



A Level Religious Studies– Euthanasia



West Kirby
Grammar School

Learning about this topic is important because: Euthanasia raises questions about the sanctity and quality of life, autonomy, human dignity and the role of religious and secular ethical theories in decision-making. Studying euthanasia enables students to apply ethical theories to real-life situations and evaluate competing moral arguments.

This builds on : GCSE studies of ethics and morality. Christian moral principles and the sanctity of life. Natural Law, Situation Ethics, Utilitarianism and Kantian Ethics. Conscience and moral decision-making. Issues surrounding rights, autonomy and human dignity.

We will learn:

- Definitions and types of euthanasia: Voluntary euthanasia, Non-voluntary euthanasia.
- Arguments for and against euthanasia.
- The sanctity of life and quality of life debate.
- Religious approaches to euthanasia.
- Secular approaches to euthanasia.
- The role of autonomy and personal choice.
- Application of Natural Law and Situation Ethics to euthanasia.
- The doctrine of double effect.

We will discuss:

- the application of Kantian ethics and utilitarianism to business ethics
- whether or not the concept of corporate social responsibility is nothing more than 'hypocritical window-dressing' covering the greed of a business intent on making profits
- whether or not human beings can flourish in the context of capitalism and consumerism
- whether globalisation encourages or discourages the pursuit of good ethics as the foundation of good business

Some of the vocabulary that we will use includes:

euthanasia ,voluntary euthanasia, non-voluntary euthanasia, involuntary euthanasia, active euthanasia, passive euthanasia, assisted suicide, sanctity of life, quality of life, autonomy, human dignity, doctrine of double effect, ordinary means, extraordinary means, personhood, beneficence, non-maleficence, palliative care, Hospice movement

We will develop/practise skills including:AO1 – Knowledge and Understanding

- Demonstrate detailed knowledge and understanding of religious and secular approaches to euthanasia and scholarship.
- Apply ethical theories and theological principles to contemporary issues.

AO2 – Analysis and Evaluation

- Analyse and evaluate arguments and interpretations.
- Compare religious and secular approaches to euthanasia.
- Assess strengths, weaknesses and scholarly criticisms.
- Develop reasoned, evidence-based judgements and justified conclusions.

You could learn more about this topic by reading:

Glover, J. (1977) Causing Death and Saving Life, London: Penguin Books, Chapters 14 and 15
Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (5th May 1980) Declaration on Euthanasia
Singer, P. (1995) Rethinking Life and Death: The Collapse of our Traditional Ethics, Oxford: OUP, Chapter 7
Rachels, J and S. The elements of moral philosophy.



A Level Religious Studies–Kantian Ethics



West Kirby
Grammar School

Learning about this topic is important because: Kantian Ethics is a key deontological ethical theory on the OCR specification. It explores the role of duty, reason and universal moral principles in ethical decision-making and provides an alternative to consequentialist approaches.

This builds on : GCSE ethics and Christian moral teachings. Deontological and teleological ethics. Ideas about reason, free will and moral responsibility.

We will learn:

- Immanuel Kant's ethical theory and the role of reason.
- The good will and duty.
- The categorical imperative and its formulations:

The Formula of Universal Law.

The Formula of Humanity as an End.

- Hypothetical and categorical imperatives.
- Summum bonum and the postulates.
- Strengths and weaknesses of Kantian Ethics.

We will discuss

• whether or not Kantian ethics provides a helpful method of moral decision-making • whether or not an ethical judgement about something being good, bad, right or wrong can be based on the extent to which duty is best served • whether or not Kantian ethics is too abstract to be applicable to practical moral decision-making • whether or not Kantian ethics is so reliant on reason that it unduly rejects the importance of other factors, such as sympathy, empathy and love in moral decision-making

We will develop/practise skills including:

AO1 – Knowledge and Understanding

- Demonstrate detailed knowledge and understanding of Kantian Ethics and scholarship.
- Explain key concepts and use specialist terminology accurately.
- Apply ethical theories to contemporary issues.

AO2 – Analysis and Evaluation

- Analyse and evaluate arguments and interpretations.
- Compare Kantian Ethics with alternative ethical theories.
- Assess strengths, weaknesses, and scholarly criticisms.
- Develop reasoned, evidence-based judgements and justified conclusions.
- Communicate balanced arguments clearly and logically.

