Learning Aims and Curriculum Intent:

Content

An evaluation of contrasting normative ethical theories (utilitarianism, Kantian deontological ethics, Aristotelian virtue ethics). Application of ethical theories to a range of moral issues (eating animals, stealing, telling lies, simulated killing). An exploration of competing meta-ethical theories. An exploration of key questions such as what is right, are there moral duties, do the consequences of an act determine its moral worth, does moral value lie in an agent's character, their actions, or the consequences, what are the origins of moral principles, are there mind-independent moral properties/ facts.

Skills

Understand the ways in which philosophers have analysed the core concepts of philosophy and be able to identify how subtle differences in analyses can have wider impacts on philosophical arguments •understand the main philosophical arguments within topics, through the works of philosophers, and articulate those arguments in appropriate forms, correctly, clearly, and precisely.

Students will also articulate how those claims might relate to other topic areas •understand the ways in which philosophical arguments are developed, issues are raised, and arguments are reformulated in response to those issues •generate responses using appropriate philosophical formats, to a range of philosophical questions. These responses must include articulating definitions; articulating arguments and counterarguments; and selecting, applying, and evaluating appropriate material to generate their own arguments. Students will also understand and be able to use the language of argumentation correctly and be able to: •identify argument within text •identify the structure of an argument: premises (including assumptions), reasons, conclusions (including sub-conclusions) and inferences •identify different forms of argument – including deduction and induction (including abduction) and be able to analyse and evaluate arguments in ways appropriate to their form (including in terms of validity/invalidity, soundness/unsoundness, certainty/probability) •recognise and deal appropriately with different types of arguments/reasoning, including arguments from analogy and hypothetical reasoning (including the use of Ockham's Razor) •recognise and deal appropriately with flaws in argument, including circularity, contradictions, question-begging and other fallacies •use examples and counter-examples •generate arguments, objections and counter-arguments.

Term	Content, Key Questions and Knowledge	Skills	Assessment
Michaelmas	**Utilitarianism: Do the consequences of an action determine its moral value?** • What is meant by utility and maximising utility? • Is quantity or quality of pleasure morally relevant? The distinction between Bentham's and Mill's utilitarianism. • Is pleasure the only intrinsic good? Hedonistic utilitarianism, non-hedonistic utilitarianism - Preference utilitarianism. Nozick's experience machine. • Should we judge the moral value of individual acts or follow general rules? Act and Rule Utilitarianism. • How would a utilitarian respond to the issues of eating animals, stealing, telling lies and simulated killing? • Is utilitarianism the correct approach to ethics? - Does utilitarianism undermine fairness and individual rights/ liberty? Does utilitarianism ignore moral integrity and the intentions of the individual? **Kantian deontological ethics: Do we have moral duties?** • What is a moral duty? What is meant by the 'good will'? • What is the different between acting out of duty and acting according to duty? • What is the categorical imperative of morality? First and second formulations. Contrast with hypothetical imperatives. The role of reason in moral decision-making. • How would a Kantian deontologist respond to the issues of eating animals, stealing, telling lies and simulated killing? • Is Kantian deontology the correct approach to ethics? – What should we if duties clash? Are all universalisable maxims distinctly moral? Are all non-universalisable actions immoral? Does Kant ignore the value of certain motives? Is morality a system of hypothetical, rather than categorical, imperatives?	• Formalising arguments in to premises and conclusion. • Analysis of argument form. • Application of abstract theory to concrete examples • Textual Analysis • Oracy and presentation • Group presentation skills • Philosophical writing • Independent research and critical thinking. • The application of reason and argument. • Seminar discussion	Retrieval quizzes to build knowledge acquisition and understanding Group presentations and peer teaching to assess understanding of key arguments and theories Regular exam practice of a range of exam questions, including shorter answer questions focusing on precise explanation of philosophical concepts, longer answer questions focusing on analysing and logically linking philosophical theories, and longer evaluative essays, weighing up arguments and counterarguments to sustain a logical and coherent argument, form reasoned judgements and reach a clear and robustly defended conclusion.

Lent	**Aristotelian virtue ethics: Does moral value lie in an agent's character rather than in their actions?** • What is 'the good' for human beings? Is 'Eudaimonia' the final end to which all humans aim? • What is the function of human beings? Aristotle's function argument and its relationship to virtue. • What are the virtues should humans aim to develop? The doctrine of the mean. • What are the roles of education and practice in moral development? • For which of our actions should we be held morally responsible? Voluntary, involuntary and non-voluntary actions. • How would an Aristotelian virtue ethicist respond to the issues of eating animals, stealing, telling lies and simulated killing? • Is Aristotelian virtue ethics the correct approach to ethics? What should we do if virtues clash? Does Aristotelian virtue ethics provide sufficient guidance? Is Aristotle's reasoning circular? What is the relationship between the good for the individual and moral good?		
Trinity	**Meta-ethics: Are there mind-independent moral properties/ facts?** • Are moral properties reducible to natural properties? Moral naturalism. • What are the problems with viewing moral properties as reducible to natural properties? Hume's is-ought gap, Moore's naturalistic fallacy and open-question argument. • Are moral properties non-natural properties? Are moral properties recognised through rational intuition? Moore's intuitionism. • Does ethical language express beliefs that are true or false? • Are moral claims knowable? Application of Hume's fork to moral claims. • Is morality relative? Does moral relativism demonstrate that moral realism is false? Mackie's argument from relativity. • Does the metaphysical and epistemological queerness of moral properties /moral claims demonstrate that moral realism is false? Mackie's argument from queerness. • Are all moral judgements false? Mackie's error theory. • Are moral claims empirically verifiable or analytically true? Do moral claims have any factual meaning? Application of Ayer's verification principle. • Is moral language an expression of emotion? Ayer's Emotivism. • Are moral claims prescriptive? Hare's Prescriptivism. • Can moral anti-realism account for how we use moral language, including moral reasoning, persuading, and disagreeing? • Can moral anti-realism account for moral progress? • Does moral anti-realism lead to moral nihilism?		

What does consolidation look like in this subject?	Retrieval of key concepts and terminology through regular spaced practice. 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 (see links below) if you don't understand something. 2. Summarising 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 theories and ideas and reinforce your understanding of the subject. 3. Practising past exam questions: Familiarise 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: Philosophy often involves exploring the relationships between different concepts, theories and disciplines. Look for connections between different ethical theories, philosophical arguments, and wider subject areas e.g. Maths, History, Science. 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 practise questions. Spacing out your revision over a longer period is generally more effective than cramming all at once.

Examples of Homework	**Reading, listening to podcasts or watching videos to prepare for discussion in class.** - E.g. Read an article on hedonistic utilitarianism from Dialogue magazine (www.dialogue.org.uk) - E.g. Listen to a podcast on virtue ethics from BBC Radio 4 In Our Time (https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p005489r) - E.g. Watch a Royal Institute of Philosophy video on moral anti-realism 'Is Anything Really Wrong?' (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XO_R8gPJllI) **Exam style questions:** **Shorter answer questions:** - E.g. What is moral realism? (3 marks) - E.g. Explain Kant's distinction between acting in accordance with duty and acting out of duty. (5 marks) - E.g. Explain how Aristotelian virtue ethics might be applied to the issue of simulated killing. (12 marks) **Essays:** - E.g. Are utilitarians correct when they say that it is morally right to maximise utility? (25 marks) - E.g. Can Kantian deontological ethics be successfully defended against objections? (25 marks)
Key terminology	Normative ethics; applied ethics; meta-ethics; good; bad; right; wrong; utilitarianism; maximising utility; consequentialism; hedonism; quantitative hedonistic utilitarianism; qualitative hedonistic utilitarianism; non-hedonistic utilitarianism; act utilitarianism; rule utilitarianism; fairness; liberty; moral integrity; deontology; good will; duty; hypothetical imperative; categorical imperative; universalisable maxim; contradiction in conception; contradiction in will; eudaimonia; function; virtue; vice; doctrine of the mean; vices of deficiency and excess; habituation; phronesis; voluntary, involuntary and non-voluntary actions; moral realism; moral anti-realism; cognitivism; non-cognitivism; mind independent moral properties; moral naturalism; moral non-naturalism; intuitionism; naturalistic fallacy; open question argument; is-ought gap; moral relativity; verification; analytic; synthetic; emotivism; prescriptivism; moral nihilism.
Super-curricular enrichment and scholarly extension	**Read:** - Books: 'What does it all mean?' by Thomas Nagel; 'Philosophy: Key Themes' by Julian Baggini; 'Ethics' by Piers Benn; 'Being Good' by Simon Blackburn; 'The Moral Philosophers' Richard Norman; 'A Companion to Ethics' Peter Singer (ed.). - Articles from journals/ magazines such as: *Think, The Philosophers' Magazine, Philosophy Now, Dialogue* (links to websites below) - Browse thousands of academic journal articles here: https://philpapers.org/browse/normative-ethics **Watch:** - Royal Institute of Philosophy YouTube Channel: https://www.youtube.com/user/RoyIntPhilosophy - Crash Course Philosophy YouTube Channel: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1A_CAkYt3GY&list=PLUHoo4L8qXthO958RfdrAL8XAHvk5xuu9&index=1 **Listen:** - Philosophy Bites Podcast – listen to top philosophers being interviewed on 'bite-sized' topics, including many discussions on moral philosophy https://nigelwarburton.typepad.com/philosophy_bites/ - Philosophy Now podcasts: https://philosophynow.org/podcasts - History of Philosophy podcasts: https://historyofphilosophy.net/ **Visit:** - Philosophy Department at King's College London: renowned philosophy department that offers lectures, seminars, and workshops on various ethical theories, including deontology, consequentialism and meta-ethics. - Goldsmiths Centre for Philosophy and Critical Thought: offers annual philosophy lectures
Useful websites	• Think (www.royalinstitutephilosophy.org/think/index.php) • The Philosophers' Magazine https://www.philosophersmag.com/ • Philosophy Now https://philosophynow.org/ • *Dialogue* (www.dialogue.org.uk) • 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/ • The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy: https://iep.utm.edu/ • https://www.alevelphilosophy.co.uk/resources/

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