

version 1.0



ASSESSMENT and
QUALIFICATIONS
ALLIANCE

General Certificate of Education

Religious Studies 2007

This specification should be read in conjunction with:

Specimen and Past Papers and Mark Schemes
Reports on the Examination
Teachers' Guide

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Background Information

1

Advanced Subsidiary and Advanced Level Specifications

1.1 Advanced Subsidiary GCE (AS)

Advanced Subsidiary courses were introduced in September 2000 for the award of the first qualification in August 2001. They may be used in one of two ways:

- as a final qualification, allowing candidates to broaden their studies and to defer decisions about specialism;
- as the first half (50%) of an Advanced GCE qualification, which must be completed before an Advanced GCE award can be made.

Advanced Subsidiary GCE is designed to provide an appropriate assessment of knowledge, understanding and skills expected of candidates who have completed the first half of a full Advanced GCE qualification. The level of demand of the Advanced Subsidiary GCE is that expected of candidates half-way through a full Advanced GCE course of study.

1.2 Advanced GCE (AS+A2)

The Advanced GCE examination is in two parts:

- Advanced Subsidiary (AS) - 50% of the total award;
- a second examination, called A2 - 50% of the total award.

Most Advanced Subsidiary and Advanced courses are modular. The Advanced Subsidiary comprises three teaching and learning modules and the A2 comprises a further three teaching and learning modules. Each teaching and learning module is normally assessed through an associated assessment unit. The specification gives details of the relationship between the modules and assessment units.

With the two-part design of Advanced courses, centres may devise an assessment schedule to meet their own and candidates' needs. For example:

- assessment units may be taken at stages throughout the course, at the end of each year or at the end of the total course;
- AS may be completed at the end of one year and A2 by the end of the second year;
- AS and A2 may be completed at the end of the same year.

Details of the availability of the assessment units for each specification are provided in Section 3.

2

Specification at a Glance

Religious Studies

| |
|---------------------------|
| Advanced Subsidiary Award |
| 5061 |



| AS Examination 5061 | | | | |
|---|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Unit 1 | | | | |
| 1 hour | | | | |
| 33 ¹ / ₃ % of the total AS marks | | | | |
| 16 ² / ₃ % of the total Advanced marks | | | | |
| Candidates answer one compulsory stimulus response structured question, and one from two optional structured questions, based on Compulsory Module 1. | | | | |
| TWO OF: | | | | |
| Unit 2 | Unit 3 | Unit 4 | Unit 5 | Unit 6 |
| For each of the two selected units, candidates answer one compulsory stimulus response structured question, and one from two optional structured questions. | | | | |
| 1 hour (each unit) Each unit 33 ¹ / ₃ % of the total AS level marks | | | | |
| Each unit 16 ² / ₃ % of the total Advanced marks | | | | |
| Each of units 2-6 is based on the corresponding subject content Module 2-6 | | | | |



| |
|----------------|
| Advanced Award |
| 6061 |



| A2 Examination 6061 | | | | |
|---|--------|--------|---------|---------|
| TWO OF: | | | | |
| Unit 7 | Unit 8 | Unit 9 | Unit 10 | Unit 11 |
| For each of the two units selected, candidates answer two structured essay questions from a choice of three. | | | | |
| 1½ hours (each unit) Each unit 15% of the total Advanced marks | | | | |
| Each of Units 7-11 is based on the corresponding subject content Module 7-11. | | | | |
| Unit 12 | | | | |
| 1½ hours | | | | |
| 20% of the total Advanced marks | | | | |
| Two questions will be set on each of three topics drawn from the Module 12 subject content. Candidates answer one question. | | | | |

3

Availability of Assessment Units and Entry Details

3.1 Availability of Assessment Units

Examinations based on this specification are available as follows:

| | Availability of Units | | Availability of Qualification | |
|----------------|-----------------------|------|-------------------------------|---------|
| | AS | A2 | AS | A Level |
| January | All | None | ✓ | ✓ |
| June | All | All | ✓ | ✓ |

3.2 Sequencing of Units

The units may be taken in any order, but it is recommended that the AS Units are taken before the A2 Units.

3.3 Entry Codes

Normal entry requirements apply, but the following information should be noted.

The following unit entry codes should be used:

| AS | | A2 | |
|---------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|
| Unit 1 - RS01 | Unit 4 - RS04 | Unit 7 - RS07 | Unit 10 - RS10 |
| Unit 2 - RS02 | Unit 5 - RS05 | Unit 8 - RS08 | Unit 11 - RS11 |
| Unit 3 - RS03 | Unit 6 - RS06 | Unit 9 - RS09 | Unit 12 - RS12 |

The **Subject Code** for entry to the AS only award is 5061

The **Subject Code** for entry to the Advanced Level award is 6061.

3.4 Prohibited Combinations

Candidates entering for this examination are prohibited from entering for any other GCE Religious Studies specification in the same examination series. This does not preclude candidates from taking AS and A2 units with AQA in the same examination series.

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

Centres should be aware that candidates who enter for more than one GCE qualification with the same classification code, will have only one grade (the highest) counted for the purpose of the School College Performance Tables. The classification code for this specification is 4610.

3.5 Access Arrangements and Special Consideration

AQA pays due regard to the provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 in its administration of this specification.

Arrangements may be made to enable candidates with disabilities or other difficulties to access the assessment. An example of an access arrangement is the production of a Braille paper for a candidate with a visual impairment. Special consideration may be requested for candidates whose work has been affected by illness or other exceptional circumstances.

Further details can be found in the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) document:

Access arrangements and Special Consideration

Regulations and Guidance Relating to Candidates who are Eligible for Adjustments in Examination

GCE, VCE, GCSE, GNVQ, Entry Level & Key Skills

This document can be viewed via the AQA web site

(www.aqa.org.uk)

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

Scheme of Assessment

4

Introduction

The specification is designed to offer an academic approach to the study of religion and to be accessible to candidates of any religious persuasion or none. Candidates will have opportunity to study aspects of one or more religions, including textual, theological, historical, ethical, phenomenological and philosophical perspectives. A synoptic module provides opportunity for Advanced candidates to adopt an interdisciplinary approach.

The specification content is sufficient to enable the assessment objectives to be attained. It is also of sufficient depth and/or breadth to permit authentic knowledge and understanding of the areas of study and to facilitate the development of Key Skills and competencies designated in the Advanced Subsidiary and Advanced subject criteria for Religious Studies. The specification content is appropriate to the subject in terms of its concepts, topics, criteria, structure and manageability in terms of time available to candidates for its study. Coherence is achieved by adherence to the required skills and assessment objectives in all alternatives, and by all areas of study making a positive contribution to the understanding and illumination of religions and/or of religious perspectives on aspects of life.

The depth and breadth required of candidates at AS will be less than that required of Advanced level candidates. At Advanced Subsidiary, candidates will be expected to demonstrate a range of knowledge and understanding, with a limited amount of in-depth study. Advanced level students will be expected to demonstrate a wider range of knowledge and a greater depth of understanding of the material. Advanced level students will also be expected to demonstrate greater maturity of thought and expression and more developed analytical skills. They will be able to make connections between a range of topics and sustain an argument which reflects the complexities of the issues. The level descriptors in the mark schemes indicate the different expectations of candidates at Advanced Subsidiary and Advanced level. The specimen mark schemes and specimen question papers are available separately.

The Advanced Subsidiary modules in each area of study provide an introduction to the key concepts and terminology; significant people, traditions or movements where appropriate; major issues and questions; and relationships with other aspects of human experience.

Each is designed to provide the basis for a satisfying course of study both for Advanced candidates and for those who will not proceed beyond Advanced Subsidiary level.

Each A2 module presumes that the corresponding Advanced Subsidiary module has been studied and is designed to promote progression and development from Advanced Subsidiary in candidates' knowledge, understanding and skills.

Each requires depth study of more demanding subject content, including:

- further key concepts and terminology;
- other significant people, traditions or movements where appropriate;
- more difficult major issues and questions;
- more complex relationships with other aspects of human experience.