Some of the vocabulary that we will use includes:

Duty, good will, reason, categorical imperative, hypothetical imperative, universalisation, humanity as an end, autonomy, summum bonum, postulates.

You could learn more about this topic by reading:

Pojman, L. (2012) Discovering Right and Wrong, Stamford: Wadsworth, Chapter 8
Warburton, N. (2014). Philosophy the Classics. Routledge - has a good chapter summarising Kant's groundwork in a few brief pages.
Kant Groundwork of the Metaphysic of Morals, Chapter 2
O'Neill, O. 'Kantian Approaches to Some Famine Problems' in ed. Shafer Landau, R. (2013) Ethical Theory: An Anthology, Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell



A Level Religious Studies– Meta Ethics



West Kirby
Grammar School

Learning about this topic is important because: Meta-ethics investigates the meaning of ethical language and whether moral statements can be objectively true. It develops philosophical thinking and underpins many debates in ethics.

This builds on: Normative ethical theories. Philosophical approaches to truth and meaning. Moral language and ethical decision-making.

We will learn:

- The distinction between normative ethics and meta-ethics.
- Naturalism and the ideas of F.H. Bradley.
- Intuitionism and the ideas of G.E. Moore.
- Emotivism and the ideas of A.J. Ayer.
- The nature of moral language.
- Strengths and weaknesses of each approach.
- Comparisons between cognitive and non-cognitive theories.

We will discuss:

• whether or not what is meant by the word 'good' is the defining question in the study of ethics • whether or not ethical terms such as good, bad, right and wrong: o have an objective factual basis that makes them true or false in describing something o reflect only what is in the mind of the person using such terms o can be said to be meaningful or meaningless • whether or not, from a common sense approach, people just know within themselves what is good, bad, right and wrong

We will develop/practise skills including:

AO1 – Knowledge and Understanding

- Demonstrate detailed knowledge and understanding of meta-ethical theories and scholarship.
- Explain key concepts and use specialist terminology accurately.
- Apply philosophical concepts to ethical issues.
- Select and organise relevant material to develop coherent lines of argument.

AO2 – Analysis and Evaluation

- Analyse and evaluate arguments and interpretations.
- Compare cognitive and non-cognitive approaches.
- Assess strengths, weaknesses and scholarly criticisms.
- Develop reasoned, evidence-based judgements and justified conclusions.
- Communicate balanced arguments clearly and logically.

Some of the vocabulary that we will use includes:

Naturalism, intuitionism, emotivism, cognitive, non-cognitive, objective, subjective, verification principle, ethical language, intuition.

You could learn more about this topic by reading:

Bowie, R. (2004). Ethical Studies. Nelson Thornes.
Mackie, J. L. (1991). Ethics: Inventing Right and Wrong. Penguin Books. Chapter 1
Moore, G.E. (1903) Principia Ethica, Chapter II
Ayer, A.J. (1936) Language, Truth and Logic, London: Victor Gollancz, Chapter 6



A Level Religious Studies– Natural Law



West Kirby
Grammar School

Learning about this topic is important because: Natural Law is a foundational deontological ethical theory which explores whether morality is based on reason, human nature and God's purpose. It provides a framework for evaluating moral issues and has influenced Christian ethics and modern debates.

This builds on: GCSE ethics and Christian teachings. Teleological and deontological ethics. Concepts of reason, conscience and moral decision-making.

We will learn:

- Aristotle's understanding of purpose and the four causes.
- Aquinas' development of Natural Law.
- Eternal Law, Divine Law, Natural Law and Human Law.
- Primary and secondary precepts.
- Real and apparent goods.
- Interior and exterior acts.
- The doctrine of double effect.
- Strengths and weaknesses of Natural Law.

We will discuss:

- whether or not natural law provides a helpful method of moral decision-making
- whether or not a judgement about something being good, bad, right or wrong can be based on its success or failure in achieving its telos
- whether or not the universe as a whole is designed with a telos, or human nature has an orientation towards the good
- whether or not the doctrine of double effect can be used to justify an action, such as killing someone as an act of self-defence

AO1 – Knowledge and Understanding

- Demonstrate detailed knowledge and understanding of Natural Law and scholarship.
- Explain key concepts and use specialist terminology accurately.
- Apply ethical theories to contemporary issues.
- Select and organise relevant material to develop coherent lines of argument.

