



# GCSE (9-1) Religious Studies A

Faith and Practice in  
the 21st Century

## Specification

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Pearson Edexcel Level 1/Level 2 GCSE (9-1) in Religious Studies A (1RA0)

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*First teaching from September 2016*

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*First certification from 2018*

Issue 1



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# 1 Introduction

## Why choose Edexcel GCSE Religious Studies A?

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We have listened to feedback from all parts of the religious education community, including higher education. We have used this opportunity of curriculum change to redesign qualifications so that students can use a wide range of concepts to confidently interpret, contextualise and analyse the expressions of religions and world views they encounter. This is one of two GCSE Religious Studies qualifications offered.

**A specification to suit everyone** – With our suite of two full course and two short course GCSE Religious Studies specifications you can pick the one that meets the needs of all your students.

**A familiar approach** – We have retained the aspects of our current specification and assessments that you like, while adding new and exciting content.

**Focus on chosen religion** – We have structured the course to allow you to focus in depth on the study of one religion (Catholic Christianity, Christianity or Islam).

**Clear and coherent structure** – We have designed our specification to allow you to co-teach the full and short course, allowing you to deliver both courses to the full cohort.

**Choice of religions and routes** – Our qualification offers a choice of three primary religions and seven 'second' religions, as well as a choice between a philosophy and ethics paper or a textual study.

**Helps develop a holistic understanding of religion** – The new specification explores religion and practice in the 21st century and encourages students to reflect on and engage with fundamental questions.

**Develops transferable skills for progression** – Students will develop analytical and critical thinking skills to enable them to present a wide range of well-informed and reasonable arguments, aiding in progression to AS and A level study.

**Accessible assessment** – Our exam papers have been designed with a straightforward structure and consistent use of command words in questions.

# Supporting you in planning and implementing this qualification

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## Planning

- Our **Getting Started** guide gives you an overview of the new GCSE qualification to help you to get to grips with the changes to content and assessment and to help you understand what these changes mean for you and your students.
- We will give you an editable **course planner** and **scheme of work** that you can adapt to suit your department.
- Our **mapping documents** highlight key differences between the new and current qualifications.

## Teaching and learning

There will be lots of free teaching and learning support to help you deliver the new qualification, including:

- guidance documents
- exemplars
- a student guide
- materials for your options evenings.

## Preparing for exams

We will also provide a range of resources to help you prepare your students for the assessments, including marked exemplars of student work with examiner commentaries.

## ResultsPlus

ResultsPlus provides the most detailed analysis available of your students' exam performance. It can help you identify the topics and skills where further learning would benefit your students.

## Get help and support

Our support line, Ask the expert and our online community will ensure you receive help and guidance from us and that you can share ideas and information with other teachers. You can sign up to receive e-newsletters from the subject advisor service to keep up to date with qualification updates and product and service news.

The Religious Studies Team can be contacted by email:  
TeachingReligiousStudies@pearson.com and by telephone: 0844 463 2817.

Learn more at [qualifications.pearson.com](http://qualifications.pearson.com)

## Qualification at a glance

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### Content and assessment overview

The Pearson Edexcel Level 1/Level 2 GCSE (9–1) in Religious Studies A consists of three externally-examined papers.

All students must complete:

- Paper 1: Area of Study 1 – Study of Religion (Catholic Christianity, Christianity and Islam)
- Paper 2: Area of Study 2 – Study of Second Religion (Catholic Christianity, Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, Judaism and Sikhism).

Students must then complete one assessment from either:

- Paper 3: Area of Study 3 – Philosophy and Ethics (Catholic Christianity, Christianity and Islam)
- Paper 4: Area of Study 4 – Textual Studies (Mark’s Gospel or The Qur’an)

Students must complete all assessments in May/June in any single year.

<b>Paper 1: Area of Study 1 – Study of Religion (*Paper code: 1RA0/1A–1C)</b>
<b>Written examination: 1 hour and 45 minutes</b> <b>50% of the qualification</b> <b>102 marks</b>
<b>Content overview</b> Students must study all four content areas based upon their chosen religion. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Beliefs and Teachings</li><li>• Practices</li><li>• Sources of Wisdom and Authority</li><li>• Forms of Expression and Ways of Life</li></ul>
<b>Assessment overview</b> Students must select <b>one</b> religion from a choice of three religions (Catholic Christianity, Christianity, Islam). <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Students must answer all questions.</li><li>• The assessment consists of four questions.</li><li>• The paper may include short open, open response and extended writing questions for questions 1 to 4.</li><li>• The paper will assess spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPaG) and use of specialist terminology and will contribute a minimum of 5% of marks towards the overall weighting for this paper.</li></ul>






\*See *Appendix 4: Codes* for a description of this code and all other codes relevant to this qualification.

**Paper 2: Area of Study 2 – Study of Second Religion (\*Paper code: 1RA0/2A–2G)**

**Written examination: 50 minutes**

**25% of the qualification**

**51 marks**

**Content overview**

Students must study both content areas based on their chosen religion.

- Beliefs and Teachings
- Practices

Students must select **one** religion from a choice of seven (Catholic Christianity, Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Sikhism).

Students must select a different religion than that selected for Paper 1: Study of Religion.

Students who have studied Catholic Christianity or Christianity cannot take either of these papers for their chosen second religion.

- Students must answer all questions.
- The assessment consists of two questions.
- The paper may include short open, open response and extended writing questions.
- The paper will assess spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPaG) and use of specialist terminology and these will contribute a minimum of 5% of marks towards the overall weighting for this paper.

**Paper 3: Area of Study 3 – Philosophy and Ethics (\*Paper code: 1RA0/3A–3C)**

**Written examination: 50 minutes**

**25% of the qualification**

**51 marks**

**Content overview**

Students must study both content areas based on their chosen religion.

- Arguments for the Existence of God
- Religious Teachings on Relationships and Families in the 21st century

Students must select **one** religion from a choice of three religions (Catholic Christianity, Christianity, Islam).

The chosen religion should be the same as that selected for Area of Study 1.

- Students must answer all questions.
- The assessment consists of two questions.
- The paper may include short open, open response and extended writing questions.
- The paper will assess spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPaG) and use of specialist terminology and these will contribute a minimum of 5% of marks towards the overall weighting for the qualification.

**Paper 4: Area of Study 4 – Textual Studies (\*Paper code: 1RA0/4A and 4B)**

**Written examination: 50 minutes**

**25% of the qualification**

**51 marks**

**Content overview**

Students must study both content areas based upon their chosen textual study.

Mark's Gospel (4A)

- Who is Jesus?
- The Nature of Discipleship

OR

- The Qur'an (4B)
- Beliefs and Teachings of Islam
- Lives of the Prophets and others

Students must select **one** textual study from a choice of two (Mark's Gospel, The Qur'an)

- Students must answer all questions.
- The assessment consists of two questions.
- The paper may include short open, open response and extended writing questions.
- The paper will assess spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPaG) and use of specialist terminology and will contribute a minimum of 5% of marks towards the overall weighting for the qualification.

## 2 Subject content

### Qualification aims and objectives

The aims and objectives of this qualification are to enable students to:

- develop their knowledge and understanding of religions and non-religious beliefs, such as atheism and humanism
- develop their knowledge and understanding of religious beliefs, teachings, and sources of wisdom and authority, including through their reading of key religious texts, other texts, and scriptures of the religions they are studying
- develop their ability to construct well-argued, well-informed, balanced and structured written arguments, demonstrating their depth and breadth of understanding of the subject
- engage with questions of belief, value, meaning, purpose, truth, and their influence on human life
- reflect on and develop their own values, beliefs and attitudes in the light of what they have learnt and will contribute to their preparation for adult life in a pluralistic society and global community
- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of two religions
- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of key sources of wisdom and authority including scripture and/or sacred texts, where appropriate, which support contemporary religious faith
- understand the influence of religion on individuals, communities and societies
- understand significant common and divergent views between and/or within religions and beliefs
- apply knowledge and understanding in order to analyse questions related to religious beliefs and values
- construct well-informed and balanced arguments on matters concerned with religious beliefs and values.

## Area of Study 1: Study of Religion

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### Area of Study 1 – Catholic Christianity

#### Overview

This area of study comprises a study in depth of Catholic Christianity as a lived religion in the United Kingdom and throughout the world.

There are four sections: Beliefs and Teachings; Practices; Sources of Wisdom and Authority; Forms of Expression and Ways of Life.

Students will be expected to study Catholic Christianity within the context of the wider British society, the religious traditions of which are, in the main, Christian. Students should compare and contrast the areas of belief and practice within Catholic Christianity with wider Christian perspectives as outlined in the content below.

- Beliefs about the afterlife and their significance (1.8)\*
- The practice and significance of worship (2.2)\*.

Students should recognise that Catholic Christianity is one of the many religious traditions in Great Britain which include Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism. This knowledge may be applied throughout the assessment of the specified content.

Students should also recognise that within Catholic Christianity there may be more than one perspective in the way beliefs and teachings are understood and expressed. Common and divergent views within the wider Christian tradition in the way beliefs and teachings are understood and expressed should be included throughout, including reference to Orthodox, Protestant and other Christian traditions.

The significance and importance of the various beliefs and practices to Catholics today, should be explored throughout the four sections.

## Section 1: Beliefs and Teachings

Students should have an understanding of:	
<b>1.1</b>	The Trinity: the nature and significance of the Trinity as expressed in the Nicene Creed; the nature and significance of the oneness of God; the nature and significance of each of the Persons individually: God as the Father, Son and Holy Spirit; how this is reflected in worship and belief in the life of a Catholic today.
<b>1.2</b>	Biblical understandings of God as a Trinity of Persons: the nature and significance of God as a Trinity of Persons, including reference to the baptism of Jesus (Matthew 3: 13–17) and historical development of the doctrine of the Trinity, including reference to the First Council of Nicaea and the First Council of Constantinople.
<b>1.3</b>	Creation: the nature and significance of the biblical account of Creation, including Genesis 1–3; and how it may be understood in divergent ways in Christianity, including reference to literal and metaphorical interpretations; the significance of the Creation account for Catholics in understanding the nature and characteristics of God, especially as Creator, benevolent, omnipotent and eternal.
<b>1.4</b>	The significance of the Creation account in understanding the nature of humanity: the nature and significance of the nature of humanity being created in the image of God, including reference to Genesis 1–3 and divergent understandings of humanity’s relationship with Creation (dominion and stewardship); the implications of these beliefs for Catholics today.
<b>1.5</b>	The Incarnation: Jesus as incarnate Son, the divine Word, including John 1, both fully God and fully human; the scriptural origins of this belief, including John 1:1–18 and its importance for Catholics today.
<b>1.6</b>	The events in the Paschal Mystery: Catholic teachings about the life, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus, including reference to Luke 24; the redemptive efficacy of these events and their significance for Catholics today.
<b>1.7</b>	The significance of the life, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus for Catholic beliefs about salvation and grace, including John 3:10–21 and Acts 4:8–12; the implications and significance of these events for Catholic practice today.
<b>1.8*</b>	Catholic beliefs about eschatology: life after death; the nature of resurrection, judgment, heaven, hell and purgatory, including reference to John 11:17–27 and 2 Corinthians 5:1–10; divergent Christian beliefs about life after death, with reference to purgatory and the nature of resurrection; why belief in life after death is important for Catholics today.

## Section 2: Practices

Students should have an understanding of:	
<b>2.1</b>	The sacramental nature of reality: Catholic teachings about how the whole of creation manifests the presence of God; the meaning and effects of each of the seven sacraments, including Catechism of the Catholic Church 1210–1211; the practice and symbolism of each sacrament; how sacraments communicate the grace of God; divergent Christian attitudes to sacraments, including reference to Orthodox and Protestant Christianity.
<b>2.2*</b>	Liturgical worship within Catholic Christianity: the nature and significance of the Mass for Catholics, including its structure and the Eucharist as the 'source and summit of Christian life', with reference to Lumen Gentium paragraph 7; divergent Christian attitudes towards the practice and meaning of liturgical worship, including its significance for Catholics and the less structured worship in evangelical Christian denominations.
<b>2.3</b>	The funeral rite as a liturgical celebration of the Church: practices associated with the funeral rite in the home, the church and the cemetery, including reference to 'Preparing my funeral' by Vincent Nichols, Archbishop of Westminster; the aims of the funeral rite, including communion with the deceased; the communion of the community and the proclamation of eternal life to the community and its significance for Catholics.
<b>2.4</b>	Prayer as the 'raising of hearts and minds to God': the nature and significance of different types of prayer; the Lord's Prayer, including Matthew 6:5–14, set (formulaic) prayers and informal (extempore) prayer; when each type might be used and why; the importance of prayer and the importance for Catholics of having different types of worship.
<b>2.5</b>	The role and importance of forms of popular piety: the nature and significance of the Rosary, Eucharistic adoration and Stations of the Cross; how each of these might be used and why; the importance of having different types of worship for Catholics including reference to Catechism of the Catholic Church 1674–1676; divergent Christian attitudes to these forms of piety.
<b>2.6</b>	Pilgrimage: the nature, history and purpose of Catholic pilgrimage; the significance of the places people go on pilgrimage; divergent Christian understandings about whether pilgrimage is important for Christians today, with specific reference to Jerusalem, Lourdes, Rome, Walsingham and the Catechism of the Catholic Church 2691–2696.
<b>2.7</b>	Catholic Social Teaching: how Catholic Social Teaching reflects the teaching to show love of neighbour; Catholic teaching on justice, peace and reconciliation, Evangelii Gaudium paragraphs 182–237 - The inclusion of the poor in society; How these teachings might be reflected in the lives of individual Catholics including reference to Matt 25: 31 –46 (sheep and goats); the work of CAFOD, what it does and why.
<b>2.8</b>	Catholic mission and evangelism: the history and significance of mission and evangelism for Catholics; divergent ways this is put into practice by the Church and individual Catholics locally, nationally and globally, and how this fulfils the commission of Jesus and teachings of the Church, including Evangelii Gaudium Chapter 5.

## Section 3: Sources of Wisdom and Authority

### Students should have an understanding of:

<b>3.1</b>	The Bible: the development and structure of the Bible as the revealed Word of God: the origins, structure and different literary forms of the Bible: Old Testament: law, history, prophets, writings; and New Testament: gospels, letters; including divergent Christian understandings about which books should be within the Bible with reference to the Council of Trent.
<b>3.2</b>	Interpretation of the Bible: Catholic interpretation of the Bible and understanding of the meaning of inspiration; divergent interpretations of the authority of the Bible within Christianity: the literal Word of God, the revealed Word of God and as source of guidance and teaching, including 2 Timothy 3:16 and Catechism of the Catholic Church 105–108; the implications of this for Catholics today.
<b>3.3</b>	The magisterium of the Church: the meaning, function and importance of the magisterium both conciliar and pontifical with reference to Catechism of the Catholic Church 100; the magisterium as the living teaching office of the Church and authentic interpreter of the affirmations of Scripture and Tradition, and why they are important for Catholics today.
<b>3.4</b>	The Second Vatican Council: the nature, history and importance of the council; the nature and significance of the four key documents for the Church and for Catholic living: Dei Verbum, Lumen Gentium, Sacrosanctum Concilium and Gaudium et Spes
<b>3.5</b>	The Church as the Body of Christ and the People of God: the nature and significance of the Church as the Body of Christ and the People of God, including Romans 12:4–6 and 1 Corinthians 12; why the Church as the Body of Christ and the People of God is important for Catholics today; divergent Christian attitudes towards these.
<b>3.6</b>	The meaning of the four marks of the Church: the nature of the Church as one, holy, catholic and apostolic including reference to the Nicene Creed and the First Council of Constantinople; how the marks may be understood in divergent ways within Christianity; why they are important for Catholics today
<b>3.7</b>	Mary as a model of the Church: the significance of Mary as a model of the Church – joined with Christ in the work of salvation, as a model of discipleship and as a model of faith and charity, including Luke 1:26–39 and Catechism of the Catholic Church 963–975; the implications of this teaching for Catholic life today.
<b>3.8</b>	Sources of personal and ethical decision making: the example and teaching of Jesus as the authoritative source for moral teaching; Jesus as fulfilment of the Law, including Matthew 5:17–24; divergent understandings of the place and authority of natural law; virtue and the primacy of conscience; the divergent implications of these sources of authority for Christians today.

## Section 4: Forms of Expression and Ways of Life

Students should have an understanding of:

<b>4.1</b>	The common and divergent forms of architecture, design and decoration of Catholic churches: how they reflect belief, are used in, and contribute to, worship, including reference to the Catechism of the Catholic Church 1179–1181.
<b>4.2</b>	The different internal features of a Catholic church including reference to Catechism of the Catholic Church 1182–1186: the meaning and significance of the lectern, altar, crucifix and tabernacle and how they express the importance of redemption and facilitate Catholic worship.
<b>4.3</b>	The meaning and significance of sacred objects, including sacred vessels, sarcophagi, and hunger cloths within Catholicism: the way these are used to express belief, including Catechism of the Catholic Church 1161, and the divergent ways in which they may be used in church and other settings.
<b>4.4</b>	The meaning and significance of paintings, fresco and drawings within Catholicism with reference to two specific pieces and Catechism of the Catholic Church 2502–2503: the divergent ways these are used to express belief by the artist and those who observe the art, and the divergent ways in which paintings, frescos and drawings may be used in church and other settings.
<b>4.5</b>	The meaning and significance of sculpture and statues with reference to Catechism of the Catholic Church 2501: the way these are used to express belief by the artist and those who observe the art, the way these are used to express belief, and the divergent ways in which how sculptures and statues may be used in church and other settings.
<b>4.6</b>	The purpose and use of symbolism and imagery in religious art: the cross, crucifix, fish, ChiRho, dove, including Catechism of the Catholic Church 701, Eagle, Alpha and Omega, symbols of the four evangelists; the way this symbolism is used to express belief, and the divergent ways in which they may be used in church and other settings.
<b>4.7</b>	The meaning and significance of drama: mystery plays, passion plays; the way drama is used to express belief with reference to Catechism of the Catholic Church 2567, and the divergent ways in which drama may be used in church and other settings.
<b>4.8</b>	The nature and use of traditional and contemporary styles of music in worship: hymns, plainchant, psalms and worship songs including reference to Catechism of the Catholic Church 2641; the way different music is used to express belief and the divergent ways in which it may be used in church (including the Mass) and other settings.

## Area of Study 1 – Christianity

### Overview

This area of study comprises a study in depth of Christianity as a lived religion in the United Kingdom and throughout the world.

There are four sections: Beliefs and Teachings; Practices; Sources of Wisdom and Authority; Forms of Expression and Ways of Life.

Students will be expected to study Christianity within the context of the wider British society, the religious traditions of which are, in the main, Christian.

Students should recognise that Christianity is one of the many religious traditions in Great Britain which include Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism. This knowledge may be applied throughout the assessment of the specified content. Students should compare and contrast two areas of belief and practice within Christianity with one of these religions practiced in Great Britain:

- Beliefs about the afterlife and their significance (1.6)\*
- The practice and significance of worship (2.1)\*.

Students should also recognise that within Christianity there may be more than one perspective in the way beliefs and teachings are understood and expressed. Common and divergent views within Christianity in the way beliefs and teachings are understood and expressed should be included throughout, including reference to Catholic, Orthodox, Protestant and other Christian traditions.

The significance and importance of the various beliefs and practices to Christians today should be explored throughout the four sections.

## Section 1: Beliefs and Teachings

Students should have an understanding of:	
<b>1.1</b>	The Trinity: the nature and significance of the Trinity as expressed in the Nicene Creed; the nature and significance of the oneness of God; the nature and significance of each of the Persons individually: including reference to Matthew 3:13–17; how this is reflected in Christian worship and belief today.
<b>1.2</b>	The creation of the universe and of humanity: the biblical account of creation and divergent ways in which it may be understood by Christians, including as literal and metaphorical; the role of the Word and Spirit in creation including John 1:1–18 and Genesis 1–3; the importance of creation for Christians today.
<b>1.3</b>	The Incarnation: the nature and importance of the person of Jesus Christ as the incarnate Son of God; the biblical basis of this teaching, including John 1:1–18 and 1 Timothy 3: 16 and its significance for Christians today.
<b>1.4</b>	The last days of Jesus' life: the Last Supper, betrayal, arrest, trial, crucifixion, resurrection and ascension of Jesus; the accounts of these within the Bible, including Luke 22–24 and the significance of these events to understanding the person of Jesus Christ.
<b>1.5</b>	The nature and significance of salvation and the role of Christ within salvation: law, sin, grace and Spirit, the role of Christ in salvation, including John 3:10–21 and Acts 4:8–12; the nature and significance of atonement within Christianity and its link to salvation.
<b>1.6*</b>	Christian eschatology: divergent Christian teachings about life after death, including the nature and significance of resurrection, judgment, heaven, and hell and purgatory, with reference to the 39 Articles of Religion and Catholic teachings; how beliefs about life after death are shown in the Bible, including reference to 2 Corinthians 5:1–10 and divergent understandings as to why they are important for Christians today.
<b>1.7</b>	The problem of evil/suffering and a loving and righteous God: the problems it raises for Christians about the nature of God, including reference to omnipotence and benevolence, including Psalm 103; how the problem may cause believers to question their faith or the existence of God; the nature and examples of natural suffering, moral suffering.
<b>1.8</b>	Divergent solutions offered to the problem of evil/suffering and a loving and righteous God: biblical, theoretical and practical, including reference to Psalm 119, Job, free will, vale of soul-making, prayer, and charity; the success of solutions to the problem.

## Section 2: Practices

Students should have an understanding of:	
<b>2.1*</b>	Christian worship: liturgical and non-liturgical forms of worship, including activities which are informal and individual, including reference to the <i>Book of Common Prayer</i> ; when each form might be used and why; divergent Christian attitudes towards the practices, meaning and significance of liturgical and non-liturgical forms of worship in Christian life today, with reference to denominations which worship with less structure, such as some Pentecostal churches.
<b>2.2</b>	The role of the sacraments in Christian life and their practice in two denominations: the role of the sacraments/ordinance as a whole; the nature and importance of the meaning and celebration of baptism and the Eucharist in at least two denominations, including reference to the 39 Articles XXV-XXXVI; divergent Christian attitudes towards the use and number of sacraments in Orthodox, Catholic and Protestant traditions.
<b>2.3</b>	The nature and purpose of prayer: the nature of and examples of the different types of prayer; set prayers; informal prayer and the Lord's Prayer including Matthew 6:5-14; when each type might be used and why; divergent Christian attitudes towards the importance of each type of prayer for Christians today.
<b>2.4</b>	Pilgrimage: the nature, history and purpose of pilgrimage, including interpretations of Luke 2:41-43; the significance of the places people go on pilgrimage; divergent Christian teachings about whether pilgrimage is important for Christians today, with specific reference to Catholic and Protestant understandings; the activities associated with, and significance of, Jerusalem, Iona, Taize and Walsingham.
<b>2.5</b>	Christian religious celebrations: the nature and history of Christian festivals in the church year, including Christmas and Easter; the significance of celebrating Advent and Christmas; the significance of celebrating Holy Week and Easter, with reference to interpretations of 1 Corinthians 15:12-34.
<b>2.6</b>	The future of the Christian Church: Church growth, the history and purpose of missionary and evangelical work including reference to Mark 16:9-20; divergent ways this is put into practice by the Church locally, nationally and globally; Christian attitudes to why evangelical work is important for the Church and for individual Christians.
<b>2.7</b>	The role and importance of the local church in the local community: how and why it helps the individual believer and the local area; local parish activities, including interpretations of 1 Peter 5:1-4, ecumenism, outreach work, the centre of Christian identity and worship through living practices.
<b>2.8</b>	The role and importance of the Church in the worldwide community: how and why it works for reconciliation and the problems faced by the persecuted Church; divergent Christian responses to teachings about charity, including 1 Corinthians 13 and Matthew 25:31-46; the work of Christian Aid, what it does and why.

## Section 3: Sources of Wisdom and Authority

Students should have an understanding of:	
<b>3.1</b>	The development and structure of the Bible and its unity as the Word of God: Old Testament: law, history, prophets, writings; and New Testament: gospels, letters; divergent interpretations of the authority of the Bible; the Bible as the literal Word of God, the inspired Word of God, source of guidance and teaching including 2 Timothy 3:16 and Dei Verbum Chapter 3; the implications of these understandings for Christians today.
<b>3.2</b>	Divergent ways in which the Bible is used in the daily life of a Christian: informal and formal worship with reference to the <i>Book of Common Prayer</i> , in the home, in the Church, as a source of comfort and guidance.
<b>3.3</b>	Divergent responses to sources of personal and ethical decision making by Christians, their significance and their inter-relationship: the use of the Bible, the role of the individual, reason and personal conscience including the Catechism of the Catholic Church 1777–1781.
<b>3.4</b>	Jesus as the Word of God including John 1 and a role model: beliefs and teachings about Jesus as the Word of God; divergent understandings of his role in modelling practices, including Mark 8:34–38; the divergent implications of Jesus' example in showing love for others, forgiveness, servanthood, reconciliation and social justice, and in establishing the Kingdom of God, the significance of these beliefs for Christians today.
<b>3.5</b>	The Church as the Body of Christ: understandings of the significance of the Church as the Body of Christ and the People of God: the nature of the Church as the Body of Christ, including Romans 12:4–6 and 1 Corinthians 12; divergent ways in which this belief is important for Christians today, including in understanding the nature of the growth and diversity of the Church.
<b>3.6</b>	The growth and development of the Church: the establishment, development and growth of the Catholic, Orthodox, Protestant and Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches; changes in the Church as the Body of Christ including interpretations of 1 Corinthians 12, the Filioque controversy and the Reformation; and divergent understandings of the significance of the development of diverse denominations within the Church today.
<b>3.7</b>	Leaders and leadership in the Church: the laity, ministers (priests/vicars/pastors), bishops and the pope: the roles and significance of each, including Ephesians 4:11–12 and Lumen Gentium Chapters 4 and 5, divergent ways in which the leaders support and interact with one another in different denominations; divergent understandings of the importance of each of these leaders in different Christian traditions.
<b>3.8</b>	The role of women in the Church: divergent understandings of the basis of roles within the Bible, including interpretations of 1 Corinthians 14:33–40 and Romans 16:1–16; the historical development of attitudes towards women as leaders, and the different roles of women today in the Church and Christian life; divergent approaches to the role of women in different denominations.

## Section 4: Forms of Expression and Ways of Life

Students should have an understanding of:	
<b>4.1</b>	The meaning and significance of paintings and drawings within Christianity with reference to two specific pieces and Catechism of the Catholic Church 2502–2503: the way these are used to express belief by the artist and those who observe the art, and the divergent ways in which paintings and drawings may be used in church and other settings.
<b>4.2</b>	The divergent meaning, significance and purpose of icons within Christianity: specific reference to the use of icons within Orthodox Christianity and in denominations that may reject their use; the way icons are used to express belief, as a focus for devotion including St Basil, Homily 24, and the divergent ways in which they may be used in church and other settings.
<b>4.3</b>	The meaning and significance of sculpture for Christians: the way these are used to express belief by the artist and those who observe the art, the way these are used to express belief with reference to Catechism of the Catholic Church 2501; the divergent ways in which sculptures and statues may be used in church and other settings, for example in Roman Catholic and Anglican churches.
<b>4.4</b>	The purpose and use of symbolism and imagery in religious art: the Cross including reference to Ephesians 2:10–19, fish, and, symbols of the four evangelists; the way this symbolism is used to express belief, and the divergent ways in which they may be used in church and other settings.
<b>4.5</b>	The meaning and significance of drama: mystery plays, passion plays. The way drama is used to express belief and events including, for example Matthew 26–28, and the divergent ways in which drama may be used in church and other settings.
<b>4.6</b>	The purpose of literature in Christian life: fiction, non-fiction, and poetry including examples from the writings of CS Lewis such as <i>The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe</i> and <i>The Great Divorce</i> ; the way different types of literature are used to express belief, and the divergent ways in which they may be used in church and other settings.
<b>4.7</b>	The nature and use of traditional styles of music in worship: including hymns, psalms and worship songs; the way traditional styles of music are used to express belief, including examples such as Gregorian Chant and reference to <i>Musicum Sacrum</i> ; the divergent ways in which they may be used in church and other settings, when each might be used and why.
<b>4.8</b>	The nature and use of contemporary music in worship: including hymns and worship songs; the way contemporary music is used to express belief, including examples such as the work of Graham Kendrick and the Casting Crowns, the divergent ways in which it may be used in Church and other settings, when it might be used and why.

## Area of Study 1 – Islam

### Overview

This area of study comprises a study in depth of Islam as a lived religion in the United Kingdom and throughout the world.

There are four sections: Beliefs and Teaching; Practices; Sources of Wisdom and Authority; Forms of Expression and Ways of Life.

Students will be expected to study Islam within the context of the wider British society, the religious traditions of which are, in the main, Christian.

Students should compare and contrast two areas of belief and practice within Christianity and Islam:

- Beliefs about the afterlife and their significance (1.8)\*
- The practice and significance of worship (2.3)\*.

Students should recognise that Islam is one of the many religious traditions in Great Britain, which include Buddhism, Hinduism, Judaism and Sikhism. This knowledge may be applied throughout the assessment of the specified content. Students should also recognise that within Islam there may be more than one perspective in the way beliefs and teachings are understood and expressed. Common and divergent views within Islam in the way beliefs and teachings are understood and expressed should be included throughout, including reference to Sunni and Shi'a traditions.

The significance and importance of the various beliefs and practices to Muslims today should be explored throughout the four sections.

## Section 1: Beliefs and Teachings

Students should have an understanding of:	
<b>1.1</b>	The six Beliefs of Islam: their nature, history and purpose, including Kitab al-iman 1: 4; how they are understood and expressed in Sunni and Shi'a Muslim communities today; the importance of these principles for Muslims.
<b>1.2</b>	The five roots of 'Usul ad-Din in Shi'a Islam (Tawhid (oneness of Allah); 'Adl (Divine Justice); Nubuwwah (Prophethood); Imamah (Successors to Muhammad) and Mi'ad (The Day of Judgment and the Resurrection): the nature, history and purpose of the five roots with reference to their Qur'anic basis, including Surah 112 (the oneness of Allah); the importance of these principles for different Shi'a communities today, including Sevener and Twelver.
<b>1.3</b>	The nature of Allah: how the characteristics of Allah are shown in the Qur'an and why they are important: Tawhid (oneness), including Surah 16: 35–36, immanence, transcendence, omnipotence, beneficence, mercy, fairness and justice, Adalat in Shi'a Islam.
<b>1.4</b>	RiSalah: the nature and importance of prophethood for Muslims including Surah 2: 136; what the roles of prophets teach Muslims, exemplified in the lives of Adam, Ibrahim, Isma'il, Musa, Dawud, Isa, Muhammad.
<b>1.5</b>	Muslim holy books (kutub): the nature, history, significance and purpose of Muslim holy books with reference to the Qur'an, Tawrat (Torah), including Surah 5: 43–48; Surah, Zabur (Psalms), including Surah 4: 163–171; Injil (Gospel), including Surah 53: 36, Sahifah (Scrolls); divergent Muslim views about the importance of the holy books in their lives today.
<b>1.6</b>	Malaikah: the nature and importance of angels for Muslims; how angels Jibril, Izra'il and Mika'il are shown in the Qur'an including Surah 19, 32: 11 and 2: 97–98, and their significance for Muslims today.
<b>1.7</b>	al-Qadr: the nature and importance of Predestination for Muslims; how al-Qadr and human freedom relates to the Day of Judgement, including reference to Sahih Al-Bukhari 78: 685; divergent understandings of predestination in Sunni and Shi'a Islam; the implications of belief in al-Qadr for Muslims today.
<b>1.8*</b>	Akhirah: Muslim teachings about life after death; the nature of judgement, paradise and hell; how they are shown in the Qur'an, including Surah 17: 49–72; divergent ways in which Muslims teachings about life after death affect the life of a Muslim today.

