



Religious Studies

GCSE 2012

Religious Studies A

Teachers' Handbook

J620

Version 1

September 2012

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Introduction

OCR is offering new GCSEs for first teaching in September 2009.

The opportunity has been taken to improve the quality of our GCSEs for teachers and students alike.

We've made improvements in two key areas: updated and relevant content and a focus on developing students' personal, learning and thinking skills. In addition and in response to reforms announced by the Government and in response to Ofqual mandated changes to GCSEs, unitised assessment of this qualification is being replaced by linear assessment from September 2012.

This means that candidates commencing a two year course from September 2012 will take all of their GCSE units at the end of the course in June 2014.

We want to make the introduction of these new GCSEs as easy for you to manage as possible.

The main changes are :

- Controlled assessment will be introduced for most subjects
- The opportunity will be taken to bring course content up to date
- Examinations should provide opportunity for extended writing and more varied question types
- All GCSEs will meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act.

OCR offers a range of support materials, developed following extensive research and consultation with teachers. They have been designed them to save you time when preparing for the new specification and to support you while teaching them.

It is important to make the point that this Teacher Handbook plays a secondary role to the specifications themselves. The GCSE Religious Studies A Specification is the document on which assessment is based: it specifies what content and skills need to be covered. At all times therefore, the Teacher Handbook should be read in conjunction with the specification. If clarification on a particular point is sought, then that clarification must be found in the specification itself.

Subject specific guidance

Summary for Teachers

- Over a period of time the specification will be covered
- On any one paper there will not necessarily be full coverage of the unit
- On any one paper questions will not necessarily follow a particular order
- The question paper may include more than one question from a sub section of the unit
- Teachers should take careful note of the text in the specification at the beginning of each unit as this indicates the breadth of coverage of the unit
- Question 1 will no longer be compulsory and candidates will be able to make a free choice of questions within the rubrics and advice set on individual papers.
- Questions in examinations for this specification will now have an equal allocation of marks (50%) to cover the Assessment Objectives 1 (Demonstrate Knowledge, Understanding and Analysis) and 2 (Use of Evidence, Evaluation and Argument). Candidates will still be required to employ skills of description and analysis using appropriate knowledge and understanding of the religions which they are studying.
- Teachers will find the OCR materials relating to assessment valuable in assisting candidates to develop the required skills, especially the level descriptors.
- Candidates will be rewarded for any appropriate response to a reasonable interpretation of a question, even if the candidate's interpretation is different from that which was anticipated when the question was set.
- In the context of the Scriptures/Text papers it may be necessary to use terms that are not inclusive eg "man" as a word to describe humankind/angel etc.

Christianity:

If biblical quotations appear on the examination paper, they will be from the NIV translation.

Hinduism:

If scriptural quotations appear on the examination paper, they will be from Hindu Scriptures, trans & ed R C Zaehner, Everyman's Library.

Islam:

Teachers should note that in the specification and question papers the phrase 'peace be upon him' after the name of the Prophet will appear as the Arabic colophon ^{صلى الله} _{عليه وسلم}.

If Qur'anic quotations appear on the examination paper, they will be from The Meaning of the Holy Qur'an, Yusuf Ali Abdullah, Amana Publications.

Judaism:

Teachers should note that in the specification and question papers the divine name will appear as G-d.

If scriptural quotations appear on the examination paper, they will be from the Tanach, Mesorah Publications.

UNIT B569: Buddhism 1 (Beliefs, Special Days, Divisions and Interpretations)

UNIT B570: Buddhism 2 (Worship, Community and Family, Sacred Writings)

These specifications could both be taken by candidates as they complement each other and would offer a comprehensive understanding of Buddhism as a World Faith. Alternatively, candidates may choose to accompany this study by preparing for examination in any of the other units in Syllabus A.

Candidates who are entering these papers may, if they wish, study Buddhism from the perspective of any one school of Buddhism, although they should be aware of the existence of other opinions and approaches, especially in relation to the section 'Major Divisions and Interpretations' in Unit B569. They should also be aware of the nature of Buddhism as a World Religion and that it may find distinctive cultural expression in different parts of the world.

It is not intended that candidates should be familiar with the content of the texts cited in the specification. They should know the kinds of stories and teachings that the texts contain, and should be aware of the reasons why these texts are particularly valued within Buddhism, but it is not expected that they should have read the texts for themselves or be able to quote from them.

Candidates should be familiar with the religious terms given in the specification and should be able to use them accurately. Candidates should aim to show understanding of the ways in which holding Buddhist beliefs might affect people's everyday lives, for example in their choice of job or their moral attitudes.

If quotations appear on the examination paper, they will be from the Buddhist Scriptures, trans. E Conze, Penguin.