AO2 – Analysis and Evaluation

- Analyse and evaluate arguments and interpretations.
- Compare Natural Law with alternative ethical theories.
- Assess strengths, weaknesses and scholarly criticisms.
- Develop reasoned, evidence-based judgements and justified conclusions.
- Communicate balanced arguments clearly and logically.

Some of the vocabulary that we will use includes:

Telos, eudaimonia, primary precepts, secondary precepts, synderesis, real goods, apparent goods, doctrine of double effect, deontological, interior acts, exterior acts.

You could learn more about this topic by reading:

Aquinas, Summa Theologica I-II (93–95)

Aristotle Physics II 3

Catechism of the Catholic Church 1954–1960

Ahluwalia, L. and Bowie, R. (2016) Oxford A Level Religious Studies for OCR (AS and Year 1). OUP Oxford.

Bowie, R. (2004). Ethical Studies. Nelson Thornes.

<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/aquinas-moral-political/>



A Level Religious Studies– Situation Ethics



West Kirby
Grammar School

Learning about this topic is important because: Situation Ethics is a prescribed normative ethical theory on the OCR A Level specification. It explores whether moral decisions should be guided by universal rules or by agape (self-giving love) in particular situations, developing critical thinking and evaluative judgement.

This builds on. Prior learning about Christian ethics, moral decision-making, deontological and teleological ethics, and GCSE work on ethical theories and religious teachings.

We will learn:

- The origins and context of Situation Ethics.
- Joseph Fletcher's theory and the centrality of agape.
- The four working principles: pragmatism, relativism, positivism and personalism.
- The six fundamental principles.
- Conscience
- How Situation Ethics applies to contemporary moral issues.
- Scholarly strengths, weaknesses and comparisons with Natural Law, Kantian Ethics and Utilitarianism.

We will consider issues raised including:

Is situation ethics a helpful method of moral decision making?

Can agape be the basis for moral ethical decision making?

Is Fletcher's understanding of agape religious or just wanting the best for the person in an individual situation?

Does the rejection of absolutes mean that moral decision making is individualistic and subjective?

Some of the vocabulary that we will use includes:

Agape, teleological, pragmatism, relativism, positivism, personalism, legalism, antinomianism, intrinsic good, conscience, normative ethics.

We will develop/practise skills including:

AO1 (Knowledge and Understanding)

- Explain key concepts, principles and terminology accurately.
- Demonstrate knowledge of Joseph Fletcher and relevant scholarship.
- Apply Situation Ethics to ethical scenarios.

AO2 (Analysis and Evaluation)

- Analyse the effectiveness of Situation Ethics in addressing moral issues.
- Compare Situation Ethics with other normative theories.
- Evaluate strengths, weaknesses and scholarly criticisms.
- Construct balanced arguments and reach justified conclusions supported by evidence.

You could learn more about this topic by: Glover, J. (1990) Causing Death and Saving Lives. Chapter 14.15 Rachels, J and S. The elements of moral philosophy. Singer, P. (1995). Rethinking Life and Death: The Collapse of our Traditional Ethics. Oxford. Chapter 7. My Revision Notes: Ethics and Religion (Eyre & Waterfield) (due February 2018). Chapter 5 Ahluwalia, L. and Bowie, R. (2016) Oxford A Level Religious Studies for OCR (AS and Year 1). OUP Oxford. Wilkinson, M., Wilcockson, M., and Campbell, H. (2016) OCR A Level Year 1, Hodder Education



A Level Religious Studies– Sexual Ethics



West Kirby
Grammar School

Learning about this topic is important because: Sexual ethics explores contemporary issues surrounding relationships and human sexuality and evaluates how ethical theories and religious beliefs influence moral decisions.

This builds on: Christian ethics. Normative ethical theories. Human relationships and moral responsibility.

We will learn:

- consideration of the following areas of sexual ethics:
 - premarital and extramarital sex
 - homosexuality
- the influence of developments in religious beliefs and practices on debates about the morality, legality and tolerability of these areas of sexual ethics
- application of the following theories to these areas of sexual ethics:
 - natural law, situation ethics, Kantian ethics, utilitarianism

We will discuss:

whether or not religious beliefs and practices concerning sex and relationships have a continuing role in the area of sexual ethics • whether choices in the area of sexual behaviour should be entirely private and personal, or whether they should be subject to societal norms and legislation • whether normative theories are useful in what they might say about sexual ethics

We will develop/practise skills including:

AO1 – Knowledge and Understanding

- Demonstrate detailed knowledge and understanding of religious and ethical approaches.
- Explain key concepts and use specialist terminology accurately.

