



Specification

GCE Religious Studies

Pearson Edexcel Level 3 Advanced Subsidiary GCE in
Religious Studies (8RS01)
First examination 2014

Pearson Edexcel Level 3 Advanced GCE in Religious Studies
(9RS01)
First examination 2014

Issue 3

About this specification

Edexcel GCE in Religious Studies is designed for use in schools and colleges. It is part of a suite of GCE qualifications offered by Edexcel.

Key features of the specification

Raising achievement

The specification provides flexible pathways allowing you to choose the most suitable content and assessment for your students. Examination questions are clear and straightforward, enabling students to demonstrate their knowledge, understanding and evaluative skills. A range of support materials dedicated to this course supports teaching and learning. Progression is built into the qualification structure: A2 units develop the themes introduced in the corresponding Advanced Subsidiary units. An anthology, available from the Edexcel website at www.edexcel.com, supports Units 3 and 4.

Why choose this specification?

A course relevant to today's concerns

Edexcel's Advanced Subsidiary and Advanced GCE Religious Studies specification is designed to encourage an interest in, and enthusiasm for, a rigorous study of religion. It will enable students to develop insights into areas of knowledge, belief and thought central to an understanding of the modern world. Through a study of philosophy, ethics and the world's major religions, students will be equipped with a range of knowledge and skills which will help them to make sense of contemporary events.

Supporting you

Edexcel aims to provide the most comprehensive support for our qualifications. We have therefore published our own dedicated suite of resources for teachers and students written by qualification experts. We also endorse a wide range of materials from other publishers to give you a choice of approach.

For more information on our wide range of support and services for this GCE in Religious Studies qualification, visit our website: www.edexcel.com/gce2008

Specification updates

This specification is Issue 3 and is valid for examination from Summer 2014. If there are any significant changes to the specification Edexcel will write to centres to let them know. Changes will also be posted on our website.

For more information please visit www.edexcel.com or www.edexcel.com/gce2008

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A Specification at a glance

AS	Unit 1: Religious Studies — Foundations	*Unit code 6RS01
■ Externally assessed ■ Availability: June		50% of the total AS marks 25% of the total GCE marks

Content summary:

This unit explores the following areas:

- Area A: Philosophy of Religion
- Area B: Ethics
- Area C: Buddhism
- Area D: Christianity
- Area E: Hinduism
- Area F: Islam
- Area G: Judaism
- Area H: Sikhism
- Area I: New Testament.

Students must study at least **two** of these **nine** areas.

Philosophy of Religion in this unit comprises a study of philosophical arguments about the existence of God and selected problems in the philosophy of religion. Ethics comprises a study of ethical concepts and dilemmas. For each of the religions, students explore key issues and emphases in teaching and practice. For New Testament, students explore key issues and emphases in the study of the teachings of Jesus Christ.

Assessment:

This unit is assessed by an external examination of 1 hour and 45 minutes. Candidates must answer **three** questions from a choice of **18**. Candidates must study at least **two** of the **nine** areas within this unit. All the questions set for this unit require extended writing.

AS	Unit 2: Religious Studies — Investigations	*Unit code 6RS02	
■ Externally assessed	■ Availability: June	50% of the total AS marks	25% of the total GCE marks

Content summary:

This unit has an enquiry-based approach to teaching and learning, and is made up of seven areas of study:

- Area A: The Study of Religion
- Area B: The Study of Philosophy of Religion
- Area C: The Study of Ethics
- Area D: The Study of World Religions
- Area E: The Study of the Old Testament/Jewish Bible
- Area F: The Study of the New Testament
- Area G: The Study of Christianity and the Christian Church.

Within each area of study there are **three** topics. Students must study **one** topic.

This unit provides for a balance of teacher-directed and more independent student enquiry. It offers a choice between these methods of teaching and learning by giving students the opportunity to undertake individual research into a topic in which they are particularly interested. This will enable students to study independently and to use, and evaluate, a wide range of source material.

Assessment:

This unit is assessed by an external examination of 1 hour and 15 minutes.

Each area of study offers **three** different topics. Candidates study **one** topic and, in the examination, answer the question that relates to that topic. The examination paper is made up of 21 questions (three for each of the seven areas of study). All the questions set for this unit are essay questions.

A2 Unit 3: Religious Studies — Developments	*Unit code 6RS03
■ Externally assessed ■ Availability: June	50% of the total A2 marks 25% of the total GCE marks

Content summary:

This unit has been designed to build on the knowledge, understanding and skills developed in *Unit 1: Religious Studies — Foundations*. It is made up of the following areas of study:

- Area A: Philosophy of Religion
- Area B: Ethics
- Area C: Buddhism
- Area D: Christianity
- Area E: Hinduism
- Area F: Islam
- Area G: Judaism
- Area H: Sikhism
- Area I: New Testament.

Students must study at least **two** of these **nine** areas.

Philosophy of Religion in this unit comprises further study of philosophical arguments about the existence of God and selected problems in the philosophy of religion. Ethics comprises further study of ethical concepts and problems. For each of the religions, students explore developments and expansion and selected concepts and set texts. For New Testament, students explore theology and Christology and selected concepts and set texts.

Assessment:

This unit is assessed by an external examination of 1 hour and 45 minutes.

Candidates must answer **three** questions from a choice of **18**. Candidates must study at least **two** of the **nine** areas within this unit. All the questions set for this unit require extended writing.

A2 Unit 4: Religious Studies — Implications	*Unit code 6RS04
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Externally assessed ■ Availability: June 	<p style="text-align: center;">50% of the total A2 marks</p> <p style="text-align: center;">25% of the total GCE marks</p>

Content summary:

This unit has been designed to build on the knowledge, understanding and skills developed in Units 1, 2 and 3.

Students will consider, examine or discuss:

- the consequences of holding certain opinions, views or beliefs, including their own
- how a particular belief or value could affect other people, either for good or ill
- how other people's lives might be affected if a certain belief were widely held or a certain value widely applied.

Within the context of the specification, students will consider implications in terms of how far particular beliefs and values might affect people's understanding or awareness, including their own, of religion and human experience.

Religion in this context may include specific religious individuals, groups or communities, or may refer more generally to the pursuit of religious or spiritual goals that are not unique to a particular religion.

Human experience in this context relates to the wider experience of life that is shared by all people on the basis of their common humanity, irrespective of any religious beliefs or values that they may hold.

Assessment:

This unit is assessed by an external examination of 1 hour and 15 minutes.

Candidates must answer **one** question from a choice of **nine**, which will be based on an extract from the *GCE Religious Studies Anthology* published by Edexcel. All the questions set for this unit are essay questions.

* See Appendix 7 for description of these codes and all other codes relevant to this qualification.

B Specification overview

Summary of assessment requirements

Unit number and unit title	Level	Assessment information	Number of marks allocated in the unit
Unit 1: Religious Studies — Foundations	AS	<p>This unit is assessed by an external examination of 1 hour and 45 minutes.</p> <p>Candidates must answer three questions from a choice of 18. They must study at least two of the nine areas within this unit.</p> <p>All the questions set for this unit require extended writing.</p> <p>The total number of marks allocated for each question is 30. The total number of marks allocated in this unit is 90.</p>	90 marks
Unit 2: Religious Studies — Investigations	AS	<p>This unit is assessed by an external examination of 1 hour and 15 minutes.</p> <p>Each area of study offers three different topics. Candidates study one topic and, in the examination, answer the question that relates to that topic.</p> <p>The examination paper is made up of 21 questions (three for each of the seven areas of study). Each question will be marked out of a total of 50.</p> <p>All the questions set for this unit are essay questions.</p> <p>Candidates can study a topic from any of the seven areas. This may be based on work being studied for <i>Unit 1: Religious Studies — Foundations</i>, but candidates do not have to follow the same area they are studying in that unit.</p> <p>All candidates in a centre may study the same area and topic, but it is not necessary for all candidates in the same group to follow the same area of study and topic.</p>	50 marks
Unit 3: Religious Studies — Developments	A2	<p>This unit is assessed by an external examination of 1 hour and 45 minutes.</p> <p>Candidates must answer three questions from a choice of 18. Candidates must study at least two of the nine areas within this unit.</p> <p>All the questions set for this unit require extended writing.</p> <p>The total number of marks allocated for each question is 30. The total number of marks allocated in this unit is 90.</p>	90 marks

B Specification overview

Unit number and unit title	Level	Assessment information	Number of marks allocated in the unit
Unit 4: Religious Studies — Implications	A2	<p>This unit is assessed by an external examination of 1 hour and 15 minutes.</p> <p>Candidates must answer one question from a choice of nine, which will be based on an extract from the <i>GCE Religious Studies Anthology</i> published by Edexcel. Details of the sources of the anthology are in <i>Appendix 1: Guidance for teachers</i>.</p> <p>The anthology can be downloaded from the Edexcel website — www.edexcel.com. 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>Candidates will be credited with any relevant knowledge from Units 1, 2 and 3 included in their answers for this paper.</p> <p>All the questions set for this unit are essay questions.</p> <p>The total number of marks allocated in this unit is 50.</p>	50 marks

Assessment objectives and weightings

		% in AS	% in A2	% in GCE
AO1	<p>Select and demonstrate clearly relevant knowledge and understanding through the use of evidence, examples and correct language and terminology appropriate to the course of study.</p> <p>In addition, for synoptic assessment, Advanced GCE students should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the connections between different elements of their course of study.</p>	70%	60%	65%
AO2	<p>Critically evaluate and justify a point of view through the use of evidence and reasoned argument.</p> <p>In addition, for synoptic assessment, Advanced GCE students should relate elements of their course of study to their broader context and to specified aspects of human experience.</p>	30%	40%	35%
	TOTAL	100%	100%	100%

Relationship of assessment objectives to units

Unit number	Assessment objective		
	AO1	AO2	Total for AO1 and AO2
Unit 1	17.5%	7.5%	25%
Unit 2	17.5%	7.5%	25%
Unit 3	15%	10%	25%
Unit 4	15%	10%	25%
Total for Advanced GCE	65%	35%	100%

Qualification summary

Subject Criteria

The General Certificate of Education is part of the Level 3 provision. This specification is based on the Advanced Subsidiary GCE and Advanced GCE Subject Criteria for Religious Studies; which are prescribed by the regulatory authorities and are mandatory for all awarding bodies.

Aims

The aims of the Edexcel Advanced Subsidiary and Advanced GCE in Religious Studies are to encourage students to:

- develop their interest in and enthusiasm for a rigorous study of religion and relate it to the wider world
- treat the subject as an academic discipline by developing knowledge, understanding and skills appropriate to a specialist study of religion
- 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 learning.

AS/A2 knowledge and understanding

This Advanced Subsidiary and Advanced GCE specification requires students, within the chosen areas of study, to acquire knowledge and understanding of:

- the key concepts (for example religious beliefs, teachings, doctrines, principles, ideas and theories), including how these are expressed in texts, writings and/or other forms and practices
- major issues and questions (for example issues of commonality and diversity, the role of dialogue, methods of study, relevance to contemporary society)
- the contribution of significant people, traditions or movements
- religious language and terminology
- the relationship between the areas of study and other aspects of human experience.

AS/A2 skills

Through the chosen areas of study, students are required to develop the following skills:

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

In addition, at A2 students are required, for the chosen areas of study, to:

- demonstrate a wider range and greater depth of knowledge, understanding and skills
- show a greater maturity of thought and expression
- explore the connections between elements of the areas of study, and with other aspects of human experience.

Unit 1 Religious Studies — Foundations 15

Unit 2 Religious Studies — Investigations 19

Unit 3 Religious Studies — Developments 23

Unit 4 Religious Studies — Implications 31

Course structure

- Edexcel's GCE in Religious Studies comprises four units and contains an Advanced Subsidiary subset of two AS units.
- The Advanced Subsidiary GCE is the first half of the GCE course and consists of Units 1 and 2. It may be awarded as a discrete qualification or contribute 50 per cent of the total Advanced GCE marks.
- The full Advanced GCE award consists of the two AS units (Units 1 and 2), plus two A2 units (Units 3 and 4) which make up the other 50 per cent of the Advanced GCE. Students wishing to take the full Advanced GCE must, therefore, complete all four units.
- The structure of this qualification allows teachers to construct a course of study which can be taught and assessed either as:
 - ◆ distinct modules of teaching and learning with related units of assessment taken at appropriate stages during the course; or
 - ◆ a linear course which is assessed in its entirety at the end.

1.1 Unit description

This unit explores the foundations of the following **nine** areas:

- Area A: Philosophy of Religion
- Area B: Ethics
- Area C: Buddhism
- Area D: Christianity
- Area E: Hinduism
- Area F: Islam
- Area G: Judaism
- Area H: Sikhism
- Area I: New Testament.

Students must study at least **two** of these.

Philosophy of Religion in this unit comprises a study of philosophical arguments about the existence of God and selected problems in the philosophy of religion. Ethics comprises a study of ethical concepts and dilemmas. For each of the religions, students explore key issues and emphases in teaching and practice. For New Testament, students explore key issues and emphases in the study of the teachings of Jesus Christ.

Guidance notes for teachers are provided in *Appendix 1*.

1.2 Assessment information

This unit is assessed by an external examination of 1 hour and 45 minutes.

Candidates must answer **three** questions from a choice of **18**.
Candidates must study at least **two** of the **nine** areas within this unit.

All the questions set for this unit require extended writing.

The total number of marks allocated for each question is 30. The total number of marks allocated in this unit is 90.

1.3 Unit content

Area A: Philosophy of Religion

Students may answer with reference to any religious or non-religious stance, provided the material is relevant to the question.

1 A study of philosophical arguments about the existence of God:

- Design — key ideas, strengths and weaknesses
- Cosmological — key ideas, strengths and weaknesses.

2 A study of selected problems in the philosophy of religion:

- Problems of evil and suffering, different types of problems and solutions
- A study of philosophical debates about miracles: concepts of miracle; reasons to believe in miracles; philosophical problems with reference to Hume.

Area B: Ethics

1 A study of ethical concepts:

- The relationship between religion and morality
- Utilitarianism
- Situation ethics.

2 A study of ethical dilemmas:

- Issues of war and peace
- Sexual ethics.

Religion

Area C: Buddhism

1 Key issues in the study of Buddhism:

- The life and work of the Buddha in its historical, religious and social context; his significance for Buddhists.

2 Key emphases in teaching and practice:

- The three refuges, meaning and significance
- Types and purposes of meditation, their context and application.

Area D: Christianity

1 Key issues in the study of Christianity:

- The Church's teaching about the life and work of Jesus in its historical, religious and social context; his significance for Christians; Early Church, Reformation and Modern Christian teaching about the Person and work of Jesus.

2 Key emphases in teaching and practice:

- Christian beliefs about God: a personal God; God as creator
- Christian worship, baptism and Eucharist: meaning and significance for belief and practice.

Area E: Hinduism

1 Key issues in the study of Hinduism:

- Distinctive features and the significance for Hindus of Indus Valley culture and Aryan influence and of Vedic beliefs and practices.

2 Key emphases in teaching and practice:

- Beliefs and practices of yoga, types, key teachings and their application
- Beliefs and practices associated with Krishna, Rama, Sakti and Siva, distinctive emphases and significance for devotees.

Area F: Islam

1 Key issues in the study of Islam:

- The life and work of Muhammad in its historical, religious and social context; his significance for Muslims.

2 Key emphases in teaching and practice:

- Six beliefs — meaning and significance for belief and practice
- Five pillars — meaning and significance for belief and practice.

Area G: Judaism**1 Key issues in the study of Judaism:**

- The historical and religious context and key teachings of: Rashi and his school; Judah Halevi; Moses Maimonides.

2 Key emphases in teaching and practice:

- Orthodox, Reform, Conservative, Liberal, distinctive teachings and practices.

Area H: Sikhism**1 Key issues in the study of Sikhism:**

- The Guru in Sikhism, with particular reference to the lives and teachings of Guru Nanak and Guru Gobind Singh, in their religious, historical and social contexts, and to the Guru Granth Sahib.

2 Key emphases in teaching and practice:

- Belief in God and the practice of devotion
- Belonging to the Khalsa.

Area I: New Testament

Students should study either Luke's Gospel or The Fourth Gospel.

1 Key issues in the study of the teachings of Jesus Christ:

- Jesus' moral teachings (Luke)
- The 'I am' sayings (Fourth Gospel)
- The meaning and significance of the miracles (Luke/Fourth Gospel).

2 Key emphases:

- Prayer, praise and the Sabbath (Luke)
- Women (Fourth Gospel)
- The nature and demands of discipleship (Luke/Fourth Gospel).

2.1 Unit description

This unit has an enquiry-based approach to teaching and learning, and is made up of **seven** areas of study:

- Area A: The Study of Religion
- Area B: The Study of Philosophy of Religion
- Area C: The Study of Ethics
- Area D: The Study of World Religions
- Area E: The Study of the Old Testament/Jewish Bible
- Area F: The Study of the New Testament
- Area G: The Study of Christianity and the Christian Church.

