



DRAFT 11/12/15 STAGE 2 SUBMISSION

WJEC GCE AS and A level in RELIGIOUS STUDIES

For teaching from 2016

For AS award from 2017

For A level award from 2018

This specification meets the GCE AS and A Level Qualification Principles which set out the requirements for all new or revised GCE specifications developed to be taught in Wales from September 2016.

	Page
Summary of assessment	2
1. Introduction	4
1.1 Aims and objectives	4
1.2 Prior learning and progression	5
1.3 Equality and fair access	5
1.4 Welsh Baccalaureate	6
1.5 Welsh perspective	6
2. Subject content	7
2.1 AS Unit 1	9
2.2 AS Unit 2	22
2.3 A level Unit 3	27
2.4 A level Unit 4	40
2.5 A level Unit 5	43
2.6 A level Unit 6	46
3. Assessment	49
3.1 Assessment objectives and weightings	49
4. Technical information	50
4.1 Making entries	50
4.2 Grading, awarding and reporting	51

GCE AS and A level in RELIGIOUS STUDIES

SUMMARY OF ASSESSMENT

This specification is divided into a total of 05 units, 02 AS units and 03 A2 units. Weightings noted below are expressed in terms of the full A level qualification.

AS Units (both compulsory)

Unit 1: An Introduction to the Study of Religion

Written examination: 1 hour 15 mins

15% of qualification

This unit offers the choice of the study of **one religion** from a **choice of six**:

Option A:	Option B:	Option C:	Option D:	Option E:	Option F:
Christianity	Islam	Judaism	Buddhism	Hinduism	Sikhism

This section provides learners with the opportunity to undertake an in-depth and broad study of four fundamental religious themes: religious figures and sacred texts, religious concepts, religious life and religious practices.

Unit 2: An Introduction to Religion and Ethics and the Philosophy of Religion.

Written examination: 1 hour 45 mins

25% of qualification

Section A: An Introduction to Religion and Ethics

This section provides learners with the opportunity to undertake an in-depth and broad study of four fundamental ethical themes: ethical language and thought, Aquinas' Natural Law, Fletcher's Situation Ethics and Utilitarianism.

Section B: An Introduction to Philosophy of Religion

This section provides learners with the opportunity to undertake an in-depth and broad study of four fundamental philosophical themes: cosmological arguments for the existence of God, teleological arguments for the existence of God, the non-existence of God - the problem of evil and religious experience.

A level Units (the two AS units studied plus a further three units).

Unit 3 is compulsory and a choice of **any two other units from 4-6.**)

Unit 3: A Study of Religion

Written examination: 1 hour 30 mins

20% of qualification

This unit offers the choice of the study of **one religion** from a **choice of six**:

Option A:	Option B:	Option C:	Option D:	Option E:	Option F:
Christianity	Islam	Judaism	Buddhism	Hinduism	Sikhism

Learners will be expected to study the same option they studied at AS.

This unit provides learners with the opportunity to undertake an in-depth and broad study of four fundamental religious themes: religious figures and sacred texts, significant historical developments in religious thought, significant social developments in religious thought, and religious practices that shape religious identity.

Unit 4: Religion and Ethics

Written examination: 1 hour 30 mins

20% of qualification

This unit provides learners with the opportunity to undertake an in-depth and broad study of four fundamental ethical themes: ethical language and thought, Kant's Moral, Law, contemporary developments in ethical theory and freewill and determinism.

Unit 5: Philosophy of Religion

Written examination: 1 hour 30 mins

20% of qualification

This unit provides learners with the opportunity to undertake an in-depth and broad study of four fundamental philosophical themes: ontological arguments for the existence of God, challenges to religious belief, religious experience (part 2) and religious language.

Unit 6: Textual Studies (New Testament)

Written examination: 1 hour 30 mins

20% of qualification

This unit provides learners with the opportunity to undertake an in-depth and broad study of four fundamental textual study themes, relating to New Testament literature: miracles, parables, Letters and Apocalyptic.

This is a unitised specification which allows for an element of staged assessment. Assessment opportunities will be available in the summer assessment period each year, until the end of the life of the specification.

Unit 1 and Unit 2 will be available in 2017 (and each year thereafter) and the AS qualification will be awarded for the first time in summer 2017.

Unit 3, 4, 5 and 6 will be available in 2018 (and each year thereafter) and the A level qualification will be awarded for the first time in summer 2018.

Qualification Accreditation Numbers

GCE AS: XXXXXXXX

GCE AS and A level: Religious Studies

GCE AS and A level in RELIGIOUS STUDIES

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Aims and objectives

This WJEC GCE AS and A level specification in Religious Studies will enable learners to:

- develop their interest in a rigorous study of religion and belief and relate it to the wider world
- develop knowledge and understanding appropriate to a specialist study of religion
- develop an understanding and appreciation of religious thought and its contribution to individuals, communities and societies
- adopt an enquiring, critical and reflective approach to the study of religion
- reflect on and develop their own values, opinions and attitudes in the light of their study.

GCE AS and A level Religious Studies are designed to enable learners to develop their interest in, and enthusiasm for, a study of religion and its place in the wider world.

The WJEC AS specification contains two units which include a wide range of topics for consideration, including an in-depth and broad study of one of the six major world religions, religion and ethics and philosophy of religion.

The A level specification allows learners to continue their systematic study of a world religion (compulsory unit) alongside two further units from a choice of religion and ethics, philosophy of religion or textual studies.

The specification is presented in a clear and concise way to ensure that the specification content is accessible, relevant and engaging for both teachers and learners.

1.2 Prior learning and progression

Any requirements set for entry to a course following this specification are at the discretion of centres. It is reasonable to assume that many learners will have achieved qualifications equivalent to Level 2 at KS4. Skills in Numeracy/Mathematics, Literacy/English and Information Communication Technology will provide a good basis for progression to this Level 3 qualification.

This specification builds on the knowledge, understanding and skills established at GCSE. Some learners may have already gained knowledge, understanding and skills through their study of Religious Studies at AS.

This specification provides a suitable foundation for the study of Religious Studies or a related area through a range of higher education courses, progression to the next level of vocational qualifications or employment. In addition, the specification provides a coherent, satisfying and worthwhile course of study for learners who do not progress to further study in this subject.

This specification is not age specific and, as such, provides opportunities for learners to extend their life-long learning.

1.3 Equality and fair access

This specification may be followed by any learner, irrespective of gender, ethnic, religious or cultural background. It has been designed to avoid, where possible, features that could, without justification, make it more difficult for a learner to achieve because they have a particular protected characteristic.

The protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

The specification has been discussed with groups who represent the interests of a diverse range of learners, and the specification will be kept under review.

Reasonable adjustments are made for certain learners in order to enable them to access the assessments (e.g. candidates are allowed access to a Sign Language Interpreter, using British Sign Language). Information on reasonable adjustments is found in the following document from the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ): *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments: General and Vocational Qualifications*.

This document is available on the JCQ website (www.jcq.org.uk). As a consequence of provision for reasonable adjustments, very few learners will have a complete barrier to any part of the assessment.

1.4 Welsh Baccaulaureate

In following this specification, learners should be given opportunities, where appropriate, to develop the skills that are being assessed through the Skills Challenge Certificates within the Welsh Baccaulaureate Certificate:

- Literacy
- Numeracy
- Digital Literacy
- Critical Thinking and Problem Solving
- Planning and Organisation
- Creativity and Innovation
- Personal Effectiveness.

1.5 Welsh perspective

In following this specification, learners should be given opportunities, where appropriate, to consider a Welsh perspective if the opportunity arises naturally from the subject matter and if its inclusion would enrich learners' understanding of the world around them as citizens of Wales as well as the UK, Europe and the world.

2 SUBJECT CONTENT

At AS Level:

Learners must study both Unit 1 and Unit 2

Each unit should be studied in the light of the overall aims and objectives for Religious Studies.

Each unit has been designed to encourage learners to demonstrate their ability to:

- reflect on, select and apply specified knowledge
- understand, interpret and evaluate critically religious concepts, texts and other sources
- identify, investigate and critically analyse questions, arguments, ideas and issues arising from within this unit
- construct well informed and reasoned arguments, substantiated by relevant evidence
- engage in debate in a way that recognises the right of others to hold a different view
- present responses to questions which are clear and coherent
- use specialist language and terminology appropriately.

Each unit has been designed to allow learners to acquire and develop 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).

At A Level:

Learners must study 3 units in total, including compulsory Unit 3 and two further units from a choice of Units 4-6.

Each unit should be studied in the light of the overall aims and objectives for Religious Studies.

Each unit had been designed to encourage learners to demonstrate their ability to:

- reflect on, select and apply specified knowledge about religion and belief
- account for the influence of social, religious and historical factors on developments in the study of religions and beliefs
- construct well informed and reasoned arguments about religion and belief, substantiated by relevant evidence
- engage in debate in a way that recognises the right of others to hold a different view
- understand, interpret and evaluate critically religious concepts, texts and other sources
- present responses to questions which are clear and coherent
- use specialist religious language and terminology appropriately
- identify, investigate and critically analyse questions, arguments, ideas and issues arising from the study of religion including those of scholars/academics
- analyse the nature of connections between the units they have studied (including those studied at AS).

Each unit has been designed to allow learners to acquire and develop knowledge and a critical understanding/awareness 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)
- 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 units studied (including those studied at AS).

2.1 AS Unit 1

Unit 1: An Introduction to the Study of Religion

Written examination: 1 hour 15 minutes

15% of qualification

60 marks

Learners will be assessed on **one** of the following options from a choice of **six**:

Option A: Christianity

Option B: Islam

Option C: Judaism

Option D: Buddhism

Option E: Hinduism

Option F: Sikhism

This unit provides the opportunity for learners to acquire and develop knowledge and a critical understanding of some of the key features of a world religion, ranging from religious figures to religious practices.

This unit includes the study of the following content:

- sources of wisdom and authority including, where appropriate, scripture and/or sacred texts and how they are used and treated, key religious figures and/or teachers and their teachings
- religious beliefs, values and teachings, in their interconnections and as they vary historically and in the contemporary world, including those linked to the nature and existence of God, gods or ultimate reality, the role of the community of believers, key moral principles, beliefs about the self, death and afterlife, beliefs about the meaning and purpose of life
- practices that shape and express religious identity, including the diversity of practice within a tradition.

The following grids exemplify how the required content has been developed in a clear and concise way into four themes:

Unit 1: Option A – An Introduction to the Study of Christianity

Theme 1: Religious figures and sacred texts	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	Examples of issues for analysis and evaluation
<p>A. Jesus – his birth: Consistency and credibility of the birth narratives; harmonisation and redaction criticism and their strengths and weaknesses; interpretation and application of the birth narratives to the doctrine of the incarnation - substantial presence and the kenotic model. The set texts for study: Matthew 1:18-2:23; Luke 1:26-2:40.</p>	The extent to which the birth narratives provide insight into the doctrine of the incarnation.
<p>B. Jesus – his resurrection: The views of Rudolf Bultmann and N.T. Wright on the relation of the resurrection event to history and the strengths and weaknesses of these approaches; interpretation and application to the understanding of the resurrected body in life after death. The set texts for study: John 20-21; 1 Corinthians 15.</p>	The nature of the resurrected body.
<p>C. The early church (in Acts of the Apostles): Its message - the kerygma as identified by R. Bultmann and C.H.Dodd; challenges include the historical value of the speeches in Acts and the adapting of the Christian message to suit the audience. The set text for study: Acts 2:14-39, 3:12-26.</p>	The extent to which the kerygma (within the areas of Acts studied) is of any value for Christians today.

Theme 2 : Religious concepts	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	Examples of issues for analysis and evaluation
<p>A. Religious concepts – the nature of God:</p> <p>Is God male? The issue of male language about God; the strengths and weaknesses of the model of Father; Sallie McFague and God as mother.</p> <p>Can God suffer? The impassibility of God; the modern view of a suffering God illustrated by Jurgen Moltmann (The Crucified Christ).</p>	The validity of referring to God as “mother”.
<p>B. Religious concepts – the Trinity:</p> <p>The difference between the Eastern Orthodox and Western Christianity approaches to the Trinity; the filioque controversy; Karl Barth’s model of the Trinity.</p>	The monotheistic claims of the doctrine of the Trinity.
<p>C. Religious concepts – the Atonement:</p> <p>Three images (which are not mutually exclusive): the Cross as a sacrifice and ransom, the Cross as a means of satisfaction and substitution, the Cross as a moral example; the difficulties raised by each of these images.</p>	The extent to which the three images of the atonement are contradictory.

