

A-Level Religious Studies – OCR Exam Board

RPE Vision: We aim to empower our students with the ability to interpret the stories, symbols and values that are at the foundation of humanity. Students will learn how different cultures have answered the ultimate questions of existence and become comfortable engaging with disagreement and uncertainty. They will ultimately live a more examined and reflective life as they are forced to confront important ideas concerning meaning, morals and mortality. Our vision is a response to this short letter:

Dear teacher,

I am a survivor of a concentration camp. My eyes saw what no person should witness: gas chambers built by learned engineers. Children poisoned by educated physicians. Infants killed by trained nurses. Women and babies shot by high school and college graduates.

So, I am suspicious of education.

My request is this: Help your children become human. Your efforts must never produce learned monsters, skilled psychopaths or educated Eichmanns.

Reading, writing, and arithmetic are important only if they serve to make our children more human.

OCR's A Level in Religious Studies has been developed in consultation with teachers and stakeholders from a variety of institutions. The content has been designed to provide a coherent and thought provoking programme of study for both teachers and learners, whilst also acting as a rigorous course of study which prepares learners for progression to Higher Education. This qualification is designed to develop a greater understanding and appreciation of religious beliefs and teachings, as well as the disciplines of ethics and philosophy of religion. Learners will develop their skills of critical analysis in order to construct balanced, informed arguments and responses to religious, philosophical and ethical ideas. OCR's A Level Religious Studies course aims to engage learners thoroughly and develop an interest in Religious Studies which extends beyond the classroom and can be applied to the world around them.

At Huntington, we study the following three components. Each of these is taught simultaneously by a different member of staff to help students to distinguish between and compartmentalise the content of each paper more clearly. We generally follow the order of content recommended by the exam board for ease of continuity, development and progression.

Philosophy – Mrs Yeadon

Ethics – Mr Parmiter

Developments in Christian Thought – Mr Eden

	<u>Year 12 - AS</u>	<u>Year 13 – A2</u>	<u>Assessment</u>
<p><u>Philosophy of Religion – Mrs Yeadon</u></p> <p>In Philosophy of religion learners will study philosophical issues and</p>	<p>Learners will study:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ancient philosophical influences (Plato and Aristotle) 2. The nature of the soul, mind and body – dualism and materialism 	<p>Learners will study:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ideas about the nature and attributes of God – Omni-benevolence, Omniscience and Omnipotence in relation to 	<p>120 marks 2 hour written paper</p>

<p>questions raised by religion and belief. These include arguments regarding the existence or non-existence of God, the nature and influence of religious experience and the problems of evil and suffering. They will also explore philosophical language and thought, through significant concepts and the works of key thinkers, illustrated in issues or debates in the philosophy of religion.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Arguments about the existence or non-existence of God (Teleological, Cosmological, Ontological) 4. The nature and impact of religious experience 5. The challenge for religious belief of the problem of evil 	<p>notions of Free Will, eternity and Justice</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Religious Language – analogical, via negative and symbolic 3. Religious Language; 20th century perspectives including cognitive and non-cognitive approaches 	<p>33.3% of Total A Level</p>
<p><u>Religious Ethic – Mr Parmiter</u></p> <p>Religion and ethics is characterised by the study of ethical language and thought, with exploration of key concepts and the works of influential thinkers. Ethical theory will also be applied to issues of importance; namely euthanasia, business ethics, and sexual ethics.</p>	<p>Learners will study:</p> <p>Normative theories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilitarianism • Situation Ethics • Kantian Ethics • Natural Law <p>Applied Ethics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Euthanasia: Should people have complete autonomy over their life and death? What is a person? Quality vs Sanctity of Life? • Business ethics: Whistleblowing? Consumerism? Globalisation? CSR? Capitalism? 	<p>Learners will study:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sexual Ethics: Pre-marital sex, extra-marital sex and homosexuality. • Meta-ethics: Is ethical language meaningless? Do words like ‘good’ describe anything ‘real’? • Conscience: Does conscience actually exist? What is it? A rational process? An unconscious psychological phenomena? Is it sociological? Is it biological? 	<p>120 marks 2 hour written paper</p> <p>33.3% of Total A Level</p>
<p><u>Developments in Christian Thought – Mr Eden</u></p> <p>Developments in religious thought provides an opportunity for the systematic study of one religious tradition. This will include the</p>	<p>Learners will study:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Human nature and the theology of St Augustine. 2. The Afterlife – what people mean when they talk about heaven, hell and purgatory. 3. How can we know anything about God? Can we use our own 	<p>Learners will study:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How should Christians approach the existence of other religions? Is Christianity the “one true religion”? 2. How should Christians approach issues around 	<p>120 marks 2 hour written paper</p> <p>33.3% of Total A Level</p>

