

# **Teacher's Guide**

## **Edexcel GCSE in Religious Studies**



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# Specification overview

The Edexcel GCSE (Short Course) in Religious Studies comprises one unit which can be taken from any module.

Students may be entered for a short course at any time, however, from June 2014 it will no longer be possible for students to ‘top up’ from a short course to the full GCSE.

The Edexcel GCSE in Religious Studies comprises two units which must be taken from different modules.

Module A	Module B	Module C	Module D
<b>Unit 1 – 5RS01</b> Religion and Life Based on a Study of Christianity and at Least one Other Religion	<b>Unit 8 – 5RS08</b> Religion and Life Based on a Study of Christianity and at Least one Other Religion	<b>Unit 9 – 5RS09</b> Christianity	<b>Unit 16 – 5RS16</b> Mark’s Gospel
<b>Unit 2 – 5RS02</b> Religion and Life Based on a Study of Christianity		<b>Unit 10 – 5RS10</b> Roman Catholic Christianity	
<b>Unit 3 – 5RS03</b> Religion and Life Based on a Study of Roman Catholic Christianity		<b>Unit 11 – 5RS11</b> Islam	
<b>Unit 4 – 5RS04</b> Religion and Life Based on a Study of Islam		<b>Unit 12 – 5RS12</b> Judaism	
<b>Unit 5 – 5RS05</b> Religion and Life Based on a Study of Judaism		<b>Unit 13 – 5RS13</b> Hinduism	
<b>Unit 6 – 5RS06</b> Religion and Life Based on a Study of Hinduism		<b>Unit 14 – 5RS14</b> Sikhism	
<b>Unit 7 – 5RS07</b> Religion and Life Based on a Study of Sikhism		<b>Unit 15 – 5RS15</b> Buddhism	

# Course planner

This section is designed to help you deliver the Edexcel GCSE in Religious Studies. As each unit has four sections with 11 topics, the scheme for any unit can be transposed to another unit. Each section has been designed to be teachable in a maximum of 15 lessons, ie a total of 60 lessons over five terms.

## Unit 1: Short Course

<b>Term 1</b> Introduction to the course Believing in God (topics 1–8)	<b>Term 2</b> Believing in God (topics 9–11) End of section test Matters of life and death (topics 1–7)
<b>Term 3</b> Matters of life and death (topics 8–11) End of section test Marriage and the family (topics 1–5) Year 10 exams	<b>Term 4</b> Marriage and the family (topics 6–11) End of section test Religion and community cohesion (topics 1–4) Revision
<b>Term 5</b> Mock exams Religion and community cohesion (topics 4–11) End of section test	<b>Term 6</b> Revision Unit 1 final exam

## Units 1 and 8: Full Course (starting Year 9)

Year 9	Year 10	Year 11
	<b>Autumn term</b> Matters of life and death End of section test Marriage and the family (topics 1–9)	<b>Autumn term</b> Rights and responsibilities (topics 10–11) End of section test Environmental and medical issues End of section test Peace and conflict (topics 1–8)
	<b>Spring term</b> Marriage and the family (topics 10–11) Religion and community cohesion	<b>Spring term</b> Mock exams Peace and conflict (topics 9–11) End of section test Crime and punishment End of section test
<b>Summer term</b> Introduction to the course Believing in God End of section test	<b>Summer term</b> Revision Unit 1 final exam Unit 8: Rights and responsibilities (topics 1–9)	<b>Summer term</b> Revision Unit 8 final exam

# Section A: Content guide

## Units 3 and 10: Full Course (starting Year 10)

Year 10	Year 11
<b>Autumn term</b> Believing in God End of section test Matters of life and death End of section test	<b>Autumn term</b> Beliefs and values (topics 10–11) End of section test Community and tradition
<b>Spring term</b> Marriage and the family End of section test Religion and community cohesion (topics 1–8)	<b>Spring term</b> Mock exams Worship and celebration End of section test Living the Christian life (topics 1–9)
<b>Summer term</b> Religion and community cohesion (topics 9–11) Revision Unit 3 final exam Unit 10: Beliefs and values (topics 1–9)	<b>Summer term</b> Living the Christian life (topics 10–11) Revision Unit 10 final exam

