

## Question: What can I do with an A Level in Religious Studies?

## Answer: What can't you do with an A Level in Philosophy and Ethics?



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One of the most common questions I get asked on open evenings, taster days or conversations with parents/carers is: "What can my son/daughter actually do with a qualification in your subject?" Philosophy, Ethics and Religious Studies is one of the more underrated subjects because of mass misunderstanding. The focus is not just on religion nor is it an extension of GCSE RE, the course offers so much more. Most importantly Philosophy, Ethics and R.S at A Level provides you with the opportunity to develop key skills that are essential for success on most degree courses.

The reason why A Level Philosophy, Ethics and R.S is so useful for University applications (and highly recognised by the top universities) is because it is unlike any other course. Whilst Law or Biology or Psychology focus on specific areas of knowledge, Philosophy and Ethics is focused on developing the skills necessary to be successful. The skills nurtured and developed in Philosophy and Ethics (that are crucial for a variety of degrees and jobs) include:

- **Good interpersonal skills:** It is very important within Philosophy and ethics to develop life skills that you will use every day to communicate and interact with other people, both individually and in groups. These include empathy and compassion, intrigue and questioning skills as well as a critical and philosophical and ethical approach to key ideas and opinions.
- **Team working:** Throughout Philosophy and Ethics you will work collaboratively with groups of students in order to achieve goals.
- **Problem solving:** Philosophy and Ethics focuses upon discovering, analysing and solving problems especially dealing with current ethical issues or finding solutions to philosophical questions.
- **Time management and ability to work to deadlines:** These are very important within Philosophy and Ethics. The course can be very demanding, so you must organise your time sufficiently to cope with the requirements.
- **Good verbal and written communication skills:** A lot of time during Philosophy and Ethics is spent discussing and debating important questions, developing an open mind and listening skills as well as a mature language and providing you ways to support your ideas. Written skills are intensely developed throughout the two years with a specific focus on written language, essay writing skills and development of a written argument.

- **Analytical skills:** Philosophy and Ethics develops the ability to gather information (often through research), articulate, analyse, solve complex problems and make decisions based on the research or information found.
- **Independent learning:** A key skill in Philosophy and Ethics is developing students' ability to think, act and pursue their own studies autonomously, often through independent work and research.

So what do students commonly go on to study at degree level?

The list is impressive:

- **Medicine**
- **Nursing**
- **Law/ Criminology/ Psychology**
- **Army/ Forces**
- **Primary Teaching/ Educational Studies**
- **English/ Journalism/ Classics**
- **PPE (Politics, Philosophy and Economics)**