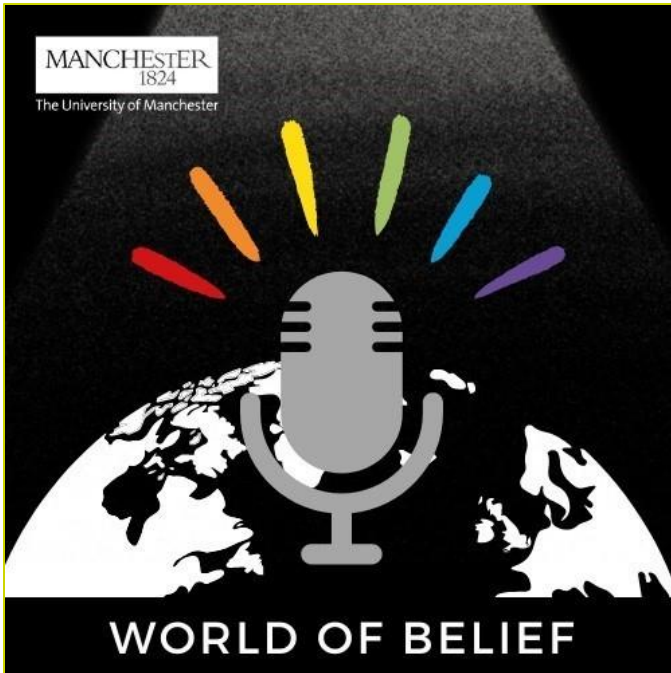


# Pearson Edexcel A level Religious Studies

## Manchester University World of Belief Podcasts



World of Belief is a new podcast that explores some of the most complex, emerging questions about the human experience through the lens of religion and faith. Representing a spectrum of views, the series engages listeners in critical thought about the role religion plays in reacting to modern issues.

The podcast is presented by Dr Holly Morse of the University of Manchester and is produced by Amanda Hancox.

Link to  
information



Dr Holly Morse, Senior Lecturer from The University of Manchester's Department of Religions and Theology talks to people from multiple faith groups to discuss how they relate to questions surrounding the environment, free will, artificial intelligence and sexuality.

Holly Morse said: "We wanted to make a podcast about modern belief, with voices from different faiths talking about some of life's biggest questions."

Link to podcast  
series



Each episode of the podcast also links in with elements of the A-level Religious Studies curriculum, making the series not just a great listen for those interested in contemporary religion, but also a valuable resource for teachers and students.

World of Belief is available to listen now on Spotify, Amazon Music, YouTube, Apple Podcasts, Google Podcasts and Castbox\*.

# Pearson Edexcel A level Religious Studies

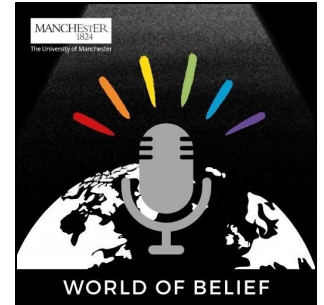
## Manchester University World of Belief Podcasts

Season 1: Episode 1 (29:32)

### Environment



*In recent decades we have witnessed a host of natural disasters around the world of almost biblical proportion. As scientists warn of the increasing dangers of climate change, how can we humans understand our role in causing but also combating environmental disaster? In this episode Dr Holly Morse talks to four young people from different religions about the ways in which they look to their faiths to answer this question and many more about the environment and the future of the planet.*



Timings and speakers:

- 2'40 **Holly Peterson:** *Christian Climate Action*
- 5'55 **Katja Behrendt:** *XR Buddhists*
- 13'28 **Amandeep Kaur Mann:** *Eco Sikh UK*
- 19'40 **Sanjay Gohil:** *Bhaktivedanta Manor*

This episode discusses decisions around the environment with members of four different religious communities. Discussions focus on extinction rebellion, **stewardship, agape, meditation, Bodhisattva** ideals, **metta**, climate justice, **ahimsa** and **seva** are considered\*.

Links that could be made to Edexcel A level Religious Studies:

- **Paper 1:** Creation themes, Gaia hypothesis.
- **Paper 2:** Environmental issues, Ethical theories, War and peace, Relationship between religion and morality
- **Paper 3:** Christian ethical teaching
- **Paper 4A:** Buddhist beliefs, meditation, Triratna Buddhism, Bodhisattva ideals, Ahimsa
- **Paper 4B:** Creation, stewardship, key moral principles
- **Paper 4C:** Ahimsa, Pluralism and diversity
- **Paper 4F:** Oneness, seva, social justice, teachings of the Gurus

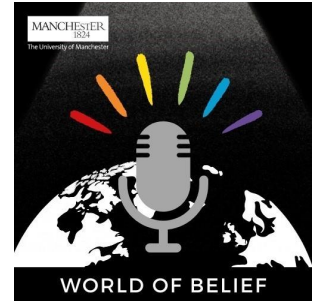
## Manchester University World of Belief Podcasts

Season 1: Episode 2 (36:06)

### Artificial Intelligence



*For many of us our daily lives are shaped by our interactions with technology, from the moment we wake up to the moment we go to sleep – and perhaps even while we sleep! From playing our favourite songs, or asking about the weather, to navigating our way around towns, cities or the countryside, if we're stuck for an answer many of us rely on Artificial Intelligence (AI) assistants like Siri or Alexa to help us out. But are our lives now becoming so controlled by technology that it is beginning to change our understanding of humanity? In this episode, Holly Morse chats to people who live and work in the world of AI and what this means for their understanding of religion in a range of different faith traditions.*



