



A Level Religious Studies

Specification

Pearson Edexcel Level 3 Advanced GCE in Religious Studies (9RS0)

First teaching from September 2016

First certification from 2018

Issue 3

Summary of A Level Religious Studies Specification Issue 3 changes

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If you need further information on these changes or what they mean, contact us via our website at: qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/contact-us.html.

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1 Introduction

Why choose Pearson Edexcel A Level Religious Studies?

We have listened to feedback from all parts of the religious studies community, including higher education. We have used this opportunity of curriculum change to redesign qualifications to reflect the demands of a truly modern and evolving religious studies environment. This new qualification will allow students to apply a wide range of concepts enabling them to confidently interpret, contextualise and analyse the expressions of religions and world views they encounter.

Clear and coherent structure – our qualification offers a choice of three from the following four components - Philosophy of Religion, Religion and Ethics, New Testament Studies and a study of a chosen religion. All of the components are assessed through an externally examined paper which follow the same structure.

Develops understanding and appreciation – this qualification encourages students to develop an appreciation of religious thought and its contribution to individuals, communities and societies. The qualification does this through an enquiring, critical and reflective approach to the study of religion.

Helps develop a holistic understanding of religion – the specification facilitates enquiry into, and develops insightful evaluations of, ultimate questions about the purposes and commitments of human life, especially as expressed in philosophy, ethics and religion. The qualification encourages students to make connections so that in each field of study they understand the influences over time of developments in religious beliefs and practices, the philosophy of religion, religious ethics and/or textual interpretation.

Provides a focus on scholarship – in the second year of study the specification content encourages students to compare the significant ideas presented in works of scholars selected from the fields of philosophy, ethics and religion. This will enable students to reflect on and develop their values, opinions and attitudes in the light of their studies.

Develops transferable skills for progression to higher education – students will use ideas from a range of approaches to the study of religions and beliefs in order to research and present a wide range of well-informed and reasonable arguments, which engage profoundly with moral, religious and spiritual issues. This will enable students to make a smooth transition to the next level of study.

Supports progression from Key Stage 4 – the content builds on the understanding developed at Key Stage 4, while also ensuring that students new to the subject are appropriately supported.

AS and A Level qualifications that are co-teachable – co-teaching AS and A Level provides flexibility for you and your students. Centres co-teaching AS and A Level can deliver the first three topics in each component in the first year, allowing students to be entered for the AS at the end of year.

Supporting you in planning and implementing this qualification

Planning

- Our **Getting Started** guide gives you an overview of the new AS and A Level qualifications to help you get to grips with the changes to content and assessment and to help you understand what these changes mean for you and your students.
- We will give you an editable **course planner** and **scheme of work** that you can adapt to suit your department.
- **Our mapping documents** highlight key differences between the new and current qualifications.

A Level Religious Studies Anthology

- The **A Level Religious Studies Anthology** can be downloaded from our website qualifications.pearson.com. Candidates will not be required to take a copy of the anthology into the examination. Relevant excerpts will be printed in the examination paper.

Preparing for examinations

We will also provide a range of resources to help you prepare your students for the assessments, including marked exemplars of student work with examiner commentaries and additional specimen papers for A Level.

ResultsPlus

ResultsPlus provides the most detailed analysis available of your students' exam performance. It can help you identify the topics and skills where further learning would benefit your students.

Get help and support

Our support line and Ask the Expert will ensure you receive help and guidance from us and that you can share ideas and information with other teachers. You can sign up to receive e-newsletters from the subject advisor service for qualification updates and product and service news.

The Religious Studies Team can be contacted by email at: TeachingReligiousStudies@pearson.com and by telephone: on 0844 463 2817.

Learn more at qualifications.pearson.com

Qualification at a glance

Content and assessment overview

The Pearson Edexcel Level 3 Advanced GCE in Religious Studies consists of three externally-examined papers. Students are required to choose **three** papers from a choice of four.

Students must complete all assessment in May/June in any single year.

Paper 1: Philosophy of Religion (*Paper code: 9RS0/01)
<p>Written examination: 2 hours</p> <p>33.33% of the qualification</p> <p>80 marks</p>
<p>Content overview</p> <p>Philosophical issues and questions; The nature and influence of religious experience; Problems of evil and suffering; Philosophical language; Works of scholars; Influences of developments in religious belief.</p>
<p>Assessment overview</p> <p>An externally-assessed written examination comprising three sections. Students answer all questions in Section A, Section B and Section C.</p> <p>Section A</p> <p>Two structured questions.</p> <p>Section B</p> <p>One two-part essay question on an excerpt, sourced from the extracts list. These are published in the <i>A Level Religious Studies Anthology</i>, which can be downloaded from our website. Candidates will not be required to take a copy of the anthology into the examination. Relevant extracts will be printed in the examination paper.</p> <p>Section C</p> <p>One extended essay question.</p>

Paper 2: Religion and Ethics (*Paper code: 9RS0/02)

Written examination: 2 hours

33.33% of the qualification

80 marks

Content overview

Significant concepts in issues or debates in religion and ethics; A study of three ethical theories; Application of ethical theories to issues of importance; Ethical language; Deontology, Virtue Ethics and the works of scholars; Medical ethics: beginning and end of life issues.

Assessment overview

An externally-assessed written examination comprising three sections. Students answer all questions in Section A, Section B and Section C.

Section A

Two extended-response questions.

Section B

One two-part essay question on an excerpt, sourced from the extracts list. These are published in the *A Level Religious Studies Anthology*, which can be downloaded from our website. Candidates will not be required to take a copy of the anthology into the examination. Relevant extracts will be printed in the examination paper.

Section C

One extended essay question.

Paper 3: New Testament Studies (*Paper code: 9RS0/03)

Written examination: 2 hours

33.33% of the qualification

80 marks

Content overview

Social, historical and religious context of the New Testament; Texts and interpretation of the Person of Jesus; Interpreting the text and issues of relationship, purpose and authorship; Ways of interpreting the scripture; Texts and interpretation: the Kingdom of God, conflict, the death and resurrection of Jesus; Scientific and historical-critical challenges, ethical living and the works of scholars.

Assessment overview

An externally-assessed written examination comprising three sections. Students answer all questions in Section A, Section B and Section C.

Section A

Two extended-response questions.

Section B

One two-part essay question on an excerpt, sourced from the extracts list. These are published in the *A Level Religious Studies Anthology* which can be downloaded from our website. Candidates will not be required to take a copy of the anthology into the examination. Relevant extracts will be printed in the examination paper.

Section C

One extended essay question.

Forbidden option

Candidates who enter for Paper 3: New Testament Studies cannot enter for Paper 4B: Christianity.

Paper 4: Study of Religion (*Paper codes: 9RS0/4A-4F)

Written examination: 2 hours

33.33% of the qualification

80 marks

Options

Students take **one** of the following six options.

4A: Buddhism

4B: Christianity

4C: Hinduism

4D: Islam

4E: Judaism

4F: Sikhism

Content overview

Religious beliefs, values and teachings; Sources of wisdom and authority; Practices that shape and express religious identity; Social and historical developments; Works of scholars; Religion and society; Primary texts.

Assessment overview

An externally-assessed written examination comprising three sections. Students answer all questions in Section A, Section B and Section C.

Section A

Two extended-response questions.

Section B

One two-part essay question on an excerpt, sourced from the extracts list. These are published in the *A Level Religious Studies Anthology* which can be downloaded from our website. Candidates will not be required to take a copy of the anthology into the examination. Relevant extracts will be printed in the examination paper.

Section C

One extended essay question.

Forbidden option

Candidates who enter for Paper 4B: Christianity cannot enter for Paper 3: New Testament Studies.

*See *Appendix 5: Codes* for a description of this code and all other codes relevant to this qualification.

Texts in the *A Level Religious Studies Anthology* will be reviewed throughout the lifetime of the specification to ensure that all prescribed texts remain fit for purpose. In the event that a change is required, centres will be notified and the appropriate alternative will be posted on our website.

2 Subject content and assessment information

The subject content sets out the knowledge, understanding and skills relevant to this qualification. Together with the assessment information, it provides the framework within which centres create their programmes of study, so ensuring progression from AS Level requirements and the possibilities for progression to higher education.

Qualification aims and objectives

The aims and objectives of this qualification are to enable students 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.

Paper 1: Philosophy of Religion

Overview

The content for this paper helps students to explore some of the main contemporary philosophical issues and questions about religion, such as belief in God or the conviction that life has both meaning and purpose. It provides a relevant and challenging context for exploring the particular beliefs, values and practices that characterise religious communities. In turn, the paper provides a sound basis for understanding and reflecting on the contemporary influence of religion, the views of those who do not share a religious belief and the impact of these factors on people's lives.

Students will engage with arguments and debates on religious and non-religious views of life, which focus on some key areas of controversy that shape modern views of the world, such as the problem of evil and suffering. Students will extend their understanding through engagement in debates on issues such as the value of evidence based on accounts of religious experience. They will analyse and evaluate particular viewpoints of thinkers who have contributed to these debates.

Students will extend the breadth and depth of their study by considering how religious ideas are expressed and communicated, and how they may differ from other contemporary ways of expressing beliefs about the world – for instance whether religious and scientific language is incompatible or complementary, whether ideas about life after death are tenable in or relevant to the modern world. As part of this process, students will study how ideas about the philosophy of religion have changed over time, and the most important influences on this process. They will use the writings of key scholars to explore differing viewpoints about the development of ideas in the philosophy of religion. **These studies will give students the opportunity to explore links between this paper and other areas of study, such as the impact of beliefs and values on modern life, the importance of tradition in religious communities or the interpretation and application of religious texts in the modern world.**

It is compulsory for students to compare the work of two named scholars, including a specific extract of their work. The list of extracts at the end of the paper must be studied by all students and this includes the work of two named scholars for comparison. These are published in the *A Level Religious Studies Anthology: Paper 1 – Philosophy of Religion* which can be downloaded from our website. The context in which these texts could be studied is indicated by bracketed numbers in the detailed content, (1) for example. These extracts are **not** exclusive to the topic areas under which they appear; students will need to be able to apply these extracts across any suitable topic. This allows for a range of questions, including text or language specific, as well as thematic.

In this paper, students will be required to study the ideas of key contributors in relation to specific content areas. These are indicated against each relevant sub-topic. Students will be required to use these ideas to support and underpin their knowledge and understanding.

Overall, this study will enhance students' capacity to deal with controversial issues about beliefs and values, to have confidence in their ability to express their ideas and to put forward their own beliefs and ideals supported by reasoned argument and evidence.

Topics	What students need to learn	
1 Philosophical issues and questions	1.1	<p>Design Argument</p> <p>a) Inductive reasoning, <i>a posteriori</i> types of arguments, interpretation of experience.</p> <p>b) Types of order and regularity, role of analogy, cumulative effect of evidence, anthropic principle, regularities of co-presence and regularities of succession.</p> <p>c) Strengths and weaknesses of Design Arguments: probability rather than proof, alternative interpretations, including evolution and deism. Challenges to the argument.</p> <p>d) Philosophical language and thought through significant concepts and the works of key thinkers, illustrated in issues in the philosophy of religion.</p> <p>With reference to the ideas of W Paley and D Hume.</p>
	1.2	<p>Cosmological Argument</p> <p>a) Inductive reasoning, <i>a posteriori</i> types of arguments.</p> <p>b) Principle of sufficient reason, explanation, interpretation of experience, movement, cause and effect, contingency, infinite regress, first cause, necessary existence, Kalam version.</p> <p>c) Strengths and weaknesses of Cosmological Arguments: probability rather than proof, brute fact, debates about infinite regress, necessary existence and God as a necessary being. Challenges to the argument.</p> <p>d) Philosophical language and thought through significant concepts and the works of key thinkers, illustrated in issues in the philosophy of religion.</p> <p>With reference to the ideas of Aquinas and D Hume, I Kant.</p>
	1.3	<p>Ontological Argument</p> <p>a) <i>A priori</i> compared to <i>a posteriori</i> types of arguments, deductive reasoning, not evidence based but understanding of concept 'God' as an analytic proposition.</p> <p>b) Definitions of 'God', necessary existence, aseity.</p> <p>c) Strengths and weaknesses of the Ontological Arguments: concept of proof compared to probability, debates about 'existence' and predicates. Challenges to the argument.</p> <p>d) Philosophical language and thought through significant concepts and the works of key thinkers, illustrated in issues in the philosophy of religion.</p> <p>With reference to the ideas of Anselm and B Russell.</p>

Topics	What students need to learn	
<p>2</p> <p>The nature and influence of religious experience</p>	2.1	<p>The nature of religious experience</p> <p>a) Context of religious experience across religious traditions, range of definitions related to belief in God and/or ultimate reality, theistic and monistic views, ineffability, noetic, transience, passivity.</p> <p>b) Types: conversion, prayer, meditation, mysticism, numinous. Relationship between religious experience and propositional and non-propositional revelation.</p> <p>c) Alternative explanations, physiological and naturalistic interpretations, objectivist and subjectivist views.</p> <p>With reference to the ideas of W James and R Otto.</p>
	2.2	<p>Influence of religious experience as an argument for the existence of God</p> <p>a) Inductive reasoning based on evidence, the link between appearances, how things seem, how things really are and conclusions drawn from experience about reality and existence. Principles of testimony and credulity, the value and role of testimony to religious experience.</p> <p>With reference to the ideas of R Swinburne and J Hick.</p> <p>b) Strengths and weaknesses of religious experience as an argument for the existence of God: experiences influenced by the religious context of the believer, religious experiences interpreted as any other sensory experiences, complexity of interpretations, issues of probability and proof as relating to the argument, nature of God, including transcendent and immanent, limitations of language, lack of uniformity of experiences, refinements of and challenges to the argument.</p> <p>With reference to the ideas of M Persinger and R Dawkins.</p>

Topics	What students need to learn	
3 Problems of evil and suffering	3.1	<p>Problem of evil and suffering (1)</p> <p>The nature of the problem across a range of religious traditions, types of evil and suffering, moral and non-moral. The challenge to religious belief posed by the inconsistency of the nature of God and the evident existence of evil and suffering challenging belief in the existence of God.</p> <p>With reference to the ideas of D Hume and J Mackie.</p>
	3.2	<p>Theodicies and solutions to the problem of suffering</p> <p>a) Belief that creation was good; evil and suffering is a privation of good due to the fall of the angels and man because of the misuse of free will, soul-deciding, significance of reconciliation.</p> <p>b) Belief that creation is a mix of good and evil linked to the vale of soul making theodicy, including free will defence, best of all possible worlds, epistemic distance, eschatological justification.</p> <p>c) Process theodicy: God is not responsible for evil and suffering, but he is co-sufferer and cannot coerce the free will of human agents.</p> <p>d) Strengths and weaknesses of theodicies and solutions: compatibility or otherwise with modern views about origins of life, nature of God, innocent suffering, hypothesis of life after death.</p> <p>With reference to the ideas of Augustine and Irenaeus.</p>