Candidates will normally be expected to study the same subject areas at AS and A2 levels and this will ensure coherence. However, it is possible to study a coherent but more eclectic range of subject areas. There are many possible combinations of alternatives which complement each other. Teachers will know best which combination will be appropriate for their candidates, taking into account the expertise of staff, the availability of resources, and the abilities, backgrounds and prior knowledge of the candidates. If an A2 module is chosen without the corresponding AS module having been studied, it is the responsibility of candidates and teachers to do whatever additional preparatory work may be necessary to bring candidates' knowledge, understanding and skills up to the threshold level needed for study of the A2 module. The syllabus provides a suitable foundation for study of Religious Studies or related courses in further and higher education. The syllabus also provides a coherent, satisfying and worthwhile course of study for students who do not progress to further study in Religious Studies after Advanced Subsidiary or Advanced.

Prior level of attainment and recommended prior learning

This Advanced Subsidiary and Advanced specification accommodates the needs of candidates with no prior knowledge of the subject. However, the opportunity is provided to build on knowledge, understanding and skills gained in Religious Studies at GCSE and in the GCSE Religious Education short course.

Assessment will be available in English only.

5

Aims

This Advanced Subsidiary and Advanced GCE specification in Religious Studies encourages students to:

- a. develop an interest and enthusiasm for a rigorous study of religion;
- b. treat the subject as an academic discipline by developing knowledge and understanding appropriate to a specialist study of religion;
- c. use an enquiring, critical and empathetic approach to the study of religion.

6

Assessment Objectives

These objectives will be tested in all examination questions.

6.1

The examination will test the extent to which candidates are able:

- A01 to select and demonstrate clearly relevant knowledge and understanding through the use of evidence, examples and correct language and terminology appropriate to the course of study. In addition, Advanced candidates should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the connections between different elements of their course of study;
- A02 to sustain a critical line of argument and justify a point of view. In addition Advanced candidates should relate elements of their course of study to their broader context and to specified aspects of human experience.

6.2

Candidates will be assessed on their ability to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- the key concepts within the chosen area(s) of study and how these are expressed in texts, writings and /or practices;
- the contribution of significant people, traditions or movements to the area(s) studied;
- religious language and terminology;
- major issues and questions arising from the chosen area(s) of study;
- the relationship between the chosen area(s) of study and other specified aspects of human experience.

6.3

Candidates will be assessed on their ability to demonstrate the following skills:

- recall, select and deploy specified knowledge;
- identify, investigate and analyse questions and issues arising from the course of study;
- use appropriate language and terminology in context;
- interpret and evaluate religious concepts, issues, ideas, the relevance of arguments and the views of scholars;
- communicate using reasoned arguments substantiated by evidence;
- make connections between the area(s) of study chosen and other specified aspects of human experience.

6.4

In addition, Advanced GCE candidates are expected to:
demonstrate a wider range and greater depth of knowledge and understanding, a greater maturity of thought and expression and more developed analytical skills.

The Advanced GCE specification has to include 20% synoptic assessment which relates to both assessment objectives. The definition of synoptic assessment in the context of Religious Studies is as follows.

Synoptic assessment assesses the candidates' knowledge and understanding of the connections between elements of the area(s) of study selected. It involves the explicit drawing together of knowledge, understanding and skills learned in different elements of the Advanced Subsidiary and Advanced course. It should also contribute to the assessment of the skill of relating such connections to specified aspects of human experience.

6.5 Quality of Written Communication

The quality of written communication is assessed in all assessment units. Candidates will be assessed according to their ability to:

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

The assessment of the quality of written communication is included in both Assessment Objectives.

7

Scheme of Assessment – *Advanced Subsidiary (AS)*

The Scheme of Assessment has a modular structure. The Advanced Subsidiary GCE (AS) award comprises three assessment units. Candidates must take Unit 1 and two from Units 2 – 6.

7.1 Assessment Units

| | | |
|---|---------------|--------|
| Unit 1 | Written Paper | 1 hour |
| <i>33¹/₃% of the total AS marks</i> | | |

Candidates answer a compulsory stimulus response structured question, followed by one from two structured essay questions. These questions are based on Compulsory Module 1, **An introduction to Religion and Human Experience**.

| | | |
|---|---------------|--------|
| Unit 2 | Written Paper | 1 hour |
| <i>33¹/₃% of the total AS marks</i> | | |

Candidates answer a compulsory stimulus response question, followed by one from two structured essay questions, based on Module 2 of the subject content, **An introduction to the Old Testament**.

| | | |
|---|---------------|--------|
| Unit 3 | Written Paper | 1 hour |
| <i>33¹/₃% of the total AS marks</i> | | |

Candidates answer a compulsory stimulus response question, followed by one from two structured essay questions, based on Module 3 of the subject content, **An introduction to the New Testament**.

| | | |
|---|---------------|--------|
| Unit 4 | Written Paper | 1 hour |
| <i>33¹/₃% of the total AS marks</i> | | |

Candidates answer a compulsory stimulus response question, followed by one from two structured essay questions, based on Module 4 of the subject content, **An introduction to Religion and Ethics**.

| | | |
|---|---------------|--------|
| Unit 5 | Written Paper | 1 hour |
| <i>33¹/₃% of the total AS marks</i> | | |

Candidates answer a compulsory stimulus response question, followed by one from two structured essay questions, based on Module 5 of the subject content, **An introduction to Aspects of a Major World Faith**.

| | | |
|---|---------------|--------|
| Unit 6 | Written Paper | 1 hour |
| <i>33¹/₃% of the total AS marks</i> | | |

Candidates answer a compulsory stimulus response question, followed by one from two structured essay questions, based on Module 6 of the subject content, **An introduction to Religion and Science**.

7.2 Weighting of Assessment Objectives for AS

The approximate relationship between the relative percentage weighting of the Assessment Objectives (AOs) and the overall Scheme of Assessment is shown in the following table.

| Assessment Objectives | Unit Weightings (%) | | | Overall Weighting of AOs (%) |
|--|---------------------|-------------------|------------------|------------------------------|
| | Unit 1 | Second Unit taken | Third Unit taken | |
| AO1 Select and demonstrate clearly relevant knowledge and understanding through the use of evidence, examples and correct language and terminology appropriate to the course of study. | 25 | 25 | 25 | 75 |
| AO2 Sustain a critical line of argument and justify a point of view. | $8\frac{1}{3}$ | $8\frac{1}{3}$ | $8\frac{1}{3}$ | 25 |
| Overall Weighting of Units (%) | $33\frac{1}{3}$ | $33\frac{1}{3}$ | $33\frac{1}{3}$ | 100 |

Candidates' marks for each assessment unit are scaled to achieve the correct weightings.

8

Scheme of Assessment – *Advanced (AS+A2)*

The Scheme of Assessment has a modular structure. The Advanced award comprises three assessment units from the AS Scheme of Assessment and three assessment units from the A2 Scheme of Assessment.

8.1 AS Assessment Units

| | | |
|--|---------------|--------|
| Unit 1 | Written Paper | 1 hour |
| 16 ² / ₃ % of the total Advanced marks | | |

| | | |
|--|---------------|--------|
| One of option Units 2-6 | Written Paper | 1 hour |
| 16 ² / ₃ % of the total Advanced marks | | |

| | | |
|--|---------------|--------|
| Another of option Units 2-6 | Written Paper | 1 hour |
| 16 ² / ₃ % of the total Advanced marks | | |

8.2 A2 Assessment Units

Candidates take two from option Units 7 to 11. All Advanced candidates must take Unit 12.

| | | |
|--|---------------|----------|
| Unit 7 <i>15% of the total Advanced marks</i> | Written Paper | 1½ hours |
|--|---------------|----------|

Candidates answer two structured essay questions from a choice of three, based on Module 7 of the subject content, **Studies in the Old Testament**.

| | | |
|--|---------------|----------|
| Unit 8 <i>15% of the total Advanced marks</i> | Written Paper | 1½ hours |
|--|---------------|----------|

Candidates answer two structured essay questions from a choice of three, based on Module 8 of the subject content, **Studies in the New Testament**.

| | | |
|--|---------------|----------|
| Unit 9 <i>15% of the total Advanced marks</i> | Written Paper | 1½ hours |
|--|---------------|----------|

Candidates answer two structured essay questions from a choice of three, based on Module 9 of the subject content, **Studies in Religion and Ethics**.

| | | |
|---|---------------|----------|
| Unit 10 <i>15% of the total Advanced marks</i> | Written Paper | 1½ hours |
|---|---------------|----------|

Candidates answer two structured essay questions from a choice of three, based on Module 10 of the subject content, **Studies in Religion and Culture**.

| | | |
|---|---------------|----------|
| Unit 11 <i>15% of the total Advanced marks</i> | Written Paper | 1½ hours |
|---|---------------|----------|

Candidates answer two structured essay questions from a choice of three, based on Module 11 of the subject content, **Studies in the Philosophy of Religion**.

| | | |
|---|---------------|----------|
| Unit 12 <i>20% of the total Advanced marks</i> | Written Paper | 1½ hours |
|---|---------------|----------|

Two questions will be set on each of three topics drawn from the Module 12 subject content, **Studies in Religion and Human Experience**. Candidates answer **one** question.

