



Coloma Sixth Form

A Level Religious Studies (H573)



'The unexamined life is not worth living'

Socrates Apology (Plato)

What will I study? : The specification OCR Religious Studies (H573)

| Content Overview | Assessment Overview | |
|---|---|--|
| <p>Philosophy of Religion Learners will study:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ancient philosophical influences • the nature of the soul, mind and body • arguments about the existence or non-existence of God • the nature and impact of religious experience • the challenge for religious belief of the problem of evil • ideas about the nature of God • issues in religious language. | <p>Philosophy of Religion (01) 120 marks 2 hour written paper</p> | <p>33.3% of total A Level</p> |
| <p>Religion and Ethics Learners will study:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • normative ethical theories • the application of ethical theory to two contemporary issues of importance • ethical language and thought • debates surrounding the significant idea of conscience • sexual ethics and the influence on ethical thought of developments in religious beliefs. | <p>Religion and ethics (02) 120 marks 2 hour written paper</p> | <p>33.3% of total A Level</p> |
| <p>Developments in Religious Thought Learners will study:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • religious beliefs, values and teachings, their interconnections and how they vary historically and in the contemporary world • sources of religious wisdom and authority • practices which shape and express religious identity, and how these vary within a tradition • significant social and historical developments in theology and religious thought • key themes related to the relationship between religion and society <p>in the context of one religion - Christianity (03).</p> | <p>Developments in Religious Thought (03) 120 marks 2 hour written paper</p> | <p>33.3% of total A Level</p> |

More Detail

The OCR A Level in Religious Studies will build on the knowledge, understanding and skills established at GCSE (9–1). Learners will be introduced to a more advanced approach to Religious Studies, and will develop a deeper understanding of the beliefs, teachings and philosophy they study.

All learners will study three components; *Philosophy of Religion (O1)*, *Religion and Ethics (O2)* and *Developments in Religious Thought (O3–O7)*. Here there will be a focus on Christian Theology.

In **Philosophy of Religion** learners will study philosophical issues and questions raised by religion and belief. These include arguments regarding the existence or non-existence of God, the nature and influence of religious experience and the problems of evil and suffering. They will also explore philosophical language and thought, through significant concepts and the works of key thinkers, illustrated in issues or debates in the philosophy of religion.

Religion and Ethics is characterised by the study of ethical theories including Utilitarianism, Natural law, Situation Ethics and Kantian Ethics. Additionally, the course includes the study of ethical language and thought, with exploration of key concepts and the works of influential thinkers such as St Thomas Aquinas, Freud, David Hume and A. J. Ayer. Ethical theory will be applied to issues of importance; namely euthanasia, business ethics, and sexual ethics.

Developments in Christian Thought provides an opportunity for the systematic study of one religious tradition. This includes study of the foundation of Christian thought, including the Person of Jesus, life after death and human nature, as well as a study of the writings of Dietrich Bonhoeffer. This strand also includes the exploration of religious beliefs and the challenge posed by secularism, religious values and how they link to multi-faith society, gender issues, and feminist theology. Also central are the ways in which religious traditions have developed over time, and religious responses to challenges and significant contemporary social issues.

Assessment of A Level Religious Studies

At the end of TWO years of study, students will sit three 2hour examinations. Each paper will contain four essay questions with the learner choosing **three** out of the **four** to answer.

Questions can target material from any area of the specification. Two questions might be set from one specification section or all questions might be from different sections. Each essay will be worth 40 marks and will test both AO1 and AO2 responses assessed via a level of response mark scheme.

The specification: <https://www.ocr.org.uk/Images/242913-specification-accredited-a-level-gce-religious-studies-h573.pdf>






Why Religious Studies?

ARE YOU READY FOR THE CHALLENGE?

