

Curriculum intent

Religious studies at A level allows not only for deepening your own self-knowledge, but it also provides the foundational knowledge and opportunity to understand other people's worldviews and religious beliefs.

Here at the Ecclesbourne School, we encourage our A level students to become responsible for their own learning, confident in discussing ideas, innovative and engaged.

The content of the Religious Studies A level course has been designed to provide a coherent and thought-provoking programme of study for our students, whilst also acting as a rigorous course of study which prepares RS students for progression to Higher Education. This A level qualification is designed to develop a greater understanding and appreciation of religious beliefs and teachings in the study of the Buddhist faith, as well as the disciplines of ethics and philosophy of religion. Students will develop their skills of critical analysis in order to construct balanced, informed arguments and responses to religious, philosophical and ethical ideas. Our A Level Religious Studies course aims to engage students thoroughly and develop an interest in Religious Studies which extends beyond the classroom and can be applied to the world around them.

Basically our aims are to encourage students to develop their interest in a rigorous study of religion and belief and relate it to the wider world; to develop knowledge and understanding appropriate to a specialist study of the Buddhist religion; develop an understanding and appreciation of religious thought and its contribution to individuals, communities and societies; adopt an enquiring, critical and reflective approach to the study of religion and also to reflect on and develop their own values, opinions and attitudes in the light of their study.

The key features of our A Level Religious Studies course are the study of three components, each with clear and well-defined content and strong supporting materials. We choose to study Buddhism as a major world religion, the philosophy of religion and religion and ethics as an in - depth study, to encourage our students to develop their understanding of the modern world and establish a deeper knowledge and appreciation of not just a world religion but the philosophical and ethical area of religious studies too. There is ample opportunity for students to apply their knowledge and skills to contemporary issues, and we focus on inspiring and motivating our students whilst at the same time challenging and developing their perceptions of the Buddhist faith and emphasising enabling students to respond critically and engage with a wealth of philosophical, ethical and religious concepts, equipping them with analytical skills readily transferable to other subjects.

Curriculum implementation:

YEAR 12		
Autumn Term – Half Term 1		
Developments in Buddhist thought	Philosophy of Religion	Religion and Ethics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Buddha* • the Buddha’s intellectual context • the influence of Brahmanism and Sramana movements, including Jainism: • the importance of Brahmanism in the Buddha’s contemporary culture; his criticisms of the Brahmins and their ideas; his use and adaptation of Brahmin ideas • the Buddha’s experience of Sramana movements and teachers; his use and adaptation of their ideas • Siddhartha’s life • Key details of Siddhartha’s life story and their significance to Buddhists and Buddhism: • birth and hedonistic upbringing • the four passing sights • renunciation • asceticism • enlightenment • teaching career • the influence of Brahmanism and Sramana movements, including Jainism • the importance of Brahmanism in the Buddha’s contemporary culture; his criticisms of the Brahmins and their ideas; his use and adaptation of Brahmin ideas • the Buddha’s experience of Sramana movements and 	<p>The nature or attributes of God</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • developments in the understanding of: • omnipotence • divine power and self-imposed limitation • omniscience • divine knowledge and its interaction with temporal existence and free will • (omni)benevolence • divine benevolence and just judgement of human actions, including Boethius’s argument relating this to divine foreknowledge, eternity and free will • eternity • divine eternity and divine action in time, including Anselm’s four-dimensionalist approach as an extension of Boethius’s view • free will • the extent to which human free will reasonably coexists with these attributes • the above should be studied with reference to alternative possibilities presented by Boethius, Anselm and Swinburne • whether or not it is possible, or necessary, to resolve the apparent conflicts between divine attributes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural Law* • Aquinas’ natural law, including: • telos • origins of the significant concept of telos in Aristotle and its religious development in the writing of Aquinas • the four tiers of law • what they are and how they are related: • 1. Eternal Law: the principles by which God made and controls the universe and which are - only fully known to God • 2. Divine Law: the law of God revealed in the Bible, particularly in the Ten Commandments and the Sermon on the Mount • 3. Natural Law: the moral law of God within human nature that is discoverable through the use of reason • 4. Human Law: the laws of nations • the precepts • what they are and how they are related • the key precept (do good, avoid evil) • five primary precepts (preservation of life, ordering of society, worship of God, education of children, reproduction) • secondary precepts