## Section 2: Practices

Students should have an understanding of:	
<b>2.1</b>	Ten Obligatory Acts of Shi'a Islam: their nature, history and purpose of the Ten Obligatory Acts; the diversity of practice and importance of Ten Obligatory Acts for Shi'a Muslims today; their basis in the Qur'an, including reference to Surah 9: 71–73; divergent understandings of these principles within Sunni Islam, including links with the Five Pillars.
<b>2.2</b>	Shahadah as one of the Five Pillars: the nature, role and significance of Shahadah for Sunni and Shi'a Muslims, including reference to Surah 3: 17–21; why reciting Shahadah is important for Muslims, and its place in Muslim practice today.
<b>2.3*</b>	Salah as one of the Five Pillars including reference to Surah 15: 98–99 and 29: 45: the nature, history, significance and purpose of Salah for Sunni and Shi'a Muslims, including different ways of understanding them; how Salah is performed including ablution, times, directions, movements and recitations, in the home and mosque and Jummah prayer.
<b>2.4</b>	Sawm as one of the Five Pillars: the nature, role, significance and purpose of fasting during Ramadan including Surah 2: 183–185; those who are excused from fasting and why; the significance of the Night of Power: the nature, history and purpose of the Night of Power; why Laylat al-Qadr is important for Muslims today.
<b>2.5</b>	Zakah as one of the Five Pillars and Khums: the nature, role, significance and purpose of Zakah and khums including Surah 9: 58–60 and 8: 36–42; why Zakah is important for Sunni Muslims; why khums is important for Shi'a Muslims; the benefits of receiving Zakah or khums.
<b>2.6</b>	Hajj as one of the Five Pillars: the nature, role, origins and significance of Hajj, including Surah 2: 124–130; 22: 25–30; how Hajj is performed and why Hajj is important for Muslims; benefits and challenges from attending Hajj for Muslims.
<b>2.7</b>	Jihad: the origins, meaning and significance of jihad in Islam; divergent understandings of jihad within Islam, including the difference between lesser and greater jihad; the conditions for declaration of lesser jihad, including reference to Surah 2: 190–194 and 22: 39; the importance of jihad in the life of Muslims.
<b>2.8</b>	The nature, origins, activities, meaning and significance of the celebration/commemoration of Id-ul-Adha, with reference to Surah 37: 77–111, and Id-ul-Fitr in Sunni Islam with reference to their place within Shi'a Islam; and Id-ul-Ghadeer, with reference to Hadith and the interpretation of Surah 5: 3, and Ashura in Shi'a Islam with reference to their place within Sunni Islam.

## Section 3: Sources of Wisdom and Authority

Students should have an understanding of:	
<b>3.1</b>	The Qur'an: the revelation and compilation of the Qur'an including Surah 53: 4–18; its significance and authority within Islam today; divergent ways in which the Qur'an is used in the daily life of a Muslim: informal and formal worship, in the home, in the mosque, as a source of teaching and guidance.
<b>3.2</b>	The Prophet Muhammad: events in the life of the Prophet including teaching and authority, including his call, work in Makkah and Madinah, the hijrah; the significance of these events and the Prophet Muhammad for Muslims today including Surah 48: 26–29.
<b>3.3</b>	The Seal of the Prophets, Surah 33: 36–47: Muhammad's role as 'seal of the Prophets'; the final prophet; fulfilling the teachings of all other prophets, and as a role model to Muslims today; the significance of Muhammad as seal of the prophets and a role model today.
<b>3.4</b>	The divergent understandings of the significance of the family of the Prophet Muhammad: including Caliph/Imam Ali (Ahl-ul-Bayt) in Sunni and Shi'a Islam and interpretations of Surah 33: 32-34, the family of the Prophet in Ismaili Islam; and the implications for questions of authority and the origins of the split between Sunni and Shi'a Islam.
<b>3.5</b>	The development and structure of the Hadith as a record of the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad: the structure and compilation of the Hadith, including isnad and matn; divergent understandings of their authority and significance within Sunni and Shi'a Islam today, including reference to Sahih Al-Bukhari, Sahih Muslim, and the Four Books.
<b>3.6</b>	Shari'ah Law: how it is agreed upon and the use of analogy (qiyas) and consensus (ijma), including interpretations of Surah 4: 115; its divergence of use by the main schools of Sunni and Shi'a Islam; specific examples showing links between the Qur'an, Hadith, and Shari'ah; divergent understandings of the role and significance of judges (qadis) and scholars (the 'ulema) as sources of authority: the establishment of judges and scholars; examples of their rulings; the significance of authority within Islam today.
<b>3.7</b>	The imam in Shi'a Islam, including reference to the Hadith of the pond of Khumm: history, major teachings and actions, divergent understandings of their contribution to Islam in Sunni and Shi'a thought, the doctrine of Nass, the hidden imam; the inerrancy and intercession of imams; the significance of the imam for different forms of Shi'a Islam today.
<b>3.8</b>	The imam in Sunni Islam: the origins, nature, role of the imam in Sunni Islam, including Sahih Al-Bukhari 73: 34–37; divergent understandings of their contribution to individual and community life in Sunni and Shi'a thought.

## Section 4: Forms of Expression and Ways of Life

Students should have an understanding of:	
<b>4.1</b>	Muslim identity: divergent ways in which Muslim identity is expressed through the ummah in the ceremonies to welcome a child; expectations about modesty, including divergent interpretations of dress Surah 24: 30–31; the origins, categories and significance of the laws of halal and haram; how they are applied to laws of food and drink, and riba (usury).
<b>4.2</b>	The mosque: divergent understandings of importance of the mosque, the design and different religious features of mosques, and furniture and objects in the mosque and their use in the various activities that take place, including reference to Sahih Al-Bukhari 2: 39.
<b>4.3</b>	The divergent understandings of the use, significance, meaning and purpose of calligraphy within Islam, including as a rejection of idolatry with reference to Surah 21: 51–62: the way it is used to express belief, and how it may be used in the mosque and other settings.
<b>4.4</b>	Shi'a obligatory actions: understandings and implications of encouraging others to do good (Amr bil Maruf) including Surah 42: 23–26; discouraging others from doing bad (Nahy Anil Munkar), Tawallah and Tabarra; Love for the Prophet Muhammad and his family and disdain for their enemies; divergent understandings of their importance for Muslims in different traditions of Islam today.
<b>4.5</b>	The significance of Sufi ways of life: the origins of Sufism, orders, saints, and practice today. Sufi practices of fasting, and dhikr (remembrance) with reference to Surah 13: 28: the nature, history, importance and purpose fasting and dhikr and divergent understandings of their importance for Muslims today.
<b>4.6</b>	The role and significance of a Sheikh/teacher in Sufism: the divergent understandings of the importance of a relationship with a teacher, the purpose of the teacher; the history, teachings and contributions of teachers: al-Ghazālī, such as in his work <i>Revival of Religious Sciences</i> , outlining the Qur'anic basis of Sufism, ibn al-'Arabi and Rābi'a al-'Adawiyya.
<b>4.7</b>	The divergent understandings of use, significance, meaning and purpose of dance, music and poetry within Islam with specific reference to Sufism: the way these are used to express belief, as a devotional act, and how they may be used in other settings; divergent interpretations of the use of dance and music in Islam, including their rejection by some and interpretations of Sahih al-Bukhari 15: 70 and 69: 494.
<b>4.8</b>	The work of one named Muslim charity working for relief of poverty and suffering in the United Kingdom, what it does and why, including reference to sadaqah and Surah 2: 271–274.

## Assessment information

### Paper 1: Area of Study 1 – Study of Religion

- First assessment: May/June 2018.
- The assessment is 1 hour and 45 minutes.
- The assessment is out of 102 marks.
- Students must select one religion from a choice of three. (Catholic Christianity, Christianity and Islam)
- Students must answer all sections and all questions.
- The paper may include short open, open response and extended writing questions.
- The paper will assess spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPaG) and use of specialist terminology and these will contribute a minimum of 5% of marks towards the overall weighting for this paper.

### Synoptic assessment

Synoptic assessment requires students to work across different parts of a qualification and to show their accumulated knowledge and understanding of a topic or subject area.

Synoptic assessment enables students to show their ability to combine their skills, knowledge and understanding with breadth and depth of the subject.

Synopticity will be assessed where students are required to bring together their knowledge and understanding of religion from across the course of study.

### Sample assessment materials

Sample papers and mark schemes can be found in the *Pearson Edexcel Level 1/Level 2 GCSE (9-1) in Religious Studies A Sample Assessment Materials (SAMs)* document.

## Area of Study 2: Study of Second Religion

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### Area of Study 2 – Catholic Christianity

#### Overview

This area of study comprises a study in depth of Catholic Christianity as a lived religion in the United Kingdom and throughout the world.

There are two sections: Beliefs and Teachings; Practices.

Students will be expected to study Catholic Christianity within the context of the wider British society, the religious traditions of which are, in the main, Christian. Students should compare and contrast the areas of belief and practice within Catholic Christianity with wider Christian perspectives as outlined in the content below.

- Beliefs about the afterlife and their significance (1.8)\*
- The practice and significance of worship (2.2)\*.

Students should recognise that Catholic Christianity is one of the many religious traditions in Great Britain, which also include Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism. This knowledge may be applied throughout the assessment of the specified content.

Students should also recognise that within Catholic Christianity there may be more than one perspective in the way beliefs and teachings are understood and expressed. Common and divergent views within the wider Christian tradition in the way beliefs and teachings are understood and expressed should be included throughout, including reference to Orthodox, Protestant and other Christian traditions.

The significance and importance of the various beliefs and practices to Catholics today should be explored throughout the two sections.

## Section 1: Beliefs and Teachings

Students should have an understanding of:	
<b>1.1</b>	The Trinity: the nature and significance of the Trinity as expressed in the Nicene Creed; the nature and significance of the oneness of God; the nature and significance of each of the Persons individually: God as the Father, Son and Holy Spirit; how this is reflected in worship and belief in the life of a Catholic today.
<b>1.2</b>	Biblical understandings of God as a Trinity of Persons: the nature and significance of God as a Trinity of Persons including reference to the baptism of Jesus (Matthew 3:13–17) and historical development of the doctrine of the Trinity, including reference to the First Council of Nicaea and the First Council of Constantinople.
<b>1.3</b>	Creation: the nature and significance of the biblical account of Creation including Genesis 1–3; and how it may be understood in divergent ways in Christianity, including reference to literal and metaphorical interpretations; the significance of the Creation account for Catholics in understanding the nature and characteristics of God, especially as Creator, benevolent, omnipotent and eternal.
<b>1.4</b>	The significance of the Creation account in understanding the nature of humanity: the nature and significance of the nature of humanity being created in the image of God including reference to Genesis 1–3 and divergent understandings of humanity’s relationship with Creation (dominion and stewardship); the implications of these beliefs for Catholics today.
<b>1.5</b>	The Incarnation: Jesus as incarnate Son, the divine Word including John 1, both fully God and fully human; the scriptural origins of this belief, including John 1:1–18 and its importance for Catholics today.
<b>1.6</b>	The events in the Paschal Mystery: Catholic teachings about the life, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus, including reference to Luke 24; the redemptive efficacy of these events and their significance for Catholics today.
<b>1.7</b>	The significance of the life, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus for Catholic beliefs about salvation and grace including John 3:10–21 and Acts 4:8–12; the implications and significance of these events for Catholic practice today.
<b>1.8*</b>	Catholic beliefs about eschatology: life after death; the nature of resurrection, judgement, heaven, hell and purgatory, including reference to John 11:17–27 and 2 Corinthians 5:1–10; divergent Christian beliefs about life after death with reference to purgatory and the nature of resurrection; why belief in life after death is important for Catholics today.

## Section 2: Practices

Students should have an understanding of:	
<b>2.1</b>	The sacramental nature of reality: Catholic teachings about how the whole of creation manifests the presence of God; the meaning and effects of each of the seven sacraments including Catechism of the Catholic Church 1210–1211; the practice and symbolism of each sacrament; how sacraments communicate the grace of God; divergent Christian attitudes to sacraments, including reference to Orthodox and Protestant Christianity.
<b>2.2*</b>	Liturgical worship within Catholic Christianity: the nature and significance of the Mass for Catholics including its structure and the Eucharist as the 'source and summit of Christian life' with reference to Lumen Gentium paragraph 7; divergent Christian attitudes towards the practice and meaning of liturgical worship, including its significance for Catholics and the less-structured worship in evangelical Christian denominations.
<b>2.3</b>	The funeral rite as a liturgical celebration of the Church: practices associated with the funeral rite in the home, the church and the cemetery, including reference to 'Preparing my funeral' by Vincent Nichols, Archbishop of Westminster; the aims of the funeral rite including communion with the deceased; the communion of the community and the proclamation of eternal life to the community and its significance for Catholics.
<b>2.4</b>	Prayer as the 'raising of hearts and minds to God': the nature and significance of different types of prayer; the Lord's Prayer including Matthew 6:5–14, set (formulaic) prayers and informal (extempore) prayer; when each type might be used and why; the importance of prayer and the importance for Catholics of having different types of worship.
<b>2.5</b>	The role and importance of forms of popular piety: the nature and significance of of the Rosary, Eucharistic adoration and Stations of the Cross; how each of these might be used and why; the importance of having different types of worship for Catholics including reference to Catechism of the Catholic Church 1674–1676; divergent Christian attitudes to these forms of piety.
<b>2.6</b>	Pilgrimage: the nature, history and purpose of Catholic pilgrimage; the significance of the places people go on pilgrimage; divergent Christian understandings about whether pilgrimage is important for Christians today with specific reference to Jerusalem, Lourdes, Rome, Walsingham and the Catechism of the Catholic Church 2691–2696.
<b>2.7</b>	Catholic Social Teaching: how Catholic Social Teaching reflects the teaching to show love of neighbour; Catholic teaching on justice, peace and reconciliation Evangelii Gaudium paragraphs 182–237 – The inclusion of the poor in society; How these teachings might be reflected in the lives of individual Catholics; the work of CAFOD, what it does and why.
<b>2.8</b>	Catholic mission and evangelism: the history and significance of mission and evangelism for Catholics; divergent ways this is put into practice by the Church and individual Catholics locally, nationally and globally, and how this fulfils the commission of Jesus and teachings of the Church including Evangelii Gaudium Chapter 5.

## Area of Study 2 – Christianity

### Overview

This area of study comprises a study in depth of Christianity as a lived religion within with the United Kingdom and throughout the world.

There are two sections: Beliefs and Teachings; Practices.

Students will be expected to study Christianity within the context of the wider British society, the religious traditions of which are, in the main, Christian.

Students should recognise that Christianity is one of the many religious traditions in Great Britain, which include Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism. This knowledge may be applied throughout the assessment of the specified content. Students should compare and contrast two areas of belief and practice within Christianity with one of these religions practiced in Great Britain:

- Beliefs about the afterlife and their significance (1.6)\*
- The practice and significance of worship (2.1)\*.

Students should also recognise that within Christianity there may be more than one perspective in the way beliefs and teachings are understood and expressed. Common and divergent views within Christianity in the way beliefs and teachings are understood and expressed should be included throughout including reference to Catholic, Orthodox, Protestant and other Christian traditions.

The significance and importance of the various beliefs and practices to Christians today should be explored throughout the two sections.

## Section 1: Beliefs and Teachings

Students should have an understanding of:	
<b>1.1</b>	The Trinity: the nature and significance of the Trinity as expressed in the Nicene Creed; the nature and significance of the oneness of God; the nature and significance of each of the Persons individually: including reference to Matthew 3:13–17; how this is reflected in Christian worship and belief today.
<b>1.2</b>	The creation of the universe and of humanity: the biblical account of creation and divergent ways in which it may be understood by Christians, including as literal and metaphorical; the role of the Word and Spirit in creation, including John 1:1–18 and Genesis 1–3; the importance of creation for Christians today.
<b>1.3</b>	The Incarnation: the nature and importance of the person of Jesus Christ as the incarnate Son of God; the biblical basis of this teaching, including John 1:1–18 and 1 Timothy 3:16 and its significance for Christians today.
<b>1.4</b>	The last days of Jesus' life: the Last Supper, betrayal, arrest, trial, crucifixion, resurrection and ascension of Jesus; the accounts of these within the Bible, including Luke 22–24 and the significance of these events to understanding the person of Jesus Christ.
<b>1.5</b>	The nature and significance of salvation and the role of Christ within salvation: law, sin, grace and Spirit, the role of Christ in salvation including John 3:10–21 and Acts 4:8–12; the nature and significance of atonement within Christianity and its link to salvation.
<b>1.6*</b>	Christian eschatology: divergent Christian teachings about life after death, including the nature and significance of resurrection, judgement, heaven, and hell and purgatory, with reference to the 39 Articles of Religion and Catholic teachings; how beliefs about life after death are shown in the Bible, including reference to 2 Corinthians 5:1–10 and divergent understandings as to why they are important for Christians today.
<b>1.7</b>	The problem of evil/suffering and a loving and righteous God: the problems it raises for Christians about the nature of God, including reference to omnipotence and benevolence including Psalm 103; how the problem may cause believers to question their faith or the existence of God; the nature and examples of natural suffering, moral suffering.
<b>1.8</b>	Divergent solutions offered to the problem of evil/suffering and a loving and righteous God: biblical, theoretical and practical including reference to Psalm 119, Job, free will, vale of soul-making, prayer, and charity; the success of solutions to the problem.

