

GCE Religious Studies

OCR Advanced Subsidiary GCE in Religious Studies H172

OCR Advanced GCE in Religious Studies H572

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specification

Contents

1	About these Qualifications	4
1.1	The Two-Unit AS	6
1.2	The Four-Unit Advanced GCE	6
1.3	Qualification Titles and Levels	6
1.4	Aims	6
1.5	Prior Learning/Attainment	7
2	Summary of Content	8
2.1	AS Units	8
2.2	A2 Units	9
3	Unit Content	12
3.1	G571: AS <i>Philosophy of Religion</i>	12
3.2	G572: AS <i>Religious Ethics</i>	16
3.3	G573: AS <i>Jewish Scriptures</i>	19
3.4	G574: AS <i>New Testament</i>	22
3.5	G575: AS <i>Developments in Christian Theology</i>	24
3.6	G576: AS <i>Buddhism</i>	27
3.7	G577: AS <i>Hinduism</i>	30
3.8	G578: AS <i>Islam</i>	33
3.9	G579: AS <i>Judaism</i>	36
3.10	G581: A2 <i>Philosophy of Religion</i>	39
3.11	G582: A2 <i>Religious Ethics</i>	41
3.12	G583: A2 <i>Jewish Scriptures</i>	44
3.13	G584: A2 <i>New Testament</i>	46
3.14	G585: A2 <i>Developments in Christian Theology</i>	49
3.15	G586: A2 <i>Buddhism</i>	52
3.16	G587: A2 <i>Hinduism</i>	55
3.17	G588: A2 <i>Islam</i>	58
3.18	G589: A2 <i>Judaism</i>	60
4	Schemes of Assessment	63
4.1	AS GCE Scheme of Assessment	63
4.2	Advanced GCE Scheme of Assessment	65
4.3	Unit Order	66
4.4	Unit Options (at AS/A2)	66
4.5	Synoptic Assessment (A Level GCE)	67
4.6	Assessment Availability	69
4.7	Assessment Objectives	69
4.8	Quality of Written Communication	70

5	Technical Information	71
5.1	Making Unit Entries	71
5.2	Making Qualification Entries	71
5.3	Grading	71
5.4	Result Enquiries and Appeals	72
5.5	Shelf-Life of Units	73
5.6	Unit and Qualification Re-sits	73
5.7	Guided Learning Hours	73
5.8	Code of Practice/Subject Criteria/Common Criteria Requirements	73
5.9	Arrangements for Candidates with Particular Requirements	73
5.10	Prohibited Qualifications and Classification Code	74
5.11	Coursework Administration/Regulations	74
6	Other Specification Issues	75
6.1	Overlap with other Qualifications	75
6.2	Progression from these Qualifications	75
6.3	Key Skills Mapping	76
6.4	Spiritual, Moral, Ethical, Social, Legislative, Economic and Cultural Issues	77
6.5	Sustainable Development, Health and Safety Considerations and European Developments	77
6.6	Avoidance of Bias	77
6.7	Language	78
6.8	Disability Discrimination Act Information Relating to these Specifications	78
	Appendix A: Performance Descriptions	79

Vertical black lines indicate a significant change to the previous printed version. Changes can be found on pages 36, 37, 38, 60, 61 and 62.

1 About these Qualifications

This booklet contains OCR's Advanced Subsidiary GCE and Advanced GCE specifications in Religious Studies for teaching from September 2008.

This specification builds on the knowledge, understanding and skills that candidates may have developed through the study of GCSE Religious Studies. It does not, however, assume or require any previous study of the subject. It is designed to support a course of study which is suitable for candidates from any religious background (or none).

At AS candidates select **two** complementary areas of study from the wide range permitted in the specification. At A2 it is recommended that candidates continue to follow the same subject areas selected at AS. Candidates are free however to select different units at A2 than those studied at AS. In such cases it should be noted that candidates should familiarise themselves with the contents of the corresponding AS, as they may be disadvantaged by not studying the areas covered at AS. The specification, however, is designed to be flexible and does permit combinations of up to four different subject areas for the Advanced GCE qualification. As required by the Subject Criteria, the Advanced GCE specification includes synoptic assessment, in which candidates are asked to show their understanding of the connections between their chosen areas of study and other specified aspects of human experience. This is incorporated fully into the content of all A2 units.

The specification incorporates:

- continuity of content in the areas of the Philosophy of Religion, Religious Ethics, World Religions and Textual papers;
- flexibility in allowing combinations of up to four areas of study in the subject;
- maintenance of established methods of assessment: the need for candidates to answer questions at the full Advanced level with essays which they must plan and structure for themselves;
- the practice of positive awarding, by which examiners are not restricted by a prescriptive marking scheme but are able to reward candidates for any valid response to a reasonable interpretation of the question according to its quality as measured against standard band descriptions.

The specification is linked closely with the OCR GCSE Religious Studies specifications, in both content and in progression of demand.

In AS units, candidates are asked two-part structured questions which relate directly to single areas within the associated module. The questions help candidates to structure their answers to meet the Assessment Objectives.

In A2 units, candidates are expected to display knowledge, understanding and evaluative skills in respect to the specified topics. They are asked essay-style questions in which they may be expected to use material from more than one area within the unit, to draw comparisons and to assess the relative significance of different aspects of the unit. The questions direct candidates towards the Assessment Objectives, but candidates are expected to select their own material and structure it themselves into a coherent answer.

The AS GCE and Advanced GCE specifications require candidates to:

Study one or more of the following areas within Religious Studies:

- philosophy of religion;
- religious ethics;
- textual studies;
- theological studies;
- history of religious tradition(s).

Candidates should acquire knowledge and understanding of:

- the key concepts within the chosen area(s) of study (eg religious beliefs, teachings, doctrines, principles, ideas and theories) and how these are expressed in texts, writings and/or practices;
- the contribution of significant people, traditions or movements to the area(s) studied;
- religious language and terminology;
- major issues and questions arising from the chosen area(s) of study;
- the relationship between the chosen area(s) of study and other specified aspects of human experience.

Candidates should develop the following skills:

- recall, select and deploy specified knowledge;
- identify, investigate and analyse questions and issues arising from the course of study;
- use appropriate language and terminology in context;
- interpret and evaluate religious concepts, issues and ideas, the relevance of arguments and the views of scholars;
- communicate, using reasoned arguments substantiated by evidence;
- develop the skill of making connections between the area(s) of study chosen and other specified aspects of human experience.

In addition, the Advanced GCE specification requires candidates to:

- demonstrate a wider range and greater depth of knowledge and understanding, a greater maturity of thought and expression and more developed analytical skills.

1.1 The Two-Unit AS

The Advanced Subsidiary GCE is both a 'stand-alone' qualification and also the first half of the corresponding Advanced GCE. The AS GCE is assessed at a standard appropriate for candidates who have completed the first year of study (both in terms of teaching time and content) of the corresponding two-year Advanced GCE course, ie between GCSE and Advanced GCE.

From September 2008 the AS GCE is made up of **two** mandatory units chosen from **nine** options, which are externally assessed and form 50% of the corresponding four-unit Advanced GCE.

1.2 The Four-Unit Advanced GCE

From September 2008 the Advanced GCE is made up of **two** mandatory units at AS and **two** further units at A2, again chosen from nine options. These A2 units are also externally assessed.

1.3 Qualification Titles and Levels

These qualifications are shown on a certificate as:

- OCR Advanced Subsidiary GCE in Religious Studies.
- OCR Advanced GCE in Religious Studies.

Both qualifications are Level 3 in the National Qualification Framework (NQF).

1.4 Aims

The aims of these specifications are to encourage candidates to:

- develop their interest in and enthusiasm for a rigorous study of religion and relate it to the wider world;
- treat the subject as an academic discipline by developing knowledge, understanding and skills appropriate to the specialist study of religion;
- adopt an enquiring, critical and reflective approach to the study of religion;
- reflect on and develop their own values, opinions and attitudes in the light of their learning.

1.5 Prior Learning/Attainment

No prior knowledge of the subject is required. The specifications build on, but do not depend on, the knowledge, understanding and skills specified for GCSE Religious Studies. It is recommended that candidates have attained communication and literacy skills at a level equivalent to GCSE Grade C in English.

2 Summary of Content

2.1 AS Units

Unit G571: AS *Philosophy of Religion*

- Ancient Greek influences on philosophy of religion;
- Judaeo-Christian influences on philosophy of religion;
- Traditional arguments for the existence of God;
- Challenges to religious belief.

Unit G572: AS *Religious Ethics*

- Ethical theories;
- Applied ethics topics.

Unit G573: AS *Jewish Scriptures*

- Time line of scriptures;
- Form criticism;
- Topics.

Unit G574: AS *New Testament*

- First century Gospel setting;
- Themes and texts of Mark's passion narrative;
- The resurrection in the Synoptic Gospels.

G575: AS *Developments in Christian Theology*

- Foundations of Christian theology;
- Liberation theology.

Unit G576: AS *Buddhism*

- Origins of Buddhism;
 - Core concepts;
 - Key teachings, attitudes and practices.
-

Unit G577: AS *Hinduism*

- Origins of Hinduism;
- Core concepts;
- Key teachings, attitudes and practices.

Unit G578: AS *Islam*

- Background and origins of Islam;
- Beliefs;
- Practices.

G579: AS *Judaism*

- Sacred writings;
 - Beliefs;
 - Practices.
-

2.2 A2 Units

Unit G581: A2 *Philosophy of Religion*

- Religious language;
- Experience and religion;
- Nature of God;
- Life and death;
- Miracle.

Unit G582: A2 *Religious Ethics*

- Meta-ethics;
 - Free will and determinism;
 - Conscience;
 - Virtue ethics;
 - Applied ethics topics.
-

Unit G583: A2 *Jewish Scriptures*

- Reward and punishment;
 - Amos and Hosea;
 - Messianic hope and the ethical kingdom;
 - Ruth;
 - Wisdom literature and religious experience.
-

Unit G584: A2 *New Testament*

- Setting and methodology;
- Themes in the New Testament.

Unit G585: A2 *Developments in Christian Theology*

- Theology of religions;
- Feminist theology.

Unit G586: A2 *Buddhism*

- Key concepts;
- The importance of scriptures;
- Religious practice;
- Later Buddhist developments;
- Ethics.

Unit G587: A2 *Hinduism*

- Key concepts;
- The importance of scriptures;
- Religious practice;
- Later Hindu developments;
- Ethics.

Unit G588: A2 *Islam*

- Beliefs;
- Muslim life;
- Development of Islam.

Unit G589: A2 *Judaism*

- Beliefs;
- Developments in Judaism.

3 Unit Content

3.1 G571: AS *Philosophy of Religion*

Ancient Greek influences on philosophy of religion

Candidates are expected to have a basic knowledge of the thinking of Plato and Aristotle; they will not be expected to have first-hand knowledge of the texts. They should be able to highlight the strengths and weaknesses in the thinking of Plato and Aristotle in the areas specified below.

Plato: the Analogy of the Cave
The Republic VII. 514A–521B

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of what might be represented in the Analogy of the Cave by the following:

- the prisoners, the shadows, the cave itself, the outside world, the sun, the journey out of the cave and the return to the prisoners.