Unit 1: Option A – An Introduction to the Study of Christianity

Theme 3: Religious life	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	Examples of issues for analysis and evaluation
<p>A. Religious life – faith and works: Luther's arguments for justification by faith alone (with reference to Romans 1:17, 5:1, Ephesians 2:8-9, Galatians 2:16, Luther's rejection of James 2:24); the Council of Trent as a response to Luther; E.P Sanders and the role of works in justification.</p>	The extent to which both faith and works are aspects of justification.
<p>B. Religious life – sacraments: The definition of a sacrament; the debate about sacramental efficacy and the Donatist controversy; Luther's arguments for three sacraments rather than seven; the function of sacraments.</p>	A consideration of whether the number of sacraments is important.
<p>C. Religious life – key moral principles: The concept of a Just War in the light of the following key moral principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - our actions governed by what we expect from others; (Leviticus 19:34; Matthew 7:12; Luke 10:25-37) - God's love for us (John 13:34; 14:15, 14:21-24, 1 John 2:3-6) - regard for truth (Ephesians 4:15,25; 1 John 3:18) - the role of conscience within Christianity. 	Whether these key principles are sufficient as a guide to the issue of a Just War.

Theme 4: Religious practices that shape religious identity	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	Examples of issues for analysis and evaluation
<p>A. Religious identity through diversity in baptism: The case for infant baptism by Augustine and Zwingli; the case against infant baptism by Karl Barth; the strengths and weaknesses of each view.</p>	The extent to which both infant and adult baptism are just symbolic acts.
<p>B. Religious identity through diversity in eucharist: The real presence – the Fourth Lateran Council and the Council of Trent; modern Roman Catholic approaches – transsignification and transfinalization; consubstantiation – Luther; memorialism – Zwingli; implications for Christian practice in the experience of believers and Christian communities.</p>	The extent to which there is any common ground within the historical understandings of the eucharist.
<p>C. Religious identity through diversity in festivals:</p> <p>Christmas The differences between the Eastern Orthodox and the Western churches' celebration of Christmas and the reasons for these differences. The role of the community of believers in maintaining the traditions associated with the festival.</p> <p>Easter The differences between the Eastern Orthodox and the Western churches' celebration of Easter and the reasons for these differences. The role of the community of believers in maintaining the traditions associated with the festival.</p>	Whether Christian festivals are treated as religious celebrations of theological beliefs or simply social occasions.

Unit 1: Option B - An Introduction to the Study of Islam

Theme 1: Religious figures and sacred texts	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	Examples of issues for analysis and evaluation
<p>A. The significance on the development of Islam of both the life and teachings of Muhammad in Makkah following the Night of Power: Jahilliyah and the need for revelation. The impact of the Night of Power upon Muhammad. Muhammad's secretive preaching and early reactions towards his religious experience and teachings. Muhammad's open preaching in Makkah and the nature of this message. The Makkah reaction to Muhammad and its implication for the development of Islam.</p>	<p>The extent to which Muhammad's message to the Makkans threatened the development of Islam.</p>
<p>B. The significance to the development of Islam of both the Hijrah and the life and teachings of Muhammad in Madinah: The context of persecution of Muhammad and his followers in Makkah as a major influence of the Hijrah (migration) including verbal abuse, physical abuse and death threats. The Hijrah as an 'escape' and guided by God. The welcome from Madinah and the establishment of the basic tenets of Islam, including the establishment of the first masjid.</p>	<p>The extent to which the Hijrah and subsequent establishment of Islam in Madinah was the most significant development in early Islam.</p>
<p>C. The Qur'an as a source of wisdom and authority – its use and treatment in worship and daily life: The Qur'an as word of God and the implications of this in both theory and practice for worship and daily life with specific reference to Sura 96:1-5, Sura 51:47 and Sura 15:9. The Qur'an as the final revelation. The Qur'an as a guide for humanity for all time. The physical treatment of the Qur'an reflecting its status. Islamic views about 'translations' of the Qur'an; integrity of the original Arabic; translation as interpretation.</p>	<p>The relevance and practicality of Qur'anic teaching for Muslims today.</p>

Theme 2 : Religious concepts	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	Examples of issues for analysis and evaluation
<p>A. The concept of Allah – tawhid and shahadah: Tawhid as statement of uncompromising monotheism. Tawhid as the nature of God as 'one' with reference to Sura 112. God as sole creator, omnipotent and yet merciful. God as beyond words and descriptions. Attributes of God as metaphors and symbols. God as transcendent and imminent. Shirk as opposition to tawhid. Shahadah as recognition of tawhid. "Declaring faith" or "bearing witness" to God's unity and the unique nature of Muhammad as "prophet of God". The power of the shahadah as a public statement of truth as well as a declaration of personal faith. The role of the shahadah in conversion.</p>	<p>The extent to which the Islamic concept of Allah is coherent.</p>
<p>B. Risalah (belief in messengers): Prophet as a "messenger" or "warner" (Qur'an 3:144, 4:9). Distinction between nabi and rasul. The associated messages of previous prophets with specific reference to Ibrahim (Sahifa), Musa (Torah), Dawud (Zabur) and Isa (Injil) and their distorted nature. Muhammad as the 'Seal of the Prophets' (Qur'an 46:9). Muhammad's character and uniqueness (Qur'an 33:21).</p>	<p>The role of messengers, angels and the Day of Final Judgment as inspiration for faith or symbols of fear.</p>
<p>C. Malaikah (belief in angels) and akhirah (the Day of Final Judgment): Angels as intermediaries for God. The nature and purpose of angels. The specific roles of Jibril, Izrail and Mikail and Israfil. God as Judge and akhirah ("Day of Final Judgement"). The significance of events from the last trumpet onward. Depictions of heaven and hell with reference to Sura 47:15 and Sura 67:7-10.</p>	<p>The relevance of the belief in life after death for Muslim life today.</p>

Unit 1: Option B - An Introduction to the Study of Islam

Theme 3: Religious life	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	Examples of issues for analysis and evaluation
<p>The role and significance of the following two Pillars for a Muslim and the Ummah (Muslim community):</p> <p>A. Salah (prayer) - from the Five Pillars The nature and purpose of different types of prayer in Islam: salah; tahajjud (Sura 17:79); nafila; du'a; tasbih and wurd. The significance of niyat. Regular prayer times (Qur'an 4:103). The significance of wudu. The role and importance of Jummah prayers for the Ummah (Qur'an 62:10).</p>	The extent to which prayer is simply a ritualistic act of piety.
<p>B. Zakah (purification through giving) and hajj (pilgrimage) – both from the Five Pillars: The nature and purpose of different types of giving in Islam: zakah; sadaqat and khums. The reasons for giving in Islam - the importance of liberationist thinking in Islam. The impact of giving on the Ummah. The nature and purpose of the Hajj and its role in uniting the Ummah.</p>	The relevance of zakah and hajj for Muslims today.
<p>C. The five categories of action: The need for guidance as arising from the development of Shari'a. The categories of fard, musthabab, halal, makruh and haram, and their importance as guides for Muslim life.</p>	The success of the five categories of ethical action as a guide for Islamic living today

Theme 4: Religious practices that shape religious identity	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	Examples of issues for analysis and evaluation
<p>Diversity of Islamic practices that shape and express religious identity, with reference to:</p> <p>A. The role of the mosque (masjid) in Islam: The importance of the functions of the first masjid in Madinah. The religious, social and political role of masjids today in the UK.</p>	Prostration as the most important purpose of the mosque.
<p>The role of festivals in shaping religious identity, with reference to:</p> <p>B. Ashura: The role of Ashura in expressing Shi'a identity. How rituals in Shi'a devotions during Ashura reflect central Shi'a teachings, with specific reference to persecution, suffering and self-punishment. The role of the community in ensuring the traditions of the festival are maintained.</p>	The significance of Ashura for expressing Shi'a identity.
<p>C. Ramadan and Id-ul-Fitr: The religious and moral benefits for a Muslim of Ramadan with reference to: relationship to God; development of Muslim spirituality; the importance of morality in Islam. The social importance of Id-ul-Fitr for the Muslim community with reference to: empathy with, and support for the poor, unity and 'brotherhood'.</p>	Whether Islamic festivals are treated as religious celebrations or social occasions.

Unit 1: Option C

- An Introduction to the Study of Judaism

Theme 1: Religious figures and sacred texts	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	Examples of issues for analysis and evaluation
<p>A. Abraham and the establishment of the covenant of circumcision (Abrahamic covenant): The significance of Abraham's faith (Genesis 22); his belief in One God (YHWH) as creator of the universe; his condemnation of pagan gods; Abraham as Father of the Jewish people (Genesis 12:1-3); the nature of the Jewish covenant between God and Abraham; circumcision (brit milah) as the sign of the covenant (Genesis 17).</p>	Whether the notion of covenant is a privilege or responsibility.
<p>B. Moses and the establishment of the covenant of law (Mosaic covenant): The nature of the Jewish covenant between God and Moses (Exodus 19-20); the significance of the law for the Jewish people; the recording of the covenant by Moses (Exodus 24:4 34:1-2, 27-28, Exodus 34:27-28); the importance of God's protection for obedience (Exodus 34:10-11).</p>	A consideration of the importance of the Mosaic covenant for Judaism.
<p>C. The Torah as a source of wisdom and authority – its use and treatment in worship and daily life: The receiving of the Torah at Sinai and the significance of the written law. The nature and purpose of Torah in Orthodox/Reform Judaism. The pre-existent and eternal relevance of Torah. Sefer Torah; Torah reading (in the synagogue and home), Torah study (at a yeshiva) and the role of the oral Torah. The care and respect shown for the Torah – ark, mantle, yad and burial.</p>	The degree to which the Torah is the most important text in Judaism.

Theme 2 : Religious concepts	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	Examples of issues for analysis and evaluation
<p>A. Beliefs about the nature of God/concept of God: Absolute monotheism; God as One; God as Creator; God as incorporeal; God as neither male nor female; God as eternal. Characteristics: omnipotent, omniscient, omnibenevolent, Holy, Just, Perfect, Merciful. God's presence (kavod and shekinah). Maimonides on the attributes of God.</p>	The possibility of knowing God.
<p>B. Beliefs about God and humanity – the Shema: The context of Shema (Deuteronomy 6:1-9). The nature of Shema as an aid to faith and remembering; Shema as a reinforcement of covenant relationship; the Shema as both central to prayer and separate from it. Orthodox and Reform views of the Shema.</p>	Consideration of the Shema as the most important statement of faith within Judaism.
<p>C. Beliefs about judgement / the afterlife: The Messiah in Judaism – 'The Anointed One' and judge - who brings peace and goodwill to humanity (Isaiah 2:1-4); the establishment of a new world order; resurrection of the dead (Daniel 12:2); the final judgement; the afterlife (olam ha-ba); the Pittsburgh Platform (paragraph 7) and Reform views about the afterlife.</p>	The relevance of Jewish beliefs about judgement and the afterlife for Judaism today.

Unit 1: Option C- An Introduction to the Study of Judaism

Theme 3: Religious life	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	Examples of issues for analysis and evaluation
Exploring various understandings of Jewish teachings concerning:	
<p>A. The diversity of views within Judaism with regards to Mitzvot: Orthodox, Reform, Hasidic understandings of the relevance of the 613 mitzvot with reference to: their interpretation, literal or otherwise; their application; their relevance today.</p>	Whether the covenant and the obedience to Mitzvah can be regarded as the main strength of Judaism or a source of division.
<p>B. Jewish teachings about prayer with reference to the Amidah and teachings about charity (tzedakah): Tefillah as spiritual self-reflection in relation to God; reasons for tefillah; the structure and content of the Amidah; the use of the Amidah in daily prayers; minyan and the diversity of practice of prayer within Judaism. The importance of charity within Judaism; Maimonides and the 'ladder of tzedekah'.</p>	The extent to which the Amidah is an encapsulation of the most important beliefs, values and teachings of Judaism.
<p>C. The importance of the 'Ten Sayings' (Aseret ha-D'varim) or Ten Commandments for Judaism: The Ten Sayings in the context of the 613 mitzvot; the Ten Sayings as a basis for religious and ethical life; the 'Aseret ha-Dibrot' in rabbinical understanding as the ten categories of mitzvot.</p>	The effectiveness of the Ten Sayings as a guide for living for Jews today

Theme 4: Religious practices that shape religious identity	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	Examples of issues for analysis and evaluation
Diversity of Jewish practices that shape and express religious identity, with reference to:	
<p>A. The role of the synagogue in Judaism: The origins of the synagogue (bayt k'nesset) as a permanent institution in Babylonian captivity. Its role in reminding Jews of the Jerusalem temple. Its contents such as the ark also reminding them of the temple in Jerusalem. Its role as meeting place for the Jewish community, literally a 'house of meeting' - bayt k'nesset. The synagogue as a place of study and Torah reading – 'house of study' - Bet midrash or 'school' - shul. The synagogue as a place of prayer. Some contain a 'mikveh' – pool for cleansing at specific times – religious and physical cleanliness. The synagogue's use as a rabbinical court or 'house of judgement' – Bet din. Its central role in Jewish festivals.</p>	The possibility of the survival of Judaism without the synagogue.
The role of festivals in shaping religious identity:	
<p>B. Pesach: The significance of the 'Passover' event for Jewish identity with reference to: the popularity of observing Pesach amongst Jews today reflecting redemption of the Jewish people from Egypt; the redemption of the world under God's command; the importance of Exodus 12-15; the symbolism of the seder plate and the use of the Haggadah; the role of the Jewish community of believers in remembering and maintaining Jewish identity; hope for the future – 'next year in Jerusalem'; the coming of Elijah to announce the arrival of the Messiah.</p>	A consideration of which festival is the most significant in the Jewish calendar Pesach, Rosh Hashanah or Yom Kippur
<p>C. Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur: The significance of the shofar horn in the Hebrew scriptures; the meaning and significance of tashlikh. The importance of the machzor; Kol Nidre and the amendments to the Amidah as confirming unity and identity of the Jewish people.</p>	Whether Jewish festivals are treated as religious celebrations or social occasions

Unit 1: Option D - An Introduction to the Study of Buddhism

Theme 1: Religious figures and sacred texts	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	Examples of issues for analysis and evaluation
<p>A. Accounts of the birth of the historical Buddha and the Four Sights: The ways in which Buddhists read these narratives. Hagiographical and mythological interpretations of the conception dream of Maya, events surrounding the birth, the prophecy and early life. The biographical impact of the Four Sights and wider religious interpretations of their meaning (in terms of impermanence, insubstantiality and dukkha).</p>	The importance of the biography of the historical Buddha for Buddhists today.
<p>B. The Awakening/Enlightenment of the Buddha: Knowledge of past lives, knowledge of the role of karma in the lives of all beings, the path to the cessation of dukkha, the Mara/temptation narratives, the earth touching mudra.</p>	The significance of the Awakening/Enlightenment of the Buddha in Buddhism.
<p>C. Buddhist texts as sources of wisdom and authority – their use and treatment in daily life: The Four Parajikas of the Patimokkha. The significance of this text for the Theravada monastic sangha.</p>	The relative importance and value of Buddhist texts in Buddhism.

