



Department
for Education

Religious studies

GCSE subject content

November 2014

Contents

Introduction	3
Subject aims and learning outcomes	3
Subject content	5
Part One: Study of religions	5
Part Two: Textual studies and religious, philosophical and ethical studies in the modern world	6
Textual studies	6
Religious, philosophical and ethical studies in the modern world	7
Religious Studies short course	8
Annex A: Part One: Study of religions	9
Buddhism	9
Christianity	11
Christianity (Catholic Christianity)	13
Hinduism	15
Islam	18
Judaism	20
Sikhism	22

Introduction

1. GCSE subject content sets out the knowledge, understanding and skills common to all GCSE specifications in a given subject. It provides the framework within which awarding organisations create the detail of their specifications, so ensuring progression from the Key Stage 3 curriculum and the possibilities for progression to GCE A level.
2. By setting out the range of subject content and areas of study for GCSE specifications in religious studies, the subject content is consistent with the requirements for the statutory provision for religious education in current legislation as it applies to different types of school.

Subject aims and learning outcomes

3. GCSE specifications in religious studies should:
 - develop students' knowledge and understanding of religions and non-religious beliefs
 - develop students' knowledge and understanding of religious beliefs, teachings, and sources of wisdom and authority, including through their reading of key religious texts, other texts, and scriptures of the religions they are studying
 - develop students' ability to construct well-argued, well-informed, balanced and structured written arguments, demonstrating their depth and breadth of understanding of the subject
 - provide opportunities for students to engage with questions of belief, value, meaning, purpose, truth, and their impact on human life
 - challenge students to 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
4. GCSE specifications in religious studies must require students to:
 - demonstrate knowledge and understanding of **two religions**
 - demonstrate knowledge and understanding of key sources of wisdom and authority including texts which support contemporary religious faith
 - understand the impact of religion on individuals, communities and societies
 - understand significant common and divergent views between and within religions and beliefs

- apply knowledge and understanding in order to analyse questions related to religious beliefs and values
- construct well-informed and balanced arguments on matters concerned with religious beliefs and values set out in the subject content below

Programme of Study

5. Specifications may offer alternative routes through the qualification, drawing from the content set out below in order to provide students with one or more of the following programmes of study:

- Study of religion: the beliefs and teachings and sources of wisdom and authority (topics a and b from Part One) in relation to two religions (making up 50% of the overall qualification weighting, shared equally between the two religions); AND either:
 - a study of four different themes from Part Two adopting a textual approach (50% of the qualification), OR
 - a study of four different themes from Part Two adopting the approach of religious, philosophical and ethical studies in the modern world (50% of the qualification), OR
 - a study of four different themes from Part Two adopting a textual approach for two of those themes and the approach of religious, philosophical and ethical studies in the modern world for two themes (50% of the qualification)

OR

- study all four topics from Part One in relation to a primary religion (50% of the overall qