

Friday, 28 June 2024

A-Level Philosophy, Religion & Ethics

Sixth form induction



Welcome!

Your teachers:

- Miss K Bradshaw – Kbradshaw@bestacademies.org.uk - (Philosophy & Ethics) – 6 hours a fortnight
- Mrs E Foreman (Buddhism) – 3 Hours a fortnight

Three areas in the subject:

- Philosophy
- Ethics
- Buddhist Philosophy

Why are you here?



- Talk to the person next to you....
- Why are you choosing/thinking of taking Philosophy?
- Do you have a career in mind?
- Did you do GCSE (and love it)? 😍
- Did you not do GCSE but wish you had?
- Did you just have an option box left over.....? 😱

• **Big Questions: Before we get started – Discuss some of these questions (Your choice!).**

1. If I do a bad thing for a good reason, does it matter?
2. Should I feel guilty if my action results in a bad outcome, even though my intention was good?
3. Do the needs of many outweigh the needs of a few?
4. Can anything be absolutely right or absolutely wrong in every situation?
5. Is morality about following rules?
6. Can you be moral and not religious?
7. How can we begin to explore whether God exists?
8. Do we have the right to end life?
9. How do we decide what constitutes 'truth'?

Expectations:

- Independent Study
 - Wider Reading – discover your subject
- Organization – A dedicated notebook and A4 folder/binder.
 - Seek advice, support and guidance
 - Communicate
 - Continue to revise

Suitability:

- APS 4.7
- Grade 5 in GCSE English language or literature.
- If studies Religious studies/Philosophy at GCSE a grade 5 is needed.
- Anyone who is interested in the big questions, such as the nature and purpose of life, human behaviour, and how belief shapes society; this is a subject where you will have deep discussion and will need to have an open mind to consider different perspectives.

If you are absent you will need to:

1. Email class teacher to inform of absence.
2. Access learning resources from the learning platform (google drive) or the google classroom.
3. Speak to class members to catch up on notes.

Examinations:

Philosophy

Written examination: 2 hours 33⅓% of qualification (⅓)

There will be four themes within this component:

- Arguments (Inductive & Deductive)
- Challenges to belief (Problem of evil & psychological)
- Religious experience
- Religious language

Learners will be expected to answer one question from Section A out of a choice of two and one question from Section B out of a choice of three in this component. Questions can be taken from any area of the specification.

Religion

Written examination: 2 hours 33⅓% of qualification (⅓)

There will be four themes within this component:

- Religious figures and sacred texts
- Concepts and religious life
- Significant social and historical developments
- Practices and religious Identity.

Learners will be expected to answer one question from Section A out of a choice of two and one question from Section B out of a choice of three in this component. Questions can be taken from any area of the specification.

Ethics

Written examination: 2 hours 33% of qualification (⅓)

There will be four themes within this component:

- Ethical thought
- Deontological ethics
- Teleological ethics
- Determinism and free will

Learners will be expected to answer one question from Section A out of a choice of two and one question from Section B out of a choice of three in this component. Questions can be taken from any area of the specification.

Topics:

Philosophy	Religion - Buddhism	Ethics
<p>1. AO1 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Philosophical and/or ethical thought and teaching.• Cause and significance of similarities and differences.• Approaches to the Issues. <p>2. AO2 Analyse and evaluate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The extent to which the classical form of the problem can be unpacked.• Whether the theory's are relevant in the 21st century.	<p>1. AO1 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief* , including: belief, practices and sources of authority influence on individuals, communities and societies similarities and differences within and/or between religions and belief</p> <p>2. AO2 Analyse and evaluate aspects of religion and belief*, including their significance and influence on society.</p>	<p>1. Ethical Theories: (AO1) These will include theories such as Natural Law, Utilitarianism, Kantian Ethics and Religious Ethics.</p> <p>2. Practical/Applied Ethics: (AO2) This part of the course will focus upon how you can apply these ethical theories to certain situations. These will include abortion, euthanasia, genetic engineering and also war and peace.</p>

A different aspect of the AO1 skill is always linked to a relevant AO2 skill and both are used with the same topic from the A level specification.