Critical Thinking *Skills from Religious Studies* Using evidence

Logic Written communication Considering other views

Verbal communication Reasoning Empathy Understanding others



Law

Lawyer, Legal secretary, Judge, Barrister, Coroner, Solicitor, Court clerk, Paralegal, Court reporter



Public services

Police, Fire service, Armed forces, Civil servant, Local government services,



Education

Primary teacher, Secondary teacher, Special needs teacher, Lecturer, Educational researcher, School psychologist, Careers adviser



Tourism

Travel intase, Holiday rep, Air cabin crew, Tourist information office, Hotel/Manager



Journalism

Editor, Copy writer, Reporter, Newspaper/Magazine writer, Researcher, Photographer



Health & Social care

Doctor, Nurse, Care worker, Social worker, Occupational therapist, Counsellor, Health worker, Midwife



Media

Social Media writer, TV producer, Radio producer, Broadcaster, Illustrator

Further info videos
<http://casestudies.reonline.org.uk/>



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(Scan the QR code to get access to the interviews)

Hear from our former A Level RS students Asia, Jade and Hannah how they liked the course and where they are now.



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Religion Studies: Philosophy - Ethics - DCT

If you want to achieve a **high grade** in A Level then you need to engage with the subject on a wider level. This means that you need to read more than just the textbook. Here are some suggestions:



Read



Visit



Create



Watch



Achieve



Think












Listen











Lead



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| <p>The Panpsycast Philosophy Podcast. Available on itunes and spotify. Fascinating discussions around Philosophy and Ethics with some phenomenal guest speakers. https://thepanpsycast.com/home</p> <p style="text-align: right;"></p> | <p>Living with Gods Podcast Neil MacGregor explores the role and expression of shared beliefs in communities around the world. In partnership with the British Museum. https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b09c1mhy/episodes/downloads</p> <p style="text-align: right;"></p> | <p>In Our Time Podcast A selection of episodes on historical, religious and philosophical topics. https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006qykl/episodes/player</p> <p style="text-align: right;"></p> |
| <p>The Freud Museum, London https://www.freud.org.uk/event/psychoanalysis-and-philosophy/</p> <p style="text-align: right;"></p> | <p>The National Gallery, Routes A or C https://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/visiting/plan-your-visit/gallery-entry Saint Francis of Assisi Exhibition (6 May – 30 July 2023) https://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/exhibitions/saint-francis-of-assisi</p> <p style="text-align: right;"></p> | <p>The British Museum, Enlightenment Era Exhibition https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/galleries/enlightenment</p> <p style="text-align: right;"></p> |
| <p>All in the Mind Podcast. Programme exploring the limits and potential of the human mind https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006qxx9</p> <p style="text-align: right;"></p> | <p>Kings College London, Public Lectures. https://www.kcl.ac.uk/trs/about/public-lectures</p> <p style="text-align: right;"></p> | <p>Philosophy Podcast Listen to Nobel prize-winning scientists and philosophers put their heads together. Discussions from the mysteries of consciousness and the problems in particle physics, to the future of feminism. https://iai.tv/iai-podcast</p> <p style="text-align: right;"></p> |



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| <p>Justice with Michael Sandel Choose from any of the 24 lectures! https://scholar.harvard.edu/sandel/justice</p>  | <p>Harvard University Online Course on Justice Introduction to moral and political philosophy https://www.edx.org/course/justice-2</p>  | <p>University of Chester's A Level webinars https://www1.chester.ac.uk/subject-activities-schools-and-colleges/theology-and-religious-studies/trs-chester-level-webinars-0</p>  |
| <p>Crash Course Philosophy https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL8dPuuaLjXtNgK6MZucdYIdNkMybYIHKR</p>  | <p>The School of Life (Western Philosophy) https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLwxNMb28XmpeypJMHfNbj4RAfKrtmAN3P</p>  | <p>Carneades https://www.youtube.com/c/carneadesofcyrene/featured</p>  |
|  <p>Recommended Reads</p>  | | |
| <p>The Puzzle of God, Peter Vardy. [Non-Fiction] A clear, well-written guide to philosophical thinking about God. (Links to DCT & Philosophy)</p> | <p>The Puzzle of Ethics, Peter Vardy. [Non-Fiction] Introduction to the subject of ethics, posing vital contemporary questions. (Links to Ethics)</p> | <p>The Puzzle of Christianity, Peter Vardy. [Non-Fiction] This gives a good overview of the major elements of Christianity. (Links to DCT)</p> |
| <p>Introducing Philosophy: A Graphic Guide, Dave Robinson and Judy Groves. [Non-Fiction] Perfect graphic guide introducing significant philosophers in the West. (Links to Philosophy)</p> | <p>Introducing Ethics: A Graphic Guide, Dave Robinson and Chris Garrett. [Non-Fiction] Perfect graphic guide introducing moral philosophers and ethical dilemmas. (Links to Ethics)</p> | <p>The Pig That Wants To Be Eaten and 99 Other Thought Experiments, Julian Baggini. [Non-Fiction]. This book has a wide selection of classic philosophical and ethical problems; each of them is explained briefly. (Links to Philosophy)</p> |