<p>exploration of religious beliefs, values, teachings and practices that shape religious identity, as well as sources of wisdom and authority. Also central are the ways in which religious traditions have developed over time, and religious responses to challenges and significant contemporary social issues.</p>	<p>minds or do we need to rely on revelation?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Who is Jesus? 5. How should Christians construct their morals? 6. The nature of suffering – Dietrich Bonhoeffer’s theology of sacrifice. Key themes related to the relationship between religion and society 	<p>gender? Are men any closer to God than women?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. How should Christianity fit into an increasingly secular Britain? <p>“Heaven is a place on Earth” – how “Christian” are the Liberation Theologians from Latin America?</p>	
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<p>Homework</p>	<p>Frequency: Homework tasks will be set on a weekly basis for each of the three course elements. Students will spend 1 hour per lesson on extended learning tasks (4-5 hours per week).</p> <p>Types of tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Write essays/essay plans – both within and outside of timed exam conditions. ▪ Improve past essays – regularly and diligently perfect work in light of targets and feedback. ▪ Collate notes and reading materials above and beyond that investigated in class. ▪ Research additional facts, figures and case-studies to exemplify and strengthen points made in essays/responses. ▪ Read relevant sources and materials weekly and take notes/annotate. ▪ Revise content thoroughly and regularly. Students will have regular knowledge tests in class to ascertain recall and understanding of key scholars/material. ▪ Quiz work on TEAMS to regularly review essential content – interleaving information and developing memory recall.
<p>Assessment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One full essay per topic (on average 3 per half-term). This could be done in timed conditions of for homework. • Regular key knowledge tests – usually one for each topic, per teacher. • Mock exams • End of year exam
<p>Feedback</p>	<p>In RPE, at all key stages, we will support students to make good progress. Exemplary work is modelled and methods of attaining best practice will be articulated and exemplified to your child repeatedly. High quality instruction will lay the foundations for effective feedback, including both summative and formative assessment strategies. Key knowledge will be regularly tested in advance of formal summative assessments and tools (e.g. Key word lists, exemplar essays, essay map guidance) will be provided to help them access and review key learning. We will endeavour to make instruction about how to make good progress clear and accessible to all students.</p> <p>Detailed feedback:</p>

	<p>One essay per topic (on average 3 per half-term), marked with feedback within 2-3 lessons (or returned prior to the setting of the next essay). Teachers can use codes and exam board marking criteria to communicate their targets and/or write extended personal comments, guidance and advice. It is expected that wishes/targets will have been addressed in subsequent essays.</p> <p>Group feedback, which verbally and visually identifies and corrects common errors and misconceptions, will be regularly used. More likely, teachers will use high quality instruction in advance of setting essays.</p> <p>Knowledge Tests: Knowledge tests – at least one per topic (min - on average 3 per half-term), peer or self-assessed, with teacher providing verbal moderation and feedback.</p> <p>Maintenance marking: Folders will be checked visually to ascertain the quality of note taking and organisation. It is not expected that every piece of classwork will be marked closely, but students with sub-standard organisation will be directed to improve it until it meets the required standard.</p> <p>Verbal Verbal feedback, including the often under-valued ‘regular praise’ will be used frequently.</p>
<p>How can I help my child?</p>	<p>It would be great if you could take an interest in what students are investigating with us in RPE. We are often told by parents and students that this subject contributes to interesting discussions of an evening.</p> <p>The Stamford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy is often recommended by the exam board as a source for students - yet there are perhaps more accessible sources. A list of reading can be accessed on the website for those students considering making this discipline part of the next stage of their journey.</p>