

PHILOSOPHY & RELIGION DEPARTMENT CURRICULUM STATEMENT – 2022-2023

Intent

Our Philosophy and Religion curriculum intends to train well-informed critical thinkers who understand how religious ideas have and do shape the world. Students will have knowledge and understanding of a range of religions and worldviews, recognising their local, national and global context. Building on their prior learning, they learn to appreciate religions and worldviews in systematic ways. Students will develop a wide range of subject specific language and learn to use the concepts of religious study to describe their own world views. Students will understand how beliefs influence the values and lives of individuals and groups, and how religions and worldviews have an impact on wider current affairs. Moreover, students will be able to appraise the practices and beliefs they study with increasing discernment based on analysis, interpretation and evaluation, developing their capacity to articulate well-reasoned positions.

The Philosophy and Religion curriculum teaches our students to engage with the world they live in, to ask questions about human experiences and to begin forming their own views on important religious, philosophical, and ethical issues. Our curriculum provides lessons rich in knowledge and we sequence these in the best order so that students can see how these important ideas link together.

We are passionate in our support of the school's overarching vision; for students to be ACE. We focus on Attainment, supporting students to make rapid progress from each starting point; on Care, encouraging students to lead happy, safe and successful lives; and on Excellence, supporting students to be truly aspirational and to achieve more than they first thought possible.

Years 7-9

The taught curriculum at GWA is allied to the Swindon Schools Agree Syllabus for Religious education 2016-2021 and follows ideas and guidance set out by this where appropriate. We aim to develop six key skills that will help students to be successful in their application of philosophy & religion – knowledge, understanding, explaining the influences beliefs have on practices, using key sources of authority for religions appropriately, evaluating beliefs/practices and expressing their own opinions on the topics studied.

This means that they will be able to:

Apply Knowledge (K1-2):

1. Demonstrate knowledge of key words and use them in the correct context e.g., omniscient, karma, utilitarianism.
2. Be able to identify key factual information about religion/philosophy/ethics

Show Understanding (U3-5):

3. Demonstrate understanding by giving specific details that relate to the beliefs of a religion
4. Demonstrate an understanding of the importance of a belief for a religion
5. Demonstrate an understanding of why religions have certain beliefs

Explain influences (I6-8):

6. Explain how a belief can influence the practice of a religion e.g., Muslims do not want to commit the sin of 'shirk' and so do not draw Allah
7. Explain what has influenced a religious person to think the things they do e.g., culture/time-period

8. Explain specific examples from holy texts and what it teaches a religious believer e.g., the story of Job

Use references to sacred writings (R9-11):

9. Identify relevant quotations from holy texts that relate to topics
10. Give interpretations of the meaning behind the relevant quotation
11. Explain what the quotation teaches a believer and how it might affect behaviour

Evaluate arguments (E12-15):

12. Identify strengths and weaknesses of an argument
13. Explain why an argument is/is not convincing
14. Develop arguments using PEE HEE literacy skills
15. Come to a justified conclusion based on the evidence

Express opinions (O16-18):

16. Be able to give a thoughtful and considered opinion on an issue
17. Use facts/evidence to back up opinions
18. Be able to compare own opinions to those studies

The Key themes / units studied in Years 7 to 9 are:

Year 7:

- **How do concepts of God differ between religions?**
- **What does it mean to belong?**
- **What does religion teach us about how we should treat the environment?**
- **How do believers express their spirituality? (Spirited Arts Competition)**

Year 8

- **How do religions respond to the existence of evil and suffering?**
- **Is there life after death?**
- **Why do believers go on pilgrimages?**
- **How do believers express their spirituality? (Spirited Arts Competition)**

Year 9

- **What is ethics?**
- **What are the main beliefs and practices of Judaism?**
- **How can we think philosophically?**
- **Are alternative religions, still religions?**

We seek to enable students to be confident in their own world views, whilst knowing about other viewpoints. They should be able to show clear understanding of other's views and be able to evaluate ideas and express their opinions on these views appropriately.