Within each area of study there are **three** topics. Students must study **one** topic.

This unit provides for a balance of teacher-directed and more independent student enquiry. It offers a choice between these methods of teaching and learning by giving students the opportunity to undertake individual research into a topic in which they are particularly interested. This will enable students to study independently and to use, and evaluate, a wide range of source material.

Guidance notes for teachers are provided in *Appendix 1*.

2.2 Assessment information

This unit is assessed by an external examination of 1 hour and 15 minutes.

Each area of study offers **three** different topics. Candidates study **one** topic and, in the examination, answer the question that relates to that topic.

The examination paper is made up of 21 questions (three from each of the seven areas of study). Each question will be marked out of a total of 50.

All the questions set for this unit are essay questions.

Candidates can study a topic from any of the seven areas. This may be based on work being studied for *Unit 1: Religious Studies — Foundations*, but candidates do not have to follow the same area they are studying in that unit.

All candidates in a centre may study the same area and topic, but it is not necessary for all candidates in the same group to follow the same area of study and topic.

The total number of marks allocated in this unit is 50.

2.3 Unit content

Topics for investigation

One numbered topic to be studied from the list below.

Guidance notes for teachers on each topic are provided in *Appendix 1*.

Area A: The Study of Religion

- 1 Religion and science
- 2 Anthropology of religion; psychology of religion; sociology of religion
- 3 A study of creative expressions in religious life

Area B: The Study of Philosophy of Religion

- 4 Religious experience; meditation
- 5 Contrasting standpoints on the relationship between mind and body
- 6 A study of one or more philosophers of religion

Area C: The Study of Ethics

- 7 Medical ethics
- 8 The natural world
- 9 Equality in the modern world

Area D: The Study of World Religions

- 10 A study of one or more religions concerning ethical precepts and applied ethics
- 11 Religious pluralism; inter-faith dialogue; religious practice in a multi-cultural society, including the UK
- 12 Contrasting standpoints on beliefs about God and/or existence

Area E: The Study of the Old Testament/Jewish Bible

- 13 Religion and science
- 14 The nature of God
- 15 Job and the problem of evil and suffering

Area F: The Study of the New Testament

- 16 Religion and science
- 17 New Testament ethics and morality
- 18 Life after death

Area G: The Study of Christianity and the Christian Church

- 19 The development of the Church up to and including the Reformation
- 20 The Modern Period
- 21 Christian belief and practice

3.1 Unit description

This unit has been designed to build on the knowledge, understanding and skills developed in *Unit 1: Religious Studies — Foundations*.

This unit is made up of the following **nine** areas of study:

- Area A: Philosophy of Religion
- Area B: Ethics
- Area C: Buddhism
- Area D: Christianity
- Area E: Hinduism
- Area F: Islam
- Area G: Judaism
- Area H: Sikhism
- Area I: New Testament.

Students must study at least **two** of these.

Philosophy of Religion in this unit comprises further study of philosophical arguments about the existence of God and selected problems in the philosophy of religion. Ethics comprises further study of ethical concepts and problems. For each of the religions, students explore developments and expansion and selected concepts and set texts. For New Testament, students explore theology and Christology and selected concepts and set texts.

Guidance notes for teachers are provided in *Appendix 1*.

3.2 Assessment information

This unit is assessed by an external examination of 1 hour and 45 minutes.

Candidates must answer **three** questions from a choice of **18**.
Candidates must study at least **two** of the **nine** areas within this unit.

All the questions set for this unit require extended writing.

The total number of marks allocated for each question is 30.

The total number of marks allocated in this unit is 90.

3.3 Unit content

Area A: Philosophy of Religion

Students may answer with reference to any religious or non-religious stance, provided the material is relevant to the question.

1 A study of philosophical arguments about the existence of God:

- Religious experience — key concepts, strengths and weaknesses
- Ontological — key concepts, strengths and weaknesses
- Non-existence of God and critiques of religious belief.

2 A study of selected problems in the philosophy of religion:

- Beliefs about life after death: reincarnation; rebirth; resurrection; immortality of the soul
- A study of religious language: analogy; language games; myth and symbol; verification and falsification debates.

Area B: Ethics**1 A study of ethical concepts:**

- Critiques of the relationship between religion and morality
- Deontology, natural moral law, virtue ethics — key concepts, strengths and weaknesses.

2 A study of selected problems in ethics:

- Meaning and definition of ethical terms with reference to 'is/ought' and debates about 'good', emotivism
- Objectivity, relativism, subjectivism
- Justice, law and punishment.

Religion

There are a number of set texts for Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Sikhism and the New Testament. The recommended translations for these texts can be found within the *GCE Religious Studies Anthology* on the Edexcel website — www.edexcel.com

Area C: Buddhism**1 Developments and expansion:**

- The life and work of Ashoka, context and significance
- Developments in China and Japan including beliefs and practices of Pure Land and Zen, types of tradition, key people and distinctive emphases.

2 Selected concepts and texts:

- Meaning and significance of: dukkha; anatta; anicca; nirvana
- Bodhisattva — types, significance, key teachings
- The Questions of King Milinda (pages 146–162); the Deer Park Sermon (pages 186–187); part of the Lotus Sutra (pages 197–211) in *Buddhist Scriptures*, editor Conze, E (Penguin, 1959).

Area D: Christianity

1 Developments and expansion:

- The practice of Christianity in the modern world, including: the Ecumenical Movement since 1910; Dietrich Bonhoeffer, his teachings and his work; the development of Liberation Theology

2 Selected concepts and texts:

- Modern beliefs about the Trinity
- Beliefs about atonement and salvation
- Beliefs about death and eternal life
- The nature of the Church

New Testament: Matthew 16:13-20, 1 Corinthians 12:27-31

- ◆ Cyprian of Carthage (*de catholicae ecclesiae unitate*) on the unity of the Church, quoted in *The Christian Theology Reader*, editor Alister McGrath, page 261 (Blackwell, 1995) and in *Documents of the Christian Church*, editor Henry Bettenson, page 71 (Oxford University Press, 1967)
- ◆ Thomas Aquinas (in *Symbolum Apostolorum* 9) on the catholicity of the Church, quoted in *The Christian Theology Reader*, editor Alister McGrath, page 264 (Blackwell, 1995)
- ◆ Martin Luther (*On the Councils and the Church* 1539) on the marks of the Church, quoted in *The Christian Theology Reader*, editor Alister McGrath (Blackwell, 1995)
- ◆ Barmen Confession, quoted in *Resistance and Conformity in the Third Reich*, Martyn Housden (Routledge, 1997)
- ◆ Gustavo Gutiérrez, *A Theology of Liberation*, pages 150-152 (SCM, 1988)

Area E: Hinduism**1 Developments and expansion:**

A study of the contributions to the modern development and expression of Hinduism of:

- The historical and religious context, key teachings and significance of: Ramakrishna; M K Gandhi; Dayananda Sarasvati; Sri Radhakrishnan.

2 Selected concepts and texts:

- Meaning and significance of: atman; Brahman; samsara; moksha; dharma
- The Katha Upanishad; The Bhagavad Gita (chapters 1–4, 11, 18).

Area F: Islam**1 Developments and expansion:**

- The Rightly Guided Caliphs, historical and religious context, key people and events; the origins and features of Sunni and Shi'ah Islam, historical and religious context, key people, events and beliefs
- The expression of Islam in one or more modern Islamic state(s), historical and religious context, key beliefs and practices.

2 Selected concepts and texts:

- Beliefs about Allah, range of beliefs and significance; revelation and the Qur'an, beliefs and significance
- Sufism, types, key people and distinctive emphases
- Suras 1, 2, 96 and 112.

Area G: Judaism**1 Developments and expansion:**

- The historical and religious context, key teachings and significance of: Moses Mendelssohn; David Friedlander; Abraham Geiger; Samson Raphael Hirsch
- Zionism and the state of Israel, historical and religious context, key emphases and events
- The Holocaust, historical context, significance for Jewish beliefs.

2 Selected concepts and texts:

- Law and authority, meaning and significance; the covenant people of God, meaning and significance
- Chasidism, types, key people and distinctive emphases
- Exodus 21, 22 and Leviticus 19; the Ethics of the Fathers (I-VI); the 13 Principles of Faith (Maimonides).

Area H: Sikhism**1 Developments and expansion:**

- Movements and orthodoxy in the development of the Sikh Panth
- The influence of the Sant tradition
- The influence of dispersion and the issue of identity.

2 Selected concepts and texts:

- Key ideas in Sikh spirituality
- Miri and piri and their application to contemporary Sikh belief and practice
- The Japji; Akal Ustat and Bachitar Natak from the Dasam Granth; the Rahit Maryada.

Area I: New Testament

Students should study either Luke's Gospel or the Fourth Gospel.

1 Theology and Christology:

- The Kingdom of God (Luke)
- The Prologue (Fourth Gospel)
- The purpose of the Gospel (Luke/Fourth Gospel).

2 Selected concepts and texts:

In addition to the use of textual material from elsewhere in the Gospels, particular reference should be made to either Luke 22-24 or John 18-21.

- Conflict with the religious and political authorities (Luke/Fourth Gospel)
- The crucifixion and resurrection (Luke/Fourth Gospel).

4.1 Unit description

This unit has been designed to build on the knowledge, understanding and skills developed in Units 1, 2 and 3.

Students will consider, examine or discuss:

- the consequences of holding certain opinions, views or beliefs, including their own
- how a particular belief or value could affect other people, either for good or ill
- how other people's lives might be affected if a certain belief were widely held or a certain value widely applied.

Within the context of the specification, students will consider implications in terms of how far particular beliefs and values might affect people's understanding or awareness, including their own, of:

- religion
- human experience.

Religion in this context may include specific religious individuals, groups or communities, or may refer more generally to the pursuit of religious or spiritual goals that are not unique to a particular religion.

Human experience in this context relates to the wider experience of life that is shared by all people on the basis of their common humanity, irrespective of any religious beliefs or values that they may hold.

Guidance notes for teachers are provided in *Appendix 1*.

4.2 Assessment information

This unit is assessed by an external examination of 1 hour and 15 minutes.

Candidates must answer **one** question from a choice of **nine**, which will be based on an extract from the *GCE Religious Studies Anthology* published by Edexcel. Details of the sources of the anthology are in *Appendix 1: Guidance for teachers*.

The anthology can be downloaded from the Edexcel website — www.edexcel.com. Candidates will not be required to take a copy of the anthology into the examination. Relevant extracts will be printed in the examination paper.

Candidates will be credited with any relevant knowledge from Units 1, 2 and 3 included in their answers for this unit.

All the questions set for this unit are essay questions.

The total number of marks allocated in this unit is 50.

4.3 Unit content

One numbered subject area to be studied from the list below.

Guidance notes for teachers are provided in *Appendix 1*.

Question 1: Philosophy of Religion

- Religious language
- Religious experience
- Emergence of modern philosophy of religion

Question 2: Ethics

- Method and moral theory
- Personal relationships
- Modern moral philosophy

Question 3: Buddhism

- Dimensions of religion
- Philosophical issues in religion
- Ethics and religions

Question 4: Christianity

- Dimensions of religion
- Philosophical issues in religion
- Ethics and religions

Question 5: Hinduism

- Dimensions of religion
- Philosophical issues in religion
- Ethics and religions

Question 6: Islam

- Dimensions of religion
- Philosophical issues in religion
- Ethics and religions

Question 7: Judaism

- Dimensions of religion
- Philosophical issues in religion
- Ethics and religions

Question 8: Sikhism

- Dimensions of religion
- Philosophical issues in religion
- Ethics and religions

Question 9: New Testament

Philosophical and theological studies of the Person of Christ and the significance of his teachings:

- Who is Jesus Christ?
- Teachings of Jesus Christ
- Death and resurrection

D Assessment and additional information

Assessment information

Assessment requirements	For a summary of assessment requirements and assessment objectives, see <i>Section B, Specification overview</i> .
Entering candidates for this qualification	Details of how to enter candidates for the examinations for this qualification can be found in Edexcel's Information Manual, copies of which are sent to all examinations officers. The information can also be found on Edexcel's website (www.edexcel.com).
Resitting of units	<p>There is no limit to the number of times that a student may retake a unit prior to claiming certification for the qualification. The best available result for each contributing unit will count towards the final grade.</p> <p>After certification all unit results may be reused to count towards a new award. Students may re-enter for certification only if they have retaken at least one unit.</p> <p>Results of units held in the Edexcel unit bank have a shelf life limited only by the shelf life of this specification.</p>
Awarding and reporting	<p>The grading, awarding and certification of this qualification will comply with the requirements of the current GCSE/GCE Code of Practice, which is published by the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual). The AS qualification will be graded and certificated on a five-grade scale from A to E. The full GCE Advanced level will be graded on a six-point scale A* to E. Individual unit results will be reported.</p> <p>A pass in an Advanced Subsidiary subject is indicated by one of the five grades A, B, C, D, E of which grade A is the highest and grade E the lowest. A pass in an Advanced GCE subject is indicated by one of the six grades A*, A, B, C, D, E of which Grade A* is the highest and Grade E the lowest. To be awarded an A* students will need to achieve an A on the full GCE Advanced level qualification and an A* aggregate of the A2 units. Students whose level of achievement is below the minimum judged by Edexcel to be of sufficient standard to be recorded on a certificate will receive an unclassified U result.</p>
Performance descriptions	Performance descriptions give the minimum acceptable level for a grade. See <i>Appendix 5</i> for the performance descriptions for this subject.

Unit results

The minimum uniform marks required for each grade for each unit:

Units 1 – 4

Unit grade	A	B	C	D	E
Maximum uniform mark = 100	80	70	60	50	40

Candidates who do not achieve the standard required for a grade E will receive a uniform mark in the range 0–39.

Qualification results

The minimum uniform marks required for each grade:

Advanced Subsidiary Cash-in code 8RS01

Qualification grade	A	B	C	D	E
Maximum uniform mark = 200	160	140	120	100	80

Candidates who do not achieve the standard required for a grade E will receive a uniform mark in the range 0–79.

Advanced GCE Cash-in code 9RS01

Qualification grade	A	B	C	D	E
Maximum uniform mark = 400	320	280	240	200	160

Candidates who do not achieve the standard required for a grade E will receive a uniform mark in the range 0–159.

Language of assessment

Assessment of this specification will be available in English only. Assessment materials will be published in English only and all work submitted for examination and moderation must be produced in English.

Quality of written communication

Students will be assessed on their ability to:

- write legibly, with accurate use of spelling, grammar and punctuation in order to make the meaning clear
- select and use a form and style of writing appropriate to purpose and to complex subject matter
- organise relevant information clearly and coherently, using specialist vocabulary when appropriate.

This is embedded in the assessment objectives and is assessed throughout all units.

Assessment objectives and weighting

		% in AS	% in A2	% in GCE
AO1	Select and demonstrate clearly relevant knowledge and understanding through the use of evidence, examples and correct language and terminology appropriate to the course of study. In addition, for synoptic assessment, Advanced GCE students should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the connections between different elements of their course of study.	70%	60%	65%
AO2	Critically evaluate and justify a point of view through the use of evidence and reasoned argument. In addition, for synoptic assessment, Advanced GCE students should relate elements of their course of study to their broader context and to specified aspects of human experience.	30%	40%	35%
	TOTAL	100%	100%	100%

Synoptic assessment

In synoptic assessment there should be a concentration on the quality of assessment to ensure that it encourages the development of the holistic understanding of the subject.

Synopticity requires students to connect knowledge, understanding and skills acquired in different parts of the Advanced GCE course.

In *Unit 3: Religious Studies – Developments* students will be required to draw on the knowledge, understanding and skills they have gained from their studies at Advanced Subsidiary level, in particular in *Unit 1: Religious Studies – Foundations*.

Synoptic assessment in the context of *Unit 4: Religious Studies – Implications* requires students to show knowledge and understanding of the connections between elements of the area(s) of study selected. It involves the explicit drawing together of knowledge, understanding and skills gained in different elements of the Advanced GCE course. It also contributes to the assessment of the skill of relating such connections to specified aspects of human experience.

Stretch and challenge

Students can be stretched and challenged in A2 units through the use of different assessment strategies, for example:

- using a variety of stems in questions — for example analyse, evaluate, discuss, compare
- a requirement for extended writing
- use of a wider range of question types to address different skills — for example open-ended questions.

Additional information

Malpractice and plagiarism

For up-to-date advice on malpractice and plagiarism, please refer to the latest *Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) Instructions for Conducting Coursework* document. This document is available on the JCQ website: www.jcq.org.uk.

For additional information on malpractice, please refer to the latest *Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) Suspected Malpractice in Examinations And Assessments: Policies and Procedures* document, available on the JCQ website.

Access arrangements and special requirements

Edexcel's policy on access arrangements and special considerations for GCE, GCSE, and Entry Level is designed to ensure equal access to qualifications for all students (in compliance with the Equality Act 2010) without compromising the assessment of skills, knowledge, understanding or competence.

Please see the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) website (www.jcq.org.uk) for their policy on access arrangements, reasonable adjustments and special considerations.

Please see our website (www.edexcel.com) for:

- the forms to submit for requests for access arrangements and special considerations
- dates to submit the forms.

Requests for access arrangements and special considerations must be addressed to:

Special Requirements
Edexcel
One90 High Holborn
London WC1V 7BH

Equality Act 2010

Please see our website (www.edexcel.com) for information on the Equality Act 2010.

Prior learning and progression**Prior learning**

Students who would benefit most from studying a GCE in Religious Studies are likely to have a Level 2 qualification such as a GCSE in Religious Studies at grades A*–C, although this is not essential.

Progression

This qualification provides, through either a one year or two year programme of study, a balanced religious education that builds on, but is not dependent on, prior knowledge of the subject at GCSE level.

This qualification supports progression into further education, training or employment.

Successful completion of this course will give students access to a range of career and higher education opportunities. Religious Studies combines well with almost all other humanities subjects such as General Studies, History, Geography and English. In addition, if taken with Mathematics and sciences, Religious Studies will give students a broad-based curriculum.

The course provides students with the opportunity to develop skills in collecting, synthesising and interpreting information from a range of sources, and to consider issues from a range of perspectives. These skills are highly valued by a range of professions, such as public services and the caring professions.

Combinations of entry

There are no forbidden combinations.

Student recruitment

Edexcel's access policy concerning recruitment to our qualifications is 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.

The wider curriculum

This qualification provides opportunities for developing an understanding of spiritual, moral, ethical, social and cultural issues, together with an awareness of environmental issues, health and safety considerations, citizenship and European developments consistent with relevant international agreements appropriate as applied to Religious Studies. *Appendix 6: Wider curriculum maps* the opportunities available.

Resources to support the specification

In addition to the resources available in the Getting Started guide book, Edexcel produces a wide range of resources to support this specification.

Please note that while resources are checked at the time of publication, materials may be withdrawn from circulation and website locations may change. The resources listed are intended to be a guide for teachers and not a comprehensive list.

Edexcel's own published resources

Edexcel aims to provide the most comprehensive support for our qualifications. We have therefore published our own dedicated suite of resources for teachers and students written by qualification experts. The resources include:

- AS Students' Book
- A2 Students' Book
- AS CD ROM (single user licence)
- A2 CD ROM (single user licence)
- AS CD ROM (networkable site licence)
- A2 CD ROM (networkable site licence).

For more information on our complete range of products and services for the GCE in Religious Studies, visit www.edexcel.com/gce2008

Edexcel publications

You can order further copies of the specification and sample assessment materials (SAMs) documents from:

Edexcel Publications
Adamsway
Mansfield
Nottinghamshire
NG18 4FN

Email: publication.orders@edexcel.com
Website: www.edexcel.com

Additional resources endorsed by Edexcel

Edexcel also endorses additional materials written to support this qualification.

Any resources bearing the 'Endorsed by Edexcel' logo have been through a rigorous quality assurance process to ensure complete and accurate support for the specification. For up-to-date information about endorsed resources, please visit www.edexcel.com/endorsed

Please note that while resources are checked at the time of publication, materials may be withdrawn from circulation and website locations may change.

The resources listed are intended to be a guide for teachers and not a comprehensive list. Further suggestions can be found in *Appendix 2*.

Please see www.edexcel.com/gce2008 for up-to-date information.

Edexcel support services

Edexcel support services

Edexcel has a wide range of support services to help you implement this qualification successfully.

ResultsPlus – ResultsPlus is an application launched by Edexcel to help subject teachers, senior management teams, and students by providing detailed analysis of examination performance. Reports that compare performance between subjects, classes, your centre and similar centres can be generated in 'one-click'. Skills maps that show performance according to the specification topic being tested are available for some subjects. For further information about which subjects will be analysed through ResultsPlus, and for information on how to access and use the service, please visit www.edexcel.com/resultsplus

Ask the Expert – to make it easier for our teachers to ask us subject specific questions we have provided the **Ask the Expert** Service. This easy-to-use web query form will allow you to ask any question about the delivery or teaching of Edexcel qualifications. You'll get a personal response, from one of our administrative or teaching experts, sent to the email address you provide. You can access this service at www.edexcel.com/ask

Support for Students

Learning flourishes when students take an active interest in their education; when they have all the information they need to make the right decisions about their futures. With the help of feedback from students and their teachers, we've developed a website for students that will help them:

- understand subject specifications
- access past papers and mark schemes
- learn about other students' experiences at university, on their travels and when entering the workplace.

We're committed to regularly updating and improving our online services for students. The most valuable service we can provide is helping schools and colleges unlock the potential of their learners. www.edexcel.com/students

Training

A programme of professional development and training courses, covering various aspects of the specification and examination, will be arranged by Edexcel each year on a regional basis. Full details can be obtained from:

Training from Edexcel
Edexcel
One90 High Holborn
London WC1V 7BH

Email: trainingbookings@pearson.com
Website: www.edexcel.com/training

F Appendices

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These guidance notes indicate the range and level of detail of material that could be studied for each area of the specification. In addition, centres may choose to study other relevant material and scholars not exemplified in these guidance notes. Questions will be set using the bullet points outlined in the unit content section of each unit, not the contents of these guidance notes.

Unit 1: Religious Studies — Foundations

Area A: Philosophy of Religion

Students may answer with reference to any religious or non-religious stance, provided the material is relevant to the question.

1 A study of philosophical arguments about the existence of God

■ Design — key ideas, strengths and weaknesses

The specification does not name or identify any particular version of the design argument and students will be credited with any version(s) relevant to the question. Notable examples may include Aquinas, Paley, Tennant, Swinburne. Key ideas may include its empirical basis, interpretation of experience, role of analogy regarding cause and effect, cumulative effect of evidence, and notions of 'God' in this argument. Knowledge of these key concepts will be supplemented with an understanding and evaluation of its strengths and weaknesses. Students should be able to identify these features and make informed judgements about the merits, or otherwise, of these strengths and weaknesses. For example, material from Hume, Mill, Kant, Darwin, Dawkins, including alternative interpretations, is appropriate.

■ Cosmological — key ideas, strengths and weaknesses

The specification does not name or identify any particular version of the cosmological argument and students will be credited with any version(s) relevant to the question. Notable examples may include Aquinas, Kalaam versions, Leibniz, Copleston. Key ideas may include principle of sufficient reason, interpretation of experience, concepts such as movement, cause and effect, contingency, infinite regress, first cause, and necessary existence. Knowledge of these key concepts will be supplemented with an understanding and evaluation of its strengths and weaknesses. Students should be able to identify these features and make informed judgements about the merits, or otherwise, of these strengths and weaknesses. For example, this may include material from Hume, Kant, Russell; alternative explanations, notion of brute facts, debates about infinite regress, necessary existence, type of 'God'.

2 A study of selected problems in the philosophy of religion**■ Problems of evil and suffering, different types of problems and solutions**

The specification does not identify particular problems of suffering or their solutions. Students will be credited with any specific examples they select from a range of religious traditions, provided the material is relevant to the question. Different types of problems may include moral and non-moral evil; issues about the 'type of God' referred to in theses, debates and non-theistic traditions. Types of solutions may include theodicies such as Augustine, Irenaeus, Hick, Process and responses from a range of religious traditions. Note no specific approaches will be named in questions. Understanding of key concepts and terms such as free-will defence, vale of soul making, best of all possible worlds and beliefs across a range of religious traditions will be central to this topic. Evaluation will require a weighing up of the respective strengths and weaknesses of scholarly approaches both to the 'problems' and 'solutions'.

■ **A study of philosophical debates about miracles: concepts of miracle; reasons to believe in miracles; philosophical problems with reference to Hume**

An examination of different definitions of miracles may be selected across a range of philosophical and religious traditions. There should be an understanding of philosophical reasons and evidence to believe in miracles, noting that this is a study in the context of the philosophy of religion and not eg primarily a biblical studies paper, but there may be material on definitions and attributes of God. There should be an understanding and evaluation of the philosophical problems associated with this topic, including the contributions of Hume such as debates about 'laws of nature' probability and proof, and the reasons and evidence to reject or support belief in miracles. Hume may be identified in questions although students may broaden their knowledge of this area by reference to other scholars such as Locke, Holland, Moore, Swinburne, Wiles.

Area B: Ethics**1 A study of ethical concepts****■ The relationship between religion and morality**

Students should consider a range of ways in which religion and morality may be related or considered to be independent of each other. They may draw on a diversity of views considering, for example, the possibility that morality is dependent on the existence of God as the ground of moral values, or as the guarantee of divine justice. Students may make connections with ideas about conscience as God-given and explore a range of religious perspectives on morality, such as divine command ethics or 20th century situationalism and agapeistic views of morality. They may explore ideas about objective moral commands and the need for a personal moral commander to make morality more than an impersonal set of inexplicable demands. Students should not be afraid to examine the problems of conflicting religious moralities whilst still maintaining the view that religion and morality have a relationship of dependence. Students should also consider a range of reasons why morality may not be dependent on religion, and may even be opposed to it. The Euthyphro Dilemma can provide the basis for an extended discussion of this issue. Students may consider the problem of religious moral positions which appear to conflict with common intuitions of morality, such as God's command to sacrifice Isaac (Genesis 22) or the teaching of the Westboro Baptist Church (www.godhatesfags.com). The wide range of non-religious explanations of morality provide plenty of scope here, and students may draw on material from elsewhere in the specification to provide examples.

■ Utilitarianism

An examination of an ethical theory as a means of solving ethical dilemmas. Social and cultural background to the theory, considering, for example, the emergence of utilitarianism against the background of the Industrial Revolution, Enlightenment thinking and social philanthropy. Key formulations of the theory, including the contributions of key scholars such as Bentham and Mill, and different approaches to utilitarianism, such as the Hedonic Calculus and principles of Act Utilitarianism; concepts of higher and lower pleasures, Ideal Utilitarianism, Rule, strong and weak, utilitarianism, and further developments of utilitarianism, including Preference and Negative Utilitarianism. Students should be able to evaluate the relative strengths and weaknesses of utilitarianism as an approach to applied ethics and moral decision making, and to consider whether it is compatible with religious and secular approaches to morality.

■ Situation ethics

Students should have a knowledge and understanding of the social and cultural background to situation ethics and the reasons why it was promoted as a means of solving ethical dilemmas relevant to the late 20th century. Issues can include post-Second World War feminism, Vietnam, civil rights, teenager and hippy culture, sexual liberation and rejection of traditional sources of authority. Students should be aware of the radical change in society which underlies situation ethics which was itself a genuine attempt to preserve religious morality but make it accessible to 'man come of age' (Robinson). The contributions of key scholars such as J A T Robinson and Joseph Fletcher are central to this topic and teachers are encouraged to explore some original source material. William Barclay's detailed criticism of Situation Ethics in *Ethics in a Permissive Society* (easily available second hand through Amazon) offers a solid foundation for evaluation of the approach. Whilst students may consider some similarities with utilitarianism, it is important that they understand the significant differences between these two approaches. Students may explore case studies to help consider the value of Situation Ethics in the ethical decision-making process, but should not allow these to dominate.

2 A study of ethical dilemmas

■ Issues of war and peace

Students should be aware of the wide range of issues arising from the Just War Theory, working from Augustine's and Aquinas's approaches to Just War, but also, if they wish, referring to other attempts to refine and present the theory. They may apply it to recent or contemporary wars in order to identify its strengths and weaknesses, whilst being careful not to overload essays with historical or political detail. Religious responses to modern warfare provide useful source materials and can offer the basis for students to consider whether religion can ever justify war. A consideration of pacifism will benefit from an examination of different motivations for pacifism, religious and non-religious, such as humanitarian and environmental reasons as well as, for example, following the teaching of Jesus. Students may make reference to the work of key pacifist individuals or organisations, but these should not be anecdotal or unexamined.

■ Sexual ethics

An examination of a range of issues associated with sexual ethics, including marital, non-marital and extra-marital sex, homosexuality and divorce. Students should consider these issues from religious and secular perspectives, including the contribution of religious texts and teaching. Related issues such as abortion or the availability of IVF to heterosexual and homosexual couples/individuals may be considered as long as the specific link with sexual ethics is made clear. Appropriate links to relevant ethical theories such as Situation Ethics may be considered. Students should be able to discuss whether issues of sexual ethics should be assessed from absolute or relative ethical positions and draw conclusions about ways of making moral decisions regarding issues of sexual ethics. Contributions from the work of any appropriate scholars are encouraged, and can be drawn from relevant religious, ethical and philosophical approaches to issues of sexual morality.

Area C: Buddhism

Note: material on Buddhism in this unit may draw on Theravada, whereas in Unit 3 there is an opportunity to examine Mahayana traditions. Students may draw on any Buddhist school or tradition in either unit, provided it is relevant to the demands of the question.

1 Key issues in the study of Buddhism**■ The life and work of the Buddha in its historical, religious and social context; his significance for Buddhists**

A study of the Buddha requires knowledge and understanding of the context of his life and work, together with an understanding and evaluation of his significance for Buddhists. Mere narrative and biographical details in themselves are only a limited and partial aspect of this part of the specification. Contextual material may include reference to a range of religious groupings at this time, including their beliefs and practices, such as relevant aspects of Hinduism, Jains; a range of samanas such as materialists and sceptics. This may be developed by an understanding and evaluation of sacrifices, caste systems, social and economic groupings and changes; types of authority and kingship. An understanding and evaluation of the Buddha's significance may refer to the notion of 'middle way', his enlightenment, teaching, and final days, with implications for Buddhist belief and practice.

2 Key emphases in teaching and practice**■ The three refuges, meaning and significance**

Students should know and understand interpretations of 'refuge' and the significance of Buddha, Dharma, Sangha in this context. Part of this study will involve the interrelationships between these three refuges together with an understanding of the key characteristics of Dharma and Sangha alongside the Buddha. Understanding and evaluation of issues such as the status and role of the laity, implications for Buddhist practice including devotion. This may be approached from the perspective of Theravada Buddhism and may include specific case studies selected by students, such as the Sangha within a particular country. Students will of course be credited with relevant material from within Mahayana Buddhism. Such exemplars may illustrate the diversity within this topic and different interpretations within Buddhist studies.

■ Types and purposes of meditation, their context and application

Material for this topic may be selected from any Buddhist tradition or school, noting that questions will not specify particular traditions. Material may be studied from the context of Theravada Buddhism, although Mahayana and Zen material would also be creditworthy. Note that contextual material for Mahayana and Zen is studied in Unit 3. Knowledge and understanding of key terms and context of these ideas such as meditation within the eight-fold path and hence links to wisdom and morality. There may be material on specific types of meditation, such as samatha and vipassana, and the influence of types of meditation on moral development. Understanding and evaluation of purposes of meditation in terms of enlightenment, and the relative importance of some aspects of meditation compared to others. Descriptive accounts of meditation techniques must be studied in relation to an analysis of their purposes and context.

**Area D:
Christianity****1 Key issues in the study of Christianity****■ The life and work of Jesus in its historical, religious and social context; his significance for Christians; Early Church, Reformation and Modern Christian teaching about the Person and work of Jesus**

The Early Church teaching about the Person and work of Jesus; Arian heresy and the Chalcedonian definition. Reformation teaching about the Person and work of Jesus: Luther and Calvin. Modern teaching about the Person and work of Jesus: Barth; Gutiérrez; Cone; Bonhoeffer.

2 Key emphases in teaching and practice**■ Christian beliefs about God: a personal God; God as creator**

Christian teaching about God, including the idea of a personal God and God as creator. The Trinitarian teaching of the Early Church. Reformation teaching about the nature of God: Luther and Calvin. Modern Christian teaching about the nature of God: Barth and Cone.

■ Christian worship, baptism and Eucharist: meaning and significance for belief and practice

Baptism and Eucharist: their meaning and significance for belief and practice in the Christian Church. Students should be able to describe and explain in detail the differing baptismal and Eucharistic practices of at least two Christian traditions. They should be able to explain and evaluate the teaching of these traditions on baptism and the Eucharist and be able to show how the teaching is reflected in the practices.

Area E: Hinduism

Note: Hinduism reflects much diversity in belief and practice and is represented by many traditions. Students may draw on any Hindu approach provided it is relevant to the demands of the question.

