



# RELIGIOUS STUDIES

**Course: OCR A-Level Religious Studies**

## INTRODUCTION

Your A Level Course is split into three components (each component is tested in a 2 hour paper) which collectively make up one A level grade. The three components are: Philosophy of Religion, Religion and Ethics and Developments in Christian thought.

## PAPER 1 THE PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION: TASKS

In your first year of study, you will consider questions such as 'how do I know what is true?', 'can we prove God's existence?' and 'Am I more than just my body?' through the lenses of many ancient and modern philosophers.

### PLATO'S UNDERSTANDING OF REALITY

- Research 'Plato's analogy of the cave' - if you type this into google or youtube, there will a wide array of resources available
- Summarise his analogy into ten bullet points
- Write one paragraph explaining what this tells us about Plato's view of the relationship between the body and the soul

### MIND, BODY SOUL

- Read through the 'brain in the vat' scenario sheet. This is a common example used when studying the 'mind, body, soul' part of the course
- Summarise the thought experiment into 5 bullet points and then answer the questions below:
- What does the 'brain in the vat' experiment suggest about the relationships between the mind/soul and the body?
- Do you think it is possible to still be 'ourselves' without our bodies?

## PAPER 2

### RELIGION & ETHICS: TASKS

The second component of A-Level religious studies looks at five major ethical theories and applies them to situations such as Euthanasia, business ethics and sexual ethics.

- Research the Philosopher Thomas Aquinas (a major thinker across all three components of the course) and create a fact file on him. Include details about key events in his life, two of his beliefs about God and the main aims of his work

- Use this website to help you:

<https://alevelphilosophyandreligion.com/natural-law/>

## PAPER 3

### DEVELOPMENTS IN CHRISTIAN THOUGHT: TASKS

The final component of the A level looks at developments in Christian theology beginning with the doctrine of the Fall and original sin and ending in year 13 with the study of gender theology and Marxism

- Read the accounts of Genesis 1-3 – The creation and fall of Man – it can be found here: <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+1-3&version=NIV>
- Draw a table to show what is different BEFORE and AFTER the fall in the following 3 categories:
  - \* Adam and Eve's relationship with each other
  - \* Adam and Eve's relationship with God
  - \* Adam and Eve's relationship with the earth

- Use quotes where possible to support the points you are making, then complete the questions below:
  - \* What does the story of the Fall in Genesis 3 suggest about the impact of Adam and Eve being tempted by the serpent?
  - \* How might this story be used to support the Christian view that all people are dependent on God for their salvation?

There are an abundance of resources that will be useful for your study of A-Level religious studies. See below for some suggestions

## WHAT TO READ

**Sophie's world – A novel about the history of Philosophy.** Online PDF available here: <https://people.tamu.edu/~sdaniel/Sophie's%20World.pdf>

**You Kant make it up!: Strange ideas from History's great Philosophers:** <https://www.amazon.co.uk/You-Kant-Make-Up-Philosophers/dp/1851688455>

**The Shack – explores the relationship between the persons of the Trinity** [https://www.amazon.co.uk/Shack-Wm-Paul-Young/dp/0340979496/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?crid=AGZM2TM3V71D&keywords=the+shack&qid=1706524808&s=books&sprefix=the+shack%2Cstripbooks%2C66&sr=1-1](https://www.amazon.co.uk/Shack-Wm-Paul-Young/dp/0340979496/ref=sr_1_1?crid=AGZM2TM3V71D&keywords=the+shack&qid=1706524808&s=books&sprefix=the+shack%2Cstripbooks%2C66&sr=1-1)

**Christian Theology – An introduction:** [https://www.amazon.co.uk/Christian-Theology-Introduction-Alister-McGrath/dp/1444335146/ref=sr\\_1\\_2?crid=1OHXS9OW22R4S&keywords=an+introduction+to+christian+theology+mcgrath&qid=1706524865&s=books&sprefix=an+introduction+to+christian+theology+mcgrath%2Cstripbooks%2C53&sr=1-2](https://www.amazon.co.uk/Christian-Theology-Introduction-Alister-McGrath/dp/1444335146/ref=sr_1_2?crid=1OHXS9OW22R4S&keywords=an+introduction+to+christian+theology+mcgrath&qid=1706524865&s=books&sprefix=an+introduction+to+christian+theology+mcgrath%2Cstripbooks%2C53&sr=1-2)

## WHAT TO WATCH

[BBC Civilisations Documentary Series: Religion and Art Episode – 'The Eye of Faith'](#)

[BBC Sacred Wonders of the World – 3 Episodes](#)

[The Good Place \(Series on Netflix or Channel 4\)](#)

[Sacred Rivers with Simon Reeve: Religion & Geography](#)

[BBC Ethics Documentary: A World without Down Syndrome?](#)

[The Story of God with Morgan Freeman \(Netflix\)](#)

[Exodus: Gods and Kings – Netflix film by Ridley Scott](#)

[The Secrets of Christ's Tomb: National Geographic on Disney+](#)

[Bryan Magee's 'The Great Philosophers' Series on Youtube](#)

[The Bible Miniseries on GloriaTV](#)

## WHAT TO LISTEN TO

**The Pansycast Philosophy Podcast** – available on all streaming platforms, apple music, spotify etc. There is a 1-2 hour episode for each topic on the entire A level

**Peter Adamson's History of Philosophy Without any Gaps:** <https://historyofphilosophy.net/>

**BBC Moral Maze** – topics to get you thinking about Ethics: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006qk11>

## QUERIES

If you have any queries, please email the Head of Religious Education, Ms Curtis

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