- Apply ethical theories to contemporary issues.

AO2 – Analysis and Evaluation

- Analyse and evaluate arguments and interpretations.
- Compare religious, secular and different ethical perspectives.
- Assess strengths, weaknesses and scholarly criticisms.
- Develop reasoned, evidence-based judgements and justified conclusions.
- Communicate balanced arguments clearly and logically.

Some of the vocabulary that we will use includes:

Natural Law, Situation Ethics, Kantian Ethics, Utilitarianism, marriage, chastity, fidelity, agape, secularisation, autonomy, sexual ethics.

You could learn more about this topic by reading:

Pope Paul VI (1968) *Humanae Vitae*
Church of England House of Bishops (1991) *Issues in Human Sexuality*, London: Church House Publishing
Mill, J.S. (1859) *On Liberty*, Chapter 1
Ahluwalia, L & Bowie, R. (2017). *Oxford A Level Religious Studies for OCR: Year 2 Student Book*. OUP Oxford. (A Level and Year 2)
Oliphant, J. (2014). *OCR Religious Ethics for AS and A2*.



A Level Religious Studies–Utilitarianism



West Kirby
Grammar School

Learning about this topic is important because: Utilitarianism develops understanding of moral decision-making based on consequences and the pursuit of the greatest happiness. Studying Utilitarianism enables students to critically assess competing approaches to ethics and apply ethical theories to contemporary issues. .

This builds on : GCSE studies of ethics and morality. Prior understanding of teleological and deontological ethics. Christian ethical teachings and moral decision-making. Earlier work on conscience, free will and responsibility. Analytical and evaluative skills developed in previous units.

We will learn:

- The origins and historical context of Utilitarianism.
- Bentham's Act Utilitarianism and the Hedonic Calculus.
- Mill's Rule Utilitarianism, higher and lower pleasures, and sanctions.
- Preference Utilitarianism and the ideas of Peter Singer.
- The concepts of utility, pleasure and happiness.
- Applications of Utilitarianism to moral dilemmas and contemporary issues.
- Strengths and weaknesses of Utilitarianism.
- Scholarly criticisms and responses.

We will discuss:

whether or not utilitarianism provides a helpful method of moral decision-making •
whether or not an ethical judgement about something being good, bad, right or wrong
can be based on the extent to which, in any given situation, utility is best served •
whether or not it is possible to measure good or pleasure and then reach a moral
decision

We will develop/practise skills including:

AO1 – Knowledge and Understanding

- Demonstrate detailed knowledge and understanding of Utilitarianism and scholarship.
- Explain key concepts and use specialist terminology accurately.
- Apply ethical theories to contemporary issues.
- Select and organise relevant material to develop coherent lines of argument.

AO2 – Analysis and Evaluation

- Analyse and evaluate arguments and interpretations.
- Compare Utilitarianism with alternative ethical theories.
- Assess strengths, weaknesses and scholarly criticisms.
- Develop reasoned, evidence-based judgements and justified conclusions.
- Communicate balanced arguments clearly and logically.

Some of the vocabulary that we will use includes:

Utilitarianism, consequentialism, teleological ethics ,Principle of utility, greatest happiness principle ,Hedonic calculus, act Utilitarianism, rule Utilitarianism, preference

You could learn more about this topic by reading,;

Bentham, J. (1789) An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation , Mill, J.S. (1863) Utilitarianism
Singer, P. (1993) Practical Ethics, Pojman, L. (2012) Discovering Right and Wrong, Chapter 7



A Level Religious Studies– Business Ethics



West Kirby
Grammar School

Learning about this topic is important because: Business ethics considers how ethical theories can be applied to economic and commercial issues. It explores the responsibilities of individuals and corporations and the relationship between profit and morality.

This builds on: Normative ethical theories. Justice, responsibility and moral decision-making. Contemporary ethical issues.

