



KIRKHAM
GRAMMAR SCHOOL

RELIGION, PHILOSOPHY & ETHICS

Studying Religious Studies at A-level not only promotes a positive awareness of the major religions of the world, it also promotes discussion and debate in a wider philosophical and ethical context. The course does not assume religious belief and will suit people of no religious faith or someone from a faith background.

It is hoped that A-level Religious Studies will encourage our students to grow and develop into mature adults who will develop a good solid knowledge and understanding of religion and its relationship with man's quest for meaning in life and the expression of such quests. It will also develop individuals who are encouraged to think for themselves, yet have great empathy. It will also develop the much needed skills of critical analysis, independent thought and evaluation. These are skills required to study most subjects at university level.

THE COURSE

A-Level

Religious Studies is an acceptable entry qualification for all universities in the UK. The A-level has recently been reformed. It is not necessary for you to have a GCSE in Religious Studies for you to study it at A-level.

The RPE department offers A-level Religious Studies from Eduqas. This qualification is split into three components.

Component 1 – Christianity

Component 2 – Philosophy of Religion

Component 3 – Religion and Ethics

Christianity

The unit is a detailed and interesting look at the world religion of Christianity. Obviously the religious figure of Jesus will be studied in depth, while also pondering big questions about the belief of the incarnation. Religious concepts such as the trinity, atonement, faith and community will also be discussed. Also, the patriarchal view of God. Social and historical developments within the religion are also looked at, including secularisation, feminism, science and migration. Studies will be taken further by looking at multi-culturalism,

pluralism and diversity. Finally, religious practices will be studied with a look at what it really means to be a Christian in the 21st Century.

Philosophy of Religion

Is there a God? Can it be proved? Why do people stop believing in God? Why do people have no belief? These are just some of the questions looked at in this section of the course. The course begins by looking at arguments for the existence of God and challenges to religious beliefs; like the problem of evil and the differing psychological approaches leading to the rise of atheism. This continues with an exploration of religious experience and religious language.

Religion & Ethics

Is there a universal moral law? Is morality relative to time and culture? How do we decide what is the right thing to do? Should we lie to save someone's life?

All three aspects of studying ethics are covered by this course. Normative ethics makes up the bulk of the course (Virtue Ethics, Natural Law, Situation Ethics, Utilitarianism), which are the applied to a variety of given issues (abortion, euthanasia, animal experimentation). Meta-ethical debates are looked at in detail, as are the arguments put forward in the freewill and determinism debate.

This is a two year course and exams will be sat at the end of Upper Sixth. However, there is an option for students to study an abridged version of the course over one year if they do not wish to take the full A-level. They would be certified with an AS qualification. The two courses (AS and A-level) are fully co-teachable.

CAREERS

An A-level course in Religious Studies links well with many other A-level courses and provides a good foundation for degree subjects such as English, Government, History, Law, Philosophy, Politics, Psychology and Theology. As well as studying PPE (Politics, Philosophy and Economics) many of the issues are also relevant to further study within the sciences. The skills and knowledge developed will be helpful in any discipline or further career. For example:

- Journalism and Broadcasting
- Counselling and Psychotherapy
- Publishing
- Law
- Librarianship
- Stockbroking
- Social Work
- Teaching
- Civil Service
- Psychology

University admissions tutors regard a qualification in Religious Studies as a serious academic subject. It shows a well-rounded individual, who possesses excellent literacy skills, as well as a lively, enquiring and analytical mind.