

Philosophy Linear A Level

Examination Board: AQA

Who should take this course?

- Anyone planning a career that involves the ability to evaluate ideas and understand complex issues.
- Anyone who enjoys questioning and debating issues of which there are no definitive answers.
- Anyone who wishes to have a better understanding of communities and society.
- Anyone who has ever thought about why people make the decisions and judgements that they do, particularly on matters of 'right' and 'wrong'.
- Anyone who has ever asked themselves difficult questions, such as: *What makes me 'Me'? Why am I here? Is there a God? Is there life after death? What makes this right and that wrong? Why did they do that?*

What is the course about?

- This course is designed to introduce students to the key methods and concepts in philosophy through the study of four broad themes: Epistemology; Philosophy of Religion; Ethics; and Philosophy of Mind. Students will develop and refine a range of transferable skills, such as the ability to ask penetrating questions, to analyse and evaluate the arguments of others and to present their own arguments clearly and logically.
- This philosophy specification asks these main questions:
 - What can we know?
 - Can the existence of God be proved?
 - How do we make moral decisions?
 - Are my mind and body separate?
- You will have the opportunity to engage in detailed analysis of philosophical texts which should act as a springboard for your future reading and reflection.

How is it assessed?

This is a LINEAR specification.

- There will be TWO exams at the end of the course. Each exam will be 3 hours and will be worth 50% of the final grade.
- You can opt to do the AS qualification which will be one 3 hour exam worth 100% of the final grade. The content is the same as the Year 1 linear specification.

Where will it take me?

- Philosophy **A-Level** is extremely well respected by colleges and universities.
- Students could go on to study Philosophy, Religious Studies, Politics, History, Geography, Medicine, English, Theology, Psychology, Sociology, and many other subjects.

Achievement Through Partnership
Bishop's Hatfield Girls' School, Monk's Walk School, Onslow St Audrey's School,
Stanborough School and Ridgeway Academy

Course Details – Year 1

- **Epistemology**

Topics include:

- What is knowledge?
 - Definitions
 - The tripartite view of knowledge
- Perception as a source of knowledge
 - Direct /Indirect realism
 - Idealism
- Reason as a source of knowledge
 - Innatism
 - The intuition and deduction thesis
- The limits of knowledge
 - Different varieties of scepticism

- **Moral Philosophy**

Topics include:

- Normative ethical theories
 - Utilitarianism
 - Kantian deontological ethics
 - Aristotle's virtue ethics
- Applied ethics
 - Applying the normative theories to stealing, simulated killing, eating animals and telling lies
- Meta-ethics
 - Moral realism
 - Moral Anti-realism

Course Details – Year 2

- **Metaphysics of God**

Topics include:

- The concept and nature of God
 - Key terms, the paradox of the stone, the Euthyphro dilemma
- Arguments relating to the existence of God
 - Ontological arguments, design arguments, cosmological arguments, the problem of evil,
- Religious language
 - Logical positivism, cognitivist and non-cognitivist accounts of religious language

- **Metaphysics of Mind**

Topics include:

- What do we mean by 'mind'?
 - Features of mental states
- Dualist theories
 - Substance dualism
 - Property dualism
- Physicalist theories
 - Physicalism
 - Mind-brain type identity theory
 - Eliminative materialism
- Functionalism