Year 10 & 11 and KS5 Assessment objectives seek the same goals and we aim also to prepare students for success at GCSE and beyond. As such, students are challenged to respond to GCSE style questions and skills from the very beginning of KS3 and will receive advice and guidance about how to improve their written answers in line with GCSE success criteria. Through the focus on GCSE criteria all students will develop the essential skills to enable them to complete the GCSE course if they choose to.

Year 10 and 11

Year 10 and 11 will follow the AQA GCSE Syllabus;

- Beliefs and Practices of Christianity

- Beliefs and Practices of Islam
- Theme A – Relationships & Families
- Theme B – Religion & Life
- Theme D – Religion, Peace & Conflict
- Theme E – Religion, Crime & Punishment

This curriculum provides new content alongside a revisiting and deepening of knowledge of content and skills studied previously. The GCSE provides clear progression to A Level through provision of similar approaches to assessment to better ensure a clear, coherent approach from year 7 to year 13 using AQA specifications.

In year 10 and 11 students will specifically be able to:

- apply knowledge and understanding of two religions
- apply knowledge and understanding of key sources of wisdom and authority including scripture and/or sacred texts, where appropriate, which support contemporary religious faith
- understand the influence of religion on individuals, communities, and societies
- understand significant common and divergent views between and/or within religions and beliefs
- apply knowledge and understanding in order to analyse questions related to religious beliefs and values
- construct well-informed and balanced arguments on matters concerned with religious beliefs and values set out in the subject content.

Where necessary, the implementation of the curriculum may involve extra bespoke intervention sessions for students who are not making expected progress.

Year 12 and 13

Studies at KS5 are through the Eduqas Religious Studies A Level. This programme of study challenges students to develop interest in and enthusiasm for Religion, Philosophy and Ethics, and an understanding of its intrinsic value and significance.

- Component 1: A study of religion - Option A – Christianity
- Component 2: Philosophy of Religion
- Component 3: Religion and Ethics

This course will enable students to:

- develop their interest in a rigorous study of religion and belief and relate it to the wider world.
- develop knowledge and understanding appropriate to a specialist study of religion.
- develop an understanding and appreciation of religious thought and its contribution to individuals, communities, and societies.
- adopt an enquiring, critical and reflective approach to the study of religion.
- reflect on and develop their own values, opinions, and attitudes in the light of their study.

In addition, the P&R department is committed to supporting whole school Enterprise Skills. We have planned into our schemes of learning explicit teaching of 'Skills Builder' steps across years 7-11 in all six skills – Teamwork, Leadership, Creativity, Problem Solving, Listening and Presenting.

Skill	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Year 13
Teamwork				Unit 1			
Leadership					Unit 1		
Creativity		Unit 2					
Problem Solving						Ethics Component	Ethics Component
Listening			Unit 2				
Presenting	Unit 4						

Implementation

These schemes of learning are designed to outline what we teach to ensure the intent of our curriculum is delivered across each key stage. In years 7 to 9 planning is based on the P&R Progress Map which is aligned with what is required of students in year 11 and beyond.

Long term overviews:

- Clear links to prior learning (Y7 linked to KS2, Y7 to Y8 and so on)
- Topic outline summarising key content

Medium term plans:

- Root enquiry and key enquiry questions
- Key Knowledge, Skills and Understanding (delivered through know, apply, extend learning objectives/outcomes)
- Duration
- Planned assessment of student progress and impact of taught curriculum
- Assessment and improvement opportunities (DIRT)
- SMSC
- Literacy and Numeracy
- Opportunities to extend learning
- Enterprise skills
- Appropriate challenge and differentiation opportunities

For details on Feedback and Homework please see the separate Humanities policies. The planning and delivery of the curriculum is also modelled below, incorporated into the assessment cycle / plan.

Impact

ONGOING TEACHER ASSESSMENT

Our schemes of learning focus on assessment and improvement opportunities and the P&R Department is committed to providing regular and timely written and verbal feedback in line with the school's policy. This enables ongoing reflection on the impact of the curriculum on student progress.

ENTERPRISE SKILLS

In line with the whole school drive on Enterprise skills, the explicit teaching against 'Skills Builder' steps is measured through students evidencing progress within their tracking tool, with the department leading on chosen skills in each year.

