

PHILOSOPHY & ETHICS

Advanced Level Subject Guide

Exam Board: AQA

SUBJECT OVERVIEW

Philosophy and Ethics at A-Level looks very different to many other courses. At William Brookes, we study:

- Philosophy
- Ethics
- Christianity

Philosophy

What is out there? Who is out there?

Is there an all-powerful being looking down on us from above?

Philosophy gives you the opportunity to explore big questions about the meaning and purpose of life: Why are we here? Where did we come from? Is this life real? Does God exist? People have been trying to answer these questions for millennia, and they are still relevant today. Philosophy is one of the oldest disciplines, having been explicitly discussed and studied for nearly 3000 years. In fact, it was recently discovered that Neanderthals buried bodies in specific, special places to protect the dead; this shows that philosophical thinking has been a feature of our history for 50,000 years.

By engaging with these questions, lessons are centred around debating, discussing and evaluating theories and views about our very existence. You have opportunities to share your own opinion, bring your experiences to the table and challenge others on their views.

Philosophy engages your mind and pushes you to be critical of the world around you. This skill is hugely important, now more than ever. With an increasing amount of fake news, misleading headlines and poorly quoted statistics, the world needs critical thinkers who are willing to look beyond the obvious. Philosophy is also a fantastic foundation for university study, and is particularly beneficial for careers in education, politics, medicine, law and social work.

Many people think inside the box. Some people can think outside the box. Philosophers question whether the box ever really existed.



ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

To be considered for this course, students must achieve 5 GCSE grades 5-9

It is not necessary to have completed RS at GCSE to study this course as the A-Level course is very different.

Subject style:

Philosophy and Ethics is an essay-based subject which requires extended writing. You will receive lots of support in how to structure and develop your writing style, with plenty of opportunities to practice!



Sixth Form Manager: Mr J Spilsbury

Head of Sixth Form: Mrs L Hennessy

Strategic Lead: Mrs C Mincher

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Ethics

Is there such thing as a 'good person'?

How should we make decisions between right and wrong?

Ethics explores different approaches to morality, and questions one of the most incredible aspects of human nature: we have a sense of right and wrong. Through the study of ethicist scholars, you will evaluate a range of theories on how to make good, moral choices. Is it about happiness? Duty? Expectations? Responsibility?

These ethical theories and ideas are then applied to some of the most important moral issues that we face today: abortion, euthanasia, cloning, death penalty, animal testing etc.

Philosophy and Ethics offers an exciting opportunity to gain a very reputable A-Level while studying topics and issues that you will enjoy.

Study of religion and dialogues

Various aspects of Christian belief and life are analysed and evaluated, including:

- Sources of wisdom and authority
- Self, death and the afterlife
- Expression of religious identity
- Religion, gender and sexuality
- Religion and science
- Religion and secularisation
- Religion and religious pluralism

The Philosophy and Ethics A-Level also requires students to write 'dialogues' essays, where you will discuss Christianity vs. Philosophy and Christianity vs. Ethics, combining different skills and areas of the course, which is excellent preparation for university study.

CAREERS & OPPORTUNITIES

Philosophy and Ethics are increasingly important for medicine, law, politics, journalism, business and computer science. Universities and large companies are keen to find young people who have excellent critical thinking skills, and an ability to discuss ethics in a range of environments, including STEM careers.



EXAMINATIONS

Students will complete two 3 Hour written exam papers at the end of Year 2.

- **COMPONENT 1:**
Philosophy & Ethics
- **COMPONENT 2:**
Study of Religion (Christianity) and dialogues.



INTERACTIVE TEACHING & LEARNING

Every year, Philosophy and Ethics A-Level students take part in a conference. This provides the opportunity for students to receive university-style lectures from a world-renowned lecturer, Dr. Peter Vardy. It is hosted in the beautiful Coventry Cathedral, a perfect location to discuss the big questions of life. It supports the A-Level course whilst also allowing the students a chance to be more independent.



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