# Section A: Content guide

## Unit 8: Short Course (over Years 10 and 11 topic by topic)

Term 1	Term 2	Term 3
<b>Religion: rights and responsibilities</b> Why some Christians use only the Bible as a basis for making moral decisions <b>One lesson</b> The authority of the Church for Christians and why some Christians use only the Church's teachings as a basis for making moral decisions <b>One lesson</b> The role of conscience and why some Christians believe conscience is the most important guide in making moral decisions <b>One lesson</b> Situation Ethics and why some Christians use only Situation Ethics as a guide for making moral decisions <b>One lesson</b> Why some Christians use a variety of authorities in making moral decisions <b>One lesson</b> Human rights in the UK <b>Two lessons</b> Why human rights are important for Christians <b>One lesson</b> Why it is important to take part in democratic and electoral processes <b>One lesson</b> Christian teachings on moral duties and responsibilities: the Golden Rule (Matthew 7:12), the Parable of the Sheep and the Goats (Matthew 25:31-46), Am I my brother's keeper? (Genesis 4:1-10, 1 John 3:11-18) <b>Two lessons</b> The nature of genetic engineering, including cloning <b>One lesson</b>	Different attitudes to genetic engineering and cloning in Christianity, and the reasons for them <b>Two lessons</b> <b>End of section test</b> <b>One lesson</b> <b>Religion: environmental and medical issues</b> Global warming – its causes and possible solutions <b>Two lessons</b> Forms of pollution and their possible solutions <b>One lesson</b> The scarcity of natural resources and how this poses a threat to the future of the planet, with possible solutions <b>One lesson</b> Christian teachings on stewardship and their effects on Christian attitudes to the environment <b>Two lessons</b> The teachings of one religion other than Christianity on stewardship and their effects on its followers' attitudes to the environment <b>One lesson</b> The nature and importance of medical treatments for infertility <b>One lesson</b> Different attitudes to infertility treatments among Christians, and the reasons for them <b>Two lessons</b>	Attitudes to infertility treatments in one religion other than Christianity, and the reasons for them <b>One lesson</b> The nature and importance of transplant surgery <b>One lesson</b> Different attitudes to transplant surgery in Christianity, and the reasons for them <b>One lesson</b> Different attitudes to transplant surgery in one religion other than Christianity, and the reasons for them <b>One lesson</b> <b>End of section test</b> <b>One lesson</b> <b>Religion: peace and conflict</b> The United Nations and world peace including one example of their work for peace <b>One lesson</b> How religious organisations try to promote world peace <b>One lesson</b> Why wars occur, using examples from current conflicts <b>One lesson</b> The nature and importance of the theory of just war <b>One lesson</b> Differences among Christians in their attitudes to war, and the reasons for them <b>Two lessons</b> Attitudes to war of one religion other than Christianity, and the reasons for them <b>One lesson</b> <b>Year 10 exams</b>