Philosophy:

Year 1:

Theme 1: Arguments for the existence of God – inductive

- A: Inductive arguments – cosmological
- B: Inductive arguments – teleological
- C: Challenges to inductive arguments

Theme 2: Arguments for the existence of God – deductive

- A: Deductive arguments – origins of the ontological argument
- B: Deductive arguments – developments of the ontological argument
- C: Challenges to the ontological argument

Theme 3: Challenges to religious belief (part 1) – the problem of evil and suffering

- A: The problem of evil and suffering
- B: Religious responses to the problem of evil: Augustinian type theodicy
- C: Religious responses to the problem of evil: Irenaean type theodicy

Theme 4: Religious experience (part 1)

- A: The nature of religious experience
- B: Mystical experience
- C: Challenges to the objectivity and authenticity of religious experience

Year 2:

Theme 2: Challenges to religious belief – Religious belief as a product of the human mind

- D: Religious belief as a product of the human mind: Sigmund Freud
- E: Religious belief as a product of the human mind: Carl Jung
- F: Issues relating to rejection of religion: Atheism

Theme 3: Religious experience

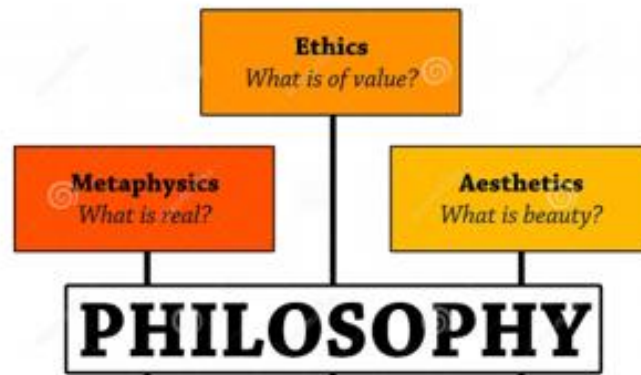
- D: The influence of religious experience on religious practice and faith
- E: Different definitions of miracles
- F: Contrasting views on the possibility of miracles: David Hume and Richard Swinburne

Theme 4: Religious language

- A: Inherent problems of religious language
- B: Religious language as cognitive, but meaningless
- C: Religious language as non-cognitive and analogical

Theme 4: Religious language

- D: Religious language as non-cognitive and symbolic
- E: Religious language as non-cognitive and mythical
- F: Religious language as a language game



Ethics:

Year 1:

Theme 1: Ethical thought

- A: Divine command theory
- B: Virtue theory
- C: Ethical egoism

Theme 2: Aquinas' Natural Law – a religious approach to ethics

- A: Thomas Aquinas' Natural Law: laws and precepts as the basis of morality
- B: Aquinas' Natural Law: the role of virtues and goods in supporting moral behaviour
- C: Aquinas' Natural Law: application of the theory

Theme 3: Situation Ethics – a religious approach to ethics

- A: Joseph Fletcher's Situation Ethics: his rejection of other forms of ethics and his acceptance of agape as the basis of morality
- B: Fletcher's Situation Ethics: the principles as a means of assessing morality
- C: Fletcher's Situation Ethics: application of the theory

Theme 4: Utilitarianism – a non-religious approach to ethics

- A: Classical Utilitarianism – Jeremy Bentham's Act Utilitarianism: happiness as the basis of morality
- B: John Stuart Mill's development of Utilitarianism: types of pleasure, the harm principle and the use of rules
- C: Utilitarianism: application of the theories (Act and Rule)

Year 2:

Theme 1: Ethical Thought

- D: Meta-ethical approaches – Naturalism
- E: Meta-ethical approaches – Intuitionism
- F: Meta-ethical approaches – Emotivism

Theme 2: Deontological Ethics

- D: John Finnis' development of Natural Law
- E: Bernard Hoose's overview of the Proportionalist debate
- F: Finnis' Natural Law and Proportionalism: application of the theories