## Section 2: Practices

Students should have an understanding of:	
<b>2.1*</b>	Christian worship: liturgical and non-liturgical forms of worship including activities which are informal and individual, including reference to the <i>Book of Common Prayer</i> ; when each form might be used and why; divergent Christian attitudes towards the practices, meaning and significance of liturgical and non-liturgical forms of worship in Christian life today, with reference to denominations which worship with less structure, such as some Pentecostal churches.
<b>2.2</b>	The role of the sacraments in Christian life and their practice in two denominations: the role of the sacraments/ordinance as a whole; the nature and importance of the meaning and celebration of baptism and the Eucharist in at least two denominations, including reference to the 39 Articles XXV–XXXVI; divergent Christian attitudes towards the use and number of sacraments in Orthodox, Catholic and Protestant traditions.
<b>2.3</b>	The nature and purpose of prayer: the nature of and examples of the different types of prayer; set prayers; informal prayer and the Lord's Prayer, including Matthew 6:5–14; when each type might be used and why; divergent Christian attitudes towards the importance of each type of prayer for Christians today.
<b>2.4</b>	Pilgrimage: the nature, history and purpose of pilgrimage, including interpretations of Luke 2:41–43; the significance of the places people go on pilgrimage; divergent Christian teachings about whether pilgrimage is important for Christians today with specific reference to Catholic and Protestant understandings; the activities associated with, and significance of, Jerusalem, Iona, Taize and Walsingham.
<b>2.5</b>	Christian religious celebrations: the nature and history of Christian festivals in the church year including Christmas and Easter; the significance of celebrating Advent and Christmas; the significance of celebrating Holy Week and Easter with reference to interpretations of 1 Corinthians 15:12–34.
<b>2.6</b>	The future of the Christian Church: Church growth, the history and purpose of missionary and evangelical work including reference to Mark 16:9–20 and John 20:21–22; divergent ways this is put into practice by the Church locally, nationally and globally; Christian attitudes to why evangelical work is important for the Church and for individual Christians.
<b>2.7</b>	The role and importance of the local church in the local community: how and why it helps the individual believer and the local area; local parish activities including interpretations of 1 Peter 5:1–4, ecumenism, outreach work, the centre of Christian identity and worship through living practices.
<b>2.8</b>	The role and importance of the Church in the worldwide community: how and why it works for reconciliation and the problems faced by the persecuted Church; divergent Christian responses to teachings about charity including 1 Corinthians 13 and Matthew 25:31–46; the work of Christian Aid, what it does and why.

## Area of Study 2 – Islam

### Overview

This area of study comprises a study in depth of Islam as a lived religion in the United Kingdom and throughout the world.

There are two sections: Beliefs and Teachings; Practices.

Students will be expected to study Islam within the context of the wider British society, the religious traditions of which are, in the main, Christian.

Students should compare and contrast two areas of belief and practice within Christianity and Islam:

- Beliefs about the afterlife and their significance (1.8)\*
- The practice and significance of worship (2.3)\*.

Students should recognise that Islam is one of the many religious traditions in Great Britain, which include Buddhism, Hinduism, Judaism and Sikhism. This knowledge may be applied throughout the assessment of the specified content. Students should also recognise that within Islam there may be more than one perspective in the way beliefs and teachings are understood and expressed. Common and divergent views within Islam in the way beliefs and teachings are understood and expressed should be included throughout, including reference to Sunni and Shi'a traditions.

The significance and importance of the various beliefs and practices to Muslims today should be explored throughout the two sections.

## Section 1: Beliefs and Teachings

Students should have an understanding of:	
<b>1.1</b>	The six Beliefs of Islam: their nature, history and purpose, including Kitab al-iman 1: 4; how they are understood and expressed in Sunni and Shi'a Muslim communities today; the importance of these principles for Muslims.
<b>1.2</b>	The five roots of 'Usul ad-Din in Shi'a Islam (Tawhid (oneness of Allah); 'Adl (Divine Justice); Nubuwwah (Prophethood); Imamah (Successors to Muhammad) and Mi'ad (The Day of Judgment and the Resurrection): the nature, history and purpose of the five roots with reference to their Qur'anic basis, including Surah 112 (the oneness of Allah); the importance of these principles for different Shi'a communities today including Sevener and Twelver.
<b>1.3</b>	The nature of Allah: how the characteristics of Allah are shown in the Qur'an and why they are important: Tawhid (oneness), including Surah 16: 35–36, immanence, transcendence, omnipotence, beneficence, mercy, fairness and justice, Adalat in Shi'a Islam.
<b>1.4</b>	RiSalah: the nature and importance of prophethood for Muslims, including Surah 2: 136; what the roles of prophets teach Muslims, exemplified in the lives of Adam, Ibrahim, Isma'il, Musa, Dawud, Isa, Muhammad.
<b>1.5</b>	Muslim holy books (kutub): the nature, history, significance and purpose of Muslim holy books with reference to the Qur'an, Tawrat (Torah), including Surah 5: 43–48; Surah, Zabur (Psalms), including Surah 4: 163–171; Injil (Gospel), including Surah 53: 36, Sahifah (Scrolls); divergent Muslim views about the importance of the holy books in their lives today.
<b>1.6</b>	Malaikah: the nature and importance of angels for Muslims; how angels Jibril, Izra'il and Mika'il are shown in the Qur'an, including Surah 19, 32: 11 and 2: 97–98, and their significance for Muslims today.
<b>1.7</b>	al-Qadr: the nature and importance of Predestination for Muslims; how al-Qadr and human freedom relates to the Day of Judgement, including reference to Sahih Al-Bukhari 78: 685; divergent understandings of predestination in Sunni and Shi'a Islam; the implications of belief in al-Qadr for Muslims today.
<b>1.8*</b>	Akhirah: Muslim teachings about life after death; the nature of judgment, paradise and hell; how they are shown in the Qur'an including Surah 17: 49–72; divergent ways in which Muslims teachings about life after death affect the life of a Muslim today.

## Section 2: Practices

Students should have an understanding of:	
<b>2.1</b>	Ten Obligatory Acts of Shi'a Islam: their nature, history and purpose of the Ten Obligatory Acts; the diversity of practice and importance of Ten Obligatory Acts for Shi'a Muslims today; their basis in the Qur'an including reference to Surah 9: 71–73; divergent understandings of these principles within Sunni Islam including links with the Five Pillars.
<b>2.2</b>	Shahadah as one of the Five Pillars: the nature, role and significance of Shahadah for Sunni and Shi'a Muslims, including reference to Surah 3: 17–21; why reciting Shahadah is important for Muslims, and its place in Muslim practice today.
<b>2.3*</b>	Salah as one of the Five Pillars including reference to Surah 15: 98–99 and 29: 45: the nature, history, significance and purpose of Salah for Sunni and Shi'a Muslims, including different ways of understanding them; how Salah is performed, including ablution, times, directions, movements and recitations, in the home and mosque and Jummah prayer.
<b>2.4</b>	Sawm as one of the Five Pillars: the nature, role, significance and purpose of fasting during Ramadan including Surah 2: 183–185; those who are excused from fasting and why; the significance of the Night of Power: the nature, history and purpose of the Night of Power; why Laylat al-Qadr is important for Muslims today.
<b>2.5</b>	Zakah as one of the Five Pillars and khums: the nature, role, significance and purpose of Zakah and khums, including Surah 9: 58–60 and 8: 36–42; why Zakah is important for Sunni Muslims; why khums is important for Shi'a Muslims; the benefits of receiving Zakah or khums.
<b>2.6</b>	Hajj as one of the Five Pillars: the nature, role, origins and significance of Hajj, including Surah 2: 124–130; 22: 25–30; how Hajj is performed and why Hajj is important for Muslims; benefits and challenges from attending Hajj for Muslims.
<b>2.7</b>	Jihad: the origins, meaning and significance of jihad in Islam; divergent understandings of jihad within Islam, including the difference between lesser and greater jihad; the conditions for declaration of lesser jihad, including reference to Surah 2: 190–194 and 22: 39; the importance of jihad in the life of Muslims.
<b>2.8</b>	The nature, origins, activities, meaning and significance of the celebration/commemoration of Id-ul-Adha, with reference to Surah 37: 77–111, and Id-ul-Fitr in Sunni Islam with reference to their place within Shi'a Islam; and Id-ul-Ghadeer, with reference to Hadith and the interpretation of Surah 5: 3, and Ashura in Shi'a Islam with reference to their place within Sunni Islam.

## Area of Study 2 – Buddhism

### Overview

This area of study comprises a study in depth of Buddhism as a lived religion within the United Kingdom and throughout the world.

There are two sections: Beliefs and Teachings; Practices.

Students will be expected to study Buddhism within the context of the wider British society, the religious traditions of which are, in the main, Christian.

Students should compare and contrast two areas of belief and practice within Christianity and Buddhism:

- Beliefs about the afterlife and their significance (1.5)\*
- The practice and significance of worship (2.6)\*.

Students should recognise that Buddhism is one of the many religious traditions in Great Britain, which include Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism. This knowledge may be applied throughout the assessment of the specified content. Students should also recognise that in Buddhism there may be more than one perspective in the way beliefs and teachings are understood and expressed. Common and divergent views within Buddhism in the way beliefs and teachings are understood and expressed should be included throughout, including reference to Theravada and Mahayana traditions.

The significance and importance of the various beliefs and practices to Buddhists today should be explored throughout the two sections.

### Section 1: Beliefs and Teachings

Students should have an understanding of:	
<b>1.1</b>	The life of the Buddha: the nature and history of the events in the life of the Buddha and why they are important to Buddhists today; including ancestry, birth, princely life, marriage, the Four Sights, including Buddhavamsa XXVI, the enlightenment of the Buddha and founding of the Sangha.
<b>1.2</b>	Dhamma: The nature and different meaning of dhamma – dependent origination/conditionality; the nature and importance of paticca-samuppada and the Three Marks of Existence, including reference to the Story of Nagasena and the Chariot in the Milinda Panha: suffering – dukkha, anicca – no fixed self and anatta – soul or essence; the implications of belief in dhamma for Buddhists today.
<b>1.3</b>	First Noble Truth, including reference to the Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta: the nature of dukkha; Buddhist teachings about suffering; the different types of suffering as pain, fabrication and change; the importance of suffering for Buddhists today.
<b>1.4</b>	Second Noble Truth: the nature of samudaya – the causes of suffering, including reference to Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta, the Three Poisons; Buddhist teachings about the causes of suffering – Sermon at Benares, and how they are represented in the Wheel of Life; divergent understandings of the Wheel of Life, with reference to Theravada and Mahayana Buddhism.

**Students should have an understanding of:**

<b>1.5*</b>	Third Noble Truth, including reference to the Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta: the nature of nirodha and the cessation of tanha; Buddhist teachings about the ending of desire; the nature of the cycle of samsara; different understandings of nibbana and enlightenment and their importance for Buddhists today.
<b>1.6</b>	Fourth Noble Truth, including reference to the Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta: the nature of The Middle Way – magga; Buddhist teachings about the Eightfold Path leading to nibbana; the Threefold Way: the nature, purpose and importance of sila (ethics), samadhi (meditation) and panna (wisdom); divergent understandings of the importance Eightfold Path and the Threefold Way for Buddhist life today.
<b>1.7</b>	Human life: divergent Buddhist understandings of the nature and importance of The Five Khandas (aggregates), including the Khandha Sutta; divergent Buddhist understandings of the nature and importance of sunnata, tathagatagarbha, Buddha-nature; divergent Buddhist understandings of the nature and importance of Arahant and Bodhisattva Ideals; divergent Buddhist understandings of the nature and history of Buddhahood and the Pure Land.
<b>1.8</b>	Buddhist ethical teachings: divergent Buddhist understandings of the nature, purpose and importance of kamma, including Dhammapada 181–187 and the Khuddakapatha, merit and rebirth, karuna (compassion), metta (loving kindness), pancha sila (the five precepts) and the paramitas (six perfections); the divergent applications of each of these ethical teachings in Buddhist life today.

## Section 2: Practices

**Students should have an understanding of:**

<b>2.1</b>	Meditation: the nature, purpose and significance of meditation in Buddhism; the different types of meditation: samatha (concentration), metta bhavana (loving kindness) and vipassana (insight); meditative practices, including mindfulness breathing and zazen, divergent understanding of the nature and importance of visualisation of the Buddha and Bodhisattvas, including Amitāyus Meditation Sutra; how the different practices are used by Mahayana and Theravada Buddhists and the benefits from their use.
<b>2.2</b>	Chanting: the nature, purpose and role of chanting in Buddhism as a devotional practice and to gain mental concentration, including Dhammapada 1–2, confidence and joy; the divergent understandings of the importance of chanting in Buddhist life today, with reference to Theravada Buddhism, including Tiratana: Dhammapada 190, and Mahayana Buddhism, including Nam Myoho Renge Kyo.
<b>2.3</b>	Mantra recitation: divergent understandings of the nature, purpose, role and importance of mantra recitation with reference to Theravada Buddhism, including Namu Buddhaya ("Homage to the Buddha"), and Mahayana Buddhism; the nature and purpose of using sacred syllables, devotional articles, offerings and mala beads, and why they are used in different schools of Buddhism.
<b>2.4</b>	Features of Buddhist places of worship: the divergent nature, history and design of Buddhist places of worship including temples, gompas, viharas and shrines in Theravada, Mahayana and Triratna Buddhism; how and why the places of worship are used, including reference to the shrine room, shrine facing east, and the library, showing the importance learning, including reference to the Kimsila Sutta.

**Students should have an understanding of:**

<b>2.5</b>	How and why objects of devotion are used within different Buddhist places of worship, buddharupas, including reference to Vakkali Sutta, shrine, Bodhi tree; divergent understandings of why devotional objects are important in Buddhism today.
<b>2.6*</b>	Puja: The nature and purpose of puja in the vihara and the home, including reference to Mangala Sutta; examples of the different types; when each type might be used and why; the importance of having different types of worship and their use in different Buddhist contexts.
<b>2.7</b>	Death and mourning rituals and ceremonies: the divergent celebration and significance of the ceremonies in Buddhist communities and to Buddhists; the distinct significance of the rituals associated with death and mourning in Theravada communities and in Japan and Tibet, with reference to the Tibetan Book of the Dead.
<b>2.8</b>	Festivals and retreats: the divergent nature, history, purpose and importance of festivals and retreats in Buddhism; divergent understandings of the origins, meaning and features of celebration of specific festivals and retreats, including Wesak, Vassa/Rain Retreat and Kathina, with reference to the Anapanasati Sutta, and Uposatha days in Theravada Buddhism; Hanamatsuri and Obon (Japanese), Parinibbana Day in Mahayana Buddhism, and Lama Tsong Khapa Day in Tibet.

## Area of Study 2 – Hinduism

### Overview

This area of study comprises a study in depth of Hinduism as a lived religion in the United Kingdom and throughout the world.

There are two sections: Beliefs and Teachings; Practices.

Students will be expected to study Hinduism within the context of the wider British society, the religious traditions of which are, in the main, Christian.

Students should compare and contrast two areas of belief and practice within Christianity and Hinduism:

- Beliefs about the afterlife and their significance (1.5)\*
- The practice and significance of worship (2.4)\*.

Students should recognise that Hinduism is one of the many religious traditions in Great Britain, which include Buddhism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism. This knowledge may be applied throughout the assessment of the specified content. Students should also recognise that within Hinduism there may be more than one perspective in the way beliefs and teachings are understood and expressed. Common and divergent views within Hinduism in the way beliefs and teachings are understood and expressed should be included throughout, including reference to Shaivism and Vaishnavism.

The significance and importance of the various beliefs and practices to Hindus today should be explored throughout the two sections.

## Section 1: Beliefs and Teachings

Students should have an understanding of:	
<b>1.1</b>	The nature of Brahman: the nature of Brahman as spirit, ultimate reality or absolute truth; how the characteristics of Brahman are shown in Hindu scriptures, including Katha Upanishad 2.2.6–8.
<b>1.2</b>	The nature and importance of understanding Brahman as Nirguna Brahman and Saguna Brahman: how Nirguna Brahman and Saguna Brahman are shown in Hindu scripture, for example Nirguna – Taittiriya Upanishad 2.7.1–2 and Saguna – Rig Veda 1.154.1–2; the nature and importance of Vaikuntha (spiritual worlds); divergent ways in which belief in each may be expressed in the life of Hindus today.
<b>1.3</b>	Three aspects of the divine – Brahman, Antaryami and Bhagavan; the nature and significance of the divine as Brahman (everywhere and non-personal), Antaryami (within the heart) and Bhagavan (beyond, as a personal loving God); how the three aspects are shown in Hindu scriptures, including Mundaka Upanishad 2.1; why belief in the three aspects of the divine are important in Hindu life and for religious pluralism today.
<b>1.4</b>	Manifestations of the Divine: the nature and importance of how the deities are shown in Hindu scriptures; avatars and murti; the nature and role of male deities: divergent understandings of the importance of Vishnu (including Rig Veda 1.22) and Shiva; the nature and role of the female force, Shakti, including Parvati and Lakshmi.
<b>1.5*</b>	The nature of the individual and life within Hinduism: the nature and importance of the atman (eternal self), karma, the cycle of samsara, moksha; divergent Hindu understandings of the nature of the individual and life, including interpretations of Brihadaranyaka Upanishad 4.4; why beliefs about the atman, karma, samsara and moksha are important for Hindus today.
<b>1.6</b>	The purpose of human life for Hindus: the nature and significance of the four aims of life (Purusharthas) – dharma, artha, kama and moksha; the nature and significance of sanatana dharma (eternal law), including Bhagavad Gita 3.35; the nature and significance of varnashrama dharma (duties according to materialistic situation in life).
<b>1.7</b>	Hindu responses to suffering, knowledge and ignorance: Hindu teachings about suffering, knowledge and ignorance, such as ahimsa, respect, empathy, mind/sense control, humility, and love, including Mahabharata 5:39; divergent Hindu understandings as to why there is suffering, knowledge and ignorance for Hindus today.
<b>1.8</b>	Hindu cosmology: the nature of the Hindu cosmology as shown in Hindu scriptures, including Rig Veda 10:129; the nature and importance of the cycle of four ages (yugas), including descriptions of the Kali Yuga in the Mahabharata, many worlds and their diverse inhabitants; the nature and divergent understandings of the importance of the concepts of prakriti (matter), tri-guna (three qualities) and maya (illusion).

## Section 2: Practices

Students should have an understanding of:	
<b>2.1</b>	The nature and purpose of Hindu yoga: the nature and purpose of different forms of yoga: karma yoga (action), jnana yoga (knowledge), astanga/raja yoga (meditation) and bhakti yoga (devotion); examples of when each form of yoga might be used, how and why; the importance of having different types of yoga; reference to Bhagavad Gita 6.44–47.
<b>2.2</b>	Focuses of worship and representations of the divine: the nature, purpose and importance of different ways of worshipping, including worshipping one god (personal or non-personal) or many deities, gurus and holy places (land, hills, rivers and sacred plants and animals); the scriptural basis for the different focuses of worship and representations of the divine in worship, including interpretations of Bhagavad Gita 6.20–31
<b>2.3</b>	The importance of Hindu places of worship: the nature, features of use and purpose of worship in different places, including in the temple, in the home, outside, including shrines and festival celebration and in the space of the heart, with reference to interpretations of Bhagavad Gita 9.13–27; the benefits for Hindus of having different places to worship in.
<b>2.4*</b>	The nature and purpose of prayer in the temple and the home: the nature, features of use and purpose of the different forms of worship, including meditation, puja, havan, darshan, arti, bhajan, kirtan and japa with reference to interpretations of Bhagavad Gita 6.44–47; divergent understandings of the benefits for Hindus of having different forms of worship.
<b>2.5</b>	Hindu sacred festivals: the nature, history, purpose and significance of Hindu sacred festivals; the origins and meaning of specific festivals, including Diwali, Holi, Navratri Dussehra, Ram Navami, Ratha-yatra, Janmashtami, and Raksha Bandhan, including interpretations of Brihadaranyaka Upanishad 1.3.28.
<b>2.6</b>	Hindu pilgrimage: the nature, history and purpose of Hindu pilgrimages; the significance of the places Hindus go on pilgrimage; divergent understandings of why pilgrimage may, or may not be, important for Hindus today; the nature, features, history and importance of pilgrimage to the Ganges, including interpretations of Rig Veda 10.75, Vrindavana and Varanasi.
<b>2.7</b>	Hindu environmental projects: divergent understandings of the nature, purpose and significance of environmental care for Hindus; the importance of care for rivers and sacred places for Hindus; how Hindus care for the environment, examples of what they do and why, including reference to cow protection, including interpretations of Rig Veda 10.87.16–19.
<b>2.8</b>	Hindu charity work: the nature and purpose of charity for Hindus; Hindu teachings about charity; the work of one named Hindu charity working to promote wellbeing, social inclusion and women’s rights, what it does and why, including interpretations of Bhagavad Gita 3:10–12.

## Area of Study 2 – Judaism

### Overview

This area of study comprises a study in depth of Judaism as a lived religion in the United Kingdom and throughout the world.

There are two sections: Beliefs and Teachings; Practices.

Students will be expected to study Judaism within the context of the wider British society, the religious traditions of which are, in the main, Christian.

Students should compare and contrast two areas of belief and practice within Christianity and Judaism:

- Beliefs about the afterlife and their significance (1.8)\*
- The practice and significance of worship (2.4)\*.

Students should recognise that Judaism is one of the many religious traditions in Great Britain, which include Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam and Sikhism. This knowledge may be applied throughout the assessment of the specified content. Students should also recognise that within Judaism there may be more than one perspective in the way beliefs and teachings are understood and expressed. Common and divergent views within Judaism in the way beliefs and teachings are understood and expressed should be included throughout including reference to Orthodox, Reform and Liberal traditions.

The significance and importance of the various beliefs and practices to Jews today should be explored throughout the two sections.

### Section 1: Beliefs and Teachings

Students should have an understanding of:	
<b>1.1</b>	The nature of the Almighty: how the characteristics of the Almighty are shown in the Torah, and why they are important in Jewish life today, including One, Creator, Law-Giver and Judge, including reference to Genesis 2.
<b>1.2</b>	The nature and importance of Shekhinah: how the divine presence is shown in the Torah and why it is important, including interpretations of 2 Chronicles 7:1–3; the divergent understandings of Shekhinah found in different forms of Orthodox Judaism and the importance of them for Jews today.
<b>1.3</b>	The nature and purpose of the Messiah: how messiahship is shown in the scriptures including Jeremiah 23:5–8; the nature and significance of the Messianic Age and the Jewish responsibility to bring it about; divergent understandings of the Messiah in different forms of Orthodox and Reform Judaism and the importance of them for Jewish people today.
<b>1.4</b>	The Covenant at Sinai: the nature and history of the Covenant at Sinai (the Ten Commandments), including Exodus 20; the role and significance of Moses in the Covenant at Sinai; divergent understandings of how and why the Decalogue is important in Jewish life today.
<b>1.5</b>	The covenant with Abraham and his descendants: the nature and history of the Abrahamic covenant; the role of Abraham in the covenant, including Genesis 17; why the Promised Land covenanted to Abraham and his descendants is important for Jews today.

**Students should have an understanding of:**

<b>1.6</b>	Sanctity of life: the nature and importance of Pikuach Nefesh (primacy of life); why human life is holy by Jewish people; how life is shown as special and taking precedence over everything, including Talmud Yoma 83–84; divergent understandings of how and why the principle of Pikuach Nefesh is applied by Jews today.
<b>1.7</b>	Moral principles and the Mitzvot: the nature and importance of the Mitzvot, including reference to the Mishneh Torah of Maimonides: Sefer Mada; the importance of the relationship between keeping the Mitzvot and free will; the Mitzvot between humans and the Almighty, and between humans; divergent understandings of the importance of the Mitzvot between the Almighty and humans, and between humans, for Jewish life today.
<b>1.8*</b>	Jewish beliefs about life after death: divergent Jewish understandings of the nature and significance of life after death, including reference to different forms of Orthodox and Reform Judaism; Jewish teachings about life after death, including interpretations of Ecclesiastes 12; the nature of resurrection and judgement; why belief in life after death may be important for Jews today.

## Section 2: Practices

**Students should have an understanding of:**

<b>2.1</b>	The nature and purpose of Jewish public acts of worship: the nature, features and purpose of Jewish public worship, including interpretations of Psalm 116:12–19; the nature, features and importance of synagogue services for the Jewish community and the individual.
<b>2.2</b>	The Tenakh and the Talmud: the nature, features, purpose and significance of the Tenakh (the written law) and Talmud (the oral law) for Jews in daily life today, with reference to Perkei Avot 2; the nature and purpose of Jewish laws: food laws, kashrut, including kosher, and treifah and the separation of dairy and meat, including reference to Deuteronomy 14:3–10; the divergent implications of the Jewish food laws for Jews today.
<b>2.3</b>	The nature and purpose of prayer in the home and of private prayer: the nature, features and purpose of prayer three times a day; the importance of having different forms of prayers, including interpretations of Psalm 55:16–23.
<b>2.4*</b>	The nature and importance of the Shema and the Amidah (the standing prayer); when the Shema and the Amidah might be used, how and why, including reference to the Mezuzah; the importance of having the Shema and the Amidah for Jews today, including reference to Deuteronomy 6:4.
<b>2.5</b>	The importance of ritual for Jews today: the nature, features and purpose of the birth, marriage, Bar and Bat Mitzvah ceremonies, including interpretations of Genesis 21:1–8 and Leviticus 12; the nature, purpose and importance of mourning ceremonies; the distinct importance of the funeral, shiva, avelut and yahrzeit for Jews today; divergent understandings of the importance of each ritual for different forms of Orthodox and Reform Judaism today.

**Students should have an understanding of:**

<b>2.6</b>	The nature, features, history and purpose of celebrating Shabbat: the nature, features and purpose of the celebration of Shabbat in the home and in the synagogue, including interpretations of Exodus 31:12–18; why the celebration of Shabbat is important for the Jewish community and the individual today.
<b>2.7</b>	Jewish festivals: the nature, history, purpose and significance of Jewish festivals; the origins and meaning of specific festivals, including Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Pesach, Shavuot and Sukkot, including interpretations of Leviticus 23 (Rosh Hashanah); divergent understandings of why festivals are important to different forms of Orthodox and Reform Judaism today.
<b>2.8</b>	Features of the synagogue: the nature, history and purpose of the different design of the synagogues in Liberal, Reform and Orthodox Judaism, including facing Jerusalem, layout of seating the Ark and the bimah and with reference to Proverbs 14:28; how and why the synagogue is used by the different communities, including reference to Exodus 27:20–21; how and why objects of devotion are used within the synagogues, including a yad, Torah Scroll, ner tamid and menorah.

## Area of Study 2 – Sikhism

### Overview

This area of study comprises a study in depth of Sikhism as a lived religion in the United Kingdom and throughout the world.

There are two sections: Beliefs and Teachings; Practices.

Students will be expected to study Sikhism within the context of the wider British society, the religious traditions of which are, in the main, Christian.

Students should compare and contrast two areas of belief and practice within Christianity and Sikhism:

- Beliefs about the afterlife and their significance (1.4)\*
- The practice and significance of worship (2.5)\*.

Students should recognise that Sikhism is one of the many religious traditions in Great Britain, which include Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam and Judaism. This knowledge may be applied throughout the assessment of the specified content. Students should also recognise that within Sikhism there may be more than one perspective in the way beliefs and teachings are understood and expressed. Common and divergent views within Sikhism in the way beliefs and teachings are understood and expressed should be included throughout, including reference to Khalsa and non-Khalsa Sikhs.

The significance and importance of the various beliefs and practices to Sikhs today should be explored throughout the two sections.

## Section 1: Beliefs and Teachings

Students should have an understanding of:	
<b>1.1</b>	The nature of God: how the characteristics of God are shown in the Mool Mantar, Guru Granth Sahib 1, and why the characteristics are important and why the Mool Mantar is significant for Sikhs.
<b>1.2</b>	God as Creator: the nature and importance of God as creator (Karta Purakh) for Sikhs; Sikh teachings on God as creator, including Guru Granth Sahib 12 and 94.
<b>1.3</b>	The nature of human life: the purpose and significance of life as an opportunity to unite with God; Sikh understandings of why uniting with God is important; how uniting with God will affect their lives, including Guru Granth Sahib 12.
<b>1.4*</b>	Sikh beliefs about life after death: the nature of karma, rebirth and mukti (liberation); how they are shown in the Guru Granth Sahib, including reference to Guru Granth Sahib 2 and 78; divergent understandings of how and why karma, rebirth and mukti are important for Sikh life today.
<b>1.5</b>	Purpose of life: the nature and importance of being gurmukh (God-centred) not manmukh (self-centred) and the elimination of haumai – (ego/pride), including reference to Guru Granth Sahib 125 and 226; what actions make a gurmukh Sikh; divergent understandings of why being gurmukh and eliminating haumai is important in Sikh life today.
<b>1.6</b>	The oneness of humanity: how the equality of all humans is shown in the Guru Granth Sahib, including Guru Granth Sahib 349, in stories from the lives of the Gurus, including the example of Mai Bhago, and the appointment of women as teachers, and in Sikh life today; how and why complete equality of men and women is important for Sikhs today.
<b>1.7</b>	Sewa (service to others): the nature of sewa, including tan, man and dhan; the origins and purpose of sewa and its importance in the development of Sikhism, including Guru Granth Sahib 26; divergent understandings of the practice and importance of sewa in Sikh life today in reflecting the priority of service to others.
<b>1.8</b>	Sangat: the nature and history of the sangat; divergent understandings of why the sangat is important for Sikhs, including Guru Granth Sahib 1316; the concept of Sat Sangat and divergent understandings of its significance for Sikhs; problems for Sikhs living without a sangat.

## Section 2: Practices

### Students should have an understanding of:

<b>2.1</b>	Features of the gurdwara: the nature, history and purpose of the design of the Gurdwara as the 'Door/Gate of the Guru', including Rahit Maryada Chapters 4–6; how and why objects of devotion are used within the gurdwara: Guru Granth Sahib, Takht, Chanani, Chaur, the langar hall, four doors, and the Nishan Sahib; divergent understandings of the importance of these features in Sikh life today.
<b>2.2</b>	The gurdwara: the role and importance of the gurdwara within the Sikh community, including reference to Guru Granth Sahib 1391; activities that take place within the gurdwara and why; the nature and importance of visiting Sikh historical gurdwaras: the Harmandir Sahib in Amritsar (the Golden Temple).
<b>2.3</b>	Langar: the history of langar including Guru Granth Sahib 967; the nature and purposes of langar; the significance of langar for Sikhs today, especially as an expression of sewa.
<b>2.4</b>	Nam Japna – Meditating on the name of God: the nature and significance of Nam Japna; diverse ways in which the Nam Japna is used in the gurdwara and in Sikh daily life, including Guru Granth Sahib 1142.
<b>2.5*</b>	Prayer, including reference to Guru Granth Sahib 305: the nature, role and purpose of prayer in the home; the different types of prayer; when prayer might take place and why; the importance of having different prayers.
<b>2.6</b>	Akhand path (continuous 48-hour reading of the Guru Granth Sahib): the nature, history, role and purpose of the akhand path, including reference Rahit Maryada Chapter 7; how and why Sikhs might take part in the akhand path: why the akhand path is important for the Sikh community and for individual Sikhs.
<b>2.7</b>	Gurpurbs and commemorations: divergent understandings of the nature, history and purpose of gurpurbs and commemorations; why they are important for Sikhs today; the origins and meaning gurpurbs, including Guru Nanak's birthday, Vaisakhi, including reference to the account of the events found in Gurbilas Patshahi 10, Divali: the origins and meaning of commemorations, including the martyrdom of Guru Arjan and Guru Tagh Bahadur Ji.
<b>2.8</b>	Birth and naming rituals and ceremonies: the celebration and significance of Naam Karan and Hukamnama; the significance of Amrit sanskar (the initiation ceremony) for Sikh families, including reference to the Rahit Maryada Chapters 11 and 13; divergent understandings of these ceremonies between khalsa and non-khalsa Sikhs; the significance of the names Singh and Kaur in the naming and Amrit ceremonies, and for Sikh identity today.

## Assessment information

### Paper 2: Area of Study 2 – Study of Second Religion

- First assessment: May/June 2018.
- The assessment is 50 minutes.
- The assessment is out of 51 marks.
- Students must select one religion from a choice of seven. (Catholic Christianity, Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Sikhism).
- Students must answer all sections and all questions.
- The paper may include short open, open response and extended writing questions.
- The paper will assess spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPaG) and use of specialist terminology and these will contribute a minimum of 5% of marks towards the overall weighting for this paper.

### Synoptic assessment

Synoptic assessment requires students to work across different parts of a qualification and to show their accumulated knowledge and understanding of a topic or subject area.

Synoptic assessment enables students to show their ability to combine their skills, knowledge and understanding with breadth and depth of the subject.

Synopticity will be assessed where students are required to bring together their knowledge and understanding of religion from across the course of study.

### Sample assessment materials

Sample papers and mark schemes can be found in the *Pearson Edexcel Level 1/Level 2 GCSE (9-1) in Religious Studies A Sample Assessment Materials (SAMs)* document.

## Area of Study 3: Philosophy and Ethics

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### Area of Study 3 - Catholic Christianity

#### Overview

This area of study comprises a study in depth of aspects of Philosophy and Ethics in the context of Catholic Christianity as a lived religion within the United Kingdom and throughout the world.

There are two sections: Arguments for the Existence of God; Religious Teachings on Relationships and Families in the 21st Century.

The significance and importance of the various beliefs, issues and practices to Catholics today should be explored throughout the two sections. This should include reference to how the Bible informs a Christian's understanding of the topics and how approaches to the issues are underpinned by philosophical arguments and ethical theory as applicable.

Students will be expected to study Catholic Christianity within the context of the wider British society, the religious traditions of which are, in the main, Christian. Students should recognise that Catholic Christianity is one of the many religions and world views in Great Britain, which include Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Sikhism and non-religious views such as Humanism and atheism. This knowledge may be applied throughout the assessment of the specified content.

Students should compare and contrast the areas of ethics and/or philosophy within Catholic Christianity with wider Christian perspectives and non-religious views as outlined in the content below.

Students should also recognise that within Catholic Christianity there may be more than one perspective in the way beliefs and teachings are understood and expressed. Common and divergent views within the wider Christian tradition in the way beliefs and teachings are understood and expressed should be included throughout, including reference to Orthodox, Protestant and other Christian traditions.

## Section 1: Arguments for the Existence of God

Students should have an understanding of:

<b>1.1</b>	Revelation as proof of the existence of God: the significance of Jesus Christ as the culmination of God's revelation; what the revelation of Jesus Christ shows about the nature of God for Catholics, including reference to Hebrews 1:1–4.
<b>1.2</b>	Visions as proof of the existence of God: the nature and importance of visions for Catholics; biblical and non-biblical examples of visions, including Joan of Arc and Genesis 15 and Matthew 17:1–13; reasons why they might lead to belief in God and Catholic responses to non-religious arguments (including atheist and Humanist) which maintain that visions are hallucinations and provide no proof that God exists.
<b>1.3</b>	Miracles as proof of the existence of God: the nature and importance of miracles for Catholics; biblical and non-biblical examples of miracles, including those at Lourdes and John 4:43–54; reasons why they might lead to belief in God and Catholic responses to non-religious arguments (including atheist and Humanist) which maintain that miracles can be scientifically explained and provide no proof that God exists.
<b>1.4</b>	Catholic attitudes towards religious experiences and its use as a philosophical argument for the existence of God: the nature of religious experience and why not all religious experiences are approved by the Church, including reference to Catechism of the Catholic Church 66–67; Catholic responses to non-religious (including atheist and Humanist) arguments that religious experiences do not provide proof that God exists.
<b>1.5</b>	Design argument: the classical design argument for the existence of God and its use by Catholics as a philosophical argument for the existence of God; understandings of what the design argument shows about the nature of God for Catholics including Romans 1:18–24; Catholic responses to non-religious (including atheist and Humanist) arguments against the design argument as evidence for the existence of God.
<b>1.6</b>	Cosmological argument: the cosmological argument for the existence of God and its use by Catholics as a philosophical argument for the existence of God, including reference to Thomas Aquinas' First Three Ways of showing God's existence; understandings of the nature and importance of what the cosmological argument shows about the nature of God for Catholics; Catholic responses to non-religious (including atheist and Humanist) arguments against the cosmological argument as evidence for the existence of God.
<b>1.7</b>	Issues raised by the existence of suffering and God as all-loving: the issues it raises for Catholics about the nature of God, including Isaiah 45; how the problem and its basis as a philosophical argument may lead some to examine and others to reject their belief in God.
<b>1.8</b>	The solutions offered to the problem of suffering and a loving and righteous God within Catholicism: biblical, theoretical and practical responses – Psalms, including reference to Psalm 119, Job, free will (St Augustine), as a way for humans to develop (St Irenaeus), prayer, and charity; divergent understandings within Christianity of their success in solving the problem.

## Section 2: Religious Teachings on Relationships and Families in the 21st Century

Students should have an understanding of:	
<b>2.1</b>	The importance and purpose of marriage for Catholics: the significance of marriage in Catholic life; Catholic teachings about marriage, including <i>Not Just Good, But Beautiful</i> by Pope Francis; divergent Christian, non-religious (including atheist and Humanist) attitudes to the importance of marriage in society, including the sanctity of marriage, a lack of importance, cohabitation and the Catholic responses to these attitudes.
<b>2.2</b>	Catholic teaching about the importance of sexual relationships: Catholic teaching about sexual relationships as marital, unitive and procreative, including Catechism of the Catholic Church 2360–2365; Catholic teaching on sexual relationships outside of marriage and homosexuality; divergent Christian, non-religious (including atheist and Humanist) attitudes to sexual relationships, including the acceptance of sexual relationships outside marriage and homosexuality and Catholic responses to them.
<b>2.3</b>	Catholic teaching about the purpose and importance of the family: Catholic teaching about the purpose and importance of families including: procreation; security and education of children; Catholic responses to the different types of family within 21st-century society (nuclear, single parent, same-sex parents, extended and blended families), including <i>Familiaris Consortio</i> , 36-85.
<b>2.4</b>	Support for the family in the local Catholic parish: how and why the local parish tries to support families, including through family worship, the sacraments, classes for parents, groups for children and counselling, with reference to the Family Group Movement and Catechism of the Catholic Church 2226; the importance of the support of the local parish for Catholic families today.
<b>2.5</b>	Catholic teaching on family planning and the regulation of births: Catholic teaching about artificial contraception and natural family planning, including reference to <i>Humanae Vitae</i> ; divergent Christian, non-religious (including atheist and Humanist) attitudes to family planning, including acceptance of artificial methods of contraception by some Protestant Churches and the application of ethical theories, such as situation ethics, and Catholic responses to them.
<b>2.6</b>	Catholic teaching about divorce, annulment and remarriage: Catholic teaching on divorce, annulment and remarriage, including Catechism of the Catholic Church 2382–2386; divergent Christian, non-religious (including atheist and Humanist) attitudes to divorce, annulment and remarriage, including the application of ethical theories, such as situation ethics, and Catholic responses to them.
<b>2.7</b>	Catholic teaching about the equality of men and women in the family: Catholic teaching about the role of men and women in the family with reference to Catechism of the Catholic Church 2207, including the dignity of work within the home; divergent Christian teachings and attitudes about the equality and roles of men and women in the family and Catholic responses to them.
<b>2.8</b>	Catholic teachings about gender prejudice and discrimination: Catholic opposition to gender prejudice and discrimination, including theology of the body; examples of Catholic opposition to gender prejudice and discrimination, including Catechism of the Catholic Church 1938; divergent Christian attitudes to gender differences, including the role of women in the Church, prejudice and discrimination and Catholic responses to them.

## Area of Study 3 – Christianity

### Overview

This area of study comprises a study in depth of aspects of Philosophy and Ethics in the context of Christianity as a lived religion within the United Kingdom and throughout the world.

There are two sections: Arguments for the Existence of God; Religious Teachings on Relationships and Families in the 21st Century.

The significance and importance of the various beliefs, issues and practices to Christians today should be explored throughout the two sections. This should include reference to how the Bible informs a Christian's understanding of the topics and how approaches to the issues are underpinned by philosophical arguments and ethical theory as applicable.

Students will be expected to study Christianity within the context of the wider British society, the religious traditions of which are, in the main, Christian. Students should recognise that Christianity is one of the many religions and world views in Great Britain, which include Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Sikhism and non-religious views such as Humanism and atheism. This knowledge may be applied throughout the assessment of the specified content.

Students should compare and contrast the areas of ethics and/or philosophy within Christianity with non-religious views as outlined in the content below.

Students should also recognise that within Christianity there may be more than one perspective in the way beliefs and teachings are understood and expressed. Common and divergent views within Christianity in the way beliefs and teachings are understood and expressed should be included throughout, including reference to Catholic, Orthodox, Protestant and other Christian traditions.

## Section 1: Arguments for the Existence of God

Students should have an understanding of:	
<b>1.1</b>	Revelation as proof of the existence of God; revelation as shown in the Bible, including in the covenants with Noah and Abraham and through Jesus, including Hebrews 1:1–4; divergent understandings of what revelation shows about the nature of God for Christians.
<b>1.2</b>	Visions as proof of the existence of God: the nature and importance of visions for Christians; biblical and non-biblical examples of visions, including Genesis 15 and Matthew 17:1–13; reasons why they might lead to belief in the existence of God and Christian responses to non-religious arguments (including atheist and Humanist) which maintain that visions are hallucinations and provide no proof that God exists; divergent understandings of what visions show about the nature of God for Christians.
<b>1.3</b>	Miracles as proof of the existence of God: the nature and importance of miracles for Christians; biblical examples of miracles, including John 4:43–54; reasons why they might lead to belief in the existence of God and Christian responses to non-religious arguments (including atheist and Humanist) which maintain that miracles can be scientifically explained and provide no proof that God exists; divergent understandings of what miracles show about the nature of God for Christians.
<b>1.4</b>	Christian attitudes towards religious experiences and its use as a philosophical argument for the existence of God: the nature of a religious experience and why it might be regarded as revelation, including reference to Exodus 3; Christian responses to non-religious (including atheist and Humanist) arguments that religious experiences do not provide proof that God exists.
<b>1.5</b>	Christian teaching about prayers: Christian teachings about the nature and importance of prayers; Christian teachings about reasons prayers that are answered in the way the person expects might lead to belief in God, including 1 John 5:13–17.
<b>1.6</b>	Design argument: the classical design argument for the existence of God and its use by Christians as a philosophical argument for the existence of God; divergent understandings about what the design argument may show about the nature of God for Christians, including Romans 1:18–24; Christian responses to non-religious (including atheist and Humanist) arguments against the design argument as evidence for the existence of God.
<b>1.7</b>	Cosmological argument: the cosmological argument for the existence of God and its use by Christians as a philosophical argument for the existence of God; divergent understandings about what the cosmological argument shows about the nature of God for Christians, including Thomas Aquinas' First Three Ways of showing God's existence; Christian responses to non-religious (including atheist and Humanist) arguments against the cosmological argument as evidence for the existence of God.
<b>1.8</b>	Religious upbringing: Christian teachings about raising children to believe in God, including reference to Proverbs 22:6; features of a Christian upbringing and why they may lead to belief in God; Christian responses to non-religious (including atheist and Humanist) arguments about why a religious upbringing may result in a rejection of God's existence.

## Section 2: Religious Teachings on Relationships and Families in the 21st Century

### Students should have an understanding of:

<b>2.1</b>	The importance and purpose of marriage for Christians: Christian teachings about the significance of marriage in Christian life; the purpose of marriage for Christians including Mark 10:6–9; divergent Christian and non-religious (including atheist and Humanist) attitudes to the importance of marriage in society; including the sanctity of marriage, a lack of importance, cohabitation and Christian responses to these attitudes.
<b>2.2</b>	Christian teachings about the nature and importance of sexual relationships: divergent Christian teachings about sexual relationships; Christian attitudes towards sexual relationships outside of marriage and homosexuality, including interpretations of 1 Corinthians 6:7–20; divergent Christian and non-religious (including atheist and Humanist) attitudes to sexual relationships, including the acceptance of sexual relationships outside marriage and homosexuality and Christian responses to them.
<b>2.3</b>	Christian teachings about the purpose and importance of the family including: procreation, security and education of children, with reference to Ephesians 6:1–4; divergent Christian responses to different types of family within 21st-century society (nuclear, single parent, same-sex parents, extended and blended families).
<b>2.4</b>	Support for the family in the local parish: how and why the local church community tries to support families, including through family worship, including interpretations of Matthew 19:13–14, rites of passage, classes for parents, groups for children, including Sunday schools and counselling; the importance of the support of the local parish for Christians today.
<b>2.5</b>	Christian teaching about family planning and regulation of births: divergent Christian attitudes about contraception and family planning, including teachings about the artificial methods of contraception by some Protestant Churches and the Catholic Church, with reference to <i>Humanae Vitae</i> ; different non-religious (including atheist and Humanist) attitudes to family planning and the application of ethical theories, such as situation ethics, and Christian responses to them.
<b>2.6</b>	Christian teachings and attitudes towards divorce and remarriage: Christian teachings about divorce and remarriage, including Matthew 19:1–12; divergent Christian, non-religious (including atheist and Humanist) attitudes to divorce and remarriage, including the application of ethical theories, such as situation ethics, and Christian responses to them.
<b>2.7</b>	Christian teaching about the equality of men and women in the family: Christian teachings and attitudes about the role of men and women in the family, including reference to Genesis 1–3 and Ephesians 5:21–30; divergent Christian attitudes about the equality and role of men and women in the family and Christian responses to them.
<b>2.8</b>	Christian teachings about gender prejudice and discrimination: Christian opposition to gender prejudice and discrimination, including Galatians 3:23–29; examples of Christian opposition to gender prejudice and discrimination; divergent Christian attitudes to gender differences, including the role of women in the Church, prejudice and discrimination and Christian responses to them.

## Area of Study 3 – Islam

### Overview

This area of study comprises a study in depth of aspects of Philosophy and Ethics in the context of Islam as a lived religion within the United Kingdom and throughout the world.

There are two sections: Arguments for the Existence of Allah; Religious Teachings on Relationships and Families in the 21st Century.

The significance and importance of the various beliefs, issues and practices to Muslims today should be explored throughout the two sections. This should include reference to how the Qur'an informs a Muslim's understanding of the topics and how approaches to the issues are underpinned by philosophical arguments and ethical theory as applicable.

Students will be expected to study Islam within the context of the wider British society, the religious traditions of which are, in the main, Christian. Students should recognise that Islam is one of the many religions and world views in Great Britain, which include Buddhism, Hinduism, Judaism, Sikhism and non-religious views such as Humanism and atheism. This knowledge may be applied throughout the assessment of the specified content.

Students should compare and contrast the areas of ethics and/or philosophy within Islam with non-religious views as outlined in the content below.

Students should also recognise that within Islam there may be more than one perspective in the way beliefs and teachings are understood and expressed. Common and divergent views within Islam in the way beliefs and teachings are understood and expressed should be included throughout, including reference to Sunni and Shi'a traditions.

## Section 1: Arguments for the Existence of Allah

Students should have an understanding of:	
<b>1.1</b>	Revelation as proof of the existence of Allah; the Qur'an as revelation; Revelation as shown in the Qur'an as direct Surah 34: 46–50 or through a messenger; divergent understandings of what revelation shows about the nature of Allah for Muslims.
<b>1.2</b>	Visions as proof of the existence of Allah: the nature and importance of visions in Islam; Qur'anic examples of visions, including Surah 19: 16–22; reasons why they might lead to belief in the existence of Allah and Muslim responses to non-religious arguments (including atheist and Humanist) which maintain that visions are hallucinations and provide no proof that Allah exists; divergent understandings of what visions show about the nature of Allah for Muslims, with reference to Sunni, Shi'a and Sufi Islam.
<b>1.3</b>	Miracles as proof of the existence of Allah: the nature and importance of miracles in Islam; the Qur'an as a miracle including Surah 17: 84–89; examples of miracles; reasons why they might lead to belief in the existence of Allah; Muslim responses to non-religious arguments (including atheist and Humanist) which maintain that miracles can be scientifically explained and provide no proof that Allah exists; divergent understandings of what miracles show about the nature of Allah for Muslims.
<b>1.4</b>	Muslim attitudes towards religious experiences and their use as philosophical arguments for the existence of Allah: the nature of a religious experience; Surah 2: 118; divergent understandings of the nature and importance of religious experiences in Islam, with reference to Sunni, Shi'a and Sufi Islam; Muslim responses to non-religious (including atheist and Humanist) arguments that religious experiences do not provide proof that Allah exists.
<b>1.5</b>	Design argument: the design argument and its use in Islam as a philosophical argument for the existence of Allah and what it shows about the nature of Allah: divergent understandings of the nature and importance of the design argument for the existence of Allah in Islam, including reference to Surah 2: 164; Muslim responses to non-religious (including atheist and Humanist) arguments against the design argument as evidence for the existence of Allah.
<b>1.6</b>	Cosmological argument: the cosmological argument and its use in Islam as a philosophical argument for the existence of Allah, including reference to kalam in the writings of Al-Ghazali, including <i>Kitab al-Iqtisad fil'Itiqad</i> ; what the cosmological argument shows about the nature of Allah; divergent understandings of the strengths and challenges of the cosmological argument in Islam; Muslim responses to non-religious (including atheist and Humanist) arguments against the cosmological argument as evidence for the existence of Allah.

**Students should have an understanding of:**

<b>1.7</b>	Issues raised by existence of suffering and Allah as compassionate, including Surah 1: the problems the existence of suffering may raise for Muslims about the nature of Allah; how the problem and its basis as a philosophical argument may lead some people to reject belief in Allah or cause believers to question their belief.
<b>1.8</b>	The different practical and philosophical solutions offered to the problem of suffering and Allah as compassionate within Islam: Qur'anic including Surah; Surah 2: 151–177, theoretical and practical responses, including life as a test, prayer, and charity; divergent understandings within Islam of their success in solving the problem.