1 Key issues in the study of Hinduism**■ Distinctive features and significance for Hindus of Indus Valley culture and Aryan influence and of Vedic beliefs and practices**

Examination and understanding of this topic focuses on the distinctive features and significance for Hindus. Descriptive accounts of archaeological evidence, for example, must be studied in the light of this focus. Contextual material may include historical and social evidence, characteristics, beliefs, including mother goddess, and practices. There should be an understanding and evaluation of scholarly debates about the interpretation of evidence. Particular attention may be paid to selected beliefs and emphases such as creation stories, notions of order, the cycle of life and death and reincarnation, ceremonies and sacrifices, beliefs about fire, and the role of priests. Understanding and evaluation of significance or otherwise of these topics for Hindus such as female deities and status of the Vedas.

2 Key emphases in teaching and practice

■ Beliefs and practices of yoga, types, key teachings and their application

Examination and understanding of key beliefs and practices of yoga, including the main types of yoga. There are a number of legitimate approaches to the study of this topic such as classical yoga and six schools or systems, and also karma yoga, jnana yoga and bhakti yoga. Questions will enable students to select relevant material from this considerable range. It is important for students to clarify central terms and understand emphases such as beliefs about mental and physical control. Descriptive accounts of practices (such as stages of techniques) should be studied in relation to their respective context and distinctive features. Students should understand and evaluate beliefs about the relationship between body and soul and purposes such as asceticism, relationship with 'God' and liberation. Understanding and evaluation of respective status or otherwise of different types of yoga and the contributions of seminal teachers.

■ Beliefs and practices associated with Krishna, Rama, Sakti and Siva, distinctive emphases and significance for devotees

Examination and understanding of the beliefs and practices of Krishna, Rama, Sakti and Siva including key terms such as avatar, bhakti, puja. Context of these beliefs and selection of biographical material relevant to the demands of the question, eg to signify certain attributes and moral virtues; place of scripture. Understanding and consideration of significance for devotees, including range of practices and selection of festivals and pilgrimage, implications of selected beliefs such as karma; implications of diversity of beliefs and practices.

Area F: Islam**1 Key issues in the study of Islam****■ The life and work of Muhammad in its historical, religious and social context; his significance for Muslims**

A study of Muhammad requires knowledge and understanding of the context of his life and work, together with an understanding and evaluation of his significance for Muslims. Mere narrative and biographical details in themselves are only a limited and partial aspect of this part of the specification. Contextual material may include reference to a range of religious features such as polytheism, animism and jinns, festivals, sacrifices, Christian, Jewish and Zoroastrian traditions, and the status of Mecca. Students should be knowledgeable about political and economic factors, social groupings and changes; literature including poetry. Understanding and comments on 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. Students should show understanding and comment on revelations and Muhammad, significance of hijra and the growth of theocracy. Students could consider the view of Muhammad as final messenger and prophet, transcending such 'contexts'.

2 Key emphases in teaching and practice**■ Six beliefs – meaning and significance for belief and practice**

Given the range of material available for this topic, students will not be expected to examine all six beliefs in any one question but will have the opportunity to select exemplars relevant to the question. Students should have knowledge and understanding of these beliefs, including analysis of key terms, such as tawhid and risallah, and the context of these beliefs. Students should have knowledge and understanding of: angels, including Gabriel, context of creation and role in relation to prophets and to humanity; Qur'an as the final Word of Allah and its infallibility; judgement and shirk, cosmic aspects of judgement, views about timing, role of the Mahdi, Jerusalem; understanding and evaluation of issues such as free will and predestination; notions of resurrection, paradise and hell, role of martyrs. Students should consider the significance of these beliefs including their influence on practice.

■ Five pillars — meaning and significance for belief and practice

Given the range of material available for this topic, students will have the opportunity to select exemplars relevant to the question, noting that there may be reference to some introductory material on the five pillars as a whole. Knowledge and understanding of the principles underlying the pillars, including an analysis of key terms such as islam and umma. Any narrative account should lead to an understanding of the purposes and significance of these pillars. Undue reliance on descriptive detail at the expense of evidence and reason about the principles and purposes will limit the level of students' performance. There may be an understanding and evaluation of different interpretations within Islam. Students should understand and evaluate the pillars in relation to their significance for belief and practice.

Area G: Judaism**1 Key issues in the study of Judaism****■ The historical and religious context and key teachings of: Rashi and his school; Judah Halevi; Moses Maimonides**

Given the range of material available for this topic, students will have the opportunity to select exemplars from this group of figures. Any biographical material needs to be adapted and focused on the demands of the question. Knowledge and understanding of the key features of the historical and religious contexts of these figures including eg Talmud, codification of Law, diaspora and significance of synagogue and practice of Judaism without the Temple, role of rabbis, relationships with other religious traditions such as Christians, Muslims and Greek philosophy. Understanding and evaluation of key teachings such as beliefs about revelation and place of reason, Israel and the status of Jewish people. Students could show debates about and interpretations of the influence and significance of these figures within Judaism.

2 Key emphases in teaching and practice

■ Orthodox, Reform, Conservative, Liberal, distinctive teachings and practices

Given the range of material available for this topic, students will have the opportunity to focus on some of these, but not all together in any one question. Students should show knowledge of relevant background material such as the enlightenment period. An examination and understanding of the distinctive teachings and practices will require students to select and adapt narrative and descriptive material as a means to focus in on understanding the distinctive features, issues of significance, interpretations and debates. For example, depending on the precise tradition being examined, there could be an understanding and evaluation of the status or otherwise of the Talmud and divine authority of scripture and its uses in worship. Students may show understanding and evaluation of the place of ritual, significance of Sabbath, dietary laws; rites of passage; use of language including Hebrew, gender issues; beliefs about Jewish people as 'chosen' and relationships with Gentiles and nationalism compared to beliefs about Israel. Questions will enable students to evaluate debates and arguments within these traditions/movements.

Area H: Sikhism

1 Key issues in the study of Sikhism

■ The Guru in Sikhism, with particular reference to the lives and teachings of Guru Nanak and Guru Gobind Singh, in their religious, historical and social contexts, and to the Guru Granth Sahib

Students should understand the concept of Guru in its various contexts within Sikhism, and its central importance in matters of belief and practice. The study of the lives of the Gurus should include reference to sources, such as the Janam Sakhis, and should focus on key events and teachings, such as the religious experience of Guru Nanak and his main teachings about God and values for living. These should be set in their various contexts, so that students are aware, for example, of the relationship between Guru Nanak and the worlds of Islam and Hinduism. Students should understand the nature and compilation of the Guru Granth Sahib, together with its role, importance and authority in Sikhism.

2 Key emphases in teaching and practice

■ Belief in God and the practice of devotion

Students should understand key Sikh concepts about God, such as those expressed in the Mool Mantar, and their central importance in Sikh beliefs, values and practice. They should understand how the worship of God is the basis of Sikh spirituality, and is expressed communally in the Gurdwara and in private devotion. The study of private devotion should include familiarity with the underlying principles of the Nit Nem and with the importance of nam simran. Devotion in the context of the Gurdwara should focus on the way in which the Guru Granth Sahib is venerated, and the implications of this for the Sikh understanding of God.

■ Belonging to the Khalsa

The study of the Khalsa should include its importance within Sikhism as a focus of identity and discipline, as seen for example in the symbols associated with it. Students should be familiar with the various codes of conduct linked to the Khalsa, including the underlying principles of the Rahit Maryada and signs of identity such as the observance of the Kurahits. They should understand some of the issues within the Sikh community relating to membership of the Khalsa, the extent of its discipline and the treatment of patits. They should be familiar with the underlying principles of behaviour promoted by identity with the Khalsa, such as sewa, and the obligations that are linked to initiation.

Area I: New Testament

- *Students should study either Luke's Gospel or The Fourth Gospel.*
- *Students are expected to answer only from the perspective of the Gospel they have studied.*
- *Students should be aware of the religious, social, cultural and historical background to life at the time of Jesus Christ.*
- *All biblical references are taken from the New International Version.*

1 Key issues in the study of the teachings of Jesus Christ

■ Jesus' moral teachings (Luke)

Knowledge and understanding of teachings including the Sermon on the Plain (chapter 6), the poor, outcasts, wealth and forgiveness — including the parables of the 'lost' (chapter 15). Students should be aware of the views of scholars and also be able to compare and contrast the teaching of Jesus with that of Judaism at that time.

■ The 'I am' sayings (Fourth Gospel)

An examination and evaluation of the meaning and significance of the sayings 'I am the bread of life/light of the world/good shepherd/gate for the sheep/resurrection and the life/the way, the truth and the life/true vine'. Students should show awareness of Jesus' teaching, the background and context of the sayings, Old Testament references, symbolism and views of scholars.

■ The meaning and significance of the miracles — (Luke/ Fourth Gospel)

The meaning and significance of the miracles (not the resurrection), highlighting such points as the power of God, mighty works, and signs. Important miracles include healing of paralytic, raising the widow's son, calming the storm, healing of the demon-possessed man, Jairus' daughter, bleeding woman (all Luke) or water into wine, the Official's son, healing at the pool, walking on water (all Fourth Gospel). Students should be able to discuss the importance of these miracles for the ministry of Jesus, and also the views of scholars.

2 Key emphases

■ Prayer, praise and the Sabbath (Luke)

Knowledge and understanding of the meaning and significance of these teachings, together with an awareness of the context and background, Old Testament references, views of scholars and an evaluation of the difference between the teachings of Jesus and that of Judaism. Reference may be made to songs of praise, Sabbath controversies and teachings on prayer.

■ Women (Fourth Gospel)

An examination of the importance of women in the ministry of Jesus. Incidents include the Samaritan woman, the woman caught in adultery, Mary and Martha at the raising of Lazarus and Mary at the tomb of Jesus. Students should know of the social and religious status of women within Judaism at the time and be able to evaluate the significance of Christ's new approach and the views of scholars.

■ The nature and demands of discipleship (Luke/Fourth Gospel)

A knowledge and understanding of Jesus' teachings on the nature of discipleship (the need to follow, witness, have faith, love one another) and the demands (persecution, world's hatred and temptation). Students should also understand and evaluate the importance to the ministry of Jesus of the Twelve, the Holy Spirit and John the Baptist. An awareness of the views of scholars will be helpful.

Unit 2: Religious Studies — Investigations

This unit provides for a balance of both teacher-directed and more independent student enquiry. It offers a choice between these methods of teaching and learning by giving students the opportunity to undertake individual research into a topic in which they are particularly interested. This will enable students to study independently and to use, and evaluate, a wide range of source material.

This specification seeks to:

- involve students as active participants
- provide possibilities for open-ended enquiry and independent learning
- identify questions, issues and problems as a starting point for enquiry
- present opportunities for enquiries using a wide range of source material
- provide scope for an effective balance of teacher-directed and more independent student enquiry
- present opportunities for the development of a wide range of skills and abilities.

The role of the teacher

This unit facilitates a range of teaching styles. Teachers should ensure that students are:

- studying a topic suitable to their needs and interests
- fulfilling the assessment aims and objectives
- selecting and using relevant and appropriate source material
- receiving appropriate guidance and advice
- able to construct useful essay plans
- planning and structuring their work so as to structure their evidence in a coherent and logical manner
- being encouraged to develop their own ideas and views
- exploring and using a wide range of scholarly material
- able to sustain a critical line of argument and justify a point of view
- able to critically evaluate arguments
- aware of a range of viewpoints
- able to choose an appropriate and coherent structure for their answer
- able to formulate and discuss an evaluative conclusion which reflects the development of their thinking over a period of time
- using religious and technical language appropriately.

Time allowance

Students should spend 50% of their time at AS preparing for this unit. Teachers should ensure that students receive adequate time to complete their investigation and develop their ideas and arguments. Teachers are recommended to adopt a coherent approach to the requirements of the specification as a whole, whereby skills and objectives should be seen as reinforcing and supporting each other. It is appropriate for teachers to monitor and supervise students' investigations and they should ensure that students manage their private study time efficiently and avoid last-minute overload.

Choosing the topic

Choosing the right topic is an important part of the process. Students are strongly advised to select the topic that best fits their studies and research interests. In particular, the standard of their answer will be heavily influenced by their ability to keep a careful focus on the topic and not, for example, add tangential material. Selection of the appropriate topic and production of a comprehensive answer will depend upon:

- the student's interests
- the availability of resources
- the effectiveness of student research
- the quality of debate surrounding the issue
- the coherence of the argument
- the weight of evidence
- the range of scholarship
- good time management
- clear understanding of the issues.

Guidance on topic content is provided on the next page.

The guidance notes indicate the range and level of detail needed for investigations on these topics. The following material presents the considerable scope of stimulating topics and provides centres with ample choice. In addition, centres may direct students to investigate topics not exemplified in the guidance notes. These must conform to the topic headings in Unit 2 and be 'fit for purpose' in relation to the assessment objectives. It is important for students to show explicit evidence of meeting the requirements of both AO1 and AO2.

Area A: The Study of Religion**1 Religion and science**

Students may investigate the methodologies of religion and science and their possible relationship to each other, including the view that science may replace a religious account of the universe. Students may investigate a variety of creation myths and their possible relationship with scientific cosmologies. Some may study concepts and terms such as multiverses, intelligent design and cosmological constant. Students may focus on a variety of religious traditions. Some may approach this topic in a philosophical manner such as a study of language games. Some may focus on specific issues such as evolution and related debates, or the Gaia hypothesis and environmental science. Students may investigate the relationships between religious concepts and ideas in science fiction.

2 Anthropology of religion; psychology of religion; sociology of religion

Disciplines in the study of religion may include anthropology, psychology and sociology of religion. Students may study the contributions of seminal thinkers such as (among others) Eliade, Levi-Strauss, Freud, Jung, Fromm, Durkheim, Marx. Some may focus on key terms and concepts such as different interpretations of 'religion'; sacred time and sacred place; functionalism; secularisation; cults and new religious movements. Students may study the impact of these disciplines on religious beliefs and/or practice.

3 A study of creative expressions in religious life

Students may link religious studies to a range of creative arts. They may focus on particular approaches such as architecture and design; art; dance; drama; film; literature; music. Students may study the contributions of notable exponents, such as particular architects; authors; choreographers; composers; directors; painters; poets. Students may focus on themes such as visual representations of the holy or divine, or the place of these creative expressions in worship including symbolism. Students may contextualise their study by reference to particular religious traditions or communities and/or to specific historical periods. Students may investigate the value and significance of the relationship between these various creative expressions and religious life.

Area B: The Study of Philosophy of Religion**4 Religious experience; meditation**

Students may investigate the contributions of various scholars to an understanding of religious experience. This may include a focus on scholars such as James, Otto and Hardy. Students may study the context of religious experiences such as cultural influences and/or key terms such as 'religious'. Students may study various types of analysis of these experiences, for example a philosophical approach. They may investigate various contentious issues such as the charge that these experiences are merely subjective and may be explained naturalistically. Students may select particular examples for their investigation such as conversion, prayer and meditation across a range of religious traditions. They may study possible insights about human nature and God arising from such experiences.

5 Contrasting standpoints on the relationship between mind and body

Students may explore this topic from contrasting standpoints in western and/or eastern philosophy of religion. They may use some of the issues that are well documented in the philosophy of mind. Students may investigate issues related to a range of stances such as dualism, monism, disembodied consciousness and physicalism. They may research different interpretations of the 'soul' and personal identity. Some may investigate this topic through a study of the contributions of one or more religious traditions such as Atman in Hinduism and anatta in Buddhism.

6 A study of one or more philosophers of religion

Students may investigate the philosophy of religion associated with a range of scholars. They may select one or more from a list that in the past has included figures such as Ayer, Aquinas, Bonhoeffer, Buber, Descartes, Hume, Kierkegaard, Nagarjuna, Plato, Sartre, Shankara. Students are not limited to these exemplars. Students may select a key idea as their focal point, such as 'God' in Descartes' philosophy, or a particular text such as Hume's *Natural History of Religion*. In the process of pursuing this topic, students may study the context of these ideas such as Greek philosophy with regard to Plato and Enlightenment thought on Hume. Students may study the influence of these philosophers, such as Kierkegaard on existentialism, and whether philosophy of religion has been helped or hindered by these ideas.

Area C: The Study of Ethics**7 Medical ethics**

Students may investigate one or more of a range of issues in medical ethics. This may focus on issues such as abortion, contraception, genetic engineering, organ transplantation, use and distribution of medical resources, euthanasia in its various forms, palliative care, fertility treatment, neo-natal care, for example in the case of exceedingly premature births or handicapped newborns, or development of new medical treatments and procedures. Students should consider the range of controversies which arise from these issues, examining them from one or more ethical perspective, for example, Utilitarian approaches, religious ethics, or deontological moral theories. Students may consider ethical questions which are relevant to one or more issues in medical ethics, such as the principle of the sanctity of life, medical consent, rights and duties, responsibilities and choices. Students will not be disadvantaged whether they study only one issue in medical ethics or cover a range.