Theme 4ABC: Determinism and free will – Determinism

- A: Religious concepts of predestination
- B: Concepts of determinism
- C: The implications of determinism and predestination

Theme 4DEF: Determinism and free will – Free will

- D: Religious concepts of free will
- E: Concepts of libertarianism
- F: The implications of libertarianism and free will

Key thinkers:

1. Robert Adams (AS).....
2. Aristotle (AS).....
3. Max Stirner (AS).....
4. F. H. Bradley.....
5. H. A. Prichard.....
6. A. J. Ayer.....
7. Thomas Aquinas (AS).....
8. John Finnis.....
9. Bernard Hoose and Richard McCormick.....
10. Joseph Fletcher (AS).....
11. Jeremy Bentham (AS).....
12. John Stuart Mill (AS).....
13. Augustine.....
14. John Calvin.....
15. John Locke.....
16. Ivan Pavlov.....
17. Thomas Hobbes.....
18. Pelagius.....
19. Jacobus Arminius.....

Buddhism:

Year 1:

Theme 1: Religious figures and sacred texts

- A: Accounts of the birth of the historical Buddha and the Four Sights
- B: The Awakening/Enlightenment of the Buddha
- C: Buddhist texts as sources of wisdom and authority – their use and treatment in daily life

Theme 2: Religious concepts

- A: The nature of ultimate reality: the three lakshanas (three marks of existence): dukkha, anicca and anatta
- B: The nature of ultimate reality: pratityasamutpada, karma and rebirth
- C: Arhat and bodhisattva – Theravada and Mahayana teachings

Theme 3: Religious life

- A: The Four Noble Truths
- B: The Eightfold Path – key moral principles
- C: The dasa sila (ten precepts) – key moral principles

Theme 4: Religious practices that shape religious identity

- A: Going for refuge
- B: Meditation
- C: The role and importance of dana (giving) and punya (merit)

Year 2:

Theme 1: Religious figures and sacred texts

- D: The Pali Canon: its role in Buddhism as a whole
- E: The main themes and concepts in two Mahayana texts
- F: The contribution made to the development of Buddhist thought by the work of contemporary Buddhist teachers

Theme 3: Significant social and historical developments in religious thought

- A: Historical development of Japanese Buddhism
- B: Religion and society: responses to the challenges from science
- C: Religion and society: responses to the challenges from secularisation

Theme 3: Significant social and historical developments in religious thought

- D: Religion and society: responses to the challenges of pluralism and diversity
- E: Historical development of Buddhism: Buddhism in Britain
- F: The relationship between religion and society: religion, equality and discrimination

Theme 4: Religious practices that shape religious identity

- D: Beliefs and practices of Tibetan Buddhist traditions
- E: Buddhism and change: the Mindfulness Movement
- F: Socially Engaged Buddhism: 'liberationist' traditions

Recommended reading and site list for summer: (Year 1)

– Philosophy of Religion

Useful resources:

- Books Philosophy of Religion: Towards a More Humane Approach, John Cottingham, CUP, 2014 – (ISBN-10 110769518X)
- An Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion, Brian Davies, OUP, 2004 – (ISBN-10 0199263477)
- Philosophy of Religion: A Guide and Anthology, Brian Davies, OUP, 2000 – (ISBN-10 019875194X)
- Philosophy of Religion: An Introduction, Michael B. Wilkinson, Continuum, 2010 – (ISBN-10 1441167730)
- WJEC AS Religious Studies: An Introduction to Philosophy of Religion and an Introduction to Religion and Ethics - Study and Revision Guide, Lawson & Pearce, Illuminate, 2012 - (ISBN-10 1908682078)
- WJEC A2 Religious Studies: Studies in Philosophy of Religion - Study and Revision Guide, Ellerton-Harris, Illuminate, 2013 – (ISBN-10 1908682108)

Websites:

A-level Journal: Challenging Religious Issues – <https://hwb.wales.gov.uk>

Dialogue: A journal of religion and philosophy - www.dialogue.org.uk

The Philosophers' Magazine – www.philosophers.co.uk www.philosophypages.com
www.philosophyonline.co.uk

