



**Intent:** Pupils who have opted for A Level RE study a religion (Buddhism), Ethics and Philosophy. They study each component with a view to be able to examine and evaluate key aspects of each element in Year 12. Pupils should have an in depth understanding of key religious, ethical and philosophical ideas that underpin the study of religions and theology or philosophy courses beyond A Level standard. They will need to familiarise themselves with important individuals, consider primary and secondary sources and read widely within and around the subject in order to be able to critically analyse key aspects of the course.

## Year 12 REP

### Threshold Concepts:

1. Buddhism is an ancient religion that can be argued to be the best equipped religion to deal with issues we have created and face in the 21<sup>st</sup> century – why is this the case?
2. Ethical theories were created in order to find systems to make correct moral decisions. Is this possible when we consider various theories and applications to modern day issues?
3. Philosophical arguments were created to help us make sense of the world – do they achieve this and provide us with answers to life’s questions?

### Unit 1: Buddhism

### Unit 2: Ethics

### Unit 3: Philosophy

**Knowledge**  
(facts, information, concepts and key terminology)

The life of Siddhartha Gautama and the creation of fundamental aspects of the dharma, including; the three universal truths (anicca, anatta and dukkha), the four noble truths and the eightfold path.

The separation into the two main schools of Buddhism: Theravada & Mahayana and their understanding of Buddha (Triakaya doctrine) Buddhist beliefs about life (Samsara & Karma) and death (Nirvana). This links to moral decision making (Ahimsa, Karuna and Metta) and the five moral precepts, applied to various issues including the unborn child and war.

The use and importance of meditation in Buddhism, within the sangha and different acts of devotional practice.

The key differences between the 3 main approaches to ethical decision making; deontological, teleological, character based. Students will study the knowledge (AO1) and evaluation (AO2) of Aristotle’s Virtue Ethics, St Thomas Aquinas’ Natural Moral Law and Joseph Fletcher’s Situation Ethics, amongst other relevant scholars.

The key arguments for the existence of God; Ontological, Design theory and Cosmological. Knowledge regarding the key proponents of these theories; namely Anselm and St Thomas Aquinas. Knowledge of the criticisms levelled at each theory and the reasons key scholars offered for these objections.

Examination of the philosophical problem of evil; logical and evidential and the responses to the problem of evil in the form of theodicies and theories; soul-making, Free will defence and process thought.

Religious experiences- visions, mysticism and numinous. Key challenges raised towards the validity of these.

**Understanding**  
(ability to connect and synthesise knowledge within a context)

How does the life of Siddhartha influence key aspects of dharma? The core of the dharma must be understood by all Buddhists – is this easy?

The 3 universal truths – why are they so significant for Buddhists? This life and the next are vital for Buddhists. What do they believe? How does this influence their behaviour to moral issues? How do Buddhists live day to day in Sangha’s? Why is it important to show devotion and what does this look like in practice?

In order to show a full understanding of how the above ethical theories work in practice, students will consider how each approach deals with the following applications; theft, lying, embryo research, cloning, designer babies, capital punishment, euthanasia, abortion, animal experimentation, intensive farming, blood sports, organ transplantation.

Students will evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the philosophical theories proposed and their counter-arguments. Students will assess how convincing each proposal or theory is and the degree to which they can be considered as evidence or proof of a concept or the degree to which they undermine a theory or principle. Throughout the course students will be encouraged to develop their understanding by considering their own personal views on the philosophical issues studied e.g. is there a justifiable reason for the existence of suffering.

**Skills**  
(successful application of knowledge and understanding to a specific task)

Student’s must be able to examine and evaluate the content above with accuracy and critical analysis. They must display knowledge (AO1) and the ability to evaluate (AO2) key religious ideas.

Students will be able to display considerable knowledge (AO1) of how the ethical approaches work, the rationale behind them, how they apply to ethical issues, and evaluate (AO2) whether they provide an effective guide to ethical decision making.

Student’s must be able to examine (AO1) and evaluate the content above (AO2) with accuracy and critical analysis.

**Formal Assessments**  
(those done by all/vast majority of the cohort)

2 assessment periods and a final end of year examination.

By the end of the year students on course for at least a grade C will be able to examine ideas from each element with reasonable accuracy, using sources and examples (scholars and theories) where appropriate to engage directly with the question. Pupils will also be able to evaluate key ideas above in depth and consider a variety of different points of view. This will include scholarly debate where appropriate and varying religious views. This evaluation will be supported by a reasoned judgement.