



GET READY TO STUDY A LEVEL RELIGIOUS STUDIES

If you are planning to study A Level Religious Studies with us in September, please review this document and complete the required activities. Please bring the completed activities with you at induction.

FAQ

What specification will I study?

You will be studying the OCR Religious Studies specification.

Year 12 will focus on developing skills for extended essay writing. You will study the fundamentals of philosophy of religion and the metaphysics of mind, ethical theories and applied ethics, and the foundations of Christianity.

Year 13 will include the study of meta-ethics, advanced debates in philosophy of religious language and divine attributes, and contemporary debates in theology.

How many lessons will I have a week?

You'll have 4 lessons a week, each lesson is 1 hour and 5 minutes (there will be one double lesson).

Who can I contact if I have a question about this subject?

Abigail Bird, A Level Religious Studies a.bird@barnsley.ac.uk

What subjects go well with Religious Studies?

Politics, English Literature, History, Sociology and Economics

What grades should I have? In addition to the general Sixth Form entry requirements, learners must have grade 5 or above in GCSE English and a humanities subject.

WHAT WILL I STUDY?

In Year 1, you will study the following topics:

Philosophy of Religion:

Plato and Aristotle (metaphysics and epistemology)

Mind, body and soul

The design argument

The cosmological argument

The ontological argument

The argument from religious experience

The problem of evil

Ethics:

Natural law theory

Kantian ethics

Situation ethics

Utilitarianism

Euthanasia

Business ethics

Developments in Christian Thought:

Person of Jesus Christ

Augustine on human nature

Bonhoeffer on duty to God

Knowledge of God

In Year 2, you will study the following topics:

Philosophy:

Attributes of God

Religious Language

Ethics:

Meta-ethical theories

Conscience: psychological and religious views

Applied ethics: sex and relationships.

Developments in Christian Thought:

Secularisation and secularism

Feminism and feminist theology

Marxism and liberation theology

Religious pluralism

WHAT WILL I NEED?

To study the course, you will need the following equipment:

- A folder with dividers
- Lined paper
- Pens and pencils
- Highlighters
- A ruler
- A textbook or revision guide

Students also find it useful to have:

- Flashcards
- A whiteboard and whiteboard pens
- BibleGateway App on their phones

FIND OUT MORE

These activities are to help broaden your understanding of the subject in preparation for studying this subject at an advanced level.

Careers	https://uk.indeed.com/career-advice/finding-a-job/philosophy-degree-jobs
YouTube	https://www.youtube.com/c/IThinkThereforeITeach
Further Reading / Useful websites	https://www.philosophycat.org/philosophy

REQUIRED ACTIVITIES

It is important that all the required activities are completed in preparation for starting your course. Please bring these completed activities with you at induction.

Choosing your A Levels can be a challenge for some learners therefore if you are undecided around which subjects you are planning to study completing these activities will give yourself greater insight into the course to help ensure you have made the right choice.

There are three activities to complete:

- Task 1: Scholars research
- Task 2: Philosophical thinking questions
- Task 3: Miracles sources
- Task 4: critical analysis on ethics

These tasks can be completed in this document if you wish to print it out.

Alternatively you can write this on your own paper but this must be handed in on the first lesson.

Induction Task 1: Scholars research

There are a number of named scholars for Philosophy, Ethics and Religion. Your task over the next few weeks is to create a factfile on each of the ones below. This will help you to become familiar with their key ideas and gain an overview of the developments of philosophical thought and ideas over time.

Name: Aristotle	Born – died:	Place of birth:
Areas linked to:	Quote:	Key idea/s:

Name: Bentham	Born – died:	Place of birth:
Areas linked to:	Quote:	Key idea/s:

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Name: Joseph Fletcher	Born – died:	Place of birth:
Areas linked to:	Quote:	Key idea/s:

Name: Immanuel Kant	Born – died:	Place of birth:
Areas linked to:	Quote:	Key idea/s:

Name: Plato	Born – died:	Place of birth:
Areas linked to:	Quote:	Key idea/s:

Name: William Paley	Born – died:	Place of birth:
Areas linked to:	Quote:	Key idea/s:

Name: Bertrand Russell	Born – died:	Place of birth:
Areas linked to:	Quote:	Key idea/s:

Name: David Hume	Born – died:	Place of birth:
Areas linked to:	Quote:	Key idea/s:

Name: Mary Daly	Born – died:	Place of birth:
Areas linked to:	Quote:	Key idea/s:

Name: Karl Barth	Born – died:	Place of birth:
Areas linked to:	Quote:	Key idea/s:

Name: Gustavo Gutierrez	Born – died:	Place of birth:
Areas linked to:	Quote:	Key idea/s:

Name: St Augustine	Born – died:	Place of birth:
Areas linked to:	Quote:	Key idea/s:

Induction Task 2: Philosophical thinking questions

Write a paragraph with your thoughts on the following questions. This can be your own opinion but you can find some examples to back up your answers. This task involves the kinds of questions we will discuss in the philosophy and ethics sections of the course, so try to think as critically as you can!

1. What do we mean when we say that something is good?

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2. How do we know the difference between appearance and reality?

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This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal black ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page, providing a template for writing or drawing. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal black ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page, providing a template for handwriting practice or general writing. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

7. How can people believe in truths without evidence?

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8. Does evil come from within, and if so, why?

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Induction Task 3: Sources task

Philosophy of Religion: Miracles

Read the sources and then answer the questions

Source 1: March 1st 1950

All 15 choir members arrived 10 minutes late for their choir practice. This was fortunate as at 7.25 there was a large gas explosion, and the building was completely destroyed. Their individual reasons for being late were not extraordinary and there was no hint of a supernatural occurrence. They had never all been late before, however, were late when it was needed for their survival. The probability of them all being late is less than 1 in 16 million. People have described this as a miracle.

Source 2: Jesus Heals a Paralytic

When Jesus again entered Capernaum, the people heard that he had come home. So many gathered that there was no room left, not even outside the door, and he preached the word to them. Some men came, bringing to him a paralytic, carried by four of them. Since they could not get him to Jesus because of the crowd, they made an opening in the roof above Jesus and, after digging through it, lowered the mat the paralyzed man was lying on. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven." ...He said to the paralytic, "I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home." He got up, took his mat and walked out in full view of them all. This amazed everyone and they praised God, saying, "We have never seen anything like this!"

Source 3: R.F. Holland states...

"A coincidence can be taken religiously as a sign and be called a miracle." Holland argues that an event that some people claim to be a coincidence can be called a miracle. He suggests that a religiously significant coincidence may qualify as a miracle. What makes an event a miracle, if it is, is its significance, which is given at least in part by its being an apparent response to a human need."

Source 4: David Hume

"A miracle is a violation of the laws of nature; and as a firm and unalterable experience has established these laws, the proof against a miracle, from the very nature of the fact, is as entire as any argument from experience can possibly be imagined. Why is it more than probable, that all men must die; that lead cannot, of itself, remain suspended in the air; that fire consumes wood, and is extinguished by water; unless it be, that these events are found agreeable to the laws of nature, and there is required a violation of these laws, or in other words, a miracle to prevent them? Nothing is esteemed a miracle, if it ever happen in the common course of nature. It is no miracle

that a man, seemingly in good health, should die on a sudden: because such a kind of death, though more unusual than any other, has yet been frequently observed to happen. But it is a miracle, that a dead man should come to life; because that has never been observed in any age or country. There must, therefore, be a uniform experience against every miraculous event, otherwise the event would not merit that appellation. And as a uniform experience amounts to a proof, there is here a direct and full proof, from the nature of the fact, against the existence of any miracle; nor can such a proof be destroyed, or the miracle rendered credible, but by an opposite proof, which is superior.”

Source 5: Aquinas

“Those things must properly be called miraculous which are done by divine power apart from order generally followed in things.”

Aquinas argues that miracles are caused by God and affect the natural order of the world.

He goes further and classifies 3 type of miracles:

- 1) something done by God that nature could never achieve
- 2) something that nature could do but not in the order as God can (in a miracle)
- 3) something that nature can do but, in this instance, caused by God e.g. rain

Questions:

1. What are differences between source 1 and 2?

2. Why would some argue that source two is a miracle?

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3. What are the differences between Holland and Aquinas' understandings of a miracle?

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4. 'A miracle is just an amazing coincidence, nothing more.' Discuss this statement, using Holland and Aquinas' ideas in your answer.

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Induction Task 4: Critical analysis (ethics)

Read the following article:



Watch the following video:



Use the above resources and your own research to write an essay in answer to the question:

Should we base our judgement of right and wrong by duty?

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]
