



Getting Started Guide

AS and A level Religious Studies

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1. Introduction

Research and key principles

The specification has been developed in consultation with the teaching community, higher education, learned societies and subject associations. Teachers from a range of schools and colleges – in focus groups, phone interviews and face-to-face conversations – have provided feedback at each stage and have helped us to shape the specification. Religious Studies academics in UK universities have helped us understand how to build on the strengths of the 2008 A level specification and advised on how progression to undergraduate study could be improved.

Drawing on feedback from all parts of the RS education community, the 2016 specification has been built on the following key principles:

- **Clear and coherent structure** – our qualification offers a choice of three components from Philosophy of Religion, Religion and Ethics, New Testament Studies and Study of Religion. All of the components are assessed through an externally examined paper and these all follow the same structure.
- **Development of an understanding and appreciation of the subject** – this qualification encourages students to develop an appreciation of religious thought and its contribution to individuals, communities and societies. This is achieved through an enquiring, critical and reflective approach to the study of religion.
- **Holistic understanding of religion** – the specification facilitates enquiry into, and develops insightful evaluations of, ultimate questions about the purposes and commitments of human life, especially as expressed in philosophy, ethics and religion. The qualification encourages students to make connections so that in each field of study, they understand the influences over time of the key developments in religious beliefs and practices, the philosophy of religion, religious ethics and/or textual interpretation.
- **Focus on scholarship** – in the second year of study, the specification content encourages students to compare the significant ideas presented in works of scholars selected from the fields of philosophy, ethics and religion. This will enable students to reflect on and develop their values, opinions and attitudes in the light of their studies.
- **Development of transferable skills for progression to higher education** – students will use ideas from a range of approaches to the study of religions and beliefs in order to research and present a wide range of well-informed and reasonable arguments, which engage profoundly with moral, religious and spiritual issues. This will enable students to make a smooth transition to their next level of study.
- **Supportive of progression from Key Stage 4** – the content builds on the understanding developed at Key Stage 4, while also ensuring that students new to the subject are appropriately supported.
- **Co-teachability across AS and A level** – co-teaching AS and A level provides flexibility for you and your students. Centres co-teaching AS and A level can deliver the first three topics in each component in the first year, allowing students to be entered for the AS at the end of the year.

Support for the new specification

This Getting Started guide provides an overview of the new AS and A level specifications, to help you get to grips with the changes to content and assessment, and to help you understand what these mean for you and your students.

- We will be providing a package of support to help you plan and implement the new specification.
- Course planners to help you decide how to teach the course and adapt this for your department and teaching staff.
- Schemes of work.
- Example student responses with examiner commentaries.
- A level Religious Studies Anthology – this can be downloaded from our website and used as part of the teaching and learning of the course.
- Documents showing how the content of the 2008 AS and A level specifications maps to the new 2016 content.
- Extra assessment materials to use as a resource for mocks and practice.

These support documents will be made available on the AS and A level 2016 Religious Studies pages of the Pearson qualifications website.

Subject support:

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2. What's changed?

2.1 How have AS and A level changed?

Changes to AS and A level qualifications

From September 2016, A level Religious Studies will be a linear qualification. This means that all examinations must be sat at the end of the course. More information about the implications of the move to linear assessment is given on page 8.

From September 2016, AS level Religious Studies will be a stand-alone qualification. This means that it cannot be used to contribute towards an A level Religious Studies grade. More information about the relationship between AS and A level is given on page 10.

Changes to Religious Studies subject content requirements

The subject content requirements for AS and A level Religious Studies were revised for specifications for first teaching 2016. All awarding organisations' specifications for AS and A level Religious Studies from 2016 must meet these criteria. The full subject content document can be found on the website of the Department for Education, but the boxes below highlight the key requirements.

The DfE requirements state that '**Religious Studies specifications at AS and A level must require students to demonstrate knowledge, understanding and skills through three of the following four approaches that must require an equal amount of teaching, learning and assessment**'.

The four approaches are:

- Systematic study of one religion
- Philosophy of religion
- Religion and ethics
- Textual studies

The following requirements apply to both AS and A level Religious Studies specifications:

Within in each of the chosen approaches, all **AS and A level** specifications must require students to acquire and development knowledge and a critical understanding of:

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

2. What's changed?

In addition, the following requirements also apply to A level specifications:

In addition, through the study of three of the four approaches, **A level** specifications in religious studies must also require students to demonstrate critical awareness of:

- questions, issues and arguments posed by scholars from within and outside religious traditions
- social, religious and historical factors that have influenced developments in the study of religions and beliefs
- connections between the various elements of the area(s) of study, as set out in content

Changes to Assessment Objectives

The AS and A level Religious Studies Assessment Objectives have been revised. The Assessment Objectives are the same for both AS and A level but the weightings are different for each of the qualifications.

AO1 50% at AS 40% at A level	Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• religious, philosophical and/or ethical thought and teaching• influence of beliefs, teachings and practices on individuals, communities and societies• cause and significance of similarities and differences in belief, teaching and practice• approaches to the study of religion and belief.
AO2 50% at AS 60% at A level	Analyse and evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief, including their significance, influence and study.