<p>teachers; his use and adaptation of their ideas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During this first half term’s study students will have the opportunity to discuss issues related to the Buddha and his role as a source of wisdom and authority, including: • how the example of Siddhartha might be used in teaching and practice, including illustration of the Middle Way • the limitations of the Buddha as an example to Buddhists; the importance of self-reliance and the idea of hipassiko/ehipaśyika (‘come and try’), not blind faith and devotion • the ways in which the cultural context affects the development of ideas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • whether Boethius, Anselm or Swinburne provides the most useful understanding of the relationship between divinity and time • whether or not any of these thinkers are successful in resolving the problems of divine knowledge, benevolence, justice, eternity and human free will • whether the attributes should be understood as subject to the limits of logical possibility or of divine self-limitation <p>Ancient philosophical influences*</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the philosophical views of Plato, in relation to: • understanding of reality - Plato’s reliance on reason as opposed to the senses • the Forms - the nature of the Forms • the analogy of the cave - details of the analogy, its purpose and relation to the theory of the Forms • the philosophical views of Aristotle, in relation to: • understanding of reality - Aristotle’s use of teleology • the four causes - material, formal, efficient and final causes • the Prime Mover - the nature of Aristotle’s Prime Mover and connections between this and the final cause • comparison and evaluation of Plato’s Form of the Good and Aristotle’s Prime Mover • comparison and evaluation of Plato’s reliance on reason 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • whether or not natural law provides a helpful method of moral decision-making • whether or not a judgement about something being good, bad, right or wrong can be based on its success or failure in achieving its telos <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • whether or not the universe as a whole is designed with a telos, or human nature has an orientation towards the good • whether or not the doctrine of double effect can be used to justify an action, such as killing someone as an act of self-defence.
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	<p>(rationalism) and Aristotle’s use of the senses (empiricism) in their attempts to make sense of reality</p>	
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<p>Prior learning to reactivate Life of the Buddha (Yr. 7) God and creation (Yr. 8) Beginnings of Hinduism as a world faith (Yr. 9) Christianity and Judaism – The concept and attributes of God (Monotheistic) (Yr. 9) Problem of Evil and suffering (Yr. 9) The Resurrection (Yr. 9) Life after death theories – including Aristotle and Plato’s world view (Yr. 8 and Yr. 9)</p> <p>Christian ethics (Yr. 9) Ethical decision making (Yr. 9 and Yr. 10) Attitudes to crime and punishment (GCSE)</p>

Autumn Term – Half Term 2

Developments in Buddhist thought	Philosophy of Religion	Religion and Ethics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taking Refuge* • the Three Refuges/ Jewels: • Buddha • Dhamma/Dharma • Sangha/Samgha • The significance of the Refuges for Buddhists and how Buddhists ‘take refuge’ • the different understandings of Buddha, including both as the historical person of Siddhartha and as an ideal • the meanings of the term dhamma/dharma, including as unmediated Truth or ultimate reality, and as the teachings of the Buddha • the various meanings and significance of sangha/samgha, including as one’s spiritual community or close associates, 	<p>Arguments based on observation*</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the teleological argument - details of this argument including reference to: • Aquinas’ Fifth Way • Paley • the cosmological argument • details of this argument including reference to: • Aquinas’ first three ways • whether a posteriori or a priori is the more persuasive style of argument • whether or not teleological arguments 	<p>Fletcher’s situation ethics, including:</p> <p>Agape origins of agape in the New Testament and its religious development in the writing of Fletcher</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the six propositions • what they are and how they give rise to the theory of situation ethics and its approach to moral decision-making: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Love is the only thing that is intrinsically good 2. Love is the ruling norm in ethical decision making and replaces all laws