Recommended reading & site list for summer: (Year 1)

– Buddhism:

Useful resources:

- Clarke, S., & Thompson, M. (2005). A New Approach: Buddhism (2nd Ed). London: Hodder Education. (ISBN-10: 0340815051)
- Erricker, C. (2015). Buddhism: A Complete Introduction: Teach Yourself. London: Hodder and Stoughton. (ISBN-10: 1473609445)
- Gethin, R. (1998). The Foundations of Buddhism. Oxford; New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press. (ISBN-10: 0192892231)
- Harvey, P. (2012). An Introduction to Buddhism, Second Edition: Teachings, History and Practices (2 edition). Cambridge; New York: CUP (ISBN-10: 0521676746)
- Keown, D. (2013). Buddhism: A Very Short Introduction (2 edition). Oxford: OUP Oxford. Lopez, D. (2009).
- Mitchell, D. W., & Jacoby, S. H. (2014). Buddhism: Introducing the Buddhist Experience. New York: OUP. (ISBN-10: 0199861870)
- Side, D. (2005). Buddhism. Deddington: Philip Allan. (ISBN-10: 1844892190)
- [My Revision Notes: A-level Religious Studies Buddhism](#)

Websites:

Documentary <http://www.bbc.co.uk/mediacentre/proginfo/2015/31/the-buddha-genius-of-ancient-world>

<http://www.ahandfulofleaves.org/Resources.html> - a rich repository of electronic books and journal articles on Buddhism, including translations of sacred texts.

www.buddhanet.net – a huge digital resource maintained by Theravadin Buddhists in Australia – but with non-sectarian and world-wide horizons.

www.dharmamet.org - Dharma Net International is also a huge digital resource maintained by Theravadins in the US but with non-sectarian and world-wide horizons.

<http://www.tricycle.com/magazine> Tricycle is a non-denominational magazine which contains articles applying Buddhist principles to everyday life and to social, economic and ecological problems.

<http://www.sacred-texts.com/bud/> - a resource containing translations of most significant Buddhist texts.

Recommended reading and site list for summer: (Year 1)

– Ethics:

Useful resources:

- [Ethical Studies \(2nd Edition\) - Robert Bowie](#)
- [WJEC/Eduqas Religious Studies for A Level Year 1 & AS - Religion and Ethics Revision Guide](#)
- Bowie, R.A., Ethical Studies, Second Edition, Nelson Thornes, 2004 (Specifically intended as a student textbook, and including an excellent comprehensive bibliography)
- Dewar, G. (2009) AS & A Level Philosophy and Ethics Through Diagrams (OUP) 978-0199180905
- Jones, G. (2006), Moral Philosophy (Hodder) 978-0340888056
- Lee, J. (1999), Ethical Theory and Language (Abacus) 1-898653- 14-3
- Thompson, M (2008), An Introduction to Philosophy and Ethics (Hodder) 978- 0340966570
- Vardy, P.(1999), The Puzzle of Sex (Fount) 978-0006280422
- Vardy, C & P (2012), Ethics Matters (SCM) 978-0334043911
- Wilcockson, M. (2001), Ethics: Sex and Relationships (Hodder Murray) 978- 0340724897

Websites:

www.philosophypages.com/ph/index.htm (Summaries of ethical theorists and their works]

www.bbc.co.uk/religion/ [BBC's Religion and Ethics homepage with links to a forum and audio and video links]

www.philosophers.co.uk/games/games.htm [The Philosophers' Magazine games section -good introduction to ethics activities e.g. Taboo]

www.iep.utm.edu Ethics section of the Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy

[www.theguardian.com>world>ethics](http://www.theguardian.com/world/ethics) A link to the news stories in the Guardian that have an ethical theme.

www.miracosta.edu > home > Imoon Good overview of basic ethical theory.

www.Rsrevision.com Useful material on many of the topics in the specification.

WJEC Eduqas candidates are assessed according to two assessment objectives, (A01 & A02).

How does this work out in practice?

