



Religious Studies for AS/A Level

Philosophy, Theology and Ethics



Religious Studies for AS/A Level

- We have chosen to study the following three units: **Philosophy, Ethics and Theology**



- Usually you will have two teachers: one will teach you the Philosophy course with some of the Theology, and the other will teach you the Ethics course with the rest of the Theology course.

The Nitty Gritty!

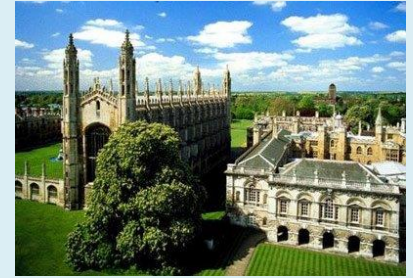


- No coursework
- 3 exams at the end of Yr 12 (AS) –
 one each for Philosophy, Ethics and Theology.
- For each exam you will write two essays
- The A level exams at the end of Yr 13 –
 another 3 exams, three essays for each exam.

You do not need to have taken GCSE RE in order to take the AS/A2 Religious Studies, so long as you have gained a good grade in another humanity (e.g. History, English)



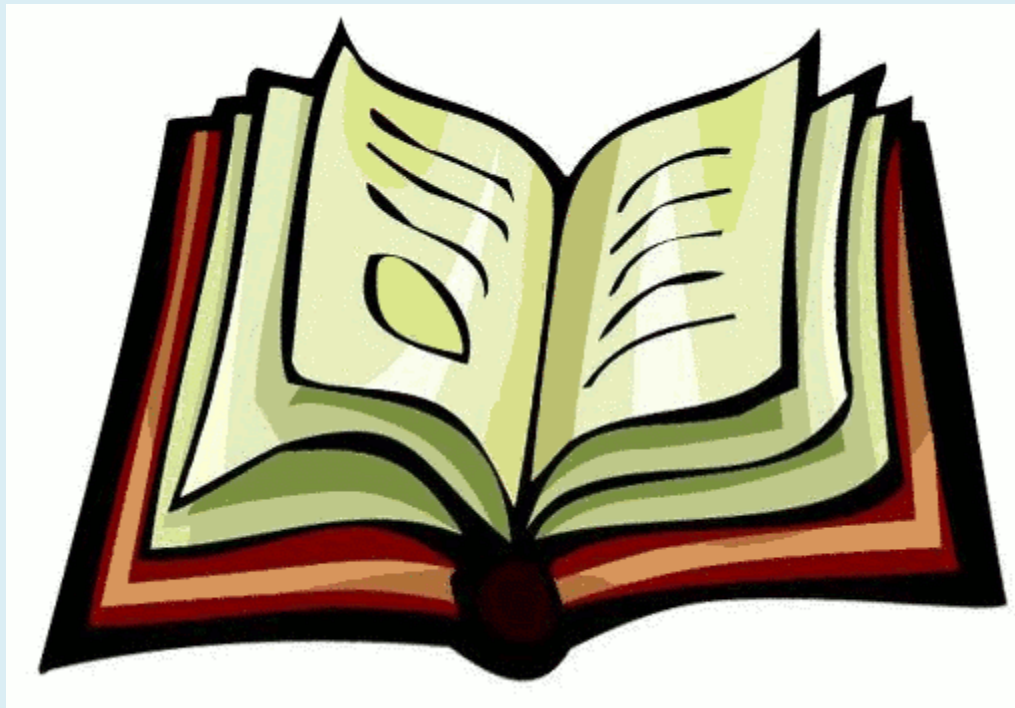
How do Universities regard Religious Studies A Level?



- It is highly regarded in the top universities.
- This is because of the skills that it requires.
- To do well you need to be able to explain various theories clearly, weigh up their various merits through careful analysis, and then argue a case convincingly justifying your conclusions.
- It is obviously directly useful for Philosophy, Theology, or related degree e.g. Anthropology, Religious Studies,
- It is also very useful for Law, History, English or other Humanity, and
- See the list of courses studied by past RE students at Uni

What is taught?

- See the syllabus summaries on the next few slides



AS Philosophy of Religion and Religious Ethics

AS Philosophy

- Plato, Aristotle – theories of knowledge
- Soul, mind and body
- Args for Existence of God – cosmological, teleological, ontological, religious experience - explanation and challenges to each
- Args against existence of God – e.g. problem of evil explanation and challenges

AS Ethics

- Ethical Theories - Situation Ethics, Natural Law, Utilitarianism, Kantian Ethics
- Applied Ethics – Euthanasia, Business Ethics

- **AS Theology (Developments in Christian Thought)**
- Augustine on human nature, death and the afterlife
- Natural and revealed theology
- Christian ethics - sources of authority
- Dietrich Bonhoeffer – an example of Christian moral action

If you plan to take the A level you will study the AS syllabus plus the following topics

Philosophy

- The nature or attributes of God
- Religious Language: Negative, Analogical or Symbolic
- Religious Language: Twentieth Century Perspectives
- Logical positivism, Wittgenstein, falsification, the cognitive/non-cognitive debate

Ethics

- What is conscience, and what role should it have in an ethical argument?
- Meta Ethics (the language of ethics)
- Applied Ethics – sexual ethics

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Theology (DCT)

- Religious pluralism – theology and society
- Gender - theology and society

- **Challenges to Religion**

Secularism, Liberation Theology and Marxism

Philosophers studied

- Named on the syllabus are: Plato, Aristotle, Anselm, Descartes, Kant, Russell, Aquinas, Copleston, Hume, Paley, Bentham, J.S. Mill, Darwin, Freud, Augustine, Irenaeus, Dawkins, Polkinghorne, Swinburne, Hick, Peter Singer, AJ Ayer, Flew, Wittgenstein, Tillich, William James, Teresa of Avila, Wiles, Boethius,
- And lots of others!

(The ones in red are still alive!)