<p>the monastic Sangha and its relationship with the laity, and all Buddhists past, present and future.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • their role in expressing Buddhist identity • different interpretations of what each means and how one takes refuge in them in practice • why these ideals are seen as the heart of Buddhism <p>Samsara*</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • samsara and the six realms of existence • how these relate to: punabbhava/punarbhava (rebirth) • the three fires/poisons • kamma/karma • paticcasamuppada/pratityasamutpada (dependent origination) • details of each of the six realms, including the nature of the realms and the beings within them, related karmic causes and significance of the human realm for liberation • the nature of each of these teachings and their relationship to the wheel of samsara and the beings within it <p>The Three Marks of Existence*</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • anicca/anitya (impermanence) • the nature of anicca/anitya, including: • both the gross and subtle/momentary level • how it links to both dukkha and anatta/anatman • dukkha/duhkha (suffering) • the nature of dukkha/duhkha, including: • different translations and understandings of the term • the three 'categories' of dukkha: 'ordinary' suffering, suffering arising from change 	<p>can be defended against the challenge of 'chance'</p>	<p>3. Love and justice are the same thing—justice is love that is distributed</p> <p>4. Love wills the neighbour's good regardless of whether the neighbour is liked or not</p> <p>5. Love is the goal or end of the act and that justifies any means to achieve that goal</p> <p>6. Love decides on each situation as it arises without a set of laws to guide it</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the four working principles <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • what they are and how they are intended to be applied: • 1. pragmatism: it is based on experience rather than on theory • 2. relativism: it is based on making the absolute laws of Christian ethics relative • 3. positivism: it begins with belief in the reality and importance of love • 4. personalism: persons, not laws or anything else, are at the centre of situation ethics • what conscience is and what it is not according to Fletcher, i.e. a verb not a noun; a term that describes attempts to make decisions creatively • Euthanasia* • sanctity of life • the religious origins of this concept (that human life is made in God's image and is therefore sacred in value) • quality of life • the secular origins of this significant concept (that human life has to possess certain attributes in order to have value) • voluntary euthanasia • what it is (that a person's life is ended at their request or with their
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<p>and the suffering of conditioned experience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the types of unavoidable suffering • anatta/anatman (no self) • the nature of anatta/anatman, including: • the rejection of both eternalism and annihilationism o the explanation offered by chariot analogy in The Questions of King Milinda (Book II, Chapter 1.1) • the understanding of the five khandhas/skandhas. 		<p>consent) and its use in the case of incurable or terminal illness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • non-voluntary euthanasia • what it is (that a person’s life is ended without their consent but with the consent of someone representing their interests) and its use in the case of a patient who is in a persistent vegetative state • the application of natural law and situation ethics to euthanasia • whether or not the religious concept of sanctity of life has any meaning in twenty-first century medical ethics • whether or not a person should or can have complete autonomy over their own life and decisions made about it • whether or not there is a moral difference between medical intervention to end a patient’s life and medical non-intervention to end a patient’s life.
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Prior learning to reactivate
 Teachings of the Buddha (Yr. 7)
 Arguments for and against God’s existence (Yr. 8 and Yr. 9)
 God and creation (Yr. 8)
 Samsara and the Tibetan Wheel of Life (Yr. 8)
 Sanctity of life (Yr. 8)
 Suffering and death (Yr. 8)
 Beginnings of Hinduism as a world faith (Yr. 9)
 Christianity and Judaism – The concept and attributes of God (Monotheistic) (Yr.8 and Yr. 9)
 Problem of Evil and suffering 9Yr. 9)
 The Resurrection (Yr. 9)
 Life after death theories – including Aristotle and Plato’s world view (Yr. 8 and Yr. 9)
 Christian ethics (Yr. 9) Ethical decision making (Yr. 9 and Yr. 10)
 Attitudes to euthanasia and abortion (GCSE)

Spring Term – Half Term 1

Developments in Buddhist thought	Philosophy of Religion	Religion and Ethics
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<p>Four Noble Truths*</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Four Noble Truths as the foundation of Buddhist teaching, including: • the doctor analogy: the illness, the cause of the illness, the truth that there is an end to the illness, and the prescription • the outline given in the Deer Park Sermon (as recorded in Samyutta Nikaya 56.11) • the path of disciples and arhats/arahants who follow the teachings • dukkha/dukkha (suffering) • dukkha/dukkha as it relates to the other three Truths and its role as the 'sickness' to be cured • tanha/trishna (craving) • the different types of craving (craving for material pleasures, craving for existence, craving for non-existence) and how they lead to suffering • tanha as one of the 12 nidanas (causes) • nibbana/nirvana • nirvana as the goal of Buddhism, including: • nirodha as the 'cutting off' of craving through detachment • nibbana/nirvana-with-remainder and parinibbana/parinirvana • nibbana/nirvana as un-conditioned existence which cannot be explained • the issues raised by the 79th and 80th dilemmas of The Questions of King Milinda • magga/marga (path) • the (Noble) Eightfold Path and its goal, including: • the eight stages and three sections (wisdom, ethics, meditation) • the stages as inter-reliant, not linear • the ninth and tenth 'acquired' stages of wisdom 	<p>challenges to arguments from observation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • details of Hume's criticisms of these arguments for the existence of God from natural religion • the challenge of evolution • whether cosmological arguments simply jump to the conclusion of a transcendent creator, without sufficient explanation • whether or not there are logical fallacies in these arguments that cannot be overcome • Soul, mind and body* • the philosophical language of soul, mind and body in the thinking of Plato and Aristotle • Plato's view of the soul as the essential and immaterial part of a human, temporarily united with the body • Aristotle's view of the soul as the form of the body; the way the body behaves and lives; something which cannot be separated from the body • metaphysics of consciousness, including: • substance dualism • the idea that mind and body are distinct substances • Descartes' proposal of material and spiritual substances as a solution to the mind/soul and body problem • Materialism • the idea that mind and consciousness can be fully explained by 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the use of the significant concept of utility (seeking the greatest balance of good over evil, or pleasure over pain) in teleological and relativist approaches to ethics • what it is (calculating the benefit or harm of an act through its consequences) and its use as a measure of individual pleasure • what it is (calculating the consequences of each situation on its own merits) and its use in promoting the greatest amount of good over evil, or pleasure over pain • what it is (following accepted laws that lead to the greatest overall balance of good over evil, or pleasure over pain) and its use in promoting the common good
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • whether or not the goal of Buddhism can be understood • whether the Buddhist idea of detachment is positive or negative • whether any of the Truths, or stages of the eightfold path, are more or less important than the others 	<p>physical or material interactions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the rejection of a soul as a spiritual substance • materialist critiques of dualism, and dualist responses to materialism • whether the concept of 'soul' is best understood metaphorically or as a reality • the idea that any discussion about the mind-body distinction is a category error 	
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Prior learning to reactivate