8 The natural world

Students may study one or more issues concerning the moral problems relating to the natural world, including environmental pollution, global warming, deforestation and farming methods, extinction and endangerment of species, issues raised by recycling and other environmentally friendly lifestyle choices, habitat conservation, national and international environmental initiatives and the relationship of animals to man, for example zoos, circuses, hunting and use of animals in research. Students may examine these issues from one or more ethical perspectives, religious or secular, as well as considering principles which may be applied to any of them, such as ideas of stewardship, responsibility, gratitude, participation in creation, humanitarianism, the relationship between the environment and economics.

9 Equality in the modern world

Students may study one or more issues concerning either or both sexual and racial equality. Issues may include the status of homosexual partnerships and matters arising from this such as adoption, surrogacy, same-sex parents, the nature of marriage and civil partnerships, homosexual clergy, homophobia and other attitudes towards homosexuality in the religious and secular world. The status of women in religious and/or secular fields, including for example women in the family, in business, as religious leaders or in the political world. Issues such as sexism, feminism, and patriarchy could all provide useful starting points for discussion. Issues in racial equality could include Black-White relations, civil rights, relationships between the Muslim community and the West, racism, prejudice and discrimination and religious and ethical attitudes to these issues.

Area D: The Study of World Religions

10 A study of one or more religions concerning ethical precepts and applied ethics

Students may investigate one or more of the world religions within the specification and any other religious tradition provided there is adequate scholarship available for them to undertake a rigorous academic study. Students may investigate key ethical teachings in one or more religions and/or the implications for applied ethics within these traditions. They may focus on specific ethical teachings such as Jewish Ten Commandments and the Buddhist Five Precepts. They may investigate applied ethics such as social justice and/or family life. In so doing they may select particular exemplars such as religious fundamentalism; racial or sexual equality including arranged marriages and feminist issues; sexual ethics; justice and crime; business ethics; political issues; peace and war. Students may focus on particular topics such as abortion and/or euthanasia. Students may study similarities and differences between different religious traditions and may investigate issues such as whether these teachings are relevant in a secular society.

11 Religious pluralism; inter-faith dialogue; religious practice in a multi-cultural society, including the UK

Students may investigate one or more of the world religions within the specification and any other religious tradition provided there is adequate scholarship available for them to undertake a rigorous academic study. They may select a particular religious tradition and investigate cultural influences on religious pluralism at a particular period and place including the contemporary UK. A similar approach may be taken with regard to key centres such as Jerusalem. They may focus on particular topics such as issues related to the Holocaust; status of scripture; sources such as Vatican II's Declaration on non-Christian religions. Students may study key terms and their implications such as exclusivism, inclusivism, and pluralism. Students may study similarities and differences between different religious traditions and may investigate issues such as whether these traditions are compatible with particular social contexts, such as a multicultural society. Some may adapt a philosophical approach to this topic, such as a study of truth-claims. Students may focus on religious practices, festivals and rites of passage in one or more religions and their significance for the individual and the community.

12 Contrasting standpoints on beliefs about God and/or existence

Students may investigate one or more of the world religions within the specification and any other religious tradition provided there is adequate scholarship available to students for a rigorous academic study. Students may focus on contrasts between two different religions or within one religion. They may investigate topics such as Jewish and Christian beliefs about monotheism; Theravada and Mahayana Buddhism; contrasting Hindu schools; Sunni and Shi'ah Islam; Orthodox and Reform Judaism. Students may focus on contrasting beliefs about 'God'; founders and key figures in religions; authority and revelation; human existence, self and the soul; life after death and near death experiences. Students may focus on specific terms such as sin; unskilful action; repentance; enlightenment; salvation.

Area E: The Study of the Old Testament/Jewish Bible**13 Religion and science**

Students may investigate the contributions of various theologians, philosophers and scientists to an understanding of the Old Testament/Jewish Bible. This may include a focus on individual scholars such as Dawkins, Atkins, Hawking and others. Students may study areas of controversy, such as evolution, creationism and Darwinism or recent scientific evidence concerning, for example, the nature of the universe. Students may study various types of evidence including archaeological, cultural, moral, sociological, anthropological and psychological. They may investigate various contentious issues such as the authenticity of the scriptures and could select particular examples such as miracles, prophecy, testimony, verifiability, falsifiability and the role of faith. They may study possible insights about human nature and God arising from the Old Testament/Jewish Bible.

14 The nature of God

Students should use the Old Testament/Jewish Bible as their starting point, but may refer to other texts and evidence. Students may investigate issues related to a range of viewpoints, eg God as creator, omnipotence, omniscience, eternity and may research such topics as sin, the Fall, good and evil and the nature of divine love and grace. They may research different interpretations of the nature of God, for example, as Creator, Father, Judge and issues of obedience, faith and goodness. Some may investigate this by studying the textual narratives and the views of scholars, relating these to their study, for example God as a being worthy of worship and the notions of salvation, forgiveness and punishment. There may be reference to the views of scholars and philosophers.

15 Job and the problem of evil and suffering

Students may investigate the textual narrative of the Old Testament/Jewish Bible, probably with particular reference to the Book of Job, but they may also refer to the Prophets and the Psalms. Students are not limited to these exemplars. Students may select as key ideas the notions of good and evil, morality, divine commands, the nature of justice, law and authority and the relationship of obedience to faith and divine retribution. In the process of pursuing this topic, students may study the textual narratives and place the context of these ideas in relation to philosophy and moral discourse. This may include reference to a range of scholars.

Area F: The Study of the New Testament**16 Religion and science**

Students may investigate the contributions of various theologians, philosophers and scientists to an understanding of the New Testament. This may include a focus on individual scholars such as Dawkins, Atkins, Hawking and others. Students may study the areas of controversy, such as miracles, or recent scientific evidence concerning, for example, the nature of life. Students may study various types of evidence including archaeological, cultural, moral, sociological, anthropological and psychological. They may investigate various contentious issues such as the authenticity of the scriptures and could select particular examples such as miracles, prophecy, testimony, verifiability, falsifiability and the role of faith. They may study possible insights about human nature and God arising from the New Testament.

17 New Testament ethics and morality

Students should use the New Testament as their starting point, but they may refer to other texts and evidence. Students may investigate issues related to a range of viewpoints, eg God as moral commander, as creator, omnipotence, omniscience, eternity, and may research topics such as sin, the Fall, good and evil and the nature of divine love and grace. They may research different interpretations of ethics and morality, for example, the divine command theory, the Ten Commandments, issues of obedience, faith and goodness. Some may investigate this by studying the textual narratives and the views of ethical and moral scholars, relating their study, for example, to situation ethics, utilitarianism and deontology. There may be reference to the views of scholars and philosophers, for instance, Bentham, Mill, Fletcher and Kant.

18 Life after death

Students may investigate the textual narrative of the New Testament, probably with particular reference to the Gospels, 1 Corinthians, Paul's letters and the Book of Revelation, but they may also refer to the Prophets and the Psalms. Students are not limited to these exemplars. Students may select as key ideas the notions of the sanctity of life, the nature of death, sin, reward and righteousness, heaven, hell, immortality of the soul and bodily resurrection. In the process of pursuing this topic, students may study the Gospel narratives, the Letters and place the context of these ideas in relation to philosophy and science. This may include reference to scholars such as Dawkins, Swinburne, Hick and Vardy.

Area G: The Study of Christianity and the Christian Church

19 The development of the Church up to and including the Reformation

Students may investigate an aspect of Church history or historical theology, for example, the persecutions of the early Church and their effect on the development of Christianity, the history of the Crusades and their influence on the development of Christian thought, Martin Luther, his teaching and his influence on the development of the Reformation, John Calvin, his teaching and his influence on the development of the Reformation, the Catholic Reformation or the development of the Radical Reformation.

20 The Modern Period

Students may investigate an aspect of Church history or theology from 1800 onwards, for example, the development of the Free Churches in the nineteenth century, Vatican II and the Roman Catholic Church, the Church of England and social justice in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the development of Black Theology, Feminist Theology, the role of women in the Christian Church, or the work of a modern theologian.

21 Christian belief and practice

Students may investigate an aspect of Christian practice, for example, sexual ethics, marriage and divorce, poverty and wealth, work and leisure or Christian beliefs about the resurrection of Jesus.

Unit 3: Religious Studies — Developments

Area A: Philosophy of Religion

Students may answer with reference to any religious or non-religious stance, provided the material is relevant to the question.

1 A study of philosophical arguments about the existence of God

■ Religious experience — key concepts, strengths and weaknesses

The specification does not name or identify any particular version of the argument based on religious experience and students will be credited with any version(s) relevant to the question. Some analysis of the meaning and types of religious experience may be relevant. Note that this is a topic set in the context of arguments about the existence of God. Key ideas may include the premises of such arguments and key concepts such as analogy, credulity and testimony, drawing on notable contributions, for example from C F Davis and B Davies, Flew, Hick, Swinburne, and Vardy. Students should understand and evaluate strengths and weaknesses so as to make informed judgements about them. This may include problems of interpretation, alternative explanations and notions about the probability of this argument.

■ Ontological — key concepts, strengths and weaknesses

The specification does not name or identify any particular version of the ontological argument and students will be credited with any version(s) relevant to the question.

Students should show knowledge and understanding of key terms such as a priori and deductive reason and key concepts such as definitions of God, necessary existence. Students should show knowledge of the premises of the argument and key stages in this type of reasoning, drawing on contributions for example from Anselm, Descartes, Malcolm, Penelhum, Plantinga. Students should understand and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the argument and any significant changes it may have undergone, so as to come to an informed judgement about its validity and whether it amounts to a proof. This may include contributions for example from Gaunilo, Kant, Russell, Hick etc.

■ Non-existence of God and critiques of religious belief

The specification does not name or identify any particular example of the non-existence of God or of any particular critique of religious belief and students will be credited with any account relevant to the question. Students should show knowledge and understanding of key terms such as atheism, agnosticism, materialism, naturalism, scepticism and unbelief. Critiques may include one or more sociological and psychological stances with reference, for example, to scholars such as Durkheim, Marx and Freud. Students should understand and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the views, coming to an informed opinion. Provided the material is focused on the demands of the question, students may use the problem of evil in this context and some arguments about the existence of God may also be used in this context.

2 A study of selected problems in the philosophy of religion**■ Beliefs about life after death: reincarnation; rebirth; resurrection; immortality of the soul**

It is unlikely that students will have to cover all these topics in any one question. They will be able to focus on specific exemplars as demanded by the question. Note that over a cycle of a few years all these topics will be examined. This is not a study in world religions but some of these themes are distinctive of certain traditions and an understanding of their respective contexts will be useful. For example, reincarnation may be found in Hinduism, rebirth in Buddhism and resurrection and immortality of the soul in various theistic traditions. Students should show knowledge and understanding of key terms and concepts such as identity, notion of 'life after death', and the relationship between the mind and body.

Students should understand and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of evidence and reasons given for a belief and weigh up philosophically the merits or otherwise of the case. This may include reference to various key scholars and debates, including the use of language.

■ **A study of religious language: analogy; language games; myth and symbol; verification and falsification debates**

It is unlikely that students will have to cover all these topics in any one question. They will be able to focus on specific exemplars as demanded by the question. Note that over a cycle of a few years all these topics will be examined. There should be knowledge of the respective contexts of key terms, for example a theological context to analogy and logical positivism with regard to verification. Students should show knowledge and understanding of key terms and concepts such as meaning, function, realism, and postmodernism. Students should understand and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of evidence and reasons given for arguments and weigh up philosophically the merits or otherwise of the viewpoint. This may include reference to various debates and key scholars such as Aquinas, Wittgenstein, Tillich, Ayer and Flew, etc.

Area B: Ethics

1 A study of ethical concepts

■ **Critiques of the relationship between religion and morality**

Students can draw on material that they have used at AS, but naturally it needs to be developed at an appropriate level for A2. The Euthyphro Dilemma, introduced at AS, can be examined in more depth, opening up consideration of its implications for God's nature, the relationship between the omnipotent God and an external source of goodness, the problems raised by God as the ground of moral values, and/or what it means for God to be good. Students may refer to the works of key scholars such as Freud (morality as the product of upbringing and parental controls), Nietzsche (religious morality as slave morality), or the views usefully discussed by R A Sharpe (*The Moral Case Against the Existence of God*, SCM). John Habgood's book *Varieties of Unbelief* (DLT) also offers useful material for this topic. Students may consider some case study material which exposes the problems of deriving morality from religion, conflicting religious moralities, and religious moral systems which may be counter-intuitive, absolutist or non-universalisable. Students may offer a critique of one or more forms of the moral argument, bearing in mind that they should not spend too long unpacking these arguments.

- **Deontology, natural moral law, virtue ethics – key concepts, strengths and weaknesses**

An examination of the key features of these approaches to ethical decision making; the contributions of key scholars such as Kant, W D Ross, Aquinas, Hoose, Aristotle, and MacIntyre; an understanding of philosophical foundations of these theories, in terms of absolute, relative, teleological and deontological principles; an evaluation of the efficacy of these theories for ethical decision making, including consideration of their religious and cultural influences at the time of development and for the modern day. Students should be able to draw evaluative conclusions about their relative strengths and weaknesses.

2 A study of selected problems in ethics

- **Meaning and definition of ethical terms with reference to 'is-ought' and debates about 'good', emotivism**

An examination of the naturalistic fallacy and associated scholarship such as that of David Hume and G E Moore; solutions to the problem of the fallacy, including Intuitionism and non-naturalistic approaches to ethics. Other considerations about the use of the term 'good' as functional, descriptive, realist or anti-realist; the background to emotivism within philosophy of language, including the contributions of key scholars, such as A J Ayer and the logical positivist school; ethical claims as subjective and non-factual claims which express opinion and provoke the hearer. Students should be able to evaluate these approaches with reference to their relative strengths and weaknesses, drawing on ethical theories by way of illustration and comparison; a consideration of the role of emotivism within religious ethics and whether it provides a satisfactory explanation for the expression of ethical ideas.

■ Objectivity, relativism, subjectivism

Students may discuss these issues in relation to specified ethical theories (without repeating material between questions) or in more general terms. They should be fluent in their use of specialist language relevant to these approaches to ethics and be able to evaluate their relative strengths and weaknesses. Students may make reference to case studies to illustrate these approaches, but they should be evaluative rather than narrative. Students may consider the status of moral knowledge, morality as opinion or feeling based, whether there can be an ultimate moral truth or source of moral truth, cultural relativism, religious ethics as absolute or relative, ethical pluralism. There are many legitimate approaches to this topic, although students should take care not to repeat large parts of material from other questions.

■ Justice, law and punishment

Students may also approach this question from many legitimate angles and need not be afraid of making connections between the three ideas. For example, what they learn about justice will inevitably overlap with punishment and they can be direct about making these links. Students are free to chose theories of justice, law and punishment from any source which offers scope for debate and academic comment. They do not need to be committed to religious approaches to these issues, although such approaches offer a good range of material on which to base a discussion.

Religion

There are a number of set texts for Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Sikhism and the New Testament. The recommended translations for these texts can be found in the *GCE Religious Studies Anthology* on the Edexcel website — www.edexcel.com

Area C: Buddhism

Note: material on Buddhism in this unit may draw on both Theravada and Mahayana Buddhism ensuring the specific material is relevant to the demands of the question.

1 Developments and expansion

■ The life and work of Ashoka, context and significance

Any biographical material must be focused on the demands of the question and the specification focuses on issues related to the context and significance of Ashoka. Students should examine and understand contextual issues such as political and military power and types of religious traditions. Students should understand important changes in the life of Ashoka, significant features of the Edicts, including debates about the meaning of dharma; relationship with Sangha and other faiths; formation of Pali canon; development and expansion of Buddhism. Students should understand and evaluate debates about the interpretation of Buddhism in the life and work of Ashoka, such as the role of meditation and devotion; significant features such as social welfare; and the eventual decline of Buddhism in India.

■ Developments in China and Japan including beliefs and practices of Pure Land and Zen, types of tradition, key people and distinctive emphases

It is unlikely that all these topics will be examined in any one question, although over a period of a few years they will all be examined. This enables students to focus their material on the particular demands of the question. Students should examine key features of the context of these developments, including relevant indigenous traditions. Students will need to examine key teachings and practices, including the contributions of key people and significant features of relevant scriptures. Students should understand and evaluate any significant features that constitute gradual or more radical changes from earlier traditions, including debates about belief and practice within these respective traditions/schools.

2 Selected concepts and texts

■ Meaning and significance of: dukkha; anatta; anicca; nirvana

It is unlikely that all these topics will be examined in any one question, although over a period of a few years they will all be examined. This enables students to focus their material on the particular demands of the question. Students should examine the context of these topics and the range of possible definitions. Students may illustrate these ideas by reference to related Buddhist teachings. Students should understand and evaluate possible implications of these beliefs such as their place and influence within Buddhist teachings and an understanding of their potential purpose within Buddhist thought. Some of the set texts may be useful for this topic.

