



# RELIGIOUS STUDIES (PHILOSOPHY AND ETHICS) GCSE



## Examination Board:

AQA

## Assessment:

One hour and 45 minutes written paper: Beliefs & Practices: Christianity and Islam. (50%)

One hour and 45 minutes written paper: Thematic Studies. (50%)

## What will you learn?

Students are required to study two major world religions. The focus of study for each religion is on '**Beliefs and teachings**' and '**Practices**'. The two religions we will study are Christianity and Islam.

Thematic Studies covers:

Theme one: **relationships and families**; religious teachings about the nature and purpose of families in the 21st century, sex, marriage, cohabitation and divorce. Issues related to the nature and purpose of families; roles of men and women; equality; gender prejudice and discrimination.

Theme two: **religion and life**; the origins of the universe, the value of the world, the use and abuse of the environment, pollution, the use and abuse of animals, the origins of human life, abortion, euthanasia, death and the afterlife.

Theme three: **religion, peace and conflict**; violence, war, pacifism, terrorism, just war theory, holy war; the role of religion and belief in 21st century conflict and peace making; the concepts of justice, forgiveness and reconciliation.

Theme four: **religion, human rights and social justice**; social justice and human rights, prejudice and discrimination, religious freedom, prejudice and discrimination; disability and race, Christian and Muslim teachings about wealth, poverty and its causes, exploitation of the poor and giving money to the poor.

Students who study Religious Education GCSE will learn to:

1. Develop knowledge and understanding of religious beliefs, teachings and sources of wisdom and authority, including through their reading of key religious texts, other texts, and scriptures of the religions they are studying.



2. Develop the ability to construct well-argued, well-informed, balanced and structured written arguments, demonstrating their depth and breadth of understanding of the subject.
3. Engage with questions of belief, value, meaning, purpose, truth, and their influence on human life.
4. Reflect on and develop their own values, beliefs and attitudes in the light of what they have learnt and contribute to their preparation for adult life in a pluralistic society and global community.
5. Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of two religions.
6. Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of key sources of wisdom and authority including scripture and/or sacred texts, where appropriate, which support contemporary religious faith.
7. Understand the influence of religion on individuals, communities and societies.
8. Understand significant common and divergent views within religions and beliefs.
9. Apply knowledge and understanding in order to analyse questions related to religious beliefs and values.
10. Construct well-informed and balanced arguments on matters concerned with religious beliefs and values.



### **Who Is This Course For?**

This course will appeal to:

1. Anyone who has enjoyed studying Religious Studies in years 7, 8 and 9.
2. Anyone who is interested in exploring the BIG questions about life.
3. Anyone who likes to think deeply and engage in discussion about their own views and the views of others.
4. Anyone who is interested in understanding the multi-cultural society in which we live.



### **What Happens When You Finish? (Career Pathway)**

The Religious Studies GCSE helps students develop many skills. These include; understanding, empathy, evaluation, analysis, reflection, expression, interpretation and investigation.

In terms of vocational pathways, the course is seen as a good introduction to issues which affect all human beings and human thought processes. Past students have gone on to Oxbridge, the Russell Group and have gone on to such careers as doctors, dentists, solicitors, barristers, teachers and even rock musicians. Careers which have specifically identified religious education as being a desirable subject, and into which past students have progressed, include: the police, the armed forces, the civil service, banking, social services, local government and retail management.