- There are three components. Each component is assessed via externally assessed written examination. You have to study all three components. In component 1 you will be looking at Buddhism, In component 2 you study Philosophy, In component 3 you study Ethics.

For all components you must answer:

- Section A: one two-part question from a choice of two.
- Section B: one two-part question from a choice of three. Questions can be taken from any area of the specification. In each question the first part addresses AO1 and the second AO2. Each part carries 25 marks.

Your responses:

In all your responses, you should:

- Reflect on, select and apply specified knowledge
- Understand, interpret and evaluate critically religious concepts, texts and other sources
- Identify, investigate and critically analyse questions, arguments, ideas and issues arising from within this component
- Construct well-informed and reasoned arguments substantiated by relevant evidence
- Engage in debate in a way that recognises the right of others to hold a different view
- Present responses to questions which are clear and coherent
- Use specialist language and terminology appropriately

Philosophical Arguments: An Introduction

- ***Tell me something that you can absolutely prove beyond any doubt.***
- ***Do you think it is possible to prove the existence of God? What would you class as unquestionable proof? Is proof of God possible? Can we disprove the existence of God?***

Arguments:

- In philosophy, an argument is a way of putting forward a theory.
- Arguments will have a **conclusion** (C) which leads on from a series of reasons or **premises** (P) which aims to convince you that it is right.



Arguments:

Here is an example of an argument:

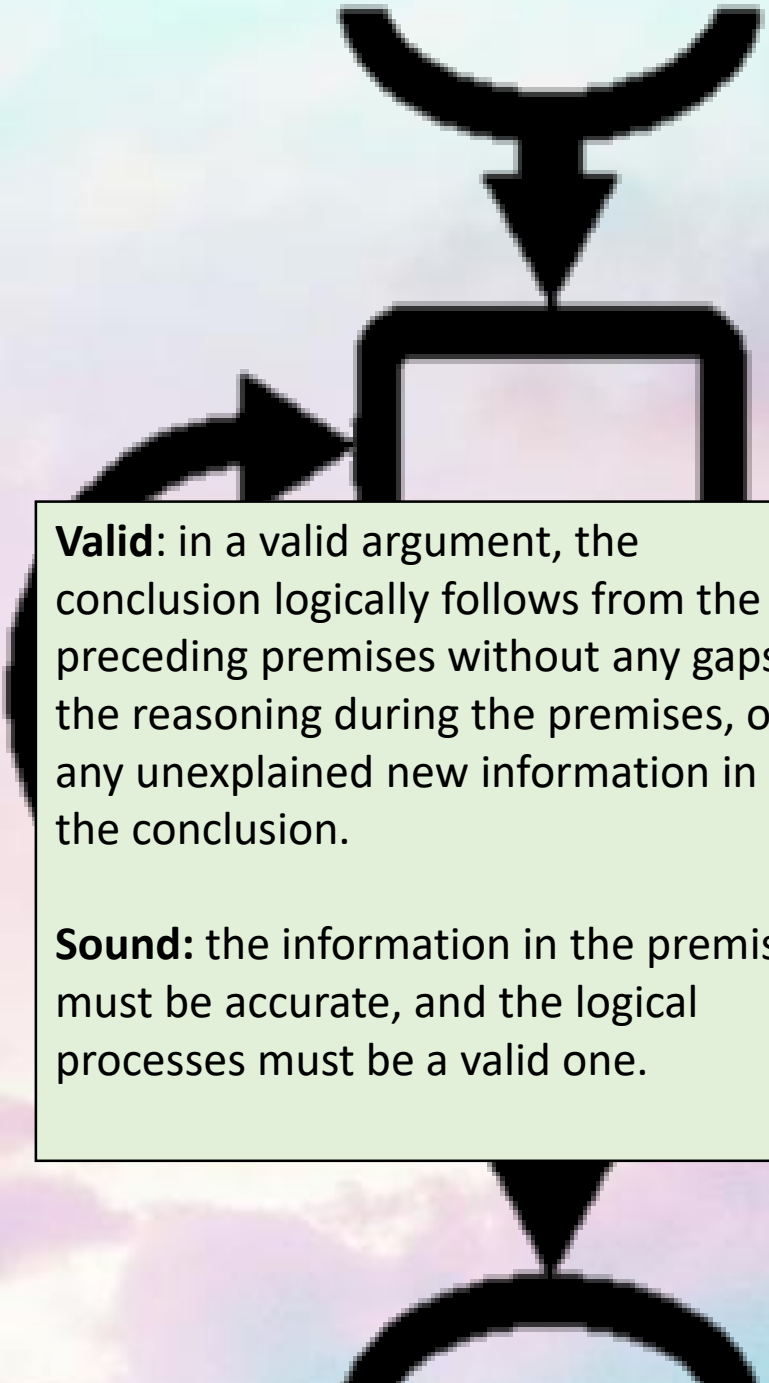
Starting point – Potatoes are the best food.

Premise 1 – It goes with lots of different meals.

Premise 2 – It can be in many different forms.

Conclusion – Potatoes are versatile and nutritious which makes them the best food!

- How convincing do you find this argument?
- Can you see any flaws with it?
- In all arguments, the **premises** (the proposition) must lead to the **conclusion** (the decision arrived at using reasoning).
- For it to be a *successful* argument, the premise and conclusion need to be both **valid** and **sound**.



Valid: in a valid argument, the conclusion logically follows from the preceding premises without any gaps in the reasoning during the premises, or any unexplained new information in the conclusion.

Sound: the information in the premises must be accurate, and the logical processes must be a valid one.

Valid and Sound Arguments:



For example

- **P:** All women have blue eyes
- **P:** Amanda is a woman
- **C:** Therefore Amanda has blue eyes.

Explain why this argument is valid:

The premises lead logically on to the conclusion. If all women have blue eyes, and Amanda is a woman, then logically, Amanda will have blue eyes.

Explain why this argument is not sound:

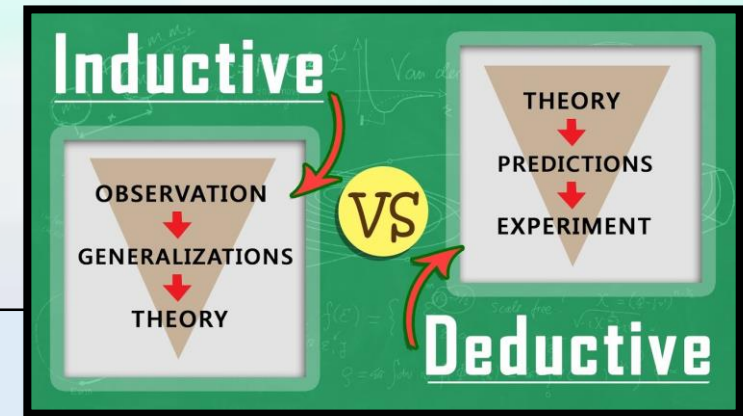
- **P:** All women have blue eyes
- **P:** Amanda is a woman
- **C:** Therefore Amanda has blue eyes.

The first premise is **not accurate**. Not all women have blue eyes. Therefore Amanda's eyes may be blue, or they may be brown, green, hazel etc.

Can you think of any arguments you hear in your own life that may not be valid or sound?

Arguments:

- The first part of Philosophy is to explore **inductive** and **deductive** arguments:
- **Inductive reasoning** is when people draw conclusions from particular examples. We see things happening a lot, and then we conclude that they always, or usually, happen. The person doing the reasoning uses their sensory experiences to make rules or predictions. Therefore, inductive arguments lead to conclusions that *might* be true – but might also be wrong.
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- **Deductive reasoning** is where we know that if the premises of the argument are true, then the conclusion must also be true. The conclusion is a logical consequence of the premise. It is not based on sensory experience, but on logical processes. Therefore, *if* the premises of the argument are true, then the conclusion will also be true.



Both inductive and deductive arguments will follow the structure of premises and conclusions.

