

GCE AS

WJEC Eduqas GCE AS in RELIGIOUS STUDIES

ACCREDITED BY OFQUAL

SPECIFICATION

Teaching from 2016
For award from 2017





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GCE AS RELIGIOUS STUDIES

SUMMARY OF ASSESSMENT

Learners must study **all** three components.

Component 1: An Introduction to the Study of Religion **Written examination: 1 hour 30 minutes** **33⅓% of qualification**

This component offers the choice of the study of **one** religion from a choice of **six**:

- Option A: Christianity
- Option B: Islam
- Option C: Judaism
- Option D: Buddhism
- Option E: Hinduism
- Option F: Sikhism

There will be four themes within each option: religious figures and sacred texts; religious concepts; religious life; and religious practices.

Learners will be expected to answer one question from Section A out of a choice of two and one question from Section B out of a choice of three in this component.

Component 2: An Introduction to Philosophy of Religion **Written examination: 1 hour 30 minutes** **33⅓% of qualification**

There will be four themes within this component: inductive arguments for the existence of God; deductive arguments for the existence of God; challenges to religious belief - the problem of evil and suffering; and religious experience.

Learners will be expected to answer one question from Section A out of a choice of two and one question from Section B out of a choice of three in this component. Questions can be taken from any area of the specification.

Component 3: An Introduction to Religion and Ethics **Written examination: 1 hour 30 minutes** **33⅓% of qualification**

There will be four themes within this component (including applied ethics in themes two to four): ethical language; Aquinas' Natural Law; Fletcher's Situation Ethics and Utilitarianism.

Learners will be expected to answer one question from Section A out of a choice of two and one question from Section B out of a choice of three in this component. Questions can be taken from any area of the specification.

This linear qualification will be available in May/June each year. It will be awarded for the first time in summer 2017.

Qualification Accreditation Number: 601/8771/2

GCE AS RELIGIOUS STUDIES

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Aims and objectives

The WJEC Eduqas AS in Religious Studies encourages learners to:

- develop their interest in a rigorous study of religion and belief and relate it to the wider world
- develop knowledge and understanding appropriate to a specialist study of religion
- develop an understanding and appreciation of religious thought and its contribution to individuals, communities and societies
- adopt an enquiring, critical and reflective approach to the study of religion
- reflect on and develop their own values, opinions and attitudes in the light of their study.

AS Religious Studies is designed to enable learners to develop their interest in, and enthusiasm for, a study of religion and its place in the wider world.

The WJEC Eduqas AS specification contains three components which include a wide range of topics for consideration, including a study of one of the six major world religions, philosophy of religion, and religion and ethics.

The specification is presented in a clear and concise way to ensure that the specification content is accessible, relevant and engaging for both teachers and learners.

Each component has also been designed to allow co-teachability with the WJEC Eduqas A level Religious Studies specification.

1.2 Prior learning and progression

There are no prior learning requirements. Any requirements set for entry to a course following this specification are at the discretion of centres. It is reasonable to assume that many learners will have achieved qualifications equivalent to Level 2 at KS4. Skills in Literacy/English and Information Communication Technology will provide a good basis for progression to this Level 3 qualification.

Some learners will have already gained knowledge, understanding, and skills through their study of Religious Studies in earlier key stages and at GCSE.

This specification provides a suitable foundation for the study of Religious Studies or a related area through a range of higher education courses, progression to A level or the next level of vocational qualifications or employment.

The transferable literacy, communication, research, analysis and evaluation skills developed throughout the specification will equip learners to go on to further wider learning and study, both in Religious Studies and in other disciplines.

In addition, the specification provides a relevant, interesting, coherent and worthwhile course of study for learners who do not progress to further study in this subject.

This specification is not age specific and, as such, provides opportunities for candidates to extend their life-long learning.

1.3 Equality and fair access

This specification may be followed by any learner, irrespective of gender, ethnic, religious or cultural background. It has been designed to avoid, where possible, features that could, without justification, make it more difficult for a learner to achieve because they have a particular protected characteristic.

The protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

The specification has been discussed with groups who represent the interests of a diverse range of learners, and the specification will be kept under review.

Reasonable adjustments are made for certain learners in order to enable them to access the assessments (e.g. candidates are allowed access to a Sign Language Interpreter, using British Sign Language). Information on reasonable adjustments is found in the following document from the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ): *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments: General and Vocational Qualifications*.

This document is available on the JCQ website (www.jcq.org.uk). As a consequence of provision for reasonable adjustments, very few learners will have a complete barrier to any part of the assessment.

2 SUBJECT CONTENT

Learners must study all **three** components.

Each component should be studied in the light of the overall aims and objectives for Religious Studies.

Each component has been designed to encourage learners to demonstrate their ability to:

- reflect on, select and apply specified knowledge
- understand, interpret and evaluate critically religious concepts, texts and other sources
- identify, investigate and critically analyse questions, arguments, ideas and issues arising from within this component
- construct well informed and reasoned arguments, substantiated by relevant evidence
- engage in debate in a way that recognises the right of others to hold a different view
- present responses to questions which are clear and coherent
- use specialist language and terminology appropriately.

Each component has been designed to allow learners to acquire and develop knowledge and a critical understanding of:

- religious thought, belief and practice and the different ways in which these are expressed in the lives of individuals, communities and societies
- how religious texts and/or other relevant sources of wisdom and authority are interpreted and applied
- major issues, challenges and questions within and about the study of religion (for example, the role of tolerance, respect and recognition and interreligious dialogue, methods of study, relevance to contemporary society) and responses to these
- the causes, meanings and significance of similarities and differences in religious thought, belief and practice within and/or between religion(s).

2.1 Component 1

Component 1: An Introduction to the Study of Religion

Written examination: 1 hour 30 minutes

33 $\frac{1}{3}$ % of qualification

100 marks

Learners will be assessed on **one** of the following options from a choice of **six**:

Option A: Christianity

Option B: Islam

Option C: Judaism

Option D: Buddhism

Option E: Hinduism

Option F: Sikhism

This component provides the opportunity for learners to acquire and develop knowledge and a critical understanding of some of the key features of a world religion, ranging from religious figures to religious practices.

This component includes the study of the following content:

- sources of wisdom and authority including, where appropriate, scripture and/or sacred texts and how they are used and treated, key religious figures and/or teachers and their teachings
- religious beliefs, values and teachings, in their interconnections and as they vary historically and in the contemporary world, including those linked to the nature and existence of God, gods or ultimate reality, the role of the community of believers, key moral principles, beliefs about the self, death and afterlife, beliefs about the meaning and purpose of life
- practices that shape and express religious identity, including the diversity of practice within a tradition.

The following grids exemplify how the required content has been developed in a clear and concise way into four themes.

Option A: An introduction to Christianity

Theme 1: Religious figures and sacred texts	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	
A.	<p>Jesus – his birth:</p> <p>Consistency and credibility of the birth narratives (Matthew 1:18-2:23; Luke 1:26-2:40); harmonisation and redaction; interpretation and application of the birth narratives to the doctrine of the incarnation (substantial presence and the kenotic model).</p>
B.	<p>Jesus – his resurrection:</p> <p>The views of Rudolf Bultmann and N.T. Wright on the relation of the resurrection event to history; interpretation and application to the understanding of death, the soul, the resurrected body and the afterlife, with reference to Matthew 10:28; John 20-21; 1 Corinthians 15; Philippians 1:21-24.</p>
C.	<p>The Bible as a source of wisdom and authority in daily life:</p> <p>The ways in which the Bible is considered authoritative: as a source of moral advice (Ecclesiastes 12:13-14; Luke 6:36-37); as a guide to living (Psalm 119:9-16; Psalm 119:105-112); as teaching on the meaning and purpose of life (Genesis 1:26-28; Ecclesiastes 9:5-9); and as a source of comfort and encouragement (Psalm 46:1-3; Matthew 6:25).</p>
<p>Issues for analysis and evaluation will be drawn from any aspect of the content above, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The extent to which the birth narratives provide insight into the doctrine of the incarnation. • The relative importance of redaction criticism for understanding the biblical birth narratives. • The nature of the resurrected body. • The historical reliability of the resurrection. • The relative value of the Bible as teaching on the meaning and purpose of life. • The extent to which the Psalms studied offer a guide to living for Christians. 	

