

A LEVEL RELIGION, PHILOSOPHY & ETHICS

2025-26



THE
PORTSMOUTH
GRAMMAR
SCHOOL



Course Outline

The Study of Buddhism

A comprehensive study of the Buddhist faith, such as the early life of the founder of Buddhism, Siddhartha Gotama (the Buddha) and how Buddhists practise their faith and morality. Pupils will be introduced to some key philosophical and ethical concepts within Buddhism that will help them in the other 2 papers.

Philosophy of Religion

Pupils begin with the great thinkers who tried to express their beliefs in God in philosophical and logical ways. Pupils also work out how an argument works, how it can be wrong and shown to be wrong. Thinkers such as Richard Dawkins, Peter Atkins and David Hume are used to criticise these philosophical arguments for the existence of God which include Descartes' Ontological Argument which attempts to prove that God exists using logic only. Other arguments from the standpoint of experience are the First Cause Argument and Religious Experience Argument. Then we study the philosophy of language and examine whether religious language in particular can be verified or falsified; religious experiences and whether, if they can be proven they could point to the existence of a supernatural being; the existence of miracles and the examination of whether they may point to God's arbitrary nature; and finally whether religious belief is the product of the human mind (Freud) and whether religion can be positive (Jung) or an illusion (Freud).

Ethics

Ethical theories such as Natural Law, Religious Ethics, Utilitarianism and Situation Ethics (relativist theories) are applied to moral issues such as sexuality (extra-marital issues and theories of gender and sexual orientation), the use of nuclear weapon as a deterrent, and abortion and euthanasia.

Entry Requirements

A GCSE in Religious Studies is not required but can be helpful. Pupils will be expected to have performed well in GCSE English Language or Literature, achieving at least a Grade 6 or equivalent in either.

A Level Assessment

EDUQAS Religious Studies, (Buddhism, Philosophy of Religion and Ethics)

There is a 33% weighting for each of these 3 papers. Furthermore, throughout all 3 papers there is a 60% weighting for evaluation and presenting arguments and weighing up evidence. There is a 40% weighting for presenting scholars' ideas and describing theories accurately. All 3 papers will be externally marked by experienced examiners.

Skills Required and Developed

Philosophical argumentation, analysis and evaluation are essential, and these are developed in class discussion and written work. An interest in religion, philosophy and ethics is paramount.

Beyond the Classroom

The Philosophy Society meets once per week, Years 9 – 13.

Philosophy for HE meets once per week for those making an application to read Philosophy at University but do not study PRS at A Level.



More Information

Contact our Head of PRS, Dr. R Richmond:

- Telephone: 023 9236 4240
- Email: R.Richmond@pgs.org.uk

You can also find more information on the exam board's website: www.eduqas.org.uk