



Philosophy and Ethics KS5 Curriculum

The aims and rationale of the curriculum in Y12-13 are:

Rationale and Ethos

The Hitchin Girls' School Philosophy and Ethics department holds that its purpose is to introduce students to two fundamental questions. Firstly: what kind of thing (in the broadest possible sense) is it reasonable to believe? Secondly: what kind of thing (in the broadest possible sense) is it good to do? These questions are, respectively, the foundational questions of Philosophy and Ethics as academic disciplines.

We hold that this ought to be our purpose for two reasons: firstly, simply because these existential issues are an inescapable part of the Human Condition, and the search for deep wisdom that studying them involves is a source of inherent value. Secondly, we believe that the process of exploring these questions will aid students in becoming confident; intellectually mature and compassionate people, as well as informed; tolerant and engaged citizens.

We hold that properly introducing these questions requires teaching students at all Key Stages the skills of Explanation and Evaluation. That is: to see a philosophical or ethical issue with clarity; to understand a sufficient range of existing approaches and answers to it, and then to come to an informed personal judgement upon it.

We hold that students will require substantive knowledge; curriculum knowledge and personal knowledge to do this. The substantive knowledge of our subject is the intellectual tradition that has been produced by aeons of philosophers, theologians and other thinkers considering the questions outlined above. The curriculum knowledge of our subject is the ability to engage with and think critically about that intellectual tradition. The personal knowledge of our subject is produced by the student as we facilitate them reflecting upon what they themselves value, and how what they have learned coheres with those personal values.

We hold that the study of the world's religions is an invaluable part of developing these skills and knowledges. The world's religions are repositories of deep wisdom that are relevant to the issues we explore, but they are also examples of value-systems that students might be unfamiliar with, and hence examining them acts as a spur for students to reflect on what they themselves consider to be important. Hence the department will approach religion very broadly: as a set of philosophical claims; and as a sociological phenomenon, and as a lived psychological reality.

We hold that in order to achieve any of the above, our classrooms must be inclusive and open spaces where students feel welcomed into a common community of inquiry and exploration. Our approach is therefore never confessional; dogmatic or polemical. Whilst restraints of decency and reasonableness apply, fundamentally we exist not to teach students *what* to think, but *how* to think.

Curriculum Design

The A-Level follows AQA Religious Studies, 7062 (2A.) All topics are compulsory, and so there were no decisions to make about what content to include in the KS5 curriculum.

The focus on explaining and evaluating as core skills is continued seamlessly from the GCSE, as they are the command words for AO1 and AO2 questions respectively, exactly as at GCSE. Hence students already find themselves well-equipped for the requirements of the exam, and minimal curriculum time needs to be spent specifically on exam skills, allowing more philosophical discussion to take place.

Curriculum Sequencing

The curriculum is designed to be taught simultaneously by two teachers: one teaching Component 1A (Philosophy of religion) and half of Component 2 (Study of Christianity), the other teaching Component 1B (Ethics) and the remaining half of Component 2. Whilst each topic is notionally self-contained, a close examination of the content of each reveals that many of them are easier to grasp if students already have certain prior knowledge in place. The order of topics taught thus has a single organising principle – namely to look at what implicit knowledge is assumed by each topic, arranging the curriculum schedule so that by the time a topic is taught, students have the background knowledge required to understand it most easily. For example, although the textbook places *Arguments for the Existence of God* before the *Concept of God* we elect to teach the latter topic first. Much as you cannot go searching for the yeti until you know what a yeti looks like, students need to understand what God actually is before they can ascertain whether He exists. Similarly in Ethics, clearly the *Normative Ethical Theories* need to be taught before the material on applying these theories to specific issues, as students cannot apply a theory until they understand what the theory has to say. In some cases the implicit knowledge assumed is less apparent than in these examples, but in every case it remains the logic that dictated the sequencing of the curriculum.

