

# Philosophy Curriculum Outline 2024-2025

This outline provides a long-term overview of the knowledge and skills developed in this subject. More detailed short- and medium-term schemes of work, not published here, are available by contacting the Philosophy Department.

	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4	Term 5	
Year 13	<p><b>Unit Title:</b> The Metaphysics of God – Arguments for and against God’s existence.</p> <p><b>Knowledge:</b> students explore the ontological argument, the teleological argument and the cosmological argument in favour of God’s existence, and counters to these arguments. They will also consider the logical and the evidential problem of evil as arguments against the existence of God, and two theodicies from Hick and Plantinga will be evaluated.</p> <p><b>Skills:</b> the nuances in the different arguments will encourage students to become even more clear and precise in their writing.</p>	<p><b>Unit Title:</b> The Metaphysics of God – Religious language.</p> <p><b>Knowledge:</b> students study the difference between cognitive and non-cognitive approaches towards religious language, the logical positivist challenges to the status of the metaphysical and other views from Flew, Hare and Mitchel found within the ‘University debate’.</p> <p><b>Skills:</b> students should be able to identify the methods of philosophy which are common to all the topic areas they have studied thus far, and see how links can be made both within and between the different units of work.</p>	<p><b>Unit Title:</b> The Metaphysics of Mind – What do we mean by ‘mind’ and substance dualism.</p> <p><b>Knowledge:</b> students explore what we might mean by ‘mind’, including the concepts of qualia and intentionality. They are introduced to the ‘mind/body problem’ and then explore the indivisibility and conceivability arguments of Descartes in favour of substance dualism. Objections are explored including problems involving interaction and the issue of other minds.</p> <p><b>Skills:</b> students should now be able to recognise the similarities and differences between the forms of reasoning used in different philosophical content areas, including the similarities and differences between different kinds of knowledge.</p>	<p><b>Unit Title:</b> The Metaphysics of Mind – Property dualism and physicalist theories.</p> <p><b>Knowledge:</b> students study two argument for property dualism (philosophical zombies and the knowledge/Mary argument) and objections to each argument. They then study three physicalist theories (philosophical behaviourism, identity theory and eliminative materialism), along with criticisms to these approaches.</p> <p><b>Skills:</b> students should now be able to identify how subtle differences in analyses can have wider impacts on philosophical arguments.</p>	<p><b>Unit Title:</b> The Metaphysics of Mind and revision – Functionalism.</p> <p><b>Knowledge:</b> Students explore functionalism: that all mental states can be characterised in terms of functional roles which can be multiply realised. They look at objections to functionalism including Ned Block’s China thought experiment and Jackson’s knowledge/Mary argument applied to functionalism.</p> <p><b>Skills:</b> students should now confidently generate responses using appropriate philosophical formats, to a range of philosophical questions. This includes articulating definitions; articulating arguments and counter-arguments; and selecting, applying and evaluating appropriate material to generate their own arguments.</p>	
	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4	Term 5	Term 6

**Unit Title:** Epistemology – Exploring the definition of knowledge and perception as the source of knowledge.

**Knowledge:** students gain an understanding of different types of knowledge (acquaintance, ability and propositional), and explore whether knowledge can be defined. The tripartite view is studied with criticisms included and responses given to those criticisms. Students then explore arguments for and against three theories of perception (direct realism, indirect realism and idealism).

**Skills:** students start to develop the ability to think philosophically and understand the nature of argument.

**Unit Title:** Epistemology - Reason as a source of knowledge and scepticism.

**Knowledge:** students consider where our knowledge comes from by studying two arguments for innatism by Plato and Leibniz. They then look at empiricist responses from Locke and the idea that the mind is 'tabula rasa'. Descartes intuition and deduction thesis is then evaluated along with his three waves of doubt. The role of scepticism within philosophy is explored and the responses to this scepticism are considered.

**Skills:** students can make a distinction between *a priori* and *a posteriori* knowledge and confidently use a range of philosophical vocabulary in their written work (analytic, synthetic etc).

**Unit Title:** Moral Philosophy - Normative ethical theories (utilitarianism and Kantian deontological ethics).

**Knowledge:** students study utilitarianism as articulated by both Bentham and Mill, along with the possible weaknesses of this normative ethical theory. They then study the contrasting approach from Kant in the form of deontological ethics, and the strengths and weaknesses of this approach.

**Skills:** studying the many different versions of utilitarianism will allow students to understand the ways in which philosophical arguments are developed, issues are raised, and arguments are reformulated in response to those issues.

**Unit Title:** Moral Philosophy - Normative ethical theories (Aristotelian virtue ethics) and applied ethics.

**Knowledge:** students study Aristotelian virtue ethics including the concept of Eudaimonia, his function argument and the role of practical wisdom. They then look at the objections to this view. This is followed by a short study of how the three normative ethical theories can be applied to stealing, telling lies, eating animals and simulated killing.

**Skills:** students will be able to recognise and deal appropriately with flaws in argument, including circularity, contradictions, question-begging and other fallacies which can be found within the normative ethical theories studied.

**Unit Title:** Moral Philosophy - Meta-ethics.

**Knowledge:** students learn about the possible origins of moral properties and the distinction between cognitivism and non-cognitivism. They then study theories within moral realism which are contrasted with theories within moral anti-realism. Criticisms of both approaches are explored.

**Skills:** students will be developing their ability to critically evaluate the arguments of others by engaging in a thorough analysis of the different meta-ethical theories.

**Unit Title:** The Metaphysics of God – The concept of God.

**Knowledge:** students to understand the attributes ascribed to God, such as omnipotence, omniscience and supreme goodness. They will explore God's relationship to time (eternal or everlasting) and whether incoherence arises in and between these attributes. The paradox of the stone and the Euthyphro dilemma will be examined.

**Skills:** students will gain confidence in their conceptual analysis through breaking down and understanding what is meant by the word 'God'. They will understand the role of conceptual analysis in other areas of philosophy.

Key/Legend/Notes: