

<p>What will I study?</p>	<p>A Level (Philosophy, Ethics and Religion), Eduqas specification</p> <p>This is a 2-year course which focuses on the 3 key elements of Religion and Ethics, The Philosophy of Religion and the study of Buddhism. The course develops the skills needed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate ultimate questions such as “Who is responsible for the existence of evil in our world?”, “Is there a God?” and considers the relationship between religion and psychology. • Understand contemporary ethical and religious issues such as animal experimentation, and whether our behaviour is based upon our own self-interest. Ask questions such as, “What kind of person should I be?” and “What does it really mean for an action to be ‘right’ or ‘wrong’?” • Study Buddhism and consider its main themes including: What is the root cause of human suffering? How can we live more mindfully and develop compassion for all beings? What happens when we die? <p>Grades needed: College level 3 entry requirements, plus English Language grade 5</p>
<p>Who teaches this course?</p>	
<p>What resources or equipment will I need?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A4 paper (lined) • A4 ring binder with dividers • Writing equipment (pens etc) • Highlighters • Record cards/revision materials
<p>Reading List</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Problems of Philosophy, Bertrand Russell • The God Delusion, Richard Dawkins • Philosophy, a guide through the subject, A.C Grayling • Being Good, Simon Blackburn • Practical Ethics, Peter Singer • The puzzle of God, Peter Vardy (1999)
<p>How can I extend my learning?</p>	<p>This is a TED talk by Nigerian novelist Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie – Why we should all be feminists. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hg3umXU_qWc</p> <p>Watch it and enjoy it 😊</p> <p>Here are a few others you could try:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TED talk by Kwame Anthony Appiah – is religion good or bad? (This is a trick question) • Listen to ‘The Moral Maze’ on BBC Radio 4 • Listen to the podcast from ‘Philosophy Now’. • Listen to the podcast from ‘The Panpsycast’

Taster Activity: To be completed and brought to your first lesson

Resources needed to complete the activity:	Pens – ideally red and green
Estimated time to complete the activity:	3-5 hours

Scenario:	My <u>initial/instant</u> response to this:	Apply one philosophical perspective to the scenario – what would the <i>utilitarian/Kantian/Aristotelian</i> say?	Apply one psychological perspective/theory/study – what does this suggest about how our decision making is affected?	My <u>reasoned</u> response to this scenario is:
1 You catch your best friend cheating in an important exam. Reporting them may get them expelled. Keeping quiet may compromise your integrity and make you feel uncomfortable. What do you do?				

<p>2</p> <p>A father steals food to feed his starving children. Should he be punished?</p>				
<p>3</p> <p>You are part of a school committee selecting a student for a scholarship. Two candidates are shortlisted:</p> <p>Alex: A top performer from your own school, well-known and liked by staff and students.</p> <p>Samira: A student from a neighbouring school with slightly stronger academic credentials, but who you've never met. She wears religious clothing that some committee members find unfamiliar.</p> <p>Despite Samira's superior qualifications, some on the panel argue that Alex "fits better" and would "represent the school well."</p> <p>Who should get the scholarship?</p>				

