



AS PHILOSOPHY (EDEXCEL)

What do we study?

Philosophy is a subject in which you are expected to think deeply about your attitudes and opinions, to question things we don't usually question, and, perhaps, to figure out what the world is all about!

Specific questions we will be seeking to answer in the AS course include: Does the existence of God just depend on your point of view? Are we born with knowledge or does experience teach us all we know? Why should I be moral? Should we be allowed to disobey governments if we don't agree with them? Should we tolerate the intolerant? Do we have free will?

Of course, we are not the first to consider these questions, so we consider the views of the great philosophers on whose shoulders we are standing. Thus, among others, we seek to understand and evaluate the following propositions: 'Cogito ergo sum' (Rene Descartes); "I may detest what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it" (Voltaire); 'Man is born free, but everywhere he is in chains.' (Jean Jacques Rousseau); and

"There was once a man who said "damn",
It is borne upon me that I am
An engine that moves in predestinate grooves
I'm not even a bus, I'm a tram" (Maurice Evan Hare)

What it's like studying philosophy?

Exploring these issues means that many lessons are discussion based. The course is delivered on the principle that students learn best when they are interested, and the aim is to make what we do both relevant and varied, so, among other things, students will be teaching each other, watching some film, and even playing the occasional game, in addition to occasionally having to listen to the teacher.

Student voice:

"Philosophy opens your eyes". Ronnie Hamoudi

Teachers

Rick Brown has 6 years experience teaching philosophy, having studied the subject at Oxford University. His students have achieved considerable success at A-level, and some have even had their eyes opened!

Recommended reading

"What does it all mean?" Thomas Nagel
"Think!" Simon Blackburn