



Learning Aims and Curriculum Intent:

Content – Students study Paper 2 of the Edexcel A Level Religious Studies specification 9RSO (Ethics). The content for this paper is focused on exploring both common ground and controversy in dealing with issues that arise in the areas of morality and religion in the context of the modern world. The paper will help students to study some of the underlying ideas and concepts of these issues, as well as questions and issues about how ethical and religious ideas and solutions may be applied in practice in contemporary social, political, and personal situations. The study addresses an important part of the key underlying concerns that students raise about the world in which they are growing up, and about their own views, opinions, and commitments. Through considering important legal, social, and religious approaches and lenses to these issues including current case studies students will be enabled to reflect on and develop their values, opinions, and attitudes in the light of their studies. Pupils will understand a wide range of ethical theories and theorists, with a strong focus on scholarship to compare the significant ideas presented in works of scholars selected from the fields of philosophy, ethics, and religion.

Skills – Students will focus on a range of transferable skills including cognitive, interpersonal, and intrapersonal skills through engaging in dialectics and extensive discussion of current topical issues with a strong focus on oracy and expression of argument. In writing and in verbal expression, students will learn to deconstruct information and/or issues to find connections and provide logical chains of reasoning in order to make judgements regarding their importance/relevance to the question context. They will be able to review/analyse information, bringing it together to form a conclusion/judgement and bring pertinent critiques or spot fallacies in ethical arguments and theories, with intelligence and originality. Pupils will gain a better understanding of legal and social contributing factors to areas of contentious ethical debate and consider how opinions can be formulated and challenged with robust and rigorous scrutiny in the modern world.

Term	Content, Key Questions and Knowledge	Skills	Assessment
Michaelmas	<p>Applied Ethics (Teacher 1):</p> <p>Environmental Ethics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key ethical, social and legal issues raised in issues of environmental conservation, including issues of climate justice, threats to the environment and how we view the Earth Ethical debates surrounding animal welfare including experimentation and vegetarianism How helpful or appropriate are religious views on issues of environment and / or animal welfare? What are some of the critiques of religious attitudes and their historical impact? <p>Equality</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How is equality philosophically defined and what different approaches to social equality are there? What is the contribution (positive and negative) of religious and secular attitudes to areas of equality, particular with regards to gender, race, and disability? How have key social movements, legal changes and individual figures contributed to ethical debates regarding equality? <p>Medical Ethics: Start of Life issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Issues regarding the status of the Embryo, including debates relating to pre-implantation diagnoses, ‘designer babies’, embryo research, IVF and abortion Legal changes and social attitudes to these issues, including issues of reproductive equality, pro-life and pro-choice movements, and the role of the government Concepts of Personhood and Autonomy, and religious approaches to start of life issues including the Sanctity of Life <p>Ethical Theories (Teacher 2):</p> <p>Utilitarianism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The social, political and cultural influences on Utilitarianism. What is ‘hedonism’? Are human actions motivated by pleasure and happiness? Bentham’s Hedonic Calculus - Can we ‘measure pleasure’ objectively? When it comes to pleasure / happiness, should we focus on quantity or quality? How does Mill distinguish between higher and lower pleasures? How has Utilitarianism developed over time? Preference, Negative and Ideal Utilitarianism. An evaluation of Utilitarianism and its continued use. What are the strengths and weaknesses of a Utilitarian approach? How can Utilitarianism be applied to contemporary issues? Is Utilitarianism compatible with the law, social attitudes and religious approaches? 	<p>Evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of significant areas of disagreement and debate, and the assessment of relevant examples, legal changes and social attitudes.</p> <p>Review/analyse information, bringing it together to form a conclusion/judgement based on strengths/weaknesses, alternatives, relevant data, or information.</p> <p>Come to a supported judgement of a subject’s qualities and relation to its context.</p> <p>Demonstrate understanding by investigating different reasons, concepts, and ideas. Condensing and distilling large amounts of complex information.</p> <p>On paper and in verbal discussion, formulate an argument based on logical chains of reasoning forming coherent judgements and responding to challenges.</p> <p>Carefully listen and respond to the views and arguments of others, including an evaluation of scholarly contributions and those of key figures.</p> <p>Make pertinent links between a wide range of current and historical ethical and philosophical issues, drawing on the skill of identifying flaws in arguments.</p>	<p>Retrieval quizzes to build knowledge acquisition and understanding.</p> <p>Regular exam practice of a range of exam questions, including shorter questions focusing on close detailed analysis of key concepts, and longer evaluative essays drawing together points to form reasoned judgement.</p>

	<p>Situation Ethics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The social, political, and cultural influences on Situation Ethics. • What is 'agape'? Is agape a good basis for moral decision making? What about the law? • Should moral decisions be made on a situation-by-situation basis? • What other guiding principles are needed? The Four Working Principles and Six Fundamental Principles. • The application of Situation Ethics to specific case studies such as Mrs Bergmeier, The Rainmaker and The Wilderness Trail. • Biblical examples of situationist thinking. • An analysis of Barclay's critique of Situation Ethics – Anthology Extract – 'Ethics in a Permissive Society' • An evaluation of Situation Ethics and its continued use. What are the strengths and weaknesses of a Situation Ethics approach? How can Situation Ethics be applied to contemporary issues? Is Situation Ethics compatible with the law, social attitudes, and religious approaches? <p>Natural Moral Law</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classical and Biblical influences on Natural Moral Law. • What is a human's 'telos' (Purpose)? Is telos a good basis for moral decision making? Do we all have the same telos? • Should moral decisions be made on an absolutist / legalist basis? • What other guiding principles are needed? The Primary and Secondary Precepts. • An evaluation of Natural Moral Law and its continued use. What are the strengths and weaknesses of Natural Moral Law? How can Natural Moral Law be applied to contemporary issues? Is Natural Moral Law compatible with the law, social attitudes, and religious approaches? <p>How has Natural Moral Law developed over time? Hoose and Proportionalism.</p>		
Lent	<p>Applied Ethics (Teacher 1):</p> <p>Medical Ethics: End of Life issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the key ethical debates and religious/secular contributions surrounding the legalisation of Euthanasia? How useful are these contributions? • Discussion of the rights and responsibilities of the Doctor and relevant case studies • How do issues of law, autonomy and the value of palliative care contribute to this discussion? <p>Religion & Conflict</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How has religion previously contributed to ethical issues surrounding War? (Including issues of Holy War, violence as depicted in the Bible, and the Just War Theory) • Study of particular case studies (including the War in Iraq, WWII, and Nuclear Warfare) as part of an ethical discussion surrounding the ethics of War. Can War ever be the 'right' thing? • Is Pacifism an ethically defensible position? <p>Ethical Theories (Teacher 2):</p> <p>Kantian Deontology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The social, political and cultural influences on Kantian Deontology. • What is a person's 'duty'? Is duty a good basis for moral decision making? • Should moral decisions be made on an absolutist basis? • What other guiding principles are needed? The Categorical Imperative and its different formulations. • An analysis of primary text – Anthology Extract – Kant's 'Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals' • How has Deontology developed over time? Prima Facie Duties • An evaluation of Kantian Deontology and its continued use. What are the strengths and weaknesses of Kantian Deontology? How can Kantian Deontology be applied to contemporary issues? Is Kantian Deontology compatible with the law, social attitudes, and religious approaches? <p>Virtue Ethics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historical and cultural influences on Virtue Ethics. • What is a 'virtue'? What is a 'vice'? • Is an agent centred approach to moral decision-making better than an approach focused on actions? • What other guiding principles are needed? The Golden Mean, virtuous characters and virtuous role models • An analysis of primary text – Anthology Extract – Aristotle's 'Nicomachean Ethics' • How has Virtue Ethics developed over time? An exploration of Foot and MacIntyre's contribution. <p>An evaluation of Virtue Ethics and its continued use. What are the strengths and weaknesses of Virtue Ethics? How can Virtue Ethics be applied to contemporary issues? Is Virtue Ethics compatible with the law, social attitudes, and religious approaches?</p>		