Resources

Buddhism: A New Approach
By Steve Clarke (Hodder Education)
ISBN: 9780340815052

Website of the Buddhist Society: <http://www.thebuddhistsociety.org/>

Website of Buddhist Education and Information network: <http://www.buddhanet.net/>

UNIT B571: Christianity 1 (Beliefs, Special Days, Divisions and Interpretations)

UNIT B572: Christianity 2 (Worship, Community and Family, Sacred Writings)

These specifications could both be taken by candidates as they complement each other and would offer a comprehensive understanding of Christianity as a World Faith. Alternatively, candidates may choose to accompany this study by preparing for examination in any of the other units in Syllabus A.

If biblical quotations appear on the examination paper, they will be from the NIV translation.

Candidates who are entering these papers may, if they wish, study Christianity from the perspective of any one denomination, although they should be aware of the existence of other opinions and approaches especially in relation to the section 'Major Divisions and Interpretations' in Unit B571. They should also be aware of the nature of Christianity as a World Religion and that it may find distinctive cultural expression in different parts of the world.

With the exception of the specified texts: the Apostles' Creed, Exodus 20: 1-17, Matthew 5–7 and Mark 12:28-34, it is not intended that candidates should be familiar with the content of any other texts. They should know the kinds of stories and teachings that the Bible contains, and should be aware of the reasons why these texts are particularly valued within Christianity.

Candidates should be familiar with the religious terms given in the specification and should be able to use them accurately. Candidates should aim to show understanding of the ways in which holding Christian beliefs might affect people's everyday lives, for example in their choice of job or their moral attitudes.

If biblical quotations appear on the examination paper, they will be from the NIV translation.

Resources

GCSE Religious Studies for OCR: Christianity
Jon Mayled, Janet Green

ISBN: 9780340983591

UNIT B573: Christianity (Roman Catholic) 1 (Beliefs, Special Days, Divisions and Interpretations)

UNIT B574: Christianity (Roman Catholic) 2 (Worship, Community and Family, Sacred Writings)

Candidates taking these units may not also take units B571 and B572: Christianity 1 and 2 as there is too much overlap between the units. They could, however, take any combination of units 1 and 2. Otherwise, these units complement each other and offer a fulsome study of Roman Catholic Christianity.

Candidates who are entering these papers are studying Christianity from the perspective of the Roman Catholic Church but should also be aware of the existence of other opinions and approaches, especially in relation to the section 'Major Divisions and Interpretations'. In addition the world-wide nature of Roman Catholicism is reflected in the reference to the international distribution of pilgrimage sites and ecumenical communities set out in the study materials.

With the exception of the specified texts: the Nicene Creed, Exodus 20: 1-17, Matthew 5–7 and Mark 12:28-34 (as well as Luke 3:11 and James 2: 14-17), it is not intended that candidates should be familiar with the content of any other texts. They should know the kinds of stories and teachings that the Bible contains, and should be aware of the reasons why these texts are particularly valued within Christianity.

Candidates should be familiar with the religious terms given in the specification and should be able to use them accurately. Candidates should aim to show understanding of the ways in which holding Christian beliefs might affect people's everyday lives, for example in their choice of job or their moral attitudes.

If biblical quotations appear on the examination paper, they will be from the NJB translation.

Resources

The Catholic Church: Belief, Practice, Life and behaviour. GCSE Religious Studies for OCR specification A (Michael Keene. Folens)

Christianity (John Mayled and Janet Green. Hodder and Stoughton)

ISBN: 9780340983591

UNIT B575: Hinduism 1 (Beliefs, Special Days, Divisions and Interpretations)

UNIT B576: Hinduism 2 (Worship, Community and Family, Sacred Writings)

These specifications could both be taken by candidates as they complement each other and would offer a comprehensive understanding of Hinduism as a World Faith. Alternatively, candidates may choose to accompany this study by preparing for examination in any of the other units in Syllabus A.

Candidates who are entering these papers may, if they wish, study Hinduism from the perspective of any one school of Hinduism, although they should be aware of the existence of other opinions and approaches, especially in relation to the section 'Major Divisions and Interpretations' in Unit B575.

It is not intended that candidates should be familiar with the content of the texts cited in the specification. They should know the kinds of stories and teachings that the texts contain, and should be aware of the reasons why these texts are particularly valued within Hinduism, but it is not expected that they should have read the texts for themselves or be able to quote from them. Candidates should be familiar with the religious terms given in the specification and should be able to use them accurately. Candidates should aim to show understanding of the ways in which holding Hindu beliefs might affect people's everyday lives, for example in their choice of job or their moral attitudes.

If quotations appear on the examination paper, they will be from Hindu Scriptures, trans & ed R C Zaehner, Everyman's Library.

UNIT B577: Islam 1 (Beliefs, Special Days, Divisions and Interpretations)

UNIT B578: Islam 2 (Worship, Community and Family, Sacred Writings)

These specifications could both be taken by candidates as they complement each other and would offer a comprehensive understanding of Islam as a World Faith. Alternatively, candidates may choose to accompany this study by preparing for examination in any of the other units in Syllabus A.

