

GCSE 2016 Religious Studies

Overview of draft
specifications

July 2015



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Agenda

- Introducing the reforms to GCSE (9-1) qualifications
- The proposed structure of our new specifications
- The proposed approach to our assessment of the qualifications
- The wide range of support to help you make the transition
- Next steps



Our approach

- We're working with the teaching community, higher education, learned societies and subject associations to design our new GCSE Religious Studies specifications for 2016. Our ambition is to develop Religious Studies qualifications that you will know and recognise, and to allow you to teach topics and religions you know your students will enjoy.
- We have commissioned and conducted our own research, including international benchmarking and trialing. This research will help us to build on the strengths of our current specification and to identify the skills students need to progress to further study in Religious Studies.



GCSE Reform

- Fully linear structure and updated subject criteria for content and assessment
- New 9-1 grading scale with 9 being the top level
- Tiering only in certain subjects such as Maths and Science
- Policy of external assessment only unless non-examined assessment (coursework) is the only valid option. GCSE RS is 100% external assessment (exam).



Timeline

Specification	2015	2016	2017	2018
Current Specification	Summer series as normal	Summer series as normal	Last assessment	
New 2016 Specification		First teaching of two year GCSE		First assessment

- The last available assessment for the current GCSEs will be June 2017
- The reformed GCSEs will be reported in the 2018 performance tables



Submission timeline

- **August 2015:** Submission of draft specifications and sample assessment materials to Ofqual
- **August 2015:** Draft specifications and sample assessment materials will be available on the Pearson website
- **September/October 2015:** FREE face-to-face and online launch events
- **After accreditation:** accredited materials available on the Pearson website
- **2016:** FREE face-to-face and online Getting Ready to Teach events



Grading

NEW GCSE GRADING STRUCTURE									
9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	U
A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U	U
CURRENT GCSE GRADING STRUCTURE									

- Broadly the same proportion of students will achieve a **grade 4** and above as currently achieve a **grade C** and above.
- Broadly the same proportion of students will achieve a **grade 7** and above as currently achieve an **A** and above.
- The bottom of **grade 1** will be aligned with the bottom of **grade G**.



The GCSE reforms: Changes in RS

- Students must study two religions
- More content has been added to the criteria and now details Areas of Study for each religion
- Specific philosophical, ethical and religious themes have been introduced
- The criteria has been split into two parts (A & B) to allow specifications to be designed with two different approaches
 - One allows a 75/25 split between 2 religions
 - One allows a 50/50 split between 2 religions



The GCSE reforms: Religions

Students must study **two** religions, from the following:

- Buddhism
- Christianity or Catholic Christianity
- Hinduism
- Islam
- Judaism
- Sikhism



The GCSE reforms: Assessment Objectives

	Objective	Weighting
AO1	Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief including: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• beliefs, practices and sources of authority• influence of individuals, communities and societies• similarities and differences within and/or between religions and beliefs	50%
AO2	Analyse and evaluate aspects of religion and belief, including their significance and influence.	50%



Our Offer: Two specifications



Specification A Faith and Practice in the 21st Century	Specification B Beliefs in Action
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Study of two religions split 75/25• Primary religion is Christianity, Catholic Christianity or Islam• Choice of Philosophy and Ethics or Textual Study in primary religion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Study of two religions split 50/50• Any combination of the two religions*• Choose two components from:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ethics,• Peace & Conflict,• Philosophy

*The two religions can not be Christianity and Catholic Christianity



Specification A: Faith and Practice in the 21st Century

- 75% of the course based on the study of one religion allowing you to focus on one religion in depth
- Offers choice between Philosophy and Ethics and Textual study of Marks Gospel or the Qu'ran to help you build a course to suit your students
- Brings to life the foundations of faith and practice.





Specification A full course: Draft Content

edexcel 



Study of 1 religion focusing on:

- Beliefs and teachings
- Practices
- Sources of wisdom and authority
- Forms of expression and ways of life

Study of a 2nd religion focusing on:

- Beliefs and teachings
- Practices

AND either:

- Two themes adopting a textual approach
- Two themes adopting the approach of religious, philosophical and ethical studies in the modern world



Specification A full course: Draft Assessment Model

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Component	Overview	Assessment
Primary Religion: 1 from Christianity, Catholic Christianity or Islam	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Beliefs and teaching• Practices• Sources of W&A• Ways of Life	50% - Examination 1hr 45 mins 112 marks
Second Religion: 1 of 7 religions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Beliefs and teaching• Practices	25% - Examination 50 mins 56 marks
EITHER: Philosophy and Ethics (primary religion)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Existence of God• Relationships & family	25% - Examination 50 mins 56 marks
OR: Textual Study (primary religion)	One of: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• St Mark's Gospel• Qur'an Choice of 2 questions	25% - Examination 50 mins 56 marks



