

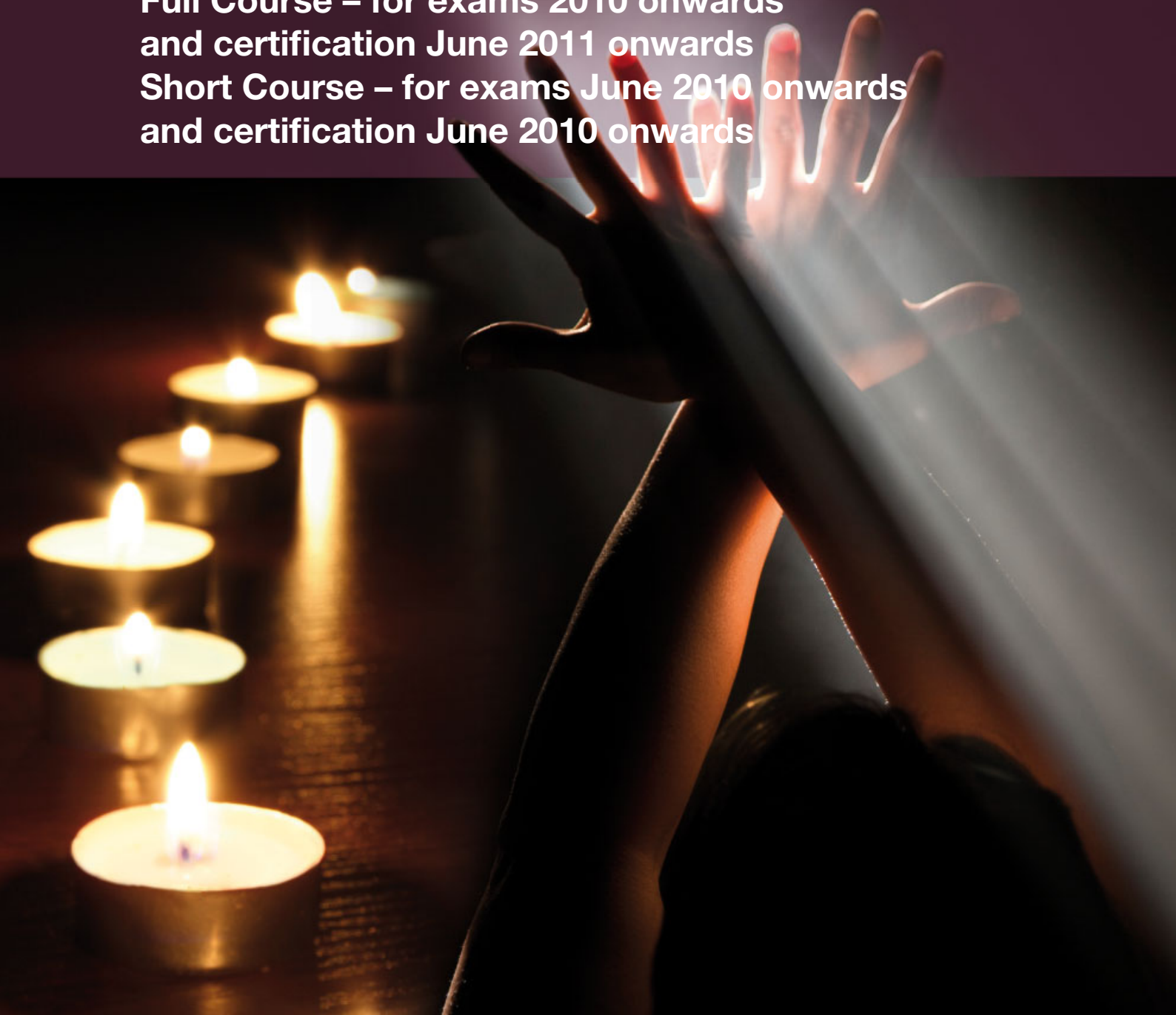
GCSE

Specification

Religious Studies B

Full Course – for exams 2010 onwards
and certification June 2011 onwards

Short Course – for exams June 2010 onwards
and certification June 2010 onwards



Contents

1	Introduction	2
1.1	Why choose AQA?	2
1.2	Why choose GCSE Religious Studies Specification B <i>Ethics, Philosophy and Religion in Society?</i>	2
1.3	Meeting the Needs of Teachers and Students: Rationale for GCSE Religious Studies Specification B <i>Ethics, Philosophy and Religion in Society</i>	4
1.4	How do I start using this Specification?	4
1.5	How can I find out more?	4
2	Specification at a Glance	5
3	Subject Content	7
3.1	Unit 1 Religion and Citizenship (40551)	7
3.2	Unit 2 Religion and Life Issues (40552)	10
3.3	Unit 3 Religion and Morality (40553)	12
3.4	Unit 4 Religious Philosophy and Ultimate Questions (40554)	15
3.5	Unit 5 Religious Expression in Society (40555)	17
3.6	Unit 6 Worship and Key Beliefs (40556)	19
4	Scheme of Assessment	24
4.1	Aims and learning outcomes	24
4.2	Assessment Objectives (AOs)	24
4.3	National criteria	25
4.4	Prior learning	25
4.5	Access to assessment: diversity and inclusion	26
5	Administration	27
5.1	Availability of assessment units and certification	27
5.2	Entries	27
5.3	Private candidates	27
5.4	Access arrangements and special consideration	28
5.5	Language of examinations	28
5.6	Qualification titles	28
5.7	Awarding grades and reporting results	28
5.8	Re-sits and shelf-life of unit results	29
	Appendices	30
A	Grade Descriptions	30
B	Spiritual, Moral, Ethical, Social, Legislative, Sustainable Development, Economic and Cultural Issues, and Health and Safety Considerations	31
C	Overlaps with other Qualifications	32
D	Key Skills	33

1 Introduction

1

1.1 Why choose AQA?

AQA is the UK's favourite exam board and more students receive their academic qualifications from AQA than from any other board. But why is AQA so popular?

AQA understands the different requirements of each subject by working in partnership with teachers. Our GCSEs:

- enable students to realise their full potential
- contain engaging content
- are manageable for schools and colleges
- are accessible to students of all levels of ability
- lead to accurate results, delivered on time
- are affordable and value for money.

AQA provides a comprehensive range of support services for teachers:

- access to subject departments
- training for teachers including practical teaching strategies and approaches that really work presented by senior examiners
- 24-hour support through our website and online *Ask AQA*
- past question papers and mark schemes
- comprehensive printed and electronic resources for teachers and students.

AQA is an educational charity focussed on the needs of the learner. All our income goes towards operating and improving the quality of our specifications, examinations and support services. We don't aim to profit from education – we want you to.

If you are an existing customer then we thank you for your support. If you are thinking of moving to AQA then we look forward to welcoming you.

1.2 Why choose GCSE Religious Studies Specification B *Ethics, Philosophy and Religion in Society?*

- The Scheme of Assessment offers flexibility – it is modular and there are Short Course and Full Course options.
- There is no controlled assessment; the assessment comprises 100% external (written) papers.
- This Specification has been developed in consultation with teachers of Religious Studies.
- The Specification is distinctive in providing opportunities for the **thematic studies** of religion and religious responses to fundamental questions of life, with reference to one or more of the six major world religions. It is flexible in the number of religions to be studied in order to accommodate the wide range of demands of different locally agreed syllabuses for Religious Education.
- This Specification is accessible to candidates of any religious persuasion or none.
- This AQA Religious Studies Specification encourages candidates to:
 - develop their interest in, and enthusiasm for, a study of religion and its relation to the wider world;
 - develop their knowledge, skills and understanding of religion by exploring the significance, impact of beliefs, teachings, sources, practices, ways of life and forms of expressing meaning;
 - express their personal responses and informed insights on fundamental questions about identity, belonging, meaning, purpose, truth, values and commitments.
- Many of the topics offered are based on AQA's previous GCSE Religious Studies Specification B (*World and Philosophical Perspectives on Religious Issues*), in order that teachers can continue to use their existing resources as far as possible. However, AQA has expanded the units available within this GCSE Religious Studies Specification to include exciting new topics of study. All topics meet the revised subject criteria.
- Candidates will have an opportunity to study aspects of one or more religions, including textual, historical, ethical and philosophical perspectives.
- This Specification offers a comprehensive range of options which enables teachers to design a course that reflects their specialism and that will engage candidates. A wide choice of topics is offered, allowing for study of the relevance of religion to issues of morality, questions of meaning, lifestyle and choices, etc. with reference to Christianity and/or one or more of the other major world religions. In particular, it provides opportunity for cross-curricular work in tracing the links between religion and Citizenship and Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE).

- No prior learning or level of attainment is necessary for candidates to undertake a course of study based on this Religious Studies Specification.
- This Specification is consistent with the requirements of the non-statutory national framework for religious education (England), the national exemplar programme of study for religious education (Wales), and the revised core syllabus for religious education in Northern Ireland, and should assist schools in these countries to meet their legal obligations for the provision of Religious Education at Key Stage 4 as required in section 375(3) of the 1996 Education Act and section 28 of the 1944 Education Act for England and Wales; and article 13 of the Education Reform Order 1989 for Northern Ireland.
- The aims and assessment objectives are compatible with the aims and attainment targets of the local authority agreed syllabuses currently operating in England and Wales. Schools that intend to use this Specification to meet all or part of their statutory obligation to provide religious education will need to check whether there are local agreed syllabus requirements that the Specification does not meet.
- This Specification is consistent with the requirements of the non-statutory framework for religious education (England), the national exemplar framework for religious education (Wales), and the revised core syllabus for religious education in Northern Ireland.
- A study of AQA's GCSE Religious Studies Specification B *Ethics, Philosophy and Religion in Society* lays a good foundation for further study of Religious Studies at A Level and that will complement other related and popular A Level subjects including Philosophy, Law, History, History of Art, Government and Politics, Sociology and English Literature.
- A study of AQA's GCSE Religious Studies Specification B *Ethics, Philosophy and Religion in Society* also provides a worthwhile course for candidates of various ages and from diverse backgrounds in terms of general education and lifelong learning.