Option A: An introduction to Christianity

Theme 2: Religious concepts	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	
A.	<p>Religious concepts – the nature of God:</p> <p>Is God male? The issue of male language about God; the pastoral benefits and challenges of the model of Father; Sallie McFague and God as mother.</p> <p>Can God suffer? The impassibility of God; the modern view of a suffering God illustrated by Jurgen Moltmann (The Crucified Christ).</p>
B.	<p>Religious concepts – the Trinity:</p> <p>The need for the doctrine of the Trinity: the nature and identity of Christ (issues of divinity and pre-existence) and Christ's relationship with the Father (co-equal and co-eternal). The origin of the Holy Spirit: the filioque controversy.</p>
C.	<p>Religious concepts – the Atonement:</p> <p>Three theories of the Atonement (which are not mutually exclusive): the death of Jesus as Christus Victor (with reference to the liberation of humanity from hostile powers); the death of Jesus as a substitution (both the belief that Jesus died as a substitute for humanity, and the belief that only the divine-human Jesus could act as a sacrifice by God for the sake of humanity); the death of Jesus as a moral example (of how to live and die). The underlying assumptions about the need for divine forgiveness and the conflict between the wrath and love of God in theories of the Atonement.</p>
<p>Issues for analysis and evaluation will be drawn from any aspect of the content above, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The validity of referring to God as mother. • The theological implications of a suffering God. • The monotheistic claims of the doctrine of the Trinity. • Whether the doctrine of the Trinity is necessary to understand the God of Christianity. • The extent to which the three theories of the Atonement are contradictory. • The extent to which the three theories suggest that the Christian God is cruel. 	

Option A: An introduction to Christianity

Theme 3: Religious life	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	
A.	<p>Religious life – faith and works:</p> <p>Luther's arguments for justification by faith alone (with reference to Romans 1:17; 5:1; Ephesians 2:8-9; Galatians 2:16; and Luther's rejection of James 2:24); the Council of Trent as a response to Luther; E. P. Sanders and the role of works in justification.</p>
B.	<p>Religious life – the community of believers:</p> <p>The New Testament community of believers as a model for churches today (with reference to Acts 2:42-47); the role of churches in providing worship and sacraments, religious teaching, mission, service and outreach, and fellowship for the community of believers.</p>
C.	<p>Religious life – key moral principles:</p> <p>Selected key moral principles of Christianity: the importance of love of neighbour (Leviticus 19:34; Luke 10:25-28); God's love as a potential model for Christian behaviour (Exodus 34:6-7; 1 John 4:19-21); regard for truth (1 Samuel 12:24; Ephesians 4:25-27); the role of conscience (2 Corinthians 1:12; 1 Timothy 1:5); and the need for forgiveness (Matthew 6:14-15; Colossians 3:12-13).</p>
<p>Issues for analysis and evaluation will be drawn from any aspect of the content above, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The extent to which both faith and works are aspects of justification. • The extent to which the New Testament letters support arguments for justification by faith alone. • Whether the main role of the church is to provide religious teaching. • The extent to which contemporary Christian churches should follow the New Testament model. • Whether love of neighbour is the most important moral principle in Christianity. • The extent to which God's behaviour towards humans is the basis for Christian morality. 	

Option A: An introduction to Christianity

Theme 4: Religious practices that shape religious identity	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	
A.	<p>Religious identity through diversity in baptism:</p> <p>The case for infant baptism by Augustine and Zwingli (the role of baptism in salvation; the role and importance of Christian parents); the case for believer's baptism with reference to Karl Barth (the example of Christ; importance of consent).</p>
B.	<p>Religious identity through diversity in Eucharist:</p> <p>The importance of the Eucharist in the life of contemporary Christian communities; selected modern Roman Catholic theories (transignification and transfinalization); selected Protestant approaches (consubstantiation and memorialism); the similarities in Eucharistic practice in Christian traditions.</p>
C.	<p>Religious identity through diversity in festivals:</p> <p>Christmas The similarities (with reference to the focus on incarnation of Christ) and differences (date of celebration; focus of Advent season; Christmas services) between the Eastern Orthodox and the Western churches' celebration of Christmas.</p> <p>Easter The similarities (with reference to the doctrine of the resurrection of Christ) and differences (date; liturgical practice at Easter; the diversity within each stream of tradition) between the Eastern Orthodox and the Western churches' celebration of Easter.</p>
<p>Issues for analysis and evaluation will be drawn from any aspect of the content above, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The extent to which both infant and adult baptism are just symbolic acts. • The criteria for expressing the commitment to be baptised. • The extent to which there is any common ground within contemporary understandings of the Eucharist. • The extent to which theoretical beliefs about the Eucharist affect the practice of different denominations. • Whether the different emphases and practices mean that Easter is a different celebration in the Eastern Orthodox and Western churches. • The relative importance of Easter and Christmas. 	

Option B: An introduction to Islam

Theme 1: Religious figures and sacred texts	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	
A.	<p>The significance in the development of Islam of both the life and teachings of Muhammad in Makkah following the Night of Power:</p> <p>Life at the time of Muhammad - Jahilliyah (ignorance) and the need for revelation: the main religious, social, political and moral characteristics of pre-Islamic Arabia. The impact of the Night of Power (Sura 97:1-5) upon Muhammad. Muhammad's secretive preaching and early reactions towards his religious experience and teachings. Muhammad's open preaching in Makkah and the nature of this message. The Makkan reaction to Muhammad and its implication for the development of Islam.</p>
B.	<p>The significance in the development of Islam of both the Hijrah and the life and teachings of Muhammad in Madinah:</p> <p>The context of persecution of Muhammad and his followers in Makkah as a major influence of the Hijrah (migration) including verbal abuse, physical abuse and death threats. The Hijrah as an 'escape' and guided by God. The welcome from Madinah and the establishment of the basic tenets of Islam, including the establishment of the first masjid. Muhammad as religious, moral, political and military leader in Madinah.</p>
C.	<p>The Qur'an as a source of wisdom and authority – its use and treatment in Islam:</p> <p>Source of wisdom and authority: The nature of the Qur'an as the final revelation. Specific reference to Sura 15:9, Sura 51:47 and Sura 96:1-5. The divine characteristics of the Qur'an as God-given and not distorted by human messengers. An overview of the compilation of the Qur'an.</p> <p>Use and treatment of the Qur'an: The Qur'an as a guide for humanity for all time. Islamic views about 'translations' of the Qur'an; integrity of the original Arabic; translation as interpretation. The physical treatment of the Qur'an reflecting its status.</p>
<p>Issues for analysis and evaluation will be drawn from any aspect of the content above, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The extent of influence of the pre-Islamic Arabian context upon the life and teaching of Muhammad. • The possibility of the failure of the Islamic religion in Makkah. • Whether Madinah is the ideal model for the establishment of Islam. • The merits of Muhammad as a complete leader of the people. • The extent to which the Qur'an is eternally relevant. • Whether the message of the Qur'an can ever be translated with accuracy. 	

Option B: An introduction to Islam

Theme 2: Religious concepts	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	
A.	<p>The concept of Allah – tawhid (oneness) and shahadah (bearing witness):</p> <p>Tawhid as statement of uncompromising monotheism. Tawhid as the nature of God as ‘one’ with reference to Sura 112. God as sole creator, omnipotent and yet merciful. God as beyond words and descriptions. Attributes of God as metaphors and symbols. God as transcendent and imminent. Shirk (attributing partners) as opposition to tawhid.</p> <p>Shahadah as recognition of tawhid. Declaring faith or bearing witness to God’s unity and the unique nature of Muhammad as prophet of God. The power of the shahadah as a public statement of truth as well as a declaration of personal faith. The role of the shahadah in conversion. Shahadah as underlining the meaning and purpose of life in Islam: belief in one God; Muhammad as messenger and an exemplary Muslim.</p>
B.	<p>Muslim beliefs about nabi (prophets), rasul (messenger), nadir (warner) and risalah (the message):</p> <p>The role of a nabi (prophet) as a rasul (messenger) or nadir (warner) - Qur’an 3:144, 4:9. Perceived and popular distinction between nabi and rasul. The associated messages of previous prophets with specific reference to Ibrahim (Sahifa), Musa (Torah), Dawud (Zabur) and Isa (Injil) and their distorted nature. Muhammad as the ‘Seal of the Prophets’ (Qur’an 46:9). Muhammad’s character and uniqueness (Qur’an 33:21).</p>
C.	<p>Malaikah (angels) and akhirah (the Day of Final Judgment):</p> <p>Malaikah as intermediaries for God. The nature and purpose of angels. The specific roles of Jibril, Mikail and Israfil. God as Judge, and Akhirah (Day of Final Judgement). The significance of events from the last trumpet onward. Depictions of heaven and hell with reference to Sura 47:15 and Sura 67:7-10. Akhirah as underlining the meaning and purpose of life: submission and reward.</p>

Issues for analysis and evaluation will be drawn from any aspect of the content above, such as:

- The extent to which the Islamic concept of Allah is coherent.
- Whether the Shahadah is more to do with private faith than public declaration.
- Whether or not the concept of ‘messenger’ has been a success for Islam.
- The extent to which Muhammad was the ideal prophet and messenger.
- Whether the Day of Final Judgement inspires fear or faith.
- The extent to which the concept of Malaikah (angels) is essential for Islam.

