Key Words:

Ethics	a discussion about moral principles
Morality	the discussion about right and wrong or good and bad behaviour
Religion	a particular system of faith and worship
Ethical scenario	An example or a situation where there is an ethical dilemma to encourage us to consider what we would do in that situation.
Saviour Sibling	A child conceived through IVF as a potential source of donor organs or cells for an existing brother or sister with a life threatening condition.
IVF	A medical procedure where the egg is fertilised by sperm outside of the body, in a test tube.
Inherited	A quality, illness, trait or characteristic that has been passed down genetically from parents.
Ensoulment	The moment a human gains a soul. Many religions believe in ensoulment, for example Muslims believe this.
Roman Catholic Christian	A branch of Christianity, the head is the Pope in Vatican City in Rome. It is the largest Christian branch (denomination) of around 1.3 billion.
Liberal Christian	A liberal Christian does not take the Bible and teachings of the Bible literally but rather as symbolic and metaphorical messages/stories. They are not as 'strict' in their practising of the religion.
Embryo	Developed from a fertilised egg – a ball of cells that has the potential to become a human
Fetus	The fetus is the unborn child or offspring that follows from the embryo. The human fetus will remain growing until it is around 9 months old.
Sanctity of Life	The belief like is a sacred gift from God and should be protected.
Siamese/Conjoined Twins	Two offspring born who are attached by one or more part of their body.
Euthanasia	The process of ending someone's life sooner than its natural end because of an incurable disease or pain.

Overview: The aim of this unit is to understand the different viewpoints on various ethical dilemmas. You will consider your own morality and ethical values and compare to religious and non-religious views. You will learn about different ethical issues like Saviour Siblings and Euthanasia.

Non-Religious attitudes to medical ethics:

There is no set belief of 'non-religious' people on matters of ethics and medical ethics. People's views will vary hugely which is why Ethics is such a big topic. Government, companies, schools and hospitals are making ethical decisions constantly about what the right thing to do in different situations are. Here is an example of non-religious arguments FOR and AGAINST euthanasia.

Non- religious arguments in favour of euthanasia:

- Suicide is legal, so why not help someone who cannot commit suicide themselves?
- If animal were suffering, we have it put down as its the most humane thing to do.
- It is their life they have should have the right to end it if they want to.
- It's not fair for the relatives to have to watch their loved one dying painfully.

Non- religious arguments against euthanasia:

- Drugs can be used for pain control.
- Euthanasia is just a fancy word for murder.
- Doctor's take an oath to save life, it is wrong to ask them to kill people.
- People can better or medical science might find a cure for them.

Religious attitudes to medical ethics:

Within any religion, there is rarely one set view. Most religions have different interpretations, branches and denominations. For example, Roman Catholic Christians have a very different view of Saviour Siblings to Church of England Christians. To get a top mark in an assessment, you need to be able to specify which branch of a religion you are writing about.

Key teachings from religions are below:

Church of England Christians would use 'agape' in ethical dilemmas and work out what the most loving and compassionate thing to do is. They would follow teachings from the Bible such as 'love they neighbour' and 1 John 4:7. 7 Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God.

Roman Catholic Christians would tend to have a stricter view towards medical ethics because of their core belief in Sanctity of Life, that only God can give and take life because life is a gift from God. They would follow the Ten Commandments strictly and may argue that Euthanasia is the same as murder. Strict Roman Catholics may argue that any scientific involvement in sometimes life is 'playing God.'

Muslims also have different views. Some Muslims would say 'Whoever saves a human life has saved the life of the whole mankind." There is then strong emphasis on saving life.

However, **Muslims** believe that all human life is sacred because it is given by Allah, and that Allah chooses how long each person will live. Human beings should not interfere in this.

All Christians and Muslims believe in the sanctity of life.

In **Judaism**, Jewish medical ethics states that doctors should provide treatment to heal and improve the life of the patient. Patients are obligated to seek beneficial treatment. In Jewish teachings, patients are to consider their life as being not theirs to give away.

Buddhists aim to live is to act, and our actions can have either harmful or beneficial consequences for oneself and others. Buddhist ethics is concerned with the principles and practices that help one to act in ways that help rather than harm. Buddhists do not disagree with surgery and would want to help fellow humans without causing harm to others.

Ethics in more detail:

Conjoined twins occur when identical twins have fused bodies before they are born. Maltese twins, known publicly as Mary and Jodie, were born joined at the abdomen and pelvis in August 2000. They were delivered by C section at at St. Mary's Hospital, Manchester, to devout Catholic parents from Malta. Early scans had revealed that the twins shared a spine and lower abdomen, although the full extent of the condition was not revealed until later. While some parents opt to terminate conjoined pregnancies early on, Mary and Jody's parents felt strongly that the babies had a right to life, regardless of the hardships they would no doubt face as a result of the condition.

Saviour Siblings is a medical concept where parents deliberately bringing a new baby into the world, with the purpose of using them to save the life of a sibling. The process involves using IVF, to preselect embryos with a genetic match, which stand the greatest chance of success in curing the specific illness. This is an ethical issue for many reasons including using a child instrumentally (to save the life of a sibling); whether it is justifiable to 'play God' and whether it is justifiable to destroy embryos.

Euthanasia is an ethical issue because it is about 'who can end life' and 'should we end life early'? The word 'euthanasia' literally means 'dying well'.

- Active euthanasia is when a person is killed, perhaps by a lethal injection. Active euthanasia is illegal in the UK.
- Passive euthanasia is where treatment is taken away to allow the person to die. Passive euthanasia is allowed as it is allowing the body to take the natural course towards death.