Philosophy and Ethics KS5 Curriculum Map

Year 12 (First half)	Autumn 1 Teacher A	Autumn 2 Teacher A	Autumn 1 + 2 Teacher B	Spring 1 Teacher A	Spring 1 + 2 Teacher B
Topic	Concept of God	Arguments for the Existence of God	Normative Ethical Theories	Evil and Suffering	Application of Normative Ethical Theories
Content: what will students know?	1) Monotheism and Ethical Monotheism 2) God's qualities of omnipotence; omniscience and transcendence 3) The Genesis account, and its implications for the nature of God 4) The challenge of self-contradiction to God's qualities 5) The doctrine of the Trinity 6) Anthropomorphism 7) The debate around God's gender 8) Understanding the Person of Jesus 9) AO1 Exam skills 10) AO2 Exam skills	1) Key philosophical concepts 2) The cosmological argument 3) Hume's objections to the cosmological argument 4) Russell's objections to the cosmological argument 5) The Design argument 6) Modern interpretations of the Design Argument (Fine-Tuning argument) 7) Darwin as a response to the Design Argument 8) Hume's objections to the Design Argument 9) The Ontological Argument 10) Gaunilo's objections to the Ontological Argument 11) Kant's objections to the Ontological Argument 12) The value of apologetics for Christianity	1) Teleological vs deontological v character-based ethics 2) The origins of Natural Law 3) Key features of Natural Law 4) The Primary and Secondary Precepts 5) Aristotle's doctrine of the Four Causes 6) Proportionalism 7) The Doctrine of Double Effect 8) Strengths and weaknesses of NML 9) Fletcher's situation ethics 10) Fletchers reassessment of mainstream Christian ethics 11) Fletcher's four presuppositions 12) Fletcher's six ethical propositions 13) Strengths and weaknesses of Fletcher's situation ethics 14) Virtue ethics with reference to Aristotle 15) The concept of eudaimonia 16) Aristotle's division of the soul 17) The doctrine of the mean 18) Aristotle's moral virtues 19) Strengths and weaknesses of Aristotle's virtue ethics	1) Introduction to the Problem of Evil 2) The logical vs evidential versions of the Problem of Evil 3) The expression of the Problem of Evil in the Inconsistent Triad 4) Hick's Soul-Making Theodicy 5) Criticisms of Hick's Soul-Making Theodicy 6) Hick's response to criticisms, with reference to Epistemic Distance 7) The Free Will Defence 8) Responses to the Free Will Defence 9) Evaluating the Free Will Defence with reference to Plantinga's "possible worlds" presentation of the debate. 10) Process Theology 11) Criticisms of Process Theology.	Application of Normative Ethical Theories to: A) Everyday ethical dilemmas 1) Theft 2) Lying B) Issues of Human Life and Death 1) Embryo research 2) Cloning 3) Designer babies 4) Abortion 5) Euthanasia 6) Capital punishment C) Issues of Non-Human Life and Death 1) Vegetarianism 2) Intensive farming 3) Cloning 4) Blood sports 5) Organ transplantation
Skills: What will students be able to do?	1) Explain the relevant Christian beliefs and theology in the topic. 2) Explain the relevance of these beliefs to modern Christianity. 3) Explain the disagreements between different denominations or scholars on these beliefs. 4) Explain any ethical or philosophical debates these beliefs raise. 5) Evaluate the controversies outlined in (3) and (4), coming to a justified personal conclusion.	1) Explain each of the three arguments for the existence of God, including their philosophical context and assumptions. 2) Explain a range of objections to these three arguments. 3) Evaluate the arguments and objections, coming to a justified personal conclusion on the existence of God.	1) Explain each of the three main ethical theories presented, including their philosophical context and assumptions. 2) Explain a range of strengths and weaknesses of these theories. 3) Evaluate these theories and objections, coming to a justified personal conclusion on which, if any, is the correct approach to ethics.	1) Explain both versions of the problem of evil 2) Explain each of the three theodicies responding to the problem of evil 3) Explain a range of objections to these three theodicies. 4) Evaluate how successfully the theodicies respond to the problem of evil, coming to a justified personal conclusion on whether the problem has a convincing solution.	1) Explain the relevant empirical facts about each of the ethical issues covered. 2) Explain what conclusion each normative theory would come to about the rightness or wrongness of each issue. 3) Evaluating the conclusions reached by each ethical theory, coming to a justified personal conclusion on the plausibility of each.
Other: Literacy, numeracy, ethos etc.	1) Diversity of worldviews, cultural capital. 2) Critical thinking 3) Literacy 4) Debate, discussion and oracy skills	1) Diversity of worldviews, cultural capital. 2) Critical thinking 3) Debate, discussion and oracy skills	1) Diversity of worldviews, cultural capital. 2) Ethical reasoning 3) Debate, discussion and oracy skills	1) Diversity of worldviews, cultural capital. 2) Critical thinking 3) Debate, discussion and oracy skills	1) Diversity of worldviews, cultural capital. 2) Ethical reasoning 3) Debate, discussion and oracy skills 4) Knowledge of current affairs, citizenship
Assessment	End of topic assessment in form of exam-style essay.	End of topic assessment in form of exam-style essay.	End of topic assessment in form of exam-style essay.	End of topic assessment in form of exam-style essay.	End of topic assessment in form of exam-style essay.

