

# Religious Studies

## Philosophy, Ethics and Developments in Christian Thought

### What will I need before taking this course?

Either a Grade 6 or above in GCSE RS or a Grade 6 or above in GCSE English.

A level Religious Studies will provide learners with the exciting opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of world religions and explore philosophy of religion, and religion and ethics. Learners engage in relevant topical issues and acquire knowledge and a critical understanding of major issues that are relevant to learners in the twenty-first century.

### Assessment and Grading

The course is demanding and a consistently disciplined approach to study is necessary. There will be regular assignments and timed essays throughout the course.

All components are assessed by written examination and the A level is linear so assessment of a student's knowledge and understanding of the whole course takes place at the end of two years of study.

### How will I learn?

The course involves discussion, debate, presentations and developing written skills needed for the exam. It also involves extensive reading and note taking, as this is essential for a comprehensive understanding of the philosophical theories. There will be tutorials and revision sessions to prepare for the exams.

### What can I do at the end of the course?

Many subjects go well with Religious Studies: for example English, History, Politics, Sociology, Geography and Psychology. Religious Studies can be a useful complement to science subjects. The skills developed in Religious Studies are particularly useful for careers in law, education, politics, medicine, administration or the media. The Russell Group of top universities has made it clear that Religious Studies A Level provides 'suitable preparation for university generally'.

### What will I learn?

**All learners will study three components;**

#### **1. Philosophy of Religion (H564/01)**

**Part A** - The course begins with a study of Ancient Greek philosophers Plato and Aristotle and the Judeo-Christian influences on the philosophy of religion. Then students study the topics of Soul, mind and body and life after death and philosophical language and thought. Finally students explore the nature and influence of religious experience.

**Part B** - Students then critically analyse three contrasting arguments regarding the existence of God and examine the challenges to belief by exploring the problem of evil and suffering. Finally students explore the nature of God.

**Part C** - Students explore Religious language and examine how views of religious language have changed over time, as well as studying Twentieth century perspectives.

#### **2. Religion and Ethics (H573/02)**

*This module is a study of the ways in which people make moral decisions, and the influences of religious belief on morality.*

**Part A** - Students study three normative ethical theories which are then applied to two issues of importance; Sex and sexuality and euthanasia

**Part B** - Students examine ethical language through significant concepts and the works of key thinkers. As a part of this students explore meta-ethics examining how ethical language has changed over time and been interpreted by different individuals.

**Part C** - The students start by exploring the idea of free will and conscience and are then introduced to the Euthyphro Dilemma (is what is morally good commanded by God because it is morally good or is it morally good because it is commanded by God?)

#### **3. Developments in Christian Thought (H573/03)**

**Part A** - Students explore the different Christian interpretations of human nature, as well as the promise and nature of the afterlife, enabling discussions about faith and reason. Finally students explore the Bible as a source of wisdom and authority.

**Part B** - Students explore the historical and theological understandings of Jesus Christ by considering Jesus as an historical religious figure and his teachings, as well as how scholars have presented him

**Part C** - Students examine the relationship between religion and society and the ways that Christian traditions view other religious and non-religious worldviews and their truth claims. Students then study the changing roles of men and women, feminism and its effect on theology (the study of God and religious belief) by exploring Christian response to the changing place of women in society, as well as the response of feminist theologians to secular feminist challenges to scripture, God and the Church.

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CONTACT FOR FURTHER DETAILS	Mrs Beavis—Acting Head of Religious Studies