■ Bodhisattva — types, significance, key teachings

Students should examine the context of this doctrine within Mahayana Buddhism, including beliefs about wisdom, liberation, loving-kindness and skilful means. Detail about the stages and perfections of the Bodhisattva path must be focused on the demands of the question. Students may refer to illustrations and ideas from relevant parts of the set texts together with examples from Bodhisattvas, including their place within particular traditions. Students should understand and evaluate relevant debates within this topic, such as the context of this belief system vis-à-vis Theravada Buddhism, together with issues about, for example, transfer of karmic merit, in order to consider their significance.

■ **The Questions of King Milinda (pp 146–162); the Deer Park Sermon (pp 186–187); part of the Lotus Sutra (pp 197–211), in *Buddhist Scriptures* (ed. Conze, E, Penguin, 1959)**

These texts are intended to supplement the details within this specification so as to provide students with material that illustrates key beliefs and issues. In that respect, they are not designed as set passages for detailed textual examination requiring technical support from detailed commentaries. For example, the Questions of King Milinda provide useful illustrative material for a range of ideas including anatta, anicca and nirvana and the Lotus Sutra gives material relevant to studies on the Bodhisattva. Students may make reference to the set texts where appropriate will be instructed on this. Some questions may direct students to particular texts whereas others may not mention any specific text, although students will be credited with such material if it is relevant to the question.

**Area D:
Christianity**

1 Developments and expansion

■ **The practice of Christianity in the modern world, including: the Ecumenical Movement since 1910; Dietrich Bonhoeffer, his teachings and his work; the development of Liberation Theology**

The Ecumenical Movement since 1910; the relationship of the Roman Catholic and Orthodox Churches with the Ecumenical Movement. Dietrich Bonhoeffer: his teachings and his work in reaction to the persecution of the Christian Churches by the Nazis in Germany, his teaching about grace and discipleship, the world come of age, religionless Christianity, Jesus the man for others. The context, emergence and development of Liberation Theology, the teachings of Gustavo Gutiérrez, the impact of Liberation Theology on the Roman Catholic and Protestant Churches.

2 Selected concepts and texts

■ Beliefs about the Trinity

Modern Trinitarian teaching: Barth, Macquarrie, Rahner.

■ Beliefs about atonement and salvation

The relationship between the person of Jesus and the work of Christ, theories of atonement, reference to modern teaching: Aulen, Barth, Gunton.

■ Beliefs about death and eternal life

The theological implications of the death and resurrection of Jesus and eschatology on Christian teaching.

■ The nature of the Church

New Testament: Matthew 16:13-20, 1 Corinthians 12:27-31

- Cyprian of Carthage (*de catholicae ecclesiae unitate*) on the unity of the Church, quoted in *The Christian Theology Reader*, editor Alister McGrath, page 261 (Blackwell, 1995) and in *Documents of the Christian Church*, editor Henry Bettenson, page 71 (Oxford University Press, 1967)
- Thomas Aquinas (in *Symbolum Apostolorum* 9) on the catholicity of the Church, quoted in *The Christian Theology Reader*, editor Alister McGrath, page 264 (Blackwell, 1995)
- Martin Luther (*On the Councils and the Church* 1539) on the marks of the Church, quoted in *The Christian Theology Reader*, editor Alister McGrath (Blackwell, 1995)
- Barmen Confession, quoted in *Resistance and Conformity in the Third Reich*, Martyn Housden (Routledge, 1997)
- Gustavo Gutiérrez, *A Theology of Liberation*, pages 150-152 (SCM, 1988).

Area E: Hinduism

Note: Hinduism reflects much diversity in belief and practice and is represented by many traditions. Students may draw on any Hindu approach provided it is relevant to the demands of the question.

1 Developments and expansion

- **A study of the contributions to the modern development and expression of Hinduism of the historical and religious context, key teachings and significance of: Ramakrishna; M K Gandhi; Dayananda Sarasvati; Sri Radhakrishnan**

It is unlikely that all these topics will be examined in any one question, although over a period of a few years they will all be examined. This enables students to focus their material on the particular demands of the question. Students should examine and understand relevant contextual issues such as the features of India and types of Hinduism current at that time. Any biographical material selected must be focused on the demands of the question. Students should understand and evaluate key teachings and consider the significance of the selected figures. Topics that promote discussion could be issues of tolerance, interfaith and nationalism, status of the Vedas, different responses to Western culture, influence of these figures on subsequent groups/schools, political and social implications such as non-violence.

2 Selected concepts and texts

■ Meaning and significance of: **atman; Brahman; samsara; moksha; dharma**

It is unlikely that all these topics will be examined in any one question, although over a period of a few years they will all be examined. This enables students to focus their material on the particular demands of the question. Students should examine and understand contextual issues relevant to these terms and an analysis of these may be supported by relevant set texts and contributions of key Hindu thinkers. Students should understand and evaluate topics such as that which is eternal in human nature, cohesion with Brahman, notion of the impersonal Absolute, and understand the importance of samsara and moksha. There could be understanding and debate about the links between the order in the cosmos and the order in moral and social relationships. Students may consider interpretations from different Hindu traditions in different contexts such as views about Dharma. Debates could include implications for moral behaviour together with implications for devotion and practice.

■ **The Katha Upanishad; The Bhagavad Gita (chapters 1–4, 11, 18)**

These texts are intended to supplement the details within this specification so as to provide students with material that illustrates key beliefs and issues. In that respect, they are not designed as set passages for detailed textual examination requiring technical support from detailed commentaries. For example, The Katha Upanishad provides useful illustrative material for a range of ideas including atman, Brahman and samsara and the Bhagavad Gita provides a classic source of many seminal beliefs within Hinduism. Students will be instructed that they may make reference to the set texts where appropriate.

Some questions may direct students to particular texts whereas others may not mention any specific text, although students will be credited with such material if it is relevant to the question.

Area F: Islam**1 Developments and expansion**

- **The Rightly Guided Caliphs, historical and religious context, key people and events; the origins and features of Sunni and Shi'ah Islam, historical and religious context, key people, events and beliefs**

It is unlikely that all these topics will be examined in any one question, although over a period of a few years they will all be examined. This enables students to focus their material on the particular demands of the question. Students should examine the historical and religious context of this period such as major developments, geographical, economic and social factors and 'Umayyad' and 'Abbasid' dynasties. Particular examples of caliphs may be used and students should have an understanding of terms such as shirk, jihad, and umma. Students should understand and evaluate issues such as debates about divine authority, succession and representation, expansion and manner of development, charismatic authority, interpretations of imam, messianism, and debates about different interpretations of Qur'an and Haddith. There could be selective use of the set texts.

- **The expression of Islam in one or more modern Islamic state(s), historical and religious context, key beliefs and practices**

A question on this topic may span other bullet points in the specification for Islam. It is important for students to specify the particular country selected, rather than present generalised accounts of Islam in the modern world. Students should examine the historical and religious context of the country selected and this may include political and social factors. Descriptive and narrative material should be adapted to the precise demands of the question. There should be understanding and evaluation of key beliefs and practices including any distinctive features and personnel, including, if relevant, their relationship with other faiths and secularism. Evaluation may include, for example, possible differences of interpretation such as preservation or adaptation.

2 Selected concepts and texts

■ Beliefs about Allah, range of beliefs and significance; revelation and the Qur'an, beliefs and significance

It is unlikely that all of these topics will be examined in any one question, although over a period of a few years they will all be examined. This enables students to focus their material on the particular demands of the question. These topics lend themselves to selected use of the set texts. Students should examine names and attributes of Allah, tawid and monotheism; Qur'an as heavenly book and the speech of Allah; revelation and beliefs about past prophets and Muhammad as the 'seal of the prophets'. Students should understand and evaluate the significance and implications of these beliefs for practice such as the relationship between Allah and humanity; tawid and interfaith dialogue; authority of the Qur'an; submission; discussion about creation and gender issues, etc.

■ Sufism, types, key people and distinctive emphases

Students should examine key types and people, which may include the origin and key developments of Sufism, such as its mystical tradition and union with God. No specific people will be named in any question although students may have the opportunity to focus on individuals of their choice, including any relevant writings. Distinctive emphases may refer to, for example, moral purity, asceticism and monastic traditions, and selected practices such as music and dance. Evaluation may refer to differences of interpretation between other traditions/schools and Sufism and to differences within Sufism; debates, eg about dualism, emanations, types of authority, influences in various Muslim states.

■ Suras 1, 2, 96 and 112

These texts are intended to supplement the details within this specification so as to provide students with material that illustrates key beliefs and issues. In that respect, they are not designed as set passages for detailed textual examination requiring technical support from detailed commentaries. For example, Sura 2 provides a wealth of material applicable to this specification and other set texts are of seminal importance within Islam. Students will be instructed that they may make reference to the set texts where appropriate. Some questions may direct students to particular texts whereas others may not mention any specific text, although students will be credited with such material if it is relevant to the question.

Area G: Judaism**1 Developments and expansion****■ The historical and religious context, key teachings and significance of: Moses Mendelssohn; David Friedlander; Abraham Geiger; Samson Raphael Hirsch**

It is unlikely that all of these topics will be examined in any one question, although over a period of a few years they will all be examined. This enables students to focus their material on the particular demands of the question. Students should examine and understand relevant contextual issues including historical and religious factors such as types of Judaism current at that time and, for example, the Enlightenment. Any biographical material selected must be focused on the demands of the question. Students should understand and evaluate key teachings and writings and consider the significance of the selected figures, including criticism. Topics that promote discussion could be issues of, for example, biblical criticism; revelation and reason; nationality and assimilation; gender issues; Orthodox and Reform debates, etc.

■ Zionism and the state of Israel, historical and religious context, key emphases and events

This topic may be linked to other aspects of the specification on Judaism. Students should examine the historical and religious context to Zionism such as its origins, including assimilation and persecutions, and key developments associated with particular events. This may include reference to the contributions of key figures. Material on the state of the State of Israel will be examined in this context of Zionism and its implications. Students should understand and evaluate the key emphases such as different interpretations of Zionism and debates about the significance of the covenant and the 'promised land', preservation, issues such as politics and Palestine and the relationship between Israel and the diaspora. There could be debates about critics of Zionism and its rejection.

■ The Holocaust, historical context, significance for Jewish beliefs

This topic may be linked to other aspects of the specification on Judaism. Students should examine relevant contextual material including historical and literary evidence. Students should understand and evaluate issues such as the relationship between God and the Jewish people, belief in God acting in history, problem of such horrendous evil and responses including views of survivors. Students may refer and evaluate the views of various scholars regarding their interpretations of the Holocaust such as suffering servant analogy, punishment and resurrection, messianic movements.

2 Selected concepts and texts

■ Law and authority, meaning and significance; the covenant people of God, meaning and significance

It is unlikely that all of these topics will be examined in any one question, although over a period of a few years they will all be examined. This enables students to focus their material on the particular demands of the question. These topics lend themselves to selected use of the set texts. Students should clarify the key ideas and features of the selected terms, including different interpretations of these concepts. Reference may be made to relevant contextual material including biblical and historical perspectives. Students should understand and evaluate implications for belief and practice with reference, if appropriate, to different traditions/schools, including debates about different covenants, relationship with God and the significance of the 'promised land' and the 'chosen people'. There may be reference to different scholarly interpretations within different Jewish traditions.

■ Chasidism, types, key people and distinctive emphases

Students should examine key types and people, which may include origins and key developments of Chasidism, such as its focus on spiritual growth, holiness and oneness with God. No specific people will be named in any question, although students may have the opportunity to focus on individuals of their choice, including their respective contexts and any relevant writings. Distinctive emphases may refer to, for example, moral purity, asceticism and selected practices. Evaluation may include differences of interpretation and criticisms between other traditions/schools and Chasidism and to differences within this tradition; debates, for example, about immanence; intermediate stages between humans and God; status of mysticism and asceticism; authority of rebbes.

■ Exodus 21, 22 and Leviticus 19; the Ethics of the Fathers (I-VI); the 13 Principles of Faith (Maimonides)

These texts are intended to supplement the details within this specification so as to provide students with material that illustrates key beliefs and issues. In that respect, they are not designed as set passages for detailed textual examination requiring technical support from detailed commentaries. For example, some of the set texts are of seminal importance across much of Jewish belief, and selections from the Ethics of the Fathers and the 13 Principles of Faith may illustrate many of the points in this specification. Students will be instructed that they may make reference to the set texts where appropriate. Some questions may direct students to particular texts whereas others may not mention any specific text, although students will be credited with such material if it is relevant to the question.

Area H: Sikhism**1 Developments and expansion****■ Movements and orthodoxy in the development of the Sikh Panth**

Students should be familiar with teachings and practices associated with various movements within the developing Sikh tradition, such as the Nirmalis, Nirankalis, Namdharis, the Singh Sabha Movement and the Nishkam Sewak Jatha. They should also understand the ongoing movement to establish orthodoxy within Sikhism, with particular reference to the influence and authority of the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandak Committee and the promulgation of rahits, culminating in the Rahit Maryada. This understanding should be supported by an awareness of the distinctions sometimes drawn between the notions of amritdhari, keshdhari and sahajdhari. Students should be familiar with some of the scholarly debates about these issues.

■ The influence of the Sant tradition

Students should be familiar with the concept of Sant in both its traditional and contemporary contexts. In particular, they should be aware of scholarly debates about the possible early influences of the tradition on the development of Sikhism, and about the use of the term today in relation to particular spiritual teachers. They should understand how such teachers are regarded within the wider Sikh community.

■ The influence of dispersion and the issue of identity

A study of dispersion should include some historical awareness of major migrations and the reasons for them, together with the experiences of Sikhs living outside the familiar context of the Punjab, including those who have settled in the UK and the issues which most affect them, such as assimilation and language. Consideration should be given to how migration has affected the sense of identity within the Sikh community, and how far engagement with non-Sikh cultures has affected Sikhs in their beliefs, values and practice. Students should also be familiar with scholarly debates on these issues, but the main focus of study should be on the impact of dispersion on religion, rather than on social or economic considerations.

2 Selected concepts and texts**■ Key ideas in Sikh spirituality**

The focus of this element of the specification should be on beliefs, values and experience. Students should consider and evaluate concepts such as samsara; sachkhand, anand, mukti and jivan mukt; nam simran and its connection with the Nit Nem, together with kirt karna and vand chakna, as basic principles of spirituality; man, manmukh, maya and haumai and their analysis of the human condition, considered in relation to the concept of gurmukh; the concept of the grace of the Guru; virtues and ideals of behaviour considered alongside the five vices (thieves). These ideas should be considered alongside their expressions in kirtans, and in the prayers of ardas and sohila, and the use and importance of the Nit Nem.

■ Miri and piri and their application to contemporary Sikh belief and practice

Students should be familiar with debates about the balance between the two ideals. This will include a consideration of particular Sikh political institutions and movements such as the Akali Dal and its relationship with the SGPC, and the Khalistan movement. Students may draw on other contemporary or historical examples. The study should also lead to an understanding of the influence of pacifism within Sikhism, and the significance of martyrdom, alongside Sikh teaching on Dharam Yudh, and the embodiment of the Sikh ideal in the concept of the 'saint-soldier'.

■ The Japji; Akal Ustat and Bachitar Natak from the Dasam Granth; the Rahit Maryada

The following texts should be studied in translation:

The Japji (in McLeod WH: *Textual sources for the study of Sikhism*, pages 86-93)

Akal Ustat and Bachitar Natak from the Dasam Granth (ibid, pages 55-63)

The Rahit Maryada (in Cole WO and Sambhi PS: *The Sikhs*, pages 200-208).

Area I: New Testament

- *Students should study either Luke's Gospel or the Fourth Gospel.*
- *Students are only expected to answer from the perspective of the Gospel they have studied.*
- *Students should be aware of the religious, social, cultural and historical background to life at the time of Jesus Christ.*
- *All biblical references are taken from the New International Version.*

1 Theology and Christology**■ The Kingdom of God (Luke)**

An examination of the notion of the teaching of Jesus concerning the Kingdom of God — the meaning, theological significance and importance for early believers. Teachings may include the coming of the Kingdom (chapter 17), Jesus and Beelzebub (chapter 11) and the Rich Ruler (chapter 18). Parables may include the Sower, Mustard Seed/Narrow Door, Great Banquet and Ten Minas. Students should also be aware of views of scholars concerning the arrival of the Kingdom — past, present and future.

■ The Prologue (Fourth Gospel)

An examination of the meaning and theological significance of the Prologue (chapter 1 v.1-18). This will include an awareness of the nature and person of Christ, the Word made flesh, concepts of life, light and dark, belief, children of God, flesh and spirit, law, grace and truth. Students should be able to understand and evaluate the views of scholars and the influences of Judaism and Hellenism.

