

Philosophy, Religion & Ethics at Samuel Whitbread Academy

Intent	<p>At Samuel Whitbread Academy we encourage students to reflect upon and consider their own beliefs and practices, at the same time as giving them the skills required to justify their viewpoints through reasoned argument. We have developed a knowledge-rich, spiral curriculum that we believe allows our students to develop their knowledge and apply it to a range of ultimate questions about the world and our lives as well as ethical issues. We aid students in recognising their common humanity through respect and intercultural understanding and that other people, with their differences, can also be right.</p> <p>The Philosophy, Religion and Ethics A level is designed and delivered to nurture thoughtful and motivated young people, who are able to think critically about life and different viewpoints. In line with our school ethos the curriculum is designed with the intention of developing the whole person. We build on confidence in examining one's own ideas, resilience and independence to build on aspirations and a tolerance and respect of others.</p> <p>Our curriculum is designed with the students in mind, we aim to promote a love of learning through engaging our curriculum with interest in the wider world, aiming to make our curriculum relevant and enriching as well as challenging and ambitious to stretch our learners and develop their thinking skills. Our curriculum is designed to build on prior learning. As well as core writing skills which provide great preparation for University (if that is a path a student wishes to take). We also provide a wide range of opportunities with a focus on building on students oracy skills through philosophical, ethical and critical thinking, which builds resilience and confidence, both academically and socially.</p>
Implementation	<p>In Philosophy, Religion and Ethics we centre our ways of knowing through how we act and respond – helping pupils to reflect personally, with integrity on what they have learned and consider the implications for actions on our own lives and the world in which we live; through how we see and understand – helping pupils to understand deeply the meaning of big questions; through how we judge and discern – helping students to judge wisely in response to different interpretations of meanings, significance and implications of texts, beliefs, and ways of life.</p> <p>Students are supported through a consistent approach to teaching and learning across the department, providing all students with an inspiring and challenging environment. We dedicate time to define, understand, verbalise and apply key literacy in all units, this is completed in lessons, assessments and fortnightly key literacy quizzing. Such a focus develops student confidence in terms of speaking and writing within the subject.</p> <p>Students are further enriched through our extra-curricular opportunities which include a range of external speakers and visits to explore the world around us, tailored to improving student oracy and resilience.</p> <p><u>Modules:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Philosophy - In this unit we will explore arguments for and against the existence of God. Were the universe and humankind created by an all-powerful being, one who continues to influence human affairs today or is everything the accidental result of a 'Big Bang'? We will consider the concept of humans feeling the need to believe in a God from a psychological perspective. ● Ethics - In this unit we will explore morality and moral decision making, including the use of happiness, love, and reason in making decisions on issues ranging from the use of nuclear weapons as a deterrent, Euthanasia, animal rights to polyamorous relationships. We will also look at determinism and consider arguments that imply that human actions are determined by something regarded as external to their own will. ● Buddhism - In this unit we will explore the religion and Philosophy of Buddhism, its key teachings, practices and history, including examination of significant social and historical developments in religious thought and the relationship between religion and society. <p><u>End of Course Assessment:</u> Exam board: Eduqas (A-Level) A-Level Assessment: At the end of year 13, students will sit 3 exams all worth 33% of their final mark. The units are: Philosophy of Religion, Religion and Ethics and Buddhism.</p>

Im pl e m en ta ti on	Ke y St ag e 5: Ye ar 12	<p>Within the first year of the course we explore:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Philosophy – Inductive and deductive arguments, the problem of evil and suffering and understanding experience. ● Ethics – We begin with ethical thought, natural law (Applying to euthanasia and abortion), Joseph Fletchers Situation Ethics (Application to Polyamorous relationships) and Act and Rule Utilitarianism (with application to Nuclear war) ● Buddhism - Beginning with a history of Buddhism’s origins we then explore concepts, life and practices.
	Ke y St ag e 5: Ye ar 13	<p>Within the Second year of the course we explore:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Philosophy – Challenges to belief, how to evaluate the strength of religious experience and language when arguing for and against the existence of a deity. ● Ethics – Going into ideas on Naturalism, Intuitionism and Emotivism as ideas where ethical thought may arise (Meta-Ethics), Deontological Ethics through a greater exploration of Aquinas’ Natural law applied to immigration and capital punishment. And finishing the theme with an exploration of determinism and free will (do we actually have choices in what we do). ● Buddhism - Exploring religious texts and the development of Buddhist thought we then explore the social and historical development in western society and the practices that shape religious identity.

Impact

Our Intent and Implementation aim to ensure that all Philosophy students gain knowledge and understanding of the world and how to question effectively, as well as developing the ability to evaluate and critically analyse arguments in a structured manner.

Students are regularly assessed to check their understanding and progress within each of the units they are taught in Key Stage 5. This includes:

- Regular independent work as preparation for each lesson which is checked.
- Peer and self-assessment of lesson tasks.
- Termly End of Unit essay practice for AO1 and AO2 which are teacher assessed and whole-class feedback is provided.
- IPE exams throughout Year 12 and 13.

The Philosophy, Religion and Ethics department consistently and regularly provides feedback to our students through assessment-based questions, and enquiry question assessments, ensuring that all of our learners make progress through their topic-based learning.

At Samuel Whitbread Academy, our success as a department relies on the enthusiasm students have for our subject, our lessons, and their voices are vital in our continuing growth.