2. What's changed?

2.2 Changes to the Edexcel specification

Specification overview

The diagram below provides a structural overview of the new AS and A level specifications. Students sit **three** of the following four components for both AS and A level:

Paper 1 Philosophy of religion	Paper 2 Religion and Ethics	Paper 3 New Testament studies	Paper 4 Study of religion
33.3% AS level 33.3% A level			
External examination	External examination	External examination	External examination
A level – 2 hrs AS level – 1 hr	A level – 2 hrs AS level – 1 hr	A level – 2 hrs AS level – 1 hr	A level – 2 hrs AS level – 1 hr

Key changes to note in the overall structure are as follows:

- The 2008 specification has two papers for AS and 2 papers for A2. In the new specification, both AS and A level students must sit three papers.
- It is still possible to focus on the key topics of Ethics, Philosophy, Study of a Religion and Textual Studies, but these are now assessed in separate papers.
- Even though the AS content makes up half of the A level content, the AS assessments do NOT count towards the A level.
- There is now a choice of component for you to teach – you must choose three of the four components above and make entries for your students to sit the relevant papers for these components.
- It is NOT possible for students to take Paper 3 - New Testament Studies *and* Paper 4B – Christianity as this is a forbidden combination.

Changes to specification content

The content of the 2016 Edexcel Religious Studies AS and A level specifications has altered to meet the new requirements set out by the DfE which are outlined above. These changes include:

- A slight reduction in the percentage weighting of the Philosophy of Religion and Ethics.
- Three approaches out of the four have to be studied, ensuring that all students will study specific religious content.
- A new requirement to compare the writings of two scholars has been added.
- There is a synoptic element to the course which requires that connections are made between all of the approaches studied.

Summary of changes to assessment

The main assessment changes apply to all AS and A level specifications in that the AS can no longer count towards the final A level grade and the two qualifications are assessed and reported separately.

2. What's changed?

The table below provides an overview of the assessment in the previous 2008 specification and the assessment in the 2016 specification. *The table is designed to show the number of units and their content and is not a mapping between the two specifications.*

2008 Specification (8RS01 and 9RS01) Unit 1 and Unit 2 must be taken for the AS; Unit 3 and Unit 4 for the A2	2016 specification (8RS0 and 9RS0) Three of the four components must be taken for both the AS and the A level.
Unit 1: Religious Studies – Foundations AO1 and AO2 At least two areas of study from a choice of nine 3 questions	Component 1: Philosophy of Religion AO1 and AO2 One area of study (six sub-topics for A level and three for AS) 4 questions for AS and A level
Unit 2: Religious Studies – Investigations AO1 and AO2 One topic from a choice of three taken from one area of study from a choice of seven 1 question	Component 2: Religion and Ethics AO1 and AO2 One area of study (six sub-topics for A level and three for AS) 4 questions for AS and A level
Unit 3 – Religious Studies – Developments AO1 and AO2 At least two areas of study from a choice of nine 3 questions	Component 3: New Testament Studies AO1 and AO2 One area of study (six sub-topics for A level and three for AS) 4 questions for AS and A level
Unit 4 – Religious Studies – Implications AO1 and AO2 One topic from a choice of three taken from one area of study from a choice of seven 1 question	Component 4: Study of Religion from Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, Judaism, Sikhism AO1 and AO2 One area of study (six sub-topics for A level and three for AS) 4 questions for AS and A level

- AO1 and AO2 are assessed in every examined paper; AO1 is assessed separately in the first question(s) for AS and A level and then alongside AO2 in the extended and essay response questions.
- The A level questions ask students to respond to a question based on an extract from the Anthology.
- Students are also required to study a number of the ideas of key contributors which are listed in the sub-topics in the specification. The ideas of the contributors should be used to help underpin students' knowledge and understanding of the sub-topic. These contributors should be used to support the teaching and learning of the key ideas within the specification. The names of the contributors will not be referred to in the questions of the examination.

2. What's changed?

A level assessment overview

Components 1-4 Students sit 3 out of the 4 papers Total marks for each paper: 80 Weighting of each paper: 33.3% Questions to answer on each paper: 4 Exam time for each paper: 2 hrs	Section A: 2 questions Q1 targets AO1 for 8 marks Students are asked to Explore Q2 targets AO1 and AO2 for 12 marks (4 for AO1 and 8 for AO2) Students are asked to Assess
	Section B: 1 question with 2 parts Q3a) targets AO1 for 10 marks Students are asked to respond to an extract from the anthology and Clarify the key fact and ideas Q3b) targets AO1 and AO2 for 20 marks (5 for AO1 and 15 for AO2) Students are asked to Analyse and make arguments connected to the question
	Section C: 1 essay question Q4 targets AO1 and AO2 for 30 marks (5 for AO1 and 25 for AO2) Students are asked to Evaluate and make synoptic links with other areas of study

AS level assessment overview

Components 1-4 Students sit 3 out of the 4 papers Total marks for each paper: 54 Weighting of each paper: 33.3% Questions to answer on each paper: 4 Exam time for each paper: 1 hr	Section A: 3 questions Q1 targets AO1 for 8 marks Students are asked to Explore Q2 and Q3 both target AO1 and AO2 for 9 marks (3 for AO1 and 6 for AO2) Students are asked to Assess
	Section B: 1 question with 2 parts Q4a targets AO1 for 8 marks Students are asked to Explore Q4b targets AO1 and AO2 for 20 marks (5 for AO1 and 15 for AO2) Students are asked to Analyse

Details on the assessment for each component and an explanation of each of the question stems is given in Section 5, page 17 of this guide.