## Section 2: Religious Teachings on Relationships and Families in the 21st Century

Students should have an understanding of:	
<b>2.1</b>	The importance and purpose of marriage in Islam: the significance of marriage in Muslim life; Muslim teachings about marriage, including Surah 4; non-religious (including atheist and Humanist) attitudes to the importance of marriage in society; including a lack of importance, cohabitation and Muslim responses to these attitudes.
<b>2.2</b>	Muslim teaching about the importance of sexual relationships: divergent Muslim teaching about sexual relationships as fulfilling physical, emotional and spiritual needs; Muslim teachings on sexual relationships outside of marriage, including Surah 23: 5–11 and homosexuality; non-religious (including atheist and Humanist) attitudes to sexual relationships, including the acceptance of sexual relationships outside marriage and homosexuality and Muslim responses to them.
<b>2.3</b>	Muslim teaching about the purpose and importance of the family: Muslim teaching about the purpose of families, including Surah 46: 15–18: procreation and the strengthening of the ummah; divergent Muslim responses to the different types of family within 21st-century society (nuclear, single parent, same-sex parents, extended and blended families).
<b>2.4</b>	Support for the family in the ummah: how and why the community tries to support families, including through worship, rites of passage, classes for parents, groups for children and counselling; divergent understandings of the importance of this support for Muslims today and how it might strengthen the ummah, with reference to Surah 3: 102–105.
<b>2.5</b>	Muslim teaching on contraception: divergent Muslim teachings and attitudes about contraception and family planning including reference to Sahih Al-Bukhari 34: 432, and 62: 136; different non-religious (including atheist and Humanist) attitudes to family planning and the application of ethical theories, such as situation ethics, and Muslim responses to them.
<b>2.6</b>	Muslim teaching about divorce: divergent Muslim beliefs, teachings and attitudes towards divorce and remarriage, including Surah 2: 226–241 and the different rules for performing a divorce in Shi'a and Sunni Islam; different non-religious (including atheist and Humanist) attitudes to divorce and remarriage, including the application of ethical theories, such as situation ethics, and Muslim responses to them.
<b>2.7</b>	Muslim teaching about the equality of men and women in the family: divergent Muslim beliefs, teachings and attitudes about the role of men and women in the family with reference to the Qur'an including Surah 4 and the time of Muhammad.
<b>2.8</b>	Muslim teachings about gender prejudice and discrimination: Muslim attitudes to gender prejudice and discrimination, including Surah 33: 35; examples of gender equality in action in Islam.

## Assessment information

### Paper 3: Area of Study 3 – Philosophy and Ethics

- First assessment: May/June 2018.
- The assessment is 50 minutes.
- The assessment is out of 51 marks.
- Students must select **one** religion from a choice of three. (Catholic Christianity, Christianity and Islam).
- Students must answer all sections and all questions.
- The paper may include short open, open response and extended writing questions.
- The paper will assess spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPaG) and use of specialist terminology and these will contribute a minimum of 5% of marks towards the overall weighting for this paper.

### Synoptic assessment

Synoptic assessment requires students to work across different parts of a qualification and to show their accumulated knowledge and understanding of a topic or subject area.

Synoptic assessment enables students to show their ability to combine their skills, knowledge and understanding with breadth and depth of the subject.

Synopticity will be assessed where students are required to bring together their knowledge and understanding of religion from across the course of study.

### Sample assessment materials

Sample papers and mark schemes can be found in the *Pearson Edexcel Level 1/Level 2 GCSE (9-1) in Religious Studies A Sample Assessment Materials (SAMs)* document.

## Area of Study 4: Textual Studies

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### Area of Study 4 – Mark’s Gospel

#### Overview

The textual studies section for Christianity refers specifically to the Gospel of Mark.

There are two sections: Who is Jesus?; The Nature of Discipleship.

The themes and teachings of this Gospel are explored in depth; the references within the specification should be used as a starting point in a student’s textual studies and students may use other texts from the Bible to help contextualise, understand and compare the teachings found below.

Students will be expected to study Christianity and Mark’s Gospel within the context of the wider British society, the religious traditions of which are, in the main, Christian. Students should recognise that Christianity is one of the many religions and world views in Great Britain, which include Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Sikhism and non-religious views such as Humanism and atheism. This knowledge may be applied throughout the assessment of the specified content.

Students should compare and contrast the areas of belief and practice within Christianity with non-religious views.

The significance and importance of the various beliefs, issues and practices to Christians today should be explored throughout the two sections. They should understand how varied interpretations of the meaning of passages from St Mark’s Gospel may give rise to diversity within Christian traditions and consider how far Christian and non-religious communities give authority to St Mark’s Gospel, especially in relation to other sources of contemporary authority.

## Section 1: Who is Jesus?

Students should have an understanding of:	
<b>1.1</b>	The Messiah and the Son of Man: the expectations of the Messiah at the time of Jesus based on the Old Testament; (Isaiah 53) what the use of these titles shows about Jesus; the title 'Son of Man'; the meaning of the title including reference to Daniel 7:13, its use in Mark's Gospel and what it shows about Jesus; the significance of Jesus as Messiah and Son of Man for different Christians today.
<b>1.2</b>	The baptism of Jesus (Mark 1:2–11): the events of the baptism; divergent understandings of its significance, including marking the beginning of the ministry of Jesus, what it shows about him, and its significance for Christians today.
<b>1.3</b>	Nature miracles in Mark's Gospel: what they show about Jesus, including the calming of the storm (Mark 4:35–41); the feeding of the five thousand (Mark 6:32–44) and the walking on the water (Mark 6:45–52) and divergent understandings of their significance for different Christians today; Christian responses to non-religious arguments (including atheist and Humanist) which maintain that miracles can be scientifically explained and provide no proof of Jesus as divine.
<b>1.4</b>	The healing miracles in Mark's Gospel: what they show about Jesus, including the healing of Legion (Mark 5:1–20); the raising of Jairus' daughter (Mark 5:21–43) and divergent understandings of their significance for Christians today.
<b>1.5</b>	Peter's confession at Caesarea Philippi (Mark 8:27–33): what this shows about Jesus and his purpose; ideas about the Messianic secret in Mark's Gospel.
<b>1.6</b>	The transfiguration (Mark 9:1–10): what this event shows about Jesus; the reasons and importance of the appearance of Moses and Elias in relation to Moses' role as lawgiver and the Old Testament prophecy of Elias; divergent understandings of its significance for Christians today; Christian responses to non-religious arguments (including atheist and Humanist) which maintain that visions, such as the transfiguration, provide no proof that Jesus is the Messiah.
<b>1.7</b>	The conflicts of Jesus in Mark's Gospel: the healing of the paralysed man (Mark 2:1–12); disagreements about the Sabbath (Mark 2:23 – 3:6) and their link with Old Testament understandings of the Sabbath; and the cleansing of the Temple (Mark 11:15–18), what these show about Jesus and why they might be important in the narrative of Mark's Gospel.
<b>1.8</b>	The last days of Jesus' life: reasons for his arrest; the Last Supper (Mark 14:12–31); the prayers in Gethsemane (Mark 14:32–42); the betrayal and arrest (Mark 14:43–52); the trial before the High Priest (Mark 14:53–65); the trial before Pilate (Mark 15:1–15); the Passion (Mark 15:21–39; 16:1–8), what these events show about the purpose of Jesus' life, and how they may differ from other Gospel accounts, what these events show about Jesus; divergent understandings of the significance of these events for different Christians today.

## Section 2: The Nature of Discipleship

Students should have an understanding of:	
<b>2.1</b>	The call of the first disciples (Mark 1:14–20, 2:13–17): how this shows the nature of discipleship in showing the willingness to immediately follow Jesus regardless of consequence and how this might affect a Christian today; the sending out of the Twelve (Mark 6:7–13), how this shows the nature of discipleship including the command to take nothing for the journey and the responsibility to preach and serve; divergent ways in which it affects ideas about Christian living today.
<b>2.2</b>	Parables: the Parable of the Tenants (Mark 12:1–12): how this story shows the potential cost of discipleship in and its relationship to Christians today; the Parable of the Sower (Mark 4:1–20), how each group shows different types of Christians; the nature of discipleship as shown in each group and in the role of the sower; its significance for Christians today; the importance of these parables with reference to the Kingdom of God and divergent ways in which that is variously understood as realised and in the future.
<b>2.3</b>	The story of the rich man (Mark 10:17–31): how this shows the nature of discipleship in the command to sell all things and how it will affect Christian discipleship today in different ways; its significance for Christians today with reference to the Kingdom of God and divergent ways in which that is variously understood as realised and in the future.
<b>2.4</b>	The spirit cast out of the boy (Mark 9:14–29): the problems of discipleship as shown in the efforts to cure the boy, and its significance for Christians today.
<b>2.5</b>	Jesus teachings on service (Mark 10:41–45): the purpose of discipleship as shown in the command to serve; its implications and significance for Christians today.
<b>2.6</b>	Peter’s denial (Mark 14:66–72): the challenges that the denial brings and what it teaches about the problems of discipleship, and its significance for Christians today as an example and warning; Christian responses to non-religious arguments (including atheist and Humanist) which suggest that religious observance, such as discipleship, can be seen to be unnecessary.
<b>2.7</b>	Women in the ministry of Jesus as shown in Mark’s Gospel: the discipleship and importance of women including the Greek woman (Mark 7:25–30); the anointing at Bethany (Mark 14:3–9); the crucifixion, burial and resurrection (Mark 15:40–47, 16:1–11); divergent understandings of its significance for Christians today.
<b>2.8</b>	Discipleship in the 21st century: divergent understandings of how discipleship is shown in the lives of individual Christians today; specific examples should show how a person’s life reflects on the demands of discipleship outlined in Mark’s Gospel, including Mark 8:34 and the examples of either Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Oscar Romero or Mother Teresa.

## Area of Study 4 – Qur'an

### Overview

The textual studies section for Islam refers specifically to the Qur'an.

There are two sections: Beliefs and Teachings of Islam; Lives of the Prophets and Others.

The themes and teachings of the Qur'an are explored in depth; the references within the specification should be used as a starting point in a student's textual studies and students may use other texts from the Qur'an, Hadith and other holy books within Islam to help contextualise, understand and compare the teachings and examples found below. The exploration of the lives of the prophets, and others, should recognise that these stories teach spiritual truths in addition to being stories.

Students will be expected to study Islam and the Qur'an within the context of wider British society, the religious traditions of which are, in the main, Christian. Students should recognise that Islam is one of the many religions and world views in Great Britain, which include Buddhism, Hinduism, Judaism, Sikhism and non-religious views such as Humanism and atheism. This knowledge may be applied throughout the assessment of the specified content.

Students should compare and contrast the areas of belief and practice within Islam with non-religious views.

The significance and importance of the various beliefs, issues and practices of Muslims today should be explored throughout the two sections. They should understand how varied interpretations of the meaning of passages from the Qur'an may give rise to diversity within Muslim traditions and consider how far Muslim and non-religious communities give authority to the Qur'an, especially in relation to other sources of contemporary authority.

## Section 1: Beliefs and Teachings of Islam

Students should have an understanding of:	
<b>1.1</b>	The importance of Allah in Surah Al-Fatiha (1): the way Allah is described; the importance of submission to his will and the significance of this to Muslims living today.
<b>1.2</b>	The oneness of Allah in Surah Al-Anaam (6: 13-24): what this means to an understanding of Allah, how this reflected in worship; its significance for Muslims today.
<b>1.3</b>	The 99 beautiful names of Allah found in the Qur'an: what they teach Muslims about Allah; individual names, including Ar-Rahman (the All-Merciful), including Surah 55: 1, Ar-Rahim (the All-Merciful), including Surah 3: 31, As-Salam (the Source of Peace), including Surah 59: 23, Al-Khaliq (the Creator), including Surah 6: 102, Al-Ghaffar (the All-Forgiving), including Surah 2: 173, Ar-Razzaq, (the Sustainer), including Surah 51: 58 and their importance should be used to illustrate understanding Allah and his relationship to humanity; and their importance for Muslim living and worship today.
<b>1.4</b>	The nature of believers in Surah Al- Baqarah (2): how believers are described; the blessings that come through belief; how non-believers are described; understandings of the significance of these passages for different Muslims today.
<b>1.5</b>	Creation (Surah 45: 3-5; 21: 30; 41: 11; 21: 33; 51: 47; 7: 54; 57: 4; 50: 38; 57: 4; 71: 13-17; 21: 30; 24: 45): the events of creation; the role of Allah and humanity in the narrative; the role of humanity as vicegerent/khalifah (Surah 2: 30-39); as being above the angels; the significance of these beliefs for Muslims today.
<b>1.6</b>	Justice (Surah An-Nisa 4: 105-35): the nature and importance of justice as outlined in the Qur'an; its application in the Qur'an, in examples from the life of Muhammad in the Hadith, and divergent ways it is applied by Muslims today.
<b>1.7</b>	Shirk: teachings about shirk in the Qur'an and their significance; the ascribing of partners to Allah; the worship of idols including Surah 7: 148-150; divergent ways in which this belief will affect a Muslim today and their relationship to other religions.
<b>1.8</b>	Shari'ah law: how the Qur'an is used as the basis for Shari'ah law (Surah 4: 59-60 and 33: 21-36) with examples expressed in the life of Muslims today; and how Shari'ah law might be understood in divergent ways in different traditions of Islam; Muslim responses to non-religious arguments (including atheist and Humanist) which suggest that religious observance, such as following Shari'ah, can be seen to be unnecessary.

## Section 2: Lives of the Prophets and Others

Students should have an understanding of:	
<b>2.1</b>	The Prophet Nuh: the events of his life and teachings in the Qur'an, including Surah 71; his importance as one of the first messengers of Allah; his preaching; his thankfulness (Surah 17: 3); his challenges; the Ark and the destruction of his people; the significance of his example for Muslims today.
<b>2.2</b>	The Prophet Ibrahim: the events of his life and teachings in the Qur'an; his importance as a messenger of Allah; his example of living in submission to the will of Allah; Ibrahim's characteristics (including Surah 37: 109–111); his preaching; his development of the Ka'ba (Surah 2: 127–129); his relationships with Hagar and Ismail; his opposition to the worship of idols (including 21: 57–58); the command to sacrifice his son (including possible debate about which son) and comparison of this story with the Tawrat; the significance of his example for Muslims today.
<b>2.3</b>	The Prophet Ismail: the events of his life and teachings in the Qur'an, including Surah 21: 5–86; his importance as a messenger of Allah; his building of the Ka'ba (Surah 2: 127–129); his relationship with his parents; and the command of Allah for him to be sacrificed and comparison of this story with the Tawrat; the significance of his example for Muslims today.
<b>2.4</b>	The Prophet Yusuf: the events of his life and teachings in the Qur'an, including Surah 12 (Yusuf); his importance as a messenger of Allah; his dreams; his betrayal; his life in Egypt and reunion with his family; the significance of his example for Muslims today.
<b>2.5</b>	The Prophet Dawud: the events of his life and teachings in the Qur'an; his importance as a messenger of Allah; Dawud's place in the armies of Saul; his encounter with Goliath (Surah 2: 249–251); his armour making; his devotion to Allah; his writing of the Zabur (Psalms), including Surah 17: 55; the significance of his example for Muslims today.
<b>2.6</b>	Maryam: the events of her life in the Qur'an and in the Hadith, including Surah 19 (Maryam); her importance as one who submits her will to Allah; her birth; childhood; the annunciation of her pregnancy; and the birth of Isa; the significance of her example for Muslims today; Muslim responses to non-religious arguments (including atheist and Humanist) which maintain that visions, such as the visitation of Jibril to Maryam, are not real and provide no proof that Allah exists.
<b>2.7</b>	The Prophet Isa: the events of his life and teachings in the Qur'an; his birth; his mission; his life, including preaching, miracles, knowledge and disciples; his ascension, including views of his death (Surah 4: 157–158); his foretelling of Muhammad (Surah 61: 6); his importance as a messenger of Allah especially in the Injil; the significance of his example for Muslims today.
<b>2.8</b>	Beliefs and teachings about Muhammad and his preaching of Islam in response to the command of Allah (Surah 26: 213–217) and its significance for Muslims today: the divergent ways in which Muslims might interpret the command to invite others to submission to Allah; Muslim responses to non-religious arguments (including atheist and Humanist) which suggest that trying to convert other people in today's society is wrong.

## Assessment information

### Paper 4: Area of Study 4 – Textual Studies

- First assessment: May/June 2018.
- The assessment is 50 minutes.
- The assessment is out of 51 marks.
- Students must select **one** textual study from a choice of two. (Mark's Gospel and The Qur'an).
- Students must answer all sections and all questions.
- The paper may include short open, open response and extended writing questions.
- The paper will assess spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPaG) and use of specialist terminology and these will contribute a minimum of 5% of marks towards the overall weighting for this paper.