Topics	What students need to learn	
4 Religious language	4.1	<p>Analogy and Symbol</p> <p>a) Analogy: <i>via negativa</i>, knowledge about God may be gained by what God is not like, univocal language and problems of anthropomorphism, equivocal language and problems of attribution, significance of proportional similarities and dissimilarities.</p> <p>With reference to the ideas of Aquinas.</p> <p>b) Symbol: types of symbol across a range of religious traditions, distinction between signs and symbols, symbols identifying and participating in a concept. Problems interpreting symbols and their limited application to a particular faith context.</p> <p>With reference to the ideas of P Tillich.</p>
	4.2	<p>Verification and falsification debates (2) (3)</p> <p>a) Context of Logical Positivism and the Vienna Circle, analytic and synthetic statements, implications for the claim that religious language is meaningless; view that religious claims are false because nothing can count against them; 'bliks' as unfalsifiable ways of framing our interpretation of the world compared to beliefs that are significant articles of faith which may be significantly challenged but not easily abandoned.</p> <p>b) Strengths and weakness of these approaches, including realist and anti-realist views and eschatological verification.</p> <p>With reference to the ideas of A J Ayer and B Mitchell.</p>
	4.3	<p>Language games</p> <p>a) Critique of picture theory, functional uses of language in the context of a form of life. Non-cognitive interpretation of language and criteria of coherence in the relevant language game, highlights the distinctive character of religious language, significance of fideism in this context – language can only be understood in the context of faith.</p> <p>With reference to the ideas of L Wittgenstein and D Phillips.</p>

Topics	What students need to learn	
5 Works of scholars	5.1	Context to critiques of religious belief and points for discussion a) Respective strengths and weaknesses of religious beliefs. b) Alternative explanations, issues of probability and postmodern interpretations of religion. c) Key terms, types of atheism and agnosticism. With reference to the ideas of R Dawkins and M Westphal.
	5.2	A comparison between a critic of religion, Bertrand Russell, and a religious believer, Frederick Copleston (4) a) The context of the writings of Russell and Copleston and the way these ideas are applied to issues in religion and belief, including the argument from contingency and religious experience.

Topics	What students need to learn	
6 Influences of developments in religious belief	6.1	<p>Views about life after death across a range of religious traditions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Immortality of the soul: soul as non-physical and spiritual and continuing to exist after death of body. b) Rebirth: belief there is no unchanging soul and importance of karma. c) Reincarnation: transmigration of souls and importance of karma. d) Replica theory: notion that one can die in one body and continue to live in a different body while being the same person, including after death. e) Resurrection: belief that God will restore the dead in bodily form to eternal life. <p>With reference to the ideas of J Hick.</p>
	6.2	<p>Points for discussion about life after death</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Relationship between mind and body, including variations of dualism and monism. b) Life after death linked to moral reasoning, near death experiences, debates related to role of evidence, religious language. <p>With reference to the ideas of Plato and Aristotle.</p>
	6.3	<p>Religion and science debates and their significance for philosophy of religion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Methodologies with emphasis on observation, hypothesis and experiment, identifying connections and differences vis a vis religious belief and processes; miracles. b) Creation themes and scientific cosmologies: Big Bang, steady state theories, intelligent design and irreducible complexity, creationism, cosmological constant, evolution, Gaia hypothesis. <p>With reference to the ideas of C Darwin and R Dawkins.</p>

List of extracts for Paper 1: Philosophy of Religion

Students are expected to study a range of texts that support and underpin their knowledge and understanding. The assessment will include two extended-response questions on an excerpt, sourced from this extracts list. The following texts are **not** exclusive to the topic areas under which they appear; students will need to be able to apply these texts across any suitable topic area. These are published in the *A Level Religious Studies Anthology: Paper 1 – Philosophy of Religion* which can be downloaded from our website.

(1) Mitchell B (ed) – *The Philosophy of Religion*, 1st edition, J Mackie – Chapter 5 Evil and Omnipotence, pp.92-104 (Oxford University Press, 1977) ISBN 9780198750185

(2) Mitchell B (ed) – *The Philosophy of Religion*, 1st edition, Flew A, Hare R M – Chapter 1 Theology and Falsification: A Symposium, pp. 13-18 (Oxford University Press, 1976) ISBN 9780198750185

(3) Mitchell B (ed) – *The Philosophy of Religion*, 1st edition, Flew A, Mitchell B – Chapter 1 Theology and Falsification: A Symposium, pp.18-22 (Oxford University Press, 1976) ISBN 9780198750185

(4) www.biblicalcatholic.com/apologetics/p20.htm (Russell B and Copleston F – The Existence of God)

Assessment information

- First assessment: May/June 2018.
- The assessment is 2 hours.
- The assessment is out of 80 marks.
- The assessment consists of three sections.
- Students must answer all questions in Section A, Section B and Section C.
- The paper includes short-open, open-response and extended writing questions.
- See *Appendix 1* for the command words that will be used in the examination paper.
- Use of specialist language will be assessed as it is through the selection and deployment of specialist language and terminology that students are able to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of religion and belief.

Synoptic assessment

Synoptic assessment requires students to work across different parts of a qualification and to show their accumulated knowledge and understanding of a topic or subject area.

Synoptic assessment enables students to show their ability to combine their skills, knowledge and understanding with breadth and depth of the subject.

Students will be able to demonstrate this through the extended essay in Question 4.

Sample assessment materials

A sample paper and mark scheme can be found in the *Pearson Edexcel Level 3 Advanced GCE in Religious Studies Sample Assessment Materials (SAMs)* document.

Paper 2: Religion and Ethics

Overview

The content for this paper is focused on exploring both common ground and controversy in dealing with issues that arise in the areas of morality and religion in the context of the modern world. The paper will help students to study some of the underlying ideas and concepts of these issues, as well as questions and issues about how ethical and religious ideas and solutions may be applied in practice in contemporary social, political and personal situations. The study addresses an important part of the key underlying concerns that students raise about the world in which they are growing up, and about their own views, opinions and commitments.

In this paper, students will study issues and practical problems such as equality, war and peace and sexual ethics. These issues and problems will provide a sufficient balance of breadth and depth for students to acquire the skills they need to address a wide range of contemporary moral dilemmas and to progress to further study. A representative array of ethical stances provides a basis for discussion and debate about major issues. This is further sharpened by engagement with the views and stances of significant ethical thinkers who have contributed to the debates.

Students will extend the breadth and depth of their study by engaging in debates about how underlying factors, such as language, are relevant in discussing moral issues, and whether there is common ground between religion and morality. This element is considered in the wider context of influences that have helped to shape modern ethical theory. Students at this level will consider, and respond to, the contrasting views of key scholars to broaden their awareness of the underlying issues. **These studies will give students the opportunity to explore links between this paper and other areas of study, such as issues about concepts in relation to philosophy or about beliefs and values in relation to the study of a particular religion.** A strong focus on understanding ethical theory is applied at this level to issues in medical ethics, considered in the context of debates about the beginning and ending of life.

It is compulsory for students to compare the work of two named scholars, including a specific extract of their work. The list of extracts at the end of the paper must be studied by all students and this includes the work of two named scholars for comparison. These are published in the *A level Religious Studies Anthology: Paper 2 – Religion and Ethics*, which can be downloaded from our website. The context in which these texts could be studied is indicated by bracketed numbers in the detailed content, (1) for example. These extracts are **not** exclusive to the topic areas under which they appear; students will need to be able to apply these extracts across any suitable topic.

This allows for a range of questions, including text or language specific, as well as thematic.

In this paper, students will be required to study the ideas of key contributors in relation to specific content areas. These are indicated against each relevant sub-topic. Students will be required to use these ideas to support and underpin their knowledge and understanding.

Overall, this study will provide engaging, contemporary and relevant study for students on whichever course they choose to embark in higher or further education, or whatever career they may choose to follow.

Topics	What students need to learn	
1 Significant concepts in issues or debates in religion and ethics	1.1	<p>Environmental issues</p> <p>a) Concepts of stewardship and conservation from the point of view of at least one religion and at least one secular ethical perspective; animal welfare and protection, sustainability, waste management and climate change.</p> <p>b) Strengths and weaknesses of significant areas of disagreement and debate, assessment of relevant examples, legal changes and social attitudes, appropriateness and value of employing religious perspectives in these debates.</p> <p>With reference to the ideas of J Lovelock and A Næss.</p>
	1.2	<p>Equality</p> <p>a) Ethical and religious concepts of equality, including the issues of gender or race or disability and the work of one significant figure in campaigns for equality in the chosen area, significant events in the progress of equality in these areas, perspectives on equality from at least one religion and one secular ethical perspective.</p> <p>b) Strengths and weaknesses of significant areas of disagreement and debate, assessment of relevant examples, legal changes and social attitudes, appropriateness and value of employing religious perspectives into these debates.</p> <p>With reference to the ideas of Martin Luther King and Joni Eareckson Tada.</p>

Topics	What students need to learn	
<p>2</p> <p>A study of three ethical theories</p>	2.1	<p>Utilitarianism</p> <p>a) Concepts of utility, pleasure, hedonism and happiness, influences on the emergence of the theory, including social, political and cultural influences, the significant contribution of Bentham and Mill to a recognised theory. Act and Rule Utilitarianism, the development of the theory, including Preference, Negative and Ideal Utilitarianism, the application of the theory in historical and contemporary ethical situations, including political and social reform, the concept of relativism in ethics.</p> <p>b) Strengths and weaknesses of the theory and its developments, appropriateness of its continuing application and use, assessment of relevant examples, change in the law and social attitudes vis a vis the theory, compatibility or otherwise with religious approaches.</p> <p>With reference to the ideas of J Bentham and J S Mill.</p>
	2.2	<p>Situation Ethics (1)</p> <p>a) The 'new morality' of the mid-20th century: social, political and cultural influences on the development of Situation Ethics, concepts of <i>agape</i> and situationalism in ethics, the application of the theory to specific case studies, biblical examples of situationist thinking, such as illustrated in the ministry of Jesus.</p> <p>b) Strengths and weaknesses of the theory and its developments, appropriateness of its continuing application and use, assessment of relevant examples, change in the law and social attitudes vis a vis the theory, compatibility or otherwise with religious approaches.</p> <p>With reference to the ideas of J A T Robinson and J Fletcher.</p>
	2.3	<p>Natural Moral Law</p> <p>a) Concepts of absolutism and legalism in ethics, early development of natural moral law, biblical and classical foundations of the approach, concepts of purpose, telos, primary and secondary precepts, contemporary applications and adaptations, including proportionalism.</p> <p>b) Strengths and weaknesses of the theory and its developments, appropriateness of its continuing application and use, assessment of relevant examples, change in the law and social attitudes vis a vis the theory, compatibility or otherwise with religious approaches.</p> <p>With reference to the ideas of Aquinas and B Hoose.</p>

Topics	What students need to learn	
3 Application of ethical theories to issues of importance	3.1	<p>War and peace</p> <p>a) The contribution of at least one religion to issues of war and peace, including the teaching of sacred text(s), the Just War Theory, including principles <i>jus ad bellum</i>, <i>jus in bello</i> and <i>jus post bellum</i>, reasons for and influences on the development of the theory, examples of wars, including contemporary conflicts that may be evaluated against the theory, special issues arising from nuclear war.</p> <p>b) Concepts of pacifism, including absolute, relative/selective and nuclear pacifism, the role of pacifist movements and pressure groups. The success of the Just War Theory as a theory and in practice, the practicality of pacifism in its different forms, perceived advantages of war such as technological development, relevance of religious contributions, success of named wars in achieving their goal.</p> <p>With reference to the ideas of Augustine and Aquinas.</p>
	3.2	<p>Sexual Ethics</p> <p>a) The contribution of at least one world religion on issues in sexual ethics, including the teaching of sacred text(s) and understanding of the diversity of religious approaches, sexual relationships in and outside of marriage, including pre-marital sex, adultery, promiscuity, same-sex relationships, including marriage and civil partnership, contraception and childlessness, secular ethical approaches to these issues and social and cultural influences on them.</p> <p>b) The continuing relevance and application of religious teachings and beliefs on sexual ethics, strengths and weaknesses of changing social attitudes, the success or otherwise of contributions from ethical theory in making decisions in matters of sexual ethics.</p> <p>With reference to the ideas of P Vardy and J Dominionian.</p>

Topics	What students need to learn	
4 Ethical language	4.1	<p>Meta-ethics</p> <p>a) Cognitive and non-cognitive uses of language, realism and anti-realism, language as factual or symbolic, the nature of ethical assertions as absolutist or relative, ethical naturalism, the naturalistic fallacy, the is-ought gap, the problem of the open question, ethical non-naturalism, intuitionism, prescriptivism.</p> <p>b) Emotivism, the influence of the logical positivism on emotivist theories of ethics, ethical language as functional and persuasive. Developments of the emotivist approach and criticism of it.</p> <p>With reference to the ideas of G E Moore and A J Ayer.</p>
	4.2	<p>The relationship between religion and morality</p> <p>a) Dependence, independence, autonomy, theonomy, heteronomy, divine command ethics, challenges from atheist and anti-theist perspectives, moral arguments for the existence and non-existence of God.</p> <p>b) Contemporary focuses, including the Westboro Baptist Church, religion and terror, conservative movements, including Quiverfull, biblical parenting.</p> <p>With reference to the ideas of R Dawkins and R A Sharpe.</p>

Topics	What students need to learn	
<p>5</p> <p>Deontology, Virtue Ethics and the works of scholars</p>	5.1	<p>A comparison of the work of Immanuel Kant and Aristotle with regard to Deontology and Virtue Ethics respectively.</p> <p>a) Kantian deontology – social, political and cultural influences on Kant’s ethical theory, duty-based ethics, the categorical imperative in its different formulations, prima facie duties, and contemporary applications of rule and duty-based ethics. (2)</p> <p>With reference to the ideas of W D Ross and T Nagel.</p> <p>b) Aristotelian virtue ethics – historical and cultural influences on Virtue Ethics from its beginnings to modern developments of the theory, concepts of eudaemonia and living well, the golden mean, development of virtuous character, virtuous role models, vices, contemporary applications of virtue theories. (3)</p> <p>With reference to the ideas of P Foot and A MacIntyre.</p> <p>c) Strengths and weaknesses of the theories and their developments, appropriateness of their continuing application and use, assessment of relevant examples, changes in the law and social attitudes vis a vis the theories, compatibility or otherwise with religious approaches.</p>
<p>6</p> <p>Medical ethics: beginning and end of life issues</p>	6.1	<p>Issues in medical ethics with a focus on beginning and end of life debates (4)</p> <p>a) The status of the embryo, concepts of sanctity and value of life from religious and secular perspectives, embryo research, pre-implantation genetic diagnosis (PGD), stem cells and cord blood, fertilisation <i>in vitro</i> and destruction of embryos, abortion.</p> <p>b) Assisted dying, euthanasia, palliative care. Religious and secular contributions to all these issues, legal position, concepts of rights and responsibilities, personhood and human nature, options and choices.</p> <p>c) Strengths and weaknesses of significant areas of disagreement and debate, assessment of relevant examples, legal changes and social attitudes, appropriateness and value of employing religious perspectives into these debates, assessment and comparison of contrasting positions.</p> <p>With reference to the ideas of P Singer and J Glover.</p>

List of extracts for Paper 2: Religion and Ethics

Students are expected to study a range of texts that support and underpin their knowledge and understanding. The assessment will include two extended-response questions on an excerpt, sourced from this extracts list. The following texts are **not** exclusive to the topic areas under which they appear; students will need to be able to apply these texts across any suitable topic area. These are published in the *A level Religious Studies Anthology: Paper 2 – Religion and Ethics* which can be downloaded from our website.

- (1) Barclay W – *Ethics in a Permissive Society*, Chapter 4 Situation Ethics, pp. 69–91 (HarperCollins Distribution Services, 1972) ISBN 9780002152044
- (2) Kant I – *Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*, Text, second section, pp. 29–53 (Yale University Press, 2002) ISBN 9780300094879
- (3) Aristotle – *The Nicomachean Ethics*, Book II, Moral Virtue, pp. 23–37 (Oxford World’s Classics edition, 1980) ISBN 9780192815187
- (4) Wilcockson M – *Issues of Life and Death*, Chapter 4 Euthanasia and Doctors’ Ethics, pp. 56–69 (Hodder Education, 1999) ISBN 9780340724880

Assessment information

- First assessment: May/June 2018.
- The assessment is 2 hours.
- The assessment is out of 80 marks.
- The assessment consists of three sections.
- Students must answer all questions in Section A, Section B and Section C.
- The paper includes short-open, open-response and extended writing questions.
- See *Appendix 1* for the command words that will be used in the examination paper.
- Use of specialist language will be assessed as it is through the selection and deployment of specialist language and terminology that students are able to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of religion and belief.

Synoptic assessment

Synoptic assessment requires students to work across different parts of a qualification and to show their accumulated knowledge and understanding of a topic or subject area.

Synoptic assessment enables students to show their ability to combine their skills, knowledge and understanding with breadth and depth of the subject.

Students will be able to demonstrate this through the extended essay in Question 4.

Sample assessment materials

A sample paper and mark scheme can be found in the *Pearson Edexcel Level 3 Advanced GCE in Religious Studies Sample Assessment Materials (SAMs)* document.

Paper 3: New Testament Studies

Overview

The content for this paper comprises a study of extended textual material. This study is set in a historical context so that students can become familiar with some of the more technical language and terminology used in the texts. It is also set in the context of the specific study of the Gospel texts, and involves a detailed understanding of the nature of selected passages of text as well as the scholarly and critical methods used today to study the text of the New Testament. There is a focus on understanding the Gospel teaching about how the first Christians understood the New Testament text and how they expressed and interpreted the relationship between Jesus and God.

Students will develop and extend their familiarity with the Gospel texts themselves and with the critical study of Christian beliefs about the status of the Bible and about Christian understanding of the meaning of the texts. They will be able to consider the views of important interpreters of the texts and contributors to the debate about the authority of the Bible in the Christian Church. **These studies will give students the opportunity to explore links between this paper and other areas of study, for example in relation to key Christian beliefs about the Trinity, Christian values in relation to the study of Ethics or the miracles of Jesus in relation to philosophical issues about their credibility.**

It is compulsory for students to compare the work of two named scholars, including a specific extract of their work. The list of extracts at the end of the paper must be studied by all students and this includes the work of two named scholars for comparison. These are published in the *A level Religious Studies Anthology: Paper 3 – New Testament Studies*, which can be downloaded from our website. The context in which these texts could be studied is indicated by bracketed numbers in the detailed content, (1) for example. These extracts are **not** exclusive to the topic areas under which they appear; students will need to be able to apply these extracts across any suitable topic.

This allows for a range of questions, including text or language specific, as well as thematic.

In this paper, students will be required to study the ideas of key contributors in relation to specific content areas. These are indicated against each relevant sub-topic. Students will be required to use these ideas to support and underpin their knowledge and understanding.

Overall, this study should give students the critical and scholarly tools they need to explore the Gospels. The study will also give them an understanding of how the early Christian communities understood Jesus and how Christians today interpret and apply the texts as a key source of authority.

Topics	What students need to learn	
1 Social, historical and religious context of the New Testament	1.1	Prophecy regarding the Messiah (1) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The Suffering Servant of Isaiah, the importance of the line of David, the idea of the messianic secret. b) The significance of these expectations and their impact on New Testament texts, including Matthew’s proof texts in the birth narratives and for understanding the Gospel texts. With reference to the ideas of R Brown and M Hooker.
	1.2	The world of the first century and the significance of this context for the life and work of Jesus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Religious groups in Palestine. b) Hellenism. c) Roman occupation. d) The role and impact of these influences on legal and ethical dimensions of life in first-century Palestine and the relationship of Jesus’ life and work to these influences.

Topics	What students need to learn	
<p>2</p> <p>Texts and interpretation of the Person of Jesus</p>	2.1	<p>The Prologue in John (2)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The meaning and theological significance, including ideas about the nature and person of Jesus, the Word made flesh, concepts of life, light and dark, belief, children of God, flesh and spirit, law, grace and truth. b) The influences of Judaism and Hellenism and the importance of these themes in understanding the gospel. c) The implication for religious laws and codes for living of different understandings of the identity and message of Jesus, including its influence beyond a religious community. <p>With reference to the ideas of C H Dodd and M Hooker.</p>
	2.2	<p>Titles of Jesus in the synoptic gospels and selected 'I am' sayings in John (3)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The meaning and significance of the terms Messiah, Son of God, Son of Man, and 'I am the bread of life/light of the world/good shepherd/true vine'. b) The background and context of these titles, including Old Testament references and symbolism and the importance of these for interpreting and understanding the Gospels. c) The implication for religious laws and codes for living of different understandings of the identity and message of Jesus, including its influence beyond a religious community. <p>With reference to the ideas of R Brown and C H Dodd.</p>
	2.3	<p>Miracles and signs (4)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The meaning and significance of the signs in the Fourth Gospel: Turning water into wine, the Healing of the Official's son, the Healing at the pool, the Feeding of the 5000, Walking on water, the Healing of the blind man and the Raising of Lazarus. b) Ideas about the identity and role of Jesus and the importance of these signs for understanding Jesus' ministry. c) The implication for religious laws and codes for living of different understandings of the identity and message of Jesus. <p>With reference to the ideas of R Brown and C H Dodd.</p>

Topics	What students need to learn	
3 Interpreting the text and issues of relationship, purpose and authorship	3.1	Interpreting the text a) The synoptic problem, source, form and redaction criticism – an examination of the relationship between the synoptic Gospels, including two source hypothesis (priority of Mark and 'Q source'), the idea of proto-Gospels and the four-source hypothesis. b) Units of tradition and their type/form, the way texts appear to have been translated, edited and transmitted. c) The significance of this for understanding the texts.
	3.2	The purpose and authorship of the Fourth Gospel a) An examination of the different purposes of the Gospel and views of its authorship: Jesus as Christ, Son of God, life in his name, Spiritual Gospel, a Gospel to convert Jews and Gentiles, fulfilment of scripture. b) The strengths and weaknesses of these views based on the text and modern scholarship, and their significance for understanding the text for individuals and communities. With reference to the ideas of R Brown and C H Dodd.
4 Ways of interpreting the scripture	4.1	Ways of interpreting Scripture a) The Bible as inspired: literal, allegorical and moral senses of scripture, modern scholarship on the value of scripture including Barth on scripture as the 'Word of God', Bultmann on demythologising the text and an overview of the four main approaches to post-Enlightenment biblical interpretation of rational, historical, sociological and literary. b) The contexts, strengths and weaknesses of these positions and the significance of these models of interpretation for understanding the text today and its relevance for the modern world.

Topics	What students need to learn	
5 Texts and interpretation: the Kingdom of God, conflict, the death and resurrection of Jesus	5.1	<p>Texts and interpretations – The Kingdom of God in Luke: parables of the kingdom and eschatology (5)</p> <p>a) The teaching of Jesus concerning the Kingdom of God, differing views on the arrival of the Kingdom, past, present and future.</p> <p>b) The meaning, theological significance and importance for early believers.</p> <p>With reference to the ideas of I H Marshall and A Schweitzer.</p>
	5.2	<p>Why did Jesus have to die? (6)</p> <p>a) Religious and political conflict in the ministry of Jesus as presented in the Fourth Gospel: the religious and political authorities and why they were so concerned about Jesus, the arrest, trials, and charges made against Jesus. References may be made to the Law of Moses, Temple cleansing, Sabbath controversies.</p> <p>b) Other elements to Jesus’ challenge to Judaism: Christology, blasphemy, threat to power, political expediency. The context of conflict in Jesus’ ministry, its key themes and differing views on who was responsible for the death of Jesus.</p> <p>With reference to the ideas of E Rivkin and R A Culpepper.</p>
	5.3	<p>The crucifixion and resurrection narratives in Luke’s Gospel (7)</p> <p>a) Old Testament references, symbolism, fulfilment of scripture, God’s saving plan. The religious significance of the crucifixion narratives.</p> <p>b) The meaning and significance of the resurrection narratives for early believers, including terms such as sacrifice, salvation, atonement, power of God, forgiveness of sins, relationship with God, the future of the early Church.</p> <p>With reference to the ideas of I H Marshall and F Matera.</p>

Topics	What students need to learn	
6 Scientific and historical-critical challenges, ethical living and the works of scholars	6.1	Scientific and historical-critical challenges – faith and history: the death and resurrection of Jesus in modern scholarship <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Context of scientific challenges to the resurrection as miracle; the challenge of the Enlightenment – resurrection as a fictional event, the resurrection as myth, the resurrection as an event in the experience of the disciples. b) The work of Ian Wilson and Frank Morison on the historical evidence for the resurrection of Jesus based on analysis of the different Gospel narratives and alternative explanations for the empty tomb. (8) (9) c) Context, comparison and the strengths and weaknesses of these views. Their significance for understanding the texts and their impact on other areas of study over time.
	6.2	How should we live? (10) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Christian life: the ethical teaching of Jesus from the Sermon on the Plain in Luke 6 and other texts on the poor, outcasts, wealth and forgiveness, including the parables of the Lost (Luke 15), the Good Samaritan (Luke 10), the Rich Man and Lazarus (Luke 16). b) The relationship of the teaching of Jesus to that of Judaism at the time. Interpretations of this material for today, including religious and secular views, and the impact on Christian codes of living, including equality and pluralism. With reference to the ideas of I H Marshall and F Matera.

List of extracts for Paper 3: New Testament Studies

Students are expected to study a range of texts that support and underpin their knowledge and understanding. The assessment will include two extended-response questions on an excerpt, sourced from this extracts list. The following texts are **not** exclusive to the topic areas under which they appear; students will need to be able to apply these texts across any suitable topic area. These are published in the *A level Religious Studies Anthology: Paper 3 – New Testament Studies*, which can be downloaded from our website.

Suggested version of the Bible is the New International Version (NIV).

(1) Matthew 1:18–2:23

(2) John 1:1–18

(3) John 6:24–59, 8:12, 9:1–12, 10:1–21, 15:1–17

(4) John 2:1–11, 4:43–54, 5:1–15, 6:1–24, 9:1–12 and 11:1–44

(5) Luke 8:1–15, 11:14–32, 13:22–30, 14:15–24, 17:20–37, 18:18–30, 19:11–27

(6) John 2:12–25, 5:16–47, 7:25–52, 8:12–59, 9:13–34, 10:22–42, 11:45–57, 18:1–19:16

(7) Luke 23:26–24:53

(8) Morison F – *Who Moved the Stone?*, Chapter 8 Between Sunset and Dawn , pp.88–102 (Magdalene Press, 2015) ISBN 9781897384480

(9) Wilson I – *Jesus: The Evidence*, Chapter 10 Did Jesus Really Rise From the Dead?, pp.139–153 (Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1996) ISBN 9780297835295

(10) Luke 6:17–26, 10:25–37, 15:1–32, 16:19–31

Assessment information

- First assessment: May/June 2018.
- The assessment is 2 hours.
- The assessment is out of 80 marks.
- The assessment consists of three sections.
- Students must answer all questions in Section A, Section B and Section C.
- The paper includes short-open, open-response and extended writing questions.
- See *Appendix 1* for the command words that will be used in the examination paper.
- Use of specialist language will be assessed as it is through the selection and deployment of specialist language and terminology that students are able to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of religion and belief.

Synoptic assessment

Synoptic assessment requires students to work across different parts of a qualification and to show their accumulated knowledge and understanding of a topic or subject area.

Synoptic assessment enables students to show their ability to combine their skills, knowledge and understanding with breadth and depth of the subject.

Students will be able to demonstrate this through the extended essay in Question 4.

Sample assessment materials

A sample paper and mark scheme can be found in the *Pearson Edexcel Level 3 Advanced GCE in Religious Studies Sample Assessment Materials (SAMs)* document.

Paper 4: Study of Religion

Overview

The content for this paper comprises a focused and in-depth study of a chosen religion. The study provides a foundation for understanding the key beliefs and values of a religion, recognising that 'belief' itself does not necessarily have the same role and emphasis in religions or between religions. The study helps students explore how believers attribute authority both to key people in the religious community and to various kinds of traditional, sacred texts. This study also explores various and diverse ways in which religious believers express their sense of identity through, for example, their most sacred rituals and their codes of behaviour. It gives students an opportunity to explore both common ground and diversity in the religious tradition. They will broaden their understanding through familiarity with the views of various contributors, from within and outside the tradition, who have studied this religion in some depth.

