

# IB PHILOSOPHY

## Entry Requirement

At least a 6 in GCSE Religious Studies. Boys may study IB Philosophy without having taken GCSE RS, subject to approval by the Head of Department.

## Introduction

The emphasis of IB Philosophy is on 'doing' philosophy. It is an aim of the IB course that students begin as students of philosophy but become young philosophers. Students engage in their own reflection on central philosophical issues using a wide range of sources from philosophical texts to films and novels. A historical approach to philosophy is discouraged and the purpose is to encourage the student's own thinking. Candidates are expected to express their ideas clearly and coherently, using the appropriate philosophical language. They will learn to develop and evaluate philosophical ideas and arguments and analyse a variety of texts and examples. IB Philosophy at both Higher and Standard Level is assessed by written papers and one piece of coursework. Students need no formal background in Religious Studies or Philosophy in order to take the course.

## Syllabus Content and Assessment

### Paper One – Philosophical Themes

Both Higher and Standard Level students study the Core Theme, 'Being Human' which covers issues such as freedom and determinism, the relationship between mind and body and whether animals or machines could be persons.

Higher and Standard Level students also study the additional Ethics Optional Theme; this looks at theories such as utilitarianism, deontological approaches and virtue ethics as well as biomedical issues, environmental issues and animal rights. Pupils taking IB Philosophy at Higher Level study the,

Philosophy of Religion Optional Theme; areas of study include arguments for the existence of God, the problem of evil, religious experience, science and religion and the post-modern view of faith.

### Paper Two – Prescribed Text

All candidates study a prescribed text. The study of classical philosophical texts allows students to broaden their knowledge and understanding of philosophy and engage critically with the arguments presented. The current text for study is *On Liberty* by John Stuart Mill.

### Paper Three – Unseen Text

This paper is for Higher Level candidates only and consists of an unseen text on the nature, function and meaning of philosophical activity to which students are required to write a response. The paper allows students to demonstrate their understanding of what philosophy means through a holistic application of knowledge, skills and ideas developed through the course.

### Coursework

For both Higher and Standard Level candidates, the coursework consists of one 1600 - 2000 word critical philosophical analysis of a non- philosophical stimulus such as a film, novel, poem or work of art.