■ The purpose of the Gospel (Luke/Fourth Gospel)

An examination of the different purposes of the Gospels. For Luke, these may include God's action in human history, Christ's message for all peoples, a Gospel for the Gentiles, an apologia to the Romans, Jesus' mission to seek and save the lost. For the Fourth Gospel, this may include Jesus as Christ, Son of God, life in his name, Spiritual Gospel, a Gospel to convert Jews and Gentiles, fulfilment of scripture. Students should show an awareness and evaluation of the diversity of purposes and the views of scholars.

2 Selected concepts and texts

In addition to the use of textual material from elsewhere in the Gospels, particular reference should be made to either Luke 22 – 24 or John 18-21.

■ Conflict with the religious and political authorities (Luke/Fourth Gospel)

Students are only expected to answer on either Luke's Gospel or the Fourth Gospel. Knowledge and understanding of the religious and political authorities and why they were so concerned about Jesus. This should include arrest, trials, and charges made. References may be made to the Law of Moses, Temple cleansing, Sabbath controversies. Other factors include salvation history, God's plan in history, Jesus' challenge to Judaism, Son of God, blasphemy, threat to power, political expediency, King of the Jews. Students should be aware of the views of scholars and evaluate such issues as who was responsible for the death of Christ.

■ The crucifixion and resurrection (Luke/Fourth Gospel)

Knowledge and understanding of the crucifixion narratives, including Old Testament references, symbolism, fulfilment of scripture, God's saving plan, religious significance. For the resurrection, an examination of the meaning and significance for early believers — sacrifice, salvation, atonement, power of God, forgiveness of sins, relationship with God.

Unit 4: Religious Studies — Implications

Details of sources for the *GCE Religious Studies Anthology* are given below.

The anthology can be downloaded from the Edexcel website — www.edexcel.com.

Question 1: Philosophy of Religion

- Religious language
 - ◆ Ayer A — *God-talk is evidently nonsense* in Davies B (editor) — *Philosophy of Religion: a Guide and Anthology* (Oxford University Press, 2000) pages 143–146
- Religious experience
 - ◆ Donovan P — *Can we know God by experience?* in Davies B (editor) — *Philosophy of Religion: a Guide and Anthology* (Oxford University Press, 2000) pages 370–381
- Emergence of modern philosophy of religion
 - ◆ Westphal, M — *The emergence of modern philosophy of religion* in Quinn P and Taliaferro C (editors) — *A Companion to Philosophy of Religion* (Blackwell, 1999) pages 111–117

Question 2: Ethics

- Method and moral theory
 - ◆ Jamieson D — *Method and Moral Theory* in Singer P (editor) — *A Companion to Ethics* (Blackwell, 2001) pages 476–486
- Personal relationships
 - ◆ La Follette H — *Personal Relationships* in Singer P (editor) — *A Companion to Ethics* (Blackwell, 2001) pages 327–332
- Modern moral philosophy
 - ◆ Schneewind J — *Modern Moral Philosophy* in Singer P (editor) — *A Companion to Ethics* (Blackwell, 2001) pages 147–156

**Question 3:
Buddhism**

- Dimensions of religion
 - ◆ Smart N — *The Religious Experience of Mankind* (Collins, 1977) pages 15-25
- Philosophical issues in religion
 - ◆ Griffiths P — *Buddhism* in Quinn P and Taliaferro C (editors) — *A Companion to Philosophy of Religion* (Blackwell, 1999) pages 15-23
- Ethics and religions
 - ◆ De Silva P — *Buddhist Ethics* in Singer P (editor) — *A Companion to Ethics* (Blackwell, 2001) pages 58-68

**Question 4:
Christianity**

- Dimensions of religion
 - ◆ Smart N — *The Religious Experience of Mankind* (Collins, 1977) pages 15-25
- Philosophical issues in religion
 - ◆ Wainwright W — *Christianity* in Quinn P and Taliaferro C (editors) — *A Companion to Philosophy of Religion* (Blackwell, 1999) pages 56-63
- Ethics and religions
 - ◆ Preston R — *Christian Ethics* in Singer P (editor) — *A Companion to Ethics* (Blackwell, 2001) pages 91-105

**Question 5:
Hinduism**

- Dimensions of religion
 - ◆ Smart N — *The Religious Experience of Mankind* (Collins, 1977) pages 15-25
- Philosophical issues in religion
 - ◆ Smart N — *Hinduism* in Quinn P and Taliaferro C (editors) — *A Companion to Philosophy of Religion* (Blackwell, 2002) pages 7-14
- Ethics and religions
 - ◆ Bilimoria P — *Indian Ethics* in Singer P (editor) — *A Companion to Ethics* (Blackwell, 2001) pages 43-56

Question 6: Islam

- Dimensions of religion
 - ◆ Smart N — *The Religious Experience of Mankind* (Collins, 1977) pages 15-25
- Philosophical issues in religion
 - ◆ Nanji A and Esmail A — *Islam* in Quinn P and Taliaferro C (editors) — *A Companion to Philosophy of Religion* (Blackwell, 2002) pages 64-70
- Ethics and religions
 - ◆ Nanji A — *Islamic Ethics* in Singer P (editor) — *A Companion to Ethics* (Blackwell, 2001) pages 106-117

**Question 7:
Judaism**

- Dimensions of religion
 - ◆ Smart N — *The Religious Experience of Mankind* (Collins, 1977) pages 15-25
- Philosophical issues in religion
 - ◆ Goodman L — *Judaism* in Quinn P and Taliaferro C (editors) — *A Companion to Philosophy of Religion* (Blackwell, 2002) pages 43-54
- Ethics and religions
 - ◆ Kellner M — *Jewish Ethics* pages 82-89 in Singer P (editor) — *A Companion to Ethics* (Blackwell, 2001)

**Question 8:
Sikhism**

- Dimensions of religion
 - ◆ Smart N — *The Religious Experience of Mankind* (Collins, 1977) pages 15-25
- Philosophical issues in religion
 - ◆ Cole W O and Sambhi P S — *The Sikhs: their religious beliefs and practices* (Sussex Academic, 1995) pages 67-76
- Ethics and religions
 - ◆ Cole W O and Sambhi P S — *The Sikhs: their religious beliefs and practices* (Sussex Academic, 1995) pages 142-152

Question 9: New Testament

Philosophical and theological studies of the Person of Christ and the significance of his teachings

- Who is Jesus Christ?
 - ◆ Bowker J — *God: A brief history* (Dorling Kindersley, 2002) 'The Person of Christ', pages 240-245
 - ◆ Reid G and Tyler S — *Advanced Religious Studies* (Philip Allan Updates, 2002) 'The Titles of Jesus' pages 270-271, 'Why did Jesus have to die?' pages 271-273
 - ◆ Russell B — *Why I am not a Christian* (Routledge Classics, 2004) 'Defects in Christ's Teaching' pages 12-13
 - ◆ Ward K — *God: A guide for the perplexed* (Oneworld, 2002) 'Jesus and the Law', pages 78-80
- Teachings of Jesus Christ — readings for Luke's Gospel and the Fourth Gospel
 - ◆ *Religious Studies Review Vol. No. 2* (Philip Allan Updates, 2005) from 'Jesus and Discipleship'
 - ◆ Reid G and Tyler S — *Advanced Religious Studies* (Philip Allan Updates, 2002) 'The teaching of Jesus' pages 312-325, 'The Farewell Discourses' pages 390-397
 - ◆ *Religious Studies Review Vol. No. 1* (Philip Allan Updates, 2004) 'Passion in the Fourth Gospel'
- Death and Resurrection
 - ◆ Morison F — *Who moved the Stone?* (Authentic Lifestyle, 1996) 'Between sunset and dawn' pages 88-102
 - ◆ Reid G and Tyler S — *A2 Religious Studies Synoptic Guide* (Philip Allan Updates, 2003) 'Life after death in the New Testament' pages 47-50
 - ◆ Wilson I — *Jesus: The Evidence* (Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1996) 'Did Jesus really rise from the dead?' pages 136-153

Please note that while resources are checked at the time of publication, materials may be withdrawn from circulation and website locations may change at any time.

Books

There is a wide range of textbooks appropriate for the teaching of this specification. Students are expected to read widely. It is recommended that students be aware of current religious events and issues reported in newspapers and on television. There is an increasingly wide range of information available on video, the internet and CD ROM, and in a variety of other forms from religious and voluntary organisations.

The reading list given below is not to be regarded as prescribed reading, nor is it exhaustive. It indicates the range and diversity of sources relevant to teachers, and is intended as a recommended list from which a selection can be made to enable staff to read around their subject. Edexcel does not guarantee that the books are currently in print. The status of any book can be checked using book sales websites such as www.amazon.co.uk. Websites such as www.abebooks.com can be used to obtain books that are out of print.

Philosophy of Religion

Cole P — *Philosophy of Religion* (Hodder and Stoughton, 2004)
ISBN 978 0340815038

Davies B — *An Introduction to Philosophy of Religion* (Oxford University Press, 1994) ISBN 978 0199263479

Davies B — *Philosophy of Religion: a Guide and Anthology* (Oxford University Press, 2000) ISBN 978 0198751946

Dawkins R — *The God Delusion* (Bantam, 2006)
ISBN 978 0593055489

Hick J — *Evil and the God of Love* (Macmillan, 1985)
ISBN 978 0333394830

Hick J — *Philosophy of Religion* (Prentice Hall, 1989)
ISBN 978 0136626282

Hick J — *Death and Eternal Life* (Westminster John Knox Press, 1996) ISBN 978 0664255091

Jordan A, Lockyer N and Tate E — *Philosophy of Religion for A level* (Nelson Thornes, 2004) ISBN 978 0748780785

Mann W (editor) — *The Blackwell Guide to the Philosophy of Religion* (Blackwell, 2004) ISBN 978 0631221296

McGrath A E — *Dawkins' God* (Blackwell, 2004)
ISBN 978 1405125383

Peterson M et al — *Philosophy of Religion: Selected Readings* (Oxford University Press, 2006) ISBN 978 0195188295

Peterson M et al — *Reason and Religious Belief* (Oxford University Press, 2003) ISBN 978 0195156959

Peterson M and VanArragon R (editors) — *Contemporary Debates in Philosophy of Religion* (Blackwell, 2003) ISBN 978 0631200437

Quinn P and Taliaferro C — *A Companion to Philosophy of Religion* (Blackwell, 1999) ISBN 978 0631213284

Swinburne R — *Is there a God?* (Oxford University Press, 1996)
ISBN 978 0198235453

Swinburne R — *The Existence of God* (Clarendon Press, 2004)
ISBN 978 0199271689

Taliaferro C and Griffiths P — *Philosophy of Religion: An Anthology* (Blackwell, 2003) ISBN 978 0631214717

Thompson M — *Philosophy of Religion* (Teach Yourself Books, 2003)
ISBN 978 0340867570

Tyler S and Reid G — *AS/A Religious Studies: Philosophy of Religion and Ethics* (Hodder Arnold, 2006) ISBN 978 1844895137

Tyler S — *Exam Revision Notes: A/AS Level Religious Studies* (Philip Allan Updates, 2000) ISBN 978 0860034322

Tyler S and Reid G — *Advanced Religious Studies* (Philip Allan Updates, 2002) ISBN 978 0860037514

Vardy P — *The Puzzle of Evil* (Fount, 1999) ISBN 978 0006276388

Vardy P — *The Puzzle of God* (Fount, 1999) ISBN 978 0006281436

Zagzebski L — *Philosophy of Religion: An Historical Introduction* (Blackwell, 2007) ISBN 978 1405118729

Ethics

Atkinson D and Field D — *New Dictionary of Christian Ethics and Pastoral Theology* (IVP, 1995) ISBN 978 0851106502

Ayer A — *Language, Truth and Logic* (Penguin, 1936)
ISBN 978 0486200101

Cook D — *The Moral Maze* (SPCK, 1983) ISBN 978 0281040384

Fletcher J — *Situation Ethics* (Westminster John Knox Press, 1997)
ISBN 978 0664257613

Frankena W — *Ethics* (Prentice Hall, 1973) ISBN 978 0132904780

Gill R — *The Cambridge Companion to Christian Ethics* (Cambridge University Press, 2000) ISBN 978 0521779180

Harris J — *The Value of Life* (Routledge, 2004) ISBN 0415040327

Jones D G — *Valuing People* (STL, 1998) ISBN 978 0853649915

Macquarrie I and Childress J — *A New Dictionary of Christian Ethics* (SCM, 1990) ISBN 978 0334022046

Nagel T — *What Does it all Mean?* (Oxford University Press, 2004) ISBN 978 0195174373

Phillips D — *Religion and Morality* (Palgrave Macmillan, 1996) ISBN 978 0333620663

Pojman L — *Moral Philosophy: a Reader* (Hackett, 1998) ISBN 978 0872204089

Richardson A and Bowden J — *A New Dictionary of Christian Theology* (SCM, 1998) ISBN 978 0334022084

Rosenstand N — *The Moral of the Story* (McGraw-Hill, 2005) ISBN 978 0072963359

Singer P — *Applied Ethics* (Oxford University Press, 1986) ISBN 978 0198750673

Singer P — *A Companion to Ethics* (Blackwell, 2001) ISBN 978 0631187851

Stott J — *Issues Facing Christians Today* (Zondervan, 2006) ISBN 978 0310252696

Tyler S and Reid G — *AS/A Religious Studies: Philosophy of Religion and Ethics* (Hodder Arnold, 2006) ISBN 978 1844895137

Tyler S and Reid G — *Advanced Religious Studies* (Philip Allan Updates, 2002) ISBN 978 0860037514

Vardy P — *The Puzzle of Ethics* (Fount, 1999) ISBN 978 0006281443

Wyatt J — *Matters of Life and Death* (IVP, 1998) ISBN 978 0851115887

Religions

Alongside the books selected for particular religions, the following provide an overview of the study of religions.

Beckerlegge G — *The World Religions Reader* (Routledge, 2000)
ISBN 978 0415247498

Billington R — *Understanding Eastern Philosophy* (Routledge, 1997)
ISBN 978 0415129657

Burke T — *The Major Religions: An Introduction with Texts*
(Blackwell, 2004) ISBN 978 1405110495

Carr B — *Companion Encyclopedia of Asian Philosophy* (Routledge, 2000)
ISBN 978 0415240383

Hardy F — *The Religions of Asia* (Routledge, 1990)
ISBN 978 0415058155

Hinnells J (editor) — *The New Penguin Handbook of Living Religions*
(Penguin, 2000) ISBN 978 0140514803

Markham I — *A World Religions Reader* (Blackwell, 1999)
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Website: www.buddhanet.org

For further information:

The Buddhist Society
58 Eccleston Square
London SW1V 1PH

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For further information:

The Jewish Memorial Council Bookshop
25 Enford Street
London W1H 2DD

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ISBN 978 0232522136

Ward K — *Christianity: A Short Introduction* (Oneworld, 2000)
ISBN 978 1851682294

Useful websites

www.edexcel.com/gce2008

www.wiley.com (a very good academic publisher for Religious Studies — click Humanities on home page)

www.dialogue.org.uk (Philosophy of Religion)

Other resources

Tyler S — *AS/A Level Religious Studies Exam Revision Notes* (Philip Allan Updates, 2000) ISBN 978 0860034322

Video

Religion and philosophy on video www.insight-media.com
2162 Broadway New York NY USA 10024-0621

Philosophy Videos
Resources in Training and Education Ltd
Cross Tree, Walton St
Walton-in-Gordano, Clevedon
Somerset BS21 7AW

Journals

Medical Ethics Monthly (BMJ Publishing Company)

Religious Studies Review (published three times a year by Philip Allan Updates, www.philipallan.co.uk)

Unit 1: Religious Studies — Foundations

Assessment objective 1

Select and demonstrate clearly relevant knowledge and understanding through the use of evidence, examples and correct language and terminology appropriate to the course of study

Level	Descriptor	Marks
1	A limited range of isolated facts which are accurate and relevant, but unstructured; a generalised presentation with mainly random and unorganised detail; imprecisely expressed.	1–5
2	Mainly relevant and accurate information presented within a structure which shows a basic awareness of the issue raised, and expressed with a sufficient degree of accuracy to make the meaning clear.	6–10
3	A range of accurate and relevant knowledge, presented within a recognisable and generally coherent structure, selecting significant features for emphasis and clarity, and dealing at a basic level with some key ideas and concepts; expressed clearly and accurately using some technical terms.	11–15
4	A coherent and well-structured account of the subject matter, with accurate and relevant detail, clearly identifying the most important features; using evidence to explain key ideas; expressed accurately and fluently, using a range of technical vocabulary.	16–21

Assessment objective 2

Critically evaluate and justify a point of view through the use of evidence and reasoned argument