Theme 2 : Religious concepts	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	Examples of issues for analysis and evaluation
<p>A. The Three Lakshanas: dukkha, anicca, and anatta: An understanding anicca and dukkha with reference to the Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta. An understanding of anatta with reference to Section 1 Chapter 1 of the Chariot Passage of the Questions of King Milinda.</p>	The Three Lakshanas as representative of reality.
<p>B. Pratityasamutpada, karma and rebirth: An understanding of pratityasamutpada and rebirth with reference to the iconography of the bhavachakra. An understanding of karma by reference to the Dhammapada, Chapter 1 'The Pairs' and Chapter 9 'Evil'.</p>	The relevance of Buddhist teachings of pratityasamutpada, karma and rebirth as representative of reality
<p>C. Bodhisattva: Mahayana and Therevada teachings: Including reference to perfections, stages and vow, and the interrelationship between wisdom and compassion.</p>	The concept of Bodhisattva as an essential feature of Buddhism.

Unit 1: Option D - An Introduction to the Study of Buddhism

Theme 3: Religious life	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	Examples of issues for analysis and evaluation
A. The Four Noble Truths: Including the three types of dukkha - dukkha-dukkha; viparinama-dukkha; sankhara-dukkha; the medical metaphor and the notions of tanha, nirodha and magga.	The Four Noble Truths as essential for all Buddhists
B. The Eightfold Path (Wisdom, Morality and Meditation): Including exemplification of ways in which the Eightfold Path is practiced. The Eightfold Path within the context of the diversity of Buddhism.	The usefulness of the Eightfold Path as a moral guide for all Buddhists.
C. The Ten Precepts (dasa sila): Including exemplification of their application/appropriateness for the community of believers: lay people and monks.	The relative importance of the Ten Precepts as a means of regulating the Sangha.

Theme 4: Religious practices that shape religious identity	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	Examples of issues for analysis and evaluation
A. Going for refuge: A consideration of the chanting practice of going for refuge three times, the meanings of each for heritage and convert Buddhists.	The relevance of going for refuge in the modern world.
B. Meditation: vipassana (insight/clear seeing) and zazen (just sitting): How they are used for experiencing the true nature of reality. The practice of metta bhavana.	The value and relevance of meditation for all Buddhists today.
C. The role and importance of dana (giving) and punya (merit): The role and importance of selfless generosity/giving or sharing of time/money/possessions. The role of the Buddhist community in supporting those both inside and outside the community. The role and importance of punya – the concept of the merit gained and accumulated as a result of good deeds, acts, or thoughts and which carries over throughout life or the subsequent rebirths.	The significance of the practice of dana in its relationship to the notion of merit.

Unit 1: Option E - An Introduction to the Study of Hinduism

Theme 1: Religious figures and sacred texts	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	Examples of issues for analysis and evaluation
<p>A. Krishna's childhood and Gopi stories: Found within Bhagavata Purana Book 10, which reveals his personality and demonstrate virtues: divine nature – story of Yashoda and the stealing of butter; unconditional love and devotions – his relationship with Radha; engaging with the divine – stealing the gopis' clothes, his amorous adventures with the gopis; power to overcome evil – defeating Kalilya the multi headed serpent; intimate relationship with God as the highest goal of human existence and the practice of bhakti worship – his flute music drawing the gopis into an ecstatic dance.</p>	The significance of beliefs and practices associated with Krishna.
<p>B. Krishna and Arjuna: The teaching on dharma and varnadharma; the conflict which can arise from following personal dharma. The wisdom of Samkhya, nature of religious practices; different paths to liberation – jnana yoga, karma yoga and bhakti yoga. Bhagavad Gita - 3:4-5; 3:19; 18:46; 2:31; 18:47; 11:54; 9:26-28; 9:32; 9:23; 14:23-26; 16:1-3.</p>	The relationship between Krishna and Arjuna as a central feature of Hinduism.
<p>C. Hindu texts as sources of wisdom and authority - their use in daily life: A comparison of status and importance of shruti and smriti. The significance of differences in terms of authority and use - the Vedas in ritual ceremonies and the Ramayana and Mahabharata for ethical teachings. Ramayana teaches the importance of righteous behaviour, selfless caring, courage, friendship and devotion. Mahabharata teaches the importance of doing one's duty.</p>	The relative importance and value of Hindu texts in Hinduism.

Theme 2 : Religious concepts	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	Examples of issues for analysis and evaluation
Exploring Hindu teachings concerning self, death, afterlife and meaning and purpose of life with reference to:	
<p>A. Brahman and atman: The relationship between: Brahman as Sat Cit Ananda, macrocosmic spirit and atman as micro cosmic. Difference between jiva-atman and paramatman; Monist and Monotheist; Shankara and Madhva.</p>	The nature of the relationship between Brahman and atman.
<p>B. Trimurti: Relationship and importance to Hindu understanding of Saguna Brahman and Hindu vision of time as cyclic – returning to life in a new form; link to liberation. Differing attitudes towards deities of the Trimurti – Shaivism and Vaishnavism.</p>	The relative importance of Trimurti in Hinduism in comparison with the other concepts studied
<p>C. Karma and reincarnation: Karma in the context of samsara and the importance of eternal and universal order; different aspects of karma (accumulated, fruit-bearing and karma in the making) and their influence on types of reincarnation. The relationship between samsara and moksha and the significance within samsara of human rebirth. Bhagavad Gita 2:13.</p>	The impact of teachings about karma and reincarnation upon the lifestyle of Hindus.

Unit 1: Option E - An Introduction to the Study of Hinduism

Theme 3: Religious life	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	Examples of issues for analysis and evaluation
<p>A. Varnashramadharmā: Mythical origins of the system in the Purusha Sukta – Rig Veda 10:90 11-12; the concept of Varnahramadharmā - sometimes referred to as Catuvarnashramadharmā – catu – four - defines duties for the individual according to their position in the four varnas of society – priests (brahmanas); warriors and ruler (Kshatriyas); merchants (vaishyas) and labourers (sudras). The four ashramas, student stage (brahmacharya), householder stage (grihastha), retirement stage (vanaprastha) and renunciation (sannyasin). Relationship with bhakti; links and differences with Santana dharma, (Bhagavad Gita 18:47).</p>	<p>The extent to which Hinduism can be described as a religion of duty.</p>
<p>B. The status of the Dalits: Their status within the varna system; comparison between Gandhi and Ambedkar; contemporary status of Dalits and the development and improvement of their social standing.</p>	<p>The relevance and practicality of varna in today's world.</p>
<p>C. The concept of ahimsa: Jainian origins of the concept; traditional concept within Hinduism; Gandhi's reinterpretation; relationship with satyagraha – truth force; implications for racial equality - Manu 5:38.</p>	<p>The ideal of ahimsa as a relevant and viable standard to live by in the modern world.</p>

Theme 4: Religious practices that shape religious identity	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	Examples of issues for analysis and evaluation
<p>The diversity of Hindu practices that shape and express identity, with reference to:</p> <p>A. Puja in the home and the mandir: Nature of puja in the home and mandir – compare and contrast; importance of relationship between individual devotee and deities; receiving of darshan; mandir rituals such as circumambulation and accepting prashad; comparative importance of personal and congregational worship.</p>	<p>The relative importance of puja in the home and in the mandir.</p>
<p>The role of festivals in shaping religious identity – with reference to:</p> <p>B. Holi: Representing the story of Holika and Prahlada in some Hindu traditions; the story of Krishna and Radha in others; spiritual significance of these events - blessing of babies by Agni; the god of Fire, the virtue of love; confirming and strengthening faith; good overcoming evil, benevolence of the Gods; reminds devotees of aims and duties in life - to help others. The role of the community in ensuring the traditions of the festival are maintained.</p>	<p>The extent to which worship is essential in Hinduism.</p>
<p>C. Durga Puja: Representing the story of Rama, Sita and Durga; spiritual significance of these events - thanksgiving, helping others; importance of avatars; Durga as divine mother; impurity and sin; it confirms and strengthens faith; good overcomes evil, importance of worship and prayer; reminds devotees of aims and duties in life – to lead a life free from impurity, sin and weakness. The role of the community in ensuring the traditions of the festival are maintained.</p>	<p>Whether Hindu festivals are treated as religious celebrations or social occasions.</p>

Unit 1: Option F - An Introduction to the Study of Sikhism

Theme 1: Religious figures and sacred texts	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	Examples of issues for analysis and evaluation
<p>A. The life and teachings of Guru Nanak: Influence of background and socio-religious ideas of his time on key teachings: Status/role of women in Islam and caste in Hinduism – Adi Granth 150 and Adi Granth 91.</p> <p>Relationship between key events in his life and specific teachings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - His horoscope at his birth and the acknowledgement of One Formless Lord. - His experience of God's court, his teaching that God is neither Hindu nor Muslim and his mission to reveal the message of God's name to the world. - His meeting with Sajjan and his teaching of what true religion is - the jannam sakhi episodes. - His teaching against the caste system and raising the status of women. - His foundation of the institution of the guru, rejection of the sacred thread ceremony and Hindu rituals. - His establishment of community at Kartapur based on Sikh principles. 	<p>The extent to which Guru Nanak's message is original.</p>
<p>B. Guru Gobind Singh's contribution to the development of Sikhism: The relationship of his action's with Nanak's vision – both as protector and restorer; his defence of Sikhism in the face of attacks and persecution; his development of Sikhism as a religion with a strong identity - prepared to defend its beliefs and principles; and community orientation – founded the Khalsa; introduced the amrit ceremony as initiation and wearing of 5Ks; the adoption of names Singh and Kaur; welcomed women and members of all castes into the community; contributed to the compilation and content of Dasam Granth; interpretation and new concept of Guru – the Guru Panth; the development of the Guru Granth Sahib.</p>	<p>Whether Guru Gobind Singh can be regarded as the true founder of the Sikh religion.</p>
<p>C. The Guru Granth Sahib as a source of wisdom and authority – its use and treatment in worship and daily life: Its legal and theological status – regarded as living Guru with full authority of Gurus' teaching and treated with same devotion and respect; all decisions taken in presence of Guru Granth; all ceremonies and rites of passage to be completed in its presence; it is the basis of all sermons and the authority as the basis of Sikh teaching on the nature of God, faith and salvation, the difference between Adi Granth and Guru Granth; role of Muslim and Hindu writings within its pages - Sheik Farid - Guru Granth Sahib – 448, 1384; Bhagat Ramanand – Guru Granth Sahib – 1195; creation of gurmukhi script; its role as more than a visible focal point for Sikh devotions – taking the place of living Gurus; it guides Sikhs in daily life – vak lao.</p>	<p>The relevance of the Guru Granth Sahib for Sikhs today.</p>

Theme 2 : Religious concepts	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	Examples of issues for analysis and evaluation
<p>Exploring Sikh teachings concerning self, death, afterlife and meaning and purpose of life, with reference to:</p> <p>A. Philosophical understanding of the Sikh concept of God: 'God is the one, the only one' and 'the one without a second'; symbolism of 'Ik Onkar' (Adi Granth 929, 1035,1037); God as personal – Adi Granth 784, 1190; God as nirguna and saguna; God as omnipotent and omniscient; God as creator and sustainer of life; God as immanent and transcendent – Adi Granth 25,684,700.</p>	<p>The relevant importance of Sikh beliefs about God and the soul.</p>
<p>B. The soul: Nature of the soul - divine spark of Waheguru, ethereal and non-material; union with Waheguru. The aim of breaking cycle of rebirth; journey of the soul through many life forms to attain this aim; stage of Saram Khand and realm of grace.</p>	<p>The impact of teachings about karma upon the lifestyle of Sikhs.</p>
<p>C. Karma, rebirth and mukti: Philosophical understanding of the path of liberation; the role of karma and transmigration of the soul; union with God – Adi Granth 1127, 905, 275.</p>	<p>The relevance of Sikh beliefs about rebirth and mukti for Sikhs today.</p>

Unit 1: Option F - An Introduction to the Study of Sikhism

Theme 3: Religious life	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	Examples of issues for analysis and evaluation
The role and significance of the following teachings for the Sikh community:	
<p>A. The concept of sewa: Its influence on personal morality – recognising no barriers of religion, caste or race; relationship with teaching of Guru Granth Sahib and principles of Sarbhat da bhalla; importance of state of mind – selfless and desire-less action – physical service, mental service, material service, its material and spiritual value within the Sikh community – part of a Sikh’s spiritual life leading to spiritual liberation. Bhai Gurdas, Varan 6:12.</p>	The relative importance of sewa in Sikh life compared to other teachings.
<p>B. The concepts of Kirat Karo and Vand Chakko: Teaching of Guru Gobind Singh; understanding of concept of Kirat Karo in relation to Naam Japo and Vand Chakko; relationship with teaching on karma; the pursuit of grace; influence on sangat.</p>	The relative importance of the virtues of Kirat Karo and Vand Chakko in Sikhism.
<p>C. The concepts of Sant Sipahi (saint-soldier)/Dharam Yudh (just war): Understanding of concept of Sant Sipahi in the context of the development of Sikhism by Guru Harbogind and Guru Gobind Singh; philosophical meaning of the term; duties associated with sant; meaning in relation to dharam; rules of the khalsa in relation to Dharam Yudh; general Sikh principle of Dharam Yudh.</p>	Whether it is possible to combine spirituality with the use of force (Sant Sipahi and Dharam Yudh).

Theme 4: Religious practices that shape religious identity	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	Examples of issues for analysis and evaluation
The diversity of Sikh practices that shape and express religious identity:	
<p>A. The expression of Sikh identity through the role of the gurdwara: Representation of the principle of freedom of worship; fulfilment of religious and social needs – B40 Janam Sakhi, Adi Granth 1068; worship as a reflection of Sikh identity.</p>	The degree to which the gurdwara is an essential part of the Sikh religion.
The role of festivals in shaping religious identity:	
<p>B. Diwali: Representing the story of Guru Hargobind and his release from prison; focuses attention on spiritual matters – freedom and deliverance; it confirms and strengthens faith - good overcomes evil; light overcomes darkness; reminds Sikhs of aims and duties in life; focuses on the importance of unity within the community.</p>	The relative importance of Diwali and Vaisakhi.
<p>C. Vaisakhi: New Year’s Day in the Punjab; remembers Guru Gobind Singh’s founding of the Sikh brotherhood; focuses attention on spiritual matters – Sikh identity, sacrifice, virtues of Sikh living; it confirms and strengthens faith – reminds Sikhs of aims and duties in life – protecting the truth, standing up for the oppressed; creates a feeling of belonging to a community – the Khalsa.</p>	Whether Sikh festivals are treated as religious celebrations or social occasions.

2.2 AS Unit 2

Unit 2: An Introduction to Religion and Ethics and the Philosophy of Religion.

Written examination: 1 hour 45 minutes

25% of qualification

90 marks

Section A: An Introduction to Religion and Ethics

This section provides the opportunity for learners to acquire and develop knowledge and a critical understanding of key ethical concepts and theories, ranging from moral absolutism to Utilitarianism.

- ethical language and thought through significant concepts and the works of key thinkers, illustrated in issues or debates in religion and ethics
- three normative ethical theories such as deontological, teleological or character based ethics (at least two of which must be religious approaches)
- the application of ethical theory to two personal, societal or global issues of importance, including religious ethical perspectives.

Section B: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion.

This section provides the opportunity for learners to acquire and develop knowledge and a critical understanding of some of the key features of fundamental philosophical themes, ranging from arguments for the existence of God to religious experience.

This unit includes the study of the following content:

- philosophical issues and questions raised by religion and belief including at least three contrasting arguments about the existence or non-existence of God, gods or ultimate reality
- philosophical language and thought through significant concepts and the works of key thinkers, illustrated in issues or debates in the philosophy of religion
- challenges to religious belief such as the problems of evil and suffering
- the nature and influence of religious experience.

The following grids exemplify how the required content has been developed in a clear and concise way into four themes:

Unit 2: Section A - An Introduction to Religion and Ethics

Theme 1: Ethical language and thought	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	Examples of issues for analysis and evaluation
<p>The concepts of and major differences between moral absolutism and moral relativism:</p> <p>A. <u>Moral absolutism:</u> Universal moral norms exist which apply in all situations; right and wrong actions are objective; actions are intrinsically right or wrong in themselves; rules or principles inform or guide people as to which actions are right or wrong.</p>	<p>The degree to which a relativist view of ethics is more just than an absolutist view.</p>
<p>B. <u>Moral relativism:</u> No universal moral norms exist, right or wrong are subjective; actions should be judged right or wrong depending upon culture (cultural relativism), time (historical relativism), religion (religious relativism) or an individual's character (subjective relativism).</p>	
<p>C. <u>Normative ethical approaches:</u></p> <p><u>A deontological approach:</u> Being concerned with the actions themselves and not with the consequences of actions. The rightness or wrongness of actions are judged on an adherence to a set of rules; it is a duty or obligation to follow the deontological rules often linked with moral absolutism.</p> <p><u>A teleological approach:</u> Being concerned with the end purpose, or goal of the action. The rightness or wrongness of actions are derived by judging the end purpose against what is defined as a good end. Linked with a consequentialist approach to ethics and moral relativism.</p> <p><u>The attainment of virtues:</u> Being concerned with defining what are moral people and the qualities that make them moral. By cultivating these virtues it is possible to become a moral person. Virtues have more to do with character than with the rights and wrongs of specific actions or their end purpose.</p>	<p>Whether one of the normative ethical approaches you have studied is superior to the other approaches.</p> <p>Consideration of the idea that it is better to be a good person than to just do good deeds.</p>

Theme 2 : Aquinas' Natural Law	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	Examples of issues for analysis and evaluation
<p>A. <u>Aquinas' Natural Law – Part 1</u> Aquinas' four levels of law: eternal, divine, natural and human: Natural law derived from rational thought; as a form of moral absolutism; a deontological or teleological theory? The five primary precepts; these are based on the premise of 'doing good and avoiding evil'; the secondary precepts which derive from these.</p>	<p>The degree to which human law should be influenced by Natural Law.</p>
<p>B. <u>Aquinas' Natural Law – Part 2</u> The importance of the three revealed and four cardinal virtues; different types of acts: internal and external; different types of goods: real and apparent (linked to sin).</p>	<p>The effectiveness of Natural Law in dealing with ethical issues.</p>
<p>C. <u>The application of Natural Law</u> to both of the personal, societal and global issues listed below:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. abortion 2. voluntary euthanasia. 	<p>Whether Natural Law provides a practical basis for moral decision making for believers and/or non-believers.</p>

Unit 2: Section A - An Introduction to Religion and Ethics

Theme 3: Fletcher's Situation Ethics	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	Examples of issues for analysis and evaluation
<p>A. Fletcher's Situation Ethics: Part 1 Fletcher's rejection of other approaches within ethics - legalism, antinomianism and the role of conscience. Fletcher's rationale for using the religious concept of 'agape' as the 'middle way'.</p>	The degree to which agape is a fairer approach to ethics than legalism and/or antinomianism.
<p>B. Fletcher's Situation Ethics: Part 2 The four working principles and the six fundamental principles of Situation Ethics. The theory as a form of moral relativism; a consequentialist and teleological theory.</p>	The effectiveness of the principles of Situation Ethics in dealing with ethical issues.
<p>C. The application of Situation Ethics and to both the personal, societal and global issues listed below:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. homosexual relationships 2. polyamorous relationships. 	Whether agape should replace religious rules.

Theme 4: Utilitarianism	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	Examples of issues for analysis and evaluation
<p>A. Bentham's Act Utilitarianism: The principle of utility; the hedonic calculus; as a form of moral relativism, a consequentialist and teleological theory.</p>	The effectiveness of the utility/hedonic calculus in dealing with ethical issues.
<p>B. Mill's development of Utilitarianism (now known as 'Rule' Utilitarianism) and 'higher' and 'lower' pleasures (a teleological / deontological hybrid).</p>	The extent to which one of the forms of Utilitarianism studied is better than the others.
<p>C. The application of Act and Rule Utilitarianism to both the personal, societal and global issues listed below:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. animal experimentation for medical research 2. the use of nuclear weapons as a deterrent. 	A consideration of whether Utilitarianism provides a practical basis for moral decision making for believers and/or non-believers.

Unit 2: Section B - An Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion

Theme 1: Cosmological arguments for the existence of God	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	Examples of issues for analysis and evaluation
A. The Classical cosmological argument: Aquinas. (Potentiality and actuality; cause and existence; contingent and necessary; the problem of infinite regression).	Whether the cosmological argument for God's existence is successful.
B. A modern version of the cosmological argument: Islamic Kalam tradition (beginnings and causes) and its defence by Craig.	The extent to which science now replaces the need for a creator God.
C. Challenges to the cosmological argument: With reference to Hume (empirical approach and fallacy of composition), Russell, (no explanation required), and alternative scientific explanations - Big Bang.	The effectiveness of the challenges to the cosmological argument for God's existence.

Theme 2 : Teleological arguments for the existence of God	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	Examples of issues for analysis and evaluation
A. Classical teleological arguments: Aquinas (arrow analogy) and Paley (design qua purpose/design qua regularity).	The effectiveness of the different versions of the teleological argument for God's existence.
B. Modern teleological arguments: Tennant (anthropic) and Swinburne (order and regularity).	The effectiveness of the challenges to the teleological argument for God's existence.
C. Challenges to the teleological argument: Including Hume (empirical challenges), Mill (disorder in universe) and Darwin (naturalistic explanations).	The extent to which science challenges the need for a designer God.

Unit 2: Section B - An Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion

Theme 3: The non-existence of God – the problem of evil	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	Examples of issues for analysis and evaluation
<p>A. The types of evil, the logical problem of evil: Classical (Epicurus), the problem of suffering.</p>	<p>The extent to which the Classical form of the problem of evil is a 'problem'.</p>
<p>B. Modern developments with regards to the nature of the problem of evil: With reference to Mackie (evil and omnipotence), Rowe (intense human and animal suffering) and Paul (premature deaths).</p>	<p>The degree to which modern problem of evil arguments are effective in proving God's non-existence.</p>
<p>C. Religious responses to the problem of evil (theodicies):</p> <p>Augustinian type theodicy: Evil as a consequence of sin: evil as a privation; the fall of human beings and creation; the Cross overcomes evil, soul-deciding; strengths and weaknesses.</p> <p>Irenaean type theodicy: Vale of soul-making: human beings created imperfect; epistemic distance; second-order goods; soul-making; eschatological justification strengths and weaknesses.</p>	<p>The extent to which an Augustinian type theodicies and an Irenaean type theodicies you have studied are successful in responding to the problem of evil.</p>

Theme 4: Religious experience	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	Examples of issues for analysis and evaluation
<p>A. Types of religious experience with particular reference to: Visions, conversion, mysticism and prayer.</p>	<p>The impact of religious experiences upon religious belief and practice.</p>
<p>B. William James' four characteristics of mystical experience: Ineffability, noetic, transient and passive.</p>	<p>The adequacy of James' four characteristics in defining mystical experience.</p>
<p>C. Challenges to the objectivity and authenticity of religious experience: With reference to Caroline Franks Davis (description-related; subject-related and object-related challenges). Strengths including: claims to be rejected on grounds of misunderstanding; claims delusional - possibly related to substance misuse, fantastical claims contrary to everyday experiences. Weaknesses such as: individual experiences valid even if non-verifiable; claims could be genuine - integrity of individual; one-off experiences can still be valid even if never repeated.</p>	<p>The extent to which the challenges to religious experience are valid.</p>

2.3 A level Unit 3

Unit 3: A Study of Religion

Written examination: 1 hour 30 mins

20% of qualification

90 marks

Learners will be assessed on **one** of the following options from a choice of **six**:

Option A: Christianity

Option B: Islam

Option C: Judaism

Option D: Buddhism

Option E: Hinduism

Option F: Sikhism

This unit provides learners with the opportunity to undertake an in-depth and broad study of their chosen religion covering themes ranging from religious figures and sacred texts to practices that shape religious identity.

This unit includes the study of the following content:

- religious beliefs, values and teachings, in their interconnections and as they vary historically and in the contemporary world, including those linked to the nature and existence of God, gods or ultimate reality, the role of the community of believers, key moral principles, beliefs about the self, death and afterlife, beliefs about the meaning and purpose of life
- sources of wisdom and authority including, where appropriate, scripture and/or sacred texts and how they are used and treated, key religious figures and/or teachers and their teachings
- practices that shape and express religious identity, including the diversity of practice within a tradition
- significant social and historical developments in theology or religious thought including the challenges of secularisation, science, responses to pluralism and diversity within traditions, migration, the changing roles of men and women, feminist and liberationist approaches
- a comparison of the significant ideas presented in works of at least two key scholars selected from the field of religion and belief
- two themes related to the relationship between religion and society, for example: the relationship between religious and other forms of identity; religion, equality and discrimination; religious freedom; the political and social influence of religious institutions; religious tolerance, respect and recognition and the ways that religious traditions view other religions and non-religious worldviews and their truth claims
- how developments in beliefs and practices have, over time, influenced and been influenced by developments in philosophical, ethical, studies of religion and/or by textual interpretation.

The following grids exemplify how the required content has been developed in a clear and concise way into four themes:

Unit 3: A Study of Religion - Option A: Christianity

Theme 1: Religious figures and sacred texts	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	Examples of issues for analysis and evaluation
<p>A. Two views of Jesus: A comparison of the work of two key scholars, including their views of Jesus with reference to their different methods of studying Jesus: John Dominic Crossan and N.T. Wright.</p> <p>Crossan: Jesus the social revolutionary - using apocryphal material, seeing Jesus as man of his time; what the words of Jesus would have meant in Jesus' time.</p> <p>Wright: Jesus the true Messiah - critical realism; seeks to find the best explanation for the traditions found in the Gospels.</p>	<p>The validity of the different methods of studying Jesus as used by Crossan and Wright.</p>
<p>B. The Bible as a source of wisdom and authority in worship: Its use and importance in private worship and in public worship; the Bible as the inspired word of God; different understandings of inspiration including John Calvin's doctrine of accommodation, the objective and subjective view of inspiration. The set text for study: 2 Timothy 3:16-1.</p>	<p>The extent to which the Bible can be regarded as the inspired word of God.</p>
<p>C. The Bible as a source of wisdom and authority in daily life: The role of the Bible as a guide to living and as a source of comfort and encouragement; the extent to which the Bible is authoritative in 21st century life. The set texts for study: Psalm 46:1-3; Psalm 119:9-16, Psalm 119:105-112; Luke 6:46-49; Hebrews 4:12-13.</p>	<p>The relative importance of scripture as the source of wisdom and authority.</p>

Theme 2 : Significant historical developments in religious thought	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	Examples of issues for analysis and evaluation
<p>A. Historical developments in religious thought – challenges from secularism: Evidence of decline of role and status of Christianity in society; possible causes; challenges to Christians - removal of Christianity from public sector, reduced impact in public life such as in medicine and law, permeation of secular values, restricted religious liberty.</p>	<p>The effectiveness of the Christian response to the challenge of secularism.</p>
<p>B. Historical developments in religious thought – challenges from science: Richard Dawkins' (The God Delusion) and Alister McGrath's (The Dawkins Delusion) contrasting views on whether science has disproved God's existence, the limits of science and the God of the gaps argument.</p>	<p>The extent to which a scientist must be an atheist.</p>
<p>C. Historical developments in religious thought – challenges from pluralism and diversity within a tradition: Difference between religious pluralism and tolerance of diversity within a tradition; the exclusivist attitude of the Christian Bible (Deut 6:5; Joshua 23:16; John 14:6; Acts 4:12); the contribution of John Hick and Karl Rahner to Christian inclusivism (and the difference between their positions); the differences between Christian Universalism and pluralistic universalism.</p>	<p>The extent to which it is possible to be both a committed Christian and a religious pluralist.</p>

Unit 3: A Study of Religion - Option A: Christianity

Theme 3: Significant social developments in religious thought	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	Examples of issues for analysis and evaluation
<p>A. Social developments in religious thought – attitudes towards wealth: The dangers of wealth; apparent contradiction between biblical teaching on stewardship and the ascetic ideal; the prosperity gospel of the Word-Faith movement. Set texts for study: Mark 10:17-25; Matthew 6: 25-34; Luke 12:32-34, 1 Timothy 6:10.</p>	The extent to which wealth is a sign of God's blessing.
<p>B. Social developments in religious thought – challenges of being a Christian in Britain (migration): The conflicting worldviews both religious and non-religious; culture and faith linked with reference to African Christianities; beliefs conflicting with laws of country; reverse mission movement in the UK.</p>	The extent to which the UK is a modern mission field.
<p>C. Social developments in religious thought – Feminist Theology and the changing role of men and women: The contribution of Mary Daly and Rosemary Radford Ruether to Feminist Theology. The changing role of men and women - the issue of the legitimacy of the ordination of women priests and bishops in the Anglican Church: the impact on the lives of believers and communities of Christianity today.</p>	Whether men and women are equal in Christianity.

Theme 4: Religious practices that shape religious identity	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	Examples of issues for analysis and evaluation
<p>A. Religious identity through unification: The development of the Ecumenical Movement since 1910 (World Missionary Conference); the World Council of Churches, its rationale, its mission and its work in three main areas: Unity, Mission, and Ecumenical Relations, Public Witness and Diakonia, and Ecumenical Formation.</p>	Whether the work of the World Council of Churches can be viewed as a success or a failure.
<p>B. Religious identity through religious experience: The development of the Charismatic Movement post 1960; main beliefs; implications for Christian practice in the experience of believers and Christian communities; philosophical challenges to charismatic experience – verification and natural explanation.</p>	The strengths and weaknesses of the Charismatic movement.
<p>C. Religious identity through responses to poverty and injustice: The basis (political, ethical and religious) of Liberation Theology with reference to Gustavo Gutierrez and Leonardo Boff; Roman Catholic Church responses to Liberation Theology.</p>	The political and ethical foundations of Liberation Theology being more important than any religious foundations.

Unit 3: A Study of Religion - Option B: A Study of Islam

Theme 1: Religious figures and sacred texts	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	Examples of issues for analysis and evaluation
<p>A. Sources of shari'a (Qur'an; sunna and hadith; qiyas; ijma): The significance of sunna for Muslims and the development of hadith. The different categories of hadith. The development of qiyas and ijma. The work of Al-Shafi and the establishments of the four law schools.</p>	The divine nature of the Shari'a.
<p>B. The role of shari'a and its importance for Muslims: Different understandings of the term shari'a and the different ways in which it is applied by Muslims throughout the world today with reference to: shari'a as civil law; sharia's as religious law and shari'a as a moral guide. Fiqh, the role of mujtahid and taqlid. Specific reference to the debates surrounding 'ijtihad' and contrasting views from within Sunni and Shi'a Islam on 'ijtihad'. A comparison of the approaches taken by Salafi scholar Rashid Rida and modernist Islamic scholar Tariq Ramadan.</p>	The extent to which the shari'a is a reflection of divine will or human interpretation.
<p>C. Muslim understandings of jihad: The different meanings of 'jihad' (greater and lesser). The importance and significance of greater jihad as a personal spiritual struggle for every Muslim. The historical context and the specific conditions of lesser jihad. The problems in applying lesser jihad today with specific reference to modern warfare.</p>	The relevance today of the teachings about lesser jihad.

Theme 2 : Significant historical developments in religious thought	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	Examples of issues for analysis and evaluation
<p>A. The concept of an Islamic state and the political and social influence of religious institutions as a challenge to secularism: The social and political structure of Madinah as a 'model' or 'ideal' for an Islamic state. The role of shari'a law within an Islamic state. The challenge of shari'a law within a non-Islamic secular state.</p>	The compatibility of Islam with democracy.
<p>B. The challenges to Islam from scientific views about the origins of the universe: Islamic teachings about creation and their compatibility with modern scientific theories such as the 'Big Bang', the 'Steady State' and 'Expanding/Oscillating Universe' theories. Reference should be made to Sura 3:26-27, Sura 23:12-14 and Sura 51:47.</p>	The effectiveness of Islamic responses to the challenges of scientific views about the origins of the universe.
<p>C. Western perceptions of Islam: Issues of bias, misrepresentation, inaccuracy and 'Islamaphobia' throughout the Western world with a particular focus on Britain. Examples may be drawn from: political views; views from media sources (television, radio or newspapers) and/or online media.</p>	The extent to which the media influences Western perceptions of Islam.

Unit 3: A Study of Religion - Option B: A Study of Islam

Theme 3: Significant social developments in religious thought	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	Examples of issues for analysis and evaluation
<p>A. Islamic attitudes towards pluralism: The diversity in Muslim attitudes towards other religions, including 'People of the Book'. The teachings found in Sura 42:13, Sura 2:136 and Sura 2:256. The importance of religious freedom in the history of the Islamic religion. Conversion in Islam.</p>	The effectiveness of Islamic responses to pluralism.
<p>B. The importance of family life for the Muslim religion: The role of the family and the Muslim home as foundational for Islamic principles. The changing role of men and women in Islam with reference to family life. The role and status of women in Islam with reference to feminism: the pioneering work of Professor Aisha Abd Al Rahman "Bint ash shati"; a contemporary feminist view Haleh Afshar.</p>	The extent to which the Muslim family is central to the Islamic religion.
<p>C. Islam and migration - the challenges of being a Muslim in Britain today: An examination of the problems created by segregation and assimilation for Muslim communities and individuals living in Britain today with a focus on food, dress, practice of religion and, education. The role of the Muslim Council of Britain.</p>	The possibility of assimilation into a secular society for Muslims in Britain.

Theme 4: Religious practices that shape religious identity	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	Examples of issues for analysis and evaluation
<p>Diversity within Islam:</p> <p>A. Beliefs and practices distinctive of Shi'a Islam: Specific Shi'a interpretations of, and additions to, the Five Pillars. The significance of the historical dispute that gave rise to Shi'a Islam with reference to: the succession of Ali; the death of Hussein and, martyrdom. Beliefs about the Imam; Mahdi (occultation); pilgrimage; muta and taqiyya.</p>	Islam as a divided or united religion.
<p>Islam and change - the development and influence on religious belief and practice within Islam of:</p> <p>B. Sufi philosophical thought about the nature of God and religious experience: The Qutb. The role of the teacher, the use of parables and the direct personal relationship of teacher to pupil. The role of asceticism. The role of personal, mystical religious experience as a way of experiencing God. The variety of sufi devotional practices including dhikr, muraqaba and sama (specifically whirling).</p>	The possibility of a personal mystical union with God in Islam.
<p>C. Ethical debate about crime and punishment, including arguments posed by scholars from within and outside the Islamic tradition: Traditional Muslim views about punishment for crime. Categories of punishment: qisas; hudud; tazir. Contrasting views about the death penalty: a modernist scholarly view (Tariq Ramadan); a traditionalist Islamic scholar (Sheikh Ahmad Ash-Sharabasi); the response of James Rachels.</p>	The effectiveness of Islamic ethical teachings as a guide for living for Muslims today.

Unit 3: A Study of Religion - Option C: Judaism

Theme 1: Religious figures and sacred texts	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	Examples of issues for analysis and evaluation
<p>A. The structure and development of the Talmud and its importance within Judaism: The differences between the Jerusalem and Babylonian Talmuds. The nature of the Mishnah: content, style and importance for study in Judaism. The nature of the Gemara: content, style and importance for study in Judaism.</p>	The Mishnah as the most important element of the Talmud.
<p>B. Midrash in Judaism - the distinction between Halakhah and Haggadah: The meaning and purpose of midrash. The Halakhah and the 613 mitzvot; Halakhah as the revealed will of God – Orthodox and Reform views. The significance of Haggadah and different interpretations with reference to Maimonides (literal, rational and hidden).</p>	The importance of Halakhah versus the importance of Haggadah for Judaism.
<p>C. Rashi and Maimonides: A comparison of the views of Rashi and Maimonides concerning: creation; the Torah; the patriarchs and the 613 mitzvot; approaches to midrash.</p>	The relative importance of Rashi and Maimonides for understanding Hebrew scriptures.

Theme 2 : Significant historical developments in religious thought	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	Examples of issues for analysis and evaluation
<p>A. The development of the Zionist Movement and the establishment of the secular state of Israel. Jewish responses to Zionism: The origins of Religious Zionism with reference to Amos 9:14–15 and “Zion theology” found in the Hebrew Bible. The rise of nationalism in response to anti-Semitism in the 19th century. Political Zionism and the developing idea of a ‘national’ identity amongst Jews with reference to: the Dreyfus affair; the work of Herzl and the international Zionist movement; the First Zionist conference in 1897 and the establishment of political and legal claims; revival of the Hebrew language in its modern spoken form. Labour Zionism and the development of kibbutz. Migration to Israel; the challenge of the secular state of Israel with reference to the specific response by Haredi Judaism.</p>	The validity and strength of the links between Zionism and Judaism.
<p>B. The challenge of science: Diversity of responses within Judaism to the philosophical issues relating to both the nature of God and to the creation event with reference to bereshit; evolution and different Jewish understandings of the creation process; the debate about the age of the universe.</p>	The success of Reform Judaism in meeting the challenges posed by science and secularisation.
<p>C. Holocaust theology: Key theological responses to the Holocaust with reference to: the meaning of Richard Rubenstein’s “death of God”; Elie Wiesel’s “The Trial of God”; Ignaz Maybaum’s view of Israel as the “suffering servant” and the Holocaust as “vicarious atonement”; Eliezer Berkovitz and “the hiding of the divine face” and free will; Emil Fackenheim’s proposal of the Holocaust as a new revelation experience of God by way of a 614th commandment.</p>	The success of Holocaust theologies in addressing the challenges raised by the Holocaust.

Unit 3: A Study of Religion - Option C: Judaism

Theme 3: Significant social developments in religious thought	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	Examples of issues for analysis and evaluation
<p>A. The development of Reform Judaism and Jewish attitudes to pluralism: The role and legacy of the Pittsburgh Platform with reference to: attitudes towards liberationist thought (concern for the poor) and Tikkun Olam; attitudes towards other religions; the diversity of views in Reform and Orthodox Judaism towards interfaith dialogue.</p>	The effectiveness of Jewish responses to pluralism.
<p>B. Jewish family life, including diversity of views within Judaism about gender equality: The role of the family and the Jewish home as foundational for Jewish principles. The changing role of men and women in Judaism with reference to family life. The role and status of women in Judaism with reference to feminism: debates about agunah; debates about minyan; the contributions of Judith Plaskow and Margaret Wenig to Jewish feminism.</p>	Family life as the main strength of Judaism.
<p>C. Judaism and migration - the challenges of being a religious and ethnic minority in Britain with reference to Shabbat observance and kashrut: An examination of the problems created by segregation and assimilation for Jewish communities and individuals living in Britain today with a focus on: kashrut; dress; practice of religion and education. The role of the Jewish Leadership Council.</p>	The possibility of assimilation into a secular society for Jews in Britain.

Theme 4: Religious practices that shape religious identity	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	Examples of issues for analysis and evaluation
<p>A. Beliefs and practices distinctive of Hasidic Judaism: Baal Shem Tov and Mitnagdim; adoption of new prayer rite; modified liturgy; influence of the rebbe; miraculous healing; charismatic approach to worship; life of piety; emphasis on worship rather than traditional study.</p>	Whether Hasidism contributed to the survival of Judaism.
<p>B. Philosophical understandings of the nature of God and religious experience found in Kabbalah: Esotericism: meditation, visual aids, art and magic. The role of the Zohar. The focus on the experience of God and trying to penetrate God's essence: En Sof; Sefirot; Devekut and Tikkun.</p>	The possibility of a personal mystical union with God in Judaism.
<p>C. Ethical debate within Judaism about embryo research, including arguments posed by scholars from within and outside the Jewish tradition: Jewish contributions to the debate about embryo research with particular reference to: the relationship between stem-cell research and Pikuach Nefesh; somatic cell nuclear transfer (SCNT); pre-implantation embryo research; a comparison of the views proposed by Rabbi J. David Bleich and Rabbi Moshe Dovid Tendler; the views and work of Professor Clare Blackburn.</p>	The effectiveness of Jewish ethical teachings as a guide for living for Jews today.

Unit 3: A Study of Religion - Option D: A Study of Buddhism

Theme 1: Religious figures and sacred texts	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	Examples of issues for analysis and evaluation
<p>A. The Pali Canon - its role in Buddhism as a whole: The Tipitaka. The authority of the Vinaya for the Theravada sangha the wider authority and significance of the Suttapitaka, the relevance of the Abidhamma for the commentarial development of Buddhism. The importance of the Pali Canon as a source of wisdom.</p>	The relative importance of the Pali Canon in Buddhism.
<p>B. The main themes and concepts in two Mahayana Texts: 1) The Heart Sutra - the philosophical content regarding the mutual identity of emptiness and form 2) The Parable of the Burning House in the Lotus Sutra - exemplifying the concept of skillful means and the provisional nature of the teachings.</p>	The teachings in Mahayana Sutras as representative of reality.
<p>C. The contribution made to the development of Buddhist thought by the work of contemporary Buddhist teachers: the Dalai Lama and Thich Nhat Hanh: With reference to their interpretation of Buddhist teachings, including compassion, meditation and non-harming for life in the West.</p>	The relative success of the Dalai Lama and Thich Nhat Hanh in ensuring the relevance of Buddhism in the modern world.

Theme 2 : Significant historical developments in religious thought	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	Examples of issues for analysis and evaluation
<p>A. Historical development of Buddhism: The development of key Buddhist traditions in Japan - Zen, Pure Land and Nichiren, with particular reference to the central practices of koan, nembutsu and daimoku.</p>	The extent to which Japanese Buddhism is unique.
<p>B. Responses to the challenges from science: The tension between presentations of Buddhism as avoiding 'blind faith' and emphasising the realisation of truth in experience (with reference to the Kalama Sutta v.9&10). Asian Buddhist worldviews populated with a diversity of beings and realms. The Dalai Lama's assessment of the value of science.</p>	The extent to which there is a close relationship between Buddhism and science.
<p>C. Responses to the challenges from secularism: Buddhism's frequent presentation in the West as a secular philosophy, with reference to Stephen Bachelor (a Buddhist Atheist) and his presentation of Buddhism as a rational philosophy and way of life, and David Brazier who claims Buddhism is a religion.</p>	The legitimacy of Western presentations of Buddhism as atheistic and secular.

Unit 3: A Study of Religion - Option D: A Study of Buddhism

Theme 3: Significant social developments in religious thought	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	Examples of issues for analysis and evaluation
<p>A. Responses to the challenges of pluralism and diversity: Emphasis within Buddhism on the individual testing the teachings and staying true to experience, even if that means following a path different to Buddhism (with reference to the Kalama Sutta v. 9 & 10 and Majjhima Nikaya 56.16 - the Buddha's conversation with Upali). In Mahayana Buddhism, the teachings are sometimes considered to be only provisional, different upaya (skilful means) to suit different listeners. There is good within all religions and they should be respected (Edicts of Emperor Ashoka, Rock Edict NB 7 and Rock Edict NB 12).</p>	<p>The extent to which Buddhism's openness means it is in danger of losing its own identity.</p>
<p>B. Historical development of Buddhism: Buddhism in Britain, distinguishing between heritage Buddhism (the Buddhism of those whose relatives were born in Buddhist countries and migrated to Britain) and convert Buddhism. Possible reasons for the popularity of Buddhism in Britain.</p>	<p>The unique nature of British Buddhism in comparison with Buddhism found in other countries.</p>
<p>C. The changing roles of men and women including feminist approaches within Buddhism: Different views in Buddhism about whether women can be nuns and attain awakening. The Lotus Sutra teaches that all equally possess the potential to attain Buddhahood, but in Chapter 12 - the Dragon King's daughter transforms into a man before attaining awakening. However, the Buddha ordained women. Buddhism's commitment to the end of suffering may be seen as inherently feminist (as indicated by Rita Gross). Cultural stereotypes of the roles of men and women have no universal application within Buddhism.</p>	<p>Whether Buddhism aligns with feminism.</p>

Theme 4: Religious practices that shape religious identity	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	Examples of issues for analysis and evaluation
<p>A. Beliefs and practices of Tibetan Buddhism with reference to mudra, mandala and mantra: The relationship of Buddhism with pre-Buddhist Bon religion as the context for the development of these distinctive practices - mudra, mandala and mantra.</p>	<p>The unique nature of Tibetan Buddhism.</p>
<p>Buddhism and change – the development and influence on religious belief and practice within Buddhism of:</p> <p>B. Philosophical understandings of the nature of reality and religious experience found within the Contemporary Anglophone Mindfulness movement: The response of Slavoj Zizek - that by encouraging stress-release, mindfulness serves capitalism rather than challenges it.</p>	<p>The extent to which the Mindfulness movement can be considered to be Buddhist and/or ethical.</p>
<p>C. Socially Engaged Buddhism: The reasons for the development of Socially Engaged Buddhism: Thich Nhat Hanh's Mindfulness Trainings; the primary drive to combat suffering (not just on achieving a positive rebirth or awakening for oneself); it is supported by high profile individuals such as the Dalai Lama (non-violent protest with regards to Tibet); it receives high media coverage, it has links to supporting organisations such as Sakyadhita and the Buddhist Peace Fellowship. The views of Joanna Macy and Damien Keown on this movement.</p>	<p>Social justice as a requisite for the observance of Buddhist teachings.</p>

Unit 3: A Study of Religion - Option E: A Study of Hinduism

Theme 1: Religious figures and sacred texts	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	Examples of issues for analysis and evaluation
<p>A. Content and significance of the Upanishad: Origin and background of the Upanishads; teaching of the gurus - significant teaching on the relationship between Brahman and atman; achievement of jnana and the concept of yajna. Reference should be made to: Katha Upanishad – dialogue between Yama the god of death and his disciple Chela 2:8; 2:24; 2:16; 3:6; 3:12; 4:3; 5:7; 3:15; 5:2 Chandogya Upanishad 6:13:1-3.</p>	The importance of the Upanishads for Hindus today.
<p>B. Gandhi: Conviction and belief in Advaita Vedanta, satyagraha and brahmacarya; their interpretation and application. The interaction between his political stance and religious beliefs; self-rule for India; opposition to the Partition, opposition to 'untouchability'; belief in a universalist religion. Bhagavad Gita: 18:52-53.</p>	A comparison of the contributions made to Hinduism by Gandhi and Shri Paramahansa Ramakrishna.
<p>C. Shri Paramahansa Ramakrishna: The influence of mystical experiences on his thought. Development of Advaita - his role in promoting Hinduism and developing neo-Vedanta thought; belief in the importance of Vivekananda and Ramakrishna Mission.</p>	The individual successes and failures of Gandhi / Shri Paramahansa Ramakrishna.

Theme 2 : Significant historical developments in religious thought	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	Examples of issues for analysis and evaluation
<p>A. The reasons for the development and growth of ISKCON: With special reference to A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada; religious and cultural reasons for growth; key practices - regulation of life, an austere code of behaviour; key beliefs, e.g. importance of bhakti for Krishna consciousness; Prabhupada's life and influence.</p>	ISKCON as a 'deviation' from 'traditional' Hinduism.
<p>B. The challenges to Hinduism from secularism and science: The relationship between Hinduism and science in vedic literature - Saankhya yoga classifies matter; Hindu rishis as philosophers, mathematicians and scientists – Charaka and Aryabhata. Hinduism's acceptance of scientific advancements – a legitimate but incomplete step towards knowing and understanding reality; the diversity of views – conservative and liberal. Hindutva response to secularism in context of India as secular state; meaning of secularism in India; orthodox Hindus view history as pre-ordained and therefore accept secularism.</p>	The effectiveness of Hindu responses to the challenges of science and secularism.
<p>C. Hindu liberationist thinking as defending the poor and oppressed: The importance of the four purusharthas (dharma, artha, karma and moksha) to the Hindu attitude to wealth and poverty and the relationship between them; their influence on the guidance of artha shastras; influence of Vinoba Bhave. Manu 4:12, Manu 4:15, Rig Veda 10:117.</p>	Relevance and practicality of Hindu attitude to wealth and poverty in today's world.

Unit 3: A Study of Religion - Option E: A Study of Hinduism

Theme 3: Significant social developments in religious thought	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	Examples of issues for analysis and evaluation
<p>A. Difference between diversity and pluralism: Hinduism can be viewed as a pluralist tradition; many religious and cultural variations tolerated within Hinduism itself; historical origins of Hindu attitudes - Gandhi's Sarvodaya. The conflict between exclusivism and pluralism; Hindu attitudes to other faiths – concept of ishdateva – God honoured under many names and forms; person's choice which is the focus of their religious quest; celebration of divine under one name does not imply exclusion of celebration under another name or form.</p>	The extent to which Hinduism is an exclusivist or inclusivist tradition.
<p>B. The impact of migration on Hindu identity and the challenges of being a religious and ethnic minority in Britain: The meaning of Hindu identity in terms of belief, practice, lifestyle, worship and conduct; possible conflict of traditional Hinduism with popular culture; difficulties of practising Hinduism in a non-Hindu society.</p>	The possibility of assimilation into a secular society for Hindus in Britain.
<p>C. The changing roles of men and women in Hinduism (including different views within the religion): Religious and cultural views on the rights of women. Traditional views on the role of men and women in Hinduism; development of the role of women with reference to Indira Gandhi; contemporary views on the role of women including Madhu Kishwar and how these ideas have impacted on the role of men.</p>	Changing roles of men and women in Hinduism.

