

Plato Gilbert Ryle Knowledge Hilary Putnam category error qualia
Hempel Eliminative Materialism Ned Block Folk Psychology
Property Dualism Churchland Functionalism Block Inverted qualia
Wade Savage George Mavrodes Type Identity Theory Harry Frankfurt
Ned Block Boethius paradox of the stone Manichean Dualism
omnipotence Gaunilo Euthyphro Dilemma recapitulation
Aquinas omniscience
omnibenevolence
Norman Malcolm
Richard Swinburne
William Paley
Aristotle
Diogenes Laertius
Epistemology
Hedonic Calculus
Anselm cosmological
Thomas Aquinas Thomas Hobbes
Ethics Machiavelli Montaigne
Sextus Empiricus Pyrrho of Elis Vienna Circle
Cicero Emotivism
Naturalistic Fallacy
Prescriptivism
Hume's Is-Ought Gap
Richard Hare
Moral Nihilism
Anti-Realism
Principia Ethica
Open Question Argument
Nicomachean Ethics
Moral Fictionalism
Metaethics
Socrates

AQA

Reason Kant
Berkeley Locke
Spinoza
Descartes
Hume
Augustine of Hippo
Irenaeus of Lyons
multiple realizability
Wittgenstein Frank Jackson
Princess Elisabeth of Bohemia
Philosophical zombie
Edmund Gettier Robert Nozick
maxim Zagzebski
Feuerbach
Catherine Trotter Cockburn
Marilyn Adams
Mackie Midgley
Chalmers Plantinga
Martha Nussbaum
John Stuart Mill Fred Dretske
Machiavelli
Bertrand Russell
Logical Positivism
solipsism perception paradox universalizability
tabula rasa hypothetical imperative
Innatism Utility
preference utilitarianism
cognitive hallucination
necessary contingent
Indirect Realism
Empirical Experience
Mind

philosophy

PHILOSOPHY

“What syllabus would I be following?”

We study the 7172 AQA A Level Philosophy specification.

The specification consists of four modules: 3.1 Epistemology, 3.2 Moral Philosophy, 3.3 Metaphysics of God and 3.4 Metaphysics of Mind.

These modules will give you the opportunity to explore and debate some of the biggest and most celebrated questions about the nature of truth and reality, questions about morality and human behaviour, the nature of God, rational arguments for the existence of God, and the challenges posed by the Problem of Evil. They will give you a chance to wrestle with major issues and help you to think through, clarify, and refine your own views about a wide and diverse range of subjects. It will also enable all of you to develop a range of transferable skills which can be applied far beyond the study of Philosophy. You will gain a thorough grounding in key philosophical concepts, themes, texts and techniques. You will be taught how to develop the ability to reason, form your own judgements, express yourselves coherently and contribute to the process of debate. We shall also show you how to consider philosophical problems through the study of key texts.

“Do I need to have done GCSE Religious Studies first?”

No! This course is a Philosophy course. Although some of the content will be familiar to anybody who has studied GCSE RS, those who did not opt for GCSE RS will not be disadvantaged. Anyone who is really committed to investing time, energy and enthusiasm in the careful exploration of the specification materials is welcome on the course. The most important requirement is the ability to read fluently and extensively, and write in precise, accurate English. This is why we require a level 6 in GCSE English Language.

“Do A Levels require lots of work?”

Definitely! There is an important difference between the workload of GCSEs and A Levels. You'll need to be prepared to attend lessons punctually and regularly—unless there are circumstances that make that impossible. You'll need to read thoroughly the booklets, flashcards and factsheets you are given to deepen your understanding of key topics. You'll need to be prepared to spend several hours each week consolidating work covered in lessons, researching and preparing essays, summarising important arguments, looking up unfamiliar technical words and exploring relevant and reliable INTERNET sites.

“You'd better describe your ideal student!”

OK. A person who keeps a sensible and realistic balance between his or her social life and academic life for the two years of the course—someone who's really prepared to give the subject the respect and time it requires to be studied properly. A person who is confident and enjoys being challenged intellectually. A person who's self-disciplined and conscientious and manages time well, knowing how to prioritise effectively. A person who is intellectually and emotionally resilient and who recognises the dangers of being lazy and complacent—who's not afraid to ask for help when encountering difficulties. A person who enjoys reading widely and is skilful at deploying his or her knowledge in

essays. A person who likes to analyse arguments and probe for weaknesses. A person who wants to be well-informed rather than just opinionated. A person with a good sense of humour and a lively, enquiring mind.

“How is the course examined?”

