

# PHILOSOPHY

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**Being able to think and think independently, thinking about deep questions but without resorting to what you already believe – philosophy can help you to understand yourself. It's what education is really about. What more could anybody want from an A level?**

## **Current Teaching Staff:**

Mrs D Bloomfield - Head of Department  
Miss R Thompson, Mr A Strachan

**Examination board and syllabus:** AQA Philosophy

**Entrance requirement:** Grade 6 at GCSE in Religious Studies and Grade 6 in English Language. If not taken at GCSE, at least a Grade 6 in History or Geography

## **Course outline:**

Epistemology: Perception; The Nature of Knowledge; Where do ideas/concepts come from?

Moral philosophy: Ethical theory; Utilitarianism; Kantian ethics; Aristotle's Virtue ethics; Meta-ethics.

Philosophy of Religion: The concept of God; Arguments relating to the Existence of God; Religious Language.

Philosophy of Mind: The Mind/Body problem; Materialism; Dualism.

Classes have two teachers in each year. Many different styles of teaching are used, ranging from didactic lecturing to group work, paired presentations, peer review and assessment. There is a sustained focus on examination skills practice. We often take part in local Philosothon.

There are many different types of homework set, including research, comprehension and reading, but of course the core focus is on essay-writing and in particular the evaluative pieces required. Essays will be done in different formats (in-class, out of class, with supporting material, without supporting material) to reinforce learning.

The department provides help on Immersion Day, focusing on the learning skills. Lunchtime help is developed early on in the year to guide targeted students but is available to all that would like help.

Number of Unit	% of A2	Coursework / Examination	Length of Time	Examination / Coursework entered
Epistemology and Moral Philosophy (unit 7172)	50%	Examination	180 mins.	June at end of Year 13
Metaphysics of God and the Metaphysics of Mind (unit 7172)	50%	Examination	180 mins.	June at end of Year 13

Philosophy A Level encourages self-confidence. You should not be intimidated by famous names and/or theories. Many of these people are well-known because their ideas are simple and clear. You will be expected to criticise them and not see such analysis as inappropriate. As part of this process you will develop your own style and voice, refining the basis of the beliefs you hold. As you progress, your essay technique will show complexity and insight.

Students will need to:	Compulsory	Optional
Attend extra sessions before Examinations	X	
Read widely around the subject	X	
Make extensive notes	X	
Carry out detailed revision for regular tests beyond public examinations	X	
Be willing to lead class discussions	X	

## CAREERS

Essentially, Philosophy is a skills-based course. You are developing the ability to understand sophisticated points of view and argue the case for issues with precision and clarity. This skill is useful in many careers, but perhaps notably in Law and Journalism. The course will develop an understanding of the historical movement of ideas and can provide a solid grounding for work involving cultural and social interaction, for example in the world of Medicine, Civil Service and Politics.