Theme 4: Religious practices that shape religious identity	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	Examples of issues for analysis and evaluation
<p>A. Bhakti Movement: Origin and background of movement; different types of bhakti – bhakti marga, Vaishnava bhakti; Shaiva bhakti; yatra (pilgrimage) as part of bhakti; Bhagavad Gita 9:26-28, 9:32, 16:1-3.</p>	Bhakti as a less spiritual expression and path of Hinduism.
<p>Hinduism and change – the development and influence on religious belief and practice within Hinduism of:</p> <p>B. Philosophical understandings of the nature of reality and religious experience found in Samkhya yoga and Advaita Vedanta: Development of Samkhya philosophy; three forms of Brahman – ishvara, prakriti and atman; the three gunas – sattva, rajas and tamas; influence of Patanjali and ashtanga yoga. Maitri Upanishad 18-19, Shvetashvatara Upanishad 5:7, 12-13. Meaning of Advaita; understanding of Brahman as nirguna; influence of Shankara and his teaching; the three levels of reality – illusory, mundane and ultimate; idea of adhyasa – superimposition.</p>	The relative successes of Samkhya and Advaita Vedanta philosophies in explaining the true relationship between God and humanity.
<p>C. Hindu bioethics: Infertility – relevant Hindu teaching and concepts; consideration of the views of Swasti Bhattacharya and S. Cromwell Crawford on 'Assisted Reproductive Technology' - IVF, sperm donation and embryonic transfer.</p>	The social and historical limitations of Hindu ethical teachings you have studied.

Unit 3: A Study of Religion - Option F: A Study of Sikhism

Theme 1: Religious figures and sacred texts	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	Examples of issues for analysis and evaluation
<p>A. Role and significance of: the texts of Mul Mantra and the Japji of Guru Nanak: Study of their philosophical content: liberating and awesome presence of God; interpretation and application in worship, personal meditation and initiation.</p>	The relative importance of the Japji of Guru Nanak and the Mul Mantra as the most important statement of faith within Sikhism.
<p>The contribution made to the development of Sikh thought through the works of:</p> <p>B. Guru Arjan - a period of Sikh growth: Building of Harmandir at Amritsar – architectural features reflecting Sikh beliefs, such as humility before God and all castes being equal. Compilation of Adi Granth to promote truth, peace and contemplation; his vision for Sikhism (Adi Granth 396 and Adi Granth 1136).</p>	The extent to which the Gurus can be viewed as 'idols'.
<p>C. Maharaja Ranjit Singh and the founding of the Sikh empire: His background and early life; the founding of the Khalsa; political sovereignty in the Punjab; his success in creating a golden age for Sikhism; features of the secular empire - no discrimination and religious freedom.</p>	The relative merits of the contributions to Sikhism of Guru Arjan and Maharaja Ranjit Singh.

Theme 2 : Significant historical developments in religious thought	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	Examples of issues for analysis and evaluation
<p>A. The aspiration for Khalistan: Understanding of the political background; 1919 Vaisakhi Massacre; partition of Punjab in 1947; Operation Bluestar 1984; role of persecution in Sikh identity and aspiration; diversity of views on self-rule.</p>	The relative importance within Sikhism as a whole of the aspiration for Khalistan, Punjabi language and culture.
<p>B. Role of men and women in Sikhism: Teaching of Guru Nanak – Adi Granth 62, 473; example of Guru Gobind Singh; marriage monogamous and a religious ceremony; widow's right to be head of the family; equal rights in education; gender equality – Guru Granth Sahib – 473; importance of women's views; equal religious opportunities and roles; equality in dress of men and women. Guru Amar Das - his appointment of women teachers. The views of Dr Mohinder Kaur Gill; Dr Gurnam Kaur; Kanwaljit Kaur Singh.</p>	Whether men and women are equal in Sikhism.
<p>C. Origins and development of the Sikh community in Britain: Migration from Punjab and East Africa; distribution of Sikh population in Britain; difficulties encountered – such as disposal of the dead, wearing of Punjabi dress; adoption of Sunday; development of gurdwara as a social centre.</p>	The possibility of assimilation into a secular society for Sikhs in Britain.

Unit 3: A Study of Religion - Option F: A Study of Sikhism

Theme 3: Significant social developments in religious thought	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	Examples of issues for analysis and evaluation
<p>A. Difference between diversity and pluralism: Historical origins of Sikh attitudes – conflicts with Islam and Hinduism; the teaching of Guru Granth Sahib; conflict between exclusivism and inclusivism; Sikh attitudes to interfaith dialogue – Sikhism no longer a missionary religion; Sikh attitudes to other faiths – enlightenment mediated through all theistic religious systems. Diversity between Khalsa and non-khalsa Sikhs.</p>	The extent to which Sikhism is an exclusivist or inclusivist tradition.
<p>B. The challenges to Sikhism from science and its responses to secularism: Relationship of Sikhism with science – no conflict with scientific view of Big Bang, continuous creation and evolution – Guru Granth Sahib – 1163;8276. Secularism: Sikh emphasis on social obligations and social reforms; duties as a citizen; freedom and equality of religion; compatibility of Sikh beliefs with secular democracy.</p>	The effectiveness of Sikh responses to the challenges of science and secularism.
<p>C. The challenges of being a religious and ethnic minority in Britain with reference to miri and piri: Origins of concept of miri and piri; development of tegh and deg – sword and cooking pot; Sikh liberationist thinking as defending the poor and oppressed; practical implications of concept of protecting the oppressed and feeding the hungry - material and spiritual needs; wearing of the kirpan.</p>	The relationship between miri and piri in Sikh daily life.

Theme 4: Religious practices that shape religious identity	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	Examples of issues for analysis and evaluation
<p>A. The status and importance of Rahit Maryada and Rahit Namas: Origins of the Rahit Maryada; relationship between values, principles and practices; importance in terms of beliefs, conduct and influence on Sikh identity; interpretation and reform; relationship between Rahit Maryada and Rahit Namas.</p>	The effectiveness of the Rahit Maryada or Rahit Namas as a guide to Sikh living.
<p>Sikhism and change - the development and influence on religious belief and practice within Sikhism of:</p> <p>B. Philosophical understandings of the nature of God and religious experience found in the names of God: Quintessence of Sikh spirituality and the practice of naam japo. Naam as a controlling force, attributes of naam, the 5 Shabads and the 5 Khands.</p>	The practice of naam japo as evidence of a personal mystical union with God.
<p>C. Sikhism and bioethics – infertility: Sikh teaching and concepts; consideration and comparison of the views of Sikh scholars - D.S. Chahal; Dr Jodh Singh; and W.O. Cole as a scholar outside the Sikh faith – views on 'Assisted Reproductive Technology' - IVF, sperm donation and embryonic transfer.</p>	The effectiveness of Sikh ethical teachings you have studied as a guide for living for Sikhs today.

2.4 A level Unit 4

Unit 4: Religion and Ethics

Written examination: 1 hour 30 minutes

20% of qualification

90 marks

This unit provides learners with the opportunity to undertake an in-depth and broad study of fundamental ethical themes, ranging from ethical language and thought to freewill and determinism.

This unit includes the study of the following content:

- ethical language and thought through significant concepts and the works of key thinkers, illustrated in issues or debates in religion and ethics
- three normative ethical theories such as deontological, teleological or character based ethics (at least two of which must be religious approaches)
- the application of ethical theory to two personal, societal or global issues of importance, including religious ethical perspectives
- how ethical language in the modern era has changed over time; including a study of meta-ethical theories and significant ideas in religious and moral thought such as free will, conscience or authority
- a comparison of the significant ideas presented in the works of at least two key scholars selected from the field of religion and ethics, and developments in the way these ideas are applied to significant issues in religion and belief
- how the study of ethics has, over time, influenced and been influenced by developments in religious beliefs and practices, the philosophy of religion and/or textual interpretation.

The following grids exemplify how the required content has been developed in a clear and concise way into four themes:

Unit 4: Religion and Ethics

Theme 1: Ethical language and thought	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	Examples of issues for analysis and evaluation
A. Divine command theory God as the origin and regulator of morality; right or wrong are objective truths based on God's will/command. The dependence (heteronomy) or independence (autonomy) of morality on God.	Whether morality is whatever God commands.
B. Meta-ethical approaches – intuitionism: The views of G.E. Moore regarding: criticisms of Naturalism: no objective moral truths / the naturalistic fallacy and intuitionism: ethical non-naturalism.	Consideration of the idea that emotivism or intuitionism is the best way to understand moral language
C. Meta-ethical approaches - emotivism: The views of A.J. Ayer regarding: emotivism: ethical non-cognitivism, the emotive nature of moral statements, the meaningless of moral statements (boo and hurrah).	The extent to which knowledge of ethical language and thought is essential when dealing with moral issues.

Theme 2 : Kant's Moral Law theory	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	Examples of issues for analysis and evaluation
A. Kant's Moral Law: A form of moral absolutism; moral statements as 'a priori analytical'; a deontological ethic; Kant's use of reason, the highest good (summum bonum), God's existence as a postulate of pure reason, duty and good will. The contrast between hypothetical/categorical imperatives; the three forms of the categorical imperative - the Formula of the Law of Nature; the Formula of the End in itself and the Formula of Ends.	The effectiveness of the Categorical Imperative in dealing with ethical issues.
B. W.D. Ross' development of Kant's Categorical Imperative: The seven prima facie duties as the basis of intuitive judgements about moral actions.	A consideration of whether W.D. Ross improved Kant's Categorical Imperative.
C. The application of Kant's Moral Theory AND Ross prima facie duties to both personal, societal and global issues listed below: a) immigration b) capital punishment.	Whether Kant's Moral Theory provides a practical basis for moral decision making for believers and/or non-believers.

Unit 4: Religion and Ethics

Theme 3: Contemporary developments in ethical theory	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	Examples of issues for analysis and evaluation
<p>A. Bernard Hoose's Proportionalism: A hybrid of Situation Ethics and teleological/deontological ethics: based on love; moral rules should stand unless there is a proportionate reason to break them; pre-moral and moral acts; distinction between good acts and right acts. The application of Proportionalism to both personal, societal and global issues listed below: a) homosexual relationships b) polyamorous relationships.</p>	Whether agape should replace religious rules.
<p>B. John Finnis' development of Natural Law: The seven basic human goods; theoretical / practical reason; Nine Requirements of Practical Reason; the first moral principle: the common good and the need for authority. The application of Finnis' Natural Law to both personal, societal and global issues listed below:</p>	The extent to which John Finnis' version of Natural Law is an improvement on the one provided by Aquinas.
<p>C. Singer's Preference Utilitarianism: Utility based on preference and not happiness/pleasure; the principle of equal consideration; the goal of minimising suffering. The application of Preference Utilitarianism to both personal, societal and global issues listed below: a) animal experimentation for medical research b) the use of nuclear weapons as a deterrent.</p>	A consideration of whether Preference Utilitarianism provides a practical basis for moral decision making for believers and/or non-believers.

Theme 4: Free will and determinism	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	Examples of issues for analysis and evaluation
<p>A. Religious concepts of predestination and free will, with reference to the teachings of: Augustine: doctrine of Original Sin: concupiscence; human as "a lump of sin" (massa peccati); an essentially 'free' human nature (liberium arbitrium); the loss of human liberty (libertas), a second sinful nature; God's grace and atonement for the elect / saints. Calvin: doctrine of Election: the absolute power of God; the corrupted nature of humans; the Elect and the Reprobates, unconditional election, limited atonement, irresistible grace and perseverance of the elect. Pelagius: the role of original sin: humanity maturing in God's image and accepting the responsibility of free will. Free will used to follow God's laws. The role of grace in salvation. Arminius: denial of predestination; the effect of original sin on free will; the part of God's 'prevenient' grace (the Holy Spirit) in allowing humans to exercise free will; the Elect and the possibility of rejecting God's grace; the election of believers being conditional on faith.</p>	A consideration of whether religious believers should accept predestination or instead accept that predestination can be reconciled with religious beliefs about free will.
<p>B. Concepts of determinism and libertarianism: Hard determinism: philosophical (John Locke), scientific, psychological (classical and operant conditioning). Soft determinism: caused acts v forced acts (Ayer); internal and external causes (Hobbes). Libertarianism: philosophical (Sartre), scientific (free floating DNA – Sirigu), psychological (humanism – Rogers).</p>	The degree to which philosophical, scientific and/or psychological views inevitably lead people to accept libertarianism.
<p>C. The relationship between determinism/ free will, moral responsibility and religious belief: i. The relationship between determinism (hard and soft) and free will/libertarianism with moral responsibility: the worth of human ideas of rightness, wrongness and moral value. The value in blaming anyone for 'bad' actions. The usefulness of normative ethics. ii. The relationship between determinism (hard and soft) and free will/libertarianism with religious belief: the link between God and evil. The implications for God's omnipotence and omnibenevolence. Implications for the use of prayer and miracles.</p>	The extent to which free will and determinism support the ideas that moral responsibility is an illusion and/or that God is omnipotent / omnibenevolent.

2.5 A level Unit 5

Unit 5: Philosophy of Religion

Written examination: 1 hour 30 minutes

20% of qualification

90 marks

This unit provides learners with the opportunity to undertake an in-depth and broad study of fundamental philosophical themes, ranging from arguments for the existence of God to the use of religious language.