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|--|---|---|
| <p>Think: A Compelling Introduction to Philosophy, Simon Blackburn [Non-Fiction] Here at last is a coherent, unintimidating introduction to the challenging and fascinating landscape of Western philosophy.</p> <p>(Links to Philosophy)</p> | <p>The God Delusion, Richard Dawkins [Non-Fiction] A controversial read. The world's most prominent atheist - asserts the irrationality of belief in God, and the grievous harm religion has inflicted on society, from the Crusades to 9/11.</p> <p>(Links to Philosophy and DCT)</p> | <p>God is Not Great: How Religion Poisons Everything, Christopher Hitchens [Non-Fiction] A controversial read. Hitchens documents the ways in which religion is a man-made wish, a cause of dangerous sexual repression, and a distortion of our origins in the cosmos.</p> <p>(Links to Philosophy and DCT)</p> |
| <p>Ethics in the Real World: 86 Brief Essays on Things that Matter, Peter Singer [Non-Fiction]</p> <p>(Links to Ethics)</p> | <p>Invisible Women: Data Bias in a World Designed by Men, Caroline Criado Perez [Non-Fiction]</p> <p>(Links to DCT - Gender & Society)</p> | <p>Phantoms in the Brain: Probing the Mysteries of the Human Mind, V.S. Ramachandran [Non-Fiction]</p> <p>(Links to Ethics - Conscience and Philosophy - Soul, Mind and Body)</p> |
| <p>Sophie's World, Jostein Gaarder [Fiction] A Novel about the History of Philosophy. Sophie's World has fired the imagination of readers all over the world, with more than twenty million copies in print.</p> <p>(Links to Philosophy)</p> | <p>The Little Prince, Antoine de Saint-Exupéry [Fiction] Despite its style as a children's book, The Little Prince makes observations about life and human nature.</p> <p>(Links to Philosophy)</p> | <p>The Devil and Miss Prym, Paulo Coelho [Fiction] A story searching for the answer to a question that torments the lead character: Are human beings, in essence, good or evil?</p> <p>(Links to Ethics - Conscience, Meta-Ethics)</p> |
| <p>The Alchemist, Paulo Coelho [Fiction] A bestselling allegorical novel about a traveller who discovers the meaning(s) of life.</p> <p>(Links to Philosophy)</p> | <p>Me Before You, Jojo Moyes [Fiction] A heartbreaking story about love, disability and euthanasia.</p> <p>(Links to Ethics -Euthanasia)</p> | <p>My Sister's Keeper, Jodi Piccoult [Fiction] Is it morally correct to do whatever it takes to save a child's life, even if that means infringing upon the rights of another? Is it worth trying to discover who you really are if that quest makes you like yourself less?</p> <p>(Links to Ethics - Autonomy)</p> |



Philosophy of Religion



Philosophy of Religion (H573/01)

Philosophy is simply “thinking about thinking”, an intellectual journey of life.

At A Level we start our study with the Ancient Greek philosophers Plato and Aristotle. We then look at arguments for and against the existence of God. This involves the study of many philosophers including Kant, Descartes, Dawkins and Aquinas.