8.3 Synoptic Assessment

The Advanced Subsidiary and Advanced Criteria state that Advanced specifications must include synoptic assessment (representing 20% of the total Advanced GCE marks). All synoptic assessment takes place in Unit 12.

8.4 Weighting of Assessment Objectives for Advanced GCE

The approximate relationship between the relative percentage weighting of the Assessment Objectives (AOs) and the overall Scheme of Assessment is shown in the following table.

Advanced Assessment Units (AS + A2)

| Assessment Objectives | Unit Weightings (%) | | | | | | Overall Weighting of AOs (%) |
|--|---------------------|--------------------|------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|---------|------------------------------|
| | Unit 1 | One from Units 2-6 | Another from Units 2-6 | One from Units 7-11 | Another from Units 7-11 | Unit 12 | |
| AO1 Select and demonstrate clearly relevant knowledge and understanding through the use of evidence, examples and correct language and terminology appropriate to the course of study. In addition, Advanced candidates should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the connections between different elements of their course of study. | 12½ | 12½ | 12½ | 9 | 9 | 12 | 67½ |
| AO2 Sustain a critical line of argument and justify a point of view. In addition Advanced candidates should relate elements of their course of study to their broader context and specified aspects of human experience. | 4⅓ | 4⅓ | 4⅓ | 6 | 6 | 8 | 32½ |
| Overall Weighting of Units (%) | 16⅔ | 16⅔ | 16⅔ | 15 | 15 | 20 | 100 |

Candidates' marks for each assessment unit are scaled to achieve the correct weightings.

Subject Content

9

Summary of Subject Content

9.1 AS Modules

MODULE 1 - An introduction to Religion and Human Experience

Compulsory

MODULE 2 - An introduction to the Old Testament

Optional

MODULE 3 - An introduction to the New Testament

Optional

MODULE 4 - An introduction to Religion and Ethics

Optional

MODULE 5 - An introduction to Aspects of a Major World Faith

Optional

MODULE 6 - An introduction to Religion and Science

Optional

9.2 A2 Modules

MODULE 7 - Studies in the Old Testament

Optional

MODULE 8 - Studies in the New Testament

Optional

MODULE 9 - Studies in Religion and Ethics

Optional

MODULE 10 - Studies in Religion and Culture

Optional

MODULE 11 - Studies in the Philosophy of Religion

Optional

MODULE 12 - Studies in Religion and Human Experience

Compulsory

AS Module 1

An introduction to Religion and Human Experience

10.1

This module provides candidates with the opportunity to make an introductory study of two key concepts that are fundamental to religious faith and practice: subjective religious experience and one aspect of objective religious authority, namely the authority and inspiration of sacred writings.

Candidates will need to illustrate and exemplify these concepts with appropriate examples, which may be drawn from the Old or New Testaments or from any of the six major world religions. It is not necessary to provide exemplification from more than one textual or religious tradition, but candidates may refer in their answers to more than one if they wish. Answers to questions on religious experience may draw on insights from the philosophy of religion, though this is not a requirement.

Generic questions will be set on the topics listed in Section 10.2 below. Candidates will be expected to be familiar with the terminology used as well as with all of the content listed in 10.2.

10.2 Religious Experience

What is religious experience? Definitions from theoretical studies.

Identification and analysis of different forms of religious experience (including conversion, visions, revelation, mystical experience) and their characteristics; illustrations and examples of each from the textual or religious tradition(s) chosen for study.

The importance of religious experience as a source of authority and inspiration for faith and practice, in relation to the tradition(s) chosen.

Religious Authority: Sacred Writings

The nature, purpose and role of scripture and sacred writings as a source of authority and inspiration for faith and practice in the tradition(s) chosen.

General understanding of different ways of interpreting scripture (e.g. literally or symbolically) in the tradition(s) chosen, with some illustrations and examples.

The authority and status of scriptures in the tradition(s) chosen in the light of the relevant religious beliefs about the revelation or inspiration of the scriptures.

The importance of scriptures for believers in relation to other sources of religious authority in the tradition(s) chosen.

10.3

The following areas covered in optional units have been identified from the religious traditions as providing suitable material for use in exemplification and illustration. **These are neither prescriptive nor exhaustive and other examples could be used.** Candidates may use this or other material in their answers where it is relevant. Questions will not be set directly on any of this material.

Old Testament

Experience The prophetic vocation; the experiences of Ezekiel; Job's struggles with God.

Authority The reliability of the Old Testament; the formation of the Canon; the status of the Apocrypha.

New Testament

Experience The temptations of Jesus; the transfiguration of Jesus; St. Paul's conversion.

Authority The reliability of the gospels; status of epistles; links with the Old Testament.

Buddhism

Experience The experiences of Siddhattha Gotama.

Authority The nature and composition of the Pali Canon.
The purpose of the three pitakas.

Christianity

Experience Examples of Christian spirituality and mystical experiences of well-known Christian saints e.g. St Teresa of Avila, St. John of the Cross, Julian of Norwich.

Authority The development and formation of the Canon; attitudes towards the Bible within different Christian groups.

Hinduism

Experience Arjuna's vision of God in Chapter 11 of Bhagavad Gita.

Authority The nature and compilation of the Vedas. The difference between *shruti* and *smriti*. The nature of the epics Mahabharata, Ramayana, and the status of the puranas.

Islam

| | |
|------------|--|
| Experience | The experiences of Muhammad. Mystical experiences as part of the Sufi path. |
| Authority | The role of prophets in Islam. The nature and purpose of the Qur'an as the ultimate source of authority. |

Judaism

| | |
|------------|---|
| Experience | Hasidism; The Kabbalah. |
| Authority | The role of the Prophets; the Torah and the Talmud; the role of rabbis. |

Sikhism

| | |
|------------|---|
| Experience | The religious experiences of Guru Nanak. |
| Authority | The Guru Granth Sahib: its nature and its status for Sikhs. |

AS Module 2

An introduction to the Old Testament

This module aims to introduce candidates to the Old Testament. It is expected that candidates will make a brief study of the context of the Old Testament in the Ancient Near Eastern world. No specific questions will be set on such background alone.

11.1 God and Covenant

A brief introduction to some ideas on the nature of God in the Old Testament; (God as one; lawgiver; judge; a God who enters into a relationship with people).

Concept of covenant as illustrated by the ideas of covenant in: the traditions of Abraham and Moses; Jeremiah's teaching on a new covenant.

11.2 Development of Prophecy

The development of prophecy, with particular reference to the types of prophets found in the tenth and ninth centuries. The rise of prophecy; the development of the prophetic experience; types of prophecy.

11.3 Eighth Century Prophecy

The nature of prophecy in the eighth century BCE, as illustrated by the work of Amos; his teachings on the nature of God and the covenant responsibilities of the people.

11.4

The topics in 11.1, 11.2 and 11.3 must be studied with reference to the following texts. Credit will also be given for the use of other appropriate examples. It is emphasised that detailed analysis of the texts is not required, but candidates are expected to be familiar with their main themes.

