

## **Philosophy**

### **Course Outline**

The word Philosophy comes from the Ancient Greeks and can be translated to mean 'the love of wisdom'. The Philosophy A-level course is designed to encourage students to explore a range of classical philosophical issues, from Epistemology and Metaphysics, to Rene Descartes' Meditations.

Through analysis, well-reasoned arguments and of course questioning, students are able to develop a wide range of skills including evaluation, critical analysis, essay writing and reading.

### **Knowledge and Understanding**

#### **AS Level**

At AS Level students are required to study Epistemology & Metaphysics and Philosophy of Religion. The aim of the course is to introduce students to the fundamental theories in Philosophy and develop skills required for A2 and potentially undergraduate study.

Epistemology and Metaphysics explores:

- What are the immediate objects of perception?
- The origin of concepts and the nature of knowledge
- The Definition of Knowledge

Philosophy of Religion explores:

- The Concepts of God
- Arguments relating to the existence of God
- Religious Language

#### **A2 Level**

At A2 students are given the opportunity to specialise further and study Ethics and Philosophy of Mind. The aim of the course is to refine and build upon skills such as the ability to ask penetrating questions, construct sound arguments and present clear and logical evaluations.

Ethics explores:

- Ethical Theories: How do we decide what is morally right to do?
- Ethical Language

Philosophy of Mind Explores:

- The mind and body problem: What is the relationship between the body and the mind?

Skills and development

Learning is achieved through a range of mediums including class discussions, video, lectures and group tasks. At both AS and A2 students will be required to read and engage with philosophical texts. Learning is solidified via exam practice, essay writing and more informally via discussion. Students are encouraged to think analytically and demonstrate understanding with clarity and precision.

### **Assessment**

Students are assessed regularly and exam practice incorporated into most lessons.

End of unit assessments take place every 6 weeks and students who are not on target are offered a range of support including extension lessons and academic tutors.

Assessments are tracked and monitored closely to ensure progress is being made by each student.

### **Literacy**

Across the course at both AS and A2, students are encouraged to develop and hone their literacy skills. Via essay writing, group work and presentations, students are encouraged to develop their writing, listening and speaking skills. It is essential that students become philosophically literate and are able to engage with philosophy beyond the course.

### **Meeting the needs of individual students**

The philosophy department at Sir John Cass aim to meet the individual needs of students. A range of teaching styles are used to ensure that all learning preferences are catered for. Open door sessions take place where students can clarify or catch up on work and academic mentors are provide to assist students with essay writing and exam techniques.

### **Home study**

Students are set homework at least once a week and are expected to continually solidify their knowledge via reflection, wider reading and note taking. Homework tasks include: reading, exam practice, essay planning and independent research.

### **SMSC**

The study of Philosophy provides students with many avenues to develop their SMSC. During the modules of Religion, students are encouraged to explore the place of religion and spiritually in society, as well as reflect on their own beliefs and reasoning behind them. Morality is an area that is explicitly investigated during the course with students addressing questions such as 'where does good come from?' and 'Is morality objective?' Through group work, debate and discussion, students

are given ample opportunity to develop social skills. The course has been designed to reflect the perspectives of different cultures both contemporary and historically.