When we use the word **'argument'**, we usually mean some sort of disagreement. In philosophical terms, however, an 'argument' is really someone's way of putting forward their theory. A philosophical argument will have a conclusion ('Therefore, God exists.') which is supported by several reasons in an attempt to convince you that the **conclusion (C)** is true or right. These reasons are called **'premises' (P)**. Look at the example below:

- **P:** Philosophy, Religion & Ethics is a really interesting A Level.
P: Other subjects are incredibly boring.
P: Philosophy, Religion & Ethics is the only subject that isn't boring.
C: Therefore, Philosophy, Religion & Ethics is the best subject.

Here are three extremely convincing premises, which you will definitely agree with. You agree with the premises for different reasons – some of you might have experienced other subjects being incredibly boring, some of you might know inherently that other subjects pale in comparison to Philosophy, Religion & Ethics. But how **sound** and **valid** is this argument?

A Priori and A Posteriori

- Arguments can also be classified into the categories of a priori and a posteriori.
- A priori arguments, like deductive arguments, do not rely on evidence or experience to arrive at a conclusion. They are based only on the processes of logic. An example is that $2+2=4$. You do not need evidence in the form of adding two pens with another two pens to arrive at the conclusion. Logically the answer must be four – that is mathematics. Similarly, you don't need evidence to know that $2+2=5$ is incorrect – you just know it is, because that's maths!
- A posteriori arguments are more like inductive arguments, in that they rely on experience and evidence to reach a conclusion. They are posterior to experience of how things are. An example is that every morning we see the sun rise. From this, we can conclude that tomorrow the sun will rise. This conclusion is correct based on our experience – X is true, therefore Y must be true. If we lived on another planet, but kept our 24 hour days then our argument would be different – the sun doesn't rise every day (because it takes more or less than 24 hours) so our experience, and therefore our argument, will be different.
- The key difference between the two kinds of arguments is that a posteriori arguments rely on empirical data, whereas a priori arguments don't. The word empirical refers to sensory data from the physical world.

Valid and Sound Arguments:

Is this argument sound and valid? What type of argument is it?

P: PE teachers are good at sport

P: Mr Chapman is a PE teacher

C: Therefore, Mr Chapman is good at sports.

- The argument is valid because the conclusion logically follows from the premises.
- The argument is sound if we assume the premises are true. (But as we know they are not the argument is not sound because, in this case, the second premise ("Mr. Chapman is a PE teacher") is false. If Mr. Chapman is not a PE teacher, then the generalization in the first premise does not apply to him.
- It is a posteriori as it involves empirical observations about PE teachers and Mr. Tawede.
- This argument is deductive. In deductive reasoning, if the premises are true and the argument is valid, then the conclusion must also be true.

An introduction to ethics:

The study of ethics examines the guiding principles that direct an action. Ethics as a discipline is a study of the various systems of moral values that exist today. Ethics analyses not only how these values direct a person's actions if they wish to be morally good, but it also identifies the obligations behind the purpose of doing right rather than wrong.

- The framework of guiding principles that we identified through a study of ethics is called an ethical theory. For those involved, acting consistently within this framework is acting morally, or sometimes referred to as right behaviour. Sometimes a person, sometimes referred to as a 'moral agent' in ethics, may choose to act contrary to a given framework and so be said to be acting immorally or wrongly. In ethics, right and wrong generally have stronger meanings than just error or misjudgement. There is often an implied 'going against character' or failing to be the sort of person required in relation to set expectations – a standard of which the moral agent has fallen short. There is an indication that the moral agent has done something he or she is obliged not to do.

In the study of ethics there is a distinction made between meta-ethics and normative ethics.

- **Meta-ethics** – a study of the nature of ethical thinking, for example a consideration of why we act as we do, or, whether or not 'right' and 'wrong' are dependent upon self-interest, subjective view or objective standards.
- **Normative ethics** – study of the content of, or the principles that underlie, a specific ethical theory.
- **Applied ethics** – the debates that arise when normative ethical theories are applied to issues that arise in practice in the real world
- Ethics, then, considers the meaning behind terms such as 'moral' and 'right', studies proposed theories that outline what is considered as 'moral' and 'right' behaviour and, considers how such theories work in practice.