Candidates should be able to discuss critically the validity of the points being made in this analogy.

Plato: the concept of the Forms;
the Form of the Good

Candidates should understand what Plato meant by 'Forms' and be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- the relation between concepts and phenomena;
- the concept of 'Ideals';
- the relation between the Form of the Good and the other Forms.

Candidates should be able to discuss critically the validity of the above points.

Aristotle: ideas about cause and purpose in relation to God
Metaphysics Book 12

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- Aristotle's understanding of material, efficient, formal and final cause;
- Aristotle's concept of the Prime Mover.

Candidates should be able to discuss critically the validity of the above points.

Judaeo-Christian influences on philosophy of religion

Candidates should be familiar with Biblical texts to exemplify the topics below. There are no prescribed texts.

The concept of God as Creator

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- the way the Bible presents God as involved with his creation;
- the imagery of God as a craftsman;
- the concepts of omnipotence, omniscience and omnipresence;
- the concept of 'creatio ex nihilo'.

Candidates should be able to:

- compare this view with Aristotle's Prime Mover;
- discuss whether, if God created the universe, God is therefore responsible for everything that happens in it.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas in a critical manner.

The goodness of God

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- the ways in which the God of the Bible is seen as morally perfect and the source of human ethics;
- the concept of God as lawgiver and as judge.

Candidates should be able to:

- consider whether, in a Biblical context, God commands things because they are good or whether things are good because God commands them.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas in a critical manner.

Traditional arguments for the existence of God

The Ontological argument from Anselm and Descartes; challenges from Gaunilo and Kant

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- the Ontological argument from Anselm and Descartes;
- challenges to it from Gaunilo and Kant;
- Anselm's understanding of God – his understanding of the differences between contingent and necessary existence;
- Descartes' understanding of existence as a perfection which God cannot lack;
- Gaunilo's analogy of the island in *On Behalf of the Fool*.

Candidates should be able to discuss critically these views and their strengths and weaknesses.

<p>The Cosmological argument from Aquinas and Copleston; challenges from Hume and Russell</p>	<p>Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Cosmological argument from Aquinas and Copleston; • the arguments put forward by Copleston in the 1948 radio debate with Russell and Russell's counter arguments; • Hume's criticisms of the cosmological argument. <p>Candidates should be able to discuss critically these views and their strengths and weaknesses.</p>
<p>The Teleological argument from Aquinas and Paley; challenges from Hume, Mill and Darwin</p>	<p>Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the teleological argument from Aquinas and Paley; • the challenges to it from Hume, Mill and Darwinism. <p>Candidates should be able to discuss critically these views and their strengths and weaknesses.</p>
<p>The Moral argument from Kant: psychological challenges from Freud</p>	<p>Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the moral argument from Kant, including his concept of the 'summum bonum' and his inferences about innate moral awareness; • psychological challenges from Freud to the moral argument, his view that moral awareness comes from sources other than God. <p>Candidates should be able to discuss critically these views and their strengths and weaknesses.</p>
<p>Challenges to religious belief</p>	
<p>The problem of evil</p>	<p>Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the problem of evil: the classic theodicies of Augustine and Irenaeus; • the nature of the problem of evil and the possible differences between natural and moral evil; • how each theodicy understands the responsibility of God for the existence of evil in the world; • the origins of evil and the role of human free will. <p>Candidates should be able to discuss critically these approaches and their strengths and weaknesses.</p>

Religion and science

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- scientific and philosophical views on the creation of the universe; particularly the debate between Creationism and the Big Bang theory;
- Darwinism and various developments of evolutionary theory;
- 'Intelligent Design' and 'Irreducible Complexity';
- Religious responses to challenges posed by scientific views.

Candidates should be able to discuss critically these views and their strengths and weaknesses.

3.2 G572: AS Religious Ethics

Ethical theories

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- the concepts of absolutist and relativist morality;
- what it means to call an ethical theory absolutist and objective;
- what it means to call an ethical theory relativist and subjective;
- the terms deontological and teleological.

Candidates should be able to discuss critically these concepts and their strengths and weaknesses.

Ethical theories: Natural Law

Natural Law

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- the origins of Aquinas' Natural Law in Aristotle's idea of purpose;
- Aquinas' ideas of purpose and perfection;
- the use of reason to discover Natural Law;
- the primary and secondary precepts.

Candidates should be able to discuss critically these views and their strengths and weaknesses.

Ethical theories: Kantian ethics

Kantian ethics

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- the difference between the Categorical and the Hypothetical Imperatives;
- the various formulations of the Categorical Imperative;
- Kant's understanding of the universalisation of maxims;
- Kant's theory of duty;
- Kant's ideas of the moral law, good will and the summum bonum.

Candidates should be able to discuss critically these theories and their strengths and weaknesses.

Ethical theories: Utilitarianism

Utilitarianism

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- the classical forms of Utilitarianism from Bentham and Mill;
- the principle of Utility;
- the differences between the Utilitarianism of Bentham and of Mill;
- the Hedonic Calculus, higher and lower pleasures, quantity v. quality, and Act and Rule Utilitarianism;
- the Preference Utilitarianism of Peter Singer.

Candidates should be able to discuss critically these issues and their strengths and weaknesses.

Ethical theories: religious ethics

Religious ethics – a study of the ethics of the religion chosen by the candidate

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- the main ethical principles of the religion studied and how the followers of the religion make ethical decisions;
- the ways in which religion and morality may seem to be linked or be seen as separate from each other;
- how far morality may be seen as dependant on God (Divine Command theory);
- how far religious ethics may be seen as absolutist or relativist;
- how ethical theories may be considered religious.

Candidates should be able to discuss critically these issues and their strengths and weaknesses.

Applied Ethics

The ethical theories:

- Natural Law;
- Kantian Ethics;
- Utilitarianism;
- Religious Ethics.

as applied to the ethical topics below.

Abortion; the right to a child

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- the concept of the 'Sanctity of Life' and how it applies to abortion;
- the concept of personhood as applied to abortion;
- the right to life as applied to abortion and the rights of all those involved;
- the issues of infertility and the right to a child;
- the status of the embryo;
- whether a child is a gift or a right;
- the application and the different approaches of the ethical theories listed above to abortion and the right to a child.

Candidates should be able to discuss critically these issues and their strengths and weaknesses.

Euthanasia

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- the concept of the 'Sanctity of Life' and how it applies to euthanasia;
- the concept of the 'Quality of Life' and how it applies to euthanasia;
- the right to life as applied to euthanasia;
- the application and the different approaches of the ethical theories listed above to euthanasia.

Candidates should be able to discuss critically these issues and their strengths and weaknesses.

Genetic engineering

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- the ethical questions raised by the different types of genetic engineering to humans, animals and plants; human embryo research;
- the application and the different approaches of the ethical theories listed above to genetic engineering.

Candidates should be able to discuss critically these issues and their strengths and weaknesses.

War and peace

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- the principles of 'Just War' and its application;
- the theories of ethical and religious pacifism;
- the application and the different approaches of the ethical theories listed above to war and peace.

Candidates should be able to discuss critically these issues and their strengths and weaknesses.

3.3 G573: AS Jewish Scriptures

Candidates should be able to demonstrate thorough knowledge of the set texts and to be able to use them (in paraphrase) in their responses to examination questions.

Background to Jewish Scriptures

The texts listed are to be studied with reference to their date, authorship, purpose and historicity.

In discussing the texts candidates should be able to refer to their structure and theological importance as well as simply demonstrating knowledge of their content.

Candidates should be able to comment in detail on the texts in relation to the concepts listed and consider the texts from a traditional Jewish or a critical approach.

A time line of scriptures:

placing Jewish scriptures in their historical context and considering the probable dates of principal events and people, ie the life of Abraham, life of Moses, the Exodus, life of David, the Exile, the life of Isaiah, the Maccabean revolt, the destruction of the Temple

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- the different opinions about the dates of the Jewish scriptures and also, therefore, of the possible dates of the events contained in them.

Candidates should be able to consider two or three of the possible forms of evidence and their possible value and reliability.

Candidates may use either Gregorian or Jewish dating and may employ historical, literary or archaeological evidence.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

Form criticism

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- the types of literature found in Jewish Scriptures: myth, history, prophecy, poetry, law, wisdom (hohma), liturgy;
- the origins and purpose of the different types of literature found in Jewish Scriptures;
- the main types of literature found in the Tenakh.

Candidates should be aware of examples of each of these. (Their origins can be viewed either from a traditional Jewish standpoint or from a more modern critical one.)

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

Themes from the Jewish Scriptures: Covenant

Covenant

Genesis 1:26–30, (Adam) 8:20–9:29, (Noah) 12, 15, 17 (Abraham); Exodus 19–24 (Moses); 2 Samuel 7 (David); Jeremiah 31 (the new covenant)

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- the idea of covenant as a particularly Jewish concept and of the way in which this idea develops through the listed texts, moving from a largely single-sided agreement on the part of G-d to a two-way agreement between G-d and humanity;
- the development of covenantal ideas: the differences between each of the eight covenants listed and the way in which they show the developing relationship between G-d and the Jews and, in particular, the idea of the Promised Land.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

Themes from the Jewish Scriptures: G-d and suffering

G-d and suffering

Job 1–14; 19; 38 & 42

Jonah

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- the unique nature of the books of Jonah and Job;
- the particular teachings about the nature of G-d which are found within them;
- the suffering of the Jews as demonstrated in these texts, in relation to the Jewish understanding of the nature of G-d.

Job: candidates should have good textual knowledge and understanding of:

- the Prologue (chapter 1);
- the impact on Job of G-d speaking from the whirlwind (chapter 38) which led to his acceptance of G-d's will and;
- the Epilogue (chapter 42);
- the first series of arguments with his 'comforters' (chapters 2 – 14) and his suffering (chapter 19).

Jonah: candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the following themes:

- obedience;
- the inability to hide from G-d or resist G-d's wishes;
- the relationship with non-Jews.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

Themes from the Jewish Scriptures: the Prophet Elijah

The Prophet Elijah:
1 Kings 18, 19, 21

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- the role of the Prophet as exemplified by Elijah;
- the Elijah stories connected with Mount Carmel, Mount Horeb and Naboth's vineyard.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

Scripture references in Unit G573 are taken from *Tanach Mesorah Publications* and *Holy Bible NRSV*.

Where quotes from texts appear in examination papers, they will be taken from – *Tanach Mesorah Publications* (1996) 0899062695.

3.4 G574: AS *New Testament*

Candidates should be able to demonstrate thorough knowledge of the set texts and to be able to use them (in paraphrase) in their responses to examination questions.