3. Planning

3.1 Planning and delivering linear AS and A level courses

Both the AS and the A level will be linear, with all assessments at the end of each course. There will be no January assessment window for either qualification. AS students will sit the three chosen component exams at the end of the AS course – normally at the end of Year 12. A level students will sit their three chosen component exams at the end of the A level course – normally at the end of Year 13.

Students may be entered for both the AS and the A level – for example, sitting AS exams at the end of Year 12 and A level at the end of Year 13 – but they will have to sit the three chosen component exams for A level at the end of the A level course as the AS exams will not count towards the A level, now that the qualifications are separate.

For AS, therefore, centres can decide whether to teach the three chosen components one after another or alongside each other, based on their timetabling and staffing situation.

For A level, centres need to decide whether they are delivering the A level on its own or co-teaching AS and A level students together, as this could affect the approach to teaching in the first year. See sections 3.2 and 3.3 and the Course Planner document on the Pearson qualifications website for more details.

With a linear A level, it is important that sufficient time is left for revision in the second year, particularly for students to revisit topics studied in the first year. For example, centres may choose to start some of the A level content in the summer term of the first year, so that this can be completed earlier in the second year and leave more time for revision.

One of the first decisions centres will need to make is whether they wish to offer both the AS and the A level, or the A level only, and – if the aim is to offer both AS and A level – whether the two courses will be co-taught or taught separately.

The benefits of a linear A level course that is *not* co-taught with AS include more flexibility in structuring the course, more time for teaching and learning in the first year, greater student maturity when completing all assessments and more opportunity for students to make links between different elements of the course. On the other hand, it means that all students must embark on the two-year A level course; any student who leaves an A level course after one year, for whatever reason, would leave with no qualification.

Centres who wish to offer the AS and A level could co-teach AS and A level students in the same class, or run separate AS and A level classes. The specification content and approach to progression in assessment has been designed with co-teachability in mind, as this is likely to be the most practical option for many centres. Centres who run separate classes will avoid the complications of co-teaching students who will complete different assessments at the end of their courses and be able to focus teaching on one qualification only, but are likely to face greater complications in terms of staffing and timetabling.

Centres may wish to allow students to decide to transfer from AS to A level or from A level to AS part-way into the course. One option would be to require students to confirm by the AS entry date; those intending not to continue to A level could then be entered for the AS exams, while those opting to do the full A level might sit internal exams. Another option would be to put all students in for the AS exams and decide on the basis of their AS results whether they will continue to the full A level or not. Those who do go on to the full A level would still have to be examined on all the A level content at the end of the second year.

4. Content guidance

Centres co-teaching the AS will deliver all of the AS level content in the first year. The three components could be taught side by side or one taught after the other depending on what is more appropriate for staffing and timetabling within each centre. Centres not co-teaching AS and A level may wish to start with different components for each group depending on their interests. Different approaches to structuring the course are given in the separate Course Planner document.

Implications for funding

It is not expected that the changes to the AS and A level qualification will have any funding impact. The information provided here is in response to questions from teachers attending events for a number of subjects.

Funding currently works on the number of hours planned for a student each year in their study programme, both for qualifications and for activity that does not relate to qualifications, such as enrichment activity, tutorial and work experience. Institutions will want to check that they are recording sufficient planned hours for students to count as full time, particularly in year 2.

Q: Can a student start out planning to do the A level but then decide to switch to the AS?

A: If a student planning to do the A level subsequently decides not to continue after the first year, this does not affect the funding as long as the student is retained in the first year and as long as the institution either does not record them as starting the A level in the second year or withdraws the student from the A level before the qualifying period has been completed. Centres will want to check that they are recording sufficient planned hours for students to count as full time if a student does not continue with the full A level.

Q: Can a student start out planning to do the AS but then decide to switch to A level?

A: Study programmes are planned annually, so if a student completes the AS course in the first year and wishes to transfer to do the A level in their second year, that will not affect the funding in the second year: the centre can be funded for that learning in the next year, depending on the hours taken according to the funding bands.

Q: Can we use the AS as a mock – i.e. put all students in for AS (including those we know will do A level)

A: Yes, sitting the AS as a mock will not affect funding – but you will need to pay the registration fee for both qualifications.

Q: Can students defer their decision about whether they want to do AS or A level until part way into the course date?