STUDENT SURVEYS

Student voice is utilised to understand the impact of the curriculum. Student voice is collected annually, seeking student feedback on their understanding on their own progress, the curriculum and lesson experiences.

INTERNAL EXAMINATION RESULTS

Students undertake a minimum three key assessments against GCSE success criteria in each year 7-9. At KS4 and 5, assessments are completed on each unit studied. On each occasion, teaching staff evaluate the impact of the curriculum by assessing student progress against stated learning objectives. Formal exams are conducted at the end of each year, offering a further opportunity to assess student progress and make judgements about the impact of the taught curriculum.

EXTERNAL EXAMINATION RESULTS

In year 11 & 13 our results in national examinations will be a clear measure of the impact of the curriculum. These results will be the culmination of a data trail tracking from a student's first term at GWA as part of the school's annual data collection and reporting of progress cycle.

WORK REVIEWS

We learn from the 3 annual whole school led work reviews and conduct our work reviews, moderation & standardisation of exercise books and assessments in a clear cycle of department meetings throughout the year.

IMPACT

MODERATION

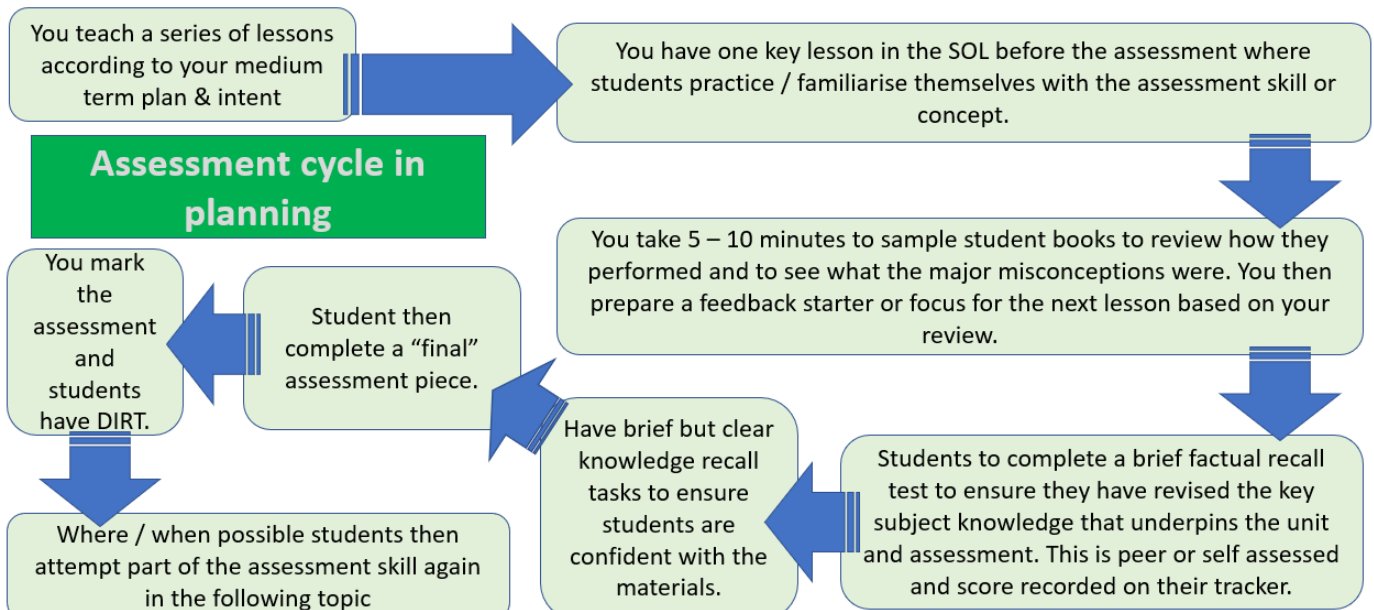
Annual moderation meetings take place within the department to provide quality assurance and better support department wide reflection on the impact of the curriculum. Where possible (and appropriate) opportunities for external moderation with other high performing schools are sought or through exam board network / CPD sessions.

