



# Philosophy

## Why you should follow this course

A demanding academic subject, philosophy provides students with an excellent progression route to university courses. Philosophy combines very well with subjects such as history, English literature or law. It develops skills of analysis and argument, and allows students to wrestle with some of the biggest questions ever to face humanity. Questions concerning the nature of reality, how we should live our lives, whether body and mind are separate and whether there are rational reasons for believing in God will all be considered as part of this exciting and challenging course. Philosophy is available as both an AS (at the end of year 12) and a full A level (at the end of year 13).

## What teaching and learning methods will be used?

Teaching and learning will primarily take the form of seminar style lessons and independent study. Students will be encouraged to develop their skills of argument, analysis and evaluation through discussion and debate. You will be expected to read independently, keep organised notes and complete written tasks.

## How will the course be assessed?

There will be one exam at the end of year 12 for the AS level qualification, those who continue to the full A level will sit a further exam at the end of year 13. On both exams there are a variety of question styles ranging from short definitions to essays. There is no controlled assessment.

## What can you do when you have your qualification?

A level philosophy is a highly respected qualification, complimenting the arts, humanities, sciences and social sciences. A very wide variety of university courses would welcome applicants with A level philosophy. If you are interested in a career involving law, politics, journalism, sociology (and many other disciplines) then philosophy could be for you!



Examination Board: AQA  
Qualification: AS & A Level

## YEAR 12 COURSE CONTENT: Year 12 (AS)

### **Epistemology** (theory of knowledge) – *What can we know?*

Can we be sure that there is a world around us? Is there anything we can be sure of at all? What is knowledge? Do we learn everything through experience or is some knowledge innate?

### **Moral Philosophy** – *How do we decide what is right or wrong?*

A study of three ethical theories: Utilitarianism (we should do whatever brings the best consequences), Kant's deontology (we should always follow the rules), and virtue ethics (we should do what develops a good character).

## YEAR 13 COURSE CONTENT: Year 13 (A level)

### **The Metaphysics of Mind** – *Are my mind and body separate?*

What is the relationship between the body and the mind? What is consciousness? Is there a difference between a mind and a computer? If you swapped brains with someone which person would be you?

### **The Metaphysics of God** – *Can it be rational to believe in God?*

What arguments have been presented for God's existence and can they be criticised? If there were a God, can the existence of suffering be explained? Could an all-powerful God create a stone He couldn't lift?

**For further information or advice please contact  
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