Timings and speakers:

- 2'45 **Tim Foley:** Writer of *Electric Rosary* and regular contributor to *Dr Who* audio drama
- 11'53 **Thomas Arnold:** Research Associate in the Human-Robot Interaction Laboratory, at Tufts University
- 21'10 **Lior Cole:** Designer of Robo Rabbi, Cornell University Student and Fashion Model
- 28'24 **Yaqub Chaudhary:** Research Fellow in AI, Philosophy and Theology at Cambridge Muslim College in Cambridge

This episode discusses questions around the use of artificial intelligence (AI) and technology in our modern lives and within religion. Discussions focus on **ethical** concerns, **consciousness**, **personhood**, the **soul**, and the role technology can have in religious communities\*.

Links that could be made to Edexcel A level Religious Studies:

- **Paper 1:** Arguments for the existence of God, religious experience, religious language
- **Paper 2:** Ethical theories, Meta-ethics, Virtue ethics, medical ethics
- **Paper 4B:** God as creator
- **Paper 4E:** Religious values, Sources of wisdom, Nature of the soul, Rabbinic Judaism

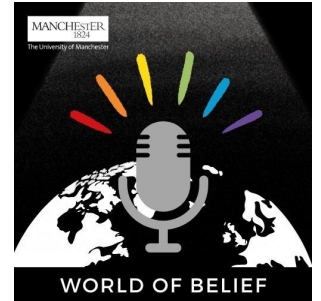
## Manchester University World of Belief Podcasts

Season 1: Episode 3 (38:35)

### Free Will



*In today's modern, globalised world, our fast-paced lives can often feel overwhelmed by choice. But are we ever truly free to shape our own future? Do we all have the same liberty to determine the direction of our lives? Or are our decisions already always shaped for us, by our biological make-up, or our psychological states, or even by a divine plan? In this podcast Dr Holly Morse speaks to three amazing people from different faiths about their extraordinary lives, and the ways the events and experiences they have been through have shaped the way they understand free will.*



Timings and speakers:

- 2'45 **Pastor Mick** - founder of Church on the Street
- 15'54 **Rehena Harilall** - Buddhist activist and psychologist
- 30'17 **Rabba Dr Lindsey Taylor-Guthartz** - Orthodox Rabbi

This episode discusses questions freedom, choice and the extent to which decisions are determined or limited. It touches on **religious experience**, namely **conversion experiences, morality, Jesus' resurrection, the three poisons, and freedom around gender roles within Judaism\***.

Links that could be made to Edexcel A level Religious Studies:

- **Paper 1:** Arguments for the existence of God, Religious Experience, Problem of evil and suffering
- **Paper 2:** Relationship between religion and morality
- **Paper 3:** Why did Jesus have to die? Crucifixion and Resurrection, How should we live?
- **Paper 4A:** The three poisons, five khandas.
- **Paper 4B:** Nature of God as personal, key moral principles
- **Paper 4E:** Religious values, Sources of wisdom, Jewish identity, Equality and the role of women.

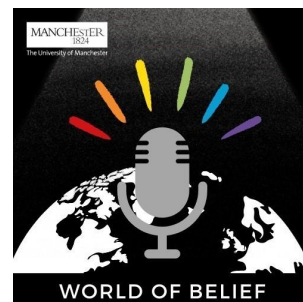
## Manchester University World of Belief Podcasts

Season 1: Episode 4 (42:49)

### Sexuality



*Sex and religion, uncomfortable bedfellows or close companions? Different religions seem to find it hard to agree. For most world religions, it is possible to find contained within each a whole spectrum of conflicting beliefs about sex and desire; from ardent rejections of queer sexuality, to whole-hearted embraces of the LGBTQ+ love. With all this disagreement and tension, we might ultimately be left wondering, what's faith got to do with our sex lives and romantic connections? In this episode Holly Morse talks to three incredible people from different faiths about the major challenges but also the powerful joys of LGBTQ+ experiences of faith and religion.*



Timings and speakers:

1'45 **Revd Sarah Hildreth-Osborn** - Rector of St Grwst Church

14'50 **Ibtisam Ahmed** - Head of Policy and Research at the LGBT Foundation

29.30 **Benji Park** - Fashion Blogger

This episode discusses questions around faith and sexuality and the diversity of interpretation and attitudes within religions. Discussions focus on **morality**, textual interpretation, **revelation**, scripture, culture and modern society\*.

Links that could be made to Edexcel A level Religious Studies:

- **Paper 2:** Situation Ethics, Natural Moral Law, Sexual ethics
- **Paper 4B:** Nature of God, Key Moral principles, The Bible
- **Paper 4D:** Religion and Society, Gender and Islam, Challenges of secularisation
- **Paper 4E:** Religious values, Orthodox and Reform, Modern developments of Judaism, Religious pluralism, Equality and discrimination

# Further Support for Edexcel Religious Studies



## Contact the Religious Studies team:

Email: [teachingreligiousstudies@pearson.com](mailto:teachingreligiousstudies@pearson.com)

Phone: +44 (0) 344 463 2535 (Mon – Fri, 9am – 5pm GMT)

Contact online: <https://bit.ly/2KLSNT0>

Book a Teams meeting with the subject advisor:  
<https://bit.ly/3rEVLx8>

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