Candidates who are entering this paper may, if they wish, study Islam from the perspective of any one division of Islam, although they should be aware of the existence of other opinions and approaches, especially in relation to the section 'Major Divisions and Interpretations' in Unit B577. It is not intended that candidates should be familiar with the content of the Qur'an and Hadith.

They should know the kinds of stories and teachings that the texts contain, and should be aware of the reasons why these texts are particularly valued within Islam, but it is not expected that they should have read the texts for themselves or be able to quote from them.

Candidates should be familiar with the religious terms given in the specification and should be able to use them accurately. Candidates should aim to show understanding of the ways in which holding Muslim beliefs might affect people's everyday lives, for example in their choice of job or their moral attitudes.

Teachers should note that in the specification and question papers the phrase 'peace be upon him' after the name of the Prophet will appear as the Arabic colophon .

If quotations appear on the examination paper, they will be from *The Meaning of the Holy Qur'an*, Yusuf Ali Abdullah, Amana Publications.

Resources

GCSE Religious Studies for OCR: Islam 2nd Edition

Janet Green

ISBN: 9780340983614

UNIT B579: Judaism 1 (Beliefs, Special Days, Divisions and Interpretations)

UNIT B580: Judaism 2 (Worship, Community and Family, Sacred Writings)

These specifications could both be taken by candidates as they complement each other and would offer a comprehensive understanding of Judaism as a World Faith. Alternatively, candidates may choose to accompany this study by preparing for examination in any of the other units in Syllabus A. Candidates who are entering this paper may, if they wish, study Judaism from the perspective of any one division or group, although they should be aware of the existence of other opinions and approaches, especially in relation to the section 'Major Divisions and Interpretations' in Unit B579.

It is not intended that candidates should be familiar with the content of the texts cited in the specification. They should know the kinds of stories and teachings that the texts contain, and should be aware of the reasons why these texts are particularly valued within Judaism, but it is not expected that they should have read the texts for themselves or be able to quote from them.

Candidates should be familiar with the religious terms given in the specification and should be able to use them accurately. Candidates should aim to show understanding of the ways in which holding Jewish beliefs might affect people's everyday lives, for example in their choice of job or their moral attitudes.

If quotations appear on the examination paper, they will be from the Tanach, Mesorah Publications.

Resources

GCSE Religious Studies for OCR: Judaism 2nd edition
Jon Mayled

ISBN: 9780340983621

Judaism 101 website: <http://www.jewfaq.org/index.htm>

UNIT B581: Sikhism 1 (Beliefs, Special Days, Divisions and Interpretations)

UNIT B582: Sikhism 2 (Worship, Community and Family, Sacred Writings)

These specifications could both be taken by candidates as they complement each other and would offer a comprehensive understanding of Sikhism as a World Faith. Alternatively, candidates may choose to accompany this study by preparing for examination in any of the other units in Syllabus A.

It is not intended that candidates should be familiar with the content of the Guru Granth Sahib Ji. They should know the kinds of prayers and teachings that the text contains, and should be aware of the reasons why this book is particularly valued within Sikhism, and the ways that it is shown respect, but it is not expected that they should have read the text for themselves, or be able to quote from it.

Candidates should be familiar with the religious terms given in the specification and should be able to use them accurately. Candidates should aim to show understanding of the ways in which holding Sikh beliefs might affect people's everyday lives, for example in their choice of job or their moral attitudes.

Candidates should be familiar with the religious terms given in the specification and should be able to use them accurately. Terminology about Sikhism that does not appear explicitly in the specification will not be used in examination questions, although credit may be given to candidates who show knowledge of a wider range of terms. Candidates should also aim to show understanding of the ways in which holding Sikh beliefs might affect people's everyday lives, for example in their choice of job or their moral attitudes.

If quotations appear on the examination paper, they will be from the Sri Guru Granth Sahib (CD) translated by Dr. Sant Singh Khalsa.

Unit B583: Christian Scriptures 1 (Mark's Gospel)

This specification could be studied along with B584 as these units complement each other in offering a study of different influential Christian Scriptures. Alternatively, candidates may choose to accompany this study by preparing for examination in any of the other units in Syllabus A. Units B 571 or B572 (Christianity 1 or 2) could be particularly relevant for study. Units B573 or B574 (Roman Catholic) could be equally relevant.

The distinctive feature of this Gospel study is in its investigation of Jesus' life and actions.

Candidates need to have studied all the texts specified for this study of Mark's gospel and they will need to demonstrate knowledge of factual details relating to them. They should also have some idea of how these texts fit into the overall context of Mark's gospel along with the particular emphases and interpretations which Mark brings to his writings and the influence this might have on Christian thought, belief and life.

It will be important for candidates to not only have good factual recall of details from the texts specified but also to be able to demonstrate understanding of the implications and issues raised by the texts, especially in relation to the themes specified by the syllabus ("Jesus as Messiah, Death and Resurrection, the Lord's Supper, Jesus as miracle worker, Jesus in conflict with authority").