Level	Descriptor	Marks
1	A mainly descriptive response, at a general level, to the issue(s) raised in the task; leading to a point of view that is logically consistent with the task, supported by reference to a simple argument or unstructured evidence; imprecisely expressed.	1–2
2	A response to the task showing a simple but partial awareness of the issue(s) raised, typically supported by some attempt to set out a range of views; a point of view supported by limited but appropriate evidence and/or argument; communicated with a sufficient degree of accuracy to make the meaning clear.	3–4
3	An accurate statement of the main issue(s) raised by the task with some attempt to set out reasons for a range of views; a point of view expressed clearly, supported by relevant evidence and argument and deploying some technical language appropriately.	5–6
4	An attempt at an evaluation of the issue(s) raised in the task, typically through a careful analysis of alternative views; leading to a clearly expressed viewpoint supported by well-deployed evidence and reasoned argument; expressed accurately, fluently and using a range of technical vocabulary.	7–9

Unit 2: Religious Studies — Investigations

Assessment objective 1

Select and demonstrate clearly relevant knowledge and understanding through the use of evidence, examples, and correct language and terminology appropriate to the course of study

Level	Descriptor	Marks
1	Uncritical and descriptive presentation of mainly random information about the topic investigated, demonstrating a minimal ability to identify and select material relevant to the task; communicated within a largely simplistic and unstructured framework.	1–6
2	Some relevant and partially structured knowledge of the topic investigated, presented within a limited framework which shows an awareness of some of its significant features, with a general link to the task, expressed with sufficient accuracy to make the meaning clear.	7–13
3	Presentation of a selection of relevant material, which reflects some understanding of the significant features of the topic investigated; linked directly to the issue(s) raised in the task; with some use of specialised religious language in appropriate contexts	14–20
4	Presentation of a good range of well-selected material from the topic investigated, to show a coherent understanding of its significant features within the context of the issue(s) raised in the task, highlighting some key concepts and supported by the use of appropriate evidence and/or examples; topic explored using defined and relevant religious terms further reflecting an understanding of the topic.	21–27
5	Presentation of a wide range of selected, relevant factual knowledge and understanding of the topic investigated; offering some analysis of issues raised by the topic, using a variety of sources, examples and/or illustrations; structured around, and showing clear understanding of, the main theme(s) or concept(s) of the task; both topic and task explored with the proficient use of religious language.	28–35

Assessment objective 2

Critically evaluate and justify a point of view through the use of evidence and reasoned argument

Level	Descriptor	Marks
1	A mainly descriptive response, at a general level, to the issue(s) raised in the task; expression of a point of view that is logically consistent with the task, supported by reference to a simple argument or unstructured evidence; imprecisely expressed.	1–3
2	A response to the task showing a simple but partial awareness of the issue(s) raised, typically supported by some attempt to set out alternative views; a point of view supported by limited but appropriate evidence and/or argument; communicated with a sufficient degree of accuracy to make the meaning clear.	4–7
3	An accurate statement of the main issue(s) raised by the task with some attempt to set out reasons for alternative views; a point of view expressed clearly, supported by some relevant evidence and argument and deploying some technical language appropriately.	8–11

4	An attempt at an evaluation of the issue(s) raised in the task, typically through a careful analysis of alternative views; leading to a clearly expressed viewpoint supported by well-deployed evidence and reasoned argument; expressed accurately, fluently and using a range of technical vocabulary.	12–15
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Unit 3: Religious Studies — Developments

Assessment objective 1

Select and demonstrate clearly relevant knowledge and understanding through the use of evidence, examples and correct language and terminology appropriate to the course of study

Level	Descriptor	Marks
1	Some relevant knowledge deployed as evidence or examples to show a basic understanding of some of the issue(s) raised by the task, though limited in scope and imprecisely expressed.	1–4
2	A sufficient range of evidence and/or examples to show understanding of some key ideas or concepts, but limited in terms of the scope of the task; communicated with a sufficient degree of accuracy to make the meaning clear.	5–9
3	Relevant evidence and examples used to produce a clearly structured response to the task, offering sufficient breadth and/or depth to indicate a broad understanding of the main issue(s); expressed clearly and accurately, using some technical terms.	10–14
4	A coherent response to the task including a good range of relevant evidence presented within a clear and concise structure, with examples appropriately deployed to show a clear understanding of the main issue(s) raised; expressed accurately and fluently, and using a range of technical vocabulary.	15–18

Assessment objective 2

Critically evaluate and justify a point of view through the use of evidence and reasoned argument

Level	Descriptor	Marks
1	A simple awareness of some of the issue(s) raised in the task, typically shown at a descriptive level through limited arguments for and/or against alternative approaches; leading to a largely unsubstantiated point of view; imprecisely expressed.	1–3
2	An attempt to offer a limited response to some of the issue(s) raised in the task, typically by reference to alternative approaches; a point of view supported by limited evidence or argument; communicated with a sufficient degree of accuracy to make the meaning clear.	4–6
3	A structured attempt to offer an evaluation of the main issue(s) raised by the task, based on an analysis of alternative approaches, typically by reference to appropriate sources; a point of view supported by evidence and argument; expressed clearly and accurately using some technical terms.	7–9

4	A coherent response to the task, in which scholarly opinion and careful analysis support a critical evaluation of the issue(s) raised; a point of view expressed accurately, fluently and using a range of technical vocabulary, and supported substantially by evidence and reasoning.	10–12
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Unit 4: Religious Studies — Implications

Assessment objective 1

Select and demonstrate clearly relevant knowledge and understanding through the use of evidence, examples, and correct language and terminology appropriate for the course of study. Students should also demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the connections between different elements of their course of study

Level	Descriptor	Marks
1	Partial attempt to offer a re-statement of some aspects of the passage, based on reiteration and simple comprehension. Limited and unstructured knowledge of examples and/or evidence relevant to the meaning of the passage.	1–6
2	Uncritical presentation of the argument/interpretation of the passage; limited ability to identify and select the most relevant/important information and, therefore, reflecting little understanding; over reliance on repetition of the chosen passage.	7–12
3	Presentation of a selection of relevant evidence and examples, drawing on different elements in their course of study, which reflect a basic understanding of the argument/interpretation of the passage; some use of specialised religious language in appropriate contexts.	13–18
4	Clear understanding of the main point(s) and key idea(s) of the argument/interpretation of the passage, deploying material from different elements of their course of study; set in an appropriate context, with some analysis of key concepts; using relevant religious terms.	19–24
5	Comprehensive understanding of the argument/interpretation of the passage, demonstrated through clear and critical analysis; applying principles/ideas from different elements of their course of study; and proficient use of religious language, discussed within a wider context.	25–30

Assessment objective 2

Critically evaluate and justify a point of view through the use of evidence and reasoned argument. Students should also relate elements of their course of study to their broader context and to aspects of human experience

Level	Descriptor	Marks
1	An attempt to offer a personal response to the topic or theme of the passage, but largely unsupported by evidence or argument; showing marginal awareness of the implications of the expressed viewpoint for its broader context and in relation to aspects of religion and human experience; imprecisely expressed.	1–5
2	A basic response to the view(s) expressed in the passage, based on limited evidence or argument; a point of view with a simple justification based on a limited range of evidence and/or reasons; an attempt to consider a possible implication of the expressed viewpoint for its broader context; or in relation to aspects of religion and/or human experience; communicated within a framework which makes the meaning sufficiently clear.	6–10
3	Justification of a point of view using evidence and relevant argument; based on an attempt to offer a simple critical assessment of the view(s) expressed in the passage; with some evidence of awareness of some of the possible implications of the expressed viewpoint for its wider context in relation to aspects of religion and/or human experience; expressed clearly and accurately, using some technical vocabulary.	11–15
4	A critical evaluation of the point of view expressed in the passage, based on coherent discussion, by reference to alternative approaches to the theme/topic; a statement of the student's own stance, based on reasoning and supported by evidence and argument; discussion of possible implications of the expressed viewpoint in relationship to religion and human experience; expressed accurately and fluently, using a range of technical vocabulary.	16–20

Advanced Subsidiary and A2 assessment

The 'trigger' words set out in the grid below differentiate between AS and A2, and between the assessment objectives AO1 and AO2.

	Advanced Subsidiary	A2
AO1	Compare Describe Examine Give an account of How Identify Illustrate In what ways Outline Select What	Analyse Compare and contrast Differentiate Distinguish between Define Examine Explain
AO2	Comment on Consider How far To what extent Why	Assess Consider critically Criticise Discuss Evaluate Interpret Justify To what extent Why

Introduction

Performance descriptions have been created for all GCE subjects. They describe the learning outcomes and levels of attainment likely to be demonstrated by a representative candidate performing at the A/B and E/U boundaries for AS and A2.

In practice most candidates will show uneven profiles across the attainments listed, with strengths in some areas compensating in the award process for weaknesses or omissions elsewhere. Performance descriptions illustrate expectations at the A/B and E/U boundaries of the AS and A2 as a whole; they have not been written at unit level.

Grade A/B and E/U boundaries should be set using professional judgement. The judgement should reflect the quality of candidates' work, informed by the available technical and statistical evidence. Performance descriptions are designed to assist examiners in exercising their professional judgement. They should be interpreted and applied in the context of individual specifications and their associated units. However, performance descriptions are not designed to define the content of specifications and units.

The requirement for all AS and A level specifications to assess candidates' quality of written communication will be met through one or more of the assessment objectives.

The performance descriptions have been produced by the regulatory authorities in collaboration with the awarding bodies.

AS performance descriptions for Religious Studies

Assessment objective 1	Assessment objective 2
<p>Assessment objectives</p> <p>Select and demonstrate clearly relevant knowledge and understanding through the use of evidence, examples, and correct language and terminology appropriate to the course of study.</p> <p>In addition, for synoptic assessment, A level candidates should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the connections between different elements</p>	<p>Critically evaluate and justify a point of view through the use of evidence and reasoned argument.</p> <p>In addition, for synoptic assessment, A level candidates should relate elements of their course of study to their broader context and to aspects of human experience.</p> <p>Candidates characteristically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a select accurate and relevant material b explain clearly relevant features or key ideas, supported by examples and/or sources of evidence c use accurately a range of technical language and terminology d show evidence of being familiar with issues raised by relevant scholars, or a variety of views, where appropriate. <p>Candidates characteristically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a demonstrate minimal organisation and/or limited coherence b offer mainly descriptive answers with little argument, justification or evaluation c use language and expression that lacks precision.
<p>A/B boundary performance descriptions</p>	<p>Candidates characteristically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a select limited but relevant material b show basic understanding of relevant features or key ideas, supported by occasional examples and/or sources of evidence c show limited accurate use of technical language and terminology.
<p>E/U boundary performance descriptions</p>	<p>Candidates characteristically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a demonstrate minimal organisation and/or limited coherence b offer mainly descriptive answers with little argument, justification or evaluation c use language and expression that lacks precision.

A2 performance descriptions for Religious Studies

Assessment objective 1	Assessment objective 2
<p>Assessment objectives</p> <p>Select and demonstrate clearly relevant knowledge and understanding through the use of evidence, examples, and correct language and terminology appropriate to the course of study.</p> <p>In addition, for synoptic assessment, A level candidates should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the connections between different elements of their course of study.</p>	<p>Critically evaluate and justify a point of view through the use of evidence and reasoned argument.</p> <p>In addition, for synoptic assessment, A level candidates should relate elements of their course of study to their broader context and to aspects of human experience.</p> <p>Candidates characteristically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a address the question specifically and select relevant material b deploy comprehensive and mostly accurate knowledge, expressed lucidly c use a range of technical language and terminology accurately and consistently d competently explain appropriate examples and/or relevant sources/scholars. <p>In addition, for the synoptic assessment, candidates perform at this level in relation to connections between different elements of their course of study.</p> <p>Candidates characteristically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a select limited but relevant material b deploy limited knowledge, some of which is accurate c show limited accurate or consistent use of technical terms d demonstrate basic understanding of key ideas, making occasional reference to examples and sources of evidence. <p>In addition, for the synoptic assessment, candidates perform at this level in relation to connections between different elements of their course of study.</p>
<p>A/B boundary performance descriptions</p>	<p>Candidates characteristically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a construct a coherent and well-organised evaluative argument b demonstrate an informed viewpoint and evidence of own thinking within the context of understanding different arguments and views c use proficient, fluent and accurate language. <p>In addition, for the synoptic assessment, candidates show competent analysis of the nature of connections between elements of their course of study, their broader context and aspects of human experience.</p>
<p>E/U boundary performance descriptions</p>	<p>Candidates characteristically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a demonstrate minimal organisation and/or limited coherence b demonstrate few personal insights, or little convincing argument or justification of a point of view with minimal evaluation c use language and expression that lacks precision. <p>In addition, for the synoptic assessment, candidates show limited analysis of the nature of connections between elements of their course of study, their broader context and aspects of human experience.</p>

Signposting

Issue	Unit 1	Unit 2	Unit 3	Unit 4
Spiritual	✓	✓	✓	✓
Moral	✓		✓	
Ethical	✓	✓	✓	✓
Social	✓	✓	✓	
Cultural	✓	✓	✓	
Citizenship	✓	✓	✓	✓
Environmental		✓		
European initiatives		✓		

Development suggestions

Issue	AS/A2 units	Opportunities for development or internal assessment
Spiritual	1, 2, 3, 4	Spiritual issues are addressed in all units.
Moral	1, 3	<i>Unit 1: Religious Studies — Foundations</i> — moral issues are addressed under Ethics, in the relationship between religion and morality. <i>Unit 3: Religious Studies — Developments</i> — moral issues are addressed under Ethics, particularly in the study of the concept of natural moral law.
Ethical	1, 2, 3, 4	Ethical issues are addressed in all units.
Social	1, 2, 3	<i>Unit 1: Religious Studies — Foundations</i> — social issues are addressed under Religion, as part of the context to the development of each of the world religions. <i>Unit 2: Religious Studies — Investigations</i> — Topics in the study of Religions include social issues, which are addressed as part of the study of practices, festivals and rites of passage. This area also includes the study of the sociology of religion. <i>Unit 3: Religious Studies — Developments</i> — social issues are addressed under Religion, as part of the context to each world religion.
Cultural	1, 2, 3	<i>Unit 1: Religious Studies — Foundations</i> — cultural issues are addressed under Religion, as part of the context to each of the world religions. <i>Unit 2: Religious Studies — Investigations</i> — Topics in the study of Religions include cultural issues, which are addressed as part of the study of practices, festivals and rites of passage, and religious practice in a multicultural society. <i>Unit 3: Religious Studies — Developments</i> — cultural issues are addressed under Religion, as part of the context to each world religion.

Issue	AS/A2 units	Opportunities for development or internal assessment
Citizenship	1, 2, 3, 4	<p><i>Unit 1: Religious Studies — Foundations</i> — citizenship issues are addressed under Ethics (utilitarianism, war and peace, ethical dilemmas).</p> <p><i>Unit 2: Religious Studies — Investigations</i> — Topics in the study of Ethics include medical ethics, animal rights, conservation of the environment, equality issues, personal social relationships and business ethics. Topics in the study of Religion includes multicultural and multi-faith society. Topics in the study of Christianity and the Christian Church include liberation theology and persecution.</p> <p><i>Unit 3: Religious Studies — Developments</i> — citizenship issues are addressed under Ethics (justice, law and punishment).</p> <p><i>Unit 4: Religious Studies — Implications</i> — citizenship issues are addressed as part of the study of the consequences of human decisions and actions.</p>
Environmental	2	<i>Unit 2: Religious Studies — Investigations</i> — Topics in the study of Ethics include the study of conservation of the environment.
European initiatives	2	<i>Unit 2: Religious Studies — Investigations</i> — European initiatives may be explored through Topics in the study of Ethics (medical ethics, euthanasia, conservation of the environment, business ethics) and through Topics in the study of Religions (religious practice in a multicultural society).

Type of code	Use of code	Code number
National classification codes	Every qualification is assigned to a national classification code indicating the subject area to which it belongs. Centres should be aware that students who enter for more than one GCE qualification with the same classification code will have only one grade (the highest) counted for the purpose of the school and college performance tables.	4610
National Qualifications Framework (NQF) codes	Each qualification title is allocated a National Qualifications Framework (NQF) code. The National Qualifications Framework (NQF) 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 is the number that will appear on the student's final certification documentation.	The QNs for the qualifications in this publication are: AS — 500/2448/6 Advanced GCE — 500/2331/7
Unit codes	Each unit is assigned a unit code. This unit code is used as an entry code to indicate that a student wishes to take the assessment for that unit. Centres will need to use the entry codes only when entering students for their examination.	Unit 1 — 6RS01 Unit 2 — 6RS02 Unit 3 — 6RS03 Unit 4 — 6RS04
Cash-in codes	The cash-in code is used as an entry code to aggregate the student's unit scores to obtain the overall grade for the qualification. Centres will need to use the entry codes only when entering students for their qualification.	AS — 8RS01 Advanced GCE — 9RS01
Entry codes	The entry codes are used to: 1 enter a student for the assessment of a unit 2 aggregate the student's unit scores to obtain the overall grade for the qualification.	Please refer to the Edexcel Information Manual available on the Edexcel website.

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