

SUBJECT: PHILOSOPHY IB HIGHER

**HEAD OF DEPARTMENT:
MR A SUTHERLAND**

**HEAD OF SUBJECT:
MR R SAULL**

**SYLLABUS NUMBER:
N/A**

SYNOPSIS OF CONTENT

Core theme

This covers questions like ‘What is a person?’ ‘What is the difference between animals, humans and machines?’ The ideas of Plato, Kierkegaard, Descartes, Sartre and existentialism, scientific understandings of what it means to be a human being (e.g. Dawkins), and do we have a soul? I.e. the Big Questions!

Philosophy of Religion

What does the word God mean? Traditional proofs of God’s existence, the problem of evil, religious experience as a proof of God, religious language, how faith motivates life, the post-modern view of faith, religion and politics.

Epistemology

Questions of knowledge: What do we mean when we say we *know* something? How do we know that reality is as it appears?

Philosophical texts

An in-depth study of the *Meditations* of Descartes.

Unseen text

Debate over what it means to “be philosophical”. What are the best methods to study philosophy? Furthermore, what IS philosophy?

SKILLS THAT WILL BE DEVELOPED

- The ability to explain one’s own view and those of others.
- The ability to read and internalise source material, i.e. philosophical texts.
- The ability to analyse and evaluate complex ideas, producing a reasoned conclusion and justifying your arguments.

The emphasis is on doing philosophy and thinking about things for yourself, with help from philosophers from the past!

SOME USEFUL WEBSITES

There are many. Here are just a few:

www.philosophypages.com
www.diryahoo.com/Arts/Humanities/philosophy
www.philosophynow.org
<http://www.philosophybites.com/>
<http://www.thebookoflife.org/>

A number of IB past exam papers can be found at:
www.freeexampapers.com/past

ASSESSMENT

For the Higher students there will be three papers:

1. Core theme + Philosophy of Religion + Epistemology. (2h 30m; 40%).
2. Set text paper: the *Meditations* of Descartes. (1h; 20%).
3. Unseen text on what it is to do philosophy. (1h 15m; 20%).

There is also an Internal Assessment which is worth 20% of the final grade.

SPECIFIC MATRICULATION REQUIREMENTS

In addition to the Sixth Form matriculation requirements, students are required to have at least one GCSE grade B or above in a Humanities subject. Religious Studies at GCSE is good preparation for this course, but other Humanities subjects are also relevant. As there are essay writing skills, a grade 6 or above in English is advisable.

OTHER INFORMATION

Eg Field Trips/expenses/books

There are unlikely to be any compulsory extra expenses. Students are supplied with relevant text books.