The Moral Mind Lab: Resource Pack

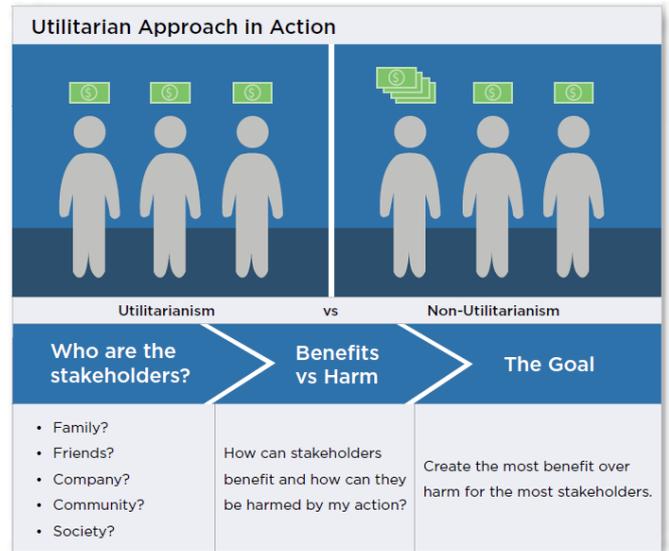
Ethical Theories Overview

Utilitarianism

Developed by Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill, utilitarianism holds that the best action is the one that maximizes happiness or well-being for the greatest number of people. Decisions are judged solely by their consequences on happiness – the more people made happy by an action, the better. Happiness is the most valuable thing, and humans and animals naturally pursue pleasure and avoid pain.

Kantian Ethics (Deontology)

Immanuel Kant's deontological ethics argues that actions are morally right if they follow a set of rules or duties, regardless of the consequences. A



key principle is the 'Categorical Imperative': act only according to maxims (principles) that you would 'will' to become universal laws (laws that everyone would apply to everyone equally, including yourself!) An action cannot be morally good if it cannot be 'willed' that everyone does it. Essentially, if everyone were to do X, and the consequences would be bad overall, then action X is always wrong. This means that actions are either good or bad in themselves; once we have determined that an action is

Concept of Duty

- Duty is what you ought to do
- We have a moral obligation to perform certain actions
- We have freewill to follow our duty and can work it out through reason.
- Doing what is right for no other reason than because it is good/ the right thing to do (regardless of consequences)
- As long as you do your duty you are morally blameless.
- Duty is discovered through the categorical imperative.

Importance of following duty for duty's sake:

- no emotion
- personal gain
- no authority command

- Using emotions e.g. Kindness/ generosity not wrong just NOT moral = amoral.
- Only type of morality = morals that follow duty.

"Duty involves freely choosing the action"

morally wrong it is **absolutely wrong** in all circumstances.



Virtue Ethics

Rooted in the work of Aristotle, virtue ethics focuses on the character of the moral agent rather than rules or outcomes. A virtuous person demonstrates traits like honesty, courage, and compassion, aiming for a balanced life avoiding extremes (Aristotle referred to this as the 'Golden Mean')

Psychological Concepts and Theories

Kohlberg's Stages of Moral Development

Lawrence Kohlberg proposed six stages of moral development, grouped into three levels:

1. Pre-conventional (obedience and self-interest)
2. Conventional (conformity and law/order)
3. Post-conventional (social contract and universal ethics)

Individuals move from simple punishment-avoidance to principled reasoning over time.

COGNITIVE DISSONANCE THEORY

Cognitive dissonance is an internal conflict that occurs in a person when they hold two conflicting beliefs simultaneously.

DEFINITION	EXAMPLE
Cognitive dissonance theory states that our minds go through a process of confusion and logical conflict called cognitive dissonance when faced with new information that conflicts with existing information. We aim to resolve this to return to a state of cognitive equilibrium.	Smoking vs. Health: Smoking is generally known to be harmful to health, yet people continue to smoke despite this knowledge. It presents a cognitive dissonance for the smoker who must accept that their behavior contradicts their beliefs about health and well-being.

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Cognitive Dissonance

A theory by Leon Festinger stating that people experience psychological discomfort when they hold two conflicting beliefs or when their behavior conflicts with their values. To reduce dissonance, they may change their beliefs or justify behavior.

Milgram's Obedience Experiment

Stanley Milgram's 1961 study demonstrated how ordinary people could obey authority figures to the extent of harming others. It revealed the power of social roles and obedience, raising ethical concerns about human behavior and responsibility.



Bystander Effect

A social psychological phenomenon where individuals are less likely to offer help in an emergency when other people are present. It highlights diffusion of responsibility and social influence on ethical



Cognitive Biases in Moral Reasoning

- **Confirmation Bias** – Seeking evidence that confirms pre-existing beliefs
- **Authority Bias** – Deferring to authority figures even when unethical
- **In-group Bias** – Favouring those perceived as part of one's group
- **Emotional Reasoning** – Making moral decisions based on emotions rather than logic