First Century Gospel Setting

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- common Judaism: monotheism, law and covenant, Jerusalem temple, sacrifice and synagogue;
- the influence and distinctive ideas of the Pharisees, Sadducees, Zealots and Essenes;
- Roman occupation of first-century Palestine and its impact on Jewish life and religion;
- source criticism of the Gospels; its aims; debates about Q; the Synoptic problem: one source solution; two source solution and four source solution; Markan priority.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

Mark's Gospel

Mark's Gospel

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the following issues relating to Mark's Gospel:

- historical accuracy;
- intended readership;
- purpose;
- date;
- setting;
- authorship.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

Themes and Texts of Mark's Passion Narrative

The Passion story, trial and death of Jesus
Mark 11, 14:1–15:41

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- the significance of the triumphal entry into Jerusalem and temple cleansing for the gospel writer and Jesus;
- the meaning of the Last Supper and its possible links to Passover: comparison with Luke 22:7–23 and 1 Corinthians 11:17–26;
- presentation and historical accuracy of women, Judas, Peter, Pilate;
- Jesus' death as sacrifice and atonement; idea of ransom; idea of covenant and new covenant;
- the role of Romans and Jews;
- use of Old Testament;
- general questions of historicity versus theology;
- presentation of Jesus as Son of God, Son of Man, righteous martyr.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

Themes and Texts from the Resurrection Narrative in the Synoptic Gospels

The resurrection narrative in the Synoptic Gospels
Matthew 27:57–28:20; Luke 23:50–24:53, Mark 15:42–16:20

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- resurrection narrative: comparison between the three gospels; debates about historical reliability, understanding of the meaning of the resurrection by each gospel writer;
- the meaning of the resurrection according to each gospel writer; long and short ending of Mark (Mark 16:1–8; 16:1–9; 16:9–20); debates about the lost ending of Mark.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

Where quotes from texts appear in examination papers, they will be taken from Holy Bible NRSV (Anglicized edition) Oxford University Press (1995) 0-19-107000-9.

3.5 G575: AS *Developments in Christian Theology*

Part 1: Foundations of Christian Theology

A study of the foundations of Christian theology through particular theologians.

God and creation

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of Aquinas' teachings on the following:

- God's relationship to matter;
- God's relationship to angels and to humans.

Candidates should be able to discuss critically these issues and their strengths and weaknesses.

Knowledge of God

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of Calvin's teachings on the following:

- natural and revealed knowledge;
- God as creator, God as redeemer.

Candidates should be able to discuss critically these issues and their strengths and weaknesses.

Human nature

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of Augustine's teachings on the following:

- the relationship of men and women before and after the Fall;
- the soul (deliberative and obedient) and its relationship to the body;
- sin (concupiscence).

Candidates should be able to discuss critically these issues and their strengths and weaknesses.

The person of Christ

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of James Cone's teachings on the following:

- the Jesus of history, the Christ of faith;
- Jesus as saviour.

Candidates should be able to discuss critically these issues and their strengths and weaknesses.

Interpretation of the Bible

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- hermeneutics as the art of understanding: exegesis and eisegesis;
- inspiration and authority of the Bible.

Candidates should be able to discuss critically these issues and their strengths and weaknesses.

A study of the main ideas to have evolved from liberation theology in Latin America.

Preferential option for the poor

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- justice and judgement;
- the poor as the underside of history;
- reversal and development.

Candidates should be able to discuss critically these issues and their strengths and weaknesses.

Praxis

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- first and second step praxis;
- three mediations: socio-analytic; hermeneutical, practical;
- orthodoxy and orthopraxis.

Candidates should be able to discuss critically these issues and their strengths and weaknesses.

Hermeneutics

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- process, purpose and function of liberation hermeneutics;
- hermeneutical circle; hermeneutic of suspicion;
- interpretation of the Bible and key texts used by liberation theologians (in particular the Exodus);
- conscientisation.

Candidates should be able to discuss critically these issues and their strengths and weaknesses.

Jesus the Liberator

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- types of sin: structural, social, personal;
- Jesus the Liberator.

Candidates should be able to discuss critically these issues and their strengths and weaknesses.

Base communities

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- organisation, purpose and theology of base communities;
- relationship of base communities to the Church.

Candidates should be able to discuss critically these issues and their strengths and weaknesses.

Environment and situation	<p>Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • types of poverty and oppression; • land and wealth; • alienation and exploitation. <p>Candidates should be able to discuss critically these issues and their strengths and weaknesses.</p>
Influence of Marxism	<p>Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • main aims of Marx • Marx's analysis and teaching on exploitation, alienation and false consciousness; • explicit and implicit influence of Marx on liberation theologians. <p>Candidates should be able to discuss critically these issues and their strengths and weaknesses.</p>
Impact and influence of liberation theology	<p>Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • other theologies of liberation, eg gay and colour; • responses from Roman Catholic and Protestant Churches. <p>Candidates should be able to discuss critically these issues and their strengths and weaknesses.</p>

3.6 G576: AS Buddhism

Origins of Buddhism

The historical, sociological, economic and religious background in India at the time of the Buddha

Candidates should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the influence of the following on the Buddha:

- Hindu beliefs and practices;
- contemporary religious ferment;
- challenges to the traditional caste system;
- conflict between the Kshatriya and the Brahmin castes.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

Traditional accounts of the life of the Buddha

Candidates should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the significance of the following:

- the four signs;
- ascetic practices;
- enlightenment;
- teaching;
- the nature of the Buddha's death.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

Origins of the sangha

Candidates should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the following:

- development of vinaya rules;
- lifestyle of bhikkhus and bhikkhunis.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

Spread of Buddhism

The early spread of Buddhism

Candidates should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the following:

- the role of Asoka in spreading Buddhism, fighting corruption in the sangha and formalising the scriptures.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

Core Concepts

kamma

Candidates should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the following:

- the concept of kamma;
- karmic formations and karmic consequences.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

nibbana	<p>Candidates should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the concept of nibbana; • the differences between nibbana and parinibbana. <p>Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.</p>
samsara and rebirth	<p>Candidates should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the concepts of samsara and rebirth; • the cycle of dependent origination; • the use of the Tibetan wheel of life to illustrate the cycle of dependent origination; • the role of kamma; • the five khandas. <p>Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.</p>
The three poisons/three fires – greed, hatred and delusion	<p>Candidates should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the three poisons/three fires; • the role of the three poisons/three fires in keeping the wheel of samsara in motion. <p>Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.</p>
The three refuges – Buddha, dhamma, sangha	<p>Candidates should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the three refuges and their relative importance; • the importance of the three refuges as a statement of faith, their role as a support for Buddhists, their mutual interdependence, how they might be applied in practice. <p>Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.</p>
The three marks of existence – anicca, anatta, dukkha	<p>Candidates should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the concepts of anicca, anatta and dukkha; • the relationship between the three marks of existence and their relative importance; • whether belief in the three marks of existence is helpful or consistent with human experience. <p>Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.</p>

Key Teachings, Attitudes and Practices

The Four Noble Truths – dukkha, samudaya, nirodha, magga (the eightfold path)

Candidates should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the following:

- the significance of the teaching delivered in the Deer Park;
- the concepts of and relative importance of the Four Noble Truths;
- the division of the eightfold path into prajna (wisdom), sila (morality) and samadhi (concentration);
- the use of the Four Noble Truths.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

The fourfold sangha

Candidates should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the following:

- the fourfold sangha;
- the vinaya rules;
- the relative status of bhikkhus and bhikkhunis;
- the variations between forest and village dwelling bhikkhus;
- the relationship between the monastic sangha and the laity;
- the difficulties in following vinaya rules;
- the ethical principles and practices for monks and lay people.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

The arhat and bodhisattva paths

Candidates should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the following:

- the relative importance of the arhat and bodhisattva paths in Theravada and Mahayana Buddhism;
- key aspects of each path;
- the stages and perfections of the bodhisattva path.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

Attitudes to the Buddha

Candidates should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the following:

- differing attitudes to the Buddha in Theravada and Mahayana Buddhism;
- the trikaya doctrine;
- the status of the Buddha.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

Where quotes from texts appear in examination papers, they will be taken from *Buddhist Scriptures*, trans. E. Conze, Penguin, (1969), 0140440887.

3.7 G577: AS Hinduism

Origins of Hinduism

The religious aspects of the Indus Valley civilisation

Candidates should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the following:

- the possible links between religious aspects of the Indus Valley civilisation and later Hinduism, such as the 'proto-Siva' seal, goddess images and ritual bathing.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

The Aryans

Candidates should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the following:

- migration versus cultural transformation theories;
- the possible influence of the Aryans on the development of the class system.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

Vedic ritual and theology

Candidates should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the following:

- the status and structure of the Vedas;
- the importance of ritual;
- the status of the deities.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

Core Concepts

monism, monotheism, polytheism

Candidates should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the meaning of these terms and be able to discuss them in a critical manner. Candidates should be able to evaluate which term best fits the nature of deity in the Vedas.

karma

Candidates should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the following:

- the concept of karma;
- karmic formulations and karmic consequences.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

moksha

Candidates should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the following:

- concept of moksha;
- the nature of liberation.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

samsara and rebirth	<p>Candidates should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • concepts of samsara and rebirth; • the role of karma. <p>Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.</p>
maya	<p>Candidates should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the concept of maya; • the nature of reality. <p>Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.</p>
dharma	<p>Candidates should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the concept of dharma; • the importance of duty within Hinduism. <p>Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.</p>
Brahman	<p>Candidates should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the nature of Brahman, saguna Brahman and nirguna Brahman. <p>Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.</p>
atman	<p>Candidates should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the nature of atman and relationship to Brahman. <p>Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.</p>
jnana	<p>Candidates should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the concept of and importance of jnana. <p>Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.</p>
bhakti	<p>Candidates should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the importance of bhakti yoga. <p>Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.</p>

Key Teachings, Attitudes and Practices

Worship	<p>Candidates should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the practice of puja; • the importance of the murti; • the relationship between puja and the bhakti path. <p>Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.</p>
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varnashramadharma	<p>Candidates should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the concept of varnashramadharma; • the mythical origins of the system in the <i>Purusha Sukta</i>. <p>Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.</p>
Relationship between atman and Brahman	<p>Candidates should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • different interpretations of the relationship between atman and Brahman. <p>Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.</p>
Deities in Hinduism	
The deities	<p>Candidates should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • differing attitudes towards the deities; • status and relationship of male and female power demonstrated by the deities; • the importance of shakti; • key features and importance of the following deities – the trimurti Brahma, Vishnu, Siva, Ganesha, Kali, Saraswati, Lakshmi; • the role and importance of avatars, especially Krishna and Rama. <p>Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.</p>

Where quotes from texts appear in examination papers, they will be taken from – Zaehner, R. C. (tr & ed) *Hindu Scriptures* Everyman's Library (1992) 1-85715-064-3.

3.8 G578: AS Islam

Background and Origins

Pre-Islamic Arabia: historical, geographical and religious context with a consideration of Jewish, Christian, Zoroastrian and Pagan influences

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- the historical, geographical and religious background, including the particular importance of Makkah as the centre of a number of trading routes;
- how the various influences interacted;
- the environment in which Muhammad ﷺ was born and Islam was introduced.