Care should be taken in addressing these themes in Mark's gospel as they differ significantly from those in the previous specification.

Examples of film and dramatic or artistic depictions of the Gospel stories are readily available and may be a very useful way of helping candidates to explore the relevant sections of Mark's gospel. However, teachers may need to guide students where material from other gospels could confuse their preparation for this particular study. An awareness of the Biblical context could of course be valuable to candidates' wider knowledge and studies.

In studying the texts candidates need to consider ways in which Christians today might interpret and apply the messages of Mark's gospel and that there may be diversity amongst Christians in their approaches and attitudes to issues raised by these texts. Possible areas to investigate here could be: attitudes to violence and the nature of Jesus' messiahship, attitudes to authority or attitudes to exorcism and belief in demons in modern times.

Some aspects of the specification require candidates to relate the text of Mark's gospel to contemporary themes and practices in Christianity today. Possible areas to investigate here could be: the Christian festival of Easter, baptisms/christenings, the celebration of the Eucharist, modern attitudes to miracles including healings.

Teachers may wish to make students aware of the Jewish background of much of Mark's material and concerns (eg Messiahship, the Son of Man, resurrection, the attitude of the Pharisees towards the Law/Torah.) Knowledge of this Jewish perspective would help students to understand many key aspects of Mark's gospel and also of the distinctive nature of Jesus' message as expressed by Mark.

If Biblical quotations appear on the examination paper, they will be from the NIV translation.

Resources

St. Mark's Gospel (Hodder Education)

By Michael Wilcockson

ISBN 9780340814659

Mark A Gospel for Today (Lion Publishing)

By Simon and Christopher Danes

ISBN 9780745945798

Jesus as a Teacher (Cambridge University Press)

By PHEME PERKINS

ISBN-10:0521366240)

What Can We Know About Jesus (Cambridge University Press)

By Howard Clark Kee

ISBN-10:0521369150)

Jesus as Healer (Cambridge University Press)

By Harold Remus

ISBN-10:0521584698)

Unit B584: Christian Scriptures 1 (Luke's Gospel)

This specification could be studied along with B583 as these units complement each other in offering a study of different influential Christian Scriptures. Alternatively, candidates may choose to accompany this study by preparing for examination in any of the other units in Syllabus A. Units B 571 or B572 (Christianity 1 or 2) could be particularly relevant for study. Units B573 or B574 (Roman Catholic) could be equally relevant.

The distinctive feature of this Gospel study is in its investigation of Jesus' teachings.

Candidates need to have studied all the texts specified for this study of Luke's gospel and they will need to demonstrate knowledge of factual details relating to them. They should also have some idea of how these texts fit into the overall context of Luke's gospel along with the particular emphases and interpretations which Luke brings to his writings and the influence this might have on Christian thought, belief and life.

It will be important for candidates to not only have good factual recall of details from the texts specified but also to be able to demonstrate understanding of the implications and issues raised by the texts, especially in relation to the themes specified by the syllabus ("Jesus as Messiah, The nature of God, the Kingdom of God, Christian discipleship, Christian life, The Holy Spirit).

Care should be taken in addressing these themes in Luke's gospel as they differ significantly from those in the previous specification.

Examples of film and dramatic or artistic depictions of the Gospel stories are readily available and may be a very useful way of helping candidates to explore the relevant sections of Luke's gospel. However, teachers may need to guide students where material from other gospels could confuse their preparation for this particular study. An awareness of the Biblical context could of course be valuable to candidates' wider knowledge and studies.

In studying the texts candidates need to consider ways in which Christians today might interpret and apply the messages of Luke's gospel and that there may be diversity amongst Christians in their approaches and attitudes to issues raised by these texts. Possible areas to investigate here could be: attitudes to wealth, attitudes towards women, attitudes towards outcasts.

Some aspects of the specification require candidates to relate the text of Luke's gospel to contemporary themes and practices in Christianity today. Possible areas to investigate here could be: Christian discipleship today, prejudice and discrimination, modern Christian understandings of the Holy Spirit.

Teachers may wish to make students aware of the Jewish background of much of Luke's material and concerns (e.g. Messiahship, the Kingdom of God, resurrection, the attitude Holy Spirit.) Knowledge of this Jewish perspective would help students to understand many key aspects of Mark's gospel and also of the distinctive nature of Jesus' message as expressed by Mark.

Care should be taken in remembering that this specification involves study of parts of Acts chapter 2 as well as selected sections of Luke's gospel.

If Biblical quotations appear on the examination paper, they will be from the NIV translation.

Resources

Luke: A Gospel for Today (Lion)
By Linda Smith and William Raeper
ISBN 978-0745915036 (Out of print)

Jesus as a Teacher (Cambridge University Press)
By PHEME PERKINS
ISBN-10:0521366240)

What Can We Know About Jesus (Cambridge University Press)
By Howard Clark Kee
ISBN-10:0521369150)

UNIT B585: Jewish Scriptures 1 (Tenakh)

This specification could be studied along with B586 as these units complement each other in offering a study of different influential Jewish Scriptures. Alternatively, candidates may choose to accompany this study by preparing for examination in any of the other units in Syllabus A. Units B 579 and B580 (Judaism 1 and 2) could be particularly relevant for study.