Students will deepen and extend their understanding of their chosen religion by studying an aspect of the way in which the religion has changed and developed over time, so that they increase their awareness of diversity within traditions. This aspect of development will reflect the particular focus, concerns, emphases and values of the tradition concerned. Further depth of study is provided by a study of key scholars who have made a significant contribution, either historically or in the present, to an understanding of what it means to be a follower of this religion. Further breadth is added by giving students the opportunity to explore the interface between the religion and contemporary society. Students will explore a passage of text that is influential in the tradition of this religion. **These studies will give students the opportunity to explore links between this paper and other areas of study, such as exploring common ground and diversity in the fields of philosophy and ethics.**

It is compulsory for students to compare the work of two named scholars, including a specific extract of their work. The list of extracts at the end of the paper must be studied by all students and this includes the work of two named scholars for comparison. These are published in the relevant pages of the *A Level Religious Studies Anthology*, which can be downloaded from our website. The context in which these texts could be studied is indicated by bracketed numbers in the detailed content, (1) for example. These extracts are **not** exclusive to the topic areas under which they appear; students will need to be able to apply these extracts across any suitable topic. This allows for a range of questions, including text or language specific, as well as thematic.

In this paper, students will be required to study the ideas of key contributors in relation to specific content areas. These are indicated against each relevant sub-topic. Students will be required to use these ideas to support and underpin their knowledge and understanding.

Overall, this study will give students the understanding and skills needed to be able to explore what it means to be a religious believer today, in the context of an increasingly diverse and secular society.

Students must study **one** religion from the following six options.

- 4A:** Buddhism
- 4B:** Christianity
- 4C:** Hinduism
- 4D:** Islam
- 4E:** Judaism
- 4F:** Sikhism

Paper 4, Option 4A: Buddhism

Topics	What students need to learn	
1 Religious beliefs, values and teachings	1.1	<p>The Four Noble Truths as the basis of Buddhism and the centrality of such for different Buddhists</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The Three Poisons. b) the Buddha’s teaching on suffering and the cessation of craving/desire in the Four Noble Truths: dukkha, samudaya/tanha, nirodha and magga. Including reference to the nature of Enlightenment and nibbana. c) The Eightfold Path: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o its summary in the Three-fold Way: ethics, meditation and wisdom o the ethical principles of the Noble Eightfold Path: right action, right speech, right livelihood o the qualities of metta, karuna and khanti o the relationship between these principles and the Four Noble truths. <p>How these are understood in Theravada and Mahayana, both historically and in the contemporary world.</p> <p>With reference to the ideas of D Keown and B Bodhi.</p>
	1.2	<p>How the three marks and the Five khandas are understood in Theravada and Mahayana, both historically and in the contemporary world, including how they may be linked to the rejection of the idea of the self and the non-existence of God.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The three marks of existence and how these are reflected throughout existence and also through Buddhist teachings. The importance of this in understanding the nature of reality, the ultimate reality, and the meaning and purpose of life. b) The Five khandas in Theravada; death and the afterlife: the concept of rebirth, Nibbana, karma and the search for Enlightenment. The importance of this in understanding the nature of reality, the ultimate reality, and the meaning and purpose of life. <p>With reference to the ideas of Buddhaghosa in the Visuddhimagga and T W Rinpoche.</p>
	1.3	<p>The meaning and significance of the three refuges: the Buddha, dhamma and the sangha</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The significance of each of these for a place of refuge within Buddhism. b) The interrelationship between these three refuges. c) Different interpretations of the role and nature of the sangha and the role and nature of the Buddha. d) The implications of the refuges for worship and daily life.

Topics	What students need to learn
	<p>How these are understood in Theravada and Mahayana, both historically and in the contemporary world.</p> <p>With reference to the ideas of B Bodhi and T Bhikkhu.</p>
	<p>1.4 Key Moral Principles</p> <p>a) The Five Precepts.</p> <p>b) How these are understood in Theravada and Mahayana both historically and in the contemporary world.</p> <p>With reference to the ideas of P Harvey and B Bodhi.</p>

Topics	What students need to learn
<p>2</p> <p>Sources of wisdom and authority</p>	<p>2.1 The life and work of the Buddha, its meaning and significance in its historical, religious and social context and the important teachings that his life exemplifies (1)</p> <p>a) The key events of his life, including birth, childhood, the four sights, life as an ascetic, search for Enlightenment, Enlightenment, founding of the sangha, preaching, his death and parinibbana.</p> <p>b) Links with a range of religious groupings at this time, including their beliefs and practice.</p> <p>c) Understanding and assessment of sacrifices, caste systems, social and economic groupings and changes; types of authority and kingship.</p> <p>With reference to the ideas of K Armstrong and N Bhikkhu.</p>
	<p>2.2 The significance, interpretation, use and treatment of the Tipitaka</p> <p>a) The status of the Tipitaka as the teachings of the Buddha and its collection and formation.</p> <p>b) The different sections, along with their context and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Vinaya Pitaka and how this aims to produce a cohesive community o Sutta Pitaka and the search for Enlightenment o Abhidhamma Pitaka and interpretation and understanding of the Buddha's teachings and a consideration of whether this is the work of the Buddha himself. <p>c) The significance of the Tipitaka as the source of the Buddha's teachings and its use, importance and impact as a source of wisdom in Buddhism.</p> <p>With reference to the ideas of D Keown and M Meghprasara.</p>

Topics	What students need to learn	
3 Practices that shape and express religious identity	3.1	Distinctive practices and emphases of Theravada Buddhism and how they shape and express religious identity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Its significance as the only surviving form of Nikaya Buddhism. b) Rejection of the idea of the Three Vehicles. c) The centrality of Buddha Gautama, especially in their use of images and stupas. d) The goal of nibbana and parinibbana as a central teaching alongside an emphasis on renunciation, including the four stages to becoming an arahant. e) The distinctive teachings of Theravada; their interpretation and application in light of the life and teachings of the Buddha and other traditions of Buddhism and their different emphases. With reference to the ideas of R Gombrich and H Gunaratana.
	3.2	Distinctive practices and emphases of Mahayana Buddhism and how they shape and express religious identity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Its development and context in the second century BCE and the first century CE. b) The extension of the concept of the Buddha. The doctrine of the trikaya. c) The Buddha nature in every person. The centrality of Buddha Gautama, especially in their use of images and stupas. The different schools of Mahayana should be explored in the context of the countries in which they developed and are practised. With reference to the ideas of A Basham and the 14th Dalai Lama.
	3.3	The different types and purposes of meditation, their context and application and how they shape and express religious identity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The different types of meditation in Buddhism. b) The place and context of meditation as part of the eight-fold path, links to wisdom and morality, including the influence of types of meditation on moral development. c) The practice and purpose of dhyana, samatha and vipassana as types of meditation, including accounts of meditation techniques, their purposes and context. d) Understanding of the purposes of meditation in terms of Enlightenment and the relative importance of some aspects of meditation. The practices of chanting, giving and study to understand Buddhism as it is lived by laypeople as well as monastics. With reference to the ideas of T Bhikkhu and J Goldstein.

Topics	What students need to learn	
4 Social and historical developments	4.1	<p>The spread of Buddhism and the impact of migration; with specific reference to developments in China and Japan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Beliefs and practices of Pure Land and Zen, types of tradition, key people and distinctive emphases, including relevant indigenous traditions and Buddhism’s encounter with modernity. b) Key teachings and practices, including the contributions of key people and significant features of relevant scripture. c) Significant features that constitute gradual or more radical changes from earlier traditions, including debates about belief and practice in these respective traditions/schools. <p>With reference to the ideas of S Mochizuki and W T de Bary.</p>
	4.2	<p>The rise of Triratna Buddhism in response to secularisation, Western culture and ideals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The beliefs and teachings of Triratna Buddhism (formerly Friends of the Western Buddhist Order) in the context of Western society and wider Buddhist beliefs and teachings, including the importance of the three refuges, the unity of the sangha, the importance of spreading the message of Buddhism and the rejection of specific rules within the context of the sangha. b) The success of applying Buddhist teaching in a different culture, and the response of other Buddhist traditions to these developments. <p>With reference to the ideas of Vajragupta and J Coleman.</p>
	4.3	<p>The development of the role of women, and the changing role of men, in different forms of Buddhism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The significance of Māhapājapatī Gotamī and the development of the role of women in the ordained sangha; the role of men in the sangha. b) Family life and the role of men and women in Buddhism in the dhamma, history and contemporary society. c) Feminist approaches in contemporary Buddhism. <p>With reference to the ideas of N S Salgado and T Bartholomeusz.</p>

Topics	What students need to learn	
5 Works of scholars	5.1	<p>Comparison of the bodhisattva doctrine in the works of two scholars (2) (3)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The concept of the bodhisattava with specific reference to the writings of Arthur Basham and Walpola Rahula. b) Mahayana Buddhism: the doctrine as found in the Lotus Sutra, including beliefs about wisdom, liberation, loving-kindness and skilful means. c) The stages and perfections of the Bodhisattva path, including their place in particular traditions. d) Debates such as the context of this belief system in Theravada Buddhism, together with issues, including transfer of karmic merit.
6 Religion and society	6.1	<p>The interpretation and application of ahimsa for a Buddhist in the modern world (4)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The First Precept — to refrain from harming a living thing, the interpretation of ahimsa by Buddhists with specific examples of how this may be lived, such as vegetarianism, right livelihood and involvement in the armed forces. b) The role of other beliefs and considerations in the living of ahimsa, including differences in application and importance within different traditions, and in the example of the Buddha. Specific reference should be made to excerpts of the Pali Canon and the Lotus Sutra. <p>With reference to the ideas of the 14th Dalai Lama and T Bartholomeusz.</p>
	6.2	<p>Issues in contemporary society</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The significance of teachings that underpin involvement and support in and for liberationist approaches to religion and society, religious freedom, religious tolerance, pluralism and interfaith dialogue for Buddhists in a multicultural society. b) The ways that Buddhists respond to diversity in different traditions of Buddhism. How different Buddhist traditions view other religious and non-religious world views and their truth claims. c) The benefits, extent of the involvement and potential barriers from a Buddhist context, including the difference in application and importance of interfaith dialogue in light of different traditions of Buddhism, including the different cultural and country contexts in which Buddhists are found. d) Buddhist teachings and responses to issues of science. How Buddhism has responded to these in the historical and contemporary world. <p>With reference to the ideas of the 14th Dalai Lama and K Sri Dhammananda.</p>

List of extracts for Paper 4A: Buddhism

Students are expected to study a range of texts that support and underpin their knowledge and understanding. The assessment will include two extended-response questions on an excerpt, sourced from this extracts list. The following texts are **not** exclusive to the topic areas under which they appear; students will need to be able to apply these texts across any suitable topic area. These are published in the *A Level Religious Studies Anthology: Paper 4A – Buddhism*, which can be downloaded from our website qualifications.pearson.com

Suggested translation of the Tipitaka is by Thanissaro Bhikkhu.

(1) Armstrong K – *Buddha, Chapter 3 Enlightenment*, pp. 60–88 (Phoenix, 2002)
ISBN 9780753813409

(2) de Bary W T et al – *The Buddhist Tradition in India, China and Japan, Chapter 3 The Bodhisattva*, pp. 81–109 (Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, 2011) ISBN 9780307778796

(3) Rahula W – *Gems of Buddhist Wisdom, Chapter 27 Bodhisattva Ideal in Buddhism*, pp. 461–471 (Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia: Buddhist Missionary Society, 1996)
ISBN 9789679920673

(4) www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/index.html (Samyutta Nikaya 42.3 *Yodhajiva Sutta: To Yodhajiva (The Warrior)*)

Paper 4, Option 4B: Christianity

Topics	What students need to learn	
1 Religious beliefs, values and teachings	1.1	<p>The nature of God as personal and as Creator</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Personal relationship, omnipotence and immutability; ex nihilo, emanation, construction and artistic expression, goodness of creation, stewardship. b) Implications of these teachings about God for an understanding of the self, the meaning and purpose of life, death and the afterlife. c) Interpretations of these teachings and evidence for these views, the challenges of these interpretations and their significance for Christianity, the experience of these roles of God in the life of a Christian. <p>With reference to the ideas of M Buber and Augustine.</p>
	1.2	<p>The Trinity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Biblical basis for ideas about the Trinity. b) Notions of relation and analogy to understand the Trinity. c) Modern views on the Trinity, their strengths and weaknesses, the impact of these views on the life of a Christian and their significance for Christianity. <p>With reference to the ideas of K Barth and K Rahner.</p>
	1.3	<p>The nature of the Church</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Key concepts of unity, holiness, catholicity and apostolicity. b) Interpretations of these teachings, challenges to these views and their impact on the life of Christian communities and individuals. <p>With reference to the ideas of Cyprian of Carthage and M Luther.</p>
	1.4	<p>Key moral principles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The concept of Love as the principal Christian value and the basis of all other values and qualities. b) The love of God as revealed in creation, the incarnation and the Trinity as the basis of this value. c) The relationship of all Christian values with the key principle of love.

Topics	What students need to learn	
2 Sources of wisdom and authority	2.1	<p>The Bible</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Role as a Source of authority, the word of God, its compilation and use, including as a basis for ethical teaching of the Church and the role of tradition. b) The Bible as revealed theology and its relationship to natural theology, role of Spirit in revelation/mysticism. c) Strengths and weaknesses of various models of interpretation of the text.
	2.2	<p>The nature and role of Jesus, including the strengths and weaknesses of key ideas, their impact on the development of Christianity and understanding the nature of Jesus in the life of Christians (1)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The Early Church – the Arian heresy and the Chalcedonian definition concerning the two natures of Jesus and his work in salvation. With reference to the ideas of Arius and Athanasius. b) The Reformation – views on salvation and justification, including notions of sin, sacrifice, justification by grace, revelation of God, Mediator, Prophet, Priest and King. With reference to the ideas of M Luther and J Calvin. c) Modern views – whether and how God suffers in or through Jesus, context to these thoughts and the relationship of biblical texts on suffering to notions of impassibility. With reference to the ideas of J Moltmann and T Weinandy.

Topics	What students need to learn	
3 Practices that shape and express religious identity	3.1	<p>The diversity of practice in the Eucharist</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The importance of sacraments in some denominations, the context of differing practices of the Eucharist, interpretations of the variety of practices and their meaning and significance. b) Key ideas, including sacrament, grace, transubstantiation and transignification, Real Presence, memorial. c) The experience of believers when taking part in the Eucharist, reflection and self-awareness. Implications for Christian practice in the experience of a believer and Christian communities.
	3.2	<p>The diversity of practice in creative expressions of religious identity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The depiction of the Nativity and the crucifixion in Christian art and its interpretations and role in Christian devotion. b) The role of music in Christian worship in a variety of denominations. c) The role of prayer in private and public devotion, including the use of aids to prayer. d) The significance of these creative expressions and their impact on Christianity and the lives of Christians as an expression of religious identity and as a connection to, or vehicle for, religious experience.

Topics	What students need to learn	
4 Social and historical developments	4.1	Science a) The challenge to Christian belief of modern science, including cosmology and evolution, and the view that science may replace a religious interpretation of the universe. b) Strengths and weaknesses of these challenges, the responses to them and the impact of these debates on Christian thought. With reference to the ideas of Galileo and Darwin.
	4.2	Secularisation (2) a) Religion in today's society, declining numbers, the role of the Church in formal worship and in modern life and the strengths, weaknesses and impact of the teachings of popular atheists. b) The rise of New Religious Movements and definitions of 'spiritual' and 'religious'. c) Disillusionment with some aspects of traditional religion compared to hard line atheism. With reference to the ideas of C Hitchens and R Dawkins.
	4.3	New movements in theology a) The context and key themes of Liberation theology, Feminist theology and Black theology. b) The global development of Evangelicalism, and of the nature and influence of Pentecostal and Charismatic Christianity in the US and beyond, migration as a factor in the spread of a variety of forms of Christian worship, notably in the African Christian diaspora. c) The development of these ideas and their impact on the lives of believers and communities in Christianity today. With reference to the ideas of G Gutiérrez, S McFague and J H Cone.

Topics	What students need to learn	
5 Works of scholars	5.1	<p>Atonement theory</p> <p>a) An analysis of the key terms atonement and soteriology.</p> <p>b) Models of atonement, including sacrifice, victory, substitution and moral exemplar.</p> <p>With reference to the ideas of Anselm and G Aulén.</p>
	5.2	<p>A comparison of key ideas in the work of Karl Barth and John Hick (3) (4)</p> <p>a) Barth's work on Jesus' death as a substitution for sinful humanity and taking God's judgment on himself, the idea of 'the Judge Judged in Our Place', biblical background, context of the Reformed tradition, the context of the language and traditional imagery of guilt, judgment and forgiveness.</p> <p>b) Hick's work on the role of Jesus as a moral exemplar, divinity and resurrection of Jesus as myth and metaphor, implications for doctrines of incarnation and Trinity, notions of sin, the role of the cross in the modern age, context of 20th century atrocities for an understanding of sin and human nature, the impact of Hick's ideas for interfaith dialogue.</p> <p>c) The strengths and weaknesses of these views, their meaning and significance for Christians and the impact of these views on Christianity in the modern age.</p>

Topics	What students need to learn	
6 Religion and society	6.1	Pluralism and diversity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The sociological reality of multicultural societies and the philosophical sense of pluralism in terms of equally valid routes to the same ultimate reality. b) Key concepts, including particularism, inclusivism and pluralism. c) A study of the context and content of modern Christian thought on other religions. d) The relative strengths and weaknesses of these views and their significance for Christians today. e) The work of the Ecumenical movement and its impact on the unity of Christianity. With reference to the ideas of K Rahner and J Hick.
	6.2	Equality and discrimination – gender <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) A study of the concept of equality in Christianity, including biblical bases and emphases in Christian teaching across denominations. b) Views about progress in gender equality in Christianity and reasons for its status, focusing on the debates about the role of women in the ministry of the Church and its relationship with equality debates in society. c) The significance of these debates for individuals and the community.

List of Extracts for Paper 4B: Christianity

Students are expected to study a range of texts that support and underpin their knowledge and understanding. The assessment will include two extended-response questions on an excerpt, sourced from this extracts list. The following texts are **not** exclusive to the topic areas under which they appear; students will need to be able to apply these texts across any suitable topic area. These are published in the *A Level Religious Studies Anthology: Paper 4B – Christianity*, which can be downloaded from our website.

Suggested version of the Bible is the New International Version (NIV).

(1) McGrath A (ed) – *The Christian Theology Reader*, 2nd edition, Moltmann J – Chapter 3.30 Jürgen Moltmann on the Suffering of God, pp. 218–221 (Blackwell, 2001)
ISBN 9780631226406

(2) McGrath A, McGrath J C – *The Dawkins Delusion?: Atheist Fundamentalism and the Denial of the Divine*, Chapter 1 Deluded About God?, pp. 1–31 (InterVarsity Press, 2007)
ISBN 9780830834464

(3) Barth K – *Church Dogmatics: The Doctrine of Reconciliation*, Volume IV, Part 1, selected extracts from Chapter XIV.1. See Anthology for details.

(4) Hick J – *The Metaphor of God Incarnate*, 2nd edition, Chapter 11 Atonement by the Blood of Jesus, pp. 112–127, (Westminster John Knox Press, 2006) ISBN 9780664230371

Paper 4, Option 4C: Hinduism

Topics	What students need to learn	
1 Religious beliefs, values and teachings	1.1	<p>Beliefs</p> <p>a) Sanatana Dharma, rta, including implications for Hindu belief and practice in their interconnections as reflected historically and in the contemporary world and for the community of believers.</p> <p>b) Karma and the importance of eternal and universal order, with implications for all peoples and the righteous living, law of action and consequences.</p> <p>c) Samsara as a cycle of birth and types of reincarnation and the significance of moksha. Beliefs about the self, death and the afterlife.</p> <p>With reference to the ideas of R Zaehner and I Jamieson.</p>
	1.2	<p>Beliefs about Brahman and also avatars as God in human form</p> <p>a) Brahman: the universal spirit and how he is represented in the world, deities and scripture.</p> <p>b) Krishna: the ideal avatar and the heart of the bhakti movements, ISKCON.</p> <p>c) Rama: accounts of this incarnation of Vishnu, the ideal man and the working out of various types of dharma.</p> <p>d) Shakti: creative power as Goddess, in some contexts worshipped as one of her manifestations believed to be the true form of the Divine.</p> <p>e) Significance of the context of beliefs about Vishnu who descends to the human world as an avatar when needed to re-establish the dharma.</p> <p>With reference to the ideas of J Lipner and S Sivananda.</p>
	1.3	<p>Key moral principles (1)</p> <p>a) The underlying principles of dharma (duty), karma (deeds) and ahimsa (non-violence).</p> <p>b) Values linked with the ashramas (dharma, artha, kama, vairagya and their relationship with moksha).</p> <p>c) Virtues and qualities associated with the gunas.</p> <p>With reference to the ideas of P Bilimoria.</p>

Topics	What students need to learn	
2 Sources of wisdom and authority	2.1	Emergence of Hindu traditions a) The Indus Valley culture, archaeological surveys; decline, Aryan invasion/migration/continuous development; significance for later Hinduism. b) Role of sacrifices and Agni, worship of Indra and role of soma. c) Points for discussion: significant problems with evidence and its interpretation; significance of possible links with the development of Hinduism; implications given that the evidence is not conclusive about the origins of Hinduism.
	2.2	Sources of wisdom and authority a) Shruti compared to smriti; meanings and examples, significance of their differences concerning authority; links with worship ceremonies. b) Vedas as the books of knowledge, including the Upanishads and the beginnings of philosophical traditions and their significance for the Vedanta schools. c) Smriti texts, including Ramayana and Mahabharata with accounts of avatars and the Puranas presenting ethical teachings; the significance of the use of narrative form in smriti.
	2.3	Points for discussion a) Implications arising from the breadth and range of scriptures for an understanding of Hinduism. b) Relative authority of some scriptures compared to the timeless knowledge of shruti scriptures. With reference to the ideas of J Brockington and W O'Flaherty.

Topics	What students need to learn	
3 Practices that shape and express religious identity	3.1	Sanatana dharma with links and differences to varnashrama-dharma <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Cosmic order giving norms to society as exemplified in life stages. Varna (birth); ashrama (stage in life); dharma (appropriate duty); an ideal social order. b) Ways in which the rules of varnashrama-dharma are transformed by bhakti. c) Overlap and differences between varna and jati; debates about the status of jati in modern Hinduism. d) Role of the community of believers. e) Beliefs about the meaning and purpose of life.
	3.2	Yoga: meanings and main types <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Karma yoga: and its aim of identification with the transcendent; significance of practice of dharma without attachment; the path of action to purify the mind. b) Jnana yoga: the path of wisdom, applicable to certain groups such as Brahmins; value of renunciation and aim of identification with Brahman; links with raja yoga and emphasis on meditation. c) Bhakti yoga: applicable to a wide range of people, devotion to Krishna identified with Brahman leading to moksha. d) Hatha yoga: mental and physical health seeking to purify the body and to realise its divine nature; its Western evolution.
	3.3	Points for discussion about yoga <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Key beliefs across yogic traditions – moksha and liberation from samsara and practices; implications of links to Samkhya tradition. b) Views about different purposes and diverse significance across different traditions. c) Implications for practice of Hinduism across different cultures.

Topics	What students need to learn	
4 Social and historical developments including challenges and responses	4.1	Movements (2) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Context to the modern development of Hinduism – India subject to foreign rule, Christian and Islamic influences, challenges of secularisation. b) Key emphases in movements, including Brahmo Samaj, Neo-Vedanta, Ramakrishna Mission, Arya Samaj, Hindutva movement. c) Key figures in these developments, including Mahatma Gandhi, Ram Mohan Roy, Sri Ramakrishna and Dayananda Saraswati. d) Key teachings; significance and influence in Hinduism and across the world; implications such as interfaith, nationalism and tolerance. Implications for political and social systems, including non-violence and swaraj. Hinduism and challenges of science, including astronomy and medicine. Views about Hindu renaissance and the concept of 'Hinduism' compared to a range of traditions, and Hinduism as a world religion.
	4.2	Points for discussion arising from these key figures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Significance and influence in Hinduism and across the world; implications such as interfaith, nationalism, tolerance. Neo-Vedanta compared to Hindutva. Implications for political and social systems, including non-violence. b) Views about Hindu renaissance and the concept of 'Hinduism' compared to a range of traditions, and Hinduism as a world religion.

Topics	What students need to learn	
5 Works of scholars	5.1	<p>Comparative study of ideas in the works of Shankara and Ramanuja: their respective contexts, key beliefs and influence (3) (4)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Their respective contexts in the overall Vedanta traditions. b) Sources that influenced their beliefs. c) Key beliefs such as atman; Brahman with a range of meanings; samsara; moksha; dharma. d) Influence on Advaita Vedanta, including non-dualism and philosophical foundation to devotion of soul to the personal God; and on bhakti schools, including Chaitanya. e) Radical differences between Shankara and Ramanuja as seen in bhakti, which for Shankara is inferior given the knowledge of absolute unity, a clear commitment to monism; compared to Ramanuja's view that the soul becomes like God with no personal relationship with God. Claims regarding the Bhagavad Gita as supporting their own systems. f) The strengths and weaknesses of these beliefs for an understanding of Hinduism. <p>With reference to the ideas of P Bowes and J Hopkins.</p>
6 Religion and society	6.1	<p>Pluralism and diversity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Religious pluralism, including the view that Hinduism may be seen as a number of religious traditions; religious practice in a multi-cultural society; exclusivism with reference to Hindutva; inclusivism. Studied from within Indian culture, Hindu migration, including Hinduism in the UK.
	6.2	<p>Equality and discrimination – gender</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) A study of interpretations of equality in Hinduism, including jati and harijans. b) Sexual equality, including significance within Saivism and brahmacarya and changing roles of men and women.
	6.3	<p>Points for discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Significance of these themes for the individual and community; comparisons between different Hindu traditions; implications for belief and practice. b) Feminist and liberationist approaches. <p>With reference to the ideas of F Hardy and G Flood.</p>

List of extracts for Paper 4C: Hinduism

Students are expected to study a range of texts that support and underpin their knowledge and understanding. The assessment will include two extended-response questions on an excerpt, sourced from this extracts list. The following texts are **not** exclusive to the topic areas under which they appear; students will need to be able to apply these texts across any suitable topic area. These are published in the *A Level Religious Studies Anthology: Paper 4C – Hinduism* which can be downloaded from our website.

(1) Singer P (ed) – *A Companion to Ethics*, Bilimoria P – Indian ethics, Part II, Chapter 4 pp. 43–59 (John Wiley and Sons, 1993) ISBN 9781118724965

(2) Foy W (ed) – *Man's Religious Quest*, Chapter 2.8, pp. 142–154 (Croom Helm, 1977) ISBN 9780856645990

(3) Taliaferro C, Quinn P (eds) – *A Companion to Philosophy of Religion*, Smart N – Part I, Chapter 1 Hinduism, pp. 7–14 (Wiley-Blackwell, 1999) ISBN 978-0631213284

(4) Brockington J L – *The Sacred Thread: Hinduism in Continuity and Diversity*, Chapter 6 Sectarian Developments and Chapter 7 Bhakti in the South, pp. 109–112, 134–40 (Edinburgh University Press, 1996) ISBN 9780748608300

Paper 4, Option 4D: Islam

Topics	What students need to learn	
<p>1</p> <p>Religious beliefs, values and teachings</p>	1.1	<p>The interpretation and application of the Six Beliefs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The beliefs as the basis of Islam and their interconnections. b) Their centrality in different forms of Islam and for the life and expressions of believers. c) Key concepts/emphases of the individual Beliefs and the differences of interpretation in Islam: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o the belief in Allah as the one o the belief in angels o the belief in holy books o the belief in the prophets o the belief in the Day of Judgment, including beliefs about death, the afterlife, the self, and the meaning and purpose of life o the belief in predestination, including beliefs about the meaning and purpose of life. d) The nature and existence of Allah, including the 99 Beautiful Names, and tawhid and adalat. <p>The interconnections and various understandings of their importance and influence historically and in the contemporary world. This should include specific reference to differences between Sunni and Shi'a Islam.</p> <p>With reference to the ideas of S H Nasr and W Chittick.</p>