AQA GCSE Religious Studies

- The two AQA GCSE Religious Studies Specifications address the statutory requirement for Religious Education to be delivered by centres right up to Key Stage 5;
- The development of the two GCSE Specifications has been informed by the latest agendas, including *Every Child Matters*. The five outcomes of the *Every Child Matters* agenda can be addressed through the delivery of this Specification;
- The two GCSE Religious Studies Specifications support the whole-school delivery of Citizenship and PSHE whilst at the same time enabling each school to focus on and deliver the content through its specialism;
- The Religious Studies Specifications help students to become aware of issues of local, national and global concern and placing them in spiritual and moral contexts. By understanding the beliefs and practices of religions and world views, students can make connections between belief and action. Through a consideration of the beliefs behind environmental action, the needs of refugees or the work of aid agencies, students can become aware of the connections between beliefs, lifestyles and ultimate questions. Understanding the right to hold different beliefs enables students to see diverse religions and beliefs as a significant part of the local, national and global community, and of human experience. They can develop as reflective and responsible citizens in a plural society and global community, with a strong awareness of religious and ethical diversity.
- By evaluating ethical issues, and expressing views using reasoned arguments, students can enhance their capacity and desire to make a positive contribution to debates and decisions in society.
- The Specifications are designed to be both relevant to candidates' lives and enjoyable courses of study to follow. The wide range of topics available for study provide an opportunity for personalised learning, enabling candidates to study units that support their individual strengths and interests. The Specifications also allow candidates to select units that fit into their post-16 programmes of study and both support the delivery and enhance study of subjects such as General Studies.

1.3 Meeting the Needs of Teachers and Students: Rationale for GCSE Religious Studies Specification B *Ethics, Philosophy and Religion in Society*

This Specification is one of two Specifications in Religious Studies provided by AQA. It is distinctive in providing opportunity for the **thematic study** of religion and religious responses to fundamental questions of life with a particular focus on ethical and philosophical issues.

Unit 6 provides for a balanced study of two of the six major world religions*. All other units include opportunities for the study of aspects of one, two or more religions with varying balance.

Each of the units is intended to meet the needs of schools which are required to teach Religious Education in accordance with an agreed syllabus that “reflects the fact that the religious traditions of Great Britain are in the main Christian, whilst taking account of the

other principal religions represented in Great Britain”. The variety of approaches is necessary because of the diversity of the requirements of different locally agreed syllabuses reflecting the range and variety of religious faiths which exist in Britain’s multi-cultural society and the demographic variety in different parts of Britain.

All units are intended to meet the needs of schools which are permitted or required to teach Christianity only, and of schools which are required to teach more than one religion though not necessarily with equal emphasis on each.

*For the purposes of this Specification, the six major world religions are Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism.

1.4 How do I start using this Specification?

Already using the existing AQA Religious Studies specification?

- Register to receive further information, such as mark schemes, past question papers, details of teacher support meetings, etc, at <http://www.aqa.org.uk/rn/askaqa.php> Information will be available electronically or in print, for your convenience.
- Tell us that you intend to enter candidates. Then we can make sure that you receive all the material you need for the examinations. This is particularly important where examination material is issued before the final entry deadline. You can let us

know by completing the appropriate *Intention to Enter* and *Estimated Entry* forms. We will send copies to your Exams Officer and they are also available on our website (http://www.aqa.org.uk/admin/p_entries.php).

Not using the AQA specification currently?

- Almost all centres in England and Wales use AQA or have used AQA in the past and are approved AQA centres. A small minority is not. If your centre is new to AQA, please contact our centre approval team at centreapproval@aqa.org.uk

1.5 How can I find out more?

Ask AQA

You have 24-hour access to useful information and answers to the most commonly-asked questions at <http://www.aqa.org.uk/rn/askaqa.php>

If the answer to your question is not available, you can submit a query for our team. Our target response time is one day.

Teacher Support

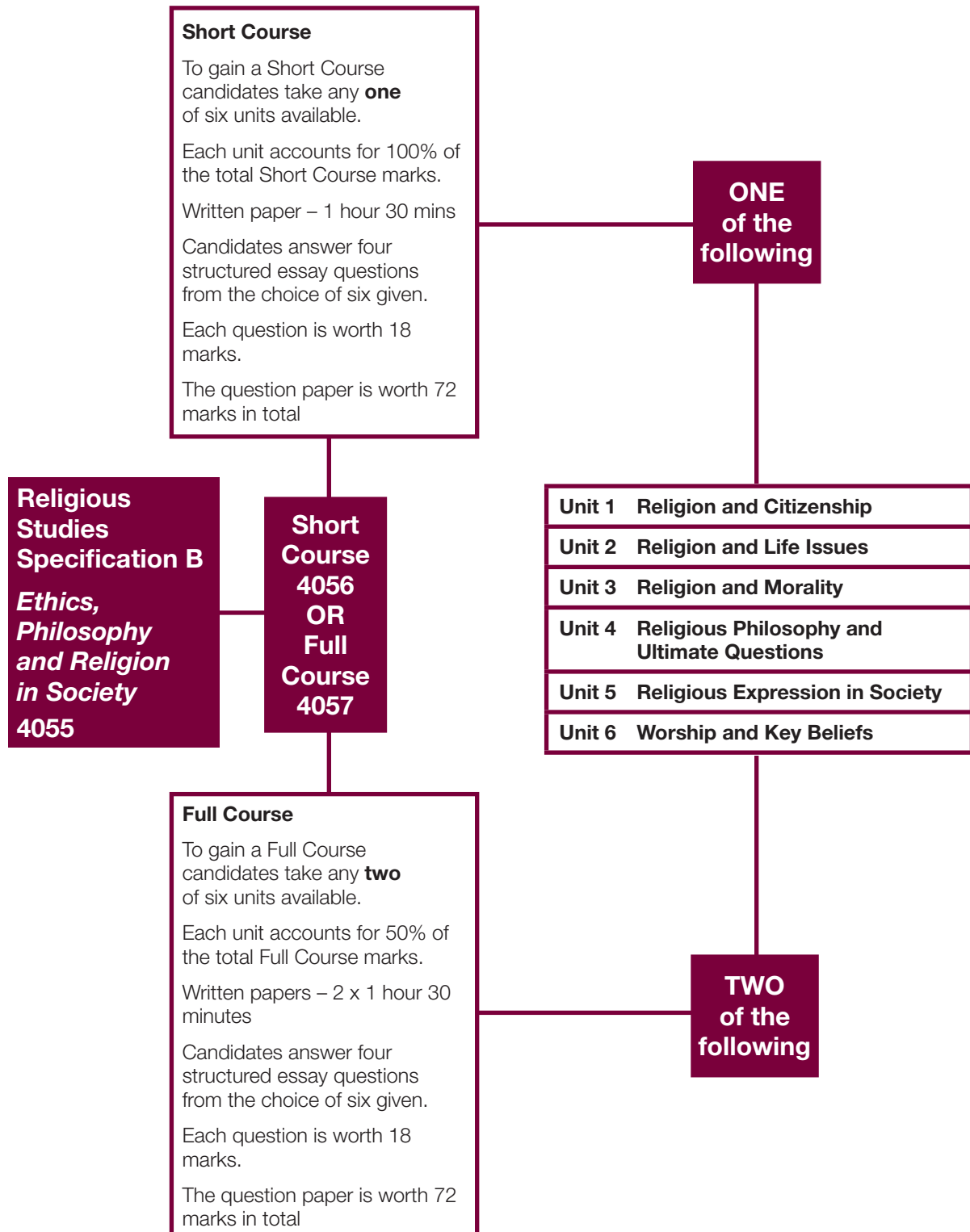
Details of the full range of current Teacher Support meetings are available on our website at <http://www.aqa.org.uk/support/teachers.php>

There is also a link to our fast and convenient online booking system for Teacher Support meetings at <http://events.aqa.org.uk/ebooking>

If you need to contact the Teacher Support team, you can call us on 01483 477860 or email us at teachersupport@aqa.org.uk

2 Specification at a Glance

Religious Studies Specification B *Ethics, Philosophy and Religion in Society*



Modular Examinations

The scheme of assessment is modular, and therefore flexible.

The following possibilities are available.

- Both assessment units taken at the end of one year of study.
- Both assessment units taken at the end of two years of study.
- One assessment unit taken at the end of one year of study, and another assessment unit taken at the end of a second year of study.
- The facility to “top-up” a unit certificated as a Short Course to a Full Course, by taking a further assessment unit.
- Assessment units can be taken in any order.

Structure of Units and Examination Papers

Units comprise six topics for study.

A question will be set on each of the six topics in each unit.

Examination Papers

Questions will be set on each of the six topics which appear on the Specification content. Candidates will answer four structured essay questions from the choice of six given.

Each question is worth 18 marks.

Each question paper is worth a total of 72 marks.