Option B: An introduction to Islam

Theme 3: Religious life	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	
A.	<p>The role and significance of the following three pillars for Muslims and the Ummah (Muslim community).</p> <p>Salah (prayer) and other forms of prayer:</p> <p>The nature and purpose of different types of prayer in Islam: salah; tahajjud (night prayer) (Sura 17:79); nafila (extra); du'a (cry out); tasbih (glorify) and wird (Sufi prayer). The significance of niyat (intention). Regular prayer times (Qur'an 4:103). The significance of wudu. The role and importance of Jummah prayers for the Ummah (Qur'an 62:10).</p>
B.	<p>Zakah (purification through giving) - a key moral principle and hajj (pilgrimage):</p> <p>The nature and purpose of different types of giving in Islam: zakah; sadaqat (voluntary) and khums (a fifth). The reasons for giving in Islam: obedience; compassion; personal sacrifice; value of benefits gained. The importance of liberationist thinking in Islam and attitudes towards the poor. The impact of giving on the Ummah. The nature and purpose of the Hajj and its role in uniting the Ummah.</p>
C.	<p>The five categories of action as exemplifying the key moral principles for Islam and a framework for Muslim living:</p> <p>The need for guidance as arising from the development of Shari'a. The categories of fard (compulsory), mustahab (neither encouraged nor discouraged, recommended but not essential), halal (blessed, allowed), makruh (disliked, offensive) and haram (forbidden), and their importance as guides for Muslim life. Examples of types of actions associated as fard, mustahab, halal, makruh and haram.</p>
<p>Issues for analysis and evaluation will be drawn from any aspect of the content above, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The extent to which prayer is simply a ritualistic act of piety. • Whether or not Jummah prayers are the most important of all prayers. • The extent to which Islam is based in support for the poor. • Whether the Hajj is more than just a personal journey of religious enquiry. • The success of the five categories of ethical action as a guide for Islamic living today. • Whether or not the five categories are, in practice, a recipe for confusion rather than clarity. 	

Option B: An introduction to Islam

Theme 4: Religious practices that shape religious identity	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	
A.	<p>The role of the masjid (mosque) in Islam:</p> <p>The importance of the functions of the first masjid in Madinah. The religious, social and political role of masjids today in the UK. The masjid as a place of prostration. The masjid as the hub of the Ummah (community of believers) for men and women: the role of the masjid in religious events; the social and educational functions of the masjid; the masjid as a community centre. The role of the community of religious believers in supporting and maintaining the masjid.</p>
B.	<p>The role of festivals in shaping religious identity, with reference to:</p> <p>Ashura:</p> <p>The reasons for celebrating Ashura. The role of Ashura in expressing Shi'a identity. How rituals in Shi'a devotions during Ashura reflect central Shi'a teachings, with specific reference to persecution, suffering and self-harm. The role of the community of believers in ensuring the traditions of the festival are maintained.</p>
C.	<p>Ramadan and Id-ul-Fitr:</p> <p>The religious and moral benefits for a Muslim of Ramadan with reference to: relationship to God; development of Muslim spirituality; the importance of morality in Islam. The role of the community in ensuring the traditions of the Id-ul-Fitr are maintained. The social importance of Id-ul-Fitr for the Muslim community with reference to: empathy with, and support for the poor, unity and 'brotherhood'.</p>
<p>Issues for analysis and evaluation will be drawn from any aspect of the content above, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prostration as the most important purpose of the masjid. • Whether the masjid today has maintained its original function as that of the first masjid established by Muhammad in Madinah. • Whether a focus on suffering during Ashura misrepresents Shi'a identity. • Self-harm as excessive religious devotion. • Whether Id-ul-Fitr is treated as a religious celebration or social occasion. • The extent to which fasting benefits the individual more than the community. 	

Option C: An introduction to Judaism

Theme 1: Religious figures and sacred texts	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	
A.	<p>Abraham and the establishment of the covenant of circumcision:</p> <p>Abraham as Father of the Jewish people (Genesis 12:1-3); Abraham's belief in One God as creator of heaven and earth; the nature of the covenant between God and Abraham – the promise of land and offspring (Genesis 12:7; 13:14-17); brit milah (circumcision) as the sign of the covenant (Genesis 17); the significance of Abraham's faith and test of obedience (Genesis 22).</p>
B.	<p>Moses and the establishment of the covenant of law:</p> <p>The nature and significance of the Mosaic covenant both at the time of Moses and today (Exodus 19-20); the recording of the covenant by Moses (Exodus 24:4, Exodus 34:1-2, 27-28); the importance of God's protection for obedience (Exodus 34:10-11).</p>
C.	<p>The Torah as a source of wisdom and authority:</p> <p>The receiving of the Torah at Sinai and the significance of the written law (Exodus 19-20). The nature and purpose of Torah in Orthodox/Reform Judaism. The pre-existent and eternal relevance of Torah.</p> <p>Use and treatment of the Torah: Sefer Torah; Torah reading (in the synagogue and home), Torah study at a yeshiva (institute for Tanakh and Talmudic studies) and the role of the oral Torah. The care and respect shown for the Torah – ark, mantle, yad (pointer) and burial.</p>
<p>Issues for analysis and evaluation will be drawn from any aspect of the content above, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The extent of covenant's universality. • Covenant as a privilege or a responsibility. • Whether covenant is a method of religious control. • How far covenant is of legal value. • The extent to which the Torah remains the main authority within Judaism today. • Whether the Torah has become a religious icon. 	

Option C: An introduction to Judaism

Theme 2: Religious concepts	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	
A.	<p>Beliefs about the nature of God/concept of God:</p> <p>Absolute monotheism; God as One; God as Creator; God as incorporeal; God as neither male nor female; God as eternal. Characteristics: omnipotent, omniscient, omnibenevolent, Holy, Just, Perfect, Merciful. God's presence as both kavod and shekinah. Maimonides on the attributes of God.</p>
B.	<p>Beliefs about God and humanity, the meaning and purpose of life:</p> <p>Humanity (the self) created in the divine image; nefesh (life) as a divine gift; pikuach nefesh (the sanctity of life); nature of humanity - yetzer hara (evil inclination) and yetzer hatov (good inclination).</p> <p>The Shema: the content of Shema (Deuteronomy 6:4-9; 11:13-21; and Numbers 15:37-41). The nature of Shema as an aid to faith and remembering; Shema as a reinforcement of covenant relationship and the meaning and purpose of life.</p>
C.	<p>Beliefs about judgement - the Messiah and the afterlife:</p> <p>The Messiah in Judaism – The Anointed One and Judge who brings peace and goodwill to humanity (Isaiah 2:1-4); the establishment of a new world order. Death; resurrection of the dead (Daniel 12:2); the final judgement; olam ha-ba (the afterlife); the Pittsburgh Platform (paragraph 7) and Reform views about the afterlife.</p>
<p>Issues for analysis and evaluation will be drawn from any aspect of the content above, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whether it is possible to know God. • Whether God's characteristics are meaningful today. • Whether the Shema contains the most important beliefs within Judaism. • The extent to which the Shema is precise enough to guide Jewish belief and practice. • Whether Jewish beliefs about judgement and the afterlife are relevant for Jews today. • Whether the concept of Messiah is a serious religious belief for all Jews today. 	

Option C: An introduction to Judaism

Theme 3: Religious life	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	
A.	<p>The diversity of views within Judaism with regards to mitzvot (commandments):</p> <p>The role of the Jewish community of believers (Orthodox, Reform, Hasidic) in understanding the relevance of the 613 mitzvot with reference to: their interpretation today, literal or otherwise; their application today; their importance today.</p>
B.	<p>Jewish teachings about tefillah (prayer) with reference to the Amidah and teachings about tzedakah (charity):</p> <p>Tefillah as spiritual self-reflection in relation to God; reasons for tefillah; the structure and content of the Amidah; the use of the Amidah in daily prayers; minyan (congregation) and the diversity of practice of prayer within Judaism. The importance of tzedakah within Judaism; Maimonides and the 'ladder of tzedekah'.</p>
C.	<p>Key moral principles - the importance of the Ten Sayings (Aseret ha-D'ibrot) or Ten Commandments for Judaism:</p> <p>The Ten Sayings in the context of the 613 mitzvot; the Ten Sayings as a basis for religious and ethical life; the 'Aseret ha-Dibrot' in rabbinical understanding as the ten categories of mitzvot.</p>
<p>Issues for analysis and evaluation will be drawn from any aspect of the content above, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The extent to which the concept of mitzvot is divisive within Judaism. • Whether mitzvot contribute effectively to spirituality in Judaism. • The extent to which the Amidah is an encapsulation of the most important beliefs, values and teachings of Judaism. • Whether prayer has become a spiritually ineffective ritual. • Whether the Ten Sayings are an effective guide for ethical living. • The extent to which the Ten Sayings adequately summarise religious belief. 	

Option C: An introduction to Judaism

Theme 4: Religious practices that shape religious identity	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	
A.	<p>Diversity of Jewish practices that shape and express religious identity, with reference to:</p> <p>The role of the synagogue in Judaism</p> <p>The origins of the synagogue as a permanent institution in Babylonian captivity. The role of the ark in reminding Jews of the Jerusalem temple. Its social role: as meeting place for the Jewish community - bet k'nesset (house of meeting); the synagogue as a place of study and Torah reading - bet midrash (house of study) or 'school' (shul). The religious role of the synagogue: its central role in Jewish festivals; as a place of prayer; and, a place for ritual - some contain a mikveh (pool) for religious and physical cleanliness. The synagogue's legal status and role: use as a rabbinical court or bet din (house of judgement).</p>
B.	<p>The role of festivals in shaping religious identity</p> <p>Pesach:</p> <p>The significance of the 'Passover' event for Jewish identity with reference to: the popularity of observing Pesach amongst Jews today reflecting redemption of the Jewish people from Egypt; the redemption of the world under God's command; the importance of Exodus 12-15; the symbolism of the seder plate and the use of the Haggadah; the role of the Jewish community of believers in remembering and maintaining Jewish identity; hope for the future ("next year in Jerusalem"); the coming of Elijah to announce the arrival of the Messiah.</p>
C.	<p>Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur:</p> <p>The origins of the rituals of these festivals and their significance; the extent to which these festivals are observed; the impact and purpose of their observance; the challenge of a 25 hour fast and its value. The significance of the shofar horn in the Hebrew scriptures; the meaning and significance of tashlikh. The importance of the machzor; Kol Nidre and the amendments to the Amidah as confirming unity and identity of the Jewish people.</p>
<p>Issues for analysis and evaluation will be drawn from any aspect of the content above, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whether the synagogue has a main 'use' or 'purpose' within Judaism. • The extent to which the synagogue is the heart of a Jewish community. • The extent to which Pesach is the central festival within Judaism. • Whether the notion of redemption has any relevance for Judaism today. • Whether Jewish festivals are effective in reinforcing Jewish identity. • Whether the regular acknowledgement of sins and penitence for them is an admission of failure in spiritual development. 	

Option D: A Introduction to Buddhism

Theme 1: Religious figures and sacred texts	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	
A.	<p>Accounts of the birth of the historical Buddha and the Four Sights:</p> <p>The ways in which Buddhists read these narratives. Hagiographical and mythological interpretations of the conception dream of Maya, events surrounding the birth, the prophecy and early life. The biographical impact of the Four Sights and wider religious interpretations of their meaning in terms of dukkha (unsatisfactoriness), anicca (impermanence), anatta (insubstantiality/no-self).</p>
B.	<p>The Awakening/Enlightenment of the Buddha:</p> <p>An explanation of the main features of the accounts of what led to the Buddha's Awakening under the Bodhi Tree; including knowledge of past lives, knowledge of the role of karma in the lives of all beings, the path to the cessation of dukkha, meanings of the Mara/temptation narratives, and the earth touching mudra.</p>
C.	<p>Buddhist texts as sources of wisdom and authority – their use and treatment in daily life:</p> <p>The Patimokkha as one of the sources of wisdom and authority for the Theravada monastic sangha. Its use and treatment as a recited text. The seriousness of the Four Parajikas 'defeats', leading to expulsion from the sangha.</p>
<p>Issues for analysis and evaluation will be drawn from any aspect of the content above, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The importance of the biography of the historical Buddha for Buddhists today. • The relative significance of different ways in which the biography may be interpreted. • The significance of the Awakening/Enlightenment of the Buddha in Buddhism. • The difficulty of articulating Awakening, as an experience beyond language. • The relative importance and value of the Patimokkha. • Critical comparison of ancient text-based rules and contemporary issues for the sangha. The relevance of the parajikas today. 	

Option D: An introduction to Buddhism

Theme 2: Religious concepts	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	
A.	<p>The nature of ultimate reality:</p> <p>The three lakshanas (three marks of existence): dukkha, anicca and anatta:</p> <p>The concepts of dukkha and anicca: with reference to the <i>Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta</i>.</p> <p>The concept of anatta with reference to Section 1 Chapter 1 of the Chariot Passage of the <i>Questions of King Milinda</i>.</p>
B.	<p>The nature of ultimate reality:</p> <p>Pratityasamutpada, karma and rebirth:</p> <p>The notions of pratityasamutpada and rebirth: with reference to the iconography of the bhavachakra.</p> <p>The notion of karma: with reference to the <i>Dhammapada</i>, Chapter 1 'The Pairs' and Chapter 9 'Evil'.</p> <p>The importance of rooting out of greed, hatred and delusion and not speculating about the existence of God and other metaphysical questions (Parable of the Poisoned Arrow – <i>Majjhima Nikaya</i> 63).</p>
C.	<p>Arhat and bodhisattva - Theravada and Mahayana teachings:</p> <p>Four stages of Awakening: stream-winner, once-returner, non-returner, arhat (worthy one).</p> <p>Characteristics of bodhisattvas: Six or ten paramitas (perfections), bhumis (stages), the vow to bring all suffering beings to Awakening and the interrelationship between wisdom and compassion.</p>
<p>Issues for analysis and evaluation will be drawn from any aspect of the content above, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The three lakshanas as representative of reality. • The three lakshanas as the most important teachings of Buddhism. • The teachings of pratityasamutpada, karma and rebirth as representative of reality. • The legitimacy of rejecting questions about the existence of God. • The concept of bodhisattva and arhat as an essential feature of Buddhism. • The relative legitimacy of concepts of bodhisattva and arhat. 	

Option D: A Introduction to Buddhism

Theme 3: Religious life	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	
A.	<p>The Four Noble Truths:</p> <p>The three types of dukkha - dukkha-dukkha (painful experience); viparinama-dukkha (changing nature of existence); sankhara-dukkha (the contingent nature of existence); the medical metaphor (the Buddha as a physician, diagnosing the symptoms, identifying cause and providing a prescription) and the notions of tanha (thirst), nirodha (cessation) and magga (the path).</p>
B.	<p>The Eightfold Path – key moral principles:</p> <p>The Threefold Trainings: wisdom, morality and meditation. The relationship of the Eightfold Path with the Middle Way. The Eightfold Path within the context of the diversity of Buddhism. Exemplification of ways in which the Eightfold Path is practised and its significance for Buddhist morality.</p>
C.	<p>The dasa sila (ten precepts) – key moral principles:</p> <p>Exemplification of the application of the dasa sila (ten precepts) within the community of believers: lay people and the monastic sangha. The different complementary roles of the lay and monastic sanghas. The notion of the precepts as training aspirations rather than commandments for the community of believers and the role of the monastic sangha in keeping the precepts on behalf of the wider sangha.</p>
<p>Issues for analysis and evaluation will be drawn from any aspect of the content above, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Four Noble Truths as essential for all Buddhists. • The Four Noble truths as accurate accounts of reality. • The usefulness of the Eightfold Path as a moral guide for all Buddhists affecting every aspect of life. • The relationship between behaviour and Awakening. • The relative importance of the dasa sila (ten precepts) as a means of regulating the sangha. • The contemporary relevance of precepts and monastic life. 	

Option D: A Introduction to Buddhism

Theme 4: Religious practices that shape religious identity	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	
A.	<p>Going for refuge:</p> <p>A consideration of the chanting practice of going for refuge three times, the meanings of each (Buddha, dharma and sangha) for both heritage and convert Buddhists. The three refuges in the context of other possible refuges in the modern world: with reference to materialism, relationships, secular values and political beliefs.</p>
B.	<p>Meditation:</p> <p>The importance of meditation in Buddhism and awareness of specific features of different traditions of meditation: vipassana (insight/clear seeing), samatha (calmness), metta bhavana (loving kindness) and zazen (just sitting). How these practices are used for accessing the true nature of reality, and for cultivating qualities which lead to awakening.</p>
C.	<p>The role and importance of dana (giving) and punya (merit):</p> <p>The role and importance of selfless generosity/giving or sharing of time/money/possessions. The role of the Buddhist community in supporting those both inside and outside the community. The role and importance of punya – the concept of the merit gained and accumulated as a result of good deeds, acts, or thoughts and which carries over throughout life or in subsequent rebirths, and may be transferred to others.</p>
<p>Issues for analysis and evaluation will be drawn from any aspect of the content above, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The relevance of going for refuge in the modern world. • The relative value of each of the three refuges. • The value and relevance of meditation for all Buddhists today. • The relative importance of different traditions of meditation. • The significance of the practice of dana in its relationship to the notion of punya. • The relative importance of dana and punya compared with other Buddhist teachings. 	

Option E: An introduction to Hinduism

Theme 1: Religious figures and sacred texts	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	
A.	<p>Sources of authority - the origins of Hinduism:</p> <p>The Indus Valley civilisation and its features; the Aryans and their culture; vedic practices – the vedic sacrifice and the structure of Vedic society; the origins controversy – conflicting definitions of the word Hinduism; conflict between theories on Indus and Aryan origins.</p>
B.	<p>Krishna and Arjuna:</p> <p>The teaching on dharma and varnadharma; the conflict which can arise from following personal dharma. The wisdom of Samkhya, nature of religious practices; different paths to liberation – jnana yoga, karma yoga and bhakti yoga. Bhagavad Gita - 2:31; 3:4-5; 3:19; 9:23; 9:26-28; 9:32; 11:54; 14:23-26; 16:1-3; 18:46; 18:47.</p>
C.	<p>Hindu texts as sources of wisdom and authority - their use in daily life:</p> <p>A comparison of status and importance of shruti and smriti. The significance of differences in terms of authority and use - the Vedas in ritual ceremonies and the Ramayana and Mahabharata for ethical teachings. The role of the Ramayana in teaching the importance of righteous behaviour, selfless caring, courage, friendship and devotion. The role of the Mahabharata in teaching the importance of doing one's duty. The role of the community of believers in interpreting and implementing the wisdom and authority of Hindu texts.</p>
<p>Issues for analysis and evaluation will be drawn from any aspect of the content above, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The controversy over the origins of Hinduism. • The relationship between modern Hinduism and Indus Valley and Aryan traditions. • The relationship between Krishna and Arjuna as a central feature of Hinduism. • The relative importance of different paths to liberation. • The relative importance of Hindu texts in Hinduism. • The relevance of Hindu texts in the modern world. 	

Option E: An introduction to Hinduism

Theme 2: Religious concepts	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	
A.	<p>Exploring Hindu teachings concerning self, death, afterlife and meaning and purpose of life with reference to:</p> <p>Brahman and atman</p> <p>The relationship between: Brahman as sat, chit, ananda (being, consciousness and bliss), macrocosmic (universal) spirit and atman as micro cosmic (personal). Difference between jiva-atman (individual soul) and paramatman (supreme self – God); Monist (belief that God and the soul are one) and Monotheist (belief that god and the soul are different); Shankara (proponent of Advaita Vedanta which emphasises an impersonal view of the divine) and Madhva (proponent of Dvaita Vedanta).</p>
B.	<p>Trimurti:</p> <p>Relationship and importance to Hindu understanding of Saguna Brahman (God with characteristics) – Brahma – creator, Vishnu – preserver, Shiva - destroyer and Hindu vision of time as cyclic – returning to life in a new form; link to liberation – the breaking of the eternal wheel of samsara - creation, preservation and destruction. The key features of Vaishnavism and Shaivism as religious traditions.</p>
C.	<p>Key moral principles of karma and reincarnation:</p> <p>Karma in the context of samsara and the importance of eternal and universal order; different aspects of karma (accumulated, fruit-bearing and karma in the making) and their influence on types of reincarnation. The relationship between samsara and moksha and the significance within samsara of human rebirth. Bhagavad Gita 2:13. The significance of karma and reincarnation in the context of the meaning and purpose of life in Hinduism – achieving Moksha.</p>
<p>Issues for analysis and evaluation will be drawn from any aspect of the content above, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The nature of the relationship between Brahman and atman. • Whether it is possible to worship an impersonal God. • The relative importance of Trimurti in Hinduism in comparison with the other concepts studied. • Whether Vaishnavism and Shaivism can be regarded as religions in themselves. • The impact of teachings about karma and reincarnation upon the lifestyle of Hindus. • The comparative importance in Hinduism of the present life and the next life. 	

Option E: An introduction to Hinduism

Theme 3: Religious life	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	
A.	<p>Key moral principles of Varnashramadharma:</p> <p>Mythical origins of the system in the Purusha Sukta – Rig Veda 10:90 11-12 the concept of Varnashramadharma - sometimes referred to as Catuvarnashramadharma – catu – four - defines duties for the individual according to their position in the four varnas of society – brahmanas (priests), Kshatriyas (warriors and rulers), vaishyas (merchants) and sudras (labourers).</p> <p>The four ashramas, brahmacharya (student stage), grihastha (householder stage), vanaprastha (retirement stage) and sannyasin (renunciation). Relationship with bhakti; links and differences with Sanatana dharma (Bhagavad Gita 18:47).</p>
B.	<p>The status of the Dalits:</p> <p>Their status within the varna system – position outside the four varnas – excluded from mainstream society; comparison between Gandhi – who opposed untouchability but supported the varna system and Ambedkar – who wanted to eradicate the varna system altogether; contemporary status of Dalits – through the Bahujan Samaj Party and the development and improvement of their social standing – success in business and public life.</p>
C.	<p>Key moral principle - the concept of ahimsa:</p> <p>The Jainian origins of the concept and its application – meaning radical non-violence founded on the belief that all living beings are worthy of respect and therefore all Jains are vegetarian; traditional concept within Hinduism; and its application; Gandhi's reinterpretation and use of the concept as a political concept; relationship with satyagraha – truth force; implications for racial equality Manu 5:38. Its practicality in the modern world.</p>
<p>Issues for analysis and evaluation will be drawn from any aspect of the content above, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The extent to which Hinduism can be described as a religion of duty. • The relevance of the ashramas in Hindu lifestyle today. • The relevance and practicality of varna in today's world. • Whether criticisms of the varna system are justified. • The ideal of ahimsa as a relevant and viable standard to live by in the modern world. • Whether truth has an inherent force. 	

Option E: An introduction to Hinduism

Theme 4: Religious practices that shape religious identity	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	
A.	<p>The diversity of Hindu practices that shape and express identity, with reference to:</p> <p>Puja in the home and the mandir:</p> <p>Nature of puja in the home and mandir – compare and contrast; importance of relationship between individual devotee and deities; receiving of darshan; mandir rituals such as circumambulation and accepting prashad; comparative importance of personal and congregational worship.</p>
B.	<p>The role of festivals in shaping religious identity – with reference to:</p> <p>Holi:</p> <p>Representing the story of Holika and Prahlada in some Hindu traditions; the story of Krishna and Radha in others; spiritual significance of these events - blessing of babies by Agni; the god of Fire, the virtue of love; confirming and strengthening faith; good overcoming evil, benevolence of the Gods; reminds devotees of aims and duties in life - to help others. The role of the community of believers in ensuring the traditions of the festival are maintained.</p>
C.	<p>Durga Puja:</p> <p>Representing the story of Rama, Sita and Durga; spiritual significance of these events - thanksgiving, helping others; importance of avatars; Durga as divine mother; impurity and sin; it confirms and strengthens faith; good overcomes evil, importance of worship and prayer; reminds devotees of aims and duties in life – to lead a life free from impurity, sin and weakness. The role of the community of believers in ensuring the traditions of the festival are maintained.</p>
<p>Issues for analysis and evaluation will be drawn from any aspect of the content above, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The relative importance of puja in the home and in the mandir. • Whether puja can be described as a religious experience. • The extent to which festivals are a necessary expression of Hindu identity. • Whether celebrating mythical or historical events on festival days is meaningful. • The value of Hindu festivals as community occasions. • The relative importance of Durga in Hinduism. 	