# Section A: Content guide

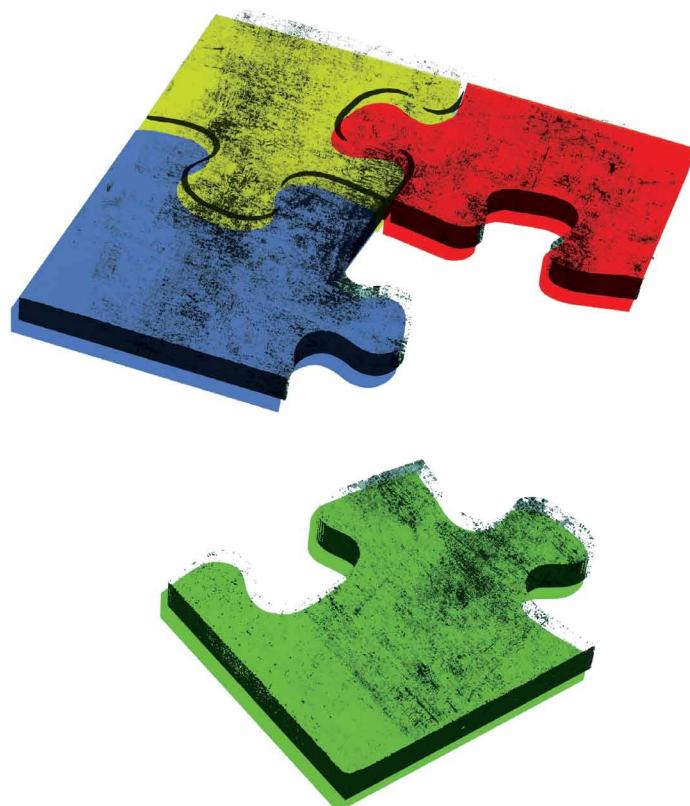
Term 4	Term 5	Term 6
<p>Christian attitudes to bullying, and the reasons for them <b>One lesson</b> Attitudes to bullying in one religion other than Christianity, and the reasons for them <b>One lesson</b> Religious conflicts within families <b>Two lessons</b> Christian teachings on forgiveness and reconciliation <b>One lesson</b> The teachings on forgiveness and reconciliation of one religion other than Christianity <b>One lesson</b> <b>End of section test</b> <b>One lesson</b> <b>Religion: crime and punishment</b> The need for law and justice <b>Two lessons</b> Theories of punishment and the arguments for and against them <b>Two lessons</b> Why justice is important for Christians <b>One lesson</b> Why justice is important for the followers of one religion other than Christianity <b>One lesson</b></p> <p><b>Mock exams</b> The nature of capital punishment and non-religious arguments about capital punishment <b>Two lessons</b> Different attitudes to capital punishment among Christians, and the reasons for them <b>One lesson</b> Different attitudes to capital punishment in one religion other than Christianity and the reasons for them <b>One lesson</b> Laws on drugs and alcohol and the reasons for them <b>One lesson</b> Social and health problems caused by drugs and alcohol <b>Two lessons</b> Different attitudes to drugs and alcohol in Christianity, and the reasons for them <b>One lesson</b> Attitudes to drugs and alcohol in one religion other than Christianity and the reasons for them <b>One lesson</b> <b>End of section test</b> <b>One lesson</b></p>		<p>Revision <b>Unit 8 final exam</b></p>

# Teaching ideas

This section aims to give you some pointers, showing why this specification should be exciting both to teach and to learn.

The aims of the specification are designed to produce interesting lessons and to enable students to:

- adopt an enquiring, critical and reflective approach to the study of religion
- explore religions and beliefs, reflect on fundamental questions, engage with them intellectually and respond personally
- enhance their spiritual and moral development, and contribute to their health and wellbeing
- enhance their personal, social and cultural development, their understanding of different cultures locally, nationally and in the wider world, and contribute to social and community cohesion
- develop their interest in, and enthusiasm for, the study of religion, and relate it to the wider world
- reflect on and develop their own values, opinions and attitudes in light of their learning.



# Section A: Content guide

## Teaching Units 1-7: Religion and Life

### **Believing in God**

Students find this a very interesting topic, especially why some people do not believe in God and how Christians try to answer the problem of evil. However, sometimes students can find religious upbringing a boring or difficult topic.

Here is an idea for a lesson to make this more interesting.

#### **Starter**

1. Put this task on the board.

'Make a list of reasons why you believe in God OR why you do not believe in God.'

Students should be encouraged to start the task as soon as they sit down.

2. You could follow this up by reading about the topic with the whole class so they understand what they will be studying in this section.

#### **Main activity**

1. Ask students to create a list of the features of a Christian upbringing using their homework from the previous lesson.
2. In pairs, they should then discuss what effects they think 12 years of being brought up this way are likely to have on a child.
3. Using the results of their discussion, students should try to explain how a religious upbringing may lead to, or support, belief in God.