Trinity	<p>Applied Ethics (Teacher 1):</p> <p>Sexual Ethics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How helpful, or harmful, is the contribution of Christianity to issues of sexual ethics (including Marriage, Divorce, Promiscuity, same-sex relationships/LGBTQ+ issues, contraception, and issues of sexual consent)? • How have social attitudes, individual figures and legal changes contributed to our perception of the ethics of sex in contemporary society? • A study of the depiction of sex in the Bible and the value of secular challenges to these contributions <p>Religion & Morality</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In what ways are Religion & Morality opposed, with consideration of arguments from Anti-Theists (including issues of Terrorism, 'brainwashing' and movements such as the Westboro Baptist Church)? • Religion and Morality as dependent on one another, including the evaluation of Divine Command Theory and moral arguments for the existence of God. <p>Ethical Theories (Teacher 2):</p> <p>Ethical Language</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is ethical language cognitive (does it express moral facts)? The theory of Ethical Naturalism and critiques put forward including the Is-Ought Gap, the Naturalistic Fallacy and the Open Question Argument. The Theory of Intuitionism. • Is ethical language non-cognitive (expresses subjective views) Emotivism and Prescriptivism. • Ethical language as absolute or relative; factual or symbolic. • Realism and anti-realism. • Strengths and weaknesses of theories on ethical language. 		
----------------	---	--	--

What does consolidation look like in this subject?	<p>Retrieval of key concepts and terminology through regular spaced practice.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reviewing course content: Go through your class notes, textbooks, and any other study materials provided by your teacher. Make sure you have a clear understanding of the main ideas, theories, and arguments discussed in the course. Engage with wider reading and online consolidation resources targeted at A Level revision (such as the Panpsycast Podcast and Ben Wardle's Youtube Channel) if you don't understand something. 2. Summarizing key concepts: Create concise summaries or mind maps of the main topics and concepts covered in each unit. This can help you identify connections between different ideas and reinforce your understanding of the subject. 3. Practicing past exam questions: Familiarize yourself with the format and style of the exam by practicing past papers. This will help you become more comfortable with the types of questions you may encounter and improve your exam technique. 4. Engaging in discussions: Participate in group discussions or find a study partner to engage in conversations about the topics you've learned. Sharing and explaining your ideas to others can enhance your understanding and clarify any areas of confusion. 5. Seeking clarification: If there are any concepts or topics that you find particularly challenging, don't hesitate to seek clarification from your teacher or classmates. They can provide additional explanations or resources to help you grasp difficult concepts. 6. Making connections: Religious Studies often involves exploring the relationships between different ideas and themes. Look for connections between different religious traditions, ethical theories, philosophical arguments, and social issues. This will help you develop a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the subject. 7. Revising regularly: Dedicate regular study sessions to revise and consolidate your knowledge. Set aside specific time slots to review your notes, summaries, and practice questions. Spacing out your revision over a longer period is generally more effective than cramming all at once.
Examples of Homework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Essay questions: You will be assigned essay questions that require you to critically analyze and evaluate key ethical theories and issues covered in Paper 2. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ "Assess the strengths and weaknesses of virtue ethics as an approach to moral decision-making." ○ "Evaluate the extent to which ethical relativism a valid perspective in the context of cultural diversity." • Case studies: You will be given case studies that relate to ethical dilemmas and topics discussed in Paper 2. Your task will be to analyze the case, consider different ethical theories, and apply them to make reasoned judgments. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ "Analyze a case study involving medical ethics, such as the allocation of organ transplants, and evaluate how different ethical frameworks would approach the situation." ○ "Explore a case study on ethical issues related to equality, such as positive discrimination in business, and assess the moral implications involved." • Comparative analysis: You will be asked to compare and contrast different ethical theories or approaches within the context of Paper 2. This will help you develop a deeper understanding of the diversity of ethical perspectives. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ "Compare consequentialism and deontology as ethical theories, and discuss their contrasting views on the morality of lying." ○ "Contrast situation ethics and utilitarianism, and evaluate their perspectives on the ethical treatment of animals."