Units 1 to 5 include opportunities for the study of one, two or more religions, with varying balance.

Unit 6 provides for a balanced study of two of the six major world religions.

Stimulus Material

Stimulus material **may** be used, as appropriate, in questions. Stimulus material will be provided in colour, where appropriate.

3 Subject Content

3.1 Unit 1 Religion and Citizenship

Aims of GCSE Religious Studies Specifications

This unit will provide students with the opportunity to:

- develop their knowledge, skills and understanding of religion by exploring the significance and impact of beliefs, teachings, sources, practices, ways of life and forms of expressing meaning;
- express their personal responses and informed insights on fundamental questions and issues about identity, belonging, meaning, purpose, truth, values and commitments.

Questions will be focussed on concepts and framed in an open-ended way that will allow candidates to answer with reference to the religion(s) they have studied. The Specification allows for the study solely of Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism or Sikhism, or for a combination of any of these specified religions. This unit may be studied as a Short Course GCSE or may form part of a Full Course GCSE in Religious Studies when taken with another unit from this Specification.

Unit 1

This unit is designed to enable Religious Studies to link closely with other subjects, particularly Citizenship and Personal, Social and Health Education, and to contribute actively to pupils' Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development and the Every Child Matters agenda.

The content is intended to encourage candidates to reflect upon religion and citizenship, including relationships, the need for work and leisure, multiculturalism, identity and human rights. In the examination candidates will be expected to illustrate their answers by reference to actual examples in relation to the issues raised, and to make appropriate references to religious stories, teachings and practices that they have studied.

Within the areas of study outlined in Topics 1 to 6, candidates are expected to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- relevant teachings from both sacred texts and contemporary religious leaders and organisations;
- the work of voluntary groups and organisations (religious and non-religious), where they make a significant contribution;
- the diversity of viewpoints which may exist within religions;

- significant secular responses and the legal position;
- the relationship between religious beliefs and teachings and action in the lives of believers.

Assessment

Candidates will be required to answer **four** questions in the examination, based on four of the six topics available.

Topic 1 Religion and Relationships

Within this topic candidates should be familiar with the religious beliefs and teachings from the religion(s) studied and should be aware of how religious leaders and other faith members have interpreted these teachings and applied them to life in society today.

- concepts of commitment, responsibility, contract and covenant;
- human sexuality and sexual relationships (heterosexual and homosexual relationships);
- age of consent and religious attitudes to sexual relationships before and outside marriage;
- religious attitudes to contraception;
- religious understandings of the purpose and character of marriage;
- marriage ceremonies, contracts and vows; alternatives to marriage;
- religious responses to the issues of love, parental involvement and race in the choice of marriage partner;
- the concept and role of parenting;
- the concept and role of the family;
- religious attitudes to divorce.

Topic 2 Religion, Sport and Leisure

Within this topic candidates should be familiar with the key teachings from the religion(s) studied and should be aware of how religious leaders and other faith members have interpreted these teachings and applied them to life in society today.

- religious attitudes towards the purpose, use and importance of leisure;
- types and purposes of relaxation, e.g. stress relief;
- misuse of leisure time, e.g. casinos, binge drinking;
- morality in sport, e.g. winning at all costs, honesty, fair competition and use of performance enhancing drugs;

- religious organisations within leisure, e.g. Christians in Sport, chaplains;
- leisure as an inspiration, benefits of belonging to a team, creative activities and the promotion of exercise, healthy living and relaxation;
- finance involved in leisure activities including pay of superstars, gambling and sponsorship;
- devotion of fans including pilgrimage, songs, symbols, memorabilia and mementos, e.g. has sport become a religion?;
- Sabbath and other religious issues, e.g. competing on holy days, source of skills and natural ability;
- leisure and issues of prejudice, e.g. gender issues, disability, professional and amateur status in sport.

Topic 3 Religion and Work

Within this topic candidates should be familiar with the key teachings from the religion(s) studied and should be aware of how religious leaders and other faith members have interpreted these teachings and applied them to life in society today.

- religious attitudes to the purpose and importance of work;
- work as service and prayer, e.g. *sewa*;
- careers, including a case study of the work of a believer who has regarded work as a vocation;
- business and enterprise, including views of acceptable and unacceptable professions, the economy and raising of money through taxation;
- use of money from earning, e.g. tithes;
- responsibilities and rights of employers and employees, e.g. fair wages, the minimum wage, health and safety issues, trade unions, contracts, code of conduct, holy day issues, family commitments;
- importance of voluntary work, including a case study of the work of a religious voluntary organisation;
- reasons for unemployment, the problems it brings and support for those out of work, e.g. by the state, community and religious organisations.

Topic 4 Religion and the Multicultural Society

Within this topic candidates should be familiar with the key teachings from the religion(s) studied and should be aware of how religious leaders and other faith members have interpreted these teachings and applied them to life in society today.

- concepts of tolerance, respect, diversity, multiculturalism and political correctness;

- religion and its involvement in politics and the debate about whether religion and politics should mix;
- advantages and disadvantages of a multicultural society, e.g. diversity, culture, celebrations, differences, segregation, misunderstanding;
- issues such as having a state religion, blasphemy laws and freedom of choice;
- debate about asylum seekers, integration, immigration and emigration;
- influence of faith communities, locally, nationally and internationally;
- projects run by faith communities;
- customs and celebrations, such as festivals in the community, e.g. Wesak, Christmas, Divali, Eid ul Fitr, Pesach and Baisakhi.

Topic 5 Religion and Identity

Within this topic candidates should be familiar with the key teachings from the religion(s) studied and should be aware of how religious leaders and other faith members have interpreted these teachings and applied them to life in society today.

- concept of what it means to be human, e.g. who am I?;
- physical and spiritual dimensions to life and personhood;
- questions concerning the purpose and meaning of life;
- questions concerning image, views of self and self-worth;
- identity within a faith community, including ceremonies of commitment, leadership, brotherhood, customs, traditions;
- identity as a follower of a faith through symbolism and dress;
- religious attitudes to healthy living, e.g. mental and physical health;
- sources for decision making, right or wrong, e.g. conscience, sacred writings, experience, religious leaders, family and peers;
- concepts of interdependence and multiple identities, e.g. local, regional, national and global identity.

Topic 6 Religion and Human Rights

Within this topic candidates should be familiar with the key teachings from the religion(s) studied and should be aware of how religious leaders and other faith members have interpreted these teachings and applied them to life in society today.

- religious attitudes towards the law and human rights;
- the impact of religion on the rights and responsibilities as a citizen;

- human rights, including United Nations (UN) Declaration of Human Rights, the Human Rights Act and legal rights;
- organisations which help if rights are being abused, e.g. Citizens Advice Bureau, ChildLine and Samaritans;
- case studies of contemporary local and national human rights issues;
- role of local, national and international pressure groups and organisations, e.g. Amnesty International, Greenpeace, Abortion Right, Society for the Protection of Unborn Children (SPUC);
- forms of protest as a means of publicising issues and achieving minority and/or human rights;
- religious responses to protest, pressure groups and human rights;
- reasons why believers might support non-religious organisations;
- case studies of the work of religious groups and individuals who have supported human rights.

3.2 Unit 2 Religion and Life Issues

Aims of GCSE Religious Studies Specifications

This unit will provide students with the opportunity to:

- develop their knowledge, skills and understanding of religion by exploring the significance and impact of beliefs, teachings, sources, practices, ways of life and forms of expressing meaning;
- express their personal responses and informed insights on fundamental questions and issues about identity, belonging, meaning, purpose, truth, values and commitments.

Questions will be focussed on concepts and framed in an open-ended way that will allow candidates to answer with reference to the religion(s) they have studied. The course allows for the study solely of Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism or Sikhism, or for a combination of any of these specified religions. This unit may be studied as a Short Course GCSE or may form part of a Full Course GCSE in Religious Studies when taken with another unit from this Specification.

Unit 2

This unit is designed to enable Religious Studies to link closely with other subjects, particularly Citizenship and Personal, Social and Health Education, and to contribute actively to pupils' Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development and the Every Child Matters agenda.

This unit is intended to encourage candidates to reflect upon religion and life including animal life and environmental issues, prejudice, the right to life, war and peace, religion and young people. In the examination candidates will be expected to illustrate their answers by reference to actual examples in relation to the issues raised, and to make appropriate references to religious stories, teachings and practices that they have studied.

Within the areas of study outlined in Topics 1 to 6, candidates are expected to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- relevant teachings from both sacred texts and contemporary religious leaders and organisations;
- the work of voluntary groups and organisations (religious and non-religious), where they make a significant contribution;
- the diversity of viewpoints which may exist within religions;
- significant secular responses and the legal position;
- the relationship between religious beliefs and teachings and action in the lives of believers.

Assessment

Candidates will be required to answer **four** questions in the examination, based on four of the six topics available.

Topic 1 Religion and Animal Rights

Within this topic candidates should be familiar with the key teachings from the religion(s) studied and should be aware of how religious leaders and other faith members have interpreted these teachings and applied them to life in society today.

- religious beliefs about the status of animals;
- the extent to which animals are different from humans and their relative value;
- religious views on animal rights and the means of protecting those rights;
- religious responses to the preservation of species from extinction;
- the contemporary use and abuse of animals including:
 - companionship, e.g. pets, guide dogs,
 - animals in sport,
 - transport and work,
 - animal experiments,
 - farming of animals (including free range and factory farming),
 - zoos,
 - hunting,
 - bull fighting,
 - the fur and ivory trade,
 - genetic modification and cloning of animals,
 - treatment of wildlife;
- issues concerning the slaughter of animals, meat, vegetarian and vegan diets.