#### **Plenary**

1. In pairs, students discuss whether children should have a right to choose whether or not to have a religious upbringing. Draw out with students what is meant by 'the right' to something.
2. Set and discuss the homework. Students should write the title: 'Children should follow the religion of their parents.' Under this title they should draw a table of two columns. The first column should be labelled 'For' and the second should be labelled 'Against'. Students should then put as many ideas as they can think of in each column.

## Matters of life and death

This can be another very interesting topic for students, especially discussion on abortion and euthanasia. However, students sometimes find it difficult to answer evaluation questions on life after death. This should be easier in the new format, which asks students to give their own opinion, with reasons, and then why some people would disagree with them. This lesson plan might help.

### **Starter**

1. Why do Roman Catholics believe in life after death?
2. What reasons are there for believing in life after death which are not connected with religion?

### **Main activity**

1. Put two columns on the board.

Arguments for life after death	Arguments against life after death

2. Use the evidence from their starter sheets (and your own knowledge if necessary) to fill in column 1.
3. Ask students to gather evidence for column 2 using their own knowledge or research with relevant books or websites. Complete column 2 together.
4. Have some discussion whilst students copy out the table.

### **Plenary**

Discuss this evaluation statement and set it for homework.

‘When you’re dead, you’re dead and that’s the end of you.’

- (i) Do you agree? Give reasons for your opinion.
- (ii) Give reasons why some people may disagree with you.

# Section A: Content guide

## **Marriage and the family**

The addition of contraception and homosexuality to this section should increase interest. However, this whole section can be sensitive: Are any students gay? Do any students have parents in a civil partnership? Are students sexually experienced and not using contraceptives?

All your lessons should have these issues at the back of your mind, but one good way of dealing with it, and of keeping student interest, is for students to make presentations, as in this example.

### **Starter**

In the last lesson we looked at how attitudes to homosexuality have changed in the UK. Using what you learned, circle which statements you think are correct:

- UK law treats homosexuals in the same way as heterosexuals
- UK law treats homosexuals differently from heterosexuals
- civil partnerships give homosexual couples the same rights as married couples
- civil partnerships do not give homosexual couples the same rights as married couples
- public opinion is against treating homosexuals differently
- public opinion is in favour of treating homosexuals differently.

### **Main activity**

1. Discuss student answers to the starter sheet to make sure they all have a grasp of the attitudes to homosexuality of the law and public opinion.
2. Divide into groups, a third to make a presentation on the Roman Catholic attitude to homosexuality and the reasons for it; a third to make a presentation on the Evangelical Protestant attitude to homosexuality and the reasons for it; a third to make a presentation on the Liberal Protestant attitude to homosexuality and the reasons for it. They will need to use textbooks and websites for research.
3. Group presentations.

### **Plenary**

Discussion of the presentations as preparation for the homework questions.

### **Homework**

Set the following homework questions.

Explain why there are different attitudes to homosexuality in Christianity.

Explain why changing attitudes to homosexuality cause problems for some Christians.

## **Religion and community cohesion**

This section has changed from social harmony to community cohesion to cover the important government strategy to improve community cohesion through education. It is important, in such an area, that students actually know the facts and the following is a way of teaching the facts about multi-faith Britain.

# Section A: Content guide

## Starter activity

1. Put the UK population in the 2001 Census on the board (58 638 162)
2. Ask students to work in pairs to join up the numbers on the starter sheet to the relevant category, using their own ideas.

## Starter sheet

Category	Numbers in the census
Christian	8 596 488
Hindu	336 179
Buddhist	159 167
No answer	149 157
Muslim	4 433 520
Sikh	267 373
Jewish	1 588 890
No religion	41 014 811
Other religions	558 342

## Main activity

1. Discuss what students think about the actual statistics (see below) using their highest and lowest guesses to enliven the discussion.
2. Discuss the implications of the statistics for deciding whether the UK is a multi-faith society.

## Plenary

Prepare for homework by asking students to give their ideas on the advantages of living in a multi-faith society.

## Homework

1. Explain why the United Kingdom is called a multi-faith society.
2. Explain why there are advantages to living in a multi-faith society.

Category	Numbers in the census
Christian	41 014 811
No religion	8 596 488
No answer	4 433 520
Muslim	1 588 890
Hindu	558 342
Sikh	336 179
Jewish	267 373
Other religions	159 167
Buddhist	149 157

# Section A: Content guide

## Teaching Unit 8: Religion and Society

### **Religion: Rights and responsibilities**

This should be a much more interesting and accessible topic for students now that the political content has been replaced by human rights and genetic engineering. Given the constantly changing nature of genetic engineering, it is an ideal opportunity for students to investigate it for themselves. However, it is essential to give students specific websites to refer to when researching on the internet.

#### **Starter**

Genetic engineering in humans is using scientific techniques to manipulate human genes as a way of finding cures for diseases or preventing diseases breaking out.

Try to think of reasons why this is a good idea (column 1) and reasons why it is a bad idea (column 2).

Points in favour of genetic engineering	Points against genetic engineering

#### **Main activity**

1. Split into five groups, each group to find out the effects of one of the following:
  - Alzheimer's disease ([www.alzheimers.org.uk](http://www.alzheimers.org.uk))
  - Cystic fibrosis ([www.cftrust.org.uk](http://www.cftrust.org.uk))
  - Muscular dystrophy ([www.muscular-dystrophy.org](http://www.muscular-dystrophy.org))
  - Parkinson's disease ([www.michaeljfox.org](http://www.michaeljfox.org) or [www.parkinsons.org.uk](http://www.parkinsons.org.uk))
  - Huntington's disease ([www.hda.org.uk](http://www.hda.org.uk))
2. Brief account of the disease from each group.

#### **Plenary**

Discuss whether religious people might change their attitudes to genetic engineering if one of their children/family developed one of the researched diseases.

# Section A: Content guide

## **Religion: Environmental and medical issues**

Many students find the questions on animal rights very difficult. However, they find the medical issues topic interesting. Again, it is a good topic to investigate on the internet, and for compiling questionnaires which can have a numeracy content.

### **Starter**

Students to log onto the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority website:  
[www.hfea.gov.uk](http://www.hfea.gov.uk)

### **Main activity**

- I. Students complete this worksheet using information from the website.

#### **WORKSHEET**

Using the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority website ([www.hfea.gov.uk](http://www.hfea.gov.uk)), answer the following questions.

- (a) What is in-vitro fertilisation (IVF)?
- (b) What is artificial insemination by donor (AID)?
- (c) What is artificial insemination by husband (AIH)?
- (d) What is egg donation?
- (e) What is embryo donation?
- (f) What is surrogacy?

2. Students should check their answers and amend where necessary.

### **Plenary**

Give students the infertility questionnaires and tally charts. Discuss how students should distribute them and how they should collect their results using tally charts. Remind them about interpreting tally charts into graphs so they can analyse the results of the questionnaires.

### **Homework**

Give out the infertility questionnaire to four people, including at least one with no religious belief, and put the answers onto the tally chart ready for the next lesson.

# Section A: Content guide

## Attitudes to fertility treatment – questionnaire

As part of my GCSE in Religious Studies course, I am studying religious and non-religious attitudes to fertility treatments. I would be grateful if you could spare a few moments to answer these questions. Please tick the box which most applies to you.

1. What is your religion?

- Roman Catholic
- Other Christian
- Islam
- Judaism
- Hinduism
- Sikhism
- No religion

2. Do you think IVF (test-tube babies) should be available on the NHS?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

3. Do you think AID (using sperm from an unknown man) should be available on the NHS?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

4. Do you think egg donation (using an egg from an unknown woman) should be available on the NHS?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

5. Do you think embryo donation (using egg and sperm from unknown people for test-tube babies) should be available on the NHS?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

6. Do you think surrogacy (when the sperm and egg of the mother and father are fertilised by IVF and then placed in another woman's womb) should be available on the NHS?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

## Fertility treatment questionnaire – tally chart

### Yes answers

	Question 1	Question 2	Question 3	Question 4	Question 5	Question 6
Roman Catholic						
Other Christian						
Islam						
Judaism						
Hinduism						
Sikhism						
No religion						

# Section A: Content guide

## **Religion: Peace and conflict**

This section of the specification has been reviewed and should be even more interesting to students.

