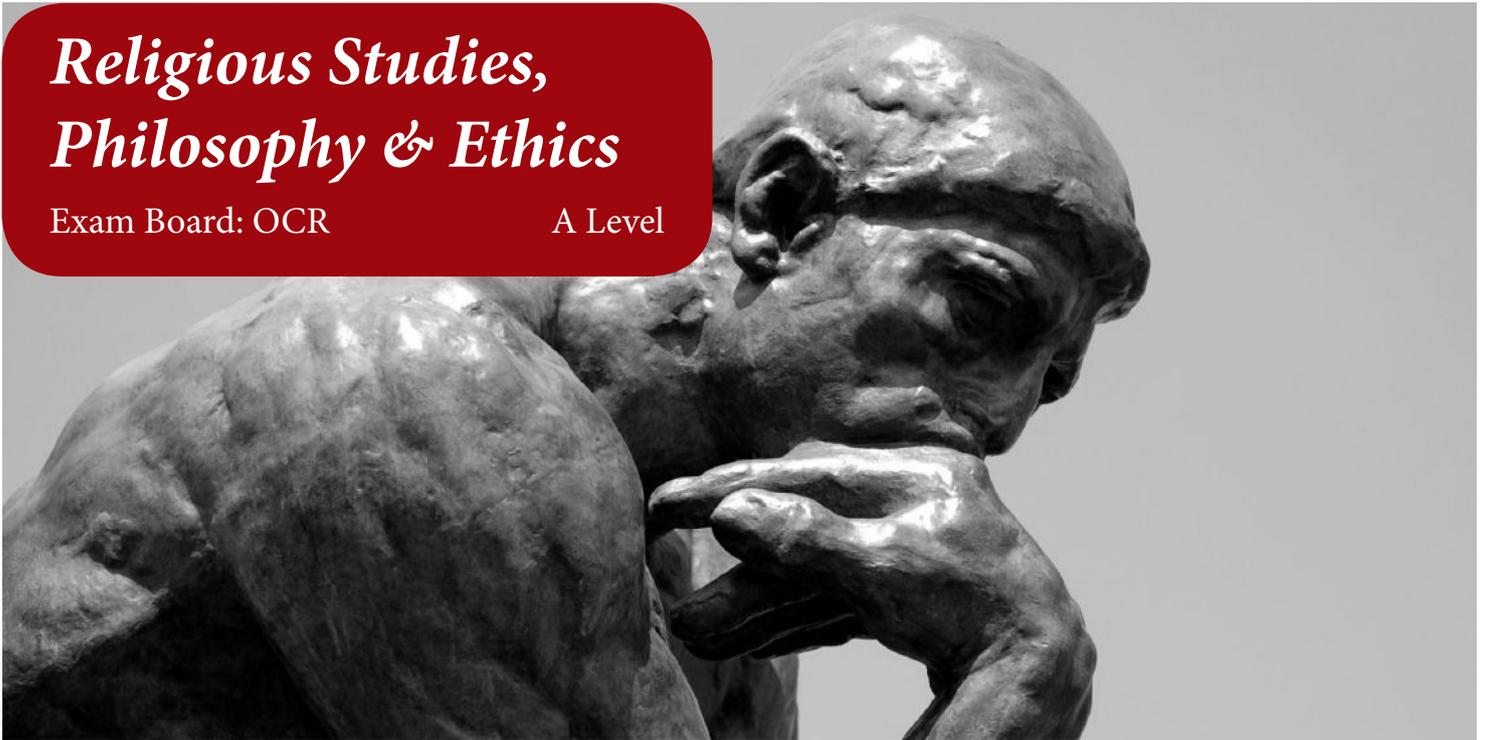




Religious Studies, Philosophy & Ethics

Exam Board: OCR

A Level



Philosophy (noun)

- the study of the fundamental nature of knowledge, reality, and existence, especially when considered as an academic discipline.*
- a theory or attitude that acts as a guiding principle for behaviour.*

A Level

The OCR A Level in religious studies will build on the knowledge, understanding and skills established at GCSE. Students will be introduced to a more advanced, complex approach to Religious Studies, and will develop a deeper understanding of the beliefs, teachings and philosophy they study. We study three components; philosophy of religion, religion and ethics and developments in religious thought.