Candidates need to have studied all the texts from Genesis, Exodus and Jonah and they will need to demonstrate knowledge of factual details relating to them. They should also have some idea of how these texts fit into the overall context of the Tenakh and Judaism generally

It will be important for candidates to not only have good factual recall of details from the texts specified but also to be able to demonstrate understanding of the implications and issues raised by the texts, especially in relation to important features such as Covenant, the nature of G_d, Shabbat and Mitzvot.

In studying the texts candidates need to consider ways in which Jews today might interpret and act on the meaning of these sacred texts and that there may be diversity as well as agreement amongst Jews in their approaches and attitudes to issues raised by these texts. The areas specified as "Contemporary Issues" give ample opportunity to investigate how Jews might use the Tenakh as a basis for interpretation and making judgements. E.g. male/female relationships, the sanctity of human life, medical ethics and marital relationships. Candidates should be encouraged to see that Judaism has an especially rich and disciplined tradition of discussing and interpreting sacred texts.

Candidates should be familiar with the religious terms given in the specification and should be able to use them accurately. Candidates should aim to show understanding of the ways in which holding Jewish beliefs might affect people's everyday lives, for example in their choice of job or their moral attitudes.

The specification lays special stress on skills of expressing and evaluating personal responses, informed insights and differing viewpoints on any of the topics specified in this unit. Candidates will need to be able to use their knowledge and understanding of these topic areas to come to reasoned, well-informed and balanced personal judgements about the Tenakh and related issues.

Resources

Judaism 101 Website: <http://www.jewfaq.org/index.htm>

GCSE Religious Studies for OCR: Judaism 2nd edition

Jon Mayled

ISBN: 9780340983621

UNIT B586: Jewish Scriptures 2 (Talmud)

This specification could be studied along with B585 as these units complement each other in offering a study of different influential Jewish Scriptures. Alternatively, candidates may choose to accompany this study by preparing for examination in any of the other units in Syllabus A. Units B 579 and B580 (Judaism 1 and 2) could be particularly relevant for study.

Candidates need to have studied all the specified texts relating to the Talmud and they will need to demonstrate knowledge of factual details relating to them. They should also have some idea of how these texts fit into the overall context of the Talmud and Judaism generally.

It will be important for candidates to not only have good factual recall of details from the texts specified but also to be able to demonstrate understanding of the implications and issues raised by the texts, especially in relation to important features such as Covenant relationship, the nature of G_d, Ethical monotheism and the nature of the Talmud.

In studying the texts candidates need to consider ways in which Jews today might interpret and act on the meaning of these important texts and that there may be diversity as well as agreement amongst Jews in their approaches and attitudes to issues raised by these texts. The areas specified as “Contemporary Issues” give ample opportunity to investigate how Jews might use the Talmud as a basis for interpretation and making judgements in particular circumstances. E.g. uses of material wealth, reward and punishment, peace and war. Candidates should be encouraged to see that Judaism has an especially rich and disciplined tradition of discussion, judgement and interpretation and that the Talmud is the product of such activity.

Candidates should be familiar with the religious terms given in the specification and should be able to use them accurately. Candidates should aim to show understanding of the ways in which holding Jewish beliefs might affect people’s everyday lives, for example in their choice of job or their moral attitudes.

The specification lays special stress on skills of expressing and evaluating personal responses, informed insights and differing viewpoints on any of the topics specified in this unit. Candidates will need to be able to use their knowledge and understanding of these topic areas to come to reasoned, well-informed and balanced personal judgements about the Talmud and issues related to its study.

Resources

Judaism 101 Website: <http://www.jewfaq.org/index.htm>

GCSE Religious Studies for OCR: Judaism 2nd edition
Jon Mayled ISBN: 9780340983621

UNIT B587: Muslim Texts 1 (Qur'an)

This specification could be studied along with B587 as these units complement each other in offering a study of different Muslim texts. Alternatively, candidates may choose to accompany this study by preparing for examination in any of the other units in Syllabus A. Units B 577 or B578 (Islam 1 and 2) could be particularly relevant for study.

Candidates need to have studied all the specified texts relating to the Qur'an and they will need to demonstrate knowledge of factual details relating to them. They should also have some idea of how these texts fit into the overall context of the Qur'an as the revelation of Allah and of Islam in general.

It will be important for candidates to not only have good factual recall of details from the texts specified but also to be able to demonstrate understanding of the implications and issues raised by the texts, especially in relation to important Muslim teachings such as the nature of Allah, the nature of submission to the will of Allah and of the nature of the Qur'an as revelation.

