Wath Sixth Form Subject Preparation Pack

RELIGIOUS STUDIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>World-class learning</th>
<th>The highest expectations</th>
<th>No excuses</th>
<th>Growth mindset</th>
<th>Never give up</th>
<th>Everyone is valued</th>
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<tr>
<td>World-class learning every lesson, every day</td>
<td>Everyone can be successful; always set and expects the highest standards</td>
<td>Create solutions not excuses; make positive thinking a habit</td>
<td>Believe you can improve; work hard and value feedback</td>
<td>Resilience is essential; be relentless in the pursuit of excellence</td>
<td>Diversity is celebrated; see the best in everyone</td>
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What is Religious Studies?

Religious Studies is an engaging qualification that introduces students to key religious beliefs and a wide range of ethical and philosophical issues. It also develops their skills in independent thinking, empathy and understanding of differing beliefs. Religious Studies is all about finding out what people believe and why. Our aim is develop young adults with the qualifications and skill-sets to navigate an ever-changing world.

Why should I study Religious Studies?

Religious Studies is a subject that is highly valued by universities and future employers because of the higher level thinking abilities developed through the course. It involves an increased understanding of people and their beliefs in a world with such a variety of views. Analytical and philosophical thinking underlies all rational discourse and enquiry. This course give students the opportunities to:

- Understand the importance of examining knowledge and beliefs critically.
- Recognise, analyse and evaluate their own and others’ beliefs and knowledge in a variety of contexts.
- Evaluate reasoning of different kinds.
- Make connections and synthesise information and arguments.
- Generate independent arguments and express them clearly.
- Ask and examine questions from a broad standpoint.

Religious Studies is one of the best forms of training for decision makers. In writing essays, one takes information from a wide range of sources, weighs it up and then develops and defends a point of view. The ability to recognise your own and other people’s presuppositions is an invaluable tool. Religious Studies gives you an appreciation of the complexities of human nature and enables you to learn how to deal with abstract concepts and to think about some of the deeper dimensions of our existence.

In handling information, assimilating, evaluating, and presenting it, Religious Studies has the intuitive approach of the arts, but requires the same rigorous, critical, and analytical skills as studying scientific subjects. The subject requires an enquiring mind. It trains one to think logically and to articulate ideas with precision noting any contradictions in the scholarly arguments.

What careers could Religious Studies lead to?

Religious Studies provides an excellent grounding in any career that requires analytical and communication skills, such as: the legal profession, the medical profession, the civil service, marketing and publishing. It will be of benefit to any careers that requires high level decision making and is highly considered by universities and employers.

You could take this course with other advanced level courses as a general preparation for a higher education course or as a foundation for studying Theology or Religious Studies at Higher Education. Religious Studies is a good
foundation for entering employment as it helps you develop the skills, understanding and knowledge that many employers across lots of industries are looking for, especially in sectors where people are the main focus. Due to the nature of the subject – understanding people – it is impossible to put together a definitive list of careers that Religious Studies would benefit.

For A-Level choices, Religious Studies will complement many other subjects, including English, History, Psychology, Languages, Classics as well as Sciences and Maths. The subject matter is truly cross-curricular, spanning a whole range of disciplines.

What will I study?

Students follow the Eduqas A level Religious Studies. Y12 and Y13 pupils are taught separately as mixed ability groups. The specification offers an academic approach to the study of religion and is accessible to students of any religious persuasion or none. It is designed to develop interest in, and enthusiasm for a study of religion and its relation to the wider world. It also encourages students to adopt an enquiring, critical and reflective approach to the study of religion whilst also reflecting on their own values, opinions and attitudes.

The course is structured into three components.

Component 1: A Study of Religion (2 hour written examination. 33.3% of A level)
Option B: Islam
There will be four themes within each option:
- religious figures and sacred texts;
- religious concepts and religious life;
- significant social and historical developments in religious thought;
- religious 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.

Component 2: Philosophy of Religion (2 hour written examination. 33.3% of A level)
There will be four themes within this component:
- arguments for the existence of God;
- challenges to religious belief;
- 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.

Component 3: Religion and Ethics (2 hour written examination - 33.3% of A level)
There will be four themes within this component:
- ethical thought;
- deontological ethics;
- teleological ethics;
- determinism; 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.

How will I be assessed?

Eduqas assess all content at the end of the course meaning that you will sit 3 x 2 hour exams in the summer of Y13. All aspects of the course must be covered in that time as the exam board will have a compulsory question from any area of the specification and then students can choose which other questions they answer from a selection. Questions are either A01 and worth 20 marks - knowledge and understanding OR A02 and worth 30 marks – analyse and evaluate.
**Recommended resources**

Eduqas has published a range of textbooks for students to use whilst studying this course. You may wish to purchase your own but we have copies in school to use within lessons.

They are split into Year 1 & Year 2. Below are some of the examples of the books we use.

Eduqas has also released a series of revision books which previous students have found very useful. They again are split into Year 1 & Year 2.
**Meet the team**

### Mrs Eyre

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time and Role at Wath Academy – 11 years</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher of Religious Studies within Religion and Social Science Faculty &amp; Academic Year Leader</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where and what I studied at University/ PGCE –</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Leeds – BA (Hons) Theology and Religious Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheffield Hallam University – PGCE Religious Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Why I wanted to become a teacher?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Love for my subject and working with young people. Always wanted to be a teacher.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why I love teaching?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Every day is different and getting to educate young people and prepare them for exams and eventually leaving school for the next steps.</td>
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### Mrs Taylor

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<tr>
<th>Time and Role at Wath Academy – 8 years</th>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher of Religious Studies within Religion and Social Science Faculty</td>
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<tr>
<td>Where and what I studied at University/ PGCE –</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheffield Hallam University – BA (Hons) Criminology and Psychology. Postgrad Diploma in Psychology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>York St John University – PGCE Religious Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Why I wanted to become a teacher?</td>
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<tr>
<td>I wanted to become a teacher because I love learning myself and want to share that passion I have with young people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why I love teaching?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It’s amazing to see students grow and develop academically over their school life.</td>
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### Mrs Redfern

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<th>Time and Role at Wath Academy – Joining the team September 2020</th>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher of Religious Studies within Religion and Social Science Faculty</td>
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<tr>
<td>Where and what I studied at University/ PGCE –</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lancaster University – BA (Hons) Religious Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheffield Hallam University – PGCE Religious Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why I wanted to become a teacher? –</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A love for my subject but also to inspire students from all walks of life, imparting lessons that will help shape the next generation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why I love teaching? –</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It’s a joy and privilege to inspire and motivate students to explore different values and attitudes, considering moral and ethical issues to help them reflect on their own approach to making moral decisions.</td>
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Transition tasks

**Aim:** The aim of these tasks is to develop your understanding of key religious content and key terms to ease the transition into the study of subject at A Level standard. By completing the tasks below, you will consolidate or develop knowledge of important content which will inevitably aid your understanding of the course over the next term.

**Philosophy of Religion**

Watch this debate between William Lane Craig and Christopher Hitchens.

The video is called: Does God Exist? William Lane Craig vs Christopher Hitchens – Full Debate

If you watch from 12 minutes you will see William Lane Craig and Christopher Hitchens being introduced. William Lane Craig is a Christian and Christopher Hitchens was a New Atheist.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0tYm41hb48o

**Structure of the talk**

The lecture is quite long and so you may wish to watch this in stages. They talk for 20 minutes each and then have a right of reply each.

- William Lane Craig starts at 13 minutes
- Christopher Hitchens starts at 33 minutes and 30 seconds
- Williams Lane Craig replies to Christopher Hitchens from 54 minutes and 15 seconds
- Christopher Hitchens replies to William Lane Craig from 1hr and 7 minutes

From one hour 20 minutes there is a cross examination that you may wish to watch.

**Task:**

**What is William Lane Craig’s view on whether God Exists?**

**What is Christopher Hitchens view on whether God Exists?**

**What is your opinion?**
Religion and Ethics

Animal research and Utilitarianism

The utilitarian principle aims for the ‘greatest happiness for the greatest number.’ On the one hand, it clearly projects the happiness of many human lives than animals if we consider lives already saved and potential human disaster by not controlling epidemics. On the other hand, in the use of animal experimentation for medical research, it would appear that if facts are correct and there are many uncertainties and discrepancies then the greatest happiness for humans is not guaranteed in relation to suffering of animals.

Concerning the principle of utility that ‘promotes pleasure and avoids pain.’ There is pleasure in that it benefits humans that may potentially suffer, but it brings suffering for animals – which outweighs the other? Is it a matter of the numbers involved? For Bentham, it may be that the quantity matters most, for Mill it is about the quality of the pleasure, which means, reluctantly, a utilitarian would have to support some forms of animal experimentation for medical research.

Bentham himself is considered a pioneer of animal rights. Bentham did not argue that humans and nonhumans had equal moral significance, but argued that the latter’s interests should be taken into account. Bentham changed the views of many people towards animals; rather than regarding them as inferior to human beings because of their inability to reason, Bentham applied ethical Utilitarianism to animals as his famous quotation affirms, ‘The question is not, can they reason? Nor can they talk? But can they suffer?’ Bentham may well have disagreed with animal experimentation for medical research; as Julia Driver notes, ‘What struck many as lacking in Bentham’s value theory was a special place for the rational capacities that mark a difference between persons and animals.’