Topics	What students need to learn	
<p>2</p> <p>Sources of wisdom and authority</p>	2.1	<p>The meaning and significance of the life and work of the Prophet Muhammad in its historical, political, religious and social context and assessment of his significance for Muslims today</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) The key events in the life of Muhammad, including his birth, childhood, marriage to Khadijah, Night of Power, life in Makkah, Hijrah, life in Madinah, return to Makkah, Last Sermon and death. b) Polytheism, animism and jinns, festivals, sacrifices, Christian, Jewish and Zoroastrian traditions, and the status of Makkah. c) Political and economic factors, social groupings and changes. d) Literature, including poetry. e) Understanding of his significance, including the strengths or otherwise of these background factors in an understanding of the status of Muhammad, including his rejection of many of these features. f) Revelations and Muhammad, significance of the Night of Power, the significance of the hijrah and the growth of theocracy. g) The view of Muhammad as final messenger and prophet, transcending such 'contexts' should also be explored. <p>With reference to the ideas of K Armstrong and M Lings.</p>
	2.2	<p>The key events in the life of Muhammad and his sayings as a basis for Muslim living</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) The Hadith and Sunnah, their compilation and authority. b) The significance and implications of the Hadith and Sunnah for Muslim living.
	2.3	<p>The interpretation, significance, treatment and use of the Qur'an</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) The status of the Qur'an as revealed word of Allah, its revelation and formation, purpose and message. This should include specific reference to its declaration of Allah and the nature of submission to Allah in Surah-Al-Fatiha 1. Surah Al-Baqarah 2 as a summary of the various messages of the Qur'an, including submission to the will of Allah. (1) b) Its significance as a basis and source of authority for all Muslim belief and practice. c) The use of the Qur'an and the Hadith in the establishment of Shari'ah law, and its various interpretations and expressions, including its application to key moral principles and activities that are considered halal and haram (including alcohol; modesty; gambling; killing and eating of animals); the principle of makruh and how that has been applied. <p>With reference to the ideas of S H Nasr and F R Malik.</p>

Topics	What students need to learn	
3 Practices that shape and express religious identity	3.1	<p>The central role of the five pillars of Islam as fulfilling the purpose of life to live in submission to the will of Allah and a way of shaping and expressing religious identity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Expressions of the worship of Allah as the one and of Islamic spirituality in different forms of Islam. b) The meaning and importance of individual pillars (Shahada, Salah, Zakāt, Sawm, Hajj) and their unity as the basis of Islamic practice and identity today. c) Similarities and diversity of practice, emphasis and interpretation in Islam. d) The relationship between intention and action and an understanding of the purposes and significance of these acts. <p>The various understandings of their importance and influence historically and in the contemporary world. This should include specific reference to differences between Sunni and Shi'a Islam.</p> <p>With reference to the ideas of S H Nasr and M Siddiqui.</p>
	3.2	<p>The ummah as an expression of Islamic identity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The historical understanding and development of the ummah and its spread from the time of Muhammad to the present day. b) The role and purpose of the ummah in contemporary society as understood in Sunni and Shi'a Islam. c) Similarities and contrasts of emphasis and interpretation in Islam. <p>With reference to the ideas of W M Watt and S H Nasr.</p>

Topics	What students need to learn	
4 Social and historical developments	4.1	<p>The origins and features of the differences between and development of Sunni and Shi'a Islam following the death of the Prophet Muhammad</p> <p>a) Historical and religious context, key people, events and beliefs, including the importance of the companions of the Prophet (including Abu Bakr) and the family of the Prophet (including Ali).</p> <p>b) Debates surrounding divine authority, succession and representation and their respective importance for different types of Islam. This should include reference to the Caliphate and the Imams, and some later examples of how the caliphate was expressed in practice.</p> <p>With reference to the ideas of K Armstrong and S H Nasr.</p>
	4.2	<p>The meaning and importance of the Rightly Guided Caliphs in Islam and to the spread of Islam</p> <p>a) The historical and religious context of this period such as major developments, geographical, migration, economic and social factors and 'Umayyad' and 'Abbasid' dynasties.</p> <p>b) Some later examples of caliphs and of how the caliphate was expressed in practice.</p>
	4.3	<p>a) The significance of the martyrdom of Husain in 680 CE to Shi'a history and practices.</p> <p>b) The events and their significance for the rituals associated with the month of Muharram, including listening to recitations of Husain and his family's sufferings, different forms of self-mortification and pilgrimages.</p> <p>With reference to the ideas of H Halm and N Ahmed.</p>
	4.4	<p>The development and rise of Sufism as a movement within existing traditions</p> <p>a) The context of and influences on the major beliefs and teachings of Sufism. Reasons why these mystical and devotional ideas about a more personal relationship with Allah developed.</p> <p>b) The extent to which Sufism penetrated existing Muslim-majority societies and the ways in which it did so.</p> <p>c) How Sunni and Shi'a have responded to Sufi teachings and practices. The extent to which Sufi might be regarded as a separate tradition.</p> <p>With reference to the ideas of R Geaves and W Chittick.</p>

Topics	What students need to learn	
	4.5	<p>The relationship between Islam and science</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The development and challenges of science and philosophy in the Middle Ages and the work of Abu Hamid al-Ghazālī. b) The interaction between modern European scientific learning and Islam, with reference to the creation and scientific method. c) The different understandings of the importance of science in contemporary Islam. <p>With reference to the ideas of S H Nasr.</p>
<p>5</p> <p>Works of scholars</p>	5.1	<p>Comparative study of Jihad in the works of two scholars (2) (3)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Context of this doctrine as the greater and lesser jihad in the writings Tariq Ramadan and Majid Khadduri. b) The importance of the subjection of the nafs and the constant struggle to live life in submission to Allah. c) The interpretation of the lesser jihad and the significance of jihad with close textual interpretation of the relevant Qur’anic passages. <p>With reference to the ideas of S H Nasr.</p>

Topics	What students need to learn	
6 Religion and society	6.1	<p>The challenges of multi-faith societies, pluralism, religious freedom and interfaith dialogue</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Textual exploration of the Qur'an regarding the place of disbelievers; people of the Book and their place in relation to Allah. b) Debates about different interpretations of the Hadith with regard to other religions. c) Modern Muslim rejection of working with other religions such as minority groups as the Nation of Islam, or Muslim nations and the restrictions on religious practice by non-Muslims. d) Scriptural reasoning or specific groups working for Muslim-Christian relationships. e) The different ways that Islam has viewed other religious and non-religious worldviews and their truth claims. <p>With reference to the ideas of T Ramadan and N Madjid.</p>
	6.2	<p>Gender and Islam</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The various ways in which men and women are viewed in Islam with reference to the Qur'an and the Hadith. b) The changing roles and importance of men and women and the challenge of feminism in Islam today. (4) <p>With reference to the ideas of L Ahmed and S H Nasr.</p>
	6.3	<p>A comparison of the significant ideas about the challenges of the secularisation and the modern 'Western' world; the impact of migration and how these have been met by different traditions of Islam</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The impact and interpretation of Shari'a law, including interpretations of different teachings, evidence for these views, contextual issues and textual materials, assessment of their significance for Islam, implications for beliefs and practices and moral behaviour, including links to liberationist approaches within Islam. b) The relationship between the modern world and issues, including secularisation, modesty and entertainment. These should include debates about different interpretations of the Qur'an and Hadith. <p>With reference to S H Nasr and M Siddiqui.</p>

List of extracts for Paper 4D: Islam

Students are expected to study a range of texts that support and underpin their knowledge and understanding. The assessment will include two extended-response questions on an excerpt, sourced from this extracts list. The following texts are **not** exclusive to the topic areas under which they appear; students will need to be able to apply these texts across any suitable topic area. These are published in the *A Level Religious Studies Anthology: Paper 4D – Islam*, which can be downloaded from our website.

Suggested translation of the Qur'an is by Abdullah Yusuf Ali.

(1) Yusuf Ali A (Translator) – *The Holy Qur'an*, Chapter 1, Chapter 2, pp. 3, 5–8
(Wordsworth Editions, 2000) ISBN 9781853267826

(2) Ramadan T – *Islam, the West and the Challenges of Modernity, Part Two Chapter 1.6c*
pp. 59–69 (The Islamic Foundation, 2001) ISBN 9780860373117

(3) Khadduri M – *War and Peace in the Law of Islam*, Chapter 5 The Doctrine of Jihād,
Chapter 6 Types of Jihād, pp. 55–82 (The Lawbook Exchange Ltd, 2010)
ISBN 9781584776956

(4) Ahmed L – *Women and Gender in Islam: Historical Roots of a Modern Debate*,
Conclusion, pp. 235–248 (Yale University Press, 1992) ISBN 9780300055832

Paper 4, Option 4E: Judaism

Topics	What students need to learn	
1 Religious beliefs, values and teachings	1.1	Ethical monotheism a) Creator, and Sustainer of all creation; He alone is God, Oneness, no physical comparison whatsoever, alone worthy of worship; rewards and punishes. b) Obligations between people and obligations between humans and God. c) Interpretations across different Jewish traditions; provides a context to the beliefs across a range of Jewish traditions, significance in terms of being the essence and foundation of Judaism and for the community of believers. With reference to the ideas of D Cohn Sherbok and G Robinson.
	1.2	God reveals himself to his people in the Torah and in the Talmud a) Jews seen as the chosen people, obligations of the Jews as an example of living in accordance with God’s will. b) Significance of revelation; preservation of Jewish identity, impacts on whole of life of the community. c) Status of Moses and the Ten Commandments, status of different covenants. With reference to the ideas of A Cohen and G Robinson.
	1.3	Interpretation of these beliefs and their impact on understanding the meaning and purpose of life and death across different traditions. The significance of these for an understanding of the distinctive features of Judaism today a) The nature of the soul. b) Life after death; spiritual and physical resurrection, judgment, heaven and She’ol/Gehenna (hell). c) Jewish thought on the meaning and purpose of life. With reference to the ideas of E Kaplan-Spitz and B L Weiss, and Y Buxbaum.

Topics	What students need to learn	
	1.4	<p>Values (1)</p> <p>a) The relationship between revelation: Torah and values, dealing with every aspect of life (Ethics of the Fathers – context in Nezikin).</p> <p>b) Jewish values and universal values: Jewish distinctiveness as the People of the Almighty and the Noahide Code expressing universal values (Ethics of the Fathers – significance of gemiluth chasadim).</p> <p>c) The qualities of the Almighty and their reflection in the values of love, justice and holiness. God is the source of moral values.</p> <p>With reference to the ideas of G Robinson and M Kellner.</p>
<p>2</p> <p>Sources of wisdom and authority</p>	2.1	<p>Tenakh, Torah, Nevi'im, Ketuvim</p> <p>a) Type of authority and the distinctive emphasis that God reveals Himself to His people in the Torah.</p> <p>b) Use of these sources in Jewish studies of scripture and in worship and the range of interpretations across different Jewish traditions.</p> <p>With reference to the ideas of G Robinson and D Cohn-Sherbok.</p>
	2.2	<p>The development of Rabbinic Judaism</p> <p>a) Commentary by Rashi and his pupils on Jewish scriptures in order to add explanations to clarify the text, and at times referred to contemporary events; commentary on the Babylonian Talmud and continued influence via tosafots.</p> <p>b) Judah Halevi: unity between God and the People of Israel; piyyutim poems of the diaspora for festivals and Sabbath and his Songs of Zion; emphasis on religious experience and value of prophecy. Supremacy of the divine word in nature and the Law. Rejected Aristotelian philosophy, Christianity and Islam, presenting views to support Judaism.</p> <p>c) Historical and religious context of these figures; nature of their authority and role of interpretation; influence on development of Rabbinic Judaism and significance in terms of emphases on selected Jewish beliefs.</p> <p>With reference to the ideas of C Potok and H Halkin.</p>

Topics	What students need to learn	
3 Practices that shape and express religious identity	3.1	<p>Orthodox</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Various meanings and interpretations of Orthodoxy; written and oral Torahs are divinely inspired, with an emphasis of living according to Halakhah. b) Status of revelation compared to theology. Debates about a literal view of the Torah or as a source for a Jewish philosophy of history. c) Place of the Temple; distinctive practices in synagogues and daily religious observances. <p>With reference to the ideas of B Brown and G Robinson.</p>
	3.2	<p>Reform</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Significance of beliefs and practices changing over time; reform views about revelation; significant changes to synagogue services and different emphases in religious observances, including gender issues. b) Influence of Haskalah (enlightenment and rationalism). c) Different types of Reform in Germany compared to more radical movements in America and in Jerusalem. <p>With reference to the ideas of M Meyer and D E Kaplan.</p>

Topics	What students need to learn	
4 Social and historical developments	4.1	<p>Context to the modern development of Judaism and the shaping of Jewish identity</p> <p>a) The significance of the destruction of the Temple and the diaspora on shaping Jewish identity. The impact of migration on the diaspora; key figures in these developments; interpretations about revelation and the authentic voice of Judaism.</p> <p>b) The Jewish response to the challenge of secularisation; the role of Judaism in a secular society; Jewish liberationist thinking – defending the poor and oppressed in a secular society.</p> <p>c) The Jewish response to the challenge of science; how far Jewish belief is compatible with scientific thinking.</p> <p>With reference to the ideas of I Gafni, R Kogel, G Cantor and M Swetlitz.</p>
	4.2	<p>Zionism</p> <p>a) Aim to reunite the Jews of the diaspora to return to the 'Promised Land'; historical and religious context to origins, including Haskalah, issues of assimilation and persecutions and key developments, including limited immigration to Palestine as a result of anti-Semitism in the 19th century.</p> <p>b) Related to the state of Israel. Different interpretations of Zionism, including religious and political characteristics and cultural and practical Zionism.</p> <p>c) Debates about the covenant and the 'Promised Land'; critics of Zionism and its rejection by some Orthodox views.</p> <p>With reference to the ideas of Y Gorny and J Neusner.</p>
	4.3	<p>Holocaust (2)</p> <p>a) Significance for Jewish beliefs related to covenant relationship, context of anti-Semitism, and Nazi pogroms and the 'Final Solution'.</p> <p>b) Jewish responses in terms of religious issues, loss of faith; death of God; God acting in history; suffering servant analogy; punishment and resurrection.</p> <p>With reference to the ideas of R Rubenstein and E Fackenheim.</p>

Topics	What students need to learn	
<p>5</p> <p>Works of scholars</p>	5.1	<p>Comparative study of Maimonides and Moses Mendelssohn (3) (4)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The different contexts to Maimonides and Moses Mendelssohn. b) The strengths and weaknesses of these scholars within Judaism. c) Their contributions to an understanding of modern Judaism. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Maimonides: his basic teachings of Judaism, including 'The Thirteen Principles of Faith'. Noted for juridical works on the Pentateuch, Arabic commentary on the Mishnah and his codification of the Talmudic Law and especially the Guide to the Perplexed. Implications for belief and practice, ethics, scholarly debates, including his proofs for the existence of God and beliefs about creation, rejecting Greek philosophy, importance of prophecy, and contributions to the development of Judaism. o Moses Mendelssohn: translation of the Torah and the Psalms into German, linked to observance of Halakhah coupled with rationalism; arguments for immortality as unending moral progress. Harmony between revealed law and reason and similar approach in his argument for the existence of God and in support of freewill. Significance of Jewish practices to sustain Israel's loyalty to God and influence on Haskalah, linked to European enlightenment, and acculturation and assimilation to the larger culture; critics such as Hatam Sofer. <p>With reference to the ideas of D Cohn-Sherbok and G Robinson.</p>

Topics	What students need to learn	
6 Religion and society	6.1	<p>Religious pluralism</p> <p>a) The impact of migration on interfaith dialogue, debates about the Messiah, religious practice in a multi-cultural and secular society.</p> <p>b) Jewish attitudes to other faiths; exclusivism, inclusivism and pluralism studied from within Israel and/or the UK. Teachings regarding respect for non-Jewish truth claims.</p> <p>c) Diverse Jewish views about Jewish identity; role of birth, faith, works and ritual in Jewish identity.</p> <p>With reference to the ideas of M Persoff and J Hick.</p>
	6.2	<p>Equality and discrimination – gender</p> <p>a) The relationship between Jewish identity and sexual identity; the changing roles of men and women and interpretations of equality in Judaism; norms of sexual behaviour and gender roles.</p> <p>b) The role of women in family life, the home and education.</p> <p>c) Debates about the role of women in leadership in the Synagogue. Orthodox compared to Reform views and practices. The development of Jewish feminism.</p> <p>With reference to the ideas of E Koltun, and D D Moore and Kaplan.</p> <p>Exemplars for women rabbis could include Regina Jonas and Julia Neuberger.</p>

List of extracts for Paper 4E: Judaism

Students are expected to study a range of texts that support and underpin their knowledge and understanding. The assessment will include two extended-response questions on an excerpt, sourced from this extracts list. The following texts are **not** exclusive to the topic areas under which they appear; students will need to be able to apply these texts across any suitable topic area. These are published in the *A Level Religious Studies Anthology: Paper 4E – Judaism*, which can be downloaded from our website.

