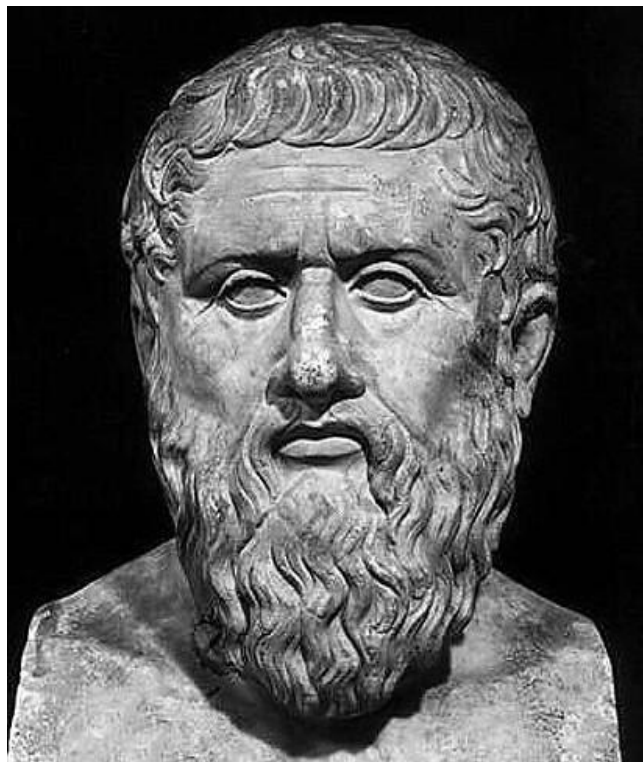




Hartismere  
College



Ethics, Philosophy  
&  
Religion

## **A STUDENT'S GUIDE TO A LEVEL RELIGIOUS STUDIES**

### **Philosophy of religion, Ethics & Religion (Islam)**

#### **What do I need to know or be able to do before taking this course?**

You do not need to have a personal religious belief; theists, atheists and agnostics are all welcomed. The A level course, like the GCSE, is not a training course for religious leaders.

***The course focuses on the study of philosophy of religion, ethics and Islam.***

You do not have to have a GCSE in RS before you can take the A level course. Those who have taken the GCSE RS will find there are many areas of study you will be familiar with, and will take further at A level. It is usual for students to have achieved at least level 5 in RS (or English) at GCSE in order to study it at A level. At Hartismere, we study Edexcel A level Philosophy, Ethics and Religion.

#### **What will I learn on this A level course?**

The course is designed to:

- develop an interest and enjoyment of philosophy, ethics and the rigorous study of a religion.
- adopt an enquiring, critical and reflective approach to the study of philosophy ethics and religion.
- reflect on, express and justify your opinions
- interpret and evaluate religious concepts, ideas, arguments and the views of scholars
- develop skills needed for independent research

#### **What kind of student is this course suitable for?**

This course will appeal to students who:

- have an interest in philosophy, ethics and religion. Who would enjoy the challenge of examining some of the most important questions which face humankind
- have an enquiring mind, and enjoy learning through discussion
- want to keep their options open for further study; it is respected for its academic rigour and the skills training it provides, and can be used to access a wide range of university courses or seek employment opportunities.
- want to study Philosophy, Ethics, Religious Studies and/or Theology at university.

## **What examinations will I have to take to get my qualification?**

### **Paper 1: Philosophy of Religion**

Written examination: 2 hours

33⅓% of qualification

This explores 6 philosophy of religion themes. You will develop knowledge, understanding and the ability to evaluate:

1. Philosophical issues and questions:
  - Ontological argument for the existence of God
  - Teleological argument for the existence of God
  - Cosmological argument for the existence of God
2. The nature and influence of religious experience
3. Problem of evil and suffering
4. Philosophical language
5. Works of scholars (Critiques of religion)
6. Influences of developments in religious belief:
  - Religion and science debates
  - Life after death

### **Paper 2: Religion and Ethics**

Written examination: 2 hours

33⅓% of qualification

This explores 6 ethical themes. You will develop knowledge, understanding and the ability to evaluate:

1. Significant concepts in issues or debates in religion and ethics:
  - Environmental issues
  - Equality
2. A study of three ethical theories:
  - Utilitarianism
  - Situation Ethics
  - Natural Moral Law
3. Application of ethical theories to issues of importance:
  - Sexual ethics
  - War and Peace
4. Ethical language
5. Deontology, Virtue Ethics and the works of scholars
6. Medical ethics: beginning and end of life issues (abortion, euthanasia etc.)

## **Paper 4D: A Study of Religion – Islam**

Written examination: 2 hours

33⅓% of qualification

This explores 6 Islamic themes. You will develop knowledge, understanding and the ability to evaluate:

1. Religious beliefs, values and teachings (The six beliefs)
2. Sources of wisdom and authority:
  - Muhammad
  - The Qur'an
3. Practices that shape and express religious identity:
  - The 5 Pillars
  - The ummah
4. Social and historical developments:
  - Origins and differences between Sunni and Shia Islam
  - Sufism
5. Works of scholars (comparative study of jihad)
6. Religion and society:
  - Gender
  - Challenges of multi-faith societies, pluralism, religious freedom and interfaith dialogue
  - Challenges of the secularisation and the modern 'Western' world
  - The impact of migration and how these have been met by different traditions of Islam

At the end of Year 12 students will sit, end of year exams. All work in year 12 is preparation for the full A level qualification which is taken at the end of year 13.

### **What could I go on to do at the end of my course?**

Students with A Level Religious Studies have a wide range of possible career and higher education opportunities. You will learn and use a wide variety of transferable skills during the course. These include developing writing skills, research skills, the ability to critically evaluate scholarly ideas, express informed and independent opinions through the use of evidence and reasoned argument. These skills are in demand from employers, universities and colleges, and are also valuable in their own right.

A level Religious Studies opens up a variety of single subject opportunities in higher education such as philosophy, religious studies and theology, all of which can be combined together. Or it can be combined with, or open up, other subject areas, for example, history, law and politics.

Many students will also use their qualification to go straight into employment rather than higher education. A wide range of occupations is open to students with AS or A Level Religious Studies. This can also include the opportunity to receive further training in areas such as journalism and law.

## Contact

Miss A Pierides  
Teacher of Ethics, Philosophy and Religion  
Hartismere School  
Castleton Way  
Eye  
Suffolk  
IP23 7BL

Telephone 01379 870315  
Email [sixthform@hartismere.com](mailto:sixthform@hartismere.com)  
Website [www.hartismere.com](http://www.hartismere.com)