Information on United Nations work for world peace can be found on [www.un.org/Depts/dpa](http://www.un.org/Depts/dpa)

The following sites are useful for information on religious organisations working for world peace:

[www.icujp.org](http://www.icujp.org)

[www.millenniumpeacesummit.org](http://www.millenniumpeacesummit.org)

## **Religion: Crime and punishment**

Students enjoy crime and punishment lessons, and there is now much more interest in the topics of alcohol and drugs. In the past, some students have found it difficult to understand why there are different attitudes to crime and punishment among Christians. This lesson plan may help.

### **Starter**

Put these situations on the board.

1. A man has been found guilty of downloading sexual images of young children from the internet.
2. A woman has been found guilty of embezzling £100,000 from a children's charity for which she worked.

As students come in, ask them to decide on a punishment for each, and then the sort of punishment they think a Christian would give.

Display some of the answers on the board.

### **Main activity**

Divide the class into two groups to make presentations.

Group A to prepare a presentation on why some Christians think that reforming criminals is the only Christian form of punishment.

Group B to prepare a presentation on why some Christians believe that punishment should include deterrence and protection.

Group presentations.

### **Plenary**

Have a class discussion on which Christian attitude they think is the most 'Christian'.

### **Homework**

Explain why there are different attitudes to punishment among Christians.

### **Tip**

Explaining why there are different attitudes means you should define one attitude and give two reasons why some Christians hold this attitude. Then define another attitude and give two reasons why some Christians hold this attitude.

Remember your Quality of Written Communication will be assessed in your answers to the questions, so:

- be careful with your spelling
- use sentences and paragraphs
- use specialist vocabulary.

# Section A: Content guide

## Teaching Units 9–15: Faith in Practice

All these units have the following common section headings:

Beliefs and values, Community and tradition, Worship and celebration, Living the Buddhist/Christian/Hindu/Jewish/Muslim/Sikh life.

### **Starter**

Give out the starter sheet below for students to complete.

### **Starter sheet**

1. What I do at Christmas
2. Why I celebrate Christmas

### **Main activity**

1. Divide the class into two groups, A and B (sub-divide those groups with large classes).
2. Ask group A to produce a presentation on how Christmas is celebrated by Roman Catholics.
3. Ask group B to produce a presentation on why the celebration of Christmas is important for Roman Catholics.
4. Group presentations. Students to complete worksheet from the presentations.

### **Worksheet**

Whilst watching the presentations, complete the following table ensuring that you put at least four points in each column.

<b>How Christmas is celebrated by Roman Catholics</b>	<b>Why celebrating Christmas is important to Roman Catholics</b>

### **Plenary**

Have a discussion comparing what students came up with in their starter activity with their worksheet answers.

### **Homework**

Find out what Lent is, when Lent is this year and four things that Roman Catholics do during Lent.

## Teaching Unit 16: Mark's Gospel

The topics for Sections 1–4, Discipleship, Conflict and argument, Death and resurrection, The identity of Jesus, have been retained, with greater emphasis on the importance for, and effects on, Christians today.

For example, when teaching the Last Supper, the following lesson plan might be useful.

### **Starter**

Show a video/DVD of people receiving the Eucharist in different ways and their feelings about it (available from the Farmington Institute or from BFI New Life video series Living Bread – Exploring Communion).

### **Main activity**

1. Discuss what students learned from the video.
2. Divide the class into four groups and ask each group to prepare a short presentation on the beliefs about the Eucharist of:
  - i) Orthodox Church
  - ii) Church of England
  - iii) Nonconformist Churches
  - iv) Salvation Army/Quakers

Group presentations, with the other students making notes in preparation for answering the question: 'Explain why there are different attitudes to the meaning of the Eucharist in Christianity'.

Group presentations could be done as PowerPoint or using Publisher.

