



Philosophy

One year AS/Two year A level.

Philosophers question everything and take nothing for granted. Philosophers adopt a rigorous approach to ideas and leave no stone unturned in the search for truth and meaning. You will learn to analyse and evaluate the ideas of others and construct your own well-supported arguments. As Socrates said, "An unexamined life is not worth living."

Requirements:

The College minimum to start an advanced level course is one grade B and four grade Cs at GCSE. Students wishing to undertake this course require grade B or above in GCSE English Language, and preferably also in Mathematics. The student will also be expected to meet the Average Points Score for this subject. This subject requires you to read difficult texts and write essays, up to 4000 words in A2. You may feel this is beyond you at the moment. This does not matter as long as you are willing to work hard to develop these essential reading and written skills during the course.

This subject will focus on:

- how should we justify our beliefs? Can we know anything?
- can we trust our senses?
- is there a world outside our own minds?
- what does it mean to be a person with a mind, rather than just a biological human being?
- can the human mind be compared to a computer? Do animals have minds?
- do we have free will or are we determined by our genes and/or environment?
- does morality exist or is it a product of society?
- how should we make moral decisions about such issues as abortion, euthanasia, the environment, animals and poverty?
- in-depth study of Nietzsche's Beyond Good and Evil. Nietzsche is a challenging philosopher who attacks many of the things most people believe in.
- what is the relationship between mind and body? Do we have a soul or are we made up completely of matter; and
- how do we explain consciousness?

Method of Assessment:

You will be assessed by two written papers in the first year and two written papers in the second year.

Progression:

Philosophy will help you develop those important 'thinking' skills that are so valued by universities and employers. In addition, it will provide vital support for your other subjects, teaching you to clarify your thoughts and construct more effective arguments. It combines well with all subjects from Mathematics and Physics to History, Psychology and Law.

Other information:

Many students have chosen to continue studying Philosophy at university either as a single subject or part of a degree course. Students find that Philosophy is more than just a subject to be learned and examined: "I think I am a better person" and "It changed my life."

Philosophy had a 100% pass rate at A Level in 2008 and 2009.