Genesis 17; 22¹⁻¹⁸

Exodus 19-20

Deuteronomy 6

1 Samuel 9¹ – 10¹³

1 Kings 18¹⁷ – 19¹⁴; 21

Jeremiah 31²³⁻³⁴

Amos

11.5

The use of Bibles, including the Apocrypha, is allowed in the examination. Any version is permitted, provided that it does not contain notes, apart from plain cross references or translators' footnotes. Centres will be required to ensure that Bibles taken into the examination room are suitable. Questions will be set on the assumption that all candidates will have Bibles before them in the examination room but candidates will not be given credit for writing out lengthy quotations from the Bible. Biblical quotations used in questions will be taken from the Revised Standard Version. Where appropriate, the source of quotations will be given.

AS Module 3

An introduction to the New Testament

This module offers candidates an introduction to New Testament Biblical Studies, focusing on reflections on Jesus.

Candidates will be expected to understand the presentation of the person and work of Jesus within the gospels, including Jesus' relationship with God and man, and his teaching on the Kingdom of God.

Candidates will be expected to understand the nature and purpose of the texts in the light of modern critical approaches (for example, source, form, redaction and narrative criticisms).

Detailed analysis of the texts will not be required, but candidates will be expected to understand their main themes. Reference to other appropriate passages will be credited.

12.1 Reflections on Jesus in the Birth, Death and Resurrection Accounts

Candidates will be expected to have studied the following passages:

Birth narratives and Prologue:

Matthew 1 - 2; Luke 1¹ - 2⁴⁰; John 1¹⁻¹⁸.

Passion narratives:

Mark 15²¹⁻⁴⁷; Luke 23²⁶⁻⁵⁶.

Resurrection narratives:

Matthew 28¹⁻²⁰; Luke 24¹⁻⁵³.

12.2 Reflections on Jesus in the Evangelists' Teaching

Candidates will be expected to have studied the following passages:

Parables:

The Sower, Mark 4¹⁻²⁰; Matthew 13¹⁻²³; Luke 8⁴⁻¹⁵.

The Great Feast, Matthew 22¹⁻¹⁴; Luke 14¹²⁻²⁴.

The Tenants in the Vineyard, Matthew 21³³⁻⁴⁶; Mark 12¹⁻¹².

Miracles:

Calming the Storm, Matthew 8²³⁻²⁷; Mark 4³⁵⁻⁴¹; Luke 8²²⁻²⁵.

Centurion's Slave, Matthew 8⁵⁻¹³; Luke 7¹⁻¹⁰.

Legion, Mark 5¹⁻²⁰; Luke 8²⁶⁻³⁹.

12.3

The use of Bibles, including the Apocrypha, is allowed in the examination. Any version is permitted, provided that it does not contain notes, apart from plain cross references or translators' footnotes. Centres will be required to ensure that Bibles taken into the examination room are suitable. Questions will be set on the assumption that all candidates will have Bibles before them in the examination room but candidates will not be given credit for writing out lengthy quotations from the Bible. Biblical quotations used in questions will be taken from the Revised Standard Version. Where appropriate, the source of quotations will be given.

AS Module 4

An introduction to Religion and Ethics

This module introduces aspects of the relationship between Religion and Ethics. Each of the following issues must be considered in relation to 13.1, 13.2 and 13.3 below. It must be emphasised that all questions will require a knowledge and understanding of a religious perspective on the ethical issue identified within the question. Candidates must therefore be familiar with **both** religious perspectives **and** ethical perspectives on each of the issues identified in A and B.

- A Medical issues (abortion, euthanasia, value and use of embryo and foetus, transplantation, allocation of resources).
- B Environmental issues (pollution, use and conservation of natural resources).

13.1 A Religious Perspective on Ethics

Candidates will be expected to have studied the ethical teachings (which may include a diversity of views) expressed within one religion or religious textual tradition.

13.2 Utilitarianism

As exemplified by Bentham (a theory dependent on consequences, hedonism, the principle of utility, quantitative measurement of pleasure/pain, hedonic calculus) and J.S. Mill (qualitative adaptation of Bentham, higher and lower pleasures).

13.3 Kant's Ethical Theory

Kant's ethical theory (deontological theory, the importance of reason, the good will, the categorical imperative, universalisation).

AS Module 5

An introduction to Aspects of a Major World Faith

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| 14.1 | <p>This module provides the opportunity for candidates to make an introductory study of aspects of one of the world faiths of Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism or Sikhism, from the perspective of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the religious tradition's historical foundations and overall development • the religious tradition's central concepts • the religious tradition's practices, and their significance. | | | | | | |
| 14.2 | <p>Appropriate and comparable subject content for each world religion has been identified and organised around a common framework. The examination paper will be sectionalised by world religion. Candidates will study one section only. It is envisaged that topics will be studied in relation to one another. Questions may be set that span more than one topic. The whole of the subject content in relation to the world religion selected must be studied.</p> | | | | | | |
| 14.3 Buddhism | <table border="0"> <tr> <td data-bbox="220 1256 432 1330">Foundations and Development</td> <td data-bbox="624 1249 1511 1406"> <p>The historical, social and religious factors leading to the emergence of Buddhism in India.</p> <p>The key features, differences and similarities between Mahayana and Theravada Buddhism.</p> </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="220 1487 440 1525">Central Concepts</td> <td data-bbox="624 1480 1203 1621"> <p>The three refuges: Buddha, Dhamma, Sangha.</p> <p>The teaching on kamma and rebirth.</p> <p>The Four Holy Truths.</p> </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="220 1697 584 1771">Religious Practices and their Significance</td> <td data-bbox="624 1697 1511 1850"> <p>The nature and purpose of different forms of Buddhist meditation, with particular reference to Vipassana, Samatha and Zen.</p> <p>The relationship between lay and monastic communities in Theravada Buddhism.</p> </td> </tr> </table> | Foundations and Development | <p>The historical, social and religious factors leading to the emergence of Buddhism in India.</p> <p>The key features, differences and similarities between Mahayana and Theravada Buddhism.</p> | Central Concepts | <p>The three refuges: Buddha, Dhamma, Sangha.</p> <p>The teaching on kamma and rebirth.</p> <p>The Four Holy Truths.</p> | Religious Practices and their Significance | <p>The nature and purpose of different forms of Buddhist meditation, with particular reference to Vipassana, Samatha and Zen.</p> <p>The relationship between lay and monastic communities in Theravada Buddhism.</p> |
| Foundations and Development | <p>The historical, social and religious factors leading to the emergence of Buddhism in India.</p> <p>The key features, differences and similarities between Mahayana and Theravada Buddhism.</p> | | | | | | |
| Central Concepts | <p>The three refuges: Buddha, Dhamma, Sangha.</p> <p>The teaching on kamma and rebirth.</p> <p>The Four Holy Truths.</p> | | | | | | |
| Religious Practices and their Significance | <p>The nature and purpose of different forms of Buddhist meditation, with particular reference to Vipassana, Samatha and Zen.</p> <p>The relationship between lay and monastic communities in Theravada Buddhism.</p> | | | | | | |

14.4 Christianity

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| Foundations and Development | <p>The character of the Christian Church in the first century: an outline of its organisation, worship and sense of mission.</p> <p>Key features, similarities and differences of Orthodox, Catholic and Protestant Christianity today, with particular reference to sources of authority and styles of worship.</p> |
| Central Concepts | <p>The nature of God (Father, Son, Holy Spirit), with particular reference to the Nicene Creed. The human condition and the means of salvation.</p> |
| Religious Practices and their Significance | <p>Baptism and the eucharist in the Roman Catholic, Anglican and Baptist traditions.</p> |

14.5 Hinduism

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| Foundations and Development | <p>Social and religious aspects of the Indus Valley civilisation.</p> <p>Modern reform movements: Brahmo Samaj, Arya Samaj, Vivekananda and the Ramakrishna mission; Gandhi's campaign for dalits (the untouchables) and the principles of non-violence.</p> |
| Central Concepts | <p>The Hindu concept of God: impersonal Brahman; the Om symbol; Trimurti: Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva; avatars of Vishnu especially Krishna and Rama.</p> <p>The nature of the self (atman); the relationship between atman and Brahman.</p> |
| Religious Practices and their Significance | <p>Puja and the home.</p> <p>Temple worship.</p> <p>The various types of Hindu holy men and their particular roles: temple priests, sannyasins, rishis and gurus.</p> |

