

LIVE Event for
students of Philosophy of Religion
for AS/A Level Religious Studies
With Dr Peter Vardy

Ultimate... Reality

Dates for 2026-27

- Worcester, 17th November
- London, 20th November
- York tbc.
- London, 11th March





Dr. Peter Vardy was Vice Principal of Heythrop College, University of London (1999-2011); he is internationally well-known as a leader in the fields of Religious Studies, Philosophy and Ethics and Values Education. Peter's many books – including the best-selling "Puzzle of" series for HarperCollins – demonstrate his ability to communicate complex ideas with clarity, accuracy and humour. For more than three decades schools and colleges have looked to Peter to provide outstanding conferences, resources and CPD / INSET, both to support their work in RS and Philosophy and more broadly.

Did you know? Peter was awarded an honorary doctorate for his work in promoting Religious Studies in schools by the University of Chichester in 2021.



"Dr Vardy and Charlotte never disappoint, both deliver content with passion and are the experts in the field. Students found the conference to be intellectually challenging and important to their A Level studies."
Teacher

"They are really excellent conferences- clear, coherent and extending talks upon all subjects linked with courses. A must for aspirational sixth formers." Save RE
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Building on the success of "Athens or Jerusalem?" and "Human Nature" in 2025-26, Candle Conferences presents an all-new LIVE event for students of the Philosophy of Religion for AS / A Level Religious Studies. "Finding Meaning" will explore content specified by ALL ENGLISH EXAMINATION BOARDS, focusing on the compulsory Philosophy of Religion paper. The event aims to get students really excited about the subject, enriching and extending their knowledge and understanding as well as supporting them in analysing, evaluating and making informed, well-reasoned academic judgements.

Sessions include...

1. A Necessary Being?

Is reality self-explanatory, or do we need something unlike everything else to explain the existence of anything at all? Through this introductory session, Dr Vardy will explore whether the universe really needs a foundation that cannot not exist. He will test classic arguments for the existence of a necessary being from motion, causation and contingency, before considering whether it is reasonable to claim that the necessary being "is what everybody calls God". This session will conclude by applying what we have learned to a typical AO2 exam-question and considering how to structure an answer to score the highest marks.

2. An Intelligent Designer?

Through this second session Dr Vardy will consider the extent to which modern science defeats... or maybe supports... the teleological argument. The idea that signs of order and/or purpose in the universe suggest an intelligent designer has come a long way since Aquinas proposed his fifth way, and Dr Vardy will outline and evaluate versions of the argument that have been designed to evade the challenge of evolution. This session will conclude with a whole-group discussion and opportunity to ask questions.

3. The Problem of Perfection

What happens when perfect power, knowledge and goodness meet the real world? Through this session Dr Vardy will dig into whether the existence of evil and or suffering undermines the existence of a perfect God, or whether they can be explained away. He will test logical challenges alongside more personal, evidential ones, and ask whether any response to evil and suffering really works. This session will conclude with a practical essay-planning exercise, designed to support students in making and defending academic judgements to maximise their AO2 marks.

4. Mind or Matter?

Are we just physical systems... or is there more to us than biology? From near-death experiences to philosophical arguments about consciousness, we'll ask what kind of beings we really are. If mind and body are different, how do they interact—and what does that mean for life beyond death? Or is the "self" just an illusion? This session will conclude with a debate on the motion: "This house believes that I am a soul and not a body." Students will prepare and contribute their academic arguments before a final vote is taken.

To Book

Student tickets for "Ultimate Reality" cost £20, when booked online.

- We offer a 10% discount if you book 10+ tickets together online (e-mail for your ACCESS CODE)
- You can buy a COMBINED ticket to both of our A Level events for just £30, when booked online and subject to t&cs.
- We offer one free teacher-place per 10 students, otherwise accompanying teachers cost £20. Teachers attending alone for CPD purposes cost £100
- Trainee teachers and extra adults supporting individual students to access the event attend for free.

With Candle you get:

- Up-to-date scholarly content made engaging and tailored to the real needs of A Level students.
- Sessions and resources designed by practicing teachers with a record of engaging students of all Abilities.

Easy, secure online bookings

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