To be prepared to start this you need to distinguish between **the main approaches to knowledge**:

Rationalism – Rationalist philosophers believe that all knowledge can be understood through a process of reasoning, without any external sources.

Empiricism – In philosophy, empiricism is a theory which believes that all knowledge comes from experience.

Summer tasks - Philosophy

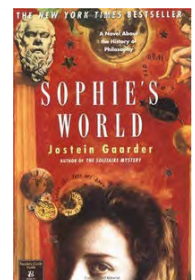
1. **Research** the **TWO** main approaches to knowledge and **produce a summary of each**. (2 sides of A4) You should include particular philosophers, and link these to Plato.
2. **Research and take notes on SOCRATES** and produce **EITHER** a presentation **or** detailed hand out on his life and teaching.
3. **Use the resources below and research your own:**
 - a. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bJUuOnsRcvc> Who was Socrates?
 - b. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CylKayNXTPY> Socrates: The Father of Western Philosophy
 - c. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ci55Qx_RYto Socrates: Biography of a great thinker
4. **Watch** the Matrix film and write a **synopsis** (Summary of the film and its key ideas)

Recommended Reading

If you want to achieve a high grade in A Level then you need to be reading at a very high level. You need to engage with much more than just the textbook.

So you should aim to read AT LEAST ONE of the following books:

1. *Philosophy: The Essential Study Guide* by Nigel Warburton ISBN 0415341809
2. *Philosophy: The Classics* by Nigel Warburton ISBN 0415356296
3. *Sophie's World* by Jostein Gaarder ISBN 1858815304
4. Vardy, P. *The Puzzle of God* Fount ISBN-10: 0006281435
- 5.



Religion and Ethics

Religion and Ethics (H573/02)

Making moral decisions is something every human being does throughout life. How we live has an impact on others. Not just whether we are kind or unpleasant to the people we meet, but also in terms of the principles we choose to live by.

Are morals universal, or can they change according to the situation?

Prepare a hand-out explaining:

1. The difference between absolutist and relativist ethics.
2. An example of an absolutist ethicist and a relativist ethicist.
3. A strength and a weakness of both absolutist and relativist ethics.



Is ethics more about the actions, or the consequences?

Prepare a hand-out explaining:

1. The difference between the difference between deontological and teleological ethics.
2. An example of a deontological and a teleological ethicist.
3. Your opinion on this statement: 'Teleological ethics are impractical.'

Useful resources:

Absolutism and relativism:

<https://www.philosophycat.org/ethics>

<http://rsrevision.com/Alevel/ethics/absoluterelativemorality/index.htm>

Deontological and teleological:

<https://www.differencebetween.com/difference-between-teleological-and-deontological/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-a739VjqdSI&t=102s>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8blys6JoEDw>



Developments in Christian Thought

Developments in Christian Thought (H573/03)

In the first topic from the OCR Religious Studies specification you will study Augustine's teachings about human nature.

Summer task

1. Research the life and background to Augustine and the influences on his thinking including:

Many factors in Augustine's life may have had an impact upon his theological ideas. These possible influences include:

- The influence of his mother.
- The classical scholars he read as a student.
- His 'wild' youth and life-long struggles with sexual urges.
- His relationship with his concubine and the fact that he had to dismiss her.
- Fatherhood (he had a son by his concubine)
- His involvement in Manicheanism (especially the dualistic world view) and his eventual disillusionment with it.
- His interest in neo-Platonism, (especially the hierarchical views)
- His conversations with St Ambrose.
- His argument with Pelagius about free will.



You may be able to identify other factors that you think might help to explain his theological views.

2. Produce a presentation or a detailed hand out on his life and teaching. Use the resources below and research your own:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9nz7C0Kr9OA&t=5s> **Augustine documentary**

<http://www.philosopherkings.co.uk/augustinebiography.html> **Key info/ biography page**

<https://thepanpsycast.com/dct-audiobook/chapter4>