14.6 Islam

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| Foundations and Development | <p>Muhammad's career in Makkah (Mecca), through the hijra, and in Madinah (Medina), with reference to the pre-Islamic context (jahiliyya).</p> <p>The significance of his life and teaching.</p> <p>The origins of Sunni and Shi'i.</p> |
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| Central Concepts | The meaning of “Muslim” and “Islam”. Beliefs about God, angels, prophets and judgement. The concept of shirk. |
| Religious Practices and their Significance | Prayer and fasting in Muslim Life. Use of the Qur’an in worship and everyday life. |

14.7 Judaism

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| Foundations and Development | God and his relationship with the chosen people: the roots of Judaism in the covenant (Abraham, Moses). Reasons for the emergence of Jewish reform movements in the nineteenth century and orthodox responses to them. Different expressions of Judaism today: key features of traditional Orthodox, Reform and Hasidic Jewish movements. |
| Central Concepts | Jewish ideas about the nature of God including, God’s oneness, justice, and the idea of God as one who works through history. The importance of the covenant as a concept underlying most Jewish practice today. |
| Religious Practices and their Significance | The importance of keeping a Jewish home, including kashrut, festival and Shabbat observances. High Holy Days (Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur) and Shabbat in the home and in the synagogue. |

14.8 Sikhism

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| Foundations and Development | Guru Nanak’s life and teachings in the context of the religious, political and social climate of fifteenth century Punjab. The contribution to Sikhism of Guru Arjan, Guru Tegh Bahadur, Guru Har Gobind and Guru Gobind Singh. The importance of the Khalsa today. |
| Central Concepts | Concepts of God, with particular reference to the Mool Mantra. Guru: the meaning of ‘Guru’: uses of the word: Sat Guru, Waheguru, Guru Granth Sahib, Guru Sangat, Guru Langar. The concept of sewa and its importance for Sikhs. |
| Religious Practices and their Significance | Worship in the home and the gurdwara. Langar: the institution of the langar in its historical context and in present-day belief and practice. |

AS Module 6

An introduction to Religion and Science

This module introduces aspects of the Philosophy of Religion with a focus on the interaction between religion and science. Appropriate illustration and exemplification from any major world religion will be credited.

15.1 Creation

Religious understandings of 'creation' and their relationship to the following scientific views of the origin and nature of the universe: Big Bang, Steady State (including Continuous Creation).

15.2 Miracles

Concepts of 'miracle', 'laws of nature' and 'interventionist God'. Challenges to belief in miracles from philosophy, with particular reference to David Hume, and from scientific explanations.

Religious responses to these challenges.

15.3 Design Arguments

Knowledge and understanding of classical and modern presentations of arguments for the existence of God based on apparent order and purpose in the world (Aquinas, Paley, Swinburne).

Challenges to these arguments from philosophy and scientific explanations.

16

A2 Module 7

Studies in the Old Testament

This module provides an opportunity for candidates to further their study of the Old Testament by examining in depth some of its complex reflections on life. Candidates will be expected to demonstrate awareness of the contribution of modern scholarship to understanding of the topics.

16.1 God and the World

Old Testament views of the nature of the created world and the human condition; the relationship between humans and God.

16.2 Wisdom and Law

Wisdom and law as the basis for daily life in Ancient Israel; the perspectives of wisdom and law on the individual and the community.

16.3 Reflections in Times of Crisis

Human destiny in the hands of God; views as expressed in the Exodus tradition; the responses to crisis expressed during the Exile; apocalyptic writing as a response to persecution.

16.4

The topics listed under 16.1, 16.2 and 16.3 should be studied with reference to the following texts. Credit will also be given for the use of other appropriate examples. It is emphasised that detailed analysis of the texts is not required, but candidates are expected to be familiar with their main themes.

Genesis 1-3; 6-9; 11¹⁻⁹
 Exodus 3¹⁻¹²; 14⁵ – 15²¹; 20¹ – 23¹⁹
 Job 1-3; 38–42
 Psalms 8; 104; 105; 137
 Isaiah 40; 43; 45
 Daniel 7-12
 Wisdom 1-5
 Ecclesiasticus 17¹ -18¹⁴; 42¹⁵ -43³³

16.5

The use of Bibles, including the Apocrypha, is allowed in the examination. Any version is permitted, provided that it does not contain notes, apart from plain cross references or translators' footnotes. Centres will be required to ensure that Bibles taken into the examination room are suitable. Questions will be set on the assumption that all candidates will have Bibles before them in the examination room but candidates will not be given credit for writing out lengthy quotations from the Bible. Biblical quotations used in questions will be taken from the Revised Standard Version. Where appropriate, the source of quotations will be given.

A2 Module 8

Studies in the New Testament

This module provides the opportunity for candidates to further their study of the New Testament by examining in depth some aspects of the Fourth Gospel. Candidates will be expected to demonstrate awareness of the contribution of modern scholarship to understanding of the topics.

Candidates should be aware of the broader context of the specified aspects, including the structure of the Fourth Gospel, and should be aware of such issues as the question of its origins and its relationship to the other gospels, though questions will not be set directly on these in the examination.

Candidates will be expected to know, understand and be able to evaluate the relevance and application of critical approaches to the material to be studied, including source, form, redaction and narrative criticisms and to be able to evaluate different ways of interpreting the material.

17.1 Signs

The nature, interpretation and significance of:

Signs by reference to the following incidents –

Water to Wine, John 2¹⁻¹¹.

The Healing of the Officer's son, John 4⁴⁶⁻⁵⁴.

The Crippled Man, John 5¹⁻¹⁸.

The Feeding of the Five Thousand, John 6¹⁻¹⁵.

17.2 Discourses

The nature, interpretation and significance of:

Discourses by reference to

(a) The 'I am' sayings/passages of:

'I am the Bread of Life', John 6³⁰⁻⁵⁸

'I am the Light of the World', John 8¹²⁻¹⁹ and 9¹⁻⁴¹

'I am the Door of the Sheep' and 'I am the Good Shepherd', John 10¹⁻¹⁸

'I am the Resurrection and the Life', John 11¹⁻⁴⁴

'I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life', John 14¹⁻⁷

'I am the True Vine', John 15¹⁻¹⁷.

(b) eschatology and beliefs about judgement in John 3¹⁶⁻²¹; 5²¹⁻³⁰; 6³⁵⁻⁵⁸ and 11²¹⁻²⁷; 12⁴⁴⁻⁵⁰.

(c) the Paraclete in John 14^{15-17; 25-26}; 15²⁶; 16⁷⁻¹⁵.

17.3 **Passion and Resurrection
Narrative**

The nature, interpretation and significance of:
the Passion and Resurrection Narrative by reference to
John 18¹ - 21²⁵.

17.4

The use of Bibles, including the Apocrypha, is allowed in the examination. Any version is permitted, provided that it does not contain notes, apart from plain cross references or translators' footnotes. Centres will be required to ensure that Bibles taken into the examination room are suitable. Questions will be set on the assumption that all candidates will have Bibles before them in the examination room but candidates will not be given credit for writing out lengthy quotations from the Bible. Biblical quotations used in questions will be taken from the Revised Standard Version. Where appropriate, the source of quotations will be given.

A2 Module 9

Studies in Religion and Ethics

This module provides opportunity for further study of the relationship between Religion and Ethics by consideration of religious and ethical perspectives on some complex contemporary issues. Candidates will be expected to demonstrate awareness of the contribution of modern scholarship to an understanding of the topics.

18.1 Free will and determinism

A study of whether ethical decisions are causally determined or made freely. Candidates should be aware of the three main positions: 'hard' determinism, 'soft' determinism, Libertarianism.

Perspectives on free will and determinism within any one religion or religious textual tradition.

18.2 Issues

Each of the following issues must be considered in relation to 18.3 and 18.4 below. It must be emphasised that questions set in the examination will require a knowledge and understanding of a religious perspective on the ethical issue identified within the question. Candidates must therefore be familiar with **both** religious **and** ethical perspectives on all of the issues identified in A and B.

A Issues raised by science and technology: cloning, genetic engineering, animal experimentation.

B Economic and business ethics: in relation to less economically developed countries; consumerism; investment/profits; business espionage.

18.3 Religious Perspectives

Candidates will be expected to have studied a diversity of views within any one religion or religious textual tradition.