The Prophet Muhammad

Muhammad ﷺ as the final messenger of Allah: the Seal of the Prophets

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- the significance, importance and uniqueness of Muhammad ﷺ for Muslims;
- Muhammad's ﷺ upbringing, his life in Makkah and the influences he was under;
- the religious significance of the Night Journey;
- the reasons for and importance of Muhammad's ﷺ migration to al-Madinah;
- the significance and relative success of Muhammad's ﷺ dual role as both Prophet and Statesman in al-Madinah;
- the battles and the return to Makkah: Battle of Badr, Battle of Uhud, Battle of al-Khandaq;
- the implications of the social and political environment within which Muhammad ﷺ lived and worked.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

Beliefs

Beliefs about Allah and human relationships

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the following beliefs about Allah:

- Allah as creator, judge and guide
- Tawhid and Shirk;
- the Kalam argument as proof of Allah's existence;
- Islamic beliefs about human rights and responsibilities;
- Islamic beliefs about human responsibility to Allah.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

The Qur'an

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- the particular manner in which the Qur'an was revealed;
- the particular and unique nature of the Qur'an;
- the process of the revelation, with a consideration of the differences in the Surahs revealed at Makkah and those at al-Madinah;
- the manner in which the Qur'an was ultimately compiled by Muhammad's ﷺ followers and its resulting structure and the infallible status accorded to the text;
- the role it continues to play in the life of Muslims.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

Surahs 1 and 96

Surahs 1 and 96 need to be studied in detail with an in-depth consideration of the issues raised within them. In particular candidates need to be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- what Surah 1 teaches about Allah and the relationship between Allah and his people;
- what Surah 96 teaches in relation to the revelation and knowledge of Allah.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

The Five Pillars: shahadah, salah, zakah, sawm, hajj and Muslim life

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- the references to the Five Pillars in the Qur'an and Hadith;
- their practical and theological nature, their inter-relationship;
- the effect which their observance has on Muslim life and the ummah.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

Practices

Worship and the mosque: in Muslim and non-Muslim countries; the Imam and Salat-ul-Jumu'ah (Friday prayers)

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- the function of a mosque;
- the particular role of the Imam in Muslim life as a teacher and leader rather than a priest and of the form of worship practised at Salat-ul-Jumu'ah prayers;
- the architecture and design of the mosque and in particular the practical and theological reasons for these;
- the symbolic nature of aspects of the building such as the dome, the prayer hall and the washing facilities, the importance of an area for study and the practical purpose of items such as the minarets;
- the reason for the absence of figurative portrayal and also on the use of calligraphy; teaching on Shirk.

In approaching these issues candidates need to have considered their implications, significance and differences in Muslim and non-Muslim countries.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

Where quotes from texts appear in examination papers, they will be taken from – Abdullah, Yusuf Ali, *The Meaning of the Holy Qur'an* Amanah Publications (1995) (seventh edition) 0-915957-55-8.

3.9 G579: AS Judaism

Importance of Scripture

The importance of Tenakh and Talmud

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- Tenakh and Talmud as Written and Oral Law, respectively, the differences between them.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

The origins, content and use of Tenakh

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- the origins of the Tenakh either in traditional belief or through modern criticism;
- the principal contents of the Tenakh: Torah, Nevi'im, Ketuvim; the way in which these are used in both daily life and worship;
- the purpose of Torah within Judaism as divine revelation to guide the people.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

The origins, content, use and purpose of Talmud

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- the origins of both the Jerusalem and the Babylon Talmuds including: the transmission of the Oral Law from the time of the Sinai, the Mishnah of Rabbi Judah Hanasi and the Jerusalem and Babylon versions of the Gemara;
- the principal differences between the two Talmuds;
- how the Jerusalem and the Babylon Talmuds came into existence and were brought together; the work of the amoraim in making the Mishnah and the basic text of legal exegesis;
- the ways in which the Talmud has continued to develop.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

The importance of the Oral and Written Torah for Jewish belief and life today

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- the continuing importance of both Oral and Written Torah;
- the way in which these are used in and influence Jewish life and worship.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

Beliefs

Ethical monotheism

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- the development in Ancient Israel of the exclusive worship of L-rd G-d;
- the nature of ethical monotheism as practical rather than theoretical belief.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

The nature of a monotheistic G-d

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- G-d as supranatural, personal, good and holy;
- the difference between the ethical monotheism of Judaism and pagan monotheism.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

The particular role of the Jews as a 'chosen people'

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- the historical emergence of the 'chosen people' concept;
- the role of the Jews as a 'chosen people' and its relationship to the concept of a royal priesthood.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

The role of ethical monotheism for Jewish life today

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- the continuing importance of ethical monotheism for Jewish life today, by observance both of the Ten Commandments and of the 613 mitzvot.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

Practices

halakhah and mitzvot

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- the purpose of the 613 mitzvot and the ways in which these generally affect Jewish life;
- the principles of Jewish life, worship and practice, observance and kashrut;
- the basis of Jewish life and worship as devotion to G-d and the way in which this is carried out;
- kashrut in relation to food, clothes, objects and money;
- Orthodox and Progressive approaches to halakhah's edicts.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

Worship

Worship in the home and synagogue

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- the forms of worship in the home, private as well as worship as a family, and the purpose and practice of prayer both at set times and spontaneous prayer;
- daily prayer and worship, the Sabbath; the Ten Days of Repentance beginning with Rosh Hashanah and ending with Yom Kippur; the Pilgrim Festivals of Pesach, Shavuot and Sukkot; the minor festivals of Hanukah, Purim and Tu B'Shevat; the fast of Tishah B'av;
- the origins, practice and observance of the listed festivals; the relative importance of these festivals.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

The roles of men and women; including the laws of purity

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- the roles of men and women within the Jewish family and in worship;
- a comparison of these roles and their origins;
- the question of to what degree they give equality to the persons concerned;
- the laws of niddah (purity) and the use of the mikveh together with its importance in the community.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

Where quotes from texts appear in examination papers, they will be taken from – Tanach *Mesorah Publications* (1996) 0899062695, The Complete Art Scroll Siddur Mesorah Publications (1984) 0-89-906655-0.

3.10 G581: A2 *Philosophy of Religion*

Religious Language

Religious language

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- religious language – uses and purpose;
- the via negativa (Apophatic way);
- the verification and falsification principles;
- different views on the meaningfulness of religious language;
- the uses of symbol, analogy and myth to express human understanding of God;
- the views of the Vienna Circle, A. J. Ayer, Anthony Flew, Ludwig Wittgenstein and Paul Tillich on religious language.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically and their strengths and weaknesses.

Religious Experience

Experience and religion

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the following in relation to God and religious belief:

- arguments from religious experience from William James;
- the aims and main conclusions drawn by William James in *The Varieties of Religious Experience*;
- the following different forms of religious experience: visions, voices, 'numinous' experience, conversion experience, corporate religious experience;
- the concept of revelation through sacred writings.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically and their strengths and weaknesses.

Miracle - a study of how God might interact with humanity, by looking at the concept of miracle	<p>Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • different definitions of miracle, including an understanding of Hume; • the biblical concept of miracle and the issues this raises about God's activity in the world; • the concept of miracle, and criticisms made by Hume and Wiles; • the implications of the concept of miracle for the problem of evil. <p>Candidates should be able to discuss whether modern people can be expected to believe in miracles, and whether miracles suggest an arbitrary or partisan God. Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically and their strengths and weaknesses.</p>
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Attributes

Nature of God	<p>Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God as eternal, omniscient, omnipotent and omni-benevolent – and the philosophical problems arising from these concepts; • the views of Boethius in his discussion of eternity and God's foreknowledge in Book 5 of <i>The Consolations of Philosophy</i>; • the question as to whether or not a good God should reward and punish. <p>Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically and their strengths and weaknesses.</p>
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Life and Death; The Soul

Life and death	<p>Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • distinctions between body and soul, as expressed in the thinking of Plato, Aristotle, John Hick and Richard Dawkins; • other concepts of the body/soul distinction; • different views of life after death: resurrection and reincarnation; • questions surrounding the nature of disembodied existence; • the relationship between the afterlife and the problem of evil. <p>Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically and their strengths and weaknesses.</p>
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3.11 G582: A2 *Religious Ethics*

Ethical Topics and Theories: Meta-ethics

Meta-ethics

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- the use of ethical language – the ways in which different scholars understand how words like ‘good’, ‘bad’, ‘right’, ‘wrong’ are used when ethical statements are made;
- how meta-ethics differs from normative ethics;
- the different approaches: cognitive and non-cognitive; ethical naturalism, intuitionism; emotivism and prescriptivism and how these apply to ethical statements.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically and their strengths and weaknesses.

Ethical Topics and Theories: Free Will and Determinism

Free will and determinism

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- hard determinism, soft determinism and libertarianism;
- the views of Darrow, Honderich, Hume and Locke;
- theological determinism (predestination) and religious ideas of free will;
- the influences of genetics, psychology, environment or social conditioning on moral choices;
- the implications of these views for moral responsibility;
- the link between free will, determinism and moral responsibility.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically and their strengths and weaknesses.

Ethical Topics and Theories: Nature and Role of the Conscience

The nature and role of the conscience

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- the different views of the conscience as God-given, innate or the voice of reason or instilled by society, parents, authority figures;
- whether conscience is a reliable guide to ethical decision-making;
- the views of Augustine, Aquinas, Butler, Newman, Freud, Fromm, Piaget.

Candidates should be able to discuss these views critically and their strengths and weaknesses.

Ethical Topics and Theories: Virtue Ethics

Virtue Ethics

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- the principles of Virtue Ethics from Aristotle;
- the 'agent-centred' nature of Virtue Ethics;
- the concepts of eudaimonia and the Golden Mean;
- the importance of practising the virtues and the example of virtuous people;
- more modern approaches to Virtue Ethics.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically and their strengths and weaknesses.

Applied Ethics

The ethical theories:

- Natural Law;
- Kantian Ethics;
- Utilitarianism;
- Religious Ethics;
- Virtue Ethics;

as applied to all the applied ethics topics listed below.

Environmental and business ethics

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- the issue of how humans should relate to the environment, its resources and species;
- secular approaches – the Gaia hypothesis;
- issues in business ethics: the relationship between business and consumers; the relationship between employers and employees;
- the relationship between business and the environment; business and globalisation;
- the application and the different approaches of the ethical theories listed above to environmental and business ethics.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

Sexual ethics

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- the issues surrounding sexual ethics – premarital and extramarital sex, contraception, homosexuality;
- the application and the different approaches of the ethical theories listed above to sexual ethics.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

3.12 G583: A2 Jewish Scriptures

Candidates should be able to demonstrate thorough knowledge of the set texts and to be able to use them (in paraphrase) in their responses to examination questions.

