fields.

Grade specific entry requirements

Grade 4 or above in RE and English Language