Bentham’s hedonic calculus suggests that the whole of the calculus should be used in dealing with both human beings and animals. The only satisfactory way of dealing with this is to consider the principle of ‘extent’ and look long term to when the suffering of animals in the present leads to less suffering for both animals and humans in the future overall.

Mill, however, is quite clear that animal pleasures and pains do not equate to their human counterparts in terms of value. Animals do not appreciate the higher pleasures and cannot, therefore operate as utilitarian beings. This does not mean they do not need protecting and treating well. As Julia Driver comments ‘This distinction between higher and lower pleasures allows Mill to hold that while animals do have moral standing in virtue of their sentience – that is, in virtue of their capacity to feel pleasure and pain, and thus to have both positive and negative experiences – their moral standing is not the same as that of persons who have higher moral standing in virtue of their capacity to experience higher pleasures.’

In response to animal experimentation for medical research, Strong Rule Utilitarianism would most probably advocate a reasonable argument in support based mainly upon the principles of Mill’s view.
Weak Rule Utilitarianism however may be more flexible, as Mill also argued that ‘reasons for legal intervention in favour of children, apply not less strongly to... the lower animals’. And that intervention should be based on ‘the intrinsic merits of the case.’ Rather than upon ‘incidental consequences... to the interests of human beings’. Therefore, a weak rule utilitarian would not consider the variants but work with the underlying principles as advocated by the distinction between higher and lower pleasures. Elsewhere Mill is clear that animal pleasures and pains do not equate to their human counterparts in terms of value. Therefore, there would be no absolute response to the issue which is problematic, not for the utilitarian, but for making a policy regarding animal experimentation for medical research.

Questions:

1. What are some of the pros of animal research?

2. What are some of the cons of animal research?

3. What would a utilitarian say about animal research?

4. What is your view on animal research?
Religion – Islam

To support the study of Islam you need to have a working background of the topic areas below. Research each topic area and produce a written report. Save your reports and bring them to your first lesson in September.

There is a wealth of resources in the digital resources folder on the Eduqas A Level Religious Studies website.
https://www.eduqas.co.uk/qualifications/religious-studies/as-a-level/

1. Topic: Historical background.
You need to know: The Messenger – The meanings of the Life of Muhammad
https://www.biography.com/people/muhammad

2. Topic: Sunni and Shi’a Muslims.
Question: What are the main differences in belief and practice of Sunnis and Shi’as, and do you think both Sunni and Shi’a can be Muslims?

3. Topic: key beliefs
What are the 6 articles of faith and why are they significant in Islam?

4. Topic: Key beliefs
What are the five pillars of Islam, why are they significant in Islam?

5. Topic: Key practices
Explore the purpose and significance of a mosque

6. Topic: Key practices
Investigate how Islamic festivals such as Eid ul fitr, Eid ul Adha and Ashura are celebrated and why they are celebrated.

7. Topic: The attitude to women has diverse opinions within a faith.
The first Muslim was Muhammad’s first wife, Khadijah. She was his boss and fifteen years his senior! We must try and produce a balanced view of everything we learn. With Islam that is probably even more the case in the current climate. In Oxford, the Muslim cleric, Taj Hargey, might be described as ‘radical’ by some (and perhaps even by himself). However, he really is not the stereotypical radical. It is a shame that the word radical, in connection with Islam, has come to mean extremist.

Look at the images and text on the next page to see some of the 'radical' changes being proposed by the MECO British Muslim group.
OXFORD MUSLIMS LAUNCH ANTI-VEIL CAMPAIGN

BRITISH MUSLIMS LAUNCH NATIONAL CAMPAIGN TO PROHIBIT ALL PUBLIC FACE-MASKING IN UK (INCLUDING BURQA/NIQAB)

Meco Holds Anti-ISIS Rally Teaching is the core of what we do.

Research and write a report on how Islam MECO fosters an open-mindedness, tolerance and social cohesion for British Muslims by encouraging their effective integration into the UK mainstream. You must use specific examples to support your ideas. Use the following link to help: (http://www.meco.org.uk)

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Testaments from Religious Studies Students

I really enjoyed learning about the different perspectives of philosophers on whether or not God exists. It's a really interesting topic that does hurt your brain a little but helps you understand possible answers to big questions everyone wonders about. (Becky)

I really enjoyed learning about Sharia within Islam and how their perspectives on crime and punishment differ from the rest of the world. (Mollie)

I can use my RS knowledge in the future to be able to understand other people's point of view of religion and to develop an understanding of different communities. (Elliott)

I will be able to use RS in the future to explore other religions and viewpoints to find different links between them. (Joe)