An extension activity could be for groups to carry out research using the official websites of the relevant Churches:

[www.cofe.anglican.org](http://www.cofe.anglican.org)

[www.methodist.org.uk](http://www.methodist.org.uk)

[www.nostos.com/church](http://www.nostos.com/church) (Greek Orthodox Church in England)

[www.salvationarmy.org.uk](http://www.salvationarmy.org.uk)

### **Plenary**

Discuss the homework question and make sure that students have enough information to answer it.

### **Homework**

Explain why the Last Supper is important for Christians today.

# Student guide

### Is this the right subject for me?

Religious Studies is the right course for you because it is about you, your life and the issues you will face when you leave school and go into the multi-ethnic, multi-faith society which is the UK.

The course also has the following advantages for you.

- GCSE Religious Studies involves a lot of thinking and writing and shows you are aware of other people's beliefs and the nature of the society you live in.
- It helps you to think through some of the big issues of life about which adults argue all the time.
- It helps to remove the ignorance that causes prejudice, hatred and violence in our world (for example many wars are caused through misunderstandings about religion).
- It also gives you the opportunity to explore religious and moral beliefs in a safe and questioning environment so that you can become sure of your own beliefs and explain them clearly to others.

Religious Studies is not about making you 'religious', it is about enabling you to think for yourself about religious and moral issues.

### What will I learn?

If you study *Religion and Life*, you will cover:

- faith in practice
- why some people believe in God and some people don't
- why some people believe in life after death and some people don't
- different attitudes to abortion and euthanasia
- different attitudes to sex, marriage and divorce
- different attitudes to family life
- different attitudes to homosexuality
- different attitudes to contraception
- religion and community cohesion in terms of women's rights, ethnic rights and the problems and benefits of living in a multi-faith society.

If you study *Religion and Society*, you will cover:

- different ways in which Christians make moral decisions
- different attitudes to human rights, genetic engineering, environmental problems, transplant surgery, infertility treatments, war, bullying, religious conflicts in families and crime and punishment
- the work of the UN for world peace

# Section A: Content guide

- problems of drugs and alcohol
- religious attitudes to drugs and alcohol.

## What do I need to know, or be able to do, before taking this course?

GCSE Religious Studies follows on from what you have done in Religious Studies and Citizenship at Key Stage 3. You will be expected to have learned some skills in: thinking for yourself, understanding why different people have different attitudes to religious and moral problems, expressing and explaining your own opinions about religious and moral problems.

## How will I be assessed?

If you are taking a Short Course, you will be assessed through a 1½ hour exam. If you are taking a Full Course, you will be assessed through two 1½ hour exams.

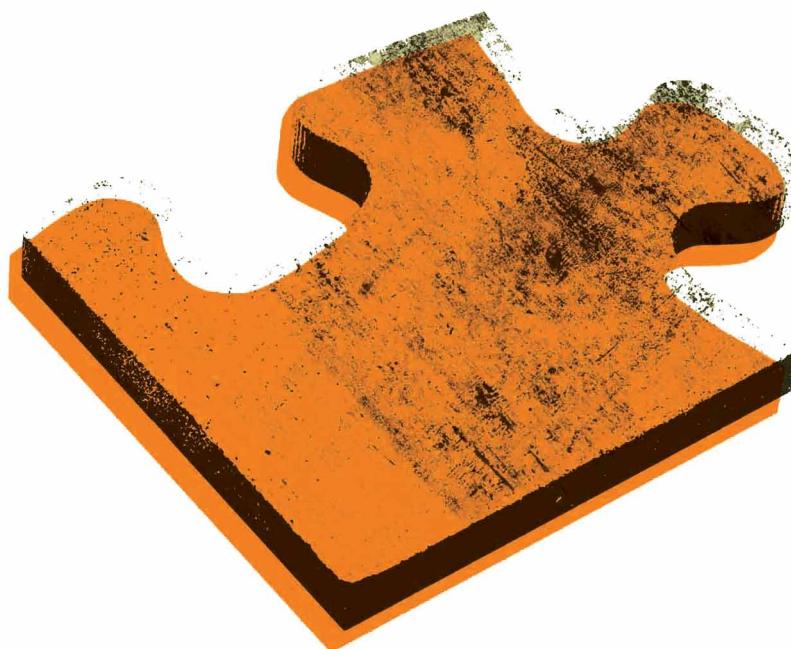
## What can I do after I've completed the course?