A: A student's study programme will be planned at the outset, so they will set out on either an AS course or an A level course, but they can transfer from an AS to A level or vice versa, as above.

Q: If an A level student encounters problems in the second year of the course (for example, they don't complete some of the A level content), could they decide to sit the AS exam at the end of the second year instead of the A level so that they do get an AS qualification?

A: Yes – this doesn't affect funding. The decision would, of course, need to be made before the entry date.

3.2 Co-teaching AS and A level

AS Religious Studies consists of a choice of three out of four components, as does the A level. The differentiation comes in the content (AS students cover the first three bullets and A level students cover all six bullets), the approach to the assessment and in the expectation of greater specificity and depth of knowledge and understanding at A level.

The approach each centre takes to tackling the differentiation will depend on how they decide to structure their teaching – whether the AS and A level students will be taught in the same class, at what point in the course students are required to confirm whether they will continue to the full A level, and whether the centre wants to enter for the AS exam those students continuing to A level. More detail on these different approaches is given in the separate Course Planner document.

Centres who wish to co-teach the AS and the A level will need to teach the AS content in year 1 and the A level content in year 2. Where it is known from the start which students will complete the full A level and which will take AS, formative and summative assessment tasks can be differentiated for students throughout Year 12.

If centres wish to give students the flexibility to defer confirming their decision about continuing to A level until the AS entry date or until after AS results day, they will need to consider whether they would prefer to focus year 1 teaching on the AS demands and leave sufficient time in year 2 to return to this content with those who do go on to A level, or to teach some A level content in year 1 so that students who continue to A level are prepared for the A level assessment.

The table below considers the ways in which the A level is more demanding than the AS and how this would affect teaching approaches.

4. Content guidance

3.3 Delivery models

The table below outlines five possible options for delivery. Additional guidance on each is given in the separate Course Planner.

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5
<i>Enrolment</i>	Only an A level course is offered; no AS course available	Students enrol on either an AS course or an A level course, with no option to switch later on		Students enrol on either an AS course or an A level course, but can switch later on	
<i>Teaching</i>	Only A level is taught	AS and A level students taught separately	AS and A level students taught in the same class	AS and A level students co-taught in the same class	
<i>End of year 1</i>	Internal exam on year 1 topics, using A level style question stems / formulations	AS students sit AS exams A level students sit an internal exam on year 1 content, using A level style question stems / formulations		Teaching finishes in time for revision for AS exams All students sit AS exam Students decide whether to continue to A level once they have their AS results	Students confirm by the AS entry deadline whether they want to continue to A level. Only those not continuing sit the AS exam All other students sit an internal exam and then start A level material in the summer of year 1

For options 3, 4 and 5, the AS and A level are being co-taught.

- Option 3: AS and A level students are co-taught but have decided at the start of the course whether they are completing the AS course or the A level course, and there is no intention to switch from one to the other. As the teacher will know from the outset which are the AS students and which are the A level students, differentiation can take place through formative and summative tasks set. It may be that all students are given AS-style tasks to start and then A level students move on to the A level question formulations, or that A level students work with A level-style questions from the start: this would be the centre's decision.
- Option 4: Where the desire is to enter all students for the AS and confirm after receiving their results whether they will continue to A level, it is possible to start the A level content in the summer of year 1 or to begin looking again at the AS content and either introduce A level-style questions or start introducing some key anthology extracts.
- Option 5: Where students confirm part-way through the course either that they are continuing to A level or that they are only taking the AS, all students could practise AS questions in preparation for the AS exam, or move onto the A level-style questions.

4. Content guidance

4.1 Structure

Below is a summary table of the AS and A level content. The AS content is highlighted in red – A level students need to cover all of the content listed below. The full details of the content can be found in the specifications.

The following should be noted:

- Students have to take **three** of the four components and study all of the content within each of the chosen components
- It is not possible for students to study Paper 3 - New Testament Studies **and** Paper 4B - Christianity as this is a forbidden combination for both AS and A level.
- It should be noted that not every topic listed below will be assessed in every examination paper year on year and that it is possible for the same topic to appear in any section of the examination paper.

Philosophy of Religion	Religion and Ethics	New Testament Studies	Study of Religion
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Philosophical issues and questions - The nature & influence of religious experience - Problems of evil and suffering - Religious language - Works of scholars - Influences and developments in religious belief 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Significant concepts in issues and debates in religion and ethics - A study of three ethical theories - Application of ethical theories to issues of importance - Ethical language - Deontology, Virtue Ethics and the works of scholars - Medical ethics: beginning and end of life issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Social, historical and religious context of the New Testament - Texts and interpretation of the Person of Jesus - Interpreting the text and issues of relationship, purpose and authorship - Ways of interpreting the scripture - Texts and interpretation: the Kingdom of God, conflict, the death and resurrection of Jesus - Scientific and historical-critical challenges, ethical living and the works of scholars 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Religious beliefs, values and teachings - Sources of wisdom and authority - Practices that shape and express religious identity - Social and historical developments - Works of scholars - Religion and society

4. Content guidance

4.2 The Anthology

The A level course is supported by the *A Level Religious Studies Anthology* which can be found online on the Pearson qualifications website. This anthology is unique to the Pearson A level qualification and enables teachers and students to have easy and instant access to the key texts, ideas and thinkers they need to study the course. The Anthology should be used as a 'starting point' for students and they should be encouraged to read and engage with the additional contributors listed.