Topic 2 Religion and Planet Earth

Within this topic candidates should be familiar with the key teachings from the religion(s) studied and should be aware of how religious leaders and other faith members have interpreted these teachings and applied them to life in society today.

- religious beliefs about the origins of life;
- religious views about the nature of Planet Earth, e.g. awe and wonder;
- religious beliefs about care and responsibility for the planet – stewardship;
- the work being done to look after the world – conservation, earth summits, international action, targets to reduce carbon emissions/greenhouse gases, sustainable development;
- problems caused by pollution, such as acid rain, oil spills, toxic chemicals and pesticides;

- effects of modern lifestyles – through emissions from cars, factories and waste, recycling;
- the debate about and the effects of climate change (global warming) – severe weather, droughts, floods, famine, destruction of crops, effect on plants and animals;
- the use and abuse of natural resources, e.g. oil;
- destruction of natural habitat, including deforestation.

Topic 3 Religion and Prejudice

Within this topic candidates should be familiar with the key teachings from the religion(s) studied and should be aware of how religious leaders and other faith members have interpreted these teachings and applied them to life in society today.

- types of prejudice, including religion, race, colour, gender, age, disability, class, lifestyle, looks;
- the causes and origins of prejudice, including ignorance, stereotyping, scapegoating, influence of parents or media, victims of prejudice, experience;
- concepts of tolerance, justice, harmony and the value of the individual;
- religious attitudes to prejudice and discrimination;
- effects of prejudice and discrimination (including the idea of positive discrimination);
- religious responses to prejudice and discrimination by individuals, groups, society and the law;
- religious believers who have fought against prejudice, e.g. Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Desmond Tutu.

Topic 4 Religion and Early Life

Within this topic candidates should be familiar with the key teachings from the religion(s) studied and should be aware of how religious leaders and other faith members have interpreted these teachings and applied them to life in society today.

- the concept of the sanctity of life in relation to its preservation;
- children being seen as a blessing and gift and the miracle of life;
- the issues surrounding when life begins, including at conception, development of backbone, when heart starts beating, at viability, when the baby is born;
- the issues concerning the quality of life, including severe handicaps, unwanted children, poverty and suffering;
- reasons used by religious believers for and against abortion;
- the Law and abortion, including the 1967 and 1990 Acts;
- the rights of those involved, e.g. mother, father and unborn child;

- alternatives to abortion, e.g. keeping the child;
- adoption and fostering;
- Pro-Life and Pro-Choice arguments and pressure groups.

Topic 5 Religion, War and Peace

Within this topic candidates should be familiar with the key teachings from the religion(s) studied and should be aware of how religious leaders and other faith members have interpreted these teachings and applied them to life in society today.

- the concepts of peace and justice and the sanctity of life in relation to war and peace;
- the causes of war;
- conflict, including examples of recent wars;
- the reasons why religious believers might go to war, including the criteria for 'Just War' and 'Holy War';
- religious believers and pacifism;
- victims of war, including refugees, those maimed;
- organisations which help victims of war, e.g. The Red Cross, The Red Crescent;
- the work of a religious believer who has worked for peace;
- peacekeeping forces, e.g. United Nations, NATO;
- issues such as terrorism, weapons of mass destruction and nuclear proliferation;
- arguments for and against nuclear weapons, including proliferation;
- religious beliefs and teachings and modern statements about war and peace.

Topic 6 Religion and Young People

Within this topic candidates should be familiar with the key teachings from the religion(s) studied and should be aware of how religious leaders and other faith members have interpreted these teachings and applied them to life in society today.

- birth and initiation ceremonies;
- the home, upbringing and spirituality and their role in decision-making and life choices, including formation of moral codes, relevance of religion;
- activities of faith groups for young people, e.g. youth groups such as Brigades, educating in the faith, Taize, Spring Harvest, worship, key celebrations and festivals;
- commitment – membership and/or coming of age ceremonies, e.g. confirmation, Bar/Bat Mitzvah;
- rights and responsibilities, including freedom of choice, relationships, rules;
- problems and benefits associated with belief and young people, including generation gap, marginalisation, peer pressure, secular society, empowerment, purpose, brotherhood;
- role of schools, including Religious Studies, assemblies, faith schools.

3.3 Unit 3 Religion and Morality

Aims of GCSE Religious Studies Specifications

This unit will provide students with the opportunity to:

- develop their knowledge, skills and understanding of religion by exploring the significance and impact of beliefs, teachings, sources, practices, ways of life and forms of expressing meaning;
- express their personal responses and informed insights on fundamental questions and issues about identity, belonging, meaning, purpose, truth, values and commitments.

Questions will be focussed on concepts and framed in an open-ended way that will allow candidates to answer with reference to the religion(s) they have studied. The Specification allows for the study solely of Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism or Sikhism, or for a combination of any of these specified religions. This unit may be studied as a Short Course GCSE or may form part of a Full Course GCSE in Religious Studies when taken with another unit from this Specification.

Unit 3

This unit is designed to enable Religious Studies to link closely with other subjects, particularly Citizenship and Personal, Social and Health Education, and to contribute actively to pupils' Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development and the Every Child Matters agenda.

The aim of this unit is to enable candidates to address fundamental questions about the basis for religious beliefs and behaviour and to investigate ways in which religious beliefs and values are relevant to specified moral issues and behaviour.

Within the areas of study outlined in Topics 1 to 6, candidates are expected to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- relevant teachings from both sacred texts and contemporary religious leaders and organisations;
- the work of voluntary groups and organisations (religious and non-religious), where they make a significant contribution;
- the diversity of viewpoints which may exist within religions;
- significant secular responses and the legal position;
- the relationship between religious beliefs and teachings and action in the lives of believers.

Assessment

Candidates will be required to answer **four** questions in the examination, based on four of the six topics available.

Topic 1 Religious Attitudes to Matters of Life (Medical Ethics)

Within this topic candidates should be aware of religious beliefs and teachings concerning the value of life, the importance of health and healing and who is responsible for life. They should be aware of the religious and ethical issues raised by new medical technologies and for the ways in which people respond to situations within this area and in particular to the following topics:

- the concept of the sanctity of life in relation to medical research and practice in the areas of:
 - human genetic engineering, including designer babies, saviour siblings,
 - embryology,
 - cloning,
 - stem cell (therapeutic);
 - transplant surgery,
 - blood transfusion,
 - experiments on humans;
- the desire to have children and the ways in which this can be fulfilled through:
 - fertility treatments such as in vitro fertilisation (IVF),
 - artificial insemination by donor (AID or DI),
 - artificial insemination by husband (AIH),
 - surrogacy;
- the implications of artificial methods of reproduction for those who take part and for the children produced.

Topic 2 Religious Attitudes to the Elderly and Death

Within this topic candidates should be aware of religious beliefs and teachings concerning the value of life, the treatment of the elderly, death and what happens after death. They should be aware of the implications of these and of developments in medicine and medical ethics for the ways in which people respond to situations within this area and in particular to the following topics:

- the concepts of the sanctity and quality of life;
- senior citizenship, including experience, retirement, role within the family, ageism, finance and health;
- the role of the family and community in caring for the elderly and the nature of individual and corporate responsibility, including the work of homes for the elderly, hospitals and hospices;
- the law concerning death and euthanasia;

- the use of life support machines to sustain life and the problems associated with making decisions about whether to continue life by artificial means or whether and under what circumstances a machine should be switched off and a life terminated;
- the problems associated with a definition of death and the significance of the heart and the brain together;
- the issue of the right to self-determination in relation to euthanasia;
- the distinction between active and passive euthanasia and the contemporary debate about euthanasia;
- the comfort given by religions to the dying and the mourning and beliefs about life after death.

Topic 3 Religious Attitudes to Drug Abuse

Within this topic candidates should be aware of religious beliefs and teachings concerning the mind and body. They should be aware of the implications of these in relation to the taking of drugs for non-medical purposes and with reference to the following areas:

- the religious beliefs and teaching concerning the mind and body and rights and responsibilities;
- religious attitudes to the use of drugs, including medically prescribed, legal and illegal drugs;
- legally accepted drugs and their effects, including caffeine, alcohol, tobacco;
- the use of the taxes raised on alcohol and tobacco for medical research and treatment;
- the reasons why illegal drugs may be taken; physical, mental, and social consequences of taking drugs for social and recreational purposes.
- issues concerning obtaining drugs and the effects on other people, e.g. stealing to pay for their habit, drinking or taking illegal drugs and driving, family problems;
- the effectiveness of methods aimed at reducing drug abuse and rehabilitating users;
- the law and drugs, including the debate about the classification and legal status of different drugs, including cannabis, ecstasy, heroin, solvents, alcohol.

Topic 4 Religious Attitudes to Crime and Punishment

Within this topic candidates should be aware of religious beliefs and teachings concerning human nature, wrong-doing and the punishment of offenders, and repentance and forgiveness. They should be aware of the implications of these beliefs and teachings in relation to:

- an understanding of the religious beliefs about law and order;
- concepts of right and wrong, conscience, duty and responsibility;
- the debate about the causes of crime including social, environmental and psychological explanations;
- the different types of crimes, including against the person, property and the state and religious offences;
- the aims of punishment, defined as protection, retribution, deterrence, reformation, vindication and reparation;
- the appropriateness of different forms of punishment in achieving the aims of punishment, including:
 - the handling of young offenders,
 - the effects of imprisonment,
 - the meaning and implications of life imprisonment,
 - issues arising out of parole and early release,
 - the debate about the death penalty (capital punishment);
- alternatives to prison, including electronic tagging, probation, fines and community service and the debate about prison reform.

Topic 5 Religious Attitudes to Rich and Poor in British Society

Within this topic candidates should be aware of religious beliefs and teachings concerning individual wealth and poverty and explanations for the existence of both rich and poor in society. They should be aware of the implications of these beliefs and teachings in relation to:

- religious attitudes towards the rich and the poor;
- religious attitudes towards the responsible use of money;
- the possible causes and sources of wealth, including business and enterprise, gifts and inheritance, earnings and savings;
- the possible causes of poverty, including:
 - homelessness,
 - laziness,
 - apathy,
 - gambling,
 - lack of education,
 - family situation,
 - dependency,
 - illness;

- ways of overcoming poverty: what is being done to help people break out of the poverty trap, including counselling, training, education, fund raising and the work of charities and religious organisations;
- issues such as the minimum wage and excessive salaries;
- the debate about who is responsible for the poor and what they should do to care for the poor, including the roles of the state, the community and the family;
- the role of the lotteries as a source of charity funding and personal wealth; whether or not it is right to take part.

Topic 6 Religious Attitudes to World Poverty

Within this topic candidates should be aware of religious beliefs and teachings on world poverty and should be aware of how religious leaders and other faith members have interpreted these texts in the light of contemporary life.

- teachings from religions, both traditional and contemporary, about world poverty;
- religious concepts of justice, stewardship and compassion;
- understanding the problem of poverty in Less Economically Developed Countries (LEDCs), including exploitation, debt, war, unfair trade, corruption, natural disasters, climate;
- examples of LEDCs;
- global interdependence and world trade;
- reasons why believers should care for the poor in other countries;
- the work of religious organisations which help to alleviate world poverty;
- ways believers care for the poor in developing countries, including religious charities, aid, fair trade and voluntary service;
- emergency aid and long term aid;
- need for sustainable development.

3.4 Unit 4 Religious Philosophy and Ultimate Questions

Aims of GCSE Religious Studies Specifications

This unit will provide students with the opportunity to:

- develop their knowledge, skills and understanding of religion by exploring the significance and impact of beliefs, teachings, sources, practices, ways of life and forms of expressing meaning;
- express their personal responses and informed insights on fundamental questions and issues about identity, belonging, meaning, purpose, truth, values and commitments.

Questions will be focussed on concepts and framed in an open-ended way that will allow candidates to answer with reference to religion(s), as appropriate. This unit may be studied as a Short Course or may form part of a Full Course in GCSE Religious Studies when taken with another unit from this Specification.

Unit 4

This unit is intended to begin philosophical thinking at GCSE, focussed on matter linked to the Philosophy of Religion. It encourages candidates to reflect upon ultimate questions about the meaning and purpose of life, and to develop their own reasoned response to those questions. In the examination, candidates will be expected to illustrate their answers by reference to actual arguments put forward by philosophers in relation to the issues. This unit allows candidates to use examples from one or more of the six major world religions of Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism.

Assessment

Candidates will be required to answer **four** questions in the examination, based on four of the following six topics.

Questions will be focussed on concepts and frames in open-ended ways that allow candidates to answer with reference to the religion(s) they have studied.

Topic 1 The Existence of God

Candidates need only refer to **one** religious tradition in this section. Candidates will be expected to know the following terms: *theist*, *atheist*, *agnostic*.

Candidates may be asked questions on the following arguments for God's existence:

- First Cause argument (cosmological argument);
- Design argument (teleological argument);
- argument from miracles;

- argument from religious experience;
- argument from morality;
- arguments against belief in the existence of God.
- candidates will be expected to be able to outline arguments in any of these areas;
- they will also be expected to be able to outline basic problems with the arguments;
- how plausible/strong are the arguments?;
- what faults lie within them?

Topic 2 Revelation

This topic looks at the idea of God's self revelation to humanity. It explores the reasonableness of the evidence of revelation, and why revelation is questioned as a real experience.

- general revelation. Candidates will be expected to understand God's revelation through scripture, nature and conscience;
- special revelation. Candidates will be expected to understand God's revelation through a direct meeting, vision or dream, including examples from scripture, worship and prayer;
- the power of any type of revelation, and its impact on those receiving the revelation;
- what is learnt of God – qualities of God such as supremacy, immanence, transcendence, personal nature, impersonal nature, omnipotence, omniscience and benevolence;
- the comparative strengths and weaknesses of general versus special revelation;
- the issue of reality or illusion in terms of any revelation;
- alternative explanations for claims of revelation;
- the question of whether accepting the reality of revelation lead to problems for the believer, such as why believers have different ideas about God.

Topic 3 The Problems of Evil and Suffering

This topic explores the concepts of evil and suffering in a created world, God's responsibility for each, and man's response.

- **the Problem of Evil** – a definition;
- what is evil? – examples and definition;
- what is its nature? – impersonal force, a personal being, or psychological phenomena?;
- where does evil originate?;
- what questions does evil raise about God's love, power and purpose?;

- how do religious believers resolve the problem of evil in terms of their beliefs, for example in terms of believing in an all-loving, all-powerful, all-knowing God?;
- how do/should believers respond in the face of evil?
- **the Problem of Suffering** – a definition;
- what are the forms of suffering?;
- is suffering natural or man-made?;
- in what ways is suffering unjust?;
- has suffering any purpose?;
- what questions does suffering raise about God's love, power and purpose?;
- the concept of karma as an explanation for evil in the world;
- how do religious believers resolve the problem of suffering in terms of their beliefs, for example in terms of karma or believing in an all-loving, all-powerful, all-knowing God?;
- how do/should believers respond in the face of suffering?

Topic 4 Immortality

This topic considers the meaning of death, and the afterlife. It also explores the reasonableness of such belief, as well as the problems created by it.

- ideas of what would count as immortality – reincarnation, resurrection, rebirth, a legacy, as a memory of others;
- the problems associated with any of these options of immortality;
- evidence of immortality, such as scriptural accounts, ghost experience, channelling, Near Death Experience, revelation;
- evidence against immortality, such as lack of proof, science, atheism;
- the concept of dualism, and the mind/body/soul debate, including its impact on how we define death, and issues raised by people thinking of themselves as a combination of these entities.

Topic 5 Miracles

This topic considers whether miracles occur, and if we can properly define them. It also explores the idea that miracles are based on interpretation rather than real evidence, and as such are always subject to doubt and cynicism.

- what do we mean by miracles? – something impossible, something contrary to the laws of nature, something only God does;
- does God work in the world through miracles?;
- can humans perform miracles?;

- examples of miracles from scripture, tradition, history and experience;
- evidence of/for miracles;
- the power of miracles in revealing God, and the qualities of God, such as benevolence, omnipotence, immanence;
- the question of to what extent the acceptance of the existence of miracles lead to problems for the believer?;
- Hume's argument regarding the impossibility of miracles.

Topic 6 Science and Religion

This topic compares and contrasts science and religion, trying to see how similar or different the two are. It particularly looks at two key issues – the origins of the universe, and the origins of life.

- scientific truth versus religious truth – what each truth is, including examples, and how it is derived;
- the issue of an evolving, changing truth versus an absolute truth;
- the issue of compatibility, including the question of whether these types of truth answer the same questions;
- why society seems to favour science over religion in the modern world, and the impact of this.

Scientific versus religious truth through the following two foci:

- **origins of the universe** – Big Bang versus Genesis 1 creation story;
- interpretations of religious creation stories, and whether this affects their compatibility with scientific theory;
- the Cosmological revolution (development of the round earth theory, and the universe with the sun as its focal point);
- the challenge the Cosmological revolution posed for religious belief in the late Middle Ages.
- **origins of life** – creation versus evolution;
- design versus evolution;
- Darwin's reliance on God to make evolution work;
- To what extent science and religion can agree;
- how evolutionary theory – when first put forward by Darwin – was a challenge to religious belief;
- the question of whether humans were created or evolved, and its impact on human attitudes and behaviour within society and to the rest of the world generally.

3.5 Unit 5 Religious Expression in Society

Aims of GCSE Religious Studies Specifications

This unit will provide students with the opportunity to:

- develop their knowledge, skills and understanding of religion by exploring the significance and impact of beliefs, teachings, sources, practices, ways of life and forms of expressing meaning;
- express their personal responses and informed insights on fundamental questions and issues about identity, belonging, meaning, purpose, truth, values and commitments.

Questions will be focussed on concepts and framed in an open-ended way that will allow candidates to answer with reference to the religion(s) they have studied. The Specification allows for the study solely of Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism or Sikhism or a combination of any of these specified religions. This unit may be studied as a Short Course GCSE or may form part of a Full Course GCSE in Religious Studies when taken with another unit from this Specification.

Unit 5

This unit offers an opportunity to study the expressive arts through the medium of religion and spirituality. It also looks at how religious believers express their religion in society today. It is intended to be a generic exploration allowing for investigation through any number of religions.

Assessment

Candidates will be required to answer **four** questions in the examination, based on four of the six topics available.

Overview

What is Spirituality?

This material should be considered in the light of each of the other topics in the unit. It is an exploration of the nature of spirituality.

- what do we mean by spirituality?
- how is spirituality expressed?
- why is spirituality such a powerful influence?
- what is the place of spirituality in the modern world?

- the concept of blasphemy – what it is, how it is demonstrated, and its impact on a religious people.

Topic 1 Religion and Art

This topic explores art in its various forms, how spirituality has influenced art, and the contribution art has made to spirituality. Candidates will be expected to be able to discuss at least **one** piece of art (Centres are free to choose the piece).

- what is religious art?;
- how is it produced – inspiration, revelation or devotion?;
- different types, and examples, including icons, painting, calligraphy, graffiti, sculpture;
- how and why religions use art;
- how is religious art used in worship (public and/or private)?;
- what impact does religious art have on those looking on – believers and non-believers?;
- what does religious art tell us – about God, about belief, about the artist?;
- the symbolic nature of this form of spirituality.

Topic 2 Religion and Architecture

This topic explores architecture in its various forms, how spirituality has influenced architecture, and the contribution architecture has made to spirituality. Candidates will be expected to be able to discuss at least **one** architectural piece (Centres are free to choose the piece).

- what is religious architecture?;
- how is religious architecture produced – inspiration, revelation or devotion?;
- different types, and examples of the following: places of worship, graveyard architecture, edifices, monuments, statues;
- how and why religions use architecture;
- how is religious architecture used in worship (public and/or private)?;
- what impact does it have on those looking on – believers and non-believers?;
- what does religious architecture tell us – about God, about belief, about the architect?;
- the symbolic nature of this form of spirituality.

Topic 3 Religion and Literature

This topic explores literature in its various forms, how spirituality has influenced literature, and the contribution literature has made to spirituality. Candidates will be expected to be able to discuss at least **one** work of literature (Centres are free to choose the piece).

- what is religious literature?;
- how is religious literature produced – inspiration, revelation or devotion?;
- different types, and examples of the following: holy books, books of teachings of famous believers, fiction with a religious message, poetry;
- how and why religions use literature;
- how is religious literature used in worship (public and/or private)?;
- what impact does religious literature have on those looking on – believers and non-believers?;
- what does religious literature tell us – about God, about belief, about the writer?;
- the symbolic nature of this form of spirituality.

Topic 4 Religion and Media

This topic explores media in their various forms, how spirituality has influenced media, and the contribution media have made to spirituality. Candidates will be expected to be able to discuss at least **one** piece from one or two genres (Centres are free to choose the piece).

- how is religion portrayed in the media – newspaper, magazine, analogue/satellite/digital TV, radio, Internet, film, documentary?;
- the positive and negative sides of religious portrayal, including education, supporting/strengthening faith, indoctrination;
- should religions be able to censor what is shown through different media forms?;
- how and why religions use the media;
- what impact does religious media have on those looking on – believers and non-believers?;
- what does religious media tell us – about God, about belief, about the producers?;
- the symbolic nature of this form of spirituality.

Topic 5 Religion and Music

This topic explores music in its various forms, how spirituality has influenced music, and the contribution music has made to spirituality. Candidates will be expected to be able to discuss at least **one** piece of music (Centres are free to choose the piece).

- what is religious music?;
- how is it produced – inspiration, revelation or devotion?;
- different types, and examples of the following: hymns, mainstream types of music, chanting, scripture put to music;
- how and why religions use music;
- how is religious music used in worship (public and/or private)?;
- what impact does religious music have on those looking on – believers and non-believers?;
- what does religious music tell us – about God, about belief, about the composer/lyricist?;
- the symbolic nature of this form of spirituality.

Topic 6 Religion in Contemporary Society

The topic explores how people express their spirituality generally within society, and the comparative impact of each, as well as how this expression can lead to negativity from others in society.

- expressing belonging – membership of a religion (including different types of membership such as lay/denominational, faith commune, community and monastic);
- use and wearing of symbols, and their meaning;
- attendance to acts of worship;
- the importance of any of the following: membership, use of symbols and attendance at worship;
- the benefits drawn from the following: membership, use of symbols and attendance at worship;
- the difficulties brought for a believer by public expression of spirituality.

3.6 Unit 6 Worship and Key Beliefs

Aims of GCSE Religious Studies Specifications

This unit will provide students with the opportunity to:

- develop their knowledge, skills and understanding of religion by exploring the significance and impact of beliefs, teachings, sources, practices, ways of life and forms of expressing meaning
- express their personal responses and informed insights on fundamental questions and issues about identity, belonging, meaning, purpose, truth, values and commitments.

Unit 6

This unit allows candidates to explore the key beliefs, teachings and practice of **at least two** of the six major world faiths (Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Sikhism). It also allows for a comparison and contrast of facets of two faiths. Candidates will be expected to evaluate and make judgements about the impact and importance of those facets of the faith. Questions will facilitate answers from any of the six major world religions, but will not be specifically about one religion.

Assessment

Candidates will be required to answer **four** questions in the examination, based on four of the six topics available. These topics are more fully defined in the tables which follow.

Topic 1 Places of Worship

For each religion studied:

- description and symbolism of the exterior of buildings;
- description and symbolism of the interior of buildings;
- furnishings, including the use and symbolism;
- why there are religious buildings;
- money spent on religious buildings, including making judgements regarding this use of money;
- uses and role in community, including its influence on the community;
- the value of buildings to an individual or the religion.

Topic 2 Worship

For each religion studied:

- worship at place of worship and at home, including the key elements of each;
- aids to worship (items used in worship) – what they are, how they are used, and their symbolism;
- roles in worship of different members of the religious community, and their importance;
- day of worship, including its importance and why it was chosen;
- function and value of worship itself;
- attitudes to worship in the life of faith.

Topic 3 Pilgrimage

For each religion studied:

- key places of pilgrimage;
- linked events and history, people, symbolism, practices for each place of pilgrimage;
- impact of pilgrimage on a religion and on an individual, including links with miraculous happenings, and pilgrimage as a life-changing experience;
- value of pilgrimage to a religion or individual;
- attitudes to the place/role of pilgrimage in a modern society.

Topic 4 Origins and Beliefs

For each religion studied:

- origins of the faith, including life of the founder or prophet;
- concept of God;
- nature of afterlife, and how this life influences that one;
- concept of soul (or similar, or no soul);
- basic beliefs/teaching;
- value to the believer of these concepts, and the impact on the lives of believers.

Topic 5 Practices and Belonging

For each religion studied:

- behaviour codes, including the need to follow them, and attitudes to those who do not;
- duties;
- dietary laws, including the challenges this may present to believers living in a multicultural society;
- prayer and meditation;
- rites of passage;
- key festivals.

For each practice, both the importance and the value must be studied.

Topic 6 Authority

For each religion studied:

- people, the life stories for the founders of a faith, role, importance and value (founder; Prophet; community leadership; leadership at all levels);
- tradition and community, and how these impact in the modern world;
- holy books – composition, importance, interpretation – and their influence in the modern world, including fundamentalist interpretations;

- the relative merits of people, tradition and holy book, including comparison and contrast.

There follows a grid of appropriate aspects to guide teaching of this course from the perspective of any of the six major world religions.

Each element should be fully studied for each of the two religions chosen.

	TOPIC 1 Place of Worship	TOPIC 2 Worship	TOPIC 3 Pilgrimage	TOPIC 4 Origins and Beliefs	TOPIC 5 Practices and Belonging	TOPIC 6 Religious Authority
Buddhism	<p>Temple, shrine, stupa</p> <p>Shrines in the home</p> <p>Design, furniture, furnishings, artefacts and symbolism of place of worship</p> <p>Uses of the place of worship</p>	<p>Merit-making</p> <p>Forms of meditation: samatha, vipassana</p> <p>Mandalas and malas</p> <p>Use of symbols/aids to worship</p> <p>Role of sangha and bhikkhus</p> <p>Use of sacred texts</p> <p>Devotion in the home</p>	<p>Places linked to the Buddha, e.g. Lumbini, Bodh Gaya, Benares, Kushinagara</p>	<p>No God</p> <p>Concept of Buddhas and Buddha heavens in Mahayana</p> <p>Life of the Buddha</p> <p>Three marks of Existence</p> <p>Four Noble Truths</p> <p>Noble Eightfold Path</p> <p>Samsara, Moksha and Nibbana</p>	<p>Three Refuges</p> <p>Bodhisatva Vow</p> <p>Five Precepts</p> <p>Compassion and metta in life</p> <p>Attitudes to meat</p> <p>Meditation</p> <p>Rites of passage</p> <p>Key festivals: Wesak, Songkran</p>	<p>Leadership within religion</p> <p>Sacred texts: origins, use, symbolism and importance</p>
Christianity	<p>Church</p> <p>Cathedral</p> <p>The home as place of worship</p> <p>Design, furniture, furnishings, artefacts and symbolism of place of worship</p> <p>Uses of the place of worship</p>	<p>Importance of Sunday</p> <p>Service of Holy Communion</p> <p>Forms and types of prayer and meditation</p> <p>Use of symbols and aids to worship</p> <p>Role of leaders in worship</p> <p>Use of sacred texts</p> <p>Prayer and Bible study in the home</p>	<p>Places of pilgrimage, e.g. Bethlehem, Jerusalem, Rome, Lourdes</p>	<p>Concept of God: attributes and qualities</p> <p>Nature of afterlife: Purgatory, Judgement Day, resurrection to heaven/hell</p> <p>Resurrection of body</p> <p>Jesus Christ</p> <p>Apostles' Creed</p>	<p>Ten Commandments</p> <p>Prayer and meditation, including mysticism</p> <p>Attitudes to food, including meat</p> <p>Tithing</p> <p>Rites of passage</p> <p>Key festivals: Christmas and Easter</p>	<p>Leadership within religion</p> <p>Holy book: origins, use, symbolism and importance</p>