DESTINATIONS

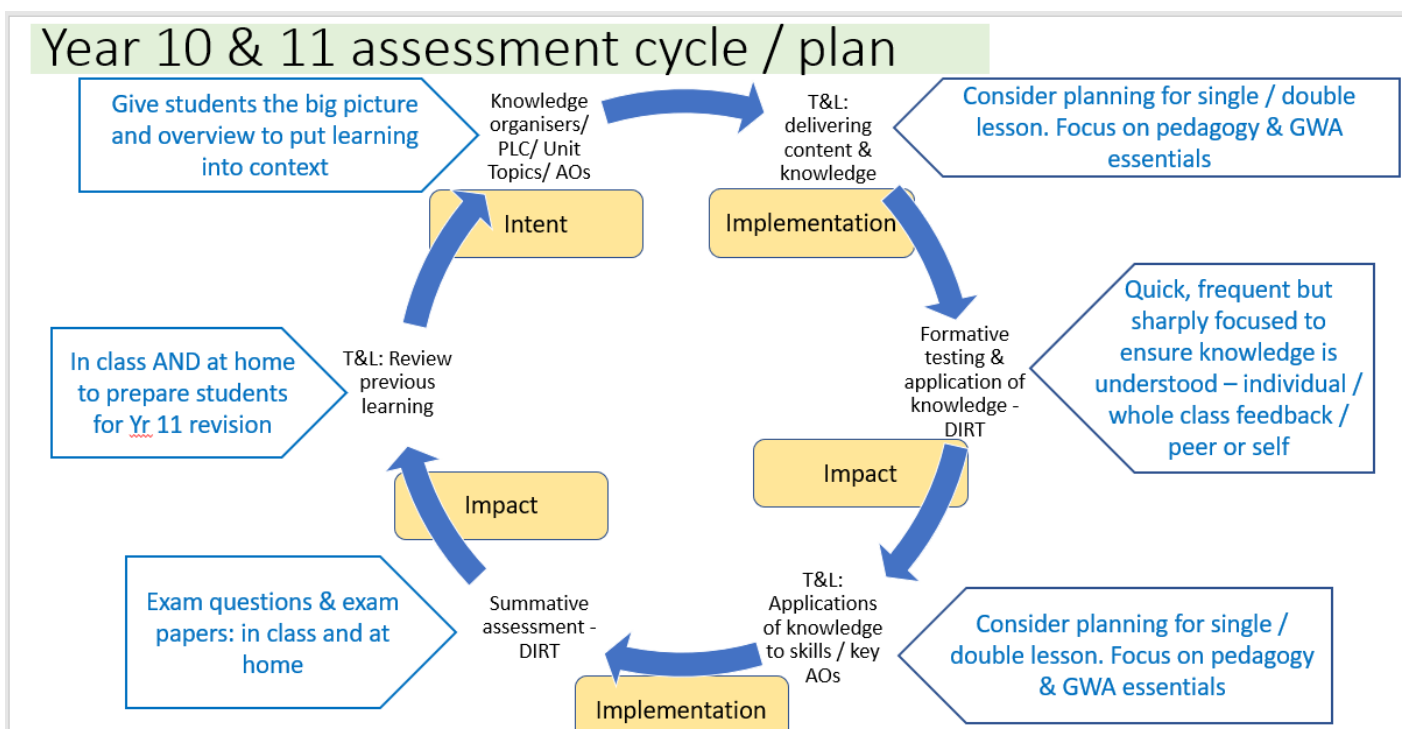
The eventual destinations of students, and the extent to which they are able to lead happy, successful lives, will be the ultimate measure of curriculum impact.

Read the Department Improvement Plan (DIP) completed 3 times a year for more information on the progress of specific individuals, groups of learners and classes. This also contains specific actions and curriculum targets for the year.

Year 7 to 9 curriculum assessment cycle / plan



Year 10 to 11 assessment cycle / plan



Parents and carers have the legal right to withdraw their child from all or part of Religious Education (RE), as outlined in the Education Act 1996. If you are considering this, please contact the school to discuss arrangements – office@gwacademy.co.uk. We are here to support your child's educational journey