18.4 Virtue Ethics

As formulated by Aristotle and A. MacIntyre: the importance of those qualities of mind and character essential to living a happy and ethically justifiable life. Responses to these theories.

A2 Module 10

Studies in Religion and Culture

This module provides the opportunity for candidates to further their study of religion by examination of some complex aspects of one of the major world religions of Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, or Sikhism. Candidates will be expected to know, understand and be able to assess the way a world religion affects the lives of its adherents, some of the religion's key concepts, and aspects of its relationship with contemporary society. Candidates will be expected to demonstrate awareness of the contribution of modern scholarship to understanding of the topics.

Appropriate and comparable subject content for each world religion has been identified and organised around a common framework. The examination paper will be sectionalised by world religion. Candidates will answer one section only. It is envisaged that topics will be studied in relation to one another. Questions may be set that span more than one topic. The whole of the subject content in relation to the world religion selected must be studied.

19.1 Buddhism

Buddhism as a Way of Life

The five moral precepts: meaning and interpretation; their relevance to life in contemporary society. The Eightfold Path: meaning and interpretation; its importance as a means to enlightenment.

Aspects of Religious Thought

Theravada Buddhism: the three characteristics of existence – dukkha, anicca, anatta; the concepts of samsara and nibbana; the doctrine of paticcasamuppada.

Mahayana Buddhism: the Bodhisattva concept; Buddhology including the three body doctrine (Tri-kaya); the teachings of the Madhyamaka school, with particular reference to Nagarjuna's teaching on 'Sunyata'.

Buddhism in Contemporary Society

The establishment of Buddhism in the west: the various forms of Buddhism (Theravada, Mahayana, Tibetan, Japanese and Chinese forms, new forms of western Buddhism); the ways in which they have adapted to western society; the reasons for their popularity.

19.2 Christianity

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|--------------------------------------|---|
| Christianity as a Way of Life | Christian understanding of vocation and service: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• within the church: ordained and lay forms of ministry; the role of religious orders• within the community: individual and corporate initiatives for the service of the community, locally and nationally. |
| Aspects of Religious Thought | The continuing Christological debate: Who was Jesus? How do Christians today understand his person and work? The feminist critique of patriarchal structures and androcentric language; the influence and achievements of feminist theology; positive and negative responses in the Church today. |
| Christianity in Contemporary Society | Diversity of views on the purpose and forms of Christian mission in inner cities and overseas today. Prophetic witness for peace and justice: the concerns and work for peace and justice of the Corrymeela and Iona communities. |

19.3 Hinduism

| | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Hinduism as a Way of Life | The concept of dharma as a fundamental principle guiding moral behaviour and social relationships. The four goals in life: artha, kama, moksha, dharma. Sanatana dharma as the eternal law and Varnasrama Dharma as the laws and customs related to caste and stage in life. Hindu understandings of marriage and family life. |
| Aspects of Religious Thought | The nature of human destiny: reincarnation, the law of karma, samsara and moksha. The means to liberation through various yogas, karma yoga, bhakti yoga and jnana yoga. The main ideas of Advaita philosophy or the non-dualism of Shankaracharya. |
| Hinduism in Contemporary Society | Nature of the Hindu community in Britain. The development and popularity of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON). |

19.4 Islam

| | |
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| Islam as a Way of Life | The formation, nature, authority and importance of the Shari'a. Family life and the role and status of women in Islam. |
| Aspects of Religious Thought | God, predestination, freedom and justice. God as immanent and transcendent (including God in Sufi thought). Concept of Jihad. Distinctive emphases of Shi'ism: the Imamate (including the doctrine of the hidden Imamate and the Mahdi); Ashura and the importance of suffering. |
| Islam in Contemporary Society | Islam in Britain: the nature and organisation of the Muslim community; issues related to practising Islam in a secular society. |

19.5 Judaism

| | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Judaism as a Way of Life | Beliefs, rituals and issues associated with birth and circumcision, bar and bat mitzvah. Marriage and divorce. The importance of the family. |
| Aspects of Religious Thought | Theological issues raised by the Holocaust; responses to them. The origins and development of Zionism, the chief concerns of Zionism today and different Jewish responses to them. |
| Judaism in Contemporary Society | The concerns of Jewish communities in Israel, Britain and the USA about identity and assimilation, about the status of Israel, and about the role and status of women. |

19.6 Sikhism

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| Sikhism as a Way of Life | Amrit sanskar. Sikh identity as expressed in amritdhari; keshdhari; sahadhari; patit; Anand Karaj (Sikh marriage ceremony); the importance of marriage and family life. |
| Aspects of Religious Thought | Concepts of: mukti; nam simran; maya; haumai; karma; kirt karo, nam japo and vand kako. The Rahit Maryada and its importance for Sikhs. Concepts of the Just War; miri and piri. |
| Sikhism in Contemporary Society | Teachings of the Gurus on gender, caste and religious tolerance and how these are put into practice. Issues affecting Sikhs in Britain: the experience of living within two cultures; the changing role of the Gurdwara. |

A2 Module 11

Studies in the Philosophy of Religion

This module provides opportunity for a depth study of issues in the Philosophy of Religion. The module builds on some concepts introduced in AS Module 6, Religion and Science.

Candidates should be aware of the scholarly debates about the following, and should be able to draw their own conclusions.

Appropriate exemplification and illustration from any major world religion will be credited.

20.1 Arguments for the Existence of God

Cosmological arguments, including those presented by Aquinas and the Kalam tradition.

Ontological arguments as presented by Anselm and Descartes.

Analysis of these arguments should include reference to the following: *a posteriori* and *a priori* reasoning; inductive and deductive arguments; proof and probability; the relationship between reason and faith.

20.2 The Problem of Evil

Evil and its challenge to faith.

Responses to the problem of evil.

The Augustinian and Irenaean Theodicies (including Hick's vale of soul making theodicy); process thought.

20.3 Nature of Religious Experience

Mysticism: the nature of mystical experience; issues of authenticity and objectivity.

Near-death experiences: the nature of near-death experiences, issues of authenticity and objectivity.

A2 Module 12

Studies in Religion and Human Experience

Candidates have a choice of **one** of the following topics, which is to be investigated during the course.

Religious Experience

Religious Authority

Life, Death and Beyond.

Two structured questions will be set on each topic in the examination, of which candidates will answer one.

Answers to the question should draw upon candidates' investigations and knowledge, understanding and skills gained throughout the course. Exemplification and illustration in the candidates' responses should be drawn from modules followed by the candidates during the course. It is expected that good responses will range widely across the candidates' course of study, e.g. candidates might address the issue of Religious Authority from the perspective of the Old Testament and Buddhism.

Candidates' responses to these topics need to be illustrated and exemplified with appropriate examples. For the synoptic topic chosen, candidates should review the relevant AS and A2 material studied, bring together different areas of study, make comparisons and contrasts, and consider in greater depth major issues considered in less detail elsewhere in the course. Note that the content specified in Section 21.1 also includes new aspects of topics that may not have been addressed in other modules at all, and candidates need to be prepared for this. It is anticipated that preparation for this unit could be built in to teaching programmes at the outset. Alternatively, candidates' research skills could be developed in a project-based approach.

No materials or texts may be taken into the examination.

Generic questions will be set on topics selected from the content specified in Section 21.1 below.