Teachings of the Buddha (Yr. 7)

Arguments for and against the existence of a soul (Yr. 8 and Yr. 9)

Nirvana (Yr. 8)

God and creation (Yr. 8)

Evolution (Yr. 8)

Samsara and the Tibetan Wheel of Life (Yr. 8)

Sanctity of life (Yr. 8)

Suffering and death (Yr. 8)

Christianity and Judaism – The concept and attributes of God (Monotheistic) (Yr 9)

Problem of Evil and suffering (Yr. 9)

The Resurrection (Yr. 7 and Yr. 9)

Life after death theories – including Aristotle and Plato's world view Yr. 8 and Yr. 9)

Christian ethics (Yr. 9) Utilitarianism and ethical decision making (Yr. 9 and Yr. 10)

Attitudes to euthanasia and abortion (GCSE)

Spring Term – Half Term 2

Developments in Buddhist thought	Philosophy of Religion	Religion and Ethics
<p>Meditation*</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • methods of meditation • the aims and results of meditation • the nature of samatha and vipassana/ vipaśyanā meditation • their goals • how they complement each other • examples of practice • the role of mindfulness in Buddhist practice • the importance of personalised practice • meditation as a stage of the Eightfold Path 	<p>Religious experience*</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the nature and influence of religious experience, including: • mystical experience • conversion experience • examples of mystical and conversion experiences and views about these, including: • views and main conclusions of William James • different ways in which individual religious experiences can be understood 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • origins of the concept of duty (acting morally according to the good regardless of consequences) in deontological and absolutist approaches to ethics • what it is (a command to act to achieve a desired result) and why it is not the imperative of morality • what it is (a command to act that is good in itself regardless of consequences) and why it

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the benefits and effects of meditation, including its use in secular, therapeutic contexts experiences of jhanas/dhyanas whether or not meditation has to be a religious practice whether or not meditation is the most important element of Buddhist practice whether or not meditation encourages an unhealthy 'inward looking' approach to life 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> as union with a greater power psychological effect such as illusion the product of a physiological effect whether personal testimony or witness is enough to support the validity of religious experiences whether or not corporate religious experiences might be considered more reliable or valid than individual experiences whether or not religious experience provides a basis for belief in God or a greater power 	<p>is the imperative of morality based on: 1. Formula of the law of nature (whereby a maxim can be established as a universal law) 2. Formula of the end in itself (whereby people are treated as ends in themselves and not means to an end) 3. Formula of the kingdom of ends (whereby a society of rationality is established in which people treat each other as ends and not means)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> what they are and why in obeying a moral command they are being accepted: 1. Freedom 2. Immortality 3. God
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Prior learning to reactivate
 Teachings of the Buddha (Yr. 7)
 Religious experience / miracles (Yr. 8 and Yr. 9)
 Existence of God (Yr. 8)
 Varna in Hinduism (Yr. 9)
 Sanctity of life (Yr. 8)
 Suffering and death (Yr. 8)
 Christianity and Judaism – The concept and attributes of God (Monotheistic) (Yr. 8 and Yr. 9)
 Problem of Evil and suffering (Yr. 9)
 The Resurrection (Yr. 7 and Yr. 9)
 Life after death theories – including Aristotle and Plato's world view (Yr. 8 and Yr. 9)
 Christian ethics (Yr. 9) Utilitarianism and ethical decision making (Yr. 9 and Yr. 10)
 Attitudes to euthanasia and abortion (GCSE)

Summer Term – Half Term 1

Developments in Buddhist thought	Philosophy of Religion	Religion and Ethics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Development of Mahayana Buddhism a general introduction, including: possible reasons for its emergence the context of its emergence the idea of upaya (skilful means) and how this is applied to the original teachings of Siddhartha 	<p>The problem of evil*</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the problem of evil and suffering: different presentations including its logical (the inconsistency between divine attributes and the presence of evil) and evidential (the evidence of so much terrible evil in the world) aspects theodicies that propose some justification or 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> what it is (that a business has responsibility towards the community and environment) and its application to stakeholders, such as employees, customers, the local community, the country as whole and governments what it is (that an employee discloses wrongdoing to the

