



Religious Studies

Examination Board: **EDUQAS**

Examination Code: **Route B – A120PB**

Outline of the Course

Topics are studied in the below order, across two teachers.

Islam

1. Religious figures and sacred texts
2. Religious concepts and religious life
3. Social and historical developments in religious thought
4. Religious practices that shape religious identity

Philosophy

1. Arguments for God
2. Challenges to religious belief
3. Religious experience
4. Religious Language

Ethics

1. Ethical thought
2. Deontological ethics
3. Teleological ethics
4. Determinism and Free-will

What will you learn?

Component 1: Islam

1. Religious figures and sacred texts

- The significance in the development of Islam of both the life and teachings of Muhammad in Makkah following the Night of Power, the Hijrah and the life and teachings of Muhammad in Madinah
- The Qur'an as a source of wisdom and authority – its use and treatment in Islam
- Sources of shari'a (the way) - Qur'an; sunna (clear trodden path) and hadith (report); qiyas (analogy); ijma (consensus)
- The role of shari'a and its importance for Muslims
- Muslim understandings of jihad

2. Religious concepts and religious life

- The concept of Allah – tawhid (oneness) and shahadah (bearing witness)
- Muslim beliefs about nabi (prophets), rasul (messenger), nadir (warner) and risalah (the message)
- Malaikah (angels) and Akhirah (the Day of Final Judgement)
- The role and significance of the following three pillars for Muslims and the Ummah (Muslim community). Salah (prayer) and other forms of prayer
- Zakah (purification through giving) and Hajj (pilgrimage)
- The five categories of ethical action as exemplifying the key moral principles for Islam and a framework for Muslim living

3. Social and historical developments

- The relationship between religion and society: respect and recognition and the ways that religious traditions view other religions and non-religious worldviews and their truth claims.
- The concept of a state governed according to Islamic principles and the political and social influence of religious institutions as a challenge to secularisation
- The challenges to Islam from scientific views about the origins of the universe
- Islamic attitudes towards pluralism
- Religion, equality and discrimination. The importance of family life for the Muslim religion
- Islam and migration: the challenges of being a Muslim in Britain today
- Western perceptions of Islam

4. Religious practices that shape religious identity

- The role of the masjid (mosque) in Islam
- The role of festivals in shaping religious identity, with reference to: Ashura and Ramadan and Id-ul-Fitr
- Diversity within Islam: Beliefs and practices distinctive of Shi'a Islam
- How developments in beliefs and practices have, over time, influenced and been influenced by developments in philosophical, ethical studies of religion.
- Islam and change - the development and influence on religious belief and practice within Islam of: Sufi philosophical thought about the nature of God and religious experience
- Ethical debate about crime and punishment (including arguments posed by scholars from within and outside the Islamic tradition)

Component 2: Philosophy

1. Arguments for God

- Inductive arguments – cosmological, teleological
- Challenges to inductive arguments
- Deductive arguments – origins and developments of the ontological argument
- Challenges to deductive arguments

2. Challenges to religious belief

- The problem of evil and suffering
- Religious responses to the problem of evil: Augustinian type theodicy and Irenaean type theodicy
- Religious belief as a product of the human mind – Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung
- Issues relating to rejection of religion: Atheism

3. Religious Experience

- The nature of religious experience
- Mystical experience
- Challenges to the objectivity and authenticity of religious experience
- The influence of religious experience on religious practice and faith
- Definitions of miracles
- Comparative study of two key scholars from within and outside the Christian tradition and their contrasting views on the possibility of miracles

4. Religious Language

- Inherent problems of religious language
- Religious language as cognitive and meaningless – Logical Positivism
- Religious language as non-cognitive and analogical
- Religious language as symbolic
- Religious language as non-cognitive and mythical
- Religious Language as a language game

Component 3: Ethics

1. Ethical Thought

- Divine Command Theory
- Virtue Theory
- Ethical Egoism
- Meta-ethical approaches of Naturalism, Intuitionism and Emotivism

2. Deontological Ethics

- St. Thomas Aquinas' Natural Law – laws and precepts as the basis of morality, the role of virtues and goods in supporting moral behaviour
- Application of Aquinas' Natural Law to abortion and voluntary euthanasia
- John Finnis' development of Natural Law
- Bernard Hoose's overview of the Proportionality debate
- Finnis and Hoose's theories applied to immigration and capital punishment

3. Teleological Ethics

- Joseph Fletcher's Situation Ethics - his rejection of other forms of ethics and his acceptance of agape as the basis of morality, the principles as a means of assessing morality

- Fletcher's Situation Ethics - application of theory: homosexual and polyamorous relationships
- Classical Utilitarianism - Jeremy Bentham's Act Utilitarianism: happiness as the basis of morality
- John Stuart Mill's development of Utilitarianism: types of pleasure, the harm principle and the use of rules
- Bentham's Act Utilitarianism and Mill's Rule Utilitarianism - application of the theory: animal experimentation for medical research 2. the use of nuclear weapons as a deterrent

4. Determinism and Free-will

- Religious concepts of predestination, with reference to the teachings of: St Augustine and John Calvin
- Concepts of determinism
- The implications of predestination / determinism
- Religious concepts of free will, with reference to the teachings of: Pelagius and Arminius
- Concepts of libertarianism
- The implications of libertarianism and free will

Mark Breakdown and Assessment

Written examination for each Component : 2 hours, equal weighting of 33.3%

Unit	Title	Method of Assessment	Exam Length
Component 1	A Study of Religion – Islam	1 examination with two questions	A Level – 2 hours
Component 2	Philosophy of Religion	1 examination with two questions	A Level – 2 hours
Component 3	Religion and Ethics	1 examination with two questions	A Level – 2 hours

Learners will be expected to answer one question from Section A out of a choice of two and one question from Section B out of a choice of three in this component. Questions can be taken from any area of the specification.

A01 (A): 40% weighting

A02 (B): 60% weighting

A01 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including: • religious, philosophical and/or ethical thought and teaching • influence of beliefs, teachings and practices on individuals, communities and societies • cause and significance of similarities and

	differences in belief, teaching and practice • approaches to the study of religion and belief. AO2 Analyse and evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief, including their significance, influence and study.
Website links	https://www.eduqas.co.uk/media/3jplmlqa/eduqas-a-level-religious-studies-spec.pdf
Key Dates	Exam: May/June Year 13
Further Information	Mrs. R Lea – Curriculum Leader for Religious Studies r.lea@stretfordgrammar.com Mr. P Deavall – Subject Teacher for Religious Studies
What can I do after I have completed the course?	Students who have studied Religious Studies at A-level or degree level can pursue various career paths. Some common options include Theology, Medicine, Law, Sciences, Apprenticeships, Engineering, Pharmacy and other Humanity subjects. Many of our former students have used Religious Studies as their third A level for entry into Dentistry, Medicine and Engineering. As a facilitating subject with a wide range of transferable skills it sits well in combination with any other A Level subjects and grants access to most degree courses, or apprenticeships.