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Source analysis: You will receive excerpts from philosophical writings or ethical texts relevant to the topics covered in Paper 2. Your task will be to critically analyse the source, identify key ideas, and evaluate their significance within the context of ethical discussions. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ "Analyse a passage from Immanuel Kant's 'Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals' and discuss its relevance to the concept of moral duty." ○ "Examine an excerpt from Peter Singer's 'Animal Liberation' and evaluate its arguments for animal rights and ethical treatment." • Debate or discussion topics: You will have opportunities to engage in debates or discussions on ethical issues specifically related to Paper 2. These discussions will encourage critical thinking and effective articulation of your arguments. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ "Debate the ethical implications of genetic engineering and gene editing in human beings." ○ "Discuss the ethical challenges surrounding the use of nuclear weapons in contemporary warfare referencing a case study." <p>These homework tasks focusing on Paper 2 will provide you with opportunities to apply your knowledge, think critically, and develop your analytical and evaluative skills in the area of ethics for A Level Religious Studies. Pay close attention to the instructions, grading criteria, and feedback provided to support your learning and progress.</p>	
Key terminology	Stewardship and conservation, shallow ecology, deep ecology, Gaia hypothesis, Personhood, sustainability, waste management, climate change, ontological/simple/moral equality, equality of opportunity/condition, feminism, discrimination, Just War Theory, jus ad bellum, jus in bello, jus post bellum, pacifism, nuclear/selective/relative pacifism, embryo research, pre-implantation genetic diagnosis (PGD), stem cells, cord blood, fertilization in vitro, destruction of embryos, abortion, assisted dying, active/passive euthanasia, palliative care, paternalism, pre-marital sex, adultery, promiscuity, same-sex relationships, marriage and civil partnership, contraception, childlessness, anti-theism, atheism, autonomy, theonomy, heteronomy, divine command ethics, utilitarianism, hedonism, preference utilitarianism, negative utilitarianism, ideal utilitarianism, situation ethics, agape, situationalism, natural moral law, absolutism, legalism, telos, primary and secondary precepts, deontology, duty-based ethics, categorical imperative, prima facie duties, virtue ethics, eudaimonia, golden mean, virtuous character, meta ethics, cognitive and non-cognitive uses of language, realism and anti-realism, ethical naturalism, ethical non-naturalism, intuitionism, prescriptivism, emotivism.	
Super-curricular enrichment and scholarly extension	Extension reading can be found on the RS SharePoint	
Useful websites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BBC Ethics - Offers a wide range of articles, videos, and interactive resources on ethical issues, including topics related to environmental ethics, equality, and sexual ethics: https://www.bbc.co.uk/ethics • Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy - A reputable online encyclopedia that covers various ethical theories and concepts, providing in-depth articles written by experts: https://plato.stanford.edu/ • Ethics Updates - Features resources and articles on different ethical theories and applied ethics topics, including case studies and discussion questions: http://ethicsupdates.net/ • The Center for Bioethics & Human Dignity - Focuses on bioethical issues, including medical ethics, and provides articles, research papers, and resources for further study: https://cbhd.org/ - or The Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA) is the UK's independent regulator for fertility treatment and human embryo research. Their website is located at https://www.hfea.gov.uk/. • Equality and Human Rights Commission - Offers information, reports, and resources related to equality and human rights issues, including resources on gender, race, and disability equality: https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/ • National Geographic - Provides articles and documentaries on environmental issues, climate change, and sustainability, offering a broader understanding of environmental ethics: https://www.nationalgeographic.com/environment/ • Pew Research Center - Offers research and reports on various topics related to religion, including surveys on religious attitudes towards ethical issues: https://www.pewresearch.org/ 	
Who can I contact?	Head of Department	Ms Mackie RM@forest.org.uk
	Teachers	Mrs Bellieu, Miss Green, Ms Mackie