

RELIGIOUS STUDIES

The Course

Religious Studies is a broad and wide-ranging qualification that will help you in your future career no matter what you go on to do. The course is formed of three components: Christianity, Ethics and Philosophy. You will develop critical and analytical skills that you will transfer to any discipline of study and career. You will:

- Investigate ultimate questions about the purpose of life, the existence of God, the basis of morality and how to make sense of moral dilemmas
- Study topics that explain the diversity of life and religion in the modern world
- Develop deep critical and analytical thinking skills
- Understand contemporary ethical and religious issues such as medical ethics or the relationship between science and religion
- Develop communication skills and learn how to develop and evaluate arguments

This qualification significantly complements other AS/A Level qualifications that you may study by providing you with the essential tools to be a critical thinker in any field, i.e. Medicine and Health Sciences, Scientific Research, Law, Journalism, Psychology, Art and many others.

Relevant questions

Here are some of the questions that you will be tackling:

1. How can we know what is right and wrong? How do we make ethical decisions?
2. How can we best decide what is good and bad?
3. Is morality just what is right for me? If so, what challenges might we encounter?
4. Does God exist? What kinds of arguments can be provided for the existence of God? How strong are they?
5. Has Science disproved Religion? To what extent can Science disprove Religion?
6. How far does the problem of evil and suffering challenge the existence of God?

Tasks

1. Choose one of these questions and create a mind map (or similar) reflecting the issues involved in your chosen question and how they may be tackled. You may also pose further questions.
2. Choose a book and a film or TV Programme from the list below and write a review considering the religious, ethical and philosophical questions reflected in them.

Books

Sophie's World (particularly chapter 1) by Jostein Gaarder

The Puzzle of Ethics by Peter Vardy and Paul Grosch

Ethics Matters by Peter Vardy and Charlotte Vardy

The Puzzle of God by Peter Vardy

The God Delusion by Richard Dawkins

Films/TV Programmes

The Story of God by Morgan Freeman (Netflix)

The Good Place (Netflix, various seasons and episodes, ethical issues)

Dead Man Walking (capital punishment, forgiveness, redemption, freedom)

A Short Stay in Switzerland (euthanasia, suffering)

Other websites

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b007zpll>

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCNUJUJtYwZTSKymLPry08cw/playlists>