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Inspiring minds.  
Shaping futures.

# PHILOSOPHY

COURSE GUIDE 2017

“The unexamined life is not worth living.”

SOCRATES

# Philosophy

## Exam Board AQA

### What will I study?

Students of Philosophy contemplate, discuss and write about fundamental questions concerning the nature of existence; how to lead the good life; the relationship between mind and body; the origins of the world; and the source and extent of knowledge. Since the birth of the subject in Ancient Greece, philosophers have tackled such questions through careful, critical, creative and rigorous thinking – with the goal of achieving, if not truth, then greater understanding. Philosophy is a demanding subject, which suits academically-minded students. In order to succeed, you will need to be committed to developing your ability to reason, critically discuss, analyse and write about philosophical arguments.

The **first year** of the Philosophy course offers the opportunity to study two key branches of philosophy – Epistemology (theory of knowledge) and Metaphysics of God. In Epistemology, we consider the relationship between our sensory experience and the world itself. Do we access the world directly through the senses or do we experience only a representation of the world? We also consider what the definition of knowledge is and where the origin of knowledge lies – do we gain knowledge mainly through experience or through reasoning? In Metaphysics of God, we consider philosophical arguments which have been made in an attempt to prove the existence of God; the status of religious language; and how the concept of God can be understood.

In the **second year** of the course, students move on to study two more key areas of philosophy – Moral and Metaphysics of Mind. Philosophy is concerned with issues regarding how we

should make moral decisions and the nature of moral concepts. Metaphysics of Mind focuses on the relationship between the mental and the physical.

### How will I be assessed?

Regular assessments are set throughout the course, typically tying in with the form of assessment found in the exams at the end of the second year. Each of these exams is devised to test knowledge, understanding and skills of analysis and evaluation. Essay responses form a substantial part of the assessment with focus on clarity and precision.

### What can I do with this subject?

Philosophy boasts a wide range of 'transferable skills', which are greatly sought after from employers within many fields. The ability to think clearly and effectively in understanding an issue, and carefully gauge what response is needed is one example of an invaluable quality, whether you are a politician, health worker, teacher, accountant, or barrister.

### What else can I do?

Students can take advantage of extra-curricular activities in the department. A Royal Institute of Philosophy course, covering the classic works of Philosophy is run for those who are looking to give breadth and depth to their studies, and a more general, student-lead philosophy club will run, featuring discussions, films, and guest speakers. Annual trips to university departments can be expected, along with residential trips to London and Gladstone's Library.

## Our students say...

I enjoy the freedom and independence that you get when you come to Carmel College. It is this independence that really sets Carmel apart from other colleges and allows you to flourish in your chosen subjects.

Philosophy is a subject for people who like challenging what they know and want to grow both intellectually and as a person. It has given me great skills in critical thinking as well as allowing me to study some of the greatest minds in human history. The thing that impressed me most about studying at Carmel was the support and expertise provided by tutors. Help and support is easily available should you need it. After I leave Carmel I hope to go to Liverpool University and study to become a lecturer in Philosophy or Sociology.



**Joshua Hibbert**  
Cowley International College

**Studying:**  
Philosophy, Government and Politics, Sociology, Critical Thinking

### What are the entry requirements for this course?

You will need a **grade 5** in **GCSE English Language** for you to be able to cope with the language demands of the course.

### Meet the Tutors

**Glenn Skelhorn**  
Head of Department

**Hannah Moss**  
Subject Tutor



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