21.1 Topics

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| Religious Experience | The typology of religious experience; the influence of religious experience as a source of faith, religious practice and moral behaviour; experience as the foundation for religious movements; validity and verification of religious experience. |
| Religious Authority | The various types of authority within religion; sources of authority within religion; challenges to religious authority; religious challenges to secular authority. |
| Life, Death and Beyond | Religious perspectives on the nature and value of human life; concepts of spiritual life; the relative importance of the present life and life after death; the symbolism of life and death; eschatology and apocalyptic teaching; beliefs about death and beyond. |

21.2

The following material has been identified as offering opportunities for exemplification and illustration of the material listed under the topic headings **Religious Experience**, **Religious Authority**, and **Life, Death and Beyond**. These are not exhaustive and **other examples could be used**. Candidates may use this or other material in their answers where it is relevant. **Questions will not be set directly on any of this material.**

21.3 Religious Experience

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| Old Testament | Moses and the burning bush; individual prophet's experiences; Ezekiel's visions; experience in times of crisis, especially as reflected through the collective experience of the people; wisdom literature (especially Job); the Psalms. |
| New Testament | Miracles; experience of disciples; signs in John's Gospel; Jesus' baptism, temptations, and transfiguration; angel appearances and dream communication; Paul's conversion; examples of prayer; Pentecost; Jesus' crucifixion; Jesus' resurrection appearances. |
| Religion and Ethics | Utilitarianism. Religious perspectives on Ethics. Conscience and feelings (intuition) as a moral guide. Religious experience as a guide to making moral decisions (e.g. 'God told me to do it'). Religious experience as opposed to Utilitarianism or Kant in making moral decisions. Specific religious traditions (e.g. Jehovah's Witnesses) on medical issues. |
| Buddhism | The Buddha's enlightenment; monastic communities; nibbana; Buddhist meditation, the eightfold path. |

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| Christianity | Christian experiences of the eucharist; the experiences of saints and leaders; spirituality past and present (e.g. Iona); the emphasis on experience within certain contemporary denominations; 'the dark night of the soul' as expressed in hymns; the vocation of those called to priesthood or religious orders. |
| Hinduism | The relationship between atman and Brahman; puja; murtis; yogas; |
| Islam | Muhammad's religious experiences; taqwah; hajj; presence of angels; sufism |
| Judaism | God's presence in daily prayer and communal worship; Hasidism; Kabbalah; keeping a Jewish home; issues and questions raised by the Holocaust; |
| Sikhism | Experiences of the Gurus; worship in the gurdwara; langar; Mool Mantra; nam simran. |
| Religion and Science/Philosophy of Religion | <p>Arguments for existence of God; Design argument and miracles.</p> <p>Attitudes in Psychology towards Religious Experience.</p> <p>Religious experiences occasioned by understandings of creation of the universe. Are religious experiences part of the 'laws of nature'? Hume's challenge to religious experience, and religious responses. Near-death experiences: their nature, issues of authenticity and objectivity. The authority of Reason in Philosophy of Religion in arguing for God's existence. The authority of faith in response to the Problem of Evil.</p> |

21.4 Authority

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| Old Testament | <p>Covenant; law; the authority of priests and prophets; the authority and reliability of the Old Testament.</p> <p>The finding of the book of the Law (2 Kings 23).</p> |
| New Testament | Reliability of the gospels; modern critical approaches; the 'I am' passages; the Paraclete; issue of truth; Jesus' authority; the authority of individuals (e.g. Pilate, Caiaphas, the chief priests). |
| Religion and Ethics | <p>Conscience. Effects of religious statements on ethics. Authority of experience in Utilitarianism. Institutional authority – early fathers; individual faith.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kant's Categorical Imperative; Mill's Higher and Lower Pleasures. • The Virtues, as put forward by Aristotle and McIntyre (e.g. courage, temperance, wisdom, understanding, justice, benevolence). Issues arising from Determinist theories (e.g. moral culpability, sanctions). |

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| Buddhism | The Three Refuges; The Four Truths; Zen Master; Dalai Lama; Five Moral Precepts; Scriptures. |
| Christianity | Development of definitions of heresy and orthodoxy; concepts of authority in the Church past and present; structures within different denominations; importance of authority as factor in Great Schism; the papacy today. Differing views among Christians on the authority of the Bible; institutional authority. |
| Hinduism | Smriti and shruti; holy men in Hinduism; Advaita Vedanta philosophy |
| Islam | The Qur'an; sunna of Muhammad; hadith; Sharia. |
| Judaism | Tora; Talmud; tradition; rabbinic roles; Beth Din; Jewish Orthodox and Reform responses. |
| Sikhism | Concept of Guru; role of Guru; Guru Granth Sahib; the Five Takhts; gurmatta; Rahit Maryada. |
| Religion and Science/Philosophy of Religion | Institutional authority; free will; authority of science; challenge of empiricism to the meaningfulness of religious language; religious perspectives; nature of faith and its relationship with reason. The authority of reason in Philosophy of Religion in arguing for God's existence; the authority of faith in response to the Problem of Evil. |

21.5 Life, Death and Beyond

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|---------------------|---|
| Old Testament | Prophetic warnings; divine retribution. Developing views on the afterlife, throughout the Old Testament, linked to the world view of the Old Testament; Sheol; human destiny in the hands of God. Covenant; Deuteronomy. Job, Psalms, Wisdom Literature; apocalyptic views. |
| New Testament | Jesus' death and resurrection; eschatology and judgement; resurrection miracles; aspects of judgement (e.g. in parables – particularly the rich man and Lazarus); the Sadducees' question about resurrection; Paul's teaching of the resurrection; material about eschatology and judgement; emphasis on eternal life; Jesus as the resurrection and the life; Jesus' resurrection appearances. |
| Religion and Ethics | Life and death issues; immortality as an aspect of Kant's theory of ethics. Problem of Evil. Ethical implications of religious views on Life after Death, e.g. reward/punishment in next life for deeds done now. Consequences of actions in Utilitarianism. |
| Buddhism | Kamma and rebirth; the bodhisattva goal. |
| Christianity | Teaching about life after death and judgement and aspects of soteriology; beliefs arising from Christology; the particular beliefs about the after life of different groups within Christianity; evidences of differences in beliefs brought about by changing levels of mortality, etc. |

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| Hinduism | Nature of self in Hinduism; approaches and attitudes towards death in ritual and teaching, the life of sannyasin and other forms of renunciation in Hinduism. |
| Islam | Akhirah; human freedom and responsibility; judgement; heaven; hell. |
| Judaism | The soul in the hands of God; judgement; kaddish; resurrection of the dead. |
| Sikhism | Karma and rebirth; mukti. |
| Religion and Science/Philosophy of Religion | Miracles. Materialist view of human nature. Death as an integral part of creation. Determinism; religious perspectives; evidence for life after death. The concept of soul and the nature of personal identity; existentialism as a contrasting view of human destiny. Near-death experiences: their nature, issues of authenticity and objectivity. |

Key Skills and Other Issues

22

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

22.1 Introduction

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

The units for 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, but they do not form part of the Key Skills Qualification.

Copies of the Key Skills Units may be downloaded from the QCA website (www.qca.org.uk/keyskills)

The units for each Key Skill comprise three sections:

- A What you need to know.
- B What you must do.
- C 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, Information Technology, Working with Others* and *Improving Own Learning and Performance*. Areas of study and learning that can be used to encourage the acquisition and use of these Key Skills, and to provide opportunities to generate evidence for Part B of the units, is signposted below. More specific guidance on integrating the delivery of Key Skills in courses based upon this specification is given in the AQA specification support material.

22.2 Key Skills Opportunities in Religious Studies

The discursive nature of Religious Studies, which calls upon candidates' abilities to demonstrate the transferability of their knowledge, understanding and skills, make it an ideal vehicle to assist candidates to develop their knowledge and understanding of the Key Skills and to produce evidence of their application. The matrices below signpost the opportunities for the acquisition, development and production of evidence for Part B of four of the six Key Skills units at *Level 3*, in the teaching and learning modules of this specification. The degree of opportunity in any one module will depend upon a number of centre-specific factors, including teaching strategies and level of resources.