Students must study each of the extracts from key scholars in each of their chosen component choices.

Each extract is linked to a specific area of content within the specification which is marked using a number and a bracket e.g. (1) against the relevant content in the specification. These extracts are not exclusive to the topic areas under which they appear; students will need to be able to apply these extracts across any suitable topic.

Below is a summary of where each of the extracts can be used.

Component 1 – Philosophy of Religion

3. Problems of evil and suffering 3.1 Problem of evil and suffering (1)	Extract 1: J.L. Mackie 'Evil and Omnipotence' (1977)
4. Religious Language 4.2 Verification and falsification debates (2) (3)	Extracts 2 & 3: Antony Flew and R. M. Hare 'Theology and Falsification: A Symposium' (1971)
5. Works of scholars 5.2 A comparison between a critic of religion, Bertrand Russell, and a religious believer, Frederick Copleston (4)	Extract 4: The Existence of God – A Debate between Bertrand Russell and Father Frederick C Copleston (1948)

Component 2 – Religion and Ethics

2. A Study of three ethical theories 2.2 Situation Ethics (1)	Extract 1: William Barclay, 'Situation Ethics' (1971)
5. Deontology, Virtue Ethics and the works of scholars 5.1 (a) Kantian deontology (2)	Extract 2: Immanuel Kant, 'Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Moral's (1785)
5. Deontology, Virtue Ethics and the works of scholars 5.1 (b) Aristotelian virtue ethics (3)	Extract 3: Aristotle, 'The Nicomachean Ethics, Book II' (350 BCE)
6. Medical ethics: beginning and end of life issues 6.1 Issues in medical ethics with a focus on beginning and end of life debates (4)	Extract 4: Michael Wilcockson, 'Euthanasia and Doctor's Ethics' (1999)

Component 3 – New Testament Studies

<p>1. Social, historical and religious context of the New Testament</p> <p>1.1 Prophecy regarding the Messiah (1)</p>	Extract 1: Matthew 1:18-2:33
<p>2. Texts and interpretation of the Person of Jesus</p> <p>2.1 The Prologue in John (2)</p>	Extract 2: John 1:1-18
<p>2. Texts and interpretation of the Person of Jesus</p> <p>2.2 Titles of Jesus in the synoptic gospels and selected 'I am' sayings in John (3)</p>	Extract 3: John 6:24-59, 8:12, 9:1-12, 10:1-21, 15:1-17
<p>2. Texts and interpretation of the Person of Jesus</p> <p>2.3 Miracles and signs (4)</p>	Extract 4: John 2:1-11, 4:43-54, 5:1-15, 6:1-24, 9:1-34, 11:1-57.
<p>5. Texts and Interpretation: the Kingdom of God, conflict, the death and resurrection of Jesus</p> <p>5.1 Texts and interpretations – the Kingdom of God in Luke: parables of the kingdom and eschatology (5)</p>	Extract 5: Luke 8:1-15, 11:14-32, 13:22-30, 14:15-24, 17:20-37, 18:18-30, 19:11-27.
<p>5. Texts and Interpretation: the Kingdom of God, conflict, the death and resurrection of Jesus</p> <p>5.2 Why did Jesus have to die? (6)</p>	Extract 6: John 2:12-25, 5:16-47, 7:25-52, 8:12-59, 9:13-34, 10:22-42, 11:45-57, 18:1-19:16
<p>5. Texts and Interpretation: the Kingdom of God, conflict, the death and resurrection of Jesus</p> <p>5.3 The crucifixion and resurrection narratives in Luke's Gospel (7)</p>	Extract 7: Luke 23:26-24:53
<p>6. Scientific and historical-critical challenges, ethical living and the works of scholars</p> <p>6.1 b) the work of Ian Wilson and Frank Morison on the historical evidence for the resurrection of Jesus (8) (9)</p>	<p>Extracts 8: Frank Morison, 'Between Sunset and Dawn' (2015)</p> <p>Extract 9: Luke 10:25-37, 15:1-32, 16:19-31.</p> <p>Extract 10: Ian Wilson, 'Did Jesus Really Rise from the Dead?' (1996)</p>
<p>6. Scientific and historical-critical challenges, ethical living and the works of scholars</p> <p>6.2 How should we live? (10)</p>	<p>Extract 9: Luke 10:25-37, 15:1-32, 16:19-31.</p> <p>Extract 10: Ian Wilson, 'Did Jesus Really Rise from the Dead?' (1996)</p>