In studying the texts candidates need to consider ways in which Muslims today understand and apply these important texts and that there may be diversity and discussion as well as agreement amongst Muslims in their approaches and attitudes to issues raised by these texts. The areas specified as "Beliefs and Teachings" give ample opportunity to investigate how Muslims might use the Qur'an for guidance and authoritative judgements. E.g. business ethics, charity, life after death. Candidates should be encouraged to see that Islam has an especially rich and disciplined tradition of scholarship, judgement and interpretation based on study of the Qur'an.

Candidates should be familiar with the religious terms given in the specification and should be able to use them accurately. Islamic terminology that does not appear explicitly in the specification will not be used in examination questions, although credit may be given to candidates who show knowledge of a wider range of terms. They should also aim to show understanding of the ways in which holding Muslim beliefs might affect people's everyday lives, for example in their choice of job or their moral attitudes.

The specification lays special stress on skills of expressing and evaluating personal responses, informed insights and differing viewpoints on any of the topics specified in this unit. Candidates will need to be able to use their knowledge and understanding of these topic areas to come to reasoned, well-informed and balanced personal judgements about the Qur'an and issues related to its study.

Resources

GCSE Religious Studies for OCR: Islam 2nd Edition
Janet Green ISBN: 9780340983614

UNIT B588: Muslim Texts 2 (Sunnah and Hadith)

This specification could be studied along with B587 as these units complement each other in offering a study of different Muslim texts. Alternatively, candidates may choose to accompany this study by preparing for examination in any of the other units in Syllabus A. Units B577 or B578 (Islam 1 and 2) could be particularly relevant for study.

Candidates need to have studied all the specified texts relating to the Sunnah and Hadith and they will need to demonstrate knowledge of factual details relating to them. They should also have some idea of how these texts fit into the overall context of Muslim belief, practice and history as well as appreciating the particular nature of the Sunnah and Hadith as influential and authoritative traditions.

It will be important for candidates to not only have good factual recall of details from the texts specified but also to be able to demonstrate understanding of the implications and issues raised by the texts, especially in relation to important aspects of Islam such as the nature of Allah and the significance of the Prophets.

A number of the texts are important in illustrating different emphases and interpretations between Shi'a and Sunni Muslims and candidates will be able to reflect on the diversity within Islam over these matters.

Candidates should be familiar with the religious terms given in the specification and should be able to use them accurately. Candidates should aim to show understanding of the ways in which holding Muslim beliefs might affect people's everyday lives, for example in their choice of job or their moral attitudes.

The specification lays special stress on skills of expressing and evaluating personal responses, informed insights and differing viewpoints on any of the topics specified in this unit. Candidates will need to be able to use their knowledge and understanding of these topic areas to come to reasoned, well-informed and balanced personal judgements about the Sunnah and Hadith and issues related to their study.

Unit B589: Perspectives on World Religions

This unit allows candidates to explore a variety of ethical and philosophical issues relating to the planet, war and peace and equality from the viewpoints of members of any of the major world faiths. Candidates could complement this study by choosing to work on any other unit relating to the religion or religions examined in this unit, or by completing the ethics unit B603. It also allows candidates to compare and contrast the perspectives and standpoints of different religions,

The questions asked for each topic will be broadly similar for each religion and the tasks students are required to complete will be comparable. This should not be taken to mean that different religions studied will lead to similar answers, or that the religions all hold similar views. Sometimes it will be appropriate for candidates to draw attention to the fact that the religion they have studied does not have strong beliefs about a particular topic, and to discuss the reasons for that, on some issues one religion may have no clear shared viewpoint, or may include two or more extremes of attitudes among believers and candidates will need to demonstrate they are aware of this. The aim should always be to give an accurate representation of the religion or religions they have studied in relation to the topic of the question, without trying to create links or similarities where these may not exist.

Because these are issues with a broad range of possible relevant and meaningful responses candidates will be rewarded for any appropriate response to a reasonable interpretation of a given question, even if the candidate's interpretation is very different from that which was anticipated when the question was set.

The highest marked sections of the exam questions require analysis, evaluation and explanation, and in these areas candidates may gain higher marks if they are able to demonstrate not only the commonality of viewpoint within a religion but also to give examples of diversity within that religion together with reasons for this difference in interpretation. Candidates who have studied a topic with reference to more than one faith may use examples from different faiths to draw out and fully illustrate relevant points and views.

Candidates are also expected to discuss the issues posed in these questions with reference to their own views and the higher level candidate will do more than simply state a personal view and move on; instead they will demonstrate an understanding and insight into the sources and reasons for their own views.

There are no specified texts or particular scriptural teachings with which candidates must be familiar for this unit, and questions will not be asked directly about, for example, a specific Bible passage or a particular Hadith. However candidates are expected to be able to support their responses to questions with reference to specific teachings and attitudes of the faith studied and these could be drawn from sacred texts as well as from other sources.