### Synoptic assessment

Synoptic assessment requires students to work across different parts of a qualification and to show their accumulated knowledge and understanding of a topic or subject area.

Synoptic assessment enables students to show their ability to combine their skills, knowledge and understanding with breadth and depth of the subject.

Synopticity will be assessed where students are required to bring together their knowledge and understanding of religion from across the course of study.

### Sample assessment materials

Sample papers and mark schemes can be found in the *Pearson Edexcel Level 1/Level 2 GCSE (9-1) in Religious Studies A Sample Assessment Materials (SAMs)* document.

## Assessment Objectives

Students must:		% in GCSE
<b>AO1</b>	Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• beliefs, practices and sources of authority</li> <li>• influence on individuals, communities and societies</li> <li>• similarities and differences within and/or between religions and beliefs.</li> </ul>	50
<b>AO2</b>	Analyse and evaluate aspects of religion and belief, including their significance and influence.	50
<b>Total</b>		<b>100%</b>

## Breakdown of Assessment Objectives

Paper	Assessment Objectives		Total for all Assessment Objectives
	AO1 %	AO2 %	
Paper 1: Area of Study 1 – Study of Religion	25	25	50%
Paper 2: Area of Study 2 – Study of Second Religion	12.5	12.5	25%
Paper 3: Area of Study 3 – Philosophy and Ethics*	12.5	12.5	25%
Paper 4: Area of Study 4 – Textual Study*	12.5	12.5	25%
<b>Total for GCSE</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>100%</b>

NB: Totals have been rounded either up or down.

\*Students are required to complete papers 1 and 2 and one paper from a choice of papers 3 and 4.

## 3 Administration and general information

### Entries

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Details of how to enter students for the examinations for this qualification can be found in our *UK Information Manual*. A copy is made available to all examinations officers and is available on our website: [qualifications.pearson.com](http://qualifications.pearson.com)

### Discount code and performance tables

Centres should be aware that students who enter for more than one GCSE, or other Level 2 qualifications with the same discount code, will have only the grade for their 'first entry' counted for the purpose of the school and college performance tables (please see *Appendix 4: Codes*). For further information about what constitutes 'first entry' and full details of how this policy is applied, please refer to the DfE website: [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-education](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-education)

Students should be advised that if they take two GCSEs with the same discount code, schools and colleges they wish to progress to are likely to take the view that this achievement is equivalent to only one GCSE. The same view may be taken if students take two GCSEs or other Level 2 qualifications that have different discount codes but have significant overlap of content. Students or their advisers who have any doubts about their subject combinations should check with the institution they wish to progress to before embarking on their programmes.

### Access arrangements, reasonable adjustments, special consideration and malpractice

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Equality and fairness are central to our work. Our equality policy requires all students to have equal opportunity to access our qualifications and assessments, and our qualifications to be awarded in a way that is fair to every student.

We are committed to making sure that:

- students with a protected characteristic (as defined by the Equality Act 2010) are not, when they are undertaking one of our qualifications, disadvantaged in comparison to students who do not share that characteristic
- all students achieve the recognition they deserve for undertaking a qualification and that this achievement can be compared fairly to the achievement of their peers.

### Language of assessment

Assessment of this qualification will be available in English. All student work must be in English.

## Access arrangements

Access arrangements are agreed before an assessment. They allow students with special educational needs, disabilities or temporary injuries to:

- access the assessment
- show what they know and can do without changing the demands of the assessment.

The intention behind an access arrangement is to meet the particular needs of an individual student with a disability, without affecting the integrity of the assessment. Access arrangements are the principal way in which awarding bodies comply with the duty under the Equality Act 2010 to make 'reasonable adjustments'.

Access arrangements should always be processed at the start of the course. Students will then know what is available and have the access arrangement(s) in place for assessment.

## Reasonable adjustments

The Equality Act 2010 requires an awarding organisation to make reasonable adjustments where a person with a disability would be at a substantial disadvantage in undertaking an assessment. The awarding organisation is required to take reasonable steps to overcome that disadvantage.

A reasonable adjustment for a particular person may be unique to that individual and therefore might not be in the list of available access arrangements.

Whether an adjustment will be considered reasonable will depend on a number of factors, which will include:

- the needs of the student with the disability
- the effectiveness of the adjustment
- the cost of the adjustment; and
- the likely impact of the adjustment on the student with the disability and other students.

An adjustment will not be approved if it involves unreasonable costs to the awarding organisation, timeframes or affects the security or integrity of the assessment. This is because the adjustment is not 'reasonable'.

## Special consideration

Special consideration is a post-examination adjustment to a student's mark or grade to reflect temporary injury, illness or other indisposition at the time of the examination/assessment, which has had, or is reasonably likely to have had, a material effect on a candidate's ability to take an assessment or demonstrate their level of attainment in an assessment.

## Further information

Please see our website for further information about how to apply for access arrangements and special consideration.

For further information about access arrangements, reasonable adjustments and special consideration, please refer to the JCQ website: [www.jcq.org.uk](http://www.jcq.org.uk).

## Malpractice

### Candidate malpractice

Candidate malpractice refers to any act by a candidate that compromises or seeks to compromise the process of assessment or which undermines the integrity of the qualifications or the validity of results/certificates.

Candidate malpractice in examinations **must** be reported to Pearson using a *JCQ Form M1* (available at [www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/malpractice](http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/malpractice)). The form can be emailed to [pqsmalpractice@pearson.com](mailto:pqsmalpractice@pearson.com) or posted to Investigations Team, Pearson, 190 High Holborn, London, WC1V 7BH. Please provide as much information and supporting documentation as possible. Note that the final decision regarding appropriate sanctions lies with Pearson.

Failure to report malpractice constitutes staff or centre malpractice.

### Staff/centre malpractice

Staff and centre malpractice includes both deliberate malpractice and maladministration of our qualifications. As with candidate malpractice, staff and centre malpractice is any act that compromises or seeks to compromise the process of assessment or which undermines the integrity of the qualifications or the validity of results/certificates.

All cases of suspected staff malpractice and maladministration **must** be reported immediately, before any investigation is undertaken by the centre, to Pearson on a *JCQ Form M2(a)* (available at [www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/malpractice](http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/malpractice)). The form, supporting documentation and as much information as possible can be emailed to [pqsmalpractice@pearson.com](mailto:pqsmalpractice@pearson.com) or posted to Investigations Team, Pearson, 190 High Holborn, London, WC1V 7BH. Note that the final decision regarding appropriate sanctions lies with Pearson.

Failure to report malpractice itself constitutes malpractice.

More-detailed guidance on malpractice can be found in the latest version of the document *JCQ General and Vocational Qualifications Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments*, available at [www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/malpractice](http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/malpractice).

## Awarding and reporting

This qualification will be graded, awarded and certificated to comply with the requirements of Ofqual's General Conditions of Recognition.

This GCSE qualification will be graded and certificated on a nine-grade scale from 9 to 1 using the total subject mark where 9 is the highest grade. Individual papers are not graded.

Students whose level of achievement is below the minimum judged by Pearson to be of sufficient standard to be recorded on a certificate will receive an unclassified U result.

The first certification opportunity for this qualification will be 2018.

## Student recruitment and progression

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Pearson follows the JCQ policy concerning recruitment to our qualifications in that:

- they must be available to anyone who is capable of reaching the required standard
- they must be free from barriers that restrict access and progression
- equal opportunities exist for all students.

## **Prior learning and other requirements**

There are no prior learning or other requirements for this qualification.

## **Progression**

Students can progress from this qualification to:

- AS and A Levels in Religious Studies and other subjects.
- vocational qualifications, such as BTEC Nationals.

## Appendices

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## Appendix 1: The context for the development of this qualification

All our qualifications are designed to meet our World Class Qualification Principles<sup>[1]</sup> and our ambition to put the student at the heart of everything we do.

We have developed and designed this qualification by:

- reviewing other curricula and qualifications to ensure that it is comparable with those taken in high-performing jurisdictions overseas
- consulting with key stakeholders on content and assessment, including learned bodies, subject associations, higher-education academics and teachers to ensure this qualification is suitable for a UK context
- reviewing the legacy qualification and building on its positive attributes.

This qualification has also been developed to meet criteria stipulated by Ofqual in their documents *GCSE (9 to 1) Qualification Level Conditions and Requirements* and *GCSE Subject Level Conditions and Requirements for Religious Studies* published in June 2014.

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<sup>[1]</sup> Pearson's World Class Qualification Principles ensure that our qualifications are:

- **demanding**, through internationally benchmarked standards, encouraging deep learning and measuring higher-order skills
- **rigorous**, through setting and maintaining standards over time, developing reliable and valid assessment tasks and processes, and generating confidence in end users of the knowledge, skills and competencies of certified students
- **inclusive**, through conceptualising learning as continuous, recognising that students develop at different rates and have different learning needs, and focusing on progression
- **empowering**, through promoting the development of transferable skills, see *Appendix 2*.

## From Pearson's Expert Panel for World Class Qualifications

“ The reform of the qualifications system in England is a profoundly important change to the education system. Teachers need to know that the new qualifications will assist them in helping their learners make progress in their lives.

When these changes were first proposed we were approached by Pearson to join an 'Expert Panel' that would advise them on the development of the new qualifications.

We were chosen, either because of our expertise in the UK education system, or because of our experience in reforming qualifications in other systems around the world as diverse as Singapore, Hong Kong, Australia and a number of countries across Europe.

We have guided Pearson through what we judge to be a rigorous qualification development process that has included:

- extensive international comparability of subject content against the highest-performing jurisdictions in the world
- benchmarking assessments against UK and overseas providers to ensure that they are at the right level of demand
- establishing External Subject Advisory Groups, drawing on independent subject-specific expertise to challenge and validate our qualifications
- subjecting the final qualifications to scrutiny against the DfE content and Ofqual accreditation criteria in advance of submission.

Importantly, we have worked to ensure that the content and learning is future oriented. The design has been guided by what is called an 'Efficacy Framework', meaning learner outcomes have been at the heart of this development throughout.

We understand that ultimately it is excellent teaching that is the key factor to a learner's success in education. As a result of our work as a panel we are confident that we have supported the development of qualifications that are outstanding for their coherence, thoroughness and attention to detail and can be regarded as representing world-class best practice. ”

### **Sir Michael Barber (Chair)**

Chief Education Advisor, Pearson plc

### **Professor Lee Sing Kong**

Director, National Institute of Education, Singapore

### **Bahram Bekhradnia**

President, Higher Education Policy Institute

### **Professor Jonathan Osborne**

Stanford University

### **Dame Sally Coates**

Principal, Burlington Danes Academy

### **Professor Dr Ursula Renold**

Federal Institute of Technology, Switzerland

### **Professor Robin Coningham**

Pro-Vice Chancellor, University of Durham

### **Professor Bob Schwartz**

Harvard Graduate School of Education

### **Dr Peter Hill**

Former Chief Executive ACARA

# Appendix 2: Transferable skills

## The need for transferable skills

In recent years, higher education institutions and employers have consistently flagged the need for students to develop a range of transferable skills to enable them to respond with confidence to the demands of undergraduate study and the world of work.

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) defines skills, or competencies, as 'the bundle of knowledge, attributes and capacities that can be learned and that enable individuals to successfully and consistently perform an activity or task and can be built upon and extended through learning.'<sup>[1]</sup>

To support the design of our qualifications, the Pearson Research Team selected and evaluated seven global 21st-century skills frameworks. Following on from this process, we identified the National Research Council's (NRC) framework as the most evidence-based and robust skills framework. We adapted the framework slightly to include the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) ICT Literacy and Collaborative Problem Solving (CPS) Skills.

The adapted National Research Council's framework of skills involves:<sup>[2]</sup>

## Cognitive skills

- **Non-routine problem solving** – expert thinking, metacognition, creativity.
- **Systems thinking** – decision making and reasoning.
- **Critical thinking** – definitions of critical thinking are broad and usually involve general cognitive skills such as analysing, synthesising and reasoning skills.
- **ICT literacy** – access, manage, integrate, evaluate, construct and communicate.<sup>[3]</sup>

## Interpersonal skills

- **Communication** – active listening, oral communication, written communication, assertive communication and non-verbal communication.
- **Relationship-building skills** – teamwork, trust, intercultural sensitivity, service orientation, self-presentation, social influence, conflict resolution and negotiation.
- **Collaborative problem solving** – establishing and maintaining shared understanding, taking appropriate action, establishing and maintaining team organisation.

## Intrapersonal skills

- **Adaptability** – ability and willingness to cope with the uncertain, handling work stress, adapting to different personalities, communication styles and cultures, and physical adaptability to various indoor and outdoor work environments.
- **Self-management and self-development** – ability to work remotely in virtual teams, work autonomously, be self-motivating and self-monitoring, willing and able to acquire new information and skills related to work.

Transferable skills enable young people to face the demands of further and higher education, as well as the demands of the workplace, and are important in the teaching and learning of this qualification. We will provide teaching and learning materials, developed with stakeholders, to support our qualifications.

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<sup>[1]</sup> OECD – *Better Skills, Better Jobs, Better Lives* (OECD Publishing, 2012)

<sup>[2]</sup> Koenig J A, National Research Council – *Assessing 21st Century Skills: Summary of a Workshop* (National Academies Press, 2011)

<sup>[3]</sup> PISA – *The PISA Framework for Assessment of ICT Literacy* (2011)

## Appendix 3: Command Words

The following command words will be used in the assessment of students across all papers.

Command Word	Meaning	Number of Marks	Assessment Objectives
State	Provide knowledge of religion and belief by recalling factual information	3	AO1 – 3 marks
Outline	Provide knowledge of religion and belief by recalling factual information	3	AO1 – 3 marks
Describe	Provide an understanding of religion and belief and contrast with that of another.	4	AO1 – 4 marks
Explain	There are two ways this command word will be used:  1. (4 marks) Provide understanding of an aspect of religion and belief and developing this beyond a habitual response.  2. (5 marks) Provide understanding of an aspect of religion and belief and developing this beyond a habitual response. In addition, students will be required to reference one source of wisdom or authority in support of their explanation.	4	AO1 – 4 marks  OR  AO1 – 5 marks
*Evaluate	Interpret a given stimulus in order to consider different viewpoints and perspectives relating to the importance or significance of a particular aspect of a religion or belief. Deconstruct the information or issue at hand, by constructing logical chains of reasoning and making connections between the elements in the question. Arguments must be justified by the appraisal of evidence leading to a supported conclusion.	12	AO2 – 12 marks

\*Additional instructions are provided to students for all 'Evaluate' questions. These instructions reflect the additional requirements of the question. Please refer to the Sample Assessment Materials for further details.

## Appendix 4: Codes

Type of code	Use of code	Code
Discount codes	<p>Every qualification eligible for performance tables is assigned a discount code indicating the subject area to which it belongs.</p> <p>Discount codes are published by DfE in the RAISEonline library (<a href="http://www.raiseonline.org">www.raiseonline.org</a>)</p>	DD1
Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF) codes	<p>Each qualification title is allocated an Ofqual Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF) code.</p> <p>The RQF code is known as a Qualification Number (QN). This is the code that features in the DfE Section 96 and on the LARA as being eligible for 16–18 and 19+ funding, and is to be used for all qualification funding purposes. The QN will appear on students' final certification documentation.</p>	<p>The QN for this qualification is:</p> <p>603/0079/6</p>
Subject codes	The subject code is used by centres to enter students for a qualification. Centres will need to use the entry codes only when claiming students' qualifications.	GCSE – 1RA0
Paper codes	These codes are provided for reference purposes. Students do not need to be entered for individual papers.	<p>Paper 1: 1RA0/1A–1C</p> <p>Paper 2: 1RA0/2A–2G</p> <p>Paper 3: 1RA0/3A–3C</p> <p>Paper 4: 1RA0/4A–4B</p>



## **Edexcel, BTEC and LCCI qualifications**

Edexcel, BTEC and LCCI qualifications are awarded by Pearson, the UK's largest awarding body offering academic and vocational qualifications that are globally recognised and benchmarked. For further information, please visit our qualification websites at [www.edexcel.com](http://www.edexcel.com), [www.btec.co.uk](http://www.btec.co.uk) or [www.lcci.org.uk](http://www.lcci.org.uk). Alternatively, you can get in touch with us using the details on our contact us page at [qualifications.pearson.com/contactus](http://qualifications.pearson.com/contactus)

## **About Pearson**

Pearson is the world's leading learning company, with 40,000 employees in more than 70 countries working to help people of all ages to make measurable progress in their lives through learning. We put the learner at the centre of everything we do, because wherever learning flourishes, so do people. Find out more about how we can help you and your learners at [qualifications.pearson.com](http://qualifications.pearson.com)

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