4. Content guidance

Component 4 Option 4A - Buddhism

<p>2. Sources of wisdom and authority 2.1 The life and work of the Buddha (1)</p>	<p>Extract 1: Karen Armstrong, 'Enlightenment' (2002).</p>
<p>5. Works of scholars 5.1 Comparison of the bodhisattva doctrine in the works of two scholars (2) (3)</p>	<p>Extract 2: A. L. Basham, 'The Bodhisattva' (1969)</p> <p>Extract 3: W Rahula, 'Bodhisattva Ideal in Buddhism' (1996)</p>
<p>6. Religion and society 6.1 The interpretation and application of ahimsa for a Buddhist in the modern world</p>	<p>Extract 4: Yodhajiva Sutta: To Yodhajiva (The Warrior), SN 42.3</p>

Component 4 – Option 4B – Christianity

<p>2. Sources of wisdom and authority 2.2 The nature and role of Jesus (1)</p>	<p>Extract 1: Jurgen Moltman, 'The Suffering of God' (1995)</p>
<p>4. Social and historical developments 4.1 Science (2)</p>	<p>Extract 2: A. McGrath, 'Deluded about God?' (2007)</p>
<p>5. Works of scholars 5.2 A comparison of key ideas in the work of Karl Barth and John Hick (3) (4)</p>	<p>Extract 3: John Hick, 'Atonement by the Blood of Jesus?' (1993)</p> <p>Extract 4: Karl Barth, 'Jesus Christ, the Lord as Servant' (1932-1967)</p>

Component 4 – Option 4C - Hinduism

<p>1. Religious beliefs, values and teachings 1.3 Key moral principles (1)</p>	<p>Extract 1: P. Billimoria, 'Indian ethics' (2001)</p>
<p>4. Social and historical developments including challenges and responses 4.1 Movements (4)</p>	<p>Extract 2: Whitfield Foy, 'Hindu Dharma, M.K. Gandhi' (1977)</p>
<p>5. Works of scholars 5.1 Comparative study of ideas in the works of Shankara and Ramanuja (3) (4)</p>	<p>Extract 3: N. Smart, 'Hinduism' (2010)</p> <p>Extract 4: J.L. Brockington, 'Bhakti in the South' and 'The Orthodox Synthesis' (1996)</p>

Component 4 – Option 4D - Islam

<p>2. Sources of wisdom and authority 2.3 The interpretation, significance, treatment and use of the Qur'an</p>	Extract 1: Surah 1 and Surah 2
<p>5. Works of scholars 5.1 Comparative study of Jihad in the works of two scholars (2) (3)</p>	<p>Extract 2: Tariq Ramadan, 'The Call to Jihad' (2001)</p> <p>Extract 3: M. Khadduri, 'The Doctrine of Jihad' (1955)</p>
<p>6. Religion and Society 6.2 (b) The challenging roles and importance of men and women and the challenge of feminism in Islam today (4)</p>	Extract 4: Leila Ahmed, 'Conclusion' (1992)

Component 4 – Option 4E - Judaism

<p>1. Religious beliefs, values and teachings 1.4 Values (1)</p>	Extract 1: M. Kellner, 'Jewish Ethics' (2001).
<p>4. Social and historical developments 4.3 Holocaust (2)</p>	Extract 2: Elie Wiesel, 'Night' (1958)
<p>5. Works of scholars 5.1 Comparative study of Maimonides and Moses Mendelssohn (3) (4)</p>	<p>Extract 3: G. Robinson, 'The Philosopher: The continuing evolution of Jewish thought' (2008)</p> <p>Extract 4: L. Goodman, 'Judaism' (2010)</p>

Component 4 – Option 4F - Sikhism

<p>1. Religious beliefs, values and teachings 1.1 Sikhs and the divine (1)</p>	Extract 1: Owen Cole and Piara Singh Sambhi, 'Sikh Religious Thought' (1998)
<p>2. Sources of wisdom and authority 2.2 The lives of the ten Gurus as teachers and exemplars for Sikhs (2)</p>	Extract 2: Nicky-Guninder Kaur-Singh, 'Guru Nanak and the Origins of Sikhism' (2011)
<p>5. Works of scholars 5.1 The importance of the feminine principle in Sikh thought. With reference to the ideas of N.K. Singh and D Jakobsh (3) (4)</p>	<p>Extract 3: Nicky-Guninder Kaur-Singh, 'Feminist Text in a Patriarchal Context' (2011)</p> <p>Extract 4: Doris R Jakobsh, 'Sikhism, Interfaith Dialogue, and Women: Transformation and Identity' (2006)</p>

5. Assessment guidance

5.1 Implications of linear assessment

For the AS and the A level qualifications, all of the exams must be sat at the end of the course. Normally this would be after one year for AS and after two years for A level.

There will be no January assessment window, and it will not be possible to take exams for the same qualification in a different exam series: all assessment must be completed at the end of the course.

It will not be possible for students to re-sit individual components. Students may re-take the whole AS or A level qualification.

5.2 Question types and Command words

For both AS and A level, the content will be assessed via external examinations. All papers use the same question types and command words for that level to help students address each of the Assessment objectives.