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the differences and similarities between the bodhisattva and the arhat/arahant and their paths • how the nature of the bodhisattva can be explained • the implications, in terms of responses to other religious truth claims and diversity within Buddhism, of the idea of upaya (skilful means) • the development in the understanding of 'Buddha' illustrated by the trikaya doctrine 	<p>reason for divine action or inaction in the face of evil</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Augustine's use of original perfection and the Fall • Hick's reworking of the Irenaean theodicy which gives some purpose to natural evil in enabling human beings to reach divine likeness • whether or not Augustine's view of the origins of moral and natural evils is enough to spare God from blame for evils in the world • whether or not the need to create a 'vale of soul-making' can justify the existence or extent of evils • which of the logical or evidential aspects of the problem of evil pose the greater challenge to belief • whether or not it is possible to successfully defend monotheism in the face of evil 	<p>employer or the public) and its application to the contract between employee and employer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • what it is (that good business decisions are good ethical decisions) and its application to shareholders and profit-making • what it is (that around the world economies, industries, markets, cultures and policy-making is integrated) and its impact on stakeholders
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Prior learning to reactivate
 Spiritual paths and goals (Yr. 7 and Yr. 9)
 Existence of evil and suffering (Yr. 9)
 Theodicies (Yr. 9)
 Genesis creation story (Yr. 8)
 Samsara and the Tibetan Wheel of Life (Yr. 8)
 Sanctity of life (Yr. 8)
 Suffering and death (Yr. 8)
 Christianity and Judaism – The concept and attributes of God (Monotheistic) (Yr. 8 and Yr. 9)
 Problem of Evil and suffering (Yr. 9)
 The Resurrection (Yr. 7 and Yr. 9)
 Life after death theories – including Aristotle and Plato's world view (Yr. 8 and Yr. 9)
 Christian ethics (Yr. 9) Utilitarianism and ethical decision making (Yr. 9 and Yr. 10)
 Attitudes to euthanasia and abortion (GCSE)

Summer Term – Half Term 2

<p>Developments in Buddhist thought</p>	<p>Philosophy of Religion</p>	<p>Religion and Ethics</p>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the bodhisattva ideal and its significance including: - • details of the bodhisattva vow and way • the six paramitas (perfections) and their significance • comparison with the Theravada arhat • key bodhisattvas and what they represent, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avalokiteśvara • Manjusri • Maitreya • the above to be studied with reference to the following parables from the Lotus Sutra: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the burning house (chapter 3) • the magic city (chapter 7) • the hidden gem (chapter 8) • the trikaya (three bodies of the Buddha) • understanding of the nature and significance of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the truth body • the heavenly body • the earthly body • the differences and similarities between the bodhisattva and the arhat/arahant and their paths • how the nature of the bodhisattva can be explained • the implications, in terms of responses to other religious truth claims and diversity within Buddhism, of the idea of upaya (skilful means) • the development in the understanding of 'Buddha' illustrated by the trikaya doctrine 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arguments based on reason* • the ontological argument • details of this argument including reference to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anselm • Gaunilo's criticisms • Kant's criticisms • whether a posteriori or a priori is the more persuasive style of argument • whether or not existence can be treated as a predicate • whether or not the ontological argument justifies belief • whether or not there are logical fallacies in this argument that cannot be overcome 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • details of this approach, including: • ratio (reason placed in every person as a result of being created in the image of God) • synderesis (inner principle directing a person towards good and away from evil) • conscientia (a person's reason making moral judgements). • vincible ignorance (lack of knowledge for which a person is responsible) • invincible ignorance (lack of knowledge for which a person is not responsible) • details of this approach, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • psychosexual development (early childhood awareness of libido) • id (instinctive impulses that seek satisfaction in pleasure) • ego (mediates between the id and the demands of social interaction) • super-ego (contradicts the id and working on internalised ideals from parents and society tries to make the ego behave morally)
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Prior learning to reactivate
 The historical Buddha? (Yr. 7)
 Arguments for and against the existence of God (Yr. 8 and Yr. 9)
 God and creation (Yr. 8)
 Evolution (Yr. 8)
 Samsara and the Tibetan Wheel of Life (Yr. 8)
 Sanctity of life (Yr. 8)

Suffering and death (Yr. 8)
 Christian ethics (Yr. 9) ethical decision making (Yr. 9 and Yr. 10)
 Relationships and families (GCSE)
 Attitudes to and abortion (GCSE)

