

## How will I be assessed?

By examination only: the qualification consists of two examinations, each of three hours duration; and is taken at the end of two years of Philosophy study.

## WHAT ARE THE PROGRESSION ROUTES FOR THIS QUALIFICATION?

Any degree will value a student with a Philosophy A Level, which is why it is on the 'preferred' subject list for many universities. The sciences, humanities, arts all value someone who can think! High-ranking universities describe Philosophy as having an 'emphasis on the development of analytical and critical skills' (Cambridge) and as developing 'analytical rigour' and 'logical reasoning' (Oxford). Philosophy also develops your abilities to 'think outside of the box', problem-solve and communicate ideas clearly and persuasively.

Very few people are paid to do philosophy, but it indicates to employers you can think well about anything so you find Philosophy graduates in an incredibly wide range of roles.

### **If you would like to know more about philosophy, here are some books:**

Anthony McGowan, *How to Teach Philosophy to Your Dog*, What makes a good dog or a bad dog? A quirky, enjoyable introduction to Philosophy

Nigel Warburton, *A Little History of Philosophy*. An accessible book covering just about every major figure in Western Philosophy.

Simon Blackburn, *Think*, Ideal for those who want to learn how the basic techniques of thinking shape our existence

### **And here are some podcasts and Youtube channels (we recommend starting any of these at episode 1):**

*Philosophize This!* – Short podcast episodes on Philosophers, books and ideas.

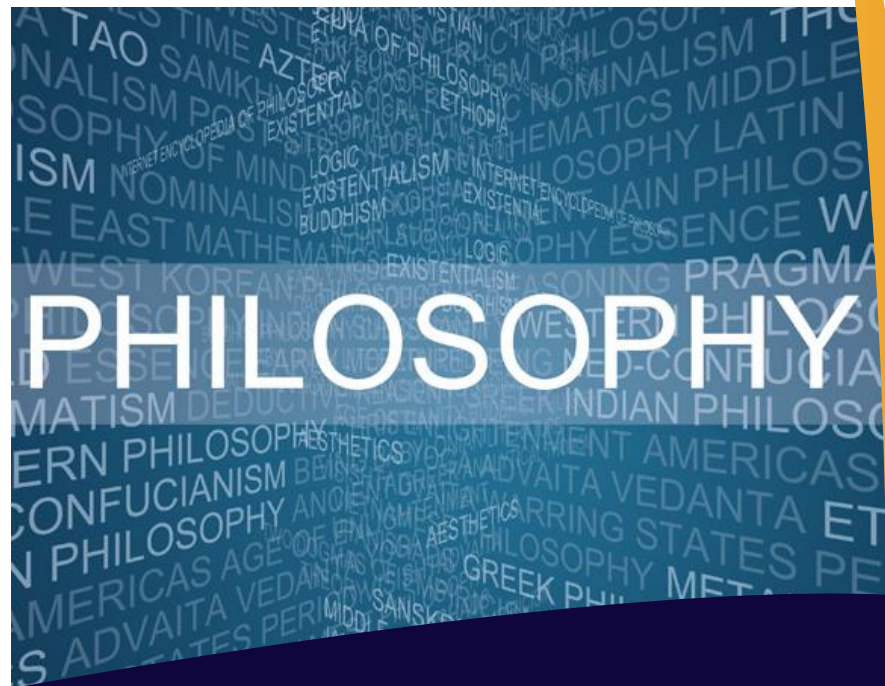
*In Our Time (Philosophy)* – A BBC radio 4 programme in which a panel discuss a philosopher or big question.

*Crash Course Philosophy* – Superbly produced youtube series: it starts with the basics and then covers the whole lot!

*Philosophy Tube* – Youtuber Olly gives away his philosophy degree for free!



# Godalming College



## PHILOSOPHY A Level AQA

Tuesley Lane, Godalming  
GU7 1RS  
T: 01483 423526  
E: [college@godalming.ac.uk](mailto:college@godalming.ac.uk)  
W: [www.godalming.ac.uk](http://www.godalming.ac.uk)

## What is the course about?

The word “Philosophy” literally means “love of knowledge”. This is a course for those who want to grapple with big questions of life (and death), who want to think hard, to read, debate, and articulate their ideas. Philosophy is intellectually challenging and very stimulating, you will have your preconceptions challenged and will begin to think in new ways.

**We study the AQA A Level in Philosophy**  
**This course covers the following philosophical themes:**

### Year 1:

**Epistemology – the study of knowledge.** How do we obtain our knowledge: through experience or by using our powers of reasoning? What can we claim to know for sure? Epistemology explores the nature, origin and limits of human knowledge.

**Moral Philosophy – the study of ethics.** Here we look at three ethical theories and discuss if any of them can provide us with satisfactory answers to the question of how we should act. We will apply these theories to specific issues as varied as stealing, eating animals and enjoying violent films or video games.

### Year 2:

**Metaphysics – the study of what exists.**

**The Metaphysics of God** In this topic we will look at arguments for and against the existence of God. Is it really possible to imagine a God that could do everything? How can we reconcile the problem of evil with God’s existence?

**The Metaphysics of Mind** Here we will explore what is meant by mind. Is mind something that can be looked at scientifically? Can a thought be reduced to a physical action? What exactly is consciousness and how did it come about?

## What is the department like?

We are a successful department, housed in the main college building. The tutors are experts in Philosophy and are enthusiastic about their subject. We realise that it is a new and difficult subject for most students, and we like to use a variety of ways to introduce and illustrate philosophical issues. We are supportive and offer lunchtime support sessions for all that require it.

Our students achieve highly with many going on to study Philosophy (amongst many other subjects) at university. We are able to support students with applications to Oxbridge, we take trips to university Philosophy departments and have arranged for guest speakers to visit.

## What sort of work will I be doing?

When studying philosophy, we don’t just give our opinion. We learn what great philosophers have said about these issues in the past and discuss their importance for our present thinking. There is a variety of work. Studying texts and theories involves reading, reflection and discussion; you may be set short tests, but also substantial essays requiring some research.

## What are the entry requirements?

The minimum requirements are five GCSE subjects at grade 4 or above, with a 5 in English Language. However, Philosophy is a demanding subject; the real qualification that will help you to succeed is a curiosity, logical thought and the determination to think hard and read around the subject.

## WHICH SUBJECTS GO WELL WITH PHILOSOPHY?

The short answer is any of them! Philosophy is often classed as a humanities subject but also has aspects which are closer to maths and science.

Philosophy combines well with most subjects, whether they are natural or social sciences or humanities subjects, and will provide evidence of important competencies for UCAS and employment applications. Because you acquire important thinking skills as well as subject knowledge, Philosophy is an excellent accompaniment to any A Level programme.

Whether you consider yourself a scientist, mathematician, artist, linguist, writer or just enjoy asking questions there will be something in Philosophy for you!