Specification A short course: Draft Model

Component	Overview	Assessment
Christianity or Catholic Christianity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Beliefs and teaching• Practices	50% - Examination 1 hour
Islam	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Beliefs and teaching• Practices	50% - Examination 1 hour

Students would study **either**:

- Christianity and Islam
- Catholic Christianity and Islam





Specification B: Beliefs in Action

- Choice of 2 from 7* religions allowing you to build a course to suit your students
- Equally weighted components to allow you to focus 50% on each religion and area of study
- Teach key themes and content through Philosophical and Ethical issues to help bring the course to life
- Choice of 2 components from a list of 3 to help you engage your students

*The two religions can not be Christianity and Catholic Christianity





Specification B full course: Draft Content

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Study two religions through the choice of two components from a list of three

- Ethics
- Peace & Conflict
- Philosophy

Areas of study are drawn from:

- Relationships and families
- Religious views of the world
- The existence of God, gods and ultimate reality
- Religion, peace and conflict
- Crime and punishment
- Dialogue within and between religions and non-religious beliefs
- Religion, human rights and social justice



Specification B full course: Draft Assessment Model

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Choice of 2 of the following 3 components:

Component	Overview	Assessment
Ethics Choice of 7 religions (must be different to component 2 or 3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• God• The Family• Worship• Life & Death	50% examination 1hr 45 mins
Peace and Conflict Choice of 7 religions (must be different to component 1 or 3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• God• Reconciliation• Worship• Peace	50% examination 1hr 45 mins
Philosophy Choice of 7 religions (must be different to component 1 or 2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• God• Belief• Worship• Equality	50% examination 1hr 45 mins

*The two religions can not be Christianity and Catholic Christianity



Specification B short course: edexcel

Draft Model

Component	Overview	Assessment
Ethics Choice of 7 religions (must be different to component 2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• God• The Family• Worship• Life & Death	50% examination 1 hour
Peace and Conflict Choice of 7 religions (must be different to component 1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• God• Reconciliation• Worship• Peace	50% examination 1 hour

- Students would study two religions* across two components
- The Areas of Study are the same titles as the full course but have less content



*The two religions can not be Christianity and Catholic Christianity



Approach to Assessment Draft structure

- The proposal for both specifications is that each section on the paper would be assessed via 4 compulsory questions assessing knowledge, understanding and evaluation.
- We are proposing clear assessment structures to the paper and mark schemes so you know exactly what will be assessed
- We are also proposing a clear use of command words to help your students prepare for the assessment





Poll

Which of the following specifications do you think you might offer from 2016?

- Spec A full course
- Spec A short course
- Spec B full course
- Spec B short course



Support

- Getting started guides
- Course planners
- Schemes of work
- Mapping documents
- Exemplars
- Guidance documents



AS and A level Religious Studies

- Redeveloped for first teaching September 2016
- First assessment AS – 2017, A level - 2018
- Students choose 3 out of 4 components:
 - Philosophy of Religion
 - Religion and Ethics
 - New Testament Studies
 - Study of Religion – choice of 6





Published Resources

- We are committed to helping teachers deliver our Edexcel qualifications and students to achieve their full potential
- To do this, we aim for our qualifications to be supported by a wide range of high-quality resources, produced by a range of publishers, including ourselves
- However, it is not necessary to purchase endorsed resources to deliver our qualifications



Endorsed Resources

- Pearson - Our new Edexcel GCSE Religious Studies resources will provide support for the new specifications, for first teaching from September 2016.
- Hodder – Victor Watton and Hodder Education will guide you through the 2016 GCSE RS specifications with brand new Student's Books.
- OUP - Oxford is publishing new resources for Edexcel GCSE RS. Visit www.oxfordsecondary.co.uk/edexcel-gcse-rs to find out more
- ZigZag - Photocopiable and digital resources for the new GCSE and A Level RS specifications range for learning, revision and exam practice.

*These resources have not yet been endorsed. This information is correct as of 23rd June 2015, but may be subject to change. Pearson policy means that our senior examining team can not write published resources.



Next Steps

- Sign up for a launch event via the Pearson website
- Sign up for Religious Studies updates on the Pearson website
- Contact the Religious Studies team with any questions:

Email: TeachingReligiousStudies@pearson.com

Tel: 0844 463 2817



Questions?