YEAR 13		
Autumn Term – Half Term 1		
Developments in Buddhist thought	Philosophy of Religion	Religion and Ethics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buddhism in the Far East • Zen Buddhism • the distinctive features of Zen Buddhism, including: • zazen meditation, its importance and the attainment of satori (awakening) • Zen attitudes to scripture and transmission of wisdom • key features of and differences between the Rinzai and Soto schools • the implications of Zen’s rejection of theory, ritual and the use of language to express truth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Religious language: Analogical or Symbolic • cataphatic way – the via positiva • symbol • the understanding of religious language in terms of analogy, with reference to: o Aquinas’s analogy of attribution and analogy of proper proportion • understanding of the language of religious expression in terms of symbol, with reference to: • Tillich’s view of theological language as almost entirely symbolic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditional religious beliefs and practices (from any religious perspectives) regarding these areas of sexual ethics • how these beliefs and practices have changed over time, including: • key teachings influencing these beliefs and practices • the ideas of religious figures and institutions • the impact of secularism on these areas of sexual ethics • how these theories might be used to make moral decisions in these areas of sexual ethics • issues raised in the application of these theories.
<p>Prior learning to reactivate Religious language (Yr. 7 and Yr. 8) Nirvana (Yr. 8) Sanctity of life (Yr. 8) Christian ethics (Yr. 9) Sexual ethics (GCSE) ethical decision making (Yr. 9 and Yr. 10)</p>		
Autumn Term – Half Term 2		
Developments in Buddhist thought	Philosophy of Religion	Religion and Ethics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pure Land Buddhism • the distinctive features of Pure Land Buddhism, including: • the person and importance of Amitabha • rebirth in a Pure Land • the practice of chanting, its importance and purpose 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Religious language: Negative • the apophatic way – the via negativa • the argument that theological language is best approached by negation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • what it is (the belief that values can be defined in terms of some natural property in the world) and its application to absolutism • what it is (the belief that basic moral truths are indefinable but self-evident) and its application to the term good

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • key features of and differences between Jōdo-shū and Jōdo Shinshū • whether Pure Land Buddhism is an ‘easy’ path • how and if Siddhartha’s original teachings can be seen in these two schools 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • what it is (the belief that ethical terms evince approval or disapproval) and its application to relativism
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Links with prior learning

Historical Buddha? (Yr. 7)
 Nirvana (Yr. 8)
 Suffering and death (Yr. 8)
 Christian ethics (Yr. 9) Utilitarianism and ethical decision making (Yr. 9 and Yr. 10)
 Attitudes to relationships and families / peace and conflict / crime and punishment / religion and life (GCSE)

Spring Term – Half Term 1

Developments in Buddhist thought	Philosophy of Religion	Religion and Ethics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buddhism in the West • the spread of Buddhism to the West • the main reasons for the spread of Buddhism, such as migration and the popularity of Buddhist ideas in modern western societies • Buddhism in popular culture • exploration of how Buddhism is portrayed in the West, including: • media stereotypes and depiction of Buddhist role models, including portrayals of figures such as the Dalai Lama • Western ‘inculturation’ • the ways in which Buddhism has changed and adapted on encountering Western science, ideas and culture, including: • the ideas of Secular Buddhism, with reference to Stephen Batchelor • the interplay of Christianity and Buddhism, the idea of ‘dual-belonging’, with reference to Paul Knitter • a comparison of the approaches and ideas of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concentration on the Religion and Ethics unit. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meta-ethical theories • naturalism • what it is (the belief that values can be defined in terms of some natural property in the world) and its application to absolutism • Intuitionism • what it is (the belief that basic moral truths are indefinable but self-evident) and its application to the term good • emotivism • what it is (the belief that ethical terms evince approval or disapproval) and its application to relativism

<p>Stephen Batchelor and Paul Knitter, and the ways in which they have adopted and ‘Westernised’ Buddhist ideas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how the depiction of Buddhism in the Western media, including the fame of figures such as the Dalai Lama, shape (and possibly distort) Western understandings of Buddhism • comparison of how figures such as the Dalai Lama are viewed by Buddhists and non-Buddhists, and their significance to each group 		
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Prior learning to reactivate
 Exemplars of faith such as the Dalai Lama (Yr. 7)
 Sanctity of life (Yr. 8)
 Christian ethics (Yr. 9) Utilitarianism and ethical decision making (Yr. 9 and Yr. 10)
 Attitudes to crime and punishment / religion and life / peace and conflict / relationships and families (GCSE)