	TOPIC 1 Place of Worship	TOPIC 2 Worship	TOPIC 3 Pilgrimage	TOPIC 4 Origins and Beliefs	TOPIC 5 Practices and Belonging	TOPIC 6 Religious Authority
Hinduism	<p>Temple Mandir Puja room and shrines in the home Design, furniture, furnishings, artefacts and symbolism of place of worship Uses of the place of worship</p>	<p>Five daily obligations Ceremonies and rituals in the mandir/temple/at home, including puja, arti, havan, pravachan, bhakan and kirtan Meditation, including Om, mantras, rangolis, yoga Use of aids and symbols to worship Role of leaders in worship Use of sacred texts Devotion in the home</p>	<p>Places of pilgrimage, e.g. Ganges River, Prayag (Kumbh Mela), Varanasi, Mathura</p>	<p>Unknown origins – concept of ultimate reality: Brahman; Trimurti; deities, including Krishna, Kali, Lakshmi, Rama and Ganesha. Nature of after life: Samsara, Moksha, Nirvana Karma and reincarnation Four aims of life: dharma, artha, kama, moksha Four varnas: shudras, kshatriyas, brahmins, vaishyas</p>	<p>Food laws/attitudes to meat Four yogas: karma, jnana, astanga, bhakti Virtues: ahimsa, tolerance, compassion, respect, wisdom, honesty, cleanliness Four ashrams: brahmachari, grihastha, vanaprastha, sannyasa Rites of passage Key festivals: Holi, Diwali</p>	<p>Leadership within religion Holy book: origins, use, symbolism and importance Contrast of shruti and smriti</p>
Islam	<p>Mosque The home as a place of worship Design, furniture, furnishings, artefacts and symbolism of place of worship Uses of the place of worship</p>	<p>Salah, including times, call to prayer, ablutions (wudu), prayer sequence (raka) Importance of Jum'ah (Friday) prayer Use of aids to worship Role of leaders in worship Use of sacred text Prayer and study of Qur'an/Hadith in the home</p>	<p>Places of pilgrimage, e.g. Makkah, Madinah, Jerusalem</p>	<p>Concept of Allah Three beliefs – tawhid, akhirah, risallah Concept of afterlife – Barzakh, Sorting, Sirat Bridge, judgement for Paradise/Hell Concept of soul (nafs) and resurrection Prophet Muhammad Five Pillars of Islam, in belief Ummah</p>	<p>Hadith and Shari'ah Five Pillars of Islam, in practice Dietary laws Prayer – du'a Rites of Passage Key festivals: Eid ul Fitr, Eid ul Adha</p>	<p>Leadership within religion Holy book – origins, use, symbolism and importance Additionally, Hadith and Sunnah, as well as Shari'ah</p>

	TOPIC 1 Place of Worship	TOPIC 2 Worship	TOPIC 3 Pilgrimage	TOPIC 4 Origins and Beliefs	TOPIC 5 Practices and Belonging	TOPIC 6 Religious Authority
Judaism	<p>Synagogue</p> <p>The home as a place of worship</p> <p>Design, furniture, furnishings, artefacts and symbolism of place of worship</p> <p>Uses of the place of worship</p>	<p>Importance of Shabbat</p> <p>Shabbat worship in the synagogue and at home</p> <p>Use of symbols and aids to worship</p> <p>Role of leaders in worship</p> <p>Use of sacred texts</p> <p>Prayer and study of Torah in the home</p>	<p>Places of pilgrimage, e.g. Jerusalem, (including specific sites within Jerusalem such as Western Wall, Yad Vashem)</p>	<p>Concept of HaShem/ God</p> <p>Concept of soul</p> <p>Concept of after life – Sheol, return of Messiah, resurrection, and Judgement Day</p> <p>Shema</p> <p>Founding Fathers of Judaism – Abraham, Moses</p>	<p>Dietary laws – Kashrut</p> <p>Ten Commandments, and 613 Mitzvot</p> <p>Shabbat practice</p> <p>Tzedek</p> <p>Prayer</p> <p>Rites of Passage</p> <p>Key festivals: Yom Kippur and Rosh Hashanah; Pesach</p>	<p>Leadership within religion</p> <p>Holy book: origins, use, symbolism and importance</p> <p>Additionally, Talmud</p>
Sikhism	<p>Gurdwara</p> <p>Langar</p> <p>Use of the home in worship</p> <p>Design, furniture, furnishings, artefacts and symbolism of place of worship</p> <p>Uses of the place of worship</p>	<p>Forms and patterns of worship in the gurdwara and in the home</p> <p>Use of symbols and aids to worship</p> <p>Role of leaders in worship</p> <p>Use of sacred text in worship</p> <p>Prayer and private study of Guru Granth Sahib/ Gutka in the home</p>	<p>Places of pilgrimage, e.g. Amritsar, Five Takhts</p>	<p>Concept of God</p> <p>Mool Mantra</p> <p>Karma, Reincarnation and the goal of life</p> <p>Concept of Khalsa, including formation, 5 Ks, and keeping of kurahit</p> <p>Japji</p> <p>Guru Nanak</p>	<p>Dietary laws</p> <p>Kurahit in practice</p> <p>Sewa, including tithing</p> <p>Prayer, including Nit nem</p> <p>Rites of passage</p> <p>Key festivals: Baisakhi, Diwali</p>	<p>Leadership within religion</p> <p>Holy book: origins, use, symbolism and importance</p> <p>Additionally, gutka</p>

4 Scheme of Assessment

4.1 Aims and learning outcomes

GCSE courses based on this Specification should encourage candidates to be inspired, moved and changed by following a broad, satisfying and worthwhile course of study that challenges young people and equips them to lead constructive lives in the modern world.

This specification enables candidates to:

- adopt an enquiring, critical and reflective approach to the study of religion;
- explore religions and beliefs, reflect upon fundamental questions, engage with them intellectually and respond personally;
- enhance their spiritual and moral development, and contribute to their health and well being;
- enhance their personal, social and cultural development, their understanding of different cultures locally, nationally and in the wider world to contribute to social and community cohesion;
- develop their interest and enthusiasm for the study of religion, and relate it to the wider world;
- reflect on and develop their own values, opinions and attitudes in light of their learning.

4.2 Assessment Objectives (AOs)

The assessment units will assess the following assessment objectives in the context of the content and skills set out in Section 3 (Subject Content).

AO1	Describe, explain and analyse, using knowledge and understanding.
AO2	Use evidence and reasoned argument to express and evaluate personal responses, informed insights, and differing viewpoints.

AO1 and AO2 are interrelated and connections must be made. Candidates will be expected to use their knowledge and understanding to support their responses to the issues for evaluation.

Quality of Written Communication (QWC)

GCSE Specifications which require candidates to produce written material in English must:

- ensure that text is legible and that spelling, punctuation and grammar are accurate so that meaning is clear;
- select and use a form and style of writing appropriate to purpose and to complex subject matter;
- organise information clearly and coherently, using specialist vocabulary when appropriate.

In this Specification QWC will be assessed in all questions that require extended writing and in all units.

Weighting of Assessment Objectives for GCSE Short Course

The table below shows the approximate weighting of each of the Assessment Objectives in the GCSE Short Course units.

Assessment Objectives	Unit Weightings (%)		Overall Weighting of AOs (%)
	All Units		
AO1	50		50
AO2	50		50
Overall weighting of units (%)	100		100

Weighting of Assessment Objectives for GCSE Full Course

The table below shows the approximate weighting of each of the Assessment Objectives in the GCSE Full Course units.

Assessment Objectives	Unit Weightings (%)		Overall Weighting of AOs (%)
	1 st Unit	2 nd Unit	
AO1	25	25	50
AO2	25	25	50
Overall weighting of units (%)	50	50	100

4

4.3 National criteria

This specification complies with the following.

- The Subject Criteria for GCSE Religious Studies including the rules for Controlled Assessment
- Code of Practice
- The GCSE Qualification Criteria
- The Arrangements for the Statutory Regulation of External Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland: Common Criteria
- The requirements for qualifications to provide access to Levels 1 and 2 of the National Qualification Framework.

4.4 Prior learning

There are no prior learning requirements.

However, any requirements set for entry to a course following this specification are at the discretion of centres.

4.5 Access to assessment: diversity and inclusion

GCSEs often require assessment of a broader range of competences. This is because they are general qualifications and, as such, prepare candidates for a wide range of occupations and higher level courses.

The revised GCSE qualification and subject criteria were reviewed to identify whether any of the competences required by the subject presented a potential barrier to any candidates regardless of their ethnic origin, religion, gender, age, disability or sexual orientation. If this was the case, the situation was

reviewed again to ensure such competences were included only where essential to the subject. The findings of this process were discussed with groups who represented the interests of a diverse range of candidates.

Reasonable adjustments are made for disabled candidates in order to enable them to access the assessments. For this reason, very few candidates will have a complete barrier to any part of the assessment. Further details are given in Section 5.4.

5 Administration

5.1 Availability of assessment units and certification

Examinations and certification for this specification are available as follows:

	Availability of Units		Availability of Certification	
	All units	Short Course	Full Course	
January 2010				
June 2010	✓	✓		
January 2011				
June 2011 onwards	✓	✓		✓

5.2 Entries

Please refer to the current version of *Entry Procedures and Codes* for up to date entry procedures. You should use the following entry codes for the units and for certification.