Option F: An introduction to Sikhism

Theme 1: Religious figures and sacred texts	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	
A.	<p>The life and teachings of Guru Nanak:</p> <p>Influence of background and socio-religious ideas of his time on key teachings: Invasion of Mughal army and Mughal persecution; influence of Sufism; influence of Lalla; north-Indian sant tradition; Monotheism in Islam; use of devotional songs; status/role of women in Islam and caste in Hinduism – Adi Granth 150 and Adi Granth 91.</p> <p>Relationship between key events in his life and specific teachings: Guru Nanak's horoscope at his birth and the acknowledgement of One Formless Lord. His experience of God's court, his teaching that God is neither Hindu nor Muslim; his mission to reveal the message of God's name to the world. His meeting with Sajjan and his teaching of what true religion is - the jannam sakhi episodes. Guru Nanak's teaching against the caste system; raising the status of women; foundation of the institution of the guru; rejection of the sacred thread ceremony and Hindu rituals; his establishment of community at Kartapur based on Sikh principles.</p>
B.	<p>Guru Gobind Singh's contribution to the development of Sikhism:</p> <p>The relationship of his actions with Nanak's vision – both as protector and restorer; his defence of Sikhism in the face of attacks and persecution; his development of Sikhism as a religion with a strong identity - prepared to defend its beliefs and principles; and community orientation – founded the Khalsa; introduced the amrit ceremony as initiation and wearing of 5Ks; the adoption of names Singh and Kaur; welcomed women and members of all castes into the community; contributed to the compilation and content of Dasam Granth; interpretation and new concept of Guru – the Guru Panth; the development of the Guru Granth Sahib.</p>
C.	<p>The Guru Granth Sahib as a source of wisdom and authority – its use and treatment in worship and daily life:</p> <p>Its legal and theological status – regarded as a living Guru with full authority of Gurus' teaching and treated with same devotion and respect; all decisions taken in presence of Guru Granth; all ceremonies and rites of passage to be completed in its presence; it is the basis of all sermons and the authority as the basis of Sikh teaching on the nature of God, faith and salvation the difference between Adi Granth and Guru Granth; role of Muslim and Hindu writings within its pages - Sheik Farid - Guru Granth Sahib – 448, 1384; Bhagat Ramanand – Guru Granth Sahib – 1195; creation of gurmukhi script; its role as more than a visible focal point for Sikh devotions – taking the place of living Gurus; it guides Sikhs in daily life – vak lao (taking advice).</p>
<p>Issues for analysis and evaluation will be drawn from any aspect of the content above, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The extent to which Guru Nanak was a religious innovator. • The relative importance of Guru Nanak's background and other key events in his life on his teaching. • The extent to which Guru Gobind Singh changed or developed the Sikhism of Guru Nanak. • The influence of Guru Gobind Singh on Sikh identity. • The relevance of the Guru Granth Sahib for Sikhs today. • The extent to which the Guru Granth Sahib can be viewed as an object of worship for Sikhs. 	

Option F: An introduction to Sikhism

Theme 2: Religious concepts	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	
A.	<p>Exploring Sikh teachings concerning self, death, afterlife and meaning and purpose of life, with reference to:</p> <p>Philosophical understanding of the Sikh concept of God:</p> <p>God is the one, the only one and the one without a second; symbolism of Ik Onkar (Adi Granth 929,1035,1037); God as personal – Adi Granth 784, 1190; God as nirguna (without attributes) and saguna (with attributes); God as omnipotent and omniscient; God as creator and sustainer of life – Adi Granth 25, 684,700; God as immanent and transcendent.</p>
B.	<p>The soul:</p> <p>Nature of the soul - divine spark of Waheguru, ethereal and non-material; union with Waheguru. The aim of breaking cycle of rebirth; journey of the soul through many life forms to attain this aim; stages of development on the path of enlightenment including stage of Saram Khand, the realm of effort and realm of grace; monist and monotheistic understanding of the relationship between God and the soul.</p>
C.	<p>Karma, rebirth and mukti:</p> <p>Philosophical understanding of the path of liberation – replacement of ignorance by spiritual enlightenment affected by God’s Grace – it is the meaning and purpose of life; the role of karma and transmigration of the soul; union with God – Adi Granth 1127, 905, 275 as the meaning and purpose of Sikh life.</p>
<p>Issues for analysis and evaluation will be drawn from any aspect of the content above, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The relevant importance of the Sikh concept of God in relation to other concepts. • Whether the most important Sikh teaching about God is that God is personal. • The impact of Sikh teachings about the soul on the Sikh view of humanity. • The relationship between God and the soul in Sikhism – monist or monotheistic. • The relevance of Sikh beliefs about rebirth and mukti for Sikhs today. • The influence of belief in karma on Sikh lifestyle. 	

Option F: An introduction to Sikhism

Theme 3: Religious life	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	
A.	<p>The role and significance of the following teachings/key moral principles for the Sikh community:</p> <p>The concept of sewa:</p> <p>Its influence on personal morality – recognising no barriers of religion, caste or race; relationship with teaching of Guru Granth Sahib and principles of Sarbhat da bhalla; importance of state of mind – selfless and desire-less action – physical service, mental service, material service; its material and spiritual value within the Sikh community – part of a Sikh’s spiritual life leading to spiritual liberation. Bhai Gurdas, Varan 6:12. The role of the community of believers in demonstrating selfless action to God and others. Sewa’s significance to Sikh identity.</p>
B.	<p>Kirat Karo and Vand Chakko:</p> <p>Teaching of Guru Gobind Singh; understanding of concept of Kirat Karo (earning money righteously and honestly) in relation to Naam Japo (remembrance of God by repeating and focusing the mind on his name) and Vand Chakko (sharing wealth with others); relationship with teaching on karma; the pursuit of grace; influence on sangat (community).</p>
C.	<p>The concepts of Sant Sipahi (saint-soldier)/Dharam Yudh (just war):</p> <p>Understanding of the concept of Sant Sipahi in the context of the development of Sikhism by Guru Harbogind and Guru Gobind Singh; philosophical meaning of the term; duties associated with sant; meaning in relation to dharam; rules of the khalsa in relation to the general Sikh principle of Dharam Yudh.</p>
<p>Issues for analysis and evaluation will be drawn from any aspect of the content above, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The relative importance of sewa in Sikh life compared to other teachings. • The practicality of the concept of sewa for Sikhs today. • The relative importance of the virtues of Kirat Karo and Vand Chakko in Sikhism. • The relationship between spiritual and material values in Sikhism. • Whether it is possible to combine spirituality with the use of force (Sant Sipahi and Dharam Yudh). • The significance of the sant tradition for Sikhs today. 	

Option F: An introduction to Sikhism

Theme 4: Religious practices that shape religious identity	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	
A.	<p>The expression of Sikh identity through the role of the gurdwara:</p> <p>Representation of the principle of freedom of worship – no restrictions on who may lead the worship in terms of caste or sex as long as they are competent to do so; fulfilment of religious and social needs – spiritual guidance and material fulfilment in terms of the langar as an expression of sewa; B40 Janam Sakhi, Adi Granth 1068; worship as a reflection of Sikh identity – the importance of Guru Granth Sahib; expression of Sikh beliefs such as equality.</p>
B.	<p>Diwali:</p> <p>Representing the story of Guru Hargobind and his release from prison; focuses attention on spiritual matters – freedom and deliverance; it confirms and strengthens faith - good overcomes evil; light overcomes darkness; reminds Sikhs of aims and duties in life; focuses on the importance of unity within the community; the role of the community of believers in maintaining the traditions associated with the festival.</p>
C.	<p>Vaisakhi:</p> <p>New Year's Day in the Punjab; remembers Guru Gobind Singh's founding of the Sikh brotherhood; focuses attention on spiritual matters – Sikh identity, sacrifice, virtues of Sikh living; it confirms and strengthens faith – reminds Sikhs of aims and duties in life – protecting the truth, standing up for the oppressed; creates a feeling of belonging to a community – the Khalsa; the role of the community of believers in maintaining the traditions associated with the festival.</p>
<p>Issues for analysis and evaluation will be drawn from any aspect of the content above, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The degree to which the gurdwara is an essential part of the Sikh religion. • The comparative importance of practices within the gurdwara. • The relative importance of Diwali and Vaisakhi. • The extent to which festivals are a necessary expression of Sikh identity. • The value of Sikh festivals as community occasions. • Whether celebrating historical events on festival days is meaningful. 	

2.2 Component 2

Component 2: An Introduction to Philosophy of Religion

Written examination: 1 hour 30 minutes

33⅓% of qualification

100 marks

This component provides the opportunity for learners to acquire and develop knowledge and a critical understanding of some of the key features of fundamental philosophical themes, ranging from arguments for the existence of God to religious experience.

