



### Why is the study of Religious Studies important?

Understanding the views of those around you. Questioning your own beliefs. Developing the ability to sympathise and accept other views. What could be more important to the well-rounded development of a young person?

Religious Studies is more than just the knowledge of religion. It is the interaction with living beliefs, the consideration of philosophical and ethical issues, the interaction with current affairs. All with an open mind to consider the information and reach informed opinions about these. It is an ever developing, evolving and changing discipline as relevant today as it ever has been. The ever-changing multicultural society in which we live contains the interaction of different faiths and world views at every level, Religious Studies is ideal to ensure that students are able to respect these views and critically analyse information they receive.

The study of other views and world beliefs opens up a whole new perspective on the world around us, by looking at things through a different pair of eyes we not only develop an understanding of others but also learn to appreciate our world more.

The themes which can be studied are current topics of which students will have general knowledge, but this will be deepened to enhance understanding and allow them to consider their own views. The nature of these topics also means that they are frequently touched on in world affairs, making the study of these themes relevant to everyday life and ensuring they are not static.

Some of the big questions in the subject include things like; is there a God? What is God like? Why do bad things happen? What happens when we die? Can there ever be peace? Is war ever the right course of action? Do prisons do more harm or good? What is a family? Should we all be treated equally?

We study AQA GCSE Religious Studies. The choice of religions and themes is at the discretion of individual academies to ensure the course is tailored to the needs of the students and local community.

### What skills will the study of Religious Studies teach you?

Students will develop a variety of crucial skills within Religious Studies, skills which are valuable within all aspects of life not just academic progress.

**Evolution** – the ability to critically consider different ideas and opinions before reaching a justified decision. A skill which is invaluable in everyday life, from the day to day decision making to more important and unique decisions.

**Critical analysis** – the ability to look at an opinion, viewpoint or information and not take it at face value, but rather to consider, critique and question what you are told. A skill needed to make informed decisions throughout life.

**Empathy and understanding** – the ability to understand and share the feelings of others. Whether it is a stranger, the victims of a tragedy, friends or family it is a skill that is vital to well-rounded emotional development.

**Tolerance of other views, cultures and beliefs** – combined with the above skills, and in light of our multicultural world this is a skill which will be used every day. The ability to understand that there are other views which are as equally valid as your own along with the ability to evaluate and critically analyse these views is something which every student needs to be a global citizen in their future.

## What will you know and understand from your study of Religious Studies?

Studies study two world religions and 4 thematic studies from the options below;

Beliefs, teachings and practices of two religions:	Religious, philosophical and ethical studies themes:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Buddhism</li> <li>• Christianity</li> <li>• Catholic Christianity</li> <li>• Hinduism</li> <li>• Islam</li> <li>• Judaism</li> <li>• Sikhism.</li> </ul> <p>Christianity and Catholic Christianity is a prohibited combination.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Theme A: Relationships and families.</li> <li>• Theme B: Religion and life.</li> <li>• Theme C: The existence of God and revelation.</li> <li>• Theme D: Religion, peace and conflict.</li> <li>• Theme E: Religion, crime and punishment.</li> <li>• Theme F: Religion, human rights and social justice.</li> </ul>

## How can you deepen your understanding of Religious Studies?

Some information about any trips, visits, enrichment opportunities your subject offers. Can also include websites they could visit, podcast they can listen too, reading they could explore etc

Religious Studies offers the unique opportunity to visit places of worship to see the faiths studied in action. Depending on the faiths covered students may visit a Church (Christianity), Mosque (Islam), Synagogue (Judaism), Gurdwara (Sikhism), Mandir (Hinduism) or Temple (Buddhism).

Students can also deepen and secure their knowledge through enrichment with their subject teacher.

There are also a number of other useful resources which students can explore;

- BBC Bitesize <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/examspecs/zjgx47h>
- Seneca Learning <https://www.senecalearning.com/blog/gcse-religious-studies-revision/>
- Quizlet <https://quizlet.com/>
- Revision World <https://revisionworld.com/gcse-revision/rs-religious-studies>
- Get Revising [https://getrevising.co.uk/resources/level/gcse/subjects/religious\\_studies](https://getrevising.co.uk/resources/level/gcse/subjects/religious_studies)
- 'The Story of God with Morgan Freeman', 2016, Documentary series
- Crash Course videos <https://www.youtube.com/user/crashcourse>

Around this keeping up with current affairs can be a brilliant way to see religion, faith and world views in action.

## How are you assessed in Religious Studies?

There are 6 assessment points each year that we term Praising Stars®. We assess how students at their current stage of study are on track to reach their end of stage targets which are formulated on aspirational expectation from their KS2 starting points. We make an informed prediction from our holistic assessments based on our subject mapping of expectation across the Religious Studies curriculum.

At the end of the course students will sit two external examinations;

- Component 1: The study of religions: belief, teachings and practices
  - o Beliefs, teachings and practices from 2 world religions
  - o 1 hour 45 minutes
  - o 96 marks, plus 6 marks for spelling, punctuation and grammar
    - 48 marks for each religion
  - o Each religion has two five-part questions of 1, 2, 4, 5 and 12 marks.
  - o 50% of GCSE
- Component 2: Thematic studies
  - o Four religious, philosophical and ethics studies themes
  - o 1 hour 45 minutes
  - o 96 marks, plus 36 marks for spelling, punctuation and grammar
    - 24 marks for each theme
  - o Each theme has a five-part questions of 1, 2, 4, 5 and 12 marks.
  - o 50% of GCSE

## Key Assessment Objectives

**AO1:** Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and beliefs including:

- beliefs, practices and sources of authority
- influence on individuals, communities and societies
- similarities and differences within and/or between religions and beliefs.

**AO2:** Analyse and evaluate aspects of religion and belief, including their significance and influence.

## **Study of Religious Studies can lead to a wide range of careers:**

Religious Studies develops a wide range of skills which are transferable to a variety of future pathways. It is a subject held in high regard by Post 16 pathways and universities due to the range of transferable skills which are developed.

### **Comment from Ed Pawson, Chair, National Association of Teachers of RE;**

*“...schools and students value Religious Education as a key subject that provides great preparation for Higher Education.”*

### **Comment from John Keast, Chair, Religious Education Council of England and Wales (REC);**

*“As our world becomes increasingly interdependent and we interact with more diverse groups day to day, RE is becoming ever more relevant. ...students, universities and employers clearly recognise this fact...”*

Some possible career paths where Religious Studies may be of particular benefit

- Teaching, education and childcare
- Youth, community, charity or aid work
- Health and social care
- Law and legal studies
- Medicine and occupational therapy
- Archivist, museum curator or librarian
- Military services
- Human resources
- Civil service
- Journalism
- Religious leader
- Emergency services

## AQA Level 1/Level 2 GCSE (9-1) in Religious Studies Course Overview

Term	Year 1	Year 2
Autumn 1	Religion 1	Theme 1
Autumn 2	Religion 1	Theme 2
Spring 1	Religion 1	Theme 3
Spring 2	Religion 2	Theme 4
Summer 1	Religion 2	Revision and exam preparation
Summer 2	Religion 2	Revision and exam preparation

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