(1) Singer P (ed) – *A Companion to Ethics*, 1st edition, Kellner M – Jewish ethics, Chapter 7 pp. 82–90 (Blackwell, 2001) ISBN 9780631187851

(2) Wiesel E – *Night*, pp. 41, 64–65, 66–69, 104–112 (Penguin UK, 2012) ISBN 9780141038995

(3) Robinson G – *Essential Judaism: A Complete Guide to Beliefs, Customs & Rituals*, Chapter 8 The Philosophers: The continuing evolution of Jewish Thought, pp. 415–421, 428–433 (Simon and Schuster, 2008) ISBN 9781439117521

(4) Taliaferro C, Quinn P (eds) – *A Companion to Philosophy of Religion*, Goodman L – Judaism, Chapter 5 pp. 43–55 (John Wiley and Sons, 1999) ISBN 9780631213284

Paper 4, Option 4F: Sikhism

Topics	What students need to learn
1 Religious beliefs, values and teachings	1.1 Sikhs and the divine (1) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Sikh teachings about the nature and existence of God; how Sikhs envisage the divine and the way to unite with it. This will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o reference to key concepts about Waheguru: oneness, sat, shabad, especially the Mool Mantar, nam, hukam, nadar o reference to key concepts about the nature of the self, the meaning and purpose of life, death and the afterlife, including maya, guru, nadar, gurmukh, manmukh, mukti, samsara and karma. b) Contrasting the meaning of these ideas in contemporary Sikhism with pre-existing Indic thought, comparison of Sikh ideas with those of the sant movement, examining it as background for the emergence of Sikh thought tracing the impact of existing thought and practices on the beliefs, values and teachings of Guru Nanak. With reference to the ideas of K E Nayar and J S Sandhu.
	1.2 The importance of sangat <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The development of this concept in the lives of the Gurus, including building spiritual and political centres at Amritsar. b) Study of the concept of Panth as a qaum or nation and the authority and status of the Panth as Guru from the lifetime of Guru Gobind Singh. c) The meaning of sangat today looking at local and global levels and at virtual and physical communities. With reference to the ideas of N K Singh and K Nayar.
	1.3 Key moral principles and values <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Nam japna, kirt karna and vand chakna and their applications in gurmukh lifestyles today. b) The key principle of seva (service to God and to others). c) Miri-piri as the unique, original and distinctive feature of Sikhism, including a study of the warrior tradition. d) Sikh values as expressions of the quality of manmukh. With reference to the ideas of N K Singh and J Sandhu.

Topics	What students need to learn	
2 Sources of wisdom and authority	2.1	<p>The nature, role and status of the Guru Granth Sahib</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Role in worship and ceremony, its theological and legal status. b) The process by which the text was compiled and recognised as Guru, including the debate between Gurinder Singh Mann and the Institute of Sikh Studies. c) The role and status of secondary texts such as the janamsakhis, vars of Bhai Gurdas and the Dasam Granth. <p>With reference to the ideas of Gurinder Singh Mann and the Institute of Sikh Studies.</p>
	2.2	<p>The lives of the ten Gurus as teachers and exemplars for Sikhs (2)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The significance of the lives of Guru Nanak and Guru Gobind Singh and the martyrdoms of Guru Arjun and Guru Tegh Bahadur. b) The teachings of the Gurus and their importance for Sikhs and the Sikh community today. c) The succession of Gurus, including the decisions of Guru Gobind Singh in 1699 and 1708. d) The role of sants in contemporary Sikh life. <p>With reference to the ideas of N K Singh and W O Cole.</p>
3 Practices that shape and express religious identity	3.1	<p>The affirmation of a distinctive Sikh identity starting toward the end of the 19th century through the Singh Sabha movements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The process by which the Sikh Rehat Maryada, the Anand Marriage Act 1909 and Gurdwara reform took place under British rule in India. b) Assessment of the impact of each in making official a particular variant of Sikh thought and practice. <p>With reference to the ideas of Oberoi and the Institute of Sikh Studies.</p>
	3.2	<p>Different perspectives about the following.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The importance of initiation into the Khalsa and wearing the 5 Ks, including amritdhari, keshdhari and sehajdhari Sikhs, and patits. b) The nature and importance of nam simaran, including meditational practices and the use of mantras.

Topics	What students need to learn	
4 Social and historical developments	4.1	<p>The impact of migration, secularisation and non-Sikh culture on beliefs, values and practices in the Sikh Diaspora</p> <p>a) Issues raised for the Sikh Rehat Maryada, including assimilation, the legal treatment of the panj kakke and diverse responses to issues related to marriage, including mixed marriages and marriages between homosexuals.</p> <p>b) The emphasis on the study of Punjabi as the language of religious devotion and the issue of English language use in the gurdwara. Analysis of Sikh values and secularisation, including Sikh responses to secular values, in the contemporary world as supportive of equality, freedom, democracy and the challenges of science.</p> <p>With reference to the ideas of G Singh and D S Tatla.</p>
	4.2	<p>The history, development and contemporary significance of liberationist approaches, including the concept of liberation, social justice, just war and martyrdom</p> <p>a) Examination of the commentary on peace, war and social justice and dharam yudh.</p> <p>a) Particular examples, periods or movements, including the martyrdom of Guru Arjun.</p> <p>c) Martyrdoms in the 18th century struggle for self-determination and the struggle for Khalistan in the 20th century.</p> <p>With reference to the ideas of L Fenech and P S Sambhi.</p>
5 Works of scholars	5.1	<p>The importance of the feminine principle in Sikh thought</p> <p>a) Comparison of the writings of N K Singh and D Jakobsh about the role of women within, and feminist approaches to Sikhism.</p> <p>b) A study of feminist themes in Sikh scripture and history, contrasted with an exploration of the under-reporting of these dimensions in mainstream accounts of Sikhism.</p> <p>c) Feminist perspectives and movements in the Sikh tradition over time, including the changing roles of men and women.</p> <p>With reference to the ideas of N K Singh and D Jakobsh (3) (4)</p>
	5.2	<p>A study of the differing methods of explaining the Sikh understanding of the divine</p> <p>a) Propositional and analytic and unitive and holistic.</p> <p>b) Different attitudes to social and political issues, including gender.</p>

Topics	What students need to learn	
6 Religion and society	6.1	Religious freedom and tolerance, responses to pluralism and diversity within traditions a) The collection of testimony from diverse traditions in the Guru Granth Sahib, the bhagat bani. b) The different responses to religious freedom and pluralism within Sikhism. c) Interfaith relations between Guru Nanak and Hindus, Muslims and the yogis. With reference to the ideas of N K Singh and S B Singh Dalawari.
	6.2	Respect and recognition for different ways that Sikhs view other religions and non-religious world views and their truth claims in understanding the divine. a) The argument that divine knowledge is 'experience of' the sacred; the rejection of philosophy and speculation associated with priests as methods of religious knowing. b) The use of reason and evidence as the basis of a rational and virtuous life and rejection of religious and non-religious authority and traditions as the foundation of the life of an individual and society. With reference to the ideas of N K Singh and W O Cole.

List of extracts for Paper 4F: Sikhism

Students are expected to study a range of texts that support and underpin their knowledge and understanding. The assessment will include two extended-response questions on an excerpt, sourced from this extracts list. The following texts are **not** exclusive to the topic areas under which they appear; students will need to be able to apply these texts across any suitable topic area. These are published in the *A Level Religious Studies Anthology: Paper 4F – Sikhism*, which can be downloaded from our website.

- (1) Cole W O and Sambhi P S – *The Sikhs: Their Religious Beliefs and Practices*, Chapter 5 Sikh religious thought, pp. 67–105 (Sussex Academic, 1998) ISBN 9781898723134
- (2) Singh N K – *Sikhism: An Introduction*, Chapter 1 Guru Nanak and the Origins of Sikhism, pp. 1–12 (I.B. Tauris, 2011) ISBN 9781848853218
- (3) Singh N K – *Sikhism: An Introduction*, Chapter 6 feminist Text in a Patriarchal Context, pp. 101–121 (I.B. Tauris, 2011) ISBN 9781848853218
- (4) Jakobsh D R – Sikhism, Interfaith Dialogue, and Women: Transformation and Identity, *Journal of Contemporary Religion*, 21:2, 183–199, DOI: 10.1080/13537900600655860 (2006)

Assessment information

- First assessment: May/June 2018.
- The assessment is 2 hours.
- The assessment is out of 80 marks.
- The assessment consists of three sections.
- Students must answer all questions in Section A and Section B and in Section C.
- The paper includes short-open, open-response and extended writing questions.
- See *Appendix 1* for the command words that will be used in the examination paper.
- Use of specialist language will be assessed as it is through the selection and deployment of specialist language and terminology that students are able to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of religion and belief.

Synoptic assessment

Synoptic assessment requires students to work across different parts of a qualification and to show their accumulated knowledge and understanding of a topic or subject area.

Synoptic assessment enables students to show their ability to combine their skills, knowledge and understanding with breadth and depth of the subject.

Students will be able to demonstrate this through the extended essay in Question 4.

Sample assessment materials

Sample papers and mark schemes can be found in the *Pearson Edexcel Level 3 Advanced GCE in Religious Studies Sample Assessment Materials (SAMs)* document.

Assessment Objectives

Students must:		% in GCE A Level
AO1	Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. 	40
AO2	Analyse and evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief, including their significance, influence and study.	60
Total		100%

Breakdown of Assessment Objectives

Paper (choice of three papers out of four)	Assessment Objectives		Total for all Assessment Objectives
	AO1 %	AO2 %	
Paper 1: Philosophy of Religion	13.33	20	33.33
Paper 2: Religion and Ethics	13.33	20	33.33
Paper 3: New Testament Studies	13.33	20	33.33
Paper 4: Study of Religion	13.33	20	33.33
Total for GCE A Level*	40%	60%	100%

NB Totals have been rounded either up or down.

*Three papers out of four

3 Administration and general information

Entries

Details of how to enter students for the examinations for this qualification can be found in our *UK Information Manual*. A copy is made available to all examinations officers and is available on our website qualifications.pearson.com

Forbidden combinations and discount code

There is one forbidden combination of options in this qualification, which is enforced through entry codes. This relates to Paper 3: New Testament Studies and Paper 4B: Christianity.

Centres should be aware that students who enter for more than one GCE qualification with the same discount code will have only one of the grades they achieve counted for the purpose of the School and College Performance Tables – normally the better grade (please see *Appendix 5: Codes*).

Students should be advised that, if they take two qualifications with the same discount code, colleges, universities and employers are very likely to take the view that they have achieved only one of the two GCEs. The same view may be taken if students take two GCE qualifications that have different discount codes but which have significant overlap of content. Students or their advisers who have any doubts about their subject combinations should check with the institution to which they wish to progress before embarking on their programmes.

Access arrangements, reasonable adjustments, special consideration and malpractice

Equality and fairness are central to our work. Our equality policy requires all students to have equal opportunity to access our qualifications and assessments, and our qualifications to be awarded in a way that is fair to every student.

We are committed to making sure that:

- students with a protected characteristic (as defined by the Equality Act 2010) are not, when they are undertaking one of our qualifications, disadvantaged in comparison to students who do not share that characteristic
- all students achieve the recognition they deserve for undertaking a qualification and that this achievement can be compared fairly to the achievement of their peers.

Language of assessment

Assessment of this qualification will be available in English. All student work must be in English.

Access arrangements

Access arrangements are agreed before an assessment. They allow students with special educational needs, disabilities or temporary injuries to:

- access the assessment
- show what they know and can do without changing the demands of the assessment.

The intention behind an access arrangement is to meet the particular needs of an individual student with a disability, without affecting the integrity of the assessment. Access arrangements are the principal way in which awarding bodies comply with the duty under the Equality Act 2010 to make 'reasonable adjustments'.

Access arrangements should always be processed at the start of the course. Students will then know what is available and have the access arrangement(s) in place for assessment.

Reasonable adjustments

The Equality Act 2010 requires an awarding organisation to make reasonable adjustments where a person with a disability would be at a substantial disadvantage in undertaking an assessment. The awarding organisation is required to take reasonable steps to overcome that disadvantage.

A reasonable adjustment for a particular person may be unique to that individual and therefore might not be in the list of available access arrangements.

Whether an adjustment will be considered reasonable will depend on a number of factors, which will include:

- the needs of the student with the disability
- the effectiveness of the adjustment
- the cost of the adjustment; and
- the likely impact of the adjustment on the student with the disability and other students.

An adjustment will not be approved if it involves unreasonable costs to the awarding organisation, timeframes or affects the security or integrity of the assessment. This is because the adjustment is not 'reasonable'.