These are outlined in the tables below.

AS level

Command word	Definition	Question number and section
Analyse	Deconstruct information and/or issues to find connections and provide logical chains of reasoning in order to make judgements regarding their importance/relevance to the question context.	Section: B Question number: 4 (b)
Assess	Requires reasoned argument of factors to reach a judgement regarding their importance/relevance to the question context.	Section: A Question number: 2 and 3
Explore	Demonstrate understanding by investigating different reasons, concepts and ideas.	Section: A and B Question number: 1 and 4(a)

A level

Command word	Definition	Question number and section
Analyse	Deconstruct information and/or issues to find connections and provide logical chains of reasoning in order to make judgements regarding their importance/relevance to the question context.	Section: B Question number: 3 (b)

Assess	Requires reasoned argument of factors to reach a judgement regarding their importance/relevance to the question context.	Section: A Question number: 2
Clarify	Identify key ideas and explain key concepts.	Section: B Question number: 3 (a)
Evaluate	Review/analyse information, bringing it together to form a conclusion/judgement based on strengths/weaknesses, alternatives, relevant data or information. Come to a supported judgement of a subject's qualities and relation to its context.	Section: C Question number: 4
Explore	Demonstrate understanding by investigating different reasons, concepts and ideas.	Section: A Question number: 1

5.3 Breakdown of questions and requirement for each question

AS Level

Section A

This section consists of three questions. Question 1 targets solely AO1, and requires students to display specific knowledge and understanding of the specification content.

As the student progresses through the section, they will be required to display more analysis and evaluation skills when constructing their answer.

Question 1

This is an 8-mark 'Explore' question targeting AO1.

Questions 2 and 3

These are 9-mark, open-response 'Assess' questions targeting 3 AO1 marks and 6 AO2 marks equally divided between analysis and evaluation. This will require students to move beyond explanation of a religious studies concept and start to demonstrate AO2 skills and come to a conclusion about an issue, concept or argument.

Section B

This section consists of a two-part question.

Question 4(a)

This is an 8-mark 'Explore' question targeting AO1. This requires students to demonstrate their understanding of the issue in the question.

Question 4(b)

This is a 20-mark, extended-response 'Analyse' question predominantly targeting AO2 (there are 5 AO1 marks and 15 AO2 marks). These questions will be linked to the topic assessed in 4(a). Students will be rewarded for finding relations or links to other areas of the specification, although this is not necessary to attain full marks. There are 5 AO1 marks in order to reward students for information they require to underpin their analysis.

5. Assessment guidance

A Level

Section A

This section consists of two structured questions. Question 1 targets solely AO1, and requires students to display specific knowledge and understanding of specification content.

As the student progresses through the section, they will be required to display more analysis and evaluation skills when constructing their answer. This will start to allow them the opportunity to display their skills in constructing arguments related to GCE Religious Studies content.

Question 1

This is an 8-mark 'Explore' question targeting AO1.

Question 2

This is a 12-mark, open-response 'Assess' question, targeting 4 AO1 marks and 8 AO2 marks equally divided between analysis and evaluation. This will require students to move beyond explanation of a religious studies concept and start to demonstrate AO2 skills and come to a conclusion about an issue, concept or argument.

Section B

This section relates to an excerpt sourced from the list of extracts. This text will be between 100 and 150 words, and from a source familiar to candidates. Candidates will be able to overcome the challenge of language within these extracts as they will have been studied in class. These are published in the *A Level Religious Studies Anthology* which can be downloaded from the Pearson qualifications website. Candidates will not be required to take a copy of the anthology into the examination. Relevant excerpts will be printed in the examination paper.

It will be followed by a two-part question.

Question 3(a)

This is a 10-mark, extended response 'Clarify' question targeting AO1. This question requires students to demonstrate their ability to expand on the concepts within the excerpt and show understanding of them.

Question 3(b)

This is a 20-mark, extended response 'Analyse' question predominantly targeting AO2 (there are 5 AO1 marks and 15 AO2 marks). Students are required to analyse and evaluate. There are five AO1 marks in order to reward students for information they require to underpin their analysis.

Section C

This section is one essay question. Each question will require students to draw upon their knowledge and understanding of how developments in one area have been influenced by one other area of their course of study. Questions include an instruction to students like the one below:

In your response to this question, you must include how developments in Religion and Ethics have been influenced by one of the following:

- *Philosophy of Religion*
- *New Testament Studies*
- *the study of a religion.*

The areas from which students may select will change depending upon the paper in which the question is set.

Question 4

These questions are 30-mark 'Evaluate' essay questions targeting 5 AO1 marks and 25 AO2 marks. They require students to explore an issue in depth, and draw links between it and other areas of their course of study in order to access marks in the top band. This question will enable students to display their full abilities in constructing an argument based on sound reasoning and will also require them to draw upon other areas of their course of study to show how the different topics they have studied have influenced or been influenced by each other.

5.4 Assessment objectives

The AS and A level qualifications have the same Assessment objectives, but the weightings of each are different between the qualifications.