Communication

| What you must do: | Signposting of Opportunities for Generating Evidence in Modules | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| C3.1 Contribute to discussions | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| C3.1b Make a presentation | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| C3.2 Read and synthesise information | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| C3.3 Write different types of documents | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |

Communication (continued)

| What you must do: | Signposting of Opportunities for Generating Evidence in Modules | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|----|----|----|
| | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| C3.1 Contribute to discussions | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| C3.1b Make a presentation | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| C3.2 Read and synthesise information | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| C3.3 Write different types of documents | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |

Information Technology

| What you must do: | Signposting of Opportunities for Generating Evidence in Modules | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| IT3.1 Plan and use different sources to search for and select information | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| IT3.2 Explore, develop and exchange information and derive new information | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| IT3.3 Present information including text, numbers and images | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |

Information Technology (continued)

| What you must do: | Signposting of Opportunities for Generating Evidence in Modules | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|----|----|----|
| | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| IT3.1 Plan and use different sources to search for and select information | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| IT3.2 Explore, develop and exchange information and derive new information | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| IT3.3 Present information including text, numbers and images | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |

Working with Others

| What you must do: | Signposting of Opportunities for Generating Evidence in Modules | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| WO3.1 Plan work, agreeing objectives, responsibilities and working arrangements | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| WO3.2 Establish and maintain co-operative working relationships | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| WO3.3 Review work | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |

Working with Others (continued)

| What you must do: | Signposting of Opportunities for Generating Evidence in Modules | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|----|----|----|
| | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| WO3.1 Plan work, agreeing objectives, responsibilities and working arrangements | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| WO3.2 Establish and maintain co-operative working relationships | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| WO3.3 Review work | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |

Improving Own Learning and Performance

| What you must do: | Signposting of Opportunities for Generating Evidence in Modules | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| LP3.1 Agree and plan targets | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| LP3.2 Seek feedback and support | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| LP3.3 Review progress | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |

Improving Own Learning and Performance (continued)

| What you must do: | Signposting of Opportunities for Generating Evidence in Modules | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|---|---|---|----|----|----|
| | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| LP3.1 Agree and plan targets | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| LP3.2 Seek feedback and support | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| LP3.3 Review progress | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |

N.B. The signposting in the eight tables above represents opportunities to acquire and produce evidence of the Key Skills seen to be achievable through this specification. There may be other opportunities to achieve these and other aspects of Key Skills via this specification, but such opportunities are dependent on the detailed course of study delivered within centres.

22.3 Key Skills in the Assessment of Religious Studies

The Key Skill of *Communication* must contribute to the assessment of Religious Studies. *Communication* is an intrinsic part of both Assessment Objectives, and will, therefore, be part of the scheme of assessment of this specification. The other Key Skills are not integrated within the assessment scheme. However, there will clearly be opportunities for the generation of evidence for the relevant Key Skills units within centres' programmes of study.

22.4 Further Guidance

More specific guidance and examples of tasks that can provide evidence of single Key Skills or composite tasks that can provide evidence of more than one Key Skill are given in the AQA specification support material.

Spiritual, Moral, Ethical, Social, Cultural and Other Issues

23.1 Spiritual, Moral, Ethical, Social and Cultural Issues

All modules in this specification provide opportunities to address subject matter that is concerned with:

- the quest for meaning in life, truth and ultimate values;
- awareness of aspects of human life other than the physical and material;
- human experiences of transcendence, awe, wonder and mystery;
- the exploration of religious belief.

In addition, they provide opportunities for candidates to:

- explore their own beliefs, creative abilities, insights, self-identity, and self-worth;
- recognise and value the world and others.

23.2 European Dimension

AQA has taken account of the 1988 Resolution of the Council of the European Community in preparing this specification and associated specimen papers. In the context of Religious Studies the specification provides opportunities to study significant European religious leaders; to study from a religious perspective the relationship of the European Union to LEDC's; and to study European scholarship contributing to significant religious debates. The specification as a whole will raise multi-cultural awareness. By this means this specification will enhance the development of the European dimension. It is anticipated that opportunities for this may be addressed in particular in the modules addressing Religion and Ethics. The compulsory Modules 1 and 12 will also afford candidates the opportunity to set religious issues within a European context.

23.3 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 papers. Religious perspectives on environmental issues should be examined as the opportunity arises. It is anticipated that these will be available particularly in the Modules addressing Religion and Ethics, and also the compulsory Modules 1 and 12 “Religion and Human Experience”, in which religious attitudes towards the environment may be addressed in any of the world religions or religious traditions specified.

23.4 Avoidance of Bias

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

Awarding and Reporting

24

Grading, Shelf-Life and Re-Sits

24.1 Grading System

Both the Advanced Subsidiary and the full Advanced qualifications will be graded on a five-grade scale: A, B, C, D and E. Candidates who fail to reach the minimum standard for grade E will be recorded as U (unclassified) and will not receive a qualification certificate.

Individual assessment unit results will be certificated.

24.2 Shelf-Life of Unit Results

The shelf-life of individual unit results, prior to the award of the qualification, is limited only by the shelf-life of the specification.

24.3 Assessment Unit Re-Sits

Each assessment unit may be re-taken an unlimited number of times within the shelf-life of the specification. The best result will count towards the final award. However, marks for individual units may be counted once only to an AS and/or A level award. Candidates who repeat an award and who do not decline their previous grade must re-take all units.

An AS result can be converted into a full A Level award by taking the A2 examination at any examination series when Religious Studies is available.

Marks for individual AS or A2 units may be counted once only towards an AS and/or an A Level award.

24.4 Minimum Requirements

Candidates must sit Unit 1, and two from Units 2 to 6 to qualify for an AS Award.

To qualify for an Advanced Award, candidates must meet the minimum requirements for an AS Award, and in addition sit Unit 12, and two from Units 7 to 11.

24.5 Awarding and Reporting

This specification complies with the grading, awarding and certification requirements of the GCSE, GCE, VCE and GNVQ Code of Practice and will be revised in the light of any subsequent changes for future years.

Appendices

A

Grade Descriptions

The following grade descriptions indicate the level of attainment characteristic of the given grade at Advanced Level. They give a general indication of the required learning outcomes at each specific grade. 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 (as in Section 6) overall. Shortcomings in some aspects of the examination may be balanced by better performances in others.

Grade A Candidates demonstrate a comprehensive and almost totally accurate knowledge of the topics studied. They use technical language and terminology accurately in a variety of contexts throughout their work. They demonstrate a full understanding and analysis of the issues studied. They can compare, contrast and evaluate the views of scholars and schools of thought, as well as offering personal insights and independent thought. They make full and effective use of evidence to sustain an argument, anticipating and counteracting views to the contrary. They demonstrate a clear understanding of the connections between the areas they have studied and their contribution to the nature of religion and aspects of human experience. There is a maturity of approach, with sophisticated and elegant expression, construction, and quality of language, which enables them to communicate with clarity.

Grade C Candidates recall, demonstrate and deploy a good and mainly accurate knowledge of the topics studied. They use technical language and terminology accurately in a variety of contexts in much of their work. They demonstrate some understanding with some analysis of the issues studied. They show some ability to compare, contrast and evaluate the views of scholars and schools of thought, as well as offering some personal insights and independent thought, but not consistently. They make good use of evidence to sustain an argument, sometimes anticipating and counteracting views to the contrary. They demonstrate some understanding of the connections between the areas they have studied and their contribution to the nature of religion and aspects of human experience. There is evidence of some maturity of approach, with fair expression, construction and quality of language, which enables them to communicate with some clarity.

Grade E Candidates recall, demonstrate and deploy a limited and partially accurate knowledge of the topics studied. They use some technical language and terminology correctly in a variety of contexts in some of their work. They demonstrate a limited understanding with minimal analysis of the issues studied. They attempt to compare, contrast and evaluate the views of scholars and schools of thought, as well as offering personal insights, but often do not do so convincingly. They make some use of evidence to sustain an argument, rarely anticipating or counteracting views to the contrary, if at all. They demonstrate a very limited understanding of the connections between the areas they have studied and their contribution to the nature of religion and aspects of human experience. There is little maturity of approach, with unsophisticated expression, weak construction and poor quality of language. They communicate with little clarity most of the time.

B

Overlaps with other qualifications

GCE Philosophy

There is some overlap of content in Modules 4, 6, 9 and 11 (modules concerned with Religion and Ethics, Religion and Science and Philosophy of Religion) with aspects of the AQA AS/A GCE specification in Philosophy. Areas of overlap include: normative ethics (e.g. utilitarianism and deontological views), practical ethics, arguments for and against the existence of God, the nature of religious experience and religious language, types of authority, free will, and the nature of faith (this list is not exhaustive). However, there is a significant difference in approach between the specifications as the GCE Religious Studies specification places particular emphasis upon religious perspectives on these and related issues, whereas this is not the case in GCE Philosophy.

Depending upon topics chosen, there could be overlap of content with GCE Philosophy in the synoptic study in Module 12.

Because the overlap with GCE Philosophy is considered to be complementary, it is not prohibited in combination.

The classification code for this specification is 4610.

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