We will learn:

- Corporate social responsibility.
- Whistleblowing.
- Good ethics and good business.
- Globalisation and ethical responsibilities.
- Ethical approaches to profit and employment.
- Utilitarian, Kantian perspectives.
- Strengths and weaknesses of ethical approaches to business.

We will discuss:

• the application of Kantian ethics and utilitarianism to business ethics • whether or not the concept of corporate social responsibility is nothing more than 'hypocritical window-dressing' covering the greed of a business intent on making profits • whether or not human beings can flourish in the context of capitalism and consumerism • whether globalisation encourages or discourages the pursuit of good ethics as the foundation of good business.

Some of the vocabulary that we will use includes:

Corporate social responsibility, whistleblowing, stakeholder, profit, globalisation, ethical investment, sustainability, justice, rights.

We will develop/practise skills including:

AO1 – Knowledge and Understanding

- Demonstrate detailed knowledge and understanding of business ethics and scholarship.
- Explain key concepts and use specialist terminology accurately.
- Apply ethical theories to business issues.
- Select and organise relevant material to develop coherent lines of argument.

AO2 – Analysis and Evaluation

- Analyse and evaluate arguments and interpretations.
- Compare ethical approaches to business issues.
- Assess strengths, weaknesses and scholarly criticisms.
- Develop reasoned, evidence-based judgements and justified conclusions.
- Communicate balanced arguments clearly and logically.

You could learn more about this topic by reading:

Friedman, M. (September 13, 1970) 'The Social Responsibility of Business is to Increase its Profits', in The New York Times Magazine, The New York Times Company Crane,



A Level Religious Studies– Business Ethics



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A. & Matten, D. (2003) Business Ethics, Oxford: OUP

Ahluwalia, L. and Bowie, R. (2016) Oxford A Level Religious Studies for OCR (AS and Year 1). OUP Oxford.

Wilkinson, M., Wilcockson, M., and Campbell, H. (2016) OCR A Level Year 1, Hodder Education.

Wilcockson, M (2010) Social Ethics. Hodder Education

<http://www.ftse.com/products/downloads/F4G-Index-Inclusion-Rules.pdf>



A Level Religious Studies– Conscience



West Kirby
Grammar School

Learning about this topic is important because: The concept of conscience explores how individuals make moral decisions and whether conscience is innate, rational or socially conditioned. It links ethics with religious beliefs and human psychology.

This builds on: Ethical theories and moral reasoning. Christian teachings. Ideas concerning free will and responsibility.

We will learn:

- Psychological understandings of conscience:
- Freud's concepts of id, ego and superego.
- Religious understandings of Aquinas and synderesis.
- The role of reason and conscience.
- Conscience as an innate moral guide.
- Strengths and weaknesses of different understandings.
- Applications to ethical decision-making.

We will discuss:

comparison between Aquinas and Freud: on the concept of guilt - on the presence or absence of God within the workings of the conscience and super-ego - on the process of moral decision-making • whether conscience is linked to, or separate from, reason and the unconscious mind • whether conscience exists at all or is instead an umbrella term covering various factors involved in moral decision-making, such as culture, environment, genetic predisposition and education.

We will develop/practise skills including:

AO1 – Knowledge and Understanding

- Demonstrate detailed knowledge and understanding of theories of conscience and scholarship.
- Explain key concepts and use specialist terminology accurately.
- Apply theories of conscience to ethical issues.
- Select and organise relevant material to develop coherent lines of argument.

AO2 – Analysis and Evaluation

- Analyse and evaluate arguments and interpretations.
- Compare psychological and religious understandings.
- Assess strengths, weaknesses and scholarly criticisms.
- Develop reasoned, evidence-based judgements and justified conclusions.

Some of the vocabulary that we will use includes:

Conscience, synderesis, ratio, id, ego, superego, innate, reason, moral decision-making, moral awareness.

You could learn more about this topic by reading:

Aquinas, Summa Theologica I–I 79, Freud, S. The Ego and the Id, Fromm, E. (1947) Man for Himself: An Inquiry into the Psychology of Ethics London: Routledge, IV.2
Strohm, P. (2011) Conscience: A Very Short Introduction, Oxford University Press, Chapters 1 and 3
<http://www.iep.utm.edu/freud/>
Ahluwalia, L & Bowie, R. (2017). Oxford A Level Religious Studies for OCR: Year 2 Student Book. OUP Oxford. (A Level and Year 2)