This component includes the study of the following content:

- philosophical issues and questions raised by religion and belief including at least three contrasting arguments about the existence or non-existence of God, gods or ultimate reality
- philosophical language and thought through significant concepts and the works of key thinkers, illustrated in issues or debates in the philosophy of religion
- challenges to religious belief such as the problems of evil and suffering
- the nature and influence of religious experience.

The following grids exemplify how the required content has been developed in a clear and concise way into four themes.

Component 2: An Introduction to Philosophy of Religion

Theme 1: Arguments for the existence of God - inductive	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	
A.	<p>Inductive arguments – cosmological:</p> <p>Inductive proofs; the concept of '<i>a posteriori</i>'. Cosmological argument: St Thomas Aquinas' first Three Ways - (motion or change; cause and effect; contingency and necessity). The Kalam cosmological argument with reference to William Lane Craig (rejection of actual infinities and concept of personal creator).</p>
B.	<p>Inductive arguments – teleological:</p> <p>St Thomas Aquinas' Fifth Way - concept of governance; archer and arrow analogy. William Paley's watchmaker - analogy of complex design. F. R. Tennant's anthropic and aesthetic arguments - the universe specifically designed for intelligent human life.</p>
C.	<p>Challenges to inductive arguments:</p> <p>David Hume - empirical objections and critique of causes (cosmological). David Hume - problems with analogies; rejection of traditional theistic claims: designer not necessarily God of classical theism; apprentice god; plurality of gods; absent god (teleological). Alternative scientific explanations including Big Bang theory and Charles Darwin's theory of evolution by natural selection.</p>
<p>Issues for analysis and evaluation will be drawn from any aspect of the content above, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whether inductive arguments for God's existence are persuasive. • The extent to which the Kalam cosmological argument is convincing. • The effectiveness of the cosmological/teleological argument for God's existence. • Whether cosmological/teleological arguments for God's existence are persuasive in the 21st Century. • The effectiveness of the challenges to the cosmological/teleological argument for God's existence. • Whether scientific explanations are more persuasive than philosophical explanations for the universe's existence. 	

An Introduction to Philosophy of Religion

Theme 2: Arguments for the existence of God - deductive	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	
A.	<p>Deductive arguments - origins of the ontological argument</p> <p>Deductive proofs; the concept of '<i>a priori</i>'. St Anselm - God as the greatest possible being (Proslogion 2). St Anselm - God has necessary existence (Proslogion 3).</p>
B.	<p>Deductive arguments - developments of the ontological argument:</p> <p>Rene Descartes - concept of God as supremely perfect being; analogies of triangles and mountains/valleys. Norman Malcolm - God as unlimited being: God's existence as necessary rather than just possible.</p>
C.	<p>Challenges to the ontological argument:</p> <p>Gaunilo, his reply to St Anselm; his rejection of the idea of a greatest possible being that can be thought of as having separate existence outside of our minds; his analogy of the idea of the greatest island as a ridicule of St Anselm's logic. Immanuel Kant's objection - existence is not a determining predicate: it cannot be a property that an object can either possess or lack.</p>
<p>Issues for analysis and evaluation will be drawn from any aspect of the content above, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The extent to which 'a priori' arguments for God's existence are persuasive. • The extent to which different religious views on the nature of God impact on arguments for the existence of God. • The effectiveness of the ontological argument for God's existence. • Whether the ontological argument is more persuasive than the cosmological/teleological arguments for God's existence. • The effectiveness of the challenges to the ontological argument for God's existence. • The extent to which objections to the ontological argument are persuasive. 	

An Introduction to Philosophy of Religion

Theme 3: Challenges to religious belief - the problem of evil and suffering	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	
A.	<p>The problem of evil:</p> <p>The types of evil: moral (caused by free will agents) and natural (caused by nature). The logical problem of evil: classical (Epicurus) - the problem of suffering. J. L. Mackie's modern development - the nature of the problem of evil (inconsistent triad). William Rowe (intense human and animal suffering) and Gregory S. Paul (premature deaths).</p>
B.	<p>Religious responses to the problem of evil (i):</p> <p>Augustinian type theodicy: Evil as a consequence of sin: evil as a privation; the fall of human beings and creation; the Cross overcomes evil, soul-deciding; challenges to Augustinian type theodicies: validity of biblical accounts; scientific error; moral contradictions of omnibenevolent God and existence of Hell; logical contradiction of perfect creation being susceptible to change.</p>
C.	<p>Religious responses to the problem of evil (ii):</p> <p>Irenaean type theodicy: Vale of soul-making: human beings created imperfect; epistemic distance; second-order goods; eschatological justification; challenges to Irenaean type theodicies: concept of universal salvation unjust; evil and suffering should not be used as a tool by an omnibenevolent God; immensity of suffering and unequal distribution of evil and suffering.</p>
<p>Issues for analysis and evaluation will be drawn from any aspect of the content above, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The extent to which the classical form of the problem of evil is a problem. • The degree to which modern problem of evil arguments are effective in proving God's non-existence. • Whether Augustinian type theodicies are relevant in the 21st Century. • The extent to which Augustine's theodicy succeeds as a defence of the God of Classical Theism. • Whether Irenaean type theodicies are credible in the 21st Century. • The extent to which Irenaeus's theodicy succeeds as a defence of the God of Classical Theism. 	

An Introduction to Philosophy of Religion

Theme 4: Religious Experience	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	
A.	<p>The nature of religious experience with particular reference to:</p> <p>Visions - sensory; intellectual; dreams. Conversion – individual/communal; sudden/gradual. Mysticism – transcendent; ecstatic and unitive. Prayer – types and stages of prayer according to Teresa of Avila.</p>
B.	<p>Mystical experience:</p> <p>William James’ four characteristics of mystical experience: ineffable, noetic, transient and passive.</p> <p>Rudolf Otto – the concept of the numinous; <i>mysterium tremendum</i>; the human predisposition for religious experience.</p>
C.	<p>Challenges to the objectivity and authenticity of religious experience:</p> <p>With reference to Caroline Franks Davis (description-related; subject-related and object-related challenges). Claims of religious experience rejected on grounds of misunderstanding; claims delusional - possibly related to substance misuse, fantastical claims contrary to everyday experiences.</p> <p>Challenges: individual experiences valid even if non-verifiable; claims could be genuine - integrity of individual; one-off experiences can still be valid even if never repeated.</p>
<p>Issues for analysis and evaluation will be drawn from any aspect of the content above, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The impact of religious experiences upon religious belief and practice. • Whether different types of religious experience can be accepted as equally valid in communicating religious teachings and beliefs. • The adequacy of James’ four characteristics in defining mystical experience. • The adequacy of Otto’s definition of ‘numinous’. • The extent to which the challenges to religious experience are valid. • The persuasiveness of Franks-Davis’s different challenges. 	

2.3 Component 3

Component 3: An Introduction to Religion and Ethics

Written examination: 1 hour 30 minutes

33 $\frac{1}{3}$ % of qualification

100 marks

This component provides the opportunity for learners to acquire and develop knowledge and a critical understanding of key ethical concepts and theories, ranging from moral absolutism to Utilitarianism.

This component includes the study of the following content:

- ethical language and thought through significant concepts and the works of key thinkers, illustrated in issues or debates in religion and ethics
- three normative ethical theories such as deontological, teleological or character based ethics (at least two of which must be religious approaches)
- the application of ethical theory to two personal, societal or global issues of importance, including religious ethical perspectives.

The following grids exemplify how the required content has been developed in a clear and concise way into four themes.

