



CHELTENHAM
LADIES'
COLLEGE

SIXTH FORM ENTRY IN SEPTEMBER 2026

IB PHILOSOPHY

Candidates are not expected to have any specific area of subject knowledge for Philosophy. Students may have covered different material in their previous education, and we are aware that some candidates will have never studied Philosophy. The paper consists of open-ended essay questions, with much choice offered, allowing plenty of scope for the candidates to draw on their particular learning and interest. It is of most importance that candidates can respond reflectively to philosophical questions and answers should go beyond mere speculation and opinion. Reading some philosophy, of any sort, before the exam would be beneficial. Candidates will be expected to use their own ideas, coupled with any knowledge they may have, to construct an argument. The most successful candidates will show an appreciation for different approaches to a philosophical question, and will be able to show strengths and weaknesses of key ideas. The ability to evaluate different viewpoints is essential.

Some candidates will have done some philosophical thinking in their Religious Studies courses, but this will not be assumed.

Topic areas most frequently covered (this list is not exhaustive):

- Philosophy of Religion e.g. the existence of God
- Moral philosophy e.g. making decisions about what is right and wrong
- Epistemology – how we know what we know. How secure is our knowledge?
- Free will
- Questions of personhood

We will be looking for

- a reasonable range of knowledge – but it is appreciated that previous learning will vary greatly between candidates.
- the ability to analyse and consider ideas in depth
- reasoning ability
- the ability to construct a formal essay
- understanding of how to construct an argument and draw conclusions based on evidence
- reflection on the strengths and weaknesses of ideas
- original thinking