The table below shows the Assessment objectives in full along with their weighting for each qualification.

	Students must:	% for AS	% for A level
AO1	Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> religious, philosophical and/or ethical thought and teaching influence of beliefs, teachings and practices on individuals, communities and societies cause and significance of similarities and differences in belief, teaching and practice approaches to the study of religion and belief 	50%	60%
AO2	Analyse and evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief, including their significance, influence and study	50%	40%

These Assessment objectives are then broken down across each examination paper as follows.

AS

Section	Question	Command word	Marks for AO1	Marks for AO2
A	1	Explore	8	
A	2	Assess	3	6
A	3	Assess	3	6
B	4(a)	Explore	8	
B	4(b)	Analyse	5	15

A level

Section	Question	Command word	Marks for AO1	Marks for AO2
A	1	Explore	8	
A	2	Assess	4	8
B	3(a)	Clarify	10	
B	3(b)	Analyse	5	15
C	4	Evaluate	5	25

5. Assessment guidance

5.4 Mark schemes

The mark schemes for AS and A level for AO1 and AO2 are very similar in order to ensure co-teaching across the course. The majority of the questions are assessed using a levels-based mark scheme and markers will use these grids to assess the responses for both AO1 and AO2. Levels-based mark schemes consists of two sections:

- indicative content that reflects specific points a student might make under the relevant AO when answering that particular question
- a levels-based grid that reflects the skills and attributes for the particular AO that is being targeted.

The indicative content and levels-based grids must be considered together when considering the response.

Questions targeting both AO1 and AO2 together clearly indicate how the marks are allocated to each AO in the mark schemes. The bullet points in each descriptor are in direct proportion to the weighting of the AOs being targeted. The bullet point descriptors for AO2 reflect the elements (analysis or evaluation) that are being assessed and where the elements are assessed together, the descriptors reflect how they are weighted.

Example of an AO1 mark scheme – AS and A level – question 1

Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable material
Level 1	1-2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A narrow range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected but are unlikely to be used appropriately or accurately (AO1)• Knowledge and understanding addresses a narrow range of key religious ideas and beliefs with some inaccuracies (AO1)• Provides a superficial understanding of key religious ideas and beliefs (AO1)
Level 2	3-5	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected most of which are used appropriately with some inaccuracies (AO1)• Knowledge and understanding addresses a narrow range of key religious ideas and beliefs (AO1)• Develops key religious ideas and beliefs to show a depth of understanding (AO1)
Level 3	6-8	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A wide range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are carefully selected and used appropriately, accurately and sustained throughout (AO1)• Knowledge and understanding addresses a broad range of key religious ideas and beliefs (AO1)• Comprehensively develops key religious ideas and beliefs to show a depth of understanding (AO1)

Example of an AO1 and AO2 mark scheme – A level – question 4

Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable material
Level 1	1-6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A narrow range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected but are unlikely to be used appropriately or accurately (AO1) • Information/issues are identified (AO2) • Makes basic connection between a limited range of elements in the question (AO2) • Judgements are supported by generic arguments (AO2) • Judgements made with no attempt to appraise evidence (AO2) • Conclusions are provided but are simplistic and/or generic (AO2)
Level 2	7-12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A limited range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected, some of which are used appropriately with some inaccuracies (AO1) • Deconstructs religious information/issues (AO2) • Makes connections between a limited range of elements in the question (AO2) • Judgements of the limited range of elements in the question are made (AO2) • Judgements made with little or no attempt to appraise evidence (AO2) • Conclusions are provided, which loosely draw together ideas but with little or no attempt to justify (AO2)
Level 3	13-18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected most of which are used appropriately with some inaccuracies (AO1) • Deconstructs religious information/issues, which lead to a simplistic chain of reasoning (AO2) • Makes connections between many but not all of the elements in the question (AO2) • Judgements of a limited range of elements in the question are made (AO2) • Judgements are supported by an attempt to appraise evidence (AO2) • Conclusions are provided, which logically draw together ideas and are partially justified (AO2)
Level 4	19-24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A wide range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are carefully selected, most of which are used appropriately and accurately throughout (AO1) • Deconstructs religious information/issues leading to coherent and logical chains of reasoning (AO2) • Makes connections between a wide range of elements in the question (AO2) • Constructs coherent and reasoned judgements of many but not all of elements of the question (AO2)

5. Assessment guidance

		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reasoned judgements are supported by the appraisal of some evidence (AO2)• Convincing conclusions are provided which fully and logically draw together ideas and are partially justified (AO2)
Level 5	25-30	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A wide range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are carefully selected and used appropriately, accurately and sustained throughout (AO1)• Critically deconstructs religious information/issues leading to coherent and logical chains of reasoning (AO2)• Makes connections between the full range of elements in the question (AO2)• Constructs coherent and reasoned judgements of the full range of elements in the question (AO2)• Reasoned judgements are fully supported by the comprehensive appraisal of evidence (AO2)• Convincing conclusions are provided which fully and logically draw together ideas and are fully justified (AO2).