

Religion, Philosophy & Ethics

Examination Board
Edexcel
Topics/ Texts Studied
<p>Students will study three papers. Paper 1 is a study of the philosophy of religion and includes topics such as arguments for God's existence, the afterlife and religious language. Paper 2 is a study of ethics. Students will learn about different ethical systems, including Situation Ethics, Utilitarianism, Kantian Ethics and Virtue Ethics alongside topics such as war and peace, sexual ethics, medical ethics and environmental ethics. The final paper is a study of religion. Holland Park School chooses to specialise in Buddhism.</p>
Coursework and Practical Elements
<p>There are no coursework elements and no practical elements for this course. Students will be assessed through 3 x 2 hour examinations at the end of the course.</p>
Recommended Pre-reading
<p>There are plenty of introductory texts available to help you to access philosophy and ethics, but I recommend beginning with the moral dilemmas illustrated in the works of fiction. Consider these: 'Never Let Me Go,' by Kazuo Ishiguro; 'We Need to Talk About Kevin,' by Lionel Shriver; 'Sophie's World,' by Jostein Gaarder; 'The Sage Train,' by Nicky Hansell; 'Under the Net,' by Iris Murdoch and 'The Unbearable Lightness of Being,' by Milan Kundera. For some non-fiction alternatives consider: 'A Little History of Philosophy,' by Nigel Warburton; 'A History of God,' by Karen Armstrong, 'Nausea,' by Jean Paul Satre or 'The Complete Philosophy Files,' by Stephen Law.</p>
Where will this course take me?
<p>The study of RE and the skills one acquires complements a wide range of subjects and so students have gone on to study at undergraduate level subjects as diverse as medicine, law, philosophy, MFL, history, English, politics, anthropology, the sciences and forensics.</p>

The course equips students with analytical skills suitable for a wide range of careers. Recent students now work in the civil service, in law, in medicine, journalism and finance.

Why should you study this course?

Religious Studies is a rigorous and demanding academic discipline in its own right. It engenders critical thinking and rigour in the search for truths in uncertain fields. It encourages philosophical thought, decision making skills, collaboration and independent working skills and the search for compromise and conflict resolutions that work. It creates opportunities for young people to develop their skills of dialogue, interpretation and analysis in a coherent context. All these are vital skills in a modern workforce where communication, collaboration and cooperation are core skills. Religious Studies has a multidisciplinary nature, involving textual study, philosophical thinking, ethics, social understanding and the skills of analysis and reasoning developing core skills of literacy. It makes a key and unique contribution to understanding British heritage, plurality, values and futures and provides an excellent opportunity for young people to engage with contemporary contentious issues, developing social, cultural, political, philosophical and historical awareness. Religious Studies supports students to learn to respect themselves and understand their own identity, to respect others, and to understand their own and others' rights and responsibilities. At a time when communities are becoming more diverse there is an even greater need for a more religiously literate and tolerant society. Religious Studies plays a key role in creating social cohesion and generating genuine understanding between communities reducing friction, intolerance and social unrest.

What are the entry requirements?

In addition to the general entry requirements, you will need a grade 7 or above in GCSE RE to study this course. We do accept some students who have not studied RE at GCSE. Here, the requirement will be a grade 7 in English Language or Literature.