

# Religious Studies



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Information for  
**students and parents**

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# RELIGIOUS STUDIES

Religious Studies is an ideal option for those of you who enjoy exploring 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 specification (H573), which 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 study of key concepts in Christianity. Students will encounter significant 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 comprehension 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 understanding.

## 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 a 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 as a rigorous academic subject. It 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 (Plato and Aristotle); 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

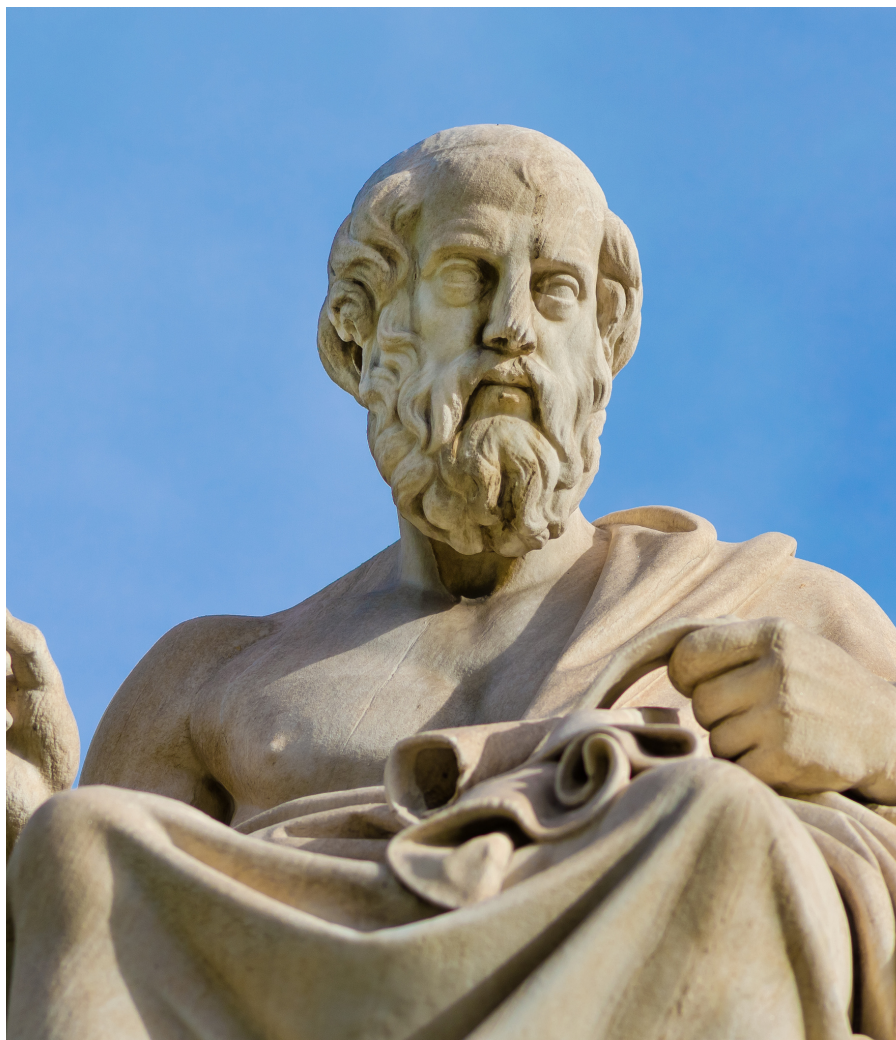
Normative ethical theories (Natural Law, Situation Ethics, Kantian Ethics and Utilitarianism); the application of ethical theory to contemporary issues of importance (sex and sexuality, business ethics, euthanasia); ethical language and thought; debates surrounding the significant ideas of conscience and free will.

### Developments in Christian Thought

Augustine's teaching on human nature; death and the afterlife; knowledge of God's existence; the person of Jesus Christ; Christian moral principles; Christian moral action (Dietrich Bonhoeffer); religious pluralism and theology; religious pluralism and society; gender and society; gender and theology; the challenge of secularism; liberation theology and Marx.

You will find more details at  
[www.ocr.org.uk](http://www.ocr.org.uk).





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**The Maynard School**

Denmark  
Road Exeter  
Devon  
EX1 1SJ

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**Enquiries**

Tel: +44 (0)1392 355998  
[admissions@maynard.co.uk](mailto:admissions@maynard.co.uk)  
[www.maynard.co.uk](http://www.maynard.co.uk)

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