This course gives you the opportunity to explore major philosophical questions in the history of Western and Eastern Philosophy. It is a subject that asks meaningful questions about the nature of the world and humanity's place within it:

- Who am I?
- Why am I here?
- How should we all live together?
- Is there life after death?

This course is for anyone who is interested in religion, philosophy and ethics. If you have an enquiring mind,

are receptive to new ideas and enjoy asking fundamental questions about important issues, then this is the right subject for you.

We welcome students who have a passion for learning, for being challenged and for thinking. You must also be a committed student and willing to read widely.

1st component 'Philosophy of Religion'

We 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. We will also explore philosophical language and thought through significant concepts and the works of key thinkers such as Plato, Aquinas and Hume, illustrated in issues or debates in the philosophy of religion. Topics include the difficulties of humans using our limited knowledge and language to talk about 'God', the meaning of 'free-will' when God is omnipotent, and the challenge of the problem of evil to belief.

2nd Component 'Religion and Ethics'

This is characterised both by a study of ethical language and thought through significant concepts and the works of key thinkers such as Kant and Singer, illustrated in issues or debates in religion and ethics, and also by the application of ethical theory to issues of importance. For example are actions justified by their consequences, or are some moral acts 'right' regardless of consequences? We will study contrasting ethical

theories and key ethical concepts (e.g. what is meant by 'conscience'), as well as developments in the way these ideas are applied to significant issues such as the ethics of business and of sex and sexuality.

3rd Component 'Developments in religious thought'

This provides a fascinating opportunity for the study of beliefs and issues in Christianity. This will include exploration of religious beliefs, values and teachings, sources of wisdom and authority and practices that shape and express religious identity. This includes Christian understandings of human nature and the afterlife, ways of conceiving of God and of the person of Jesus (e.g. as the Son of God and as the Messiah), Christian moral principles and the teachings and practice of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, issues around religion and society including pluralism, gender, secularism and science.

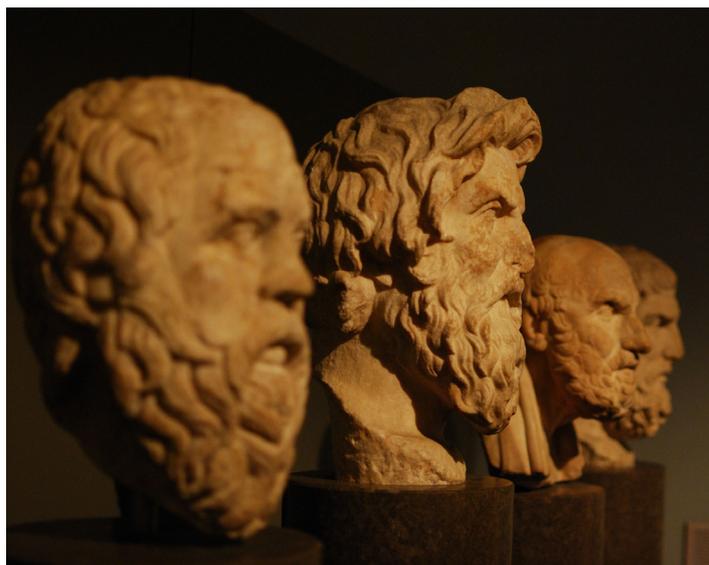
The exam for each component will be worth 120 marks and represents 33.3% of the total marks for the A Level. These exams will take the form of an externally assessed written paper lasting two hours.



Do you want an AS/A Level that will:

Stretch your mind? Introduce you to great thinkers?

Give you a qualification respected throughout higher education?



Do you enjoy:

Debating and arguing philosophical issues?

Challenging popular ideas?

Giving your point of view?

The subject complements a wide range of subject combinations:

The arts

Sciences

Mathematics

Social sciences

All universities accept and welcome students with a qualification in this area onto a variety of courses. It is widely studied at AS and A2 level to support the following career choices:

Law

Medicine

Journalism

Economics

Commerce

Management

It is suitable for students of any or no faith.