Philosophy and Ethics KS5 Curriculum Map

Year 12 (Second half)	Spring 2 Teacher A	Summer 1 Teacher A	Summer 1 Teacher B	Summer 2 Teacher A	Summer 2 Teacher B
Topic	Religious Experience	Sources of Wisdom and Authority	Good conduct and Key Moral Principles	Self, Death and Afterlife	Expressions of Religious Identity
Content: what will students know?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Augustine’s categorisation of religious visions 2) William James’s account of religious experiences 3) Walter Stace’s account of religious experiences 4) Challenges to religious experiences from ethnogens. 5) Challenges to religious experiences from Freudian psychoanalysis 6) Challenges to religious experiences from Persinger’s “God Helmet” 7) Challenges to religious experiences from Temporal Lobe Epilepsy 8) James’s Interaction Model as a response to these challenges 9) Swinburne’s Principles of Testimony and Credulity as a response to these challenges. 10) The influence of religious experiences on the history of Christianity. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Introduction to the history of the Bible 2) Evangelical approaches to exegesis 3) Catholic approaches to exegesis 4) Neo-Orthodox approaches to exegesis 5) Liberal approaches to exegesis 6) Introduction to Church history 7) Catholic approaches to Church authority 8) Protestant approaches to Church authority 9) Different denominational interpretations of Jesus’ authority 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Denominational diversity between Protestant and Catholics for ethical conduct. 2) Justification by works 3) Justification by faith 4) Predestination 5) Reference to the sermon on the mount 6) Sanctity of life 7) Application of sanctity of life principles 8) Just War Theory 9) Application of JWT to Weapons of Mass Destruction 10) Dominion and Stewardship 11) Diversity of theological opinion on Key Moral Principles 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Purpose of life as Glorifying God 2) Purpose of life as Preparing for Judgement 3) Purpose of life as building God’s Kingdom 4) The existence and concept of the Soul 5) Bodily vs Spiritual resurrection 6) Judgement Day 7) Heaven, Hell and Purgatory 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Baptism 2) Baptism in Catholic tradition 3) Baptism in Protestant tradition 4) The controversy around infant baptism 5) Holy Communion in the Catholic Church 6) Holy Communion in the Baptist tradition 7) Mission 8) Evangelism
Skills: What will students be able to do?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Explain each of the three accounts of religious experiences, including their philosophical context and assumptions, and be able to categories examples of religious experiences according to this taxonomy. 2) Explain a range of objections to the veridicality of these experiences. 3) Evaluate the arguments and objections, coming to a justified personal conclusion on the existence of veridical religious experiences, and the resulting implications for theological thought and practice. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Explain the relevant Christian beliefs and theology in the topic. 2) Explain the relevance of these beliefs to modern Christianity. 3) Explain the disagreements between different denominations or scholars on these beliefs. 4) Explain any ethical or philosophical debates these beliefs raise. 5) Evaluate the controversies outlined in (3) and (4), coming to a justified personal conclusion. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Explain the relevant Christian beliefs and theology in the topic. 2) Explain the relevance of these beliefs to modern Christianity. 3) Explain the disagreements between different denominations or scholars on these beliefs. 4) Explain any ethical or philosophical debates these beliefs raise. 5) Evaluate the controversies outlined in (3) and (4), coming to a justified personal conclusion. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Explain the relevant Christian beliefs and theology in the topic. 2) Explain the relevance of these beliefs to modern Christianity. 3) Explain the disagreements between different denominations or scholars on these beliefs. 4) Explain any ethical or philosophical debates these beliefs raise. 5) Evaluate the controversies outlined in (3) and (4), coming to a justified personal conclusion. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Explain the relevant Christian beliefs and theology in the topic. 2) Explain the relevance of these beliefs to modern Christianity. 3) Explain the disagreements between different denominations or scholars on these beliefs. 4) Explain any ethical or philosophical debates these beliefs raise. 5) Evaluate the controversies outlined in (3) and (4), coming to a justified personal conclusion.
Other: Literacy, numeracy, ethos etc.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Diversity of worldviews, cultural capital. 2) Critical thinking 3) Debate, discussion and oracy skills 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Diversity of worldviews, cultural capital. 2) Critical thinking 3) Debate, discussion and oracy skills 4) History of relevant Biblical periods. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Diversity of worldviews, cultural capital. 2) Critical thinking 3) Debate, discussion and oracy skills 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Diversity of worldviews, cultural capital. 2) Critical thinking 3) Debate, discussion and oracy skills 4) Personal response to existential questions. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Diversity of worldviews, cultural capital. 2) Critical thinking 3) Debate, discussion and oracy skills
Assessment	End of topic assessment in form of exam-style essay.	End of topic assessment in form of exam-style essay.	End of topic assessment in form of exam-style essay.	End of topic assessment in form of exam-style essay.	End of topic assessment in form of exam-style essay.

