

Philosophy and Ethics (OCR RS) A Level Wider Reading

Summer Transition work 2025

1. The Course:

The OCR RS A Level (H573) Specification is available to download here:

<https://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/as-and-a-level/religious-studies-h173-h573-from-2016/>

And to browse through here: <https://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/as-and-a-level/religious-studies-h173-h573-from-2016/specification-at-a-glance/>

We study papers 01 (Philosophy), 02 (Ethics) and 03 (Development of Religious Thought - Christianity) over two years. The final exams are comprised of three two hour papers at the end of Year 13.

2. Wider reading:

The aim of wider reading is always to help develop your understanding and your critical reading skills. There is no expectation that you should show evidence of independent wider reading in the exams. The wider reading will benefit you by 'filling in the gaps' in your knowledge, so that you understand the context of the topics and scholars you are studying. The following books are suggested as background reading:

OCR recommended resources: [AS and A Level - Religious Studies - H173, H573 - OCR](#)

The Puzzle of Ethics - Peter Vardy and Paul Grosch

SCM Study Guide to Christian Ethics - Neil Messer

The Puzzle of God - Peter Vardy

The Great Philosophers - Stephen Law

(Chapters on Socrates, Aristotle, Augustine, Thomas Aquinas, William of Ockham, Renee Descartes, David Hume, Immanuel Kant, Jeremy Bentham, Soren Kierkegaard, Karl Marx, George Edward Moore, Ludwig Wittgenstein, Gilbert Ryle, Simone de Beauvoir, A J Ayer, Peter Singer)

The Complete Philosophy Files - Stephen Law
(Files 4, 6, 7 and 8)

Sophie's World (Fiction) - Jostein Gaarder

3. Wider listening:

The Panpsycast – A podcast which shadows the OCR Philosophy, Ethics and Theology course specifically. Although the first few podcasts are not as good as the later ones, they should be your first 'port of call' for independent preparation and/or review of topics:

<https://thepanpsycast.com/home>

<https://thepanpsycast.com/episodes-by-category>

To help with your critical reasoning, these BBC podcasts will help you see how people create and criticise arguments, and then draw reasoned conclusions:

Sweet Reason <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b0bclfsr/episodes/downloads> this debating programme sets out various arguments then comes to a judgement.

Morality in the 21st Century <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b0bh7jkg/episodes/player> this programme listens to various informed views, then engages 6th formers in debate and listens to their judgements.

4. Wider research:

Philosopher Kings - <http://www.philosopherkings.co.uk/> this website is good for stretch and challenge. It is very detailed and if you wish to research topics or scholars in more detail this is a great place to start. It is NOT specific to our current Specification, it has been in existence since before the specifications were renewed in 2016, and some of the content reflects this.

5. Revision guides:

There is a growing number of revision guides to help you get the most out of targeted revision:

My Revision Notes published by Hodder – a set of three revision guides:

https://www.amazon.co.uk/s?k=my+revision+notes+rs+ocr+a+level&i=stripbooks&ref=nb_sb_noss

or [https://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/subjects/religious-education-philosophy/products/16-18/ocr-a-level-religious-studies-religion-and-eth-\(1\)](https://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/subjects/religious-education-philosophy/products/16-18/ocr-a-level-religious-studies-religion-and-eth-(1))

There is also a revision guide by Libby Ahluwalia:

https://www.amazon.co.uk/OxfordLevelReligiousStudiesRevision/dp/0198423756/ref=sr_1_1?keywords=rs+ocr+a+level+revision+guide&qid=1560100893&s=books&sr=1-1

TEXT BOOKS - You may find it helpful to buy a copy of the following text books:

Year 1 - Oxford A Level Religious Studies for OCR: AS and Year 1 Student Book:

Christianity, Philosophy and Ethics Paperback – published 1 Jun 2016

by Libby Ahluwalia and Bob Bowie

Year 2 - Oxford A Level Religious Studies for OCR: Year 2 Student Book:

Christianity, Philosophy and Ethics Paperback – published 1 Mar 2017

by Libby Ahluwalia and Bob Bowie

These do not have to be brand new, they can be second hand. In Year 12 you will only need the Year 1 book.

Summer Transition Work

Your job is to use some of these resources and any others you find out about the following:

1. Try to write a summary paragraph about each of the following people, what did they think about how we should behave?

Immanuel Kant

Jospeh Fletcher

Jeremy Bentham

Johnn Stuart Mill

Plato and Aristotle

St. Thomas Aquinas

David Hume

2. Create a glossary of the following terms:

Meta-ethics

Relativism

Absolute morality

Subjectivism

Objectivism

Utilitarianism

Natural Law

Kantian ethics

Natural law

A posteriori

A priori

Rationalism

Empiricism

Inductive arguments

Deductive arguments