

POST 16 SUBJECT OVERVIEW

Name of Subject - Religious Studies

Which Examination Specification is Studied for this Course? AQA Religious Studies 7062B

Why should I study this course? -

Do you enjoy thinking about big questions such as 'Why are we here?', 'Is there a purpose to our existence', 'Why do bad things happen?' or 'Does God exist?'. If the answer is 'Yes', then this is the course for you.

In Religious Studies we develop the age-old academic skill of developing our own views and assessing the arguments of others to critically evaluate our understanding of the philosophy and ethics associated with religion. Whether you are religious, atheist or agnostic, it doesn't matter. Being able to argue your point is what is important here.

Within the course we think about lots of issues such as abortion, capital punishment, embryo research, war, arguments for and against God's existence, the nature of human life, the afterlife, evil and suffering and many other topics which means we have lots of thought provoking discussions. It's a course which makes you question preconceptions you might have, or might not even realise you have! If you like to make your mind melt from thinking too much about difficult questions and don't mind there not being a right answer to a question then this is the course for you.

We will visit places of worship during your time studies in order to extend your knowledge of religion, philosophy and ethics and how this functions in the world today.

Thinking to the future this course will support any degree at university, apprenticeships and also the world of work - where will you ever find a future where you won't have to consider the views of others, critically analyse them and reach your own conclusion? This is exactly what this course will give you the skills to do.

It will also be suitable for students who want to debate their point of view in class and develop their skills in preparation for university. There are also specific career paths and courses which studying this course will be highly beneficial to such as; medicine, health and social care, journalism, uniformed and armed services, travel and tourism, law, sciences and education.

Religious studies is a highly valuable course at university;

- *'There are some advanced level subjects which provide suitable **preparation for entry to university generally...Religious Studies.**'* Russell Group - Informed choices.
- *'...schools and students value **Religious Education as a key subject that provides great preparation for Higher Education.** A level RS is certainly not an easy option. As the research from Durham University proves, it is **more challenging** than some of the so-called 'facilitating' subjects, and universities are recognising this fact.'* Ed Pawson, Chair, National Association of Teachers of RE.

- 'RS A level provides an **excellent foundation for a range of careers** – from medicine to public service to business. Imagine how better prepared a doctor or business professional is if they understand the culture and customs of the individuals they are treating or dealing with. Or how a broad and deep knowledge of different world faiths and beliefs can help young people truly understand the context of events in the Middle East. As our world becomes increasingly interdependent and we interact with more diverse groups day to day, **RE is becoming ever more relevant. ...students, universities and employers clearly recognise this fact...**' Comment from John Keast, Chair, Religious Education Council of England and Wales (REC)
- 'Both Oxford and Cambridge University include Religious Studies in the top level list of **'generally suitable Arts A levels'**. Applicants with Religious Studies A level were **more likely** to gain admission to study History at Oxford University in 2012 than those with A levels in many 'facilitating' subjects. **20%** of students admitted to Oxford University to study **mathematics** in 2011 had an RS A level (more than those with Economics, Physics and Business Studies A levels). NATRE end of year report.

What GCSE Qualifications Support the Study of this Course? While studying GCSE RS will have obvious links to this course it does not give a great advantage to students. A good level of written English, hard work and an inquisitive mind are all that are needed to study this course!

What are the Qualification Requirements for this Course? 5 passes - GCSE 9-5, Pass or better at level 2 BTEC

How is the Course Delivered? You will receive 5 hours of contact time with your teacher each week, outside of that you will be expected to be revising consistently throughout the course, along with being set specific tasks for homework including reading to deepen your knowledge, group projects, research and essays.

Independent study is an important part of this course, not only will you need to revise throughout the course but you will also be set reading on topics covered to deepen your knowledge. Often these will be specific to your target grade or the level you are currently working at.

Google Classroom is used on a regular basis to share lesson materials, homework resources and other revision resources. We also use Google Drive to complete group projects allowing you to develop digital literacy skills for your future.

The nature of the course means that we will look at many current issues as and when they occur, students will be encouraged to read around current affairs in their own time and apply this to their learning.

Subject Overview		
Half Term	Year 12	Year 13
Autumn 1	Arguments for the existence of God Evil and suffering	Self, death and afterlife Meta Ethics

Autumn 2	Evil and suffering Religious Experiences	Free Will and moral responsibility Conscience
Spring 1	Natural Moral Law Situation Ethics Virtue Ethics	Bentham and Kant Christianity, gender and sexuality Christianity and science
Spring 2	Application to ethical issues Sources of Wisdom and authority God	Christianity and the challenge of secularisation Christianity, migration and religious pluralism
Summer 1	Self, death and afterlife Moral conduct	Dialogues Revision and exam preparation
Summer 2	Expressions of religious identity Religious Language Miracles	Exam preparation

How is the Course Assessed?

Throughout the course you will have regular opportunities to develop your essay writing skills ready for your final exams at the end of Year 13. There are 2 essay styles which you will learn - AO1 and AO2. AO1 essays are interested in your knowledge of a topic and AO2 essays are interested in your opinion about a topic and how you evaluate the views of other scholars surrounding this topic. At the end of the 2 year course you will learn about 'Dialogue' essays which are worth 25 marks. These are nothing to worry about! They are asking you to combine the skills you will already have developed writing AO1 and AO2 essays into a longer piece which covers both the knowledge you have learnt and your views about a topic.

Your essays in Religious Studies will be longer and more complex essays than you have previously written at GCSE, but don't worry - you will be supported to learn and develop the skills needed to be successful at writing these.

The final examinations;

Component 1	Component 2
Philosophy of religion and ethics	Study of religion and dialogues
Written exam: 3 hours 100 Marks 50% of grade	Written exam: 3 hours 100 Marks 50% of grade
4x 10 mark questions 4x 15 mark questions	2x 10 mark questions 2x 15 mark questions 2x 25 mark questions
10 mark questions – assessment objective 1, demonstrate knowledge and understanding 15 mark questions – assessment objective 2, analyse and evaluate	

What is our Recommended Subject Reading list to Support your Study?

There are some great books out there that can really help you to get your grounding in the subject. Some really useful ones are;

- Peter Vardy - The Puzzle of God
- Peter Vardy - The Puzzle of Christianity
- Peter Vardy and Charlotte Vardy - Bible Matters
- Peter Vardy - The Puzzle of Evil
- Peter Vardy and Charlotte Vardy - Ethics Matters
- Jostein Gaarder - Sophie's World
- Neil Gaiman and Terry Prachett - Good Omens
- Christopher Moore - Lamb: The Gospel according to Biff, Christ's childhood pal
- Richard Dawkins - The God Delusion
- Alistar McGrath and Joanna Collicutt McGrath - The Dawkins Delusion



If you have access to some streaming services there are also some great shows too;

- Good Omens - Amazon Prime
- The Story of God with Morgan Freeman - Netflix
- Louis Theroux - Netflix
- Left Behind - Netflix
- Lucifer - Amazon Prime and Netflix
- The Good Place - Netflix

There are also some great Youtube channels which you can watch too;

Crash Course - this has a great Philosophy playlist, but also some useful videos on the World Mythology and World History playlists.

The Bible Project - this is a great channel which looks at the Bible, it's history and it's narratives. Christianity is the religion we look at so an understanding of the basics of the Bible is useful, this channel has some good playlists which are designed to introduce the Bible to beginners.

Wireless Philosophy - this has lots of videos about philosophy, they are more thematic and a little more complex than Crash Course.