Philosophy and Ethics KS5 Curriculum Map

Year 13 (Second half)	Spring 2 Teacher A	Spring 2 Teacher B	Summer 1 Teacher A	Summer 1 Teacher B	Summer 2 Teacher A	Summer 2 Teacher B
Topic	Religious Language	A) Conscience B) Christianity, Gender and Sexuality	Exam skills focus on dialogues questions	Christianity, Migration and Religious Pluralism	Revision and Study Leave	Revision and Study Leave
Content: what will students know?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Introduction to the field of Philosophy of Language and the Word/World problem 2) Cognitivism vs Non-cognitivism in Philosophy of Language 3) Verificationist theories of language 4) Falsificationist theories of language 5) Eschatological Verificationist theories of language 6) Evaluating Cognitive theories of language 7) Hare's "blik" theory of language 8) Wittgenstein's "Language Game" theory of Language (with reference to its implications for the role of philosophy as a discipline.) 9) Aquinas's symbolic theory of language 10) Maimonides' "Via Negativa" theory of language 11) Tillich's symbolic theory of language 12) Evaluating the Non-Cognitivists 	<p>Conscience</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Introduction to the concept of the conscience 2) Different religious and non-religious ideas about the nature of conscience 3) Conscience as a social adaptation 4) Conscience as super-ego 5) Conscience as conditioned response 6) Religious views on the conscience 7) The role of the conscience in moral decision-making <p>Christianity, Gender and Sexuality</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) History of women in the Church 2) The development of Biblical criticism 3) Key Biblical passages on gender equality 4) Complimentarian vs Egalitarian views of gender equality 5) Inter-denominational debates around the ordination of women 6) Hampson Vs Reuther on sexism and the Church 7) Christian attitudes to marriage 8) Christian attitudes to same-sex marriage 9) Christian responses to trans* issues 	How to approach 25-mark Dialogues questions, meeting the requirement for "synoptic" content.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Relativism vs absolutism as religious positions 2) History of migration and multiculturalism in the UK 3) Legal status of freedom of religion 4) Religious pluralism in the context of secular states 5) Ethical issues arising from multiculturalism 6) Influence of pluralism of religious thought. 7) Exclusivism vs inclusivism as theological positions 8) Inter-denominational differences and attitudes towards other Christian groups 9) Ecumenicism 10) Hick's views on Christian pluralism 		
Skills: What will students be able to do?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Explain the core problem of Religious Language. 2) Explain a range of attempts to answer this problem. 3) Evaluate whether any of the attempts in (2) are successful, coming to a justified personal conclusion about the most convincing theory of language. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Explain the relevant Christian beliefs and theology in the topic. 2) Explain the relevance of these beliefs to modern Christianity. 3) Explain the disagreements between different denominations or scholars on these beliefs. 4) Explain any ethical or philosophical debates these beliefs raise. 5) Evaluate the controversies outlined in (3) and (4), coming to a justified personal conclusion. 	Exam skills for dialogues questions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Explain the relevant Christian beliefs and theology in the topic. 2) Explain the relevance of these beliefs to modern Christianity. 3) Explain the disagreements between different denominations or scholars on these beliefs. 4) Explain any ethical or philosophical debates these beliefs raise. 5) Evaluate the controversies outlined in (3) and (4), coming to a justified personal conclusion. 		
Other: Literacy, numeracy, ethos etc.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Diversity of worldviews, cultural capital. 2) Critical thinking 3) Debate, discussion and oracy skills 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Diversity of worldviews, cultural capital. 2) Ethical reasoning 3) Debate, discussion and oracy skills 4) Current affairs, citizenship 				
Assessment	End of topic assessment in form of exam-style essay.	End of topic assessment in form of exam-style essay.	Selection of practice essays	End of topic assessment in form of exam-style essay.		