

The AHS is an association of atheist, humanist and secular student societies facilitated and supported by the British Humanist Association.

Its vision is to see a thriving atheist, humanist or secular student society in every institute of Higher Education in the UK and Republic of Ireland, networked together, with a shared voice in public life, whose members can contribute to and be part of the wider national and international movement. As a means of achieving its vision the AHS aims to build, support and represent atheist, humanist and secular student societies, facilitate communication between them, and encourage joint actions and ensure that their members have opportunities to be part of the wider national and international movement.

You can find out more at www.ahsstudents.org.uk.



National Federation
of Atheist Humanist
& Secular Student
Societies

What is...

ATHEISM?

A rough guide from the



Atheism is an absence of belief in Gods or deities.

This could mean believing that there is no God or failing to believe there is a God. Atheism is **not a religion** and is separate from antitheism, which explicitly states that religion is in some way “bad”.

Many atheists take the position because of a lack of evidence for a God, as explained by the analogy of **Russell's Teapot**:

If you were told that there is a teapot orbiting the Sun, somewhere between Earth and Mars, and you were unable to disprove this, should you believe it is true? Bertrand Russell argued that it was silly to expect other people to believe that there was a teapot orbiting the sun, just because they couldn't prove him wrong. He argued that **it should be responsibility of the claimant to prove that the teapot exists**, rather than anyone else's job to prove that it does.

Christopher Hitchens expanded on the principle of Occam's Razor when he said, **"What can be asserted without evidence can be dismissed without evidence"**. Much like Bertrand Russell, Hitchens advocated that we should not believe unsubstantiated claims.

But the arguments for atheism are not all based on the burden of proof. Reconciling **the problem of the evil** - that bad things seem to happen at random - and the existence of an all-powerful and benevolent God (like the one found in several major faiths) is difficult for a number of atheists.

Inconsistent revelations from theologians and the faithful are also an issue. **If only one god were to exist, how would we work out which is the real one?** Which religion? Which sect? And which interpretation? The probability of picking the right one would be incredibly small.