



Philosophy

Why you should follow this course

A demanding academic subject, philosophy provides students with an excellent opportunity to develop their skills of analysis and argument, as they wrestle with some of the biggest questions ever to face humanity. Questions concerning the nature of knowledge and reality, how we should live our lives, if body and mind are separate and whether there are rational reasons for believing in God will all be considered as part of this exciting and challenging course.

The skills we will develop provide an excellent progression route to university courses and Philosophy combines very well with a wide range of subjects across our Year 12 offer.

What teaching and learning methods will be used?

Teaching and learning will primarily take the form of seminar style lessons and independent study. Students will be encouraged to develop their skills of argument, analysis and evaluation through discussion and debate. They will be expected to read independently between lessons, keep organised notes and complete written exam style questions.

As part of the course students will attend two inter-school Philosophy conferences at Carlisle Cathedral where they will work alongside professionals and academics to enrich their studies.

How will the course be assessed?

The course is examined through two 3 hour exams:

- Paper 1: Epistemology and moral philosophy
- Paper 2: The metaphysics of God and the metaphysics of mind

On both exams there are a variety of question styles ranging from short definitions to essays. There is no controlled assessment.

What can you do when you have your qualification?

A level philosophy is a highly respected qualification, complimenting the arts, humanities, sciences and social sciences. A very wide variety of university courses would welcome applicants with A level philosophy. If you are interested in a career involving law, politics, journalism, business (amongst many others) then philosophy could be for you!

For further information or advice please contact

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Examination Board: AQA
Qualification: A Level

COURSE CONTENT

YEAR 12

Epistemology (theory of knowledge) – *What can we know?*

Can we be sure that there is a world around us? Is there anything we can be sure of at all? What is knowledge? Do we learn everything through experience or is some knowledge innate?

Moral Philosophy – *How do we decide what is right or wrong?*

A study of three ethical theories: Utilitarianism (we should do whatever brings the best consequences), Kant's deontology (we should always follow the rules), and virtue ethics (we should do what develops a good character).

Between Year 12 and 13 each student will complete an independent enrichment project on an area of philosophy of their choice. This will be presented to the class in September.

YEAR 13

The Metaphysics of Mind – *Are my mind and body separate?*

What is the relationship between the body and the mind? What is consciousness? Is there a difference between a mind and a computer? If you swapped brains with someone which person would be you?

The Metaphysics of God – *Can it be rational to believe in God?*

What arguments have been presented for God's existence and can they be criticised? If there were a God, can the existence of suffering be explained? Could an all-powerful God create a stone He couldn't lift?