- Unit 1 Religion and Citizenship (40551)
- Unit 2 Religion and Life Issues (40552)
- Unit 3 Religion and Morality (40553)
- Unit 4 Religious Philosophy and Ultimate Questions (40554)
- Unit 5 Religious Expression in Society (40555)
- Unit 6 Worship and Key Beliefs (40556)

GCSE Short Course certification – (4056)
GCSE certification – (4057)

QCA's 40% terminal rule means that 40% of the assessment must be taken in the examination series in which the qualification is awarded. This rule is not dependent on the size of the qualification. Therefore, all GCSE candidates, whether taking short course, single and double awards, must have 40% of their assessment taken at the end.

5.3 Private candidates

This specification is available to private candidates. Private candidates should write to AQA for a copy of *Supplementary Guidance for Private Candidates*.

5.4 Access arrangements and special consideration

We have taken note of equality and discrimination legislation and the interests of minority groups in developing and administering this specification.

We follow the guidelines in the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) document: *Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration: General and Vocational Qualifications*. This is published on the JCQ website (<http://www.jcq.org.uk>) or you can follow the link from our website (<http://www.aqa.org.uk>).

Access arrangements

We can make arrangements so that candidates with special needs can access the assessment. These arrangements must be made **before** the examination. For example, we can produce a Braille paper for a candidate with a visual impairment.

Special consideration

We can give special consideration to candidates who have had a temporary illness, injury or indisposition at the time of the examination. Where we do this, it is given **after** the examination.

Applications for access arrangements and special consideration should be submitted to AQA by the Examinations Officer at the centre.

5.5 Language of examinations

We will provide units for this specification in English only.

5.6 Qualification titles

Qualifications based on this specification are:

- AQA GCSE Short Course in Religious Studies,
- AQA GCSE Full Course in Religious Studies.

5.7 Awarding grades and reporting results

The GCSE and GCSE short course qualifications will be graded on an eight-grade scale: A*, A, B, C, D, E, F and G. Candidates who fail to reach the minimum standard for grade G will be recorded as U (unclassified) and will not receive a qualification certificate.

We will publish the minimum raw mark for each grade, for each unit, when we issue candidates' results. We will report a candidate's unit results to centres in terms of uniform marks and qualification results in terms of uniform marks and grades.

For each unit, the uniform mark corresponds to a grade as follows.

Each unit (maximum uniform mark = 100)

Grade	Uniform Mark Range
A*	90–100
A	80–89
B	70–79
C	60–69
D	50–59
E	40–49
F	30–39
G	20–29
U	0–19

We calculate a candidate's total uniform mark by adding together the uniform marks for the relevant units. We convert this total uniform mark to a grade as follows.

Short Course (maximum uniform mark = 100)

Grade	Uniform Mark Range
A*	90–100
A	80–89
B	70–79
C	60–69
D	50–59
E	40–49
F	30–39
G	20–29
U	0–19

Full Course (maximum uniform mark = 200)

Grade	Uniform Mark Range
A*	180–200
A	160–179
B	140–159
C	120–139
D	100–119
E	80–99
F	60–79
G	40–59
U	0–39

5.8 Re-sits and shelf-life of unit results

Unit results remain available to count towards certification within the shelf life of the specification whether or not they have already been used.

Candidates may re-sit a unit once only. The better result for each unit will count towards the final qualification provided that the 40% rule is satisfied. Candidates may re-sit the qualification an unlimited number of times.

Candidates will be graded on the basis of the work submitted for assessment.

Candidates must take units comprising at least 40% of the total assessment in the series in which they enter for certification.

Appendices

A Grade Descriptions

Grade descriptions are provided to give a general indication of the standards of achievement likely to have been shown by candidates awarded particular grades. The descriptions should be interpreted in relation to the content outlined in the specification; they are not designed to define that content.

The grade awarded will depend in practice upon the extent to which the candidate has met the assessment objectives (see Section 4) overall. Shortcomings in some aspects of the candidates' performance may be balanced by better performances in others.

Grade	Description
A	<p>Candidates demonstrate detailed knowledge and thorough understanding of religion to describe, explain and analyse the significance and impact of beliefs, teachings, sources, practices, ways of life and forms of expressing meaning. They interpret, draw out and explain the meaning and importance of the beliefs and practices of the religion(s) and/or beliefs studied, and assess the impact of these on the lives of believers. They explain, where appropriate, how differences in belief lead to differences of religious response. They understand and use accurately and appropriately a range of specialist vocabulary.</p> <p>They use reasoned argument supported by a range of evidence to respond to religious beliefs, moral issues and ultimate questions, recognising the complexity of issues. They demonstrate informed insight in evaluating different points of view to reach evidenced judgements about these beliefs, issues and questions.</p>
C	<p>Candidates demonstrate sound knowledge and understanding of religion to describe and explain the significance and impact of beliefs, teachings, sources, practices, ways of life and forms of expressing meaning. They show awareness of the meaning and importance of the beliefs and practices of the religion(s) and/or beliefs studied, and can describe the impact of these on the lives of believers. They recognise how differences in belief lead to differences of religious response. They communicate their ideas using specialist vocabulary appropriately.</p> <p>They use argument supported by relevant evidence to express and evaluate different responses to issues studied. They refer to different points of view in making judgements about these issues.</p>
F	<p>Candidates demonstrate basic knowledge and understanding of religion to describe, with some reasons, the significance and impact of beliefs, teachings, sources, practices, ways of life and forms of expressing meaning. They show some awareness of the meaning and importance of the religion(s) and/or beliefs studied, sometimes recognising and making simple connections between religion and people's lives. They communicate their ideas using everyday language.</p> <p>They present reasons in support of an opinion about the issues studied, and show some understanding of the complexity of the issues by describing different points of view.</p>

B Spiritual, Moral, Ethical, Social, Legislative, Sustainable Development, Economic and Cultural Issues, and Health and Safety Considerations

AQA has taken great care to ensure that any wider issues, including those particularly relevant to the education of students at Key Stage 4, have been identified and taken into account in the preparation of this specification. They will only form part of the assessment requirements where they relate directly to the specific content of the specification and have been identified in Section 3: Content.

European Dimension

AQA has taken account of the 1988 Resolution of the Council of the European Community in preparing this specification and associated specimen units.

Environmental Education

AQA has taken account of the 1988 Resolution of the Council of the European Community and the Report “Environmental Responsibility: An Agenda for Further and Higher Education” 1993 in preparing this specification and associated specimen units.

Avoidance of Bias

AQA has taken great care in the preparation of this specification and specimen units to avoid bias of any kind.

C Overlaps with other Qualifications

There is the potential for AQA GCSE Religious Studies Specification B to overlap peripherally with Specification A depending on the option(s) chosen within Specification A. However, the approaches adopted in the two Specifications are different. Because of the very specific systematic focus in Specification A, and the generic, thematic

approaches adopted in Specification B it is considered that the two Specifications would provide the basis for a valuable, complementary and mutually enlightening study of religion.

In all cases of overlap, the perspective and depth required in the study of issues or aspects of religion varies within each Specification.

D Key Skills – Teaching, Developing and Providing Opportunities for Generating Evidence

Introduction

The Key Skills Qualification requires candidates to demonstrate levels of achievement in the Key Skills of Communication, Application of Number and Information and Communication Technology.

The Wider Key Skills of Improving own Learning and Performance, Working with Others and Problem Solving are also available. The acquisition and demonstration of ability in these 'wider' Key Skills is deemed highly desirable for all candidates.

The units for each Key Skill comprise three sections:

- What you need to know
- What you must do
- Guidance.

Candidates following a course of study based on this specification for Religious Studies can be offered opportunities to develop and generate evidence of attainment in aspects of the Key Skills of:

- Communication
- Application of Number
- Information and Communication Technology
- Working with Others
- Improving own Learning and Performance
- Problem Solving.

Areas of study and learning that can be used to encourage the acquisition and use of Key Skills, and to provide opportunities to generate evidence for Part B of units, are provided in the Teachers' Resource Bank for this specification.

The above information is given in the context of the knowledge that Key Skills at levels 1 and 2 will be available until 2010 with last certification in 2012.

Key Skills Qualifications of Communication, Application of Number and Information and Communication Technology will be phased out and replaced by Functional Skills qualifications in English, Mathematics and ICT from September 2010 onwards. For further information see the AQA website: <http://web.aqa.org.uk/qual/keyskills/com04.php>.



GCSE Religious Studies B Teaching from 2009 onwards

Qualification Accreditation Number: 500/4568/4 and 500/4483/7 (Short Course)

Every specification is assigned a national classification code indicating the subject area to which it belongs. The classification code for this specification is 4610.

Centres should be aware that candidates who enter for more than one GCSE qualification with the same classification code will have only one grade (the highest) counted for the purpose of the School and College Performance Tables.

Centres may wish to advise candidates that, if they take two specifications with the same classification code, schools and colleges are very likely to take the view that they have achieved only one of the two GCSEs. The same view may be taken if candidates take two GCSE specifications that have different classification codes but have significant overlap of content. Candidates who have any doubts about their subject combinations should check with the institution to which they wish to progress before embarking on their programmes.

To obtain free specification updates and support material or to ask us a question register with Ask AQA:

www.aqa.org.uk/ask-aqa/register

Support meetings are available throughout the life of the specification.

Further information is available at:

<http://events.aqa.org.uk/ebooking>

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