The main advantage of GCSE Religious Studies is that it prepares you for life and gives you the skills you will need to make the decisions every adult faces.

However, it is also an excellent preparation for A Level Social Sciences (law, sociology, psychology etc) as well as A Level Religious Studies, History, English etc. In addition, many jobs appreciate the skills GCSE Religious Studies will give you, for example medicine, the police, the armed forces and the caring professions (social work, nursing, probation service etc).

## Next steps!

Your teacher will give you the resources you need. There are revision guides to help you, but they need to be focused on the units you are studying (for example Religion and Life Revision Guide, Roman Catholic Christianity Revision Guide).



# Assessment overview

The grid below gives an overview of the assessment for this course.

We recommend that you make this information available to students to help ensure they are fully prepared and know exactly what to expect in each assessment.

The Edexcel GCSE (Short Course) in Religious Studies comprises one unit which can be taken from any module.

The Edexcel GCSE in Religious Studies comprises two units, which must be taken from different modules.

Each unit is assessed through a one-and-a half hour examination, divided into four sections.

Students choose one of two questions set for each section – four questions in total.

There are 84 raw marks in total for each paper. Of the 84 raw marks, up to 4 raw marks will be awarded for Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar (SPaG).

### All units

Percentage	<b>100% of the marks for a Short Course 50% of the marks for a Full Course</b>
Marks	84 marks available per unit
Time/pre-release	Each unit is assessed through one external exam of 1 hour and 30 minutes No pre-release
Availability	First assessment with SPaG May/June 2013
Description	Each exam will have eight questions (two in each section) and students will answer four questions (one from each section). All the questions will have the same format starting with a 2-mark question on key words, then a 4-mark response question, an 8-mark understanding question (where the Quality of Written Communication will be assessed) and finally a 6-mark evaluation question. Questions in section 1 are where the spelling, punctuation & grammar will be assessed.
Knowledge and skills	AO1 Describe, explain and analyse, using knowledge and understanding 50% in Short Course 50% in GCSE  AO2 Use evidence and reasoned argument to express and evaluate personal responses, informed insights, and differing viewpoints 50% in Short Course 50% in GCSE

# Section B: Assessment guide

## Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar (SPaG)

Religious Studies is one of four subjects which must add extra marks for spelling punctuation and grammar. This will be introduced from the summer 2013 examination series.

There will be four marks available which will be awarded for spelling punctuation and grammar

These marks will be assessed on the first section of the paper, on either question one or two (depending on which question the candidate answers).

Ofqual have written the level descriptors for SPaG and these will be used by all awarding organisations.

### Threshold performance: Level 1

Candidates spell, punctuate and use the rules of grammar with reasonable accuracy in the context of the demands of the question. Any errors do not hinder meaning in the response. Where required, they use a limited range of specialist terms appropriately.

If candidates meet the criteria for this level descriptor they will be awarded one mark.

### Intermediate performance: Level 2

Candidates spell, punctuate and use the rules of grammar with considerable accuracy and general control of meaning in the context of the demands of the question. Where required, they use a good range of specialist terms with facility.

If candidates meet the criteria for this level descriptor they will be awarded either two or three marks depending on whether they just fit the description or whether they fit the description fully.

### High performance: Level 3

Candidates spell, punctuate and use the rules of grammar with consistent accuracy and effective control of meaning in the context of the demands of the question. Where required, they use a wide range of specialist terms adeptly and with precision.

If candidates meet the criteria for this level descriptor they will be awarded four marks.

## Support and resources

We will provide a range of guidance to centres on understanding SPAG including:

- Downloadable SPaG guide for GCSE Religious Studies
- Exemplar materials sent to schools before the 2013 examinations to illustrate how SPaG has been incorporated.
- Ask the Expert - ongoing email support from the senior examiners
- Schemes of work and course planners

# Section B: Assessment guide

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