Special consideration

Special consideration is a post-examination adjustment to a student's mark or grade to reflect temporary injury, illness or other indisposition at the time of the examination/assessment, which has had, or is reasonably likely to have had, a material effect on a candidate's ability to take an assessment or demonstrate their level of attainment in an assessment.

Further information

Please see our website for further information about how to apply for access arrangements and special consideration.

For further information about access arrangements, reasonable adjustments and special consideration, please refer to the JCQ website: www.jcq.org.uk.

Malpractice

Candidate malpractice

Candidate malpractice refers to any act by a candidate that compromises or seeks to compromise the process of assessment or which undermines the integrity of the qualifications or the validity of results/certificates.

Candidate malpractice in examinations **must** be reported to Pearson using a *JCQ Form M1* (available at www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/malpractice). The form can be emailed to pqsmalpractice@pearson.com or posted to Investigations Team, Pearson, 190 High Holborn, London, WC1V 7BH. Please provide as much information and supporting documentation as possible. Note that the final decision regarding appropriate sanctions lies with Pearson.

Failure to report malpractice constitutes staff or centre malpractice.

Staff/centre malpractice

Staff and centre malpractice includes both deliberate malpractice and maladministration of our qualifications. As with candidate malpractice, staff and centre malpractice is any act that compromises or seeks to compromise the process of assessment or which undermines the integrity of the qualifications or the validity of results/certificates.

All cases of suspected staff malpractice and maladministration **must** be reported immediately, before any investigation is undertaken by the centre, to Pearson on a *JCQ Form M2(a)* (available at www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/malpractice). The form, supporting documentation and as much information as possible can be emailed to pqsmalpractice@pearson.com or posted to Investigations Team, Pearson, 190 High Holborn, London, WC1V 7BH. Note that the final decision regarding appropriate sanctions lies with Pearson.

Failure to report malpractice itself constitutes malpractice.

More-detailed guidance on malpractice can be found in the latest version of the document *JCQ General and Vocational Qualifications Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments*, available at www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/malpractice

Awarding and reporting

This qualification will be graded, awarded and certificated to comply with the requirements of Ofqual's General Conditions of Recognition.

This A Level qualification will be graded and certificated on a six-grade scale from A* to E using the total subject mark. Individual papers are not graded.

Students whose level of achievement is below the minimum judged by Pearson to be of sufficient standard to be recorded on a certificate will receive an unclassified U result.

The first certification opportunity for this qualification will be 2018.

Student recruitment and progression

Pearson follows the JCQ policy concerning recruitment to our qualifications in that:

- they must be available to anyone who is capable of reaching the required standard
- they must be free from barriers that restrict access and progression
- equal opportunities exist for all students.

Prior learning and other requirements

There are no prior learning or other requirements for this qualification.

Students who would benefit most from studying this qualification are likely to have a Level 2 qualification such as a GCSE in Religious Studies.

Progression

Students can progress from this qualification to:

- a range of different, relevant academic and higher education qualifications
- employment in a relevant sector
- further training.

Appendices

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Appendix 1: Command word definitions

This table lists the command words that will be used in the examinations for this qualification and their definitions.

Command word	Definition	Assessment Objectives	
Analyse	Deconstruct information and/or issues to find connections and provide logical chains of reasoning in order to make judgements regarding their importance/relevance to the question context.	5 AO1	15 AO2
Assess	Requires reasoned argument of factors to reach a judgement regarding their importance/relevance to the question context.	4 AO1	8 AO2
Clarify	Identify key ideas and explain key concepts.	10 AO1	
Evaluate	Review/analyse information, bringing it together to form a conclusion/judgement based on strengths/weaknesses, alternatives, relevant data or information. Come to a supported judgement of a subject's qualities and relation to its context.	5 AO1	25 AO2
Explore	Demonstrate understanding by investigating different reasons, concepts and ideas.	8 AO1	

*Please refer to the Sample Assessment Materials and associated Levels Descriptors for further guidance relating to each command word. Each command word has a different Assessment Objective weighting. The approach to this weighting and details of how each skills must be evidenced is provided in the levels descriptors for each question.

Appendix 2: The context for the development of this qualification

All our qualifications are designed to meet our World Class Qualification Principles^[1] and our ambition to put the student at the heart of everything we do.

We have developed and designed this qualification by:

- reviewing other curricula and qualifications to ensure that it is comparable with those taken in high-performing jurisdictions overseas
- consulting with key stakeholders on content and assessment, including learned bodies, subject associations, higher-education academics and teachers to ensure this qualification is suitable for a UK context
- reviewing the legacy qualification and building on its positive attributes.

This qualification has also been developed to meet criteria stipulated by Ofqual in *GCE Qualification Level Conditions and Requirements* and *GCE Subject Level Conditions and Requirements for Religious Studies*, published in June 2015.

^[1] Pearson's World Class Qualification Principles ensure that our qualifications are:

- **demanding**, through internationally benchmarked standards, encouraging deep learning and measuring higher-order skills
- **rigorous**, through setting and maintaining standards over time, developing reliable and valid assessment tasks and processes, and generating confidence in end users of the knowledge, skills and competencies of certified students
- **inclusive**, through conceptualising learning as continuous, recognising that students develop at different rates and have different learning needs, and focusing on progression
- **empowering**, through promoting the development of transferable skills, see *Appendix 3*.

From Pearson's Expert Panel for World Class Qualifications

May 2014

“ The reform of the qualifications system in England is a profoundly important change to the education system. Teachers need to know that the new qualifications will assist them in helping their learners make progress in their lives.

When these changes were first proposed we were approached by Pearson to join an 'Expert Panel' that would advise them on the development of the new qualifications.

We were chosen, either because of our expertise in the UK education system, or because of our experience in reforming qualifications in other systems around the world as diverse as Singapore, Hong Kong, Australia and a number of countries across Europe.

We have guided Pearson through what we judge to be a rigorous qualification development process that has included:

- extensive international comparability of subject content against the highest-performing jurisdictions in the world
- benchmarking assessments against UK and overseas providers to ensure that they are at the right level of demand
- establishing External Subject Advisory Groups, drawing on independent subject-specific expertise to challenge and validate our qualifications
- subjecting the final qualifications to scrutiny against the DfE content and Ofqual accreditation criteria in advance of submission.

Importantly, we have worked to ensure that the content and learning is future oriented. The design has been guided by what is called an 'Efficacy Framework', meaning learner outcomes have been at the heart of this development throughout.

We understand that ultimately it is excellent teaching that is the key factor to a learner's success in education. As a result of our work as a panel we are confident that we have supported the development of qualifications that are outstanding for their coherence, thoroughness and attention to detail and can be regarded as representing world-class best practice. ”

Sir Michael Barber (Chair)

Chief Education Advisor, Pearson plc

Professor Lee Sing Kong

Director, National Institute of Education, Singapore

Bahram Bekhradnia

President, Higher Education Policy Institute

Professor Jonathan Osborne

Stanford University

Dame Sally Coates

Principal, Burlington Danes Academy

Professor Dr Ursula Renold

Federal Institute of Technology, Switzerland

Professor Robin Coningham

Pro-Vice Chancellor, University of Durham

Professor Bob Schwartz

Harvard Graduate School of Education

Dr Peter Hill

Former Chief Executive ACARA

All titles correct as at May 2014

Appendix 3: Transferable skills

The need for transferable skills

In recent years, higher education institutions and employers have consistently flagged the need for students to develop a range of transferable skills to enable them to respond with confidence to the demands of undergraduate study and the world of work.

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) defines skills, or competencies, as 'the bundle of knowledge, attributes and capacities that can be learned and that enable individuals to successfully and consistently perform an activity or task and can be built upon and extended through learning.'^[1]

To support the design of our qualifications, the Pearson Research Team selected and evaluated seven global 21st-century skills frameworks. Following on from this process, we identified the National Research Council's (NRC) framework as the most evidence-based and robust skills framework. We adapted the framework slightly to include the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) ICT Literacy and Collaborative Problem Solving (CPS) Skills.

The adapted National Research Council's framework of skills involves:^[2]

Cognitive skills

- **Non-routine problem solving** – expert thinking, metacognition, creativity.
- **Systems thinking** – decision making and reasoning.
- **Critical thinking** – definitions of critical thinking are broad and usually involve general cognitive skills such as analysing, synthesising and reasoning skills.
- **ICT literacy** – access, manage, integrate, evaluate, construct and communicate.^[3]

Interpersonal skills

- **Communication** – active listening, oral communication, written communication, assertive communication and non-verbal communication.
- **Relationship-building skills** – teamwork, trust, intercultural sensitivity, service orientation, self-presentation, social influence, conflict resolution and negotiation.
- **Collaborative problem solving** – establishing and maintaining shared understanding, taking appropriate action, establishing and maintaining team organisation.

Intrapersonal skills

- **Adaptability** – ability and willingness to cope with the uncertain, handling work stress, adapting to different personalities, communication styles and cultures, and physical adaptability to various indoor and outdoor work environments.
- **Self-management and self-development** – ability to work remotely in virtual teams, work autonomously, be self-motivating and self-monitoring, willing and able to acquire new information and skills related to work.

Transferable skills enable young people to face the demands of further and higher education, as well as the demands of the workplace, and are important in the teaching and learning of this qualification. We will provide teaching and learning materials, developed with stakeholders, to support our qualifications.

^[1] OECD – *Better Skills, Better Jobs, Better Lives* (OECD Publishing, 2012)

^[2] Koenig J A, National Research Council – *Assessing 21st Century Skills: Summary of a Workshop* (National Academies Press, 2011)

^[3] PISA – *The PISA Framework for Assessment of ICT Literacy* (2011)

Appendix 4: Level 3 Extended Project qualification

What is the Extended Project?

The Extended Project is a stand-alone qualification that can be taken alongside GCEs. It supports the development of independent learning skills and helps to prepare students for their next step – whether that be university study or employment. The qualification:

- is recognised by universities for the skills it develops
- is worth half of an Advanced GCE qualification at grades A*–E
- carries UCAS points for university entry.

The Extended Project encourages students to develop skills in the following areas: research, critical thinking, extended writing and project management. Students identify and agree a topic area of their choice for in-depth study (which may or may not be related to a GCE subject they are already studying), guided by their teacher.

Students can choose from one of four approaches to produce:

- a dissertation (for example an investigation based on predominately secondary research)
- an investigation/field study (for example a practical experiment)
- a performance (for example in music, drama or sport)
- an artefact (for example creating a sculpture in response to a client brief or solving an engineering problem).

The qualification is coursework based and students are assessed on the skills of managing, planning and evaluating their project. Students will research their topic, develop skills to review and evaluate the information, and then present the final outcome of their project.

The Extended Project has 120 guided learning hours (GLH) consisting of a 40-GLH taught element that includes teaching the technical skills (for example research skills) and an 80-GLH guided element that includes mentoring students through the project work. The qualification is 100% internally assessed and externally moderated.

How to link the Extended Project with Religious Studies

The Extended Project creates the opportunity to develop transferable skills for progression to higher education and to the workplace, through the exploration of either an area of personal interest or a topic of interest from the religious studies qualification content.

Through the Extended Project students will develop skills that support their study of religion, including:

- conducting, organising and using research
- independent reading in the subject area
- planning, project management and time management
- developing a research brief as the basis of investigations
- collecting, handling and interpreting evidence
- critical thinking
- adopting an enquiring, critical and reflective approach to the study of religion
- reflecting on and developing their own values, opinions and attitudes in the light of their study
- developing an understanding and appreciation of religious thought and its contribution to individuals, communities and societies.

In the context of the Extended Project, critical thinking refers to the ability to identify and develop arguments for a point of view and to consider and respond to alternative arguments. This supports the development of evaluative skills, as students critically analyse and evaluate the views and arguments of scholars/academics as well as constructing well-informed and reasoned arguments substantiated by relevant evidence.

Types of Extended Project related to religious studies

Students may produce a dissertation on any topic that can be researched and argued, for example a controversial ethical issue such as euthanasia or challenges to religious belief, or the religious, cultural and other significance of religious texts including their reception and influence beyond a religious community.

A dissertation might involve an investigation such as:

- 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
- how religious texts and/or other relevant sources of wisdom and authority are interpreted and applied

The dissertation uses the ideas of scholars to provide a reasoned defence or a point of view, with consideration of counter-arguments.

An alternative might be an investigative project involving the collection of evidence from primary research, for example a case study of inter-faith relations in Bradford.

Using the Extended Project to support breadth and depth

In the Extended Project, students are assessed on the quality of the work they produce and the skills they develop and demonstrate through completing this work. Students should demonstrate that they have extended themselves in some significant way beyond what they have been studying in Religious Studies. Students can demonstrate extension in one or more dimensions:

- **deepening understanding** – where a student explores a topic in greater depth than in the specification content. This could be an in-depth exploration of scepticism in David Hume’s ‘Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion’
- **broadening skills** – where a student learns a new skill. This might be linking theology with New Testament studies such as an investigation into Albert Schweitzer’s claim that Jesus is embedded in the presuppositions of the Gospel writers and subsequent commentators and thus he remains as ‘One unknown’
- **widening perspectives** – where the student’s project spans different subjects. A student studying Religious Studies with Sociology may wish to research the appeal and problems associated with new religious movements. A student studying Religious Studies with History may wish to use the implications of diversity of religious beliefs in the Middle East.

A wide range of information to support the delivery and assessment of the Extended Project, including the specification, teacher guidance for all aspects, an editable scheme of work and exemplars for all four approaches, can be found on our website.

Appendix 5: Codes

Type of code	Use of code	Code
Discount codes	Every qualification eligible for performance tables is assigned a discount code indicating the subject area to which it belongs. Discount codes are published by DfE.	Please see the GOV UK website*
Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF) codes	Each qualification title is allocated an Ofqual Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF) code. The RQF code is known as a Qualification Number (QN). This is the code that features in the DfE Section 96 and on the LARA as being eligible for 16–18 and 19+ funding, and is to be used for all qualification funding purposes. The QN will appear on students' final certification documentation.	The QN for this qualification is: 601/8741/4
Subject codes	The subject code is used by centres to enter students for a qualification. Centres will need to use the entry codes only when claiming students' qualifications.	A Level – 9RS0
Paper codes	These codes are provided for reference purposes. Students do not need to be entered for individual papers.	Paper 1: 9RS0/01 Paper 2: 9RS0/02 Paper 3: 9RS0/03 Paper 4: 9RS0/4A-4F

*www.gov.uk/government/publications/2018-performance-tables-discount-code

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Original origami artwork: Mark Bolitho

Origami photography: Pearson Education Ltd/Naki Kouyioumtzis

ISBN 978 1 446 94623 7

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