Component 3: An Introduction to Religion and Ethics

Theme 1: Ethical Thought	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	
A.	<p>Divine Command Theory</p> <p>Meta-ethical theory - God as the origin and regulator of morality; right or wrong as objective truths based on God's will/command, moral goodness is achieved by complying with divine command; divine command a requirement of God's omnipotence; divine command as an objective meta-physical foundation for morality. Robert Adams' 'Modified Divine Command Theory' (divine command based on God's omnibenevolence).</p> <p>Challenges: the Euthyphro dilemma (inspired by Plato); arbitrariness problem (divine command theory renders morality as purely arbitrary); pluralism objection (different religions claim different divine commands).</p>
B.	<p>Virtue Theory</p> <p>Ethical system based on defining the personal qualities that make a person moral; the focus on a person's character rather than their specific actions; Aristotle's moral virtues (based on the deficiency; the excess and the mean); Jesus' teachings on virtues (the Beatitudes).</p> <p>Challenges: virtues are not a practical guide to moral behaviour; issue of cultural relativism (ideas on the good virtues are not universal); virtues can be used for immoral acts.</p>
C.	<p>Ethical Egoism</p> <p>Normative agent focused ethic based on self-interest as opposed to altruism; ethical theory that matches the moral agent's psychological state (psychological egoism); concentration on long term self-interests rather than short term interests; Max Stirner, self-interest as the root cause of every human action even if it appears altruistic; rejection of egoism for material gain; union of egoists.</p> <p>Challenges: destruction of a community ethos; social injustices could occur as individuals put their own interests first; a form of bigotry (why is one moral agent more important than any other?).</p>
<p>Issues for analysis and evaluation will be drawn from any aspect of the content above, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whether morality is what God commands. • Whether being a good person is better than just doing good deeds. • Whether virtue theory is useful when faced with a moral dilemma. • The extent to which ethical egoism inevitably leads to moral evil. • The extent to which all moral actions are motivated by self-interest. • Whether one of the theories - divine command theory, virtue theory or ethical egoism is superior to the other theories. 	

Component 3: An Introduction to Religion and Ethics

Theme 2: Aquinas' Natural Law - a religious approach to ethics	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	
A.	<p>St Thomas Aquinas' Natural Law: laws and precepts as the basis of morality</p> <p>Aquinas' four levels of law (eternal, divine, natural and human); Natural Law derived from rational thought; based on a belief in a divine creator (the highest good as being the rational understanding of God's final purpose). Natural Law as a form of moral absolutism and a theory which has both deontological and teleological aspects. The five primary precepts (preservation of life, ordered society, worship of God, education and reproduction of the human species) as derived from rational thought and based on the premise of 'doing good and avoiding evil'; the secondary precepts which derive from the primary precepts; the importance of keeping the precepts in order to establish a right relationship with God and gain eternal life with God in heaven.</p>
B.	<p>Aquinas' Natural Law: the role of virtues and goods in supporting moral behaviour</p> <p>The need for humans to be more God-like by developing the three revealed virtues (faith, hope and charity) and four cardinal virtues (fortitude, temperance, prudence and justice). Aquinas' definition of different types of acts and goods: internal acts (the intention of the moral agent when carrying out an action) and external acts (the actions of a moral agent); real goods (correctly reasoned goods that help the moral agent achieve their telos) and apparent goods (wrongly reasoned goods that don't help the moral agent achieve their God given purpose).</p>
C.	<p>Aquinas' Natural Law: application of the theory</p> <p>The application of Aquinas' Natural Law to both of the issues listed below:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. abortion 2. voluntary euthanasia
<p>Issues for analysis and evaluation will be drawn from any aspect of the content above, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The degree to which human law should be influenced by Natural Law. • The extent to which the absolutist and/or deontological nature of Natural Law works in contemporary society. • The strengths and weaknesses of Natural Law. • A consideration of whether Natural Law promotes injustice. • The effectiveness of Natural Law in dealing with ethical issues. • The extent to which Natural Law is meaningless without a belief in a creator God 	

Component 3: An Introduction to Religion and Ethics

Theme 3: Situation Ethics – a religious approach to ethics	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	
A.	<p>Joseph Fletcher's Situation Ethics: his rejection of other forms of ethics and his acceptance of agape as the basis of morality</p> <p>Fletcher's rejection of other approaches within ethics: legalism, antinomianism and the role of conscience; Fletcher's rationale for using the religious concept of 'agape' (selfless love) as the 'middle way' between the extremes of legalism and antinomianism; the biblical evidence used to support this approach: the teachings of Jesus (Luke 10:25:37) and St Paul (1 Corinthians 13). Situation Ethics as a form of moral relativism, a consequentialist and teleological theory.</p>
B.	<p>Fletcher's Situation Ethics: the principles as a means of assessing morality</p> <p>The boss principle of Situation Ethics (following the concept of agape); the four working principles (pragmatism, relativism, positivism and personalism); the six fundamental principles (love is the only good, love is the ruling norm of Christianity, love equals justice, love for all, loving ends justify the means and love decides situationally).</p>
C.	<p>Fletcher's Situation Ethics: application of the theory</p> <p>The application of Fletcher's Situation Ethics to both of the issues listed below:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. homosexual relationships 2. polyamorous relationships
<p>Issues for analysis and evaluation will be drawn from any aspect of the content above, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The degree to which agape is the only intrinsic good. • Whether Situation Ethics promotes immoral behaviour. • The extent to which Situation Ethics promotes justice. • The effectiveness of Situation Ethics in dealing with ethical issues. • Whether agape should replace religious rules. • The extent to which Situation Ethics provides a practical basis for making moral decisions for both religious believers and non-believers. 	

Component 3: An Introduction to Religion and Ethics

Theme 4: Utilitarianism – a non-religious approach to ethics	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	
A.	<p>Classical Utilitarianism – Jeremy Bentham’s Act Utilitarianism: happiness as the basis of morality</p> <p>Bentham's theory of 'utility' or 'usefulness'; ultimate aim is to pursue pleasure and avoid pain; principle of utility ('the greatest happiness for the greatest number'). The hedonic calculus as a means of measuring pleasure in each unique moral situation; by considering seven factors: intensity, duration, certainty, remoteness, fecundity, purity and extent. Act Utilitarianism as a form of moral relativism, a consequentialist and teleological theory.</p>
B.	<p>John Stuart Mill's development of Utilitarianism: types of pleasure, the harm principle and the use of rules</p> <p>Mill's idea that not all pleasure is the same - 'higher pleasures' (intellectual) are superior to 'lower pleasures' (basic physical pleasure). Development of the 'Harm Principle': the actions of individuals should be limited to prevent harm to other individuals. Every action does not need to be assessed and actions are right if they conform to an historical rule that has demonstrated that it fulfils the principle of utility (now known as 'Rule' Utilitarianism). Mill's Utilitarianism as a teleological/deontological hybrid.</p>
C.	<p>Utilitarianism: application of the theories (Act and Rule)</p> <p>The application of Bentham’s Act Utilitarianism and Mill’s Rule Utilitarianism to both of the issues listed below:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. animal experimentation for medical research 2. the use of nuclear weapons as a deterrent
<p>Issues for analysis and evaluation will be drawn from any aspect of the content above, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The degree to which pleasure can be seen as the sole intrinsic good. • The extent to which Utilitarianism works in contemporary society. • The extent to which Rule Utilitarianism provides a better basis for making moral decisions than Act Utilitarianism. • Whether Utilitarianism promotes immoral behaviour. • The extent to which Utilitarianism promotes justice. • The extent to which Utilitarianism provides a practical basis for making moral decisions for both religious believers and non-believers. 	

3 ASSESSMENT

3.1 Assessment objectives and weightings

Below are the assessment objectives for this specification. Learners must demonstrate their ability to:

AO1

Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including:

- religious, philosophical and/or ethical thought and teaching
- influence of beliefs, teachings and practices on individuals, communities and societies
- cause and significance of similarities and differences in belief, teaching and practice
- approaches to the study of religion and belief.

AO2

Analyse and evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief, including their significance, influence and study.

The table below shows the weighting of each assessment objective for each component and for the qualification as a whole.

	AO1	AO2
Component 1	16⅔%	16⅔%
Component 2	16⅔%	16⅔%
Component 3	16⅔%	16⅔%
Overall weighting	50%	50%

4 TECHNICAL INFORMATION

4.1 Making entries

This is a linear qualification in which all assessments must be taken at the end of the course. Assessment opportunities will be available in May/June each year, until the end of the life of this specification. Summer 2017 will be the first assessment opportunity.

Where learners wish to re-sit the qualification, all components must be re-taken.

The entry codes appear below.

Qualification title	Route	Entry codes
WJEC Eduqas AS Religious Studies	Route A - including Component 1 Option A: Christianity	B120PA
	Route B - including Component 1 Option B: Islam	B120PB
	Route C - including Component 1 Option C: Judaism	B120PC
	Route D - including Component 1 Option D: Buddhism	B120PD
	Route E - including Component 1 Option E: Hinduism	B120PE
	Route F - including Component 1 Option F: Sikhism	B120PF

The current edition of our *Entry Procedures and Coding Information* gives up-to-date entry procedures.

4.2 Grading, awarding and reporting

AS qualifications are reported as a grade on the scale from A to E. Results not attaining the minimum standard for the award will be reported as U (unclassified).

AS qualifications are free-standing and are awarded in their own right. Assessments at AS cannot contribute to an A level grade.