



# A Level PHILOSOPHY

Specification: AQA 7172

## What will I study?

A Level Philosophy comprises four topic areas: Epistemology, Moral philosophy, the Metaphysics of God and the Metaphysics of mind.

Students are required to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the content, including through the use of philosophical analysis (conceptual analysis and argument analysis). They must also be able to evaluate the philosophical arguments within the subject content to form reasoned judgements.

## How will I be assessed?

Assessments objectives (AOs) are set by Ofqual and are the same across all A Level Philosophy specifications and all exam boards.

The exams will measure how students have achieved the following assessment objectives:

**AO1:** Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the core concepts and methods of philosophy, including through the use of philosophical analysis.

**AO2:** Analyse and evaluate philosophical arguments to form reasoned judgements.

## How will I learn?

Philosophy comes from the Greek “philo” for ‘love’ and “sophia” for ‘wisdom’. It is a quest for insight and knowledge by those who love wisdom. So how do we learn this? Socrates believed the only way to acquire wisdom was through questioning. He would question everyone he met about their ideas, beliefs and assumptions seeking to learn from them and explore the foundations for their ideas. For Aristotle, the route to wisdom was through logical reasoning; carefully constructed deductive arguments in which unshakeable conclusions are built on sound foundations. Descartes

believed that both our senses and our reason can deceive and that the only way to wisdom was through questioning everything: ‘systematic doubting’. All of these are part of the answer to ‘How will I learn Philosophy?’ We will use discussion, questioning, logic and reasoning to explore new ideas and test our own. We will learn how to construct deductive and inductive arguments and how to test arguments by scrutinising the logic and seeking out the fallacies of thinking that lead to errors of reasoning. We’ll also lay out our own arguments and expose them to the scrutiny of others; in discussion and in writing. By the end of the course you’ll not only be wiser, but you’ll never lose an argument again.

## What skills will I need?

- Attention to detail  
Good communication skills (orally and in writing)
- The ability to break an argument down into premises, and then evaluate the strength of each claim/premise
- Self-motivation
- Independent learning and organisation problem solving
- Reviewing and modifying
- Critical analysis and logical thinking
- Risk taking and reflective thinking

## Careers & Progression

This course is highly rated by admissions tutors at Higher Education institutions as it supports a wide range of academic disciplines. It encourages transferable skills that are valued in a variety of career routes.