Spring Term – Half Term 2

Developments in Buddhist thought	Philosophy of Religion	Religion and Ethics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engaged Buddhism and Activism • the distinctive features of Engaged Buddhism, including: • the meaning of the term ‘Engaged Buddhism’, and the origins and aims of this form of practice • the significance and ideas of Thich Nhat Hanh, including the Fourteen Precepts • why a Buddhist may feel social activism is an important part of Buddhist practice • examples of Buddhist activism in the following areas: • environmental awareness and action • opposition to oppression and injustice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The nature or attributes of God • developments in the understanding of: • omnipotence • omniscience • (omni)benevolence • eternity • free will • divine power and self-imposed limitation • divine knowledge and its interaction with temporal existence and free will • divine benevolence and just judgement of human actions, including Boethius’s argument relating this to divine foreknowledge, eternity and free will • divine eternity and divine action in time, including Anselm’s four-dimensionalist approach as an extension of Boethius’s view 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concentrate on Philosophy of Religion unit.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • war and peace • the role and focus of Buddhists in different societies and contexts • whether or not engaged practice should be central to the Buddhist path, and how this affects the stereotypical view of Buddhism as inward-looking • whether or not a Buddhist could ever accept the need for war • Buddhism and Gender • Buddhist responses to the issue of gender equality, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o female attainment of awakening • whether or not this is possible, both theoretically and realistically, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o the differing opinions of Theravada and Mahayana schools of Buddhism, with reference to The Dragon King's/Sagara's Daughter (Lotus Sutra, Chapter 11) • the reasons for these differing ideas, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o their philosophical or ideological basis o the impact both of societal changes over time and the differing cultural contexts Buddhism encountered during 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the extent to which human free will reasonably coexists with these attributes • the above should be studied with reference to alternative possibilities presented by Boethius, Anselm and Swinburne 	
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<p>its spread across the world</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the issue of female monasticism • the controversy surrounding female ordination, including: • the role, origins and controversies surrounding the gurudharma (specific monastic rules for women) • the difficulty of ordaining women in the Theravadin tradition and the role of 'eight precept women' • Mahayana female monastic traditions and lineage • the differing status of female monastics (and 'eight precept women') in different societies, for example Thailand and Myanmar/Burma • the role and aims of organisations such as the Sakyadhita (Daughters of the Buddha) International Association of Buddhist Women • why it is that the condition and treatment of women in Buddhism differs so widely across the world • the significance of contrasting traditional and modern views on the capacity of women to achieve enlightenment 		
<p>Prior learning to reactivate</p>		

Exemplars of faith such as Thich Nhat Hanh (Yr. 7)
 Arguments for and against the existence of God 9Yr 8 and Yr. 9)
 Christian ethics / divine benevolence and the existence of evil and suffering (Yr. 9)
 Free will 9Yr 9 and GCSE)
 Ethical decision making (Yr. 9 and Yr. 10)
 Attitudes to women in religion (Yr. 9 and GCSE)

Summer Term – Half Term 1

Developments in Buddhist thought	Philosophy of Religion	Religion and Ethics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Madhyamaka and Prajnaparamita • Madhyamaka philosophy and prajnaparamita (perfection of wisdom) • the role of Nagarjuna in the development of these ideas • the importance of the Prajnaparamita Sutras, including the content and interpretation of the Heart Sutra • the following with reference to the ideas of Nagarjuna: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sunyata/sunnata (emptiness) • two truths • samsara and nirvana/nibbana • different interpretations of sunyata/sunnata and what it means for all things to be empty of svabhava/sabhava (own being) • the distinction between relative and ultimate truths and why recognition of this distinction is important for liberation • the claim that samsara and nirvana/nibbana should not be understood as different things • the practical implications of these concepts for Buddhist life • how far these teachings are separate from, and discontinuous with, the teachings of the historical Buddha 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revision of Year 12 units 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revision of Year 12 units

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> if words and teachings are merely conventions, whether or not they still have value <p>Revision programme</p>		
<p>Prior learning to reactivate</p> <p>Scriptures (Yr 7)</p> <p>Concept of nirvana (Yr. 8 and Yr. 9)</p> <p>Historical Buddha (Yr. 7)</p> <p>Teachings of the Buddha (Yr. 7)</p> <p>Christian ethics / divine benevolence and the existence of evil and suffering (Yr. 9)</p> <p>Ethical decision making (Yr. 9 and Yr. 10)</p> <p>Crime and punishment / religion and life / peace and conflict / relationships and families (GCSE)</p>		
<p>Summer Term – Half Term 2</p>		
<p>Study leave</p>	<p>Study leave</p>	<p>Study leave</p>

Curriculum implementation: Extra-curricular enrichment

In addition to classroom teaching, the Religious Studies Department offer a broad array of enrichment opportunities, designed to support and stretch students’ awareness that religion is all around them.

Alongside our extracurricular programme, the department help organise attendance at GCSE and A level lectures and conferences on a variety of topics. These events offer students an opportunity to gain insight into many aspects of the courses they are studying, as well as expose students to a university-style education.

Previous lectures and conferences have covered arguments for and against the existence of God, Buddhism, the soul, evil and suffering, the Holocaust, religious language and the bases of ethics are just some recent examples.

Prior to these lectures and conferences, students will have attended fieldwork in Lincoln (Yr. 7) as part of a whole faculty initiative, visits to local churches (Yr. 7 and Yr. 8); visit to a Hindu Mandir (Yr. 9); visit to the national Holocaust Centre (Yr. 9); visit to Birmingham Cathedral and Mosque (Yr. 11); visit to Amaravati (The Deathless) Theravadin Buddhist Monastery; visit to Throssel Hole Abbey – a Soto Zen Monastery and a visit to The New Kadampa Tradition Monastery (Tara Centre) in Derbyshire. careers.

