

RELIGIOUS STUDIES

Religious Studies is an ideal option for those of you who enjoy exploring those perplexing questions about life, the universe and everything: ‘Is there a God?’; ‘Why is there suffering?’; ‘Why should we live morally?’; ‘Is it ever right to end a life?’ ‘What happens when we die?’.

The Maynard Religious Studies course follows the OCR A-level Religious Studies specifications (H173, H573). The course comprises three equally weighted areas of study: Philosophy of Religion, Religion and Ethics and Developments in Christian Thought.

This syllabus provides an opportunity to explore the rich heritage of western philosophical and ethical thought and to undertake a systematic study of Christianity. Students will encounter key thinkers such as Plato, Aristotle, St Thomas Aquinas, Immanuel Kant, David Hume, J. S. Mill and Karl Marx, as well as prominent philosophers and theologians of the 20th century and the present day.

This qualification is designed to nurture the development of critical and reflective thinking with the aim of developing a greater understanding and appreciation of religious beliefs and teachings, as well as the disciplines of ethics and philosophy of religion. Emphasis is placed on critical analysis and the construction of balanced, informed arguments within the context of religious, philosophical and ethical awareness.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

It is not necessary to have GCSE Religious Studies, or to be ‘religious’ to do this subject. What is necessary is an open, inquiring mind, plenty of enthusiasm and a willingness to engage in discussion and debate. All assessment is by essays written in the examinations so good standard of written English is required and you will be expected to do a lot of reading to support your learning in class.

HIGHER EDUCATION AND CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

This course will enable you to develop a range of transferable skills which will be invaluable to you whatever you go on to do afterwards. Universities and employers welcome Religious Studies at A-level. The subject enables you to analyse and evaluate both your own arguments and those of others, whilst exposing you to a wide range of current issues and debates that will provide an excellent

foundation for Higher Education. You might choose to pursue a degree course in Philosophy, Religious Studies or Theology; alternatively, Religious Studies provides a strong basis for a wide range of other subjects such as Law, Politics and Sociology as well as History and English. Many of our students choose RS to support their study of the sciences. Knowledge of ethics and, in particular, the study of the ethics of euthanasia would be of particular relevance and interest to those considering applying to read Medicine.

COURSE CONTENT

Exam Board: OCR

Philosophy Of Religion

Ancient philosophical influences; arguments about the existence or non-existence of God; the nature and impact of religious experience; the challenge for religious belief of the problem of evil; the nature of the soul, mind and body; the possibility of life after death; ideas about the nature of God; issues in religious language.

Religion and Ethics

Normative ethical theories; The application of ethical theory to two contemporary issues of importance (sex and sexuality and euthanasia); Ethical language and thought; Debates surrounding the significant ideas of conscience and free will; The influence on ethical thought of developments in religious beliefs and the philosophy of religion.

Developments in Religious Thought

Christian beliefs, values and teachings, their interconnections and how they vary historically and in the contemporary world; Sources of religious wisdom and authority; Practices which shape and express religious identity, and how these vary within a tradition; Significant social and historical developments in theology and religious thought; Key themes related to the relationship between religion and society.

You will find more details at www.ocr.org.uk.