

Year 12 Theology and Philosophy

Whilst Theology Philosophy in Key Stages 3 and 4 requires students to study religion, belief, practice, and philosophico-ethical themes, there is a striking difference of approach to topics within AQA A Level Philosophy (2017). The purpose of studying them in Key Stages 3 and 4 is to develop an understanding and appreciation of religious thought and its contribution to the individual, communities and society. However, the intent at A Level Philosophy is to develop a student’s ability to identify argument forms using syllogisms (an instance of a standard logical form of reasoning in which a conclusion is drawn from stated premises, such as: “P1. All dogs are animals. P2. All animals have four legs. C. Therefore, all dogs have four legs.”). Students then analyse and evaluate arguments appropriately through studying the ways in which philosophers have analysed and evaluated the soundness of arguments, and they accomplish this by considering the validity of the argument and/or the truth of the premises that lead to a conclusion. These differences are reflected by the topics and theories, and texts are specified by the subject content and also are reflected in the recent specimen and live mark schemes. As a result, to deepen knowledge and support progress, we reflect these aims in our teaching of these subject areas: Paper 1 - Epistemology (Year 13) and Moral Philosophy (Year 12); Paper 2 - Metaphysics of God (Year 12) and Metaphysics of Mind (Year 13). This course understands philosophy as **argument**. This requires a more precise and logically structured approach to both thinking and writing, with claims, explanations, reasons and objections made very clear. A purely narrative style of writing is likely to do less well in Philosophy than it would in a standard Religious Studies A Level Course. The structure of assessment in Philosophy is very different from standard Religious Studies assessments, and the exams have five compulsory questions for each of the four areas of study. Only the fifth question is an essay question (measured in AO1 for 5 marks, and AO2 for 20 marks); the others variously ask for definitions, explanations of claims or arguments, and comparisons or applications of theories (measured only in AO1 at 3 marks, 2x5 marks, and 12 marks). The exams will measure how students have achieved the following assessment objectives:

AO1: Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the core concepts and methods of philosophy, including through the use of philosophical analysis.

AO2: Analyse and evaluate philosophical arguments to form reasoned judgements.

Methods of deepening and securing knowledge:

A Level Philosophy aims to use low-stake quizzing, various means of feedback, collaboration, and student-centred resources to close gaps that our students have from previous Key Stages and to enrich knowledge.

Retrieval Practice	Retrieval Practice is evident through starter and plenary tasks to link prior learning and current learning, as well as in Retrieval Knowledge Organisers by way of extending learning and examination preparation, including “Statement Grids” that measure the levels of retrieval on all aspects of the course. Learning Hubs “Noughts and Crosses” also provides an entertaining and competitive exercise.
Elaboration	Learning Hubs allow for incremental levels of knowledge to be secured and encourage enthusiastic, collaborative learners who share anthology analysis independent learning, assessment of sample exam answers, or using independent learning to construct a collective answer to an exam question. Reading tutorials and application seminars provide an opportunity for investigation and a sharing of ideas as well as prior/present learning.
Language for Learning	We monitor student’s subject-specific vocabulary through ‘Language for Learning Word Decoding’ etymology/morphology exercises, and we embed literacy and reading into every learning theme, building opportunities for extended writing and enabling students to fully explore complex philosophical systems and ideas that evolve from them. This also is achieved through independent anthology text analysis.

Concrete Examples	Concrete examples in the form of independent anthology textual analysis using 5 lenses to extend and deepen knowledge acquired within the classroom: context, vocabulary, concepts, argument, and structure (transposing the text into syllogistic form). The applied moral philosophy element also applies normative moral theories to 4 examples: lying, stealing, simulated killing, and eating animals.
“Becoming the Examiner”	Post-examination exercises enable students to review their examination papers alongside sample answers and mark schemes in order to improve their examination script in green ink; and students are aware that, even if top marks have been awarded, there is always room for a furthering of knowledge.

	Autumn term 1	Autumn term 2	Spring term 1	Spring term 2	Summer term 1	Summer term 2
Topic(s)	Moral Philosophy I - Introduction - Overview of moral philosophy and key terms - Utilitarianism Metaphysics of God II - Overview of metaphysics of god and key terms - Design arguments	Moral Philosophy I and II - Utilitarianism - Kant’s Deontology Metaphysics of God II - Cosmological arguments	Moral Philosophy II - Kant’s Deontology Metaphysics of God I - Concept and nature of God	Moral Philosophy III - Aristotelian Aretaic Ethics Metaphysics of God II - Ontological arguments	Moral Philosophy III and IV - Aristotelian Aretaic Ethics - Metaethics Metaphysics of God II and III - Arguments for the existence of God - Religious language	Moral Philosophy IV - Metaethics Metaphysics of God III - Religious language
Assessment	Sample questions (3, 5 and 12 marks)	Sample question (25 marks)	Sample questions (3, 5 and 12 marks)	Sample question (25 marks)	Sample questions (3, 5 and 12 marks)	Summer sample questions project
CEIAG (<i>Careers that are linked to that topic</i>)	Teaching professions, medical and caring professions, law and the Police service, community liaison, welfare and social work, civil service and Ministry of Defence, journalism, recruitment, counselling.					

Homework:

Homework is integral to learning and it is planned to be challenging and relevant to each programme of study, with tasks used for a variety of purposes including consolidating learning, preparation for a following class, deepening the knowledge gained in learning themes, and preparation for examinations (using specific knowledge organisers). Exam preparation tasks are shared and discussed in learning hubs in the deadline lesson, and relevant links are made to prior and future learning, alongside peer assessment (www/ebi) that are then used for Student Improvement. Homework receives generous time in verbal/written feedback from both learning hubs and teaching staff along with strategies for improvement. Other tasks anthology textual analysis using 5 lenses to extend and deepen knowledge acquired within the classroom: context, vocabulary, concepts, argument, and structure (transposing the text into syllogistic form); set text research following standard methodology (read without breaks, break, read and highlight, break, make notes from highlights); Essay writing is always a homework activity; other tasks set at the teacher's discretion are completed either at home or in the Sixth Form Study Centre. Homework and research tasks generally are completed within the Sixth Form Google Classroom so that the high volume of tasks can be tracked and work load appropriately managed.