



Religious Studies A level (OCR)

Why study this subject?

Religious Studies is a challenging and thought-provoking academic subject that explores some of the most important questions facing humanity. Is there evidence that God exists? How should we decide what is morally right? Why does suffering exist? How have Christian beliefs developed and responded to changes in society?

You do not need to be religious to study this course. You will examine religious and non-religious perspectives, consider the arguments of influential thinkers and develop your own reasoned conclusions. The course develops highly transferable skills, including critical thinking, analysis, evaluation, debate and extended essay writing.

Entry Requirements

Grade 5 or above in Religious Studies, grade 6 preferred.

Content

The course is divided equally into three components:

- *Philosophy of Religion*, in which students explore ancient philosophical influences; the relationship between the soul, mind and body; arguments for and against the existence of God; the nature and impact of religious experience; the problem of evil and suffering; the nature and attributes of God; and issues in religious language.
- *Religion and Ethics*, in which students study Natural Law, Situation Ethics, Kantian Ethics and Utilitarianism; the application of these theories to euthanasia and business ethics; ethical language and thought; debates surrounding conscience; and sexual ethics.
- *Developments in Christian Thought*, in which students explore human nature, sin and salvation; death and the afterlife; knowledge of God's existence; the person of Jesus Christ; Christian moral principles and action; religious pluralism; gender in theology and society; the challenge of secularism; and Liberation Theology and Marx.

Assessment

The course is assessed through three written examinations at the end of Year 13, one for each component. Each examination lasts two hours, is worth 120 marks and contributes 33.3% of the final qualification. Each paper contains four essay questions, of which students answer three.



Future course and possible careers

Religious Studies is a well-regarded academic qualification that supports progression to a wide range of university courses and career pathways. It is particularly relevant to subjects such as Philosophy, Theology, Law, Politics, History, Sociology, Psychology and English, but students are not restricted to these areas.

The course develops transferable skills in critical thinking, analysis, communication, debate and extended writing. These skills are valuable in almost any career, particularly those involving people, decision-making or the evaluation of complex ideas. Possible career areas include law, education, healthcare, journalism, politics, the Civil Service, business, charities and public relations, among many others.