Resources:

Ethics through Christianity for OCR B GCSE Religious Studies

Lorraine Abbott

and

Philosophy through Christianity for OCR B GCSE Religious Studies

Lorraine Abbot

Both written for Syllabus B (philosophy and Ethics) but still containing useful and relevant material

Discovery: Philosophy and Ethics for OCR GCSE Religious Studies

Jon Mayled and Libby Ahluwalia

Also written for syllabus B (Philosophy and Ethics) but including material on all topics for this unit (as well as some other topics) from 4 of the different religious perspectives relevant to this unit.

Unit B603: Ethics (Relationships, Medical Ethics, Poverty and Wealth)

This unit is distinctive in allowing candidates to explore a variety of ethical issues from the viewpoints of members of any of the major world faiths. This allows great flexibility in that candidates could complement this study by choosing to work on any other unit relating to the religion or religions examined in this unit on Ethics. It also allows candidates to compare and contrast the ethical perspectives and standpoints of different religions, should that be required.

Candidates will be rewarded for any appropriate response to a reasonable interpretation of a question, even if the candidate's interpretation is very different from that which was anticipated when the question was set.

For each topic the questions asked will be similar for each religion and will set tasks that are broadly comparable. However, this does not mean that the different religions studied will all fit the same mould, and that similar answers are expected. Sometimes candidates will be able to draw attention to the fact that the religion they have studied does not necessarily have strong beliefs about a particular topic. For some topics the issues under discussion might be central, while for another religion they might be less important. Candidates should aim to give accurate representations of the religion or religions they are studying and should not feel they need to distort the beliefs they have studied to overemphasise any "similarity" which may actually be only superficial.

Similarly, candidates are likely to gain higher marks if they are able to demonstrate not only the commonality of viewpoint within a religion about a particular topic but also to give examples of diversity within that religion together with reasons for this difference in interpretation. (For example, within Christianity Roman Catholic Church teaching about contraception differs markedly from Anglican teaching. Within Islam there are differences in interpretation of key verses of the Qur'an which relate to attitudes towards war and self defence.)

The issues covered in this specification are often ones which can be studied in great depth at AS level and beyond. It is not expected that GCSE candidates will go beyond the level of demand and detail required in the specification. A basic knowledge of the issues, at a level appropriate for sixteen-year-olds, is all that is required.

Resources

GCSE Religious Studies for OCR A: Christianity: Ethics
Jon Mayled, Libby Ahluwalia
ISBN: 9780340983607

Ethics through Christianity for OCR B GCSE Religious Studies: Second Edition
Lorraine Abbott (Really for Syllabus B but still useful)
ISBN: 9780340984123

Christianity (GCSE RE for You) by [Anne Jordan](#)
ISBN 9780748753208

GENERAL RESOURCES

The British Library. Useful on-line resources about the Abrahamic faiths and stories from world religions. <http://www.bl.uk/learning/cult/sacredbooks/sacredintro.html>

OCR GCSE Religious Studies A: World Religion(s) Evaluation Pack

ISBN: 9780435501372

This is a free evaluation pack from Heinemann publishers. This is an introduction to a range of teacher and student resources which are endorsed by OCR

Other forms of Support

In order to help you implement the new GCSE Religious Studies A Specification effectively, OCR offers a comprehensive package of support. This includes:

Published Resources

OCR offers centres a wealth of quality published support with a fantastic choice of 'Official Publisher Partner' and 'Approved Publication' resources, all endorsed by OCR for use with OCR specifications.

Publisher partners

OCR works in close collaboration with three Publisher Partners; Hodder Education, Heinemann and Oxford University Press (OUP) to ensure centres have access to:

- Better published support, available when you need it, tailored to OCR specifications
- Quality resources produced in consultation with OCR subject teams, which are linked to OCR's teacher support materials
- More resources for specifications with lower candidate entries
- Materials that are subject to a thorough quality assurance process to achieve endorsement

Heinemann is the publisher partner for OCR GCSE Religious Studies A.



Heinemann is producing the following resources for OCR GCSE Religious Studies A for first teaching in September 2009, which were available from Spring 2009.

OCR GCSE Religious Studies A: World Religions Christianity Student Book
ISBN: 978 0 435501 3 0 3
Published: April 2009

OCR GCSE Religious Studies A: World Religions Christianity from a Roman Catholic Perspective Student Book
ISBN: 978 0 435501 3 2 7
Published: July 2009

OCR GCSE Religious Studies A: World Religions Islam Student Book
ISBN: 978 0 435501 3 4 1
Published: June 2009

OCR GCSE Religious Studies A: World Religions Judaism Student Book
ISBN: 978 0 435501 3 3 4
Published: July 2009

OCR GCSE Religious Studies A: World Religions Teacher Guide (Christianity, Judaism, Islam) with editable CD-ROM
ISBN: 978 0 435501 3 6 5
Available: September 2009

OCR GCSE Religious Studies A: World Religions Buddhism Teacher Guide
ISBN: 978 0 435501 2 9 7
Published: August 2009