Paper 1: Epistemology and Moral Philosophy is a 3-hour examination which will form 50% of the A Level. There will be five questions on Epistemology in Section A and 5 questions on moral philosophy in Section B. Paper 2: The metaphysics of God and the metaphysics of mind will also consist of a 3-hour examination with 5 questions each on the metaphysics of God and the metaphysics of mind.

“But I am not very good at writing essays!”

Lots of students say that! So you'll be taught to write high-quality essays. The good news is that the examinations consist of a variety of shorter and longer-style answers. You'll be told precisely what the examiners are looking for; you'll be shown how to understand fully what the examination questions require of you. You'll learn how to sort out your ideas into well-structured sentences and paragraphs; how to set down your ideas in clear, unambiguous prose, and how to support assertions with detailed facts, analysis and argument.

“What sorts of topics will we consider on the course?”

In Year 12 we explore the Epistemology course, learning about the differences between acquaintance knowledge, ability knowledge and propositional knowledge. We'll explore problems posed by the nature of perception and analyse arguments from illusion, hallucination and perceptual variation. We'll consider the role that Reason plays as a source of knowledge, the limitations of knowledge and famous solutions offered over the centuries by leading philosophers. In the Moral Philosophy course we shall explore questions about “Normative” ethical theories: Utilitarianism, Kantian ethics, Aristotelian Virtue Ethics and aspects of Applied ethics (stealing, telling lies, eating animals and the ethics of simulated killing in films, computer games and plays). Are there moral truths? Is morality totally subjective? Are there moral facts—or are moral statements nothing more than expressions of delight or disgust? Should morality be more concerned with judging actions or with the development of moral character? What makes an action morally right—the beneficial consequences it produces? or the sense of duty that motivated the agent? Are certain things always right and always wrong—or does it all depend on particular circumstances?

In Year 13 we encounter questions about what we mean when we refer to “minds”. What features do mental states have? Do minds exist independently of our bodies? Are we actually composed of two entities, minds and bodies? If bodies are radically different from minds, how can they causally interact with each other? Is all talk of mental states, emotions and feelings completely pointless and vacuous? Should neuroscience replace and supplant

Psychology? Would we be better off viewing human beings as comparable with computers? In the Metaphysics of God course, we analyse critically what it means to say that God is omnipotent. Does omnipotence really mean that God could do absolutely anything, including creating a shapeless cube or a round triangle? Is there any solution to the Paradox of the Stone? We explore ontological, cosmological and teleological arguments which seek to establish that God's existence can be proved through the process of rational argument. We explore the challenges to theism in the form of the "logical" and "evidential" forms of the Problem of Evil and consider defences that have been presented by religious believers. What is the difference between moral evil and natural evil? Is the existence of suffering necessary for people to develop religious faith and moral character?

“Is the AQA A Level Philosophy course highly regarded as a serious A Level course?”

Yes! It is a highly rigorous A Level course that challenges students to think really clearly and deeply, and to develop the ability to express their ideas with forensic clarity in precise, highly technical prose. Philosophy is highly regarded by the top universities in the UK and will provide an excellent preparation for many exacting degree courses. So, the AQA Philosophy A Level course interacts with a rich variety of academic disciplines that are very popular choices at many universities.

Questions about the origins and nature of human motivation explored in the Epistemology and Metaphysics of Mind module complement work covered in Psychology—and courses in Jurisprudence that form part of a degree in Law. Analysis of key concepts and terms across the two-year course entails work on Semantics, Pragmatics and Hermeneutics. Exploring the status of religious and moral speech requires us to understand referential, causal/psychological and emotive theories of meaning and speech-act theory. This has links with Logical Positivism, Wittgenstein, A J Ayer and the analytical philosophy movement.

Feedback from former students who have pursued literature degrees, history degrees, law degrees, medical degrees and many other undergraduate courses has shown us how useful our A Level teaching has been in helping our students develop analytical and communication skills that can be deployed effectively in so many different ways. Many students have told us over the years that they have learnt to write far more effective essays in History, English Lit., Geography and other essay-based subjects because of our rigorous approach.

We believe that the AQA Philosophy course will challenge you to leave your comfort zones, develop and strengthen your self-confidence, broaden your horizons, deepen your understanding of many areas, and equip you with many marketable and transferable study skills.

Curriculum Leader: Mr C Hopton

Sidegate Lane, Ipswich, Suffolk, IP4 3DL

www.northgatesixthform.co.uk | Tel: 01473 210123

E-mail: northgatesixthform@northgate.suffolk.sch.uk

 [northgatesixthform](https://www.instagram.com/northgatesixthform) |  [@northgatesixthform](https://twitter.com/northgatesixthform)