Many A Level Religious Studies Students will also have had the opportunity to visit a more long-haul destination to broaden out their study of religion in the past and we would hope to continue this tradition to such places as Krakow; Berlin; Rome; Israel; China and USA.

Curriculum impact: Assessment

Assessment objectives

There are two assessment objectives at A level, the same as GCSE to allow for continuation of the skills built up at key stage 5.

AO1 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including:

- religious, philosophical and/or ethical thought and teaching
- influence of beliefs, teachings and practices on individuals, communities and societies
- cause and significance of similarities and differences in belief, teaching and practice
- approaches to the study of religion and belief.

This amounts to 40% of the total final mark

AO2 Analyse and evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief, including

- their significance, influence and study.

This amounts to 60% of the total final mark so emphasis is clearly placed upon the second skill.

Structure of Assessment

Broadly speaking, for OCR's A Level in Religious Studies our students will study three components that are externally assessed

These are:

- Philosophy of religion (01)
- Religion and ethics (02)
- Developments in religious thought (06) Buddhism

Components 01 and 02 are mandatory. In addition, our students study one from the Developments in religious thought options: Christianity (03), Islam (04), Judaism (05), Buddhism (06) or Hinduism (07). We choose 06 Buddhism

The exam for each component is worth 120 marks and represents 33.3% of the total marks for A Level.

These exams will take the form of an externally assessed written papers lasting 2 hours each and testing both AO1 and AO2.

Each paper will contain four essay questions, with our RS students choosing three out of the four to answer.

Questions can target material from any area of the specification. Two questions might be set from one specification section, or all questions might be from different sections.

In order to guarantee access to the full range of marks for the assessment all specification content is covered by the Religious Studies Department.

Each essay is worth 40 marks and will test both AO1 and AO2.

Responses are assessed via a level of response mark scheme.

On each paper, beneath the essay questions, are instructions to students reminding them of the knowledge and skills expected in their responses as per the Assessment Objectives.

In these instructions, where reference is made to 'religion and belief' it should be noted that 'belief' does not just mean the beliefs of a particular religion but can encompass views and opinions from a variety of perspectives, religious or not.

A sample of the type of questions expected can be found below on the OCR website.

Holistic impact

Although exams and qualifications form an important part of your education, they are not the *only* means of assessing the impact of a robust Religious Studies education. Within Religious Studies we are committed to the premise that, through the study of religion in all its guises at Ecclesbourne School, students are able to know more, understand more and do more.

Future employment opportunities

Knowledge of other cultures and world religious beliefs can be useful in many jobs where you are working with the public or communities. These include counselling and social services, marketing, sales and advertising, catering and hospitality, leisure, sport and tourism, retail sales and customer services, education and training, medicine and nursing, and service sector roles.

Ultimately, the thought of you continuing your study of this wonderful subject beyond school, either at university or in a career, is evidence of its impact in itself.

You could do significantly worse than studying Religious Studies or Philosophy and Ethics related degrees at university.

Even within our department, there is a wealth of diverse and impactful careers that friends of ours have pursued with a Religious Studies related degree in hand.

Rather than list an endless number of jobs and careers with a Religious Studies degree, here are some of the skills you will gain having studied Religious Studies at A level here at Ecclesbourne:

- **Problem solving** - Some jobs particularly require problem solving skills and creative thinking to recognise problems and their causes, to identify a range of possible solutions and then assess and decide the best way forward.
- **Patience** - You'll need to be able to tolerate waiting, delay, or frustration without becoming agitated or upset. Some jobs require lots of patience such as dealing with customers or clients who may be upset or unwell, and job roles where you must explain or repeat information or instructions.
- **Communication** - your job requires verbal communication, you may need to write or give speeches and presentations. For jobs which require written communication skills, you will need to write clearly and convincingly – you could be producing or dealing with legal documents or writing articles for a newspaper. You may also require good listening skills, the ability to negotiate, or to be persuasive.
- **Attention to detail** - You'll need to be thorough and focused on details of a task. You'll monitor and check work, information, or plans.

- **Analytics** - You'll be collecting and examining information in detail to arrive at a solution, to answer a key question or make an informed decision.
- **Discipline** - You need to know and do what is expected of you. This ranges from organising yourself, being on time, to being responsible. Some jobs need particular discipline skills such as being able to persevere with the task and plans until you accomplish them or following strict procedures.
- **Literacy** - You'll need good reading and writing skills. This could include a good standard of spoken and written English, and good knowledge of spelling, punctuation, and grammar.
- **Interpersonal skills** - You'll need listening and speaking skills, as well empathy to build friendships and ensure good working relationships.