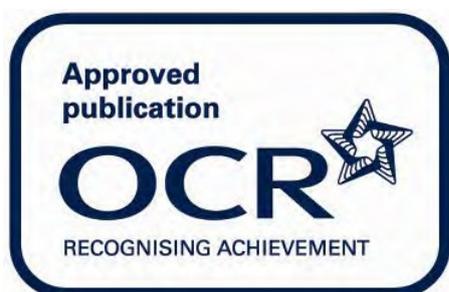
OCR GCSE Religious Studies A: World Religions Hinduism Teacher Guide
ISBN: 978 0 435501 2 8 0
Published: August 2009

OCR GCSE Religious Studies A: World Religions Sikhism Teacher Guide
ISBN: 978 0 435501 2 7 3
Published: August 2009

OCR GCSE Religious Studies A: World Religions Perspectives on Christian Ethics Student Book
ISBN: 978-0435502706
Published: July 2009

Approved publications

OCR still endorses other publisher materials, which undergo a thorough quality assurance process to achieve endorsement. By offering a choice of endorsed materials, centres can be assured of quality support for all OCR qualifications.



Endorsement

OCR endorses a range of publisher materials to provide quality support for centres delivering its qualifications. You can be confident that materials branded with OCR's "Official Publishing Partner"

or “Approved publication” logos have undergone a thorough quality assurance process to achieve endorsement. All responsibility for the content of the publisher’s materials rests with the publisher.

These endorsements do not mean that the materials are the only suitable resources available or necessary to achieve an OCR qualification. Any resource lists which are produced by OCR shall include a range of appropriate texts.

Professional Development

The 2012-13 OCR Professional Development Programme offers more accessible and more cost effective training, with the same valued content that you expect from us.

At OCR, we are constantly looking for ways in which we can improve the support we offer to teachers. Most recently we have been considering the increasing challenges that schools face in releasing teachers for INSET, and how OCR can make its professional development programme more accessible and convenient for all.

From September 2012, our new improved programme will include:

- FREE online professional development units available when and where you want them
- FREE live web broadcasts of professional development events
- FREE face to face training for GCSE controlled assessment and GCE coursework
- A series of ‘not to be missed’ premier professional development events.

For more information, please email training@ocr.org.uk or visit www.ocr.org.uk/training.

OCR Social

Visit our social media site (www.social.ocr.org.uk). By registering you will have free access to a dedicated platform where teachers can engage with each other - and OCR - to share best practice, offering guidance and access a range of support materials produced by other teachers; such as lesson plans, presentations, videos and links to other helpful sites.

Interchange

OCR Interchange has been developed to help you to carry out day to day administration functions online, quickly and easily. The site allows you to register and enter candidates online. In addition, you can gain immediate a free access to candidate information at you convenience. Sign up at <https://interchange.ocr.org.uk>

Frequently Asked Questions

How many religions do I study?

This is a matter of choice for centres. To some extent centres will wish to take into account the interests, aptitudes and faith commitments of their students. There are advantages in focussing study through one particular faith as this may clarify and simplify learning for some students. Approaching this specification through the study of two or three separate religions is educationally valid in allowing candidates to appreciate the importance of religion in a broader context.

Candidates may not study more than three religions.

Can I study any four units?

No, please see section 1.6 of the specification which states that:

If candidates study Christianity they can study one or two other principal religions also, but they are not required to do so. If candidates study Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism or Sikhism they can study one other principal religion also but are not required to do so.

Candidates entering for unit B571: Christianity 1 may not also enter for unit B573: Christianity (Roman Catholic) 1.

Candidates entering for unit B572: Christianity 2 may not also enter for unit B574: Christianity (Roman Catholic) 2.

Candidates entering for J120 – Religious Studies A (World Religion(s)) (Short course) may not enter for both B589 and B603.

Can I do Controlled Assessment?

No, assessment is by written examination.

How is the course assessed?

Assessment is by written examination. Candidates taking a Short Course in Religious Studies A will take two written examinations from any two units.

Candidates taking a Full course in Religious Studies A will take four written examinations from the four units. Each examination paper requires candidates to choose two separate questions from the topic areas involved. Each paper is one hour in length. Specimen papers and mark-schemes are available for inspection and teachers are strongly advised to read them.

The examination papers allow equal weighting for AO1 and AO2.

How does Short Course compare to Full Course GCSE?

Both types of candidates may study units in exactly the same ways; they are assessed in exactly the same ways and to the same standard. The difference is in the quantity of material the candidates are required to study; the Short Course is made up of any two units and the Full Course is made up of four units. Results from both courses are awarded on the scale A*-G.

Centres must enter candidates for the correct qualification certification (J620 for Full Course, J120 for Short Course.)

What can this study progress to?

This specification provides candidates with an appropriate foundation for study at Advanced Subsidiary GCE and Advanced GCE in Religious Studies, particularly for the OCR specifications at these levels.

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