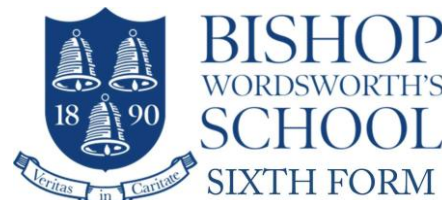


Religious Studies - Philosophy, Ethics & Theology OCR Specification



General information:

In every step of your studies and careers you will be involved in decision making whether you lean towards the Sciences or the Arts. Religious Studies comprising Philosophy, Ethics and Theology enable you to understand your colleague's and your opponent's ways of thinking. It helps with skills such as communication, critical thinking, working with others and problem solving. It enables you to be one step ahead of the game. It gives you the advantage.

Course content:

In year 12 the Philosophy component covers topics such as: Ancient Philosophical Influences, Ideas of the Nature of God, Nature of the Soul, Mind and Body, and Arguments for the Existence of God. The Ethics component covers topics such as, Natural Law; Situation Ethics and Utilitarianism and application to issues such as euthanasia. The Developments in Christian Thought covers topics such as: Religious figures and Sources of Wisdom; Religious Beliefs Values, their interconnections and how they vary historically and in the contemporary world.

In Year 13, the course goes deeper, covering Issues in Philosophy such as the Nature and Impact of Religious Experience, and the Challenge for Religious Belief of the Problem of Evil, and Issues of Religious Language. The Ethics component will cover Religious Language and thought including Meta-ethics, debates surrounding the significant idea of Conscience and Sexual Ethics. The Developments in Christian Thought component will focus on key themes related to the Relationship between Religion and Society and Practices which shape and express Religious Identity, and how these vary within a tradition, and significant Social and Historical Developments in Theology and Religious Thought.

How is the course taught and assessed?

The Philosophy/RS course is taught by specialist teachers. Students will have two teachers for the three components of the course. Teaching and learning methods include discussion and debate where students listen and can partake. Questions are actively encouraged plus students undertake homework, independent study and research work outside of the classroom.

Assessment is by three exam papers, one for each component. In each paper students will answer three essay style questions, comprising: AO1 (Knowledge and Understanding) and AO2 (Analysis and Evaluation).

Entry requirements:

In addition to the general entry requirements for BWS, a grade 6 in GCSE Religious Studies if taken, or 6 in English Language

Results information:

In 2025, 80.2% of students achieved A*- B

Top destinations for students:

We have regularly had students studying pure Philosophy at Cambridge or Philosophy/Theology at Oxford, and other prestigious universities. Students study Philosophy on its own or as part of a joint honours degree.

Beyond the curriculum:

Some of the A level students run the 'BWS Philosophy Club', meeting once a month, which is very popular with students of all ages. Every year students attend a Philosophy/Ethics conference where outside speakers offer a different viewpoint on topics and the students can interact with students from other schools and colleges. There are often outside essay competitions to take part in and also the opportunity to enrol at Sarum College Library, which has one of the largest theological collections in the South of England.