This unit includes the study of the following content:

- philosophical issues and questions raised by religion and belief about the existence or non-existence of God, gods or ultimate reality
- the nature and influence of religious experience
- challenges to religious belief
- philosophical language and thought through significant concepts and the works of key thinkers, illustrated in issues or debates in the philosophy of religion
- how views of religious language have changed over time; the challenges posed by the verification/falsification debate and language games theory over whether religious language should be viewed cognitively or non-cognitively; and a consideration of at least two different views about religious teachings being understood symbolically and analogically
- a comparison of the significant ideas presented in works of at least two key scholars selected from the field of the philosophy of religion, and developments in the way these ideas are applied to issues in religion and belief
- how the philosophy of religion has, over time, influenced and been influenced by developments in religious beliefs and practices, ethics or textual interpretation.

The following grids exemplify how the required content has been developed in a clear and concise way into four themes:

Unit 5: Philosophy of Religion

Theme 1: Ontological arguments for the existence of God	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	Examples of issues for analysis and evaluation
A. Classical ontological arguments: Anselm (God has necessary existence) Descartes (God is supremely perfect being)	The success of the classical form of the ontological argument.
B. A modern version of the ontological argument: Plantinga (necessary worlds and modal form)	The degree to which Plantinga's form of the ontological argument is effective.
C. Challenges to the ontological argument: Gaunilo (greatest island) Kant (existence is not a predicate) Frege, (existence and essence)	The effectiveness of the challenges to the ontological arguments for God's existence.

Theme 2: Challenges to religious belief	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	Examples of issues for analysis and evaluation
A. Freud - Religion is an illusion and/or a neurosis Collective neurosis; primal horde; Oedipus complex; wish fulfilment and reaction against helplessness; strengths and weaknesses.	The adequacy of Freud's explanation of religious belief.
B. Jung – Religion necessary for personal growth Collective unconscious; individuation; archetypes; the 'god within; strengths and weaknesses).	The extent to which Jung was more positive than Freud about the idea of God.
C. Atheism - Rejection of belief in deities The difference between agnosticism and atheism; the rise of new atheism (antitheism); its main criticisms of religion; responses to the challenge to religion of new atheism.	The success of atheistic arguments against religious belief.

Unit 5: Philosophy of Religion

Theme 3: Religious experience	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	Examples of issues for analysis and evaluation
<p>A. Miracles – definitions and differing views on whether they can occur. Aquinas (miracles different from the usual order), Hume (transgression of a law of nature), Holland (contingency miracle), Swinburne (religious significance); consideration of reasons why religious believers accept that miracles occur. Contrasting views on the possibility of miracles: David Hume – his scepticism of miracles and Richard Swinburne – his defence of miracles.</p>	<p>The adequacy of different definitions of miracles and of the challenges to miracles</p>
<p>B. Near Death Experiences: Main features including: out of body experiences, rising into the heavens, the life review, the being of light. Strengths including: confirmation of afterlife existence, validation of scriptural claims, transformative effect on recipient. Weaknesses such as: inconsistent with our experiences of self as a whole person, alternative scientific explanations - oxygen starvation, endorphin releases.</p>	<p>A consideration of whether explanations for Near Death Experiences are viable.</p>
<p>C. The influence of religious experience on religious practice and faith: Value for religious community including: affirmation of belief system; promotion of faith value system; strengthening cohesion of religious community. Value for individual including faith restoring; strengthening faith in face of opposition; renewal of commitment to religious ideals and doctrines.</p>	<p>The extent to which a religious experience is dependent on the individual having had a religious upbringing.</p>

Theme 4: Religious language	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	Examples of issues for analysis and evaluation
<p>A. Inherent problems of religious language: Limitations of language for traditional conceptions of God such as infinite and timeless; challenge to sacred texts and philosophy of religion as unintelligible; the differences between cognitive and non-cognitive language.</p>	<p>The solutions presented by religious philosophers for the inherent problems of using religious language.</p>
<p>B. Religious language is cognitive but meaningless: Verification (A. J. Ayer) and falsification nothing can counter the belief (Antony Flew); criticisms of verification - include the verification principle cannot itself be verified criticisms of falsification - university debate (Richard Hare and Basil Mitchell).</p>	<p>The persuasiveness of arguments asserting either the meaningfulness or meaninglessness of religious language.</p>
<p>C. Religious language as non-cognitive: Religious language as a language game: (Ludwig Wittgenstein). Analogical: proportion and attribution (Thomas Aquinas) and quantifier and disclosure (Ian Ramsey) how these two views (Aquinas/Ramsay) can be used to help understand religious teachings. Symbolic: functions of symbols (John Randall); God as that which concerns us ultimately (Paul Tillich. A consideration of how these two views (Randall/Tillich) can be used to help understand religious teachings. Mythical: complex form of symbolic language that communicates values and insights into purpose of existence.</p>	<p>The effectiveness of the terms non-cognitive, analogical, mythical and symbolic as solutions to the problems of religious language.</p>

2.6 A level Unit 6

Unit 6: Textual Studies – New Testament

Written examination: 1 hour 30 minutes

20% of qualification

90 marks

This unit provides learners with the opportunity to undertake an in-depth and broad study of issues ranging from modern scholarship's views on the biblical accounts of the miracles of Jesus to their views on Apocalyptic literature.

This unit includes the study of the following content:

- selected texts in translation from a particular religious work, corpus of sacred text or scripture:
 - examining the meaning of the material, its social and historical context,
 - its literary features, authorship and audience
 - its relationship with other texts and/or sources of wisdom and authority from the religion
- modern critical scholarship and commentary including different contemporary approaches, religious and non-religious, to the primary text or corpus, and the religious, cultural or intellectual assumptions that underpin them
- issues that arise from the formation, transmission, interpretation and translation of the texts
- methods and methodology in interpretation
- the scientific and historical-critical challenges to the authority of texts and religious responses to these
- how textual interpretations have, over time, influenced and been influenced by developments in philosophy of religion, ethics or religious thought (as set out above for systematic study of religion)

The following grids exemplify how the required content has been developed in a clear and concise way into four themes:

Unit 6: Textual Studies (New Testament)

Theme 1: New Testament literature - Parables	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	Examples of issues for analysis and evaluation
<p>Parables: a study of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the types of parables - the characteristics of parables - the purposes of parables - the interpretation of the parables <p>with special reference to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-32) • the Great Banquet (Matthew 22:1-10; Luke 14:16-24) • the Sower (Mark 4:1-20). <p>With reference to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - John Dominic Crossan, <i>The Power of Parable: How fiction by Jesus became fiction about Jesus</i> (his classification of the parables riddle parables, example parables, attack parables and challenge parables.) - Robert H. Stein, <i>An Introduction to the Parables of Jesus</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The extent to which the parables are the work of the early Christian community as opposed to the historical Jesus. • The extent to which the parables are more about belief and hope than moral behaviour. • The extent to which Jesus' parables should be interpreted allegorically, or metaphorically.

Theme 2: New Testament literature - Miracles	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	Examples of issues for analysis and evaluation
<p>Miracles: a study of :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the types of miracles - the characteristics of miracles - the purposes of miracles - the interpretation of miracles <p>with special reference to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the healing of the Centurion's Servant (Matthew 8:5-13; Luke 7:1-10) • the Gadarene Demoniacs (Matthew 8:28-34) and the Gerasene Demoniac (Mark 5:1-20) • Feeding the Five Thousand (Mark 6:30-44; Luke 9:10-17) <p>With reference to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bart Ehrman, <i>Jesus: Apocalyptic Prophet of the New Millennium</i> - Keith Warrington, <i>Miracles in the Gospels: What do they teach us about Jesus?</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The importance and significance of miracles to Jesus' ministry. • Challenges to miracles from modern critical scholarship and science. • The extent to which miracles imply that Jesus was divine.

Unit 6: Textual Studies (New Testament)

Theme 3: New Testament literature – The Letters	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	Examples of issues for analysis and evaluation
<p>The Letters of the New Testament: a study of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the authorship of 1 Peter - the readership of 1 Peter - the purpose of 1 Peter - the similarities/differences of 1 Peter with other New Testament letters. <p>with special reference to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Peter 1:1-2; 5:12-14 • 1 Peter 2:11-25 • 1 Peter 3:1-6 • 1 Peter 4 <p>With reference to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - David G. Horrell, <i>1 Peter</i> - Wayne A. Grudem, <i>1 Peter</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whether the doubts about authorship of 1 Peter affect the letter's message. • Whether the author of 1 Peter was clearly writing for Jewish Christians. • The extent to which 1 Peter is unique as a New Testament letter.
Theme 4: New Testament literature - Apocalyptic	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	Examples of issues for analysis and evaluation
<p>Apocalyptic literature: a study of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the characteristics of Apocalyptic literature - the purposes of Apocalyptic literature - the interpretation of Apocalyptic literature <p>with special reference to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revelation 1 • Revelation 6 • Revelation 21 <p>With reference to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Richard Bauckham, <i>The Theology of the Book of Revelation</i> [especially Chapter 1] - David L. Barr (ed.), <i>Reading the Book of Revelation</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The extent to which the Book of Revelation can be regarded as apocalyptic rather than prophetic. • The extent to which apocalyptic literature has value/relevance for Christians today. • How the interpretation of apocalyptic literature has been influenced by developments in philosophy of religion, ethics or religious thought.

3 ASSESSMENT

3.1 Assessment objectives and weightings

Below are the assessment objectives for this specification. Learners must demonstrate their ability to:

AO1

Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including:

- 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

Analyse and evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief, including their significance, influence and study.

AS 2 compulsory units = Unit 1 + Unit 2

A level 3 units in total = Unit 3 is compulsory + 2 other choices from Units 4-6.

The table below shows the weighting of each assessment objective for each component and for the qualification as a whole.

Overall qualification level percentages split across each unit:

	Weighting	AO1	AO2
AS Unit 1 (compulsory)	15%	18.8%	18.8%
AS Unit 2 (compulsory)	25%	31.2%	31.2%
Total for AS units only	40%	50%	50%
A level Unit 3 (compulsory)	20%	11.1%	22.2%
A level Unit 4 (optional)	20%	11.1%	22.2%
A level Unit 5 (optional)	20%	11.1%	22.2%
A level Unit 6 (optional)	20%	11.1%	22.2%
Total for A level units only	60%	33.3%	66.7%
Final Total A Level	100%	40%	60%

For each series, writing accurately will be assessed in all examination papers. Writing accurately takes into account the candidate's use of specialist language. It also takes into account the candidate's spelling, punctuation and grammar.

4 TECHNICAL INFORMATION

4.1 Making entries

This is a unitised specification which allows for an element of staged assessment.

Assessment opportunities will be available in the summer assessment period each year, until the end of the life of the specification.

Unit 1 and Unit 2 will be available in 2017 (and each year thereafter) and the AS qualification will be awarded for the first time in summer 2017.

Unit 3,4, 5 & 6 will be available in 2018 (and each year thereafter) and the A level qualification will be awarded for the first time in summer 2018.

Candidates may re-sit units **ONCE ONLY** prior to certification for the qualification, with the better result contributing to the qualification. Individual unit results, prior to the certification of the qualification, have a shelf-life limited only by that of the qualification.

A candidate may retake the whole qualification more than once.

The entry codes appear below.

WJEC GCE AS **Subject:** **Subject number**

WJEC GCE A level **Subject:** **Subject number**

The current edition of our *Entry Procedures and Coding Information* gives up-to-date entry procedures.

There is no restriction on entry for this specification with any other WJEC AS or A level specification.

4.2 Grading, awarding and reporting

The overall grades for the GCE AS qualification will be recorded as a grade on a scale A to E. The overall grades for the GCE A level qualification will be recorded as a grade on a scale A* to E. Results not attaining the minimum standard for the award will be reported as U (unclassified). Unit grades will be reported as a lower case letter a to e on results slips but not on certificates.

The Uniform Mark Scale (UMS) is used in unitised specifications as a device for reporting, recording and aggregating candidates' unit assessment outcomes. The UMS is used so that candidates who achieve the same standard will have the same uniform mark, irrespective of when the unit was taken. Individual unit results and the overall subject award will be expressed as a uniform mark on a scale common to all GCE qualifications. An AS GCE has a total of 200 uniform marks and an A level GCE has a total of 500 uniform marks. The maximum uniform mark for any unit depends on that unit's weighting in the specification.

Uniform marks correspond to unit grades as follows:

Unit Weightings	Maximum unit uniform mark	Unit grade				
		a	b	c	d	e
AS Unit 1 Compulsory (15% Weighting)	75	60	53	45	38	30
AS Unit 2 Compulsory (25% Weighting)	125	100	88	75	63	50
A level Unit 3 Compulsory (20% Weighting)	100	80	70	60	50	40
A level Unit 4 <i>Optional</i> (20% Weighting)	100	80	70	60	50	40
A Level Unit 5 <i>Optional</i> (20% Weighting)	100	80	70	60	50	40
A level Unit 6 <i>Optional</i> (20% Weighting)	100	80	70	60	50	40

The uniform marks obtained for each unit are added up and the subject grade is based on this total.

	Maximum uniform marks	Qualification grade				
		A	B	C	D	E
GCE AS	200	160	140	120	100	80
GCE A level	500	400	350	300	250	200

At A level, Grade A* will be awarded to candidates who have achieved a Grade A (400 uniform marks) in the overall A level qualification and at least 90% of the total uniform marks for the A2 units (270 uniform marks).