



AS / A2 Critical Thinking (Level 3)

WHY TAKE THIS COURSE?

Critical Thinking provides opportunities to develop deeper thinking skills, evaluate information and arguments, whilst developing your own ability to make decisions and draw conclusions based on evidence and using logic. It develops skills that can be used in A level or Vocational areas, work and further academic study.

WHAT WILL I STUDY?

A variety of materials such as newspapers, internet articles, adverts, films and current affairs programmes will be discussed and conclusions drawn about the presentation of arguments and their strengths and weaknesses. You will also construct your own arguments. In credibility exercises you will consider the reliability and credibility of witnesses in a variety of scenarios, and explore issues such as corroboration, vested interest, reputation and expertise. At A2 you will be applying the thinking to ethical issues concerned with science, religion, politics, society, business, economics and ethics. You will also build on skills developed at AS and look at complex arguments.

HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED?

All four units are assessed by written exams that consist of a mixture of multiple choice questions, data response questions and short essays. For units 2 and 4 you will also be expected to produce your own arguments in response to material that you have been provided with.

WHAT SKILLS AND SPECIAL QUALIFICATIONS DO I NEED?

You do not need any specialist knowledge or a previous Critical Thinking qualification. A "C" grade at GCSE English Language is recommended, and you should have an average GCSE pass of grade B or above. An interest in issues outside the academic curriculum is beneficial. You should be willing to join in discussions and explore arguments in written essays. There will be some topics that will require independent research.

WHAT CAN I DO NEXT?

Students have found that the skills they develop are valuable in Higher Education courses where there is a need for depth in analysis such as Law, History, English and Business. It is also beneficial for students who wish to progress in Science based subjects and need to analyse the validity of arguments based on data. Links can be found to Journalism, Law and other careers or academic areas where it is essential to produce solid arguments.

PRIESTLEY EXTRA

The enrichment activities across College provide opportunities for further development of knowledge and skills that will be beneficial in exams.