Themes in Jewish Scriptures: Reward and Punishment

Reward and punishment:

Isaiah 53; Jeremiah 7; Ezekiel 18; Daniel 12; Psalm 1; 2 Maccabees 7

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- the concept of reward and punishment as understood by the writers of the set texts;
- an overview of the concepts of reward and punishment with an indication of their development.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

Themes in Jewish Scriptures: Amos and Hosea

Amos and a comparison with Hosea 1–3, 14

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- the book of Amos, with particular reference to social concerns; a comparison with Hosea 1–3, 14.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

Themes in Jewish Scriptures: Messianic Hope

Messianic hope and the ethical kingdom, with particular reference to *Isaiah 40–43; Micah*

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- the concept of Messianic hope within the set texts and also of the ethical kingdom found in Micah.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

Themes in Jewish Scriptures: Ruth

Ruth

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- Ruth as a part of the Ketuvim (Writings) in the Jewish Scriptures;
- the devotion of Ruth to Naomi and the idea that this was possibly written to correct the particularism of Judaism after the Exile and the rebuilding of the Temple;
- the importance of Ruth being shown as the great-grandmother of David.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

Themes in Jewish Scriptures: Wisdom Literature and Religious Experience

Wisdom Literature and Religious Experience

1 Kings 5:9 – 14 (4:29 – 34 NRSV) *Proverbs* 1 – 3, 8 & 9, *Song of Songs* 1 – 3, *Ecclesiastes* 1 – 3
Ezekiel 1:1 – 28a

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- Solomon's wisdom as demonstrated in *1 Kings* 5 (4 NRSV);
- the concept of Wisdom in *Proverbs* including the presentation of Wisdom as a woman, the idea that the beginning of wisdom is fear of Hashem and the beginning of understanding is knowledge of the sacred; Wisdom as related not only to mystical aspects of religion but also social ethics;
- the imagery of the *Song of Songs*;
- the wonders and laws of the natural world, and belief in the creator G-d in *Ecclesiastes*;
- the vision of *Ezekiel* and the omnipresence of G-d.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

Scripture references in Unit G583 are taken from *Tanach Mesorah Publications* and *Holy Bible NRSV*.

Where quotes from texts appear in examination papers, they will be taken from – *Tanach Mesorah Publications* (1996) 0899062695.

3.13 G584: A2 *New Testament*

Candidates should be able to demonstrate thorough knowledge of the set texts and to be able to use them (in paraphrase) in their responses to examination questions.

New Testament background

Setting and methodology

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- Matthew: authorship and purpose; in particular Matthew's presentation of the Pharisees;
- Mark: purpose; in particular the influence on Mark's gospel of Nero's persecution;
- Luke: authorship and purpose; in particular Luke's interest in 'salvation history' and the gentiles.

Candidates should show knowledge and understanding of the first-century Jewish understanding of the following:

- apocalyptic and eschatology;
- parables;
- miracles;
- the Messiah.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

Kingdom of God

Kingdom of God

Matthew 24, Mark 13, Luke 21:5–38, Matthew 6:9–13, Luke 11:20, Matthew 12:28, Mark 9:1, Matthew 16:28, Luke 9:27, Luke 17:20

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- modern scholarly interpretations of the coming of the Kingdom: future, realised, inaugurated;
- the Kingdom of God in the Synoptic Gospels: Jesus' expectation of the coming of the Kingdom; Jesus' views of the Kingdom in relationship with contemporary Judaism; Jesus' teaching on who now belongs to the people of God;
- eschatological outlook of each of the Synoptic Gospels with comparison of the Apocalyptic discourses (Matthew 24, Mark 13, Luke 21:5–end);
- the problem of the delay of the Parousia.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

Parables

Parables

Mark 4, 12:1–12, Luke 15–16, Matthew 25

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- types of parable and their purpose: as saying, riddle, aphorism, rule and allegory;
- the message and purpose of Jesus' parables;
- parables and the nature of the Kingdom of God;
- parables and judgement and forgiveness;
- parables and inclusion/exclusion;
- parables about wealth and responsibility;
- parables about politics and nature of religion;
- parables about the lost and sinners;
- historicity: parables as product of Jesus and/or early church;
- debates about parables as allegory.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

Miracles

Miracles

Mark 1:22–2:12, 3:21–30, 4:33–5:43, 6:32–52, 7:24–8:10, 8:22–26

Matthew 8:5–13,

Luke 7:1–10

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- Jewish concept of illness and the links to sin and demon possession;
- the purpose of Jesus' miracles: as indications of nature of the Kingdom of God; as forms of teaching; as revelation of God in nature; as power and presence of God in healings and exorcisms;
- theological significance of miracles for the Synoptic Gospel writers: failure of the disciples to understand miracles.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

Law and Ethics

Law and ethics

Matthew 5–7, Mark 7 and 10:1–31

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- the main features of Jesus' ethical teachings – attitude to Gentiles, to sinners and outcasts, to Jewish authority;
- Jesus' teaching on perfection and holiness, attitude to others and on love;
- the meaning of righteousness;
- reward and punishment;
- the place of forgiveness;
- the presentation of Jesus as teacher by Matthew, Mark and Luke;
- Jesus' challenge to the Jewish Law: ritual laws of cleansing, food and fasting, Sabbath regulations and teaching on marriage, divorce and wealth.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

The Person of Jesus

Who was Jesus?

Mark 8:27–38, Matthew 10:23, Mark 11

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- Jesus as Messiah – did Jesus think he was the Messiah?
- Jesus as Son of Man: meaning of Son of Man; did Jesus think he was the Son of Man?
- Jesus as a restoration prophet;
- the historical Jesus: what can be known of the historical Jesus?, the criteria for establishing historical Jesus traditions.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

Where quotes from texts appear in examination papers, they will be taken from *Holy Bible NRSV* (Anglicized edition) Oxford University Press (1995) 0-19-107000-9.

3.14 G585: A2 *Developments in Christian Theology*

Part 1: Theology of Religions

Attempts to define religion

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- the teaching of Feuerbach on religion;
- the teaching of Ninian Smart on religion;
- the teaching of Don Cupitt on religion;
- the teaching of the above thinkers on modernity and post-modernity.

Candidates should be able to discuss these teachings critically and their strengths and weaknesses.

Exclusivist/particularist responses of Christianity to other world religions

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- the underlying principles of theological exclusivism;
- the teaching of Karl Barth on religion: the Word, revelation, natural theology, election and universalism.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically and their strengths and weaknesses.

Inclusivist responses of Christianity to other world religions

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- the underlying principles of theological inclusivism;
- the teaching of Karl Rahner on religion: open Catholicism, Grace, history and creation, Church, anonymous Christian and anonymous Christianity.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically and their strengths and weaknesses.

Pluralist responses of Christianity to other world religions

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- the underlying principles of theological pluralism;
- the teaching of John Hick on religion: religious experience, global theology, use of Kant, the Real, demythologising and divinity of Christ.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically and their strengths and weaknesses.

Part 2: Feminist theology

Presentation of women in the Bible and Christian tradition

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- presentation of women in the Old Testament;
- presentation of women in the New Testament;
- views of Augustine, Luther and *Mulieris Dignitatem* on gender and the relationship of women and men.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically and their strengths and weaknesses.

Liberal/equality feminist theology

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- aims of secular liberal or equality feminisms: rights, autonomy and patriarchy;
- response of liberal or equality feminist theologies to secular liberal and equality feminism;
- liberal feminist theology interpretation of the place and presentation of women in the Bible.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically and their strengths and weaknesses.

Reconstruction feminist theology

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- aims of secular reconstructionist feminisms: existential, Marxist, Freudian;
- responses of reconstructionist feminist theologies to secular reconstructionist feminisms;
- feminist theology's revisionist/reconstructionist views of women in Christian history; use of the hermeneutic of suspicion;
- feminist re-imagining/reconstruction of the language of God; language and the Trinity.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically and their strengths and weaknesses.

Radical/naturalist feminist theology

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- aims of secular radical and naturalist feminists: body, difference and androgyny;
- responses of radical and naturalist feminist theologians to body, difference and androgyny;
- alternative Christian theology: Elaine Pagels;
- post-Christian feminism: Mary Daly.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically and their strengths and weaknesses.

Feminist theological ethics

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- role of women as ministers/priests/bishops: responses of feminist theology and non-feminist theology to the role of women as leaders in the Church;
- role of women as mothers: responses of feminist theology and non-feminist theology to motherhood and reproduction;
- Womanist theology: problems for women of colour of racism and sexual exploitation.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically and their strengths and weaknesses.

3.15 G586: A2 Buddhism

Key Concepts

nibbana/nirvana

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- the nature of nibbana and parinibbana;
- the difficulty of describing nibbana and the ways in which this is attempted;
- the desirability of nibbana.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

The Importance of Scriptures

The Lotus Sutra

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- the importance of the Lotus Sutra in establishing Mahayana authority;
- the interpretations and importance of the parable of the burning house;
- upaya and ekayana.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

The Heart Sutra

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- the importance of the Heart Sutra as a prajnaparamita text;
- sunyata.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

The Pali Canon

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- the Pali Canon;
- the importance of the tripitaka;
- the division of the text into the sutta pitaka, vinaya pitaka and abhidhamma pitaka.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

Religious Practice

Meditation

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- aims and methods and results of meditation, including samatha and vipassana meditation;
- different methods of meditation including the use of koans, zazen, nembutsu, visualisations and mandalas;
- experiences of satori and jhanas.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

Later Buddhist Developments

Zen Buddhism

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- aims, practices, attitudes of Zen Buddhism to scripture;
- differences between Rinzai and Soto schools.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

Pure Land Buddhism

Candidates should understand the following:

- aims, practices, attitudes of Pure Land Buddhism to scripture;
- an awareness of the differences between Pure Land and True Pure Land schools.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

Tibetan Buddhism

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- aims, practices, attitudes of Tibetan Buddhism to scripture;
- the authority and status of the Dalai Lama.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

Buddhism in the west

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- Buddhist developments in the west;
- western interpretations and adaptations of the vinaya;
- psychological interpretations of Buddhist cosmology.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

Ethics

The five precepts

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- the five precepts;
- positive and negative interpretations of the five precepts;
- implications of the precepts for the development of the ethical codes.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

Implications for ethics of the eightfold path

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- the relationship between sila, prajna and samadhi;
- implications of the path for the development of the ethical codes.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

upaya, karuna and prajna

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- the concepts of upaya, karuna and prajna;
- the relationship between wisdom and compassion in Buddhist ethics;
- the implications of upaya for ethical codes.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

Where quotes from texts appear in examination papers, they will be taken from *Buddhist Scriptures*, trans. E. Conze, Penguin, (1969), 0140440887.

3.16 G587: A2 Hinduism

Key Concepts

Liberation

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- the nature of liberation in different Hindu schools;
- different paths to liberation.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

The Advaita Vedanta of Sankara

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the following concepts within the Advaita Vedanta:

- relationship between atman and Brahman;
- maya;
- jnana;
- monism;
- nature of liberation.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

The Vishishtadvaita Vedanta of Ramanuja

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the following concepts within the Vishishtadvaita Vedanta:

- relationship between atman and Brahman;
- the world as the body of God;
- bhakti;
- nature of liberation.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

The Importance of Scriptures

The Vedas

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- the importance and structure of the Vedas;
- the nature of God in the Vedas.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

The Bhagavad Gita

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- the importance of the Bhagavad Gita;
- the nature of God;
- dharma;
- bhakti;
- karma;
- relationship between Krishna and Arjuna.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

Sruti and Smriti literature	<p>Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the nature and importance of Sruti and Smriti literature. <p>Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.</p>
Religious Practice	
Meditation	<p>Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> aims, methods and results of meditation. <p>Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.</p>
samkhya and yoga	<p>Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> aims, methods and results of samkhya; relationship between purusa and prakriti; nature of the three gunas; nature of liberation. <p>Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.</p>
Later Hindu Developments	
MK Gandhi	<p>Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the religious thoughts of Gandhi; the influence of Gandhi on Hindu thought and practice. <p>Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.</p>
Arya Samaj	<p>Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the religious attitudes and developments of the Arya Samaj and their influence on Hindu thought and practice. <p>Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.</p>
Brahmo Samaj	<p>Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the religious attitudes and developments of the Brahmo Samaj and their influence on Hindu thought and practice. <p>Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.</p>
Hinduism in the west	<p>Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the development of Hinduism in the west; western interpretations of the class system; western movements: ISKCON; Vivekananda and the Ramakrishna Mission. <p>Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.</p>

Ethics

ahimsa

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- the concept of ahimsa;
- the background to the concept of ahimsa and its importance for Hindu ethics.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

Implications for ethics of varnashramadharma

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- the concept of varnashramadharma;
- the extent to which varnashramadharma is followed and its influence on Hindu ethics.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

The four purusharthas

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- the importance of and relationship between artha, kama, dharma and moksha.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

Where quotes from texts appear in examination papers, they will be taken from – Zaehner, R. C. (tr & ed) *Hindu Scriptures* Everyman's Library (1992) 1-85715-064-3.

3.17 G588: A2 Islam

Beliefs

Articles of belief: Allah, angels, scriptures, messengers, the last day, the divine decree

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- the articles of belief (Allah, angels, scriptures, messengers, the last day, the divine decree);
- their particular significance and importance in Muslim theology.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

Scripture

Surah 4



Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- the teachings of Surah 4 in relation to the treatment of women in pre-Islamic Arabia; the importance of these teachings for Muslims today;
- the changes which Muhammad introduced;
- the principles of first ummah;
- teachings about orphans, family and the roles of men and women, inheritance, Jews and Christians, enemies, hypocrites, jihad, and articles of belief.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

Muslim Life

Qur'an, Sunnah and Shari'ah as bases for Muslim life; ijtiḥad

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- the nature and importance of each of these and how they form the bases for Muslim life;
- teaching on work and wealth;
- teaching on justice, crime and punishment.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

The concept of jihad

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- jihad as 'striving for the will of Allah';
- be able to distinguish between Greater and Lesser Jihad.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

The ummah and its implications for Muslim ethics	<p>Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the theological basis and practical implications of this 'worldwide community of Muslims'; the importance of ummah in the way in which it can influence and affect Muslim ethics. <p>Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.</p>
Development of Islam	
The first four Khalifahs and the spread of Islam to 732 CE	<p>Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the importance of the first four Khalifahs: Abu Bakr, 'Umar ibn al-Khattab, 'Uthman, Ali; the expansion of Islam to 732 CE (when the Muslim forces were defeated at Poitiers by Charles Martel's Franks). <p>Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.</p>
Origins and beliefs of Sunni and Shi'a Islam	<p>Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the split between Sunni and Shi'a Islam; the different Shi'a groups of Seveners and Twelvers; <p>Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.</p>
Origins and beliefs of Sufi Islam	<p>Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of Sufi Islam:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> its origins and goals as a mystical group within Islam. <p>Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.</p>
Practice of Islam in the Western World	<p>Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> challenges to family and community values posed by non-Islamic world (including how this affects Muslims in United Kingdom). <p>Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.</p>

Where quotes from texts appear in examination papers, they will be taken from – Abdullah, Yusuf Ali, *The Meaning of the Holy Qur'an* Amana Publications (1995) (seventh edition) 0-915957-55-8.

3.18 G589: A2 Judaism

Beliefs

The concept of the Land of Israel

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- the significance of the concept of the Land of Israel for Judaism;
- its historical context as the 'Promised Land';
- the historical exile of Israel to Babylon in the sixth century BCE and the return to the Promised Land; the dispersion of the Jewish people between 70 CE and 1948;
- Zionism – origins, purposes and developments, including: political Zionism and the work of Theodor Herzl; cultural Zionism and the work of Asher Ginzberg; Orthodox and Progressive Jewish responses to Zionism and the present day State of Israel; religious responses within the present day State of Israel, including those of Neturei Karta and Gush Emunim;
- the relationship between the religious idea and the present day State of Israel;
- the difference between the concept of the Promised Land and the present day State of Israel – this should include origins and the boundaries of the land;
- concepts related to the Land, including: stewardship; Shemittah; the Year of Jubilees, the establishment of kibbutzim; present day environmental concerns arising out of rapid population growth, rapid industrialization and increased affluence within the present day State of Israel;
- the teachings of Judah Halevi in relation to the Promised Land.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

Messianic hope

Messianic hope, with reference to Isaiah and Malachi

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- the importance attached to the Messianic hope by Jews;
- the contrast between the way in which Messianic hope is understood and interpreted by Orthodox and Progressive Jewish groups today;
- the idea of the Messianic hope in the books of Isaiah and Malachi;
- the teachings of Maimonides concerning Messiah;
- Orthodox and Progressive Jewish beliefs about life after death.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

The twentieth-century Holocaust; post-Holocaust theology

The twentieth-century Holocaust and post-Holocaust theology

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- the origins and scale of the twentieth-century Holocaust;
- anti-Semitism; including: anti-Jewish attitudes in Christian thought and social practice, the establishment of ghettos, the compulsory yellow badge, the blood libel; the development of racial anti-Semitism, the anti-Semitic League, the Protocols of the Elders of Zion, Hitler and Nazism; the increase of anti-Semitism post- Holocaust;
- the twentieth-century Holocaust and its effects on world Jewry;
- the physical consequences on world Jewry and the particular theology which has resulted from it: the thinking of Rubenstein, Fackenheim, Maybaum, Berkovitz and Cohn-Sherbok;
- Orthodox and Progressive responses to the Holocaust.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

Developments in Judaism

Orthodoxy, Neo-Orthodoxy, Conservative, Reform, Progressive and Liberal; Hasidic Tradition

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- the origins and teachings of these groups as they are represented in the United Kingdom;
- their approach to the Torah, and other theological differences between them, and the way in which these differences may be reflected in and affect Jewish life and practice.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

Ashkenazi and Sephardi Jews

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understand of:

- the origins and differing practices of Ashkenazi and Sephardi Jews;
- Jewish identity and cultural diversity; the conception of the Jews as a religious group, a race, a culture, a nation; factors contributing to the formation of contemporary Jewish identity, including the Haskalah, anti-Semitism and the Holocaust, establishment of the present day State of Israel.

Candidates should be able to discuss these areas critically.

Where quotes from texts appear in examination papers, they will be taken from – *Tanach Mesorah Publications* (1996) 0899062695, *The Complete Art Scroll Siddur Mesorah Publications* (1984) 0-89-906655-0.

4 Schemes of Assessment

4.1 AS GCE Scheme of Assessment

Candidates choose any **two** units from the **nine** options listed below.

Candidates should note that any areas within the units selected can be examined in any combination and coverage of all areas in the units chosen is required.

No Bibles or other texts may be taken into examinations.

AS GCE Religious Studies (H172)

G571: AS *Philosophy of Religion*

50% of the total AS GCE marks
1.5 h written paper
70 marks

Candidates are required to answer **two** two-part essay questions from a choice of **four**.

Topics and themes in philosophy of religion.

G572: AS *Religious Ethics*

50% of the total AS GCE marks
1.5 h written paper
70 marks

Candidates are required to answer **two** two-part essay questions from a choice of **four**.

Ethical theories and certain topics in practical religious ethics.

G573: AS *Jewish Scriptures*

50% of the total AS GCE marks
1.5 h written paper
70 marks

Candidates are required to answer **two** two-part essay questions from a choice of **four**.

Highlighted themes and texts within the Jewish Scriptures.

G574: AS *New Testament*

50% of the total AS GCE marks
1.5 h written paper
70 marks

Candidates are required to answer **two** two-part essay questions from a choice of **four**.

Gospels – highlighted themes and texts.

G575: AS *Developments in Christian Theology*

50% of the total AS GCE marks
1.5 h written paper
70 marks

Candidates are required to answer **two** two-part essay questions from a choice of **four**, with a choice of **one** from **two** in Part 1 and **one** from **two** in Part 2.

Highlighted themes within modern Christian Theology.

G576: AS *Buddhism*

50% of the total AS GCE marks
1.5 h written paper
70 marks

Candidates are required to answer **two** two-part essay questions from a choice of **four**.

Origins of Buddhism and certain key beliefs and practices.

G577: AS *Hinduism*

50% of the total AS GCE marks
1.5 h written paper
70 marks

Candidates are required to answer **two** two-part essay questions from a choice of **four**.

Origins of Hinduism and certain key beliefs and practices.

G578: AS *Islam*

50% of the total AS GCE marks
1.5 h written paper
70 marks

Candidates are required to answer **two** two-part essay questions from a choice of **four**.

Origins of Islam and certain key beliefs and practices.

G579: AS *Judaism*

50% of the total AS GCE marks
1.5 h written paper
70 marks

Candidates are required to answer **two** two-part essay questions from a choice of **four**.

Key beliefs and practices within Judaism.

4.2 Advanced GCE Scheme of Assessment

Candidates choose any **two** units from the **nine** options listed below.

Candidates should note that any areas within the units selected can be examined in any combination and coverage of all areas in the units chosen is required.

No Bibles or other texts may be taken into examinations.

Advanced GCE Religious Studies (H572)

AS Units as above, G571–9, each being 25% of the total Advanced GCE marks.

G581: A2 *Philosophy of Religion*

25% of the total Advanced GCE marks
1.5 h written paper
70 marks

Candidates are required to answer **two** open essay style questions from a choice of **four**.

Themes in philosophy of religion relating to authority, language and life and death.

G582: A2 *Religious Ethics*

25% of the total Advanced GCE marks
1.5 h written paper
70 marks

Candidates are required to answer **two** open essay style questions from a choice of **four**.

Ethical issues relating to authority and destiny. Further topics in practical religious ethics.

G583: A2 *Jewish Scriptures*

25% of the total Advanced GCE marks
1.5 h written paper
70 marks

Candidates are required to answer **two** open essay style questions from a choice of **four**.

Highlighted themes and texts dealing with authority, life and death and experience.

G584: A2 *New Testament*

25% of the total Advanced GCE marks
1.5 h written paper
70 marks

Candidates are required to answer **two** open essay style questions from a choice of **four**.

Highlighted themes and texts dealing with authority, life and death and experience.

G585: A2 *Developments in Christian Theology*

25% of the total Advanced GCE marks
1.5 h written paper
70 marks

Candidates are required to answer **two** essay questions from a choice of **four**, with a choice of **one** from **two** in Part 1 and **one** from **two** in Part 2.

Certain themes within modern Christian Theology dealing with authority, life and death and experience.

G586: A2 *Buddhism*

25% of the total Advanced GCE marks
1.5 h written paper
70 marks

Candidates are required to answer **two** open essay style questions from a choice of **four**.

Themes relating to authority and truth, life and death and experience.

G587: A2 *Hinduism*

25% of the total Advanced GCE marks
1.5 h written paper
70 marks

Candidates are required to answer **two** open essay style questions from a choice of **four**.

Themes relating to authority and truth, life and death and experience.

G588: A2 *Islam*

25% of the total Advanced GCE marks
1.5 h written paper
70 marks

Candidates are required to answer **two** open essay style questions from a choice of **four**.

Themes relating to authority and truth, life and death and experience.

G589: A2 *Judaism*

25% of the total Advanced GCE marks
1.5 h written paper
70 marks

Candidates are required to answer **two** open essay style questions from a choice of **four**.

Themes relating to authority and truth, life and death and experience.

4.3 Unit Order

The normal order in which the unit assessments could be taken is AS Units **G571** to **G579** in the first year of study, leading to an AS GCE award, then A2 Units **G581** to **G589** leading to the Advanced GCE award. However, the unit assessments may be taken in any order.

4.4 Unit Options (at AS/A2)

For AS GCE Religious Studies candidates must take **two** units from AS Units **G571** to **G579**.

For Advanced GCE Religious Studies candidates take **two** AS Units, *and* **two** A2 Units.

Each unit has nine options. Candidates can study any two options at AS and any two options at A2, though it is recommended that candidates study the same units at A2 that they studied at AS.

AS units	A2 units
AS Philosophy of Religion	A2 Philosophy of Religion
AS Religious Ethics	A2 Religious Ethics
AS Jewish Scriptures	A2 Jewish Scriptures
AS New Testament	A2 New Testament
AS Developments in Christian Theology	A2 Developments in Christian Theology
AS Buddhism	A2 Buddhism
AS Hinduism	A2 Hinduism
AS Islam	A2 Islam
AS Judaism	A2 Judaism

4.5 Synoptic Assessment (A Level GCE)

Synoptic assessment is included wholly in the final A2 Units.

Synoptic assessment tests the candidates' understanding of the connections between different elements of the subject. It encourages the development of a holistic understanding of the subject. In this specification, synoptic assessment is addressed throughout both A2 units. In order to encourage this holistic approach to the subject, topics that are intrinsically synoptic, ie those that require candidates to think about certain theological themes, have been mapped onto the A2 content. Therefore whichever units candidates study at A2 they will be addressing these broader themes. The A2 Synoptic themes are outlined in the grid below.

	Concept of deity and relationship with humanity	Authority and truth in religion	Experience and religion	The Human Condition
Philosophy of Religion	God as revealed through religious language and experience Nature of God – God's attributes Miracle – God's activity in the world	Revelation through Holy Scripture Nature of Holy Scripture Meaningfulness of Religious language Revelation	Argument from Religious Experience Revelation – concept of religious experience Validity of Religious Experience Miracles	Boethius – choice and destiny Different views of life and death Distinctions between body and soul Disembodied existence
Religious Ethics	Theological determinism Religious ideas of free will Applied ethical issues and teachings of religious ethics	Meta-ethics – use of ethical language Conscience as an authority Religious ethics	Nature of and experiences of conscience Application of religious ethics to applied ethical issues	Applied ethical issues – sexual ethics, business and environment Free will and determinism Implications of views for moral responsibility
Jewish Scriptures	Nature and character of G-d as revealed through set texts Ethical kingdom Messianic kingdom	Teachings of Hosea 1– 3, 14, comparison with Amos Ruth – as part of the Ketuvim	Social concerns – Amos The concept of Wisdom and Religious Experience (<i>Proverbs 1 & 8, Song of Songs 1– 3, Ezekiel 1:4 – 28a</i>) Exile and liberation	<i>Micah 6:8</i> Ethical monotheism Freewill to repent Messianic hope Micah: reward & punishment

New Testament	Christology Son of Man; Son of God; sacrifice Theological significance of miracles Parables, Kingdom of God	Law – challenges to first-century Jewish groups Authorship and purpose of Synoptic Gospels Setting and methodology	Miracles – purpose and experiences of Parables – teachings	Eschatology/Kingdom of God Ethical teachings of Jesus
Developments in Christian Theology	Views of God – Barth, Hick, Rahner Theological responses to modernity and postmodernity	Nature of religion Exclusive v plural models Postmodernism v modernist notions of religious authority	Contextual theology v revelation Experience of religions and truth claims	Views of sexuality, poverty/suffering and race Presentation of women in Bible and Christian tradition Liberal, equalist, reconstructionist, radical and naturalist feminist theology
Buddhism	Psychological interpretations of Buddhist cosmology	Development of religious groups Importance of scriptures – the Lotus Sutra, the Heart Sutra, the Pali Canon	Religious practice – meditation Experiences of nibbana	nibbana Ethics
Hinduism	Brahman Relationship between deities and Brahman Nature of God in scriptures Ethics – attitude towards others / rest of creation Karma	Scriptures – the Vedas, the Bhagavad Gita, sruti and smriti literature Important religious figures Gandhi	Encounters with God Religious practice – meditation, samkhya and yoga Vivekananda	samsara/karma Dependent origination Ethical teachings varnashramadharma moksha atman/ Brahman
Islam	Beliefs about God: creator judge, guide tawhid Allah and his attributes Al Qadr (divine decree) Khalifahs stewards Shariah: environmental laws	Inspiration and authority of Qur'an Sunnah Shariah law, ijihad Shi'ah Imamate Articles of belief	Sufism ummah, implications for ethics Surah 4; identity, cultural diversity, Shari'ah	Free will/divine decree Jihad Good and evil Akirah Day of Judgement Resurrection of body
Judaism	Concept of Promised Land Holocaust – Stewardship	Different groups within Judaism – Orthodoxy, Neo-Orthodoxy, Conservative, Reform, Progressive, Liberal Ashkenazi and Sephardi Jews	Post – Holocaust theology Identity, belonging Zionism, Anti-semitism and family life	Concept of Messianic Hope Twentieth – century Holocaust Post – Holocaust theology
	Concept of deity	Authority and truth in religion	Experience and religion	The Human Condition

4.6 Assessment Availability

There are two examination series each year, in January and June.

In 2009 only AS units will be assessed.

From 2010 onwards, both AS units and A2 units will be assessed.

4.7 Assessment Objectives

Candidates are expected to demonstrate the following in the context of the content described:

AO1 Demonstrate Knowledge and Understanding

- select and demonstrate clearly relevant knowledge and understanding through the use of evidence, examples and correct language and terminology appropriate to the course of study. In addition, for synoptic assessment, A Level candidates should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the connections between different elements of their course of study.

AO2 Analysis, Evaluation and Application

- critically evaluate and justify a point of view through the use of evidence and reasoned argument. In addition, for synoptic assessment, A Level candidates should relate elements of their course of study to their broader context and to aspects of human experience.

AO weightings in AS GCE

Unit	% of AS GCE		
	AO1	AO2	Total
G571: AS <i>Philosophy of Religion</i>	70	30	100
G572: AS <i>Religious Ethics</i>	70	30	100
G573: AS <i>Jewish Scriptures</i>	70	30	100
G574: AS <i>New Testament</i>	70	30	100
G575: AS <i>Developments in Christian Theology</i>	70	30	100
G576: AS <i>Buddhism</i>	70	30	100
G577: AS <i>Hinduism</i>	70	30	100
G578: AS <i>Islam</i>	70	30	100
G579: AS <i>Judaism</i>	70	30	100
	70%	30%	100%

AO weightings in Advanced GCE

	AO1	AO2	Total
G571 AS <i>Philosophy of Religion</i>	35	15	50
G572: AS <i>Religious Ethics</i>	35	15	50
G573: AS <i>Jewish Scriptures</i>	35	15	50
G574: AS <i>New Testament</i>	35	15	50
G575: AS <i>Developments in Christian Theology</i>	35	15	50
G576: AS <i>Buddhism</i>	35	15	50
G577: AS <i>Hinduism</i>	35	15	50
G578: AS <i>Islam</i>	35	15	50
G579: AS <i>Judaism</i>	35	15	50
G581: A2 <i>Philosophy of Religion</i>	30	20	50
G582: A2 <i>Religious Ethics</i>	30	20	50
G583: A2 <i>Jewish Scriptures</i>	30	20	50
G584: A2 <i>New Testament</i>	30	20	50
G585: A2 <i>Developments in Christian Theology</i>	30	20	50
G586: A2 <i>Buddhism</i>	30	20	50
G587: A2 <i>Hinduism</i>	30	20	50
G588: A2 <i>Islam</i>	30	20	50
G589: A2 <i>Judaism</i>	30	20	50
	65%	35%	100%

4.8 Quality of Written Communication

Quality of Written Communication is assessed in all units and credit may be restricted if communication is unclear.

Candidates will:

- ensure that text is legible and that spelling, punctuation and grammar are accurate so that meaning is clear;
- select and use a form and style of writing appropriate to purpose and to complex subject matter;
- organise information clearly and coherently, using specialist vocabulary when appropriate.

5 Technical Information

5.1 Making Unit Entries

Please note that centres must be registered with OCR in order to make any entries, including estimated entries. It is recommended that centres apply to OCR to become a registered centre well in advance of making their first entries. Centres must have made an entry for a unit in order for OCR to supply the appropriate forms or moderator details for coursework.

It is essential that unit entry codes (the four-figure alphanumeric codes given in brackets at the end of the unit title) are quoted in all correspondence with OCR. See Sections 4.1 and 4.2 for these unit entry codes.

5.2 Making Qualification Entries

Candidates must enter for qualification certification separately from unit assessment(s). If a certification entry is **not** made, no overall grade can be awarded.

Candidates may enter for:

- AS GCE certification (entry code H172).
- Advanced GCE certification (entry code H572).

A candidate who has completed all the units required for the qualification may enter for certification either in the same examination series (within a specified period after publication of results) or in a later series.

AS GCE certification is available from June 2009.
Advanced GCE certification is available from June 2010.

5.3 Grading

All GCE units are awarded a–e. The Advanced Subsidiary GCE is awarded on the scale A–E. The Advanced GCE is awarded on the scale A–E with access to an A*. To be awarded an A*, candidates will need to achieve a grade A on their full A level qualification and an A* on the aggregate of their A2 units. Grades are reported on certificates. Results for candidates who fail to achieve the minimum grade (E or e) will be recorded as *unclassified* (U or u) and this is **not** certificated.

A Uniform Mark Scale (UMS) enables comparison of candidates' performance across units and across series and enables candidates' scores to be put on a common scale for aggregation purposes. The two-unit AS GCE has a total of 200 *uniform* marks and the four-unit Advanced GCE has a total of 400 *uniform* marks.

OCR converts each raw mark for each unit to a uniform mark. The maximum *uniform* mark for any unit depends on that unit's weighting in the specification. In these Religious Studies specifications, the four units of the Advanced GCE specification have UMS weightings of 25% (and the two units of the AS GCE specification have UMS weightings of 25%/25%). The UMS totals are 100/100/100/100. Each unit's *raw* mark grade boundary equates to the *uniform* mark boundary at the same grade. Intermediate marks are converted on a pro-rata basis.

Uniform marks correspond to *unit* grades as follows:

(Advanced GCE) Unit Weighting	Maximum Unit Uniform Mark	Unit Grade					u
		a	b	c	d	e	
25%	100	100–80	79–70	69–60	59–50	49–40	39–0

OCR adds together the unit *uniform* marks and compares these to pre-set boundaries (see the table below) to arrive at *qualification* grades.

Total uniform marks correspond to qualification grades.

Qualification	Qualification Grade					U
	A	B	C	D	E	
AS GCE	200–160	159–140	139–120	119–100	99–80	79–0
Advanced GCE	400–320	319–280	279–240	239–200	199–160	159–0

Candidates achieving at least 320 UMS marks in their Advanced GCE, ie grade A, and who also gain at least 180 UMS in their two A2 units will receive an A* grade.

5.4 Result Enquiries and Appeals

Under certain circumstances, a centre may wish to query the grade available to one or more candidates or to submit an appeal against an outcome of such an enquiry. Enquiries about unit results must be made immediately following the series in which the relevant unit was taken.

For procedures relating to enquires on results and appeals, centres should consult the *OCR Administration Guide for General Qualifications* and the document *Enquiries about Results and Appeals – Information and Guidance for Centres* produced by the Joint Council. Copies of the most recent editions of these papers can be obtained from OCR.

5.5 Shelf-Life of Units

Individual unit results, prior to certification of the qualification, have a shelf-life limited only by that of the qualification.

5.6 Unit and Qualification Re-sits

There is no restriction on the number of times a candidate may re-sit each unit before entering for certification for an AS GCE or Advanced GCE.

Candidates may enter for the full qualifications an unlimited number of times.

5.7 Guided Learning Hours

AS GCE Religious Studies requires **180** guided learning hours in total.

Advanced GCE Religious Studies requires **360** guided learning hours in total.

5.8 Code of Practice/Subject Criteria/Common Criteria Requirements

These specifications comply in all respects with current *GCSE GCE GNVQ and AEA Code of Practice* as available on the QCA website, the subject criteria for GCE Religious Studies and *The Statutory Regulation of External Qualifications 2004*.

5.9 Arrangements for Candidates with Particular Requirements

For candidates who are unable to complete the full assessment or whose performance may be adversely affected through no fault of their own, teachers should consult the *Access Arrangements and Special Consideration: Regulations and Guidance Relating to Candidates who are Eligible for Adjustments in Examinations* produced by the Joint Council. In such cases advice should be sought from OCR as early as possible during the course.

5.10 Prohibited Qualifications and Classification Code

Candidates who enter for the OCR GCE specifications may not also enter for any other GCE specification with the certification title *Religious Studies* in the same examination series.

Every specification is assigned to a national classification code indicating the subject area to which it belongs.

Centres should be aware that candidates who enter for more than one GCE qualification with the same classification code will have only one grade (the highest) counted for the purpose of the Schools and College Achievement and Attainment Tables.

The classification code for these specifications is 4610.

5.11 Coursework Administration/Regulations

There is no coursework for this specification.

6 Other Specification Issues

6.1 Overlap with other Qualifications

There is a small degree of overlap between the content GCE Critical Thinking Unit 3 Resolution of Dilemmas which focuses on religious ethics.

6.2 Progression from these Qualifications

This specification provides a suitable foundation for the further study of Religious Studies, Philosophy or Theology. As with any subject in the area of Humanities, students acquire a great range of skills, such as analysis, interpretation, critical thinking and the ability to produce extended evaluative pieces of writing. These are skills that will prepare students well for a range of courses in higher education and, beyond that, in employment generally.

6.3 Key Skills Mapping

These specifications provide opportunities for the development of the Key Skills of *Communication, Application of Number, Information Technology, Working with Others, Improving Own Learning and Performance* and *Problem Solving* at Levels 2 and/or 3. However, the extent to which this evidence fulfils the Key Skills criteria at these levels will be totally dependent on the style of teaching and learning adopted for each unit.

The following table indicates where opportunities *may* exist for at least some coverage of the various Key Skills criteria at Levels 2 and/or 3 for each unit.

Unit	C				AoN			IT			WwO			IOLP			PS		
	2.1a	2.1b	.2	2.3	2.1	2.2	2.3	2.1	2.2	2.3	2.1	2.2	2.3	2.1	2.2	2.3	2.1	2.2	2.3
G571	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
G572	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
G573	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
G574	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
G575	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
G576	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
G577	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
G578	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
G579	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
G581	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
G582	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
G583	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
G584	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
G585	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
G586	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
G587	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
G588	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
G589	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

6.4 Spiritual, Moral, Ethical, Social, Legislative, Economic and Cultural Issues

These specifications offer opportunities which can contribute to an understanding of these issues in the following topics:

Spiritual, Moral, Ethical, Social and Cultural issues are covered in all units within the specifications.

Economic and Legislative issues are covered in particular in Religious Ethics Units at AS and A2.

Religious Studies enables candidates to develop their understanding of spiritual, moral, ethical, social and cultural issues in considerable depth. All modules address at least one of these areas directly. Candidates learn about the nature of spiritual issues and have the opportunity to consider some responses to spiritual questions. Those taking units in Religious Ethics develop an understanding of the bases of morality and ethics and consider a variety of responses to ethical issues. Candidates who study the Developments in Christian Theology units or any of the Textual or World Religions modules also deepen their understanding of the ways in which culture shapes and is shaped by religious belief.

6.5 Sustainable Development, Health and Safety Considerations and European Developments

These specifications support these issues, consistent with current EU agreements, in the following topics:

Environmental education is supported within the Religious Ethics unit at A2.

Health education is supported in the Practical Ethics section of Religious Ethics at AS and A2.

European Developments is supported through topics in the study of religious ethics – medical ethics, environment and business ethics. Similarly the study of World Religions will explore religious practice in a multicultural society.

6.6 Avoidance of Bias

OCR has taken great care in the preparation of these specifications and assessment materials to avoid bias of any kind.

6.7 Language

These specifications and associated assessment materials are in English only.

6.8 Disability Discrimination Act Information Relating to these Specifications

AS/A levels often require assessment of a broad range of competences. This is because they are general qualifications and, as such, prepare candidates for a wide range of occupations and higher level courses.

The revised AS/A level qualification and subject criteria were reviewed to identify whether any of the competences required by the subject presented a potential barrier to any disabled candidates. If this was the case, the situation was reviewed again to ensure that such competences were included only where essential to the subject. The findings of this process were discussed with disability groups and with disabled people.

Reasonable adjustments are made for disabled candidates in order to enable them to access the assessments. For this reason, very few candidates will have a complete barrier to any part of the assessment. Information on reasonable adjustments is found in *Access Arrangements and Special Consideration Regulations and Guidance Relating to Candidates who are Eligible for Adjustments in Examinations* produced by the Joint Council (refer to Section 5.9 of this specification).

Candidates who are still unable to access a significant part of the assessment, even after exploring all possibilities through reasonable adjustments, may still be able to receive an award. They would be given a grade on the parts of the assessment they have taken and there would be an indication on their certificate that not all of the competences have been addressed. This will be kept under review and may be amended in the future.

Appendix A: Performance Descriptions

Performance descriptions have been created for all GCE subjects. They describe the learning outcomes and levels of attainment likely to be demonstrated by a representative candidate performing at the A/B and E/U boundaries for AS and A2.

In practice most candidates will show uneven profiles across the attainments listed, with strengths in some areas compensating in the award process for weaknesses or omissions elsewhere. Performance descriptions illustrate expectations at the A/B and E/U boundaries of the AS and A2 as a whole; they have not been written at unit level.

Grade A/B and E/U boundaries should be set using professional judgement. The judgement should reflect the quality of candidates' work, informed by the available technical and statistical evidence. Performance descriptions are designed to assist examiners in exercising their professional judgement. They should be interpreted and applied in the context of individual specifications and their associated units. However, performance descriptions are not designed to define the content of specifications and units.

The requirement for all AS and A level specifications to assess candidates' quality of written communication will be met through one or more of the assessment objectives.

The performance descriptions have been produced by the regulatory authorities in collaboration with the awarding bodies.

AS performance descriptions for Religious Studies

	Assessment objective 1	Assessment objective 2
Assessment objectives	<p>Select and demonstrate clearly relevant knowledge and understanding through the use of evidence, examples, and correct language and terminology appropriate to the course of study.</p> <p>In addition, for synoptic assessment, A level candidates should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the connections between different elements</p>	<p>Critically evaluate and justify a point of view through the use of evidence and reasoned argument.</p> <p>In addition, for synoptic assessment, A level candidates should relate elements of their course of study to their broader context and to aspects of human experience.</p>
A/B boundary performance descriptions	<p>Candidates characteristically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) select accurate and relevant material b) explain clearly relevant features or key ideas, supported by examples and/or sources of evidence c) use accurately a range of technical language and terminology d) show evidence of being familiar with issues raised by relevant scholars, or a variety of views, where appropriate. 	<p>Candidates characteristically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) construct a coherent and well-organised argument supported by examples and/or sources of evidence b) identify strengths and weaknesses of the argument c) use accurate and fluent expression.
E/U boundary performance descriptions	<p>Candidates characteristically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) select limited but relevant material b) show basic understanding of relevant features or key ideas, supported by occasional examples and/or sources of evidence c) show limited accurate use of technical language and terminology. 	<p>Candidates characteristically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) demonstrate minimal organisation and/or limited coherence b) offer mainly descriptive answers with little argument, justification or evaluation c) use language and expression that lacks precision.

A2 performance descriptions for Religious Studies

	Assessment objective 1	Assessment objective 2
Assessment objectives	<p>Select and demonstrate clearly relevant knowledge and understanding through the use of evidence, examples, and correct language and terminology appropriate to the course of study.</p> <p>In addition, for synoptic assessment, A level candidates should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the connections between different elements of their course of study.</p>	<p>Critically evaluate and justify a point of view through the use of evidence and reasoned argument.</p> <p>In addition, for synoptic assessment, A level candidates should relate elements of their course of study to their broader context and to aspects of human experience.</p>
A/B boundary performance descriptions	<p>Candidates characteristically:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> address the question specifically and select relevant material deploy comprehensive and mostly accurate knowledge, expressed lucidly use a range of technical language and terminology accurately and consistently competently explain appropriate examples and/or relevant sources/scholars. <p>In addition, for the synoptic assessment, candidates perform at this level in relation to connections between different elements of their course of study.</p>	<p>Candidates characteristically:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> construct a coherent and well-organised evaluative argument demonstrate an informed viewpoint and evidence of own thinking within the context of understanding different arguments and views use proficient, fluent and accurate language. <p>In addition, for the synoptic assessment, candidates show competent analysis of the nature of connections between elements of their course of study, their broader context and aspects of human experience.</p>
E/U boundary performance descriptions	<p>Candidates characteristically:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> select limited but relevant material deploy limited knowledge, some of which is accurate show limited accurate or consistent use of technical terms demonstrate basic understanding of key ideas, making occasional reference to examples and sources of evidence. <p>In addition, for the synoptic assessment, candidates perform at this level in relation to connections between different elements of their course of study.</p>	<p>Candidates characteristically:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrate minimal organisation and/or limited coherence demonstrate few personal insights, or little convincing argument or justification of a point of view with minimal evaluation use language and expression that lacks precision. <p>In addition, for the synoptic assessment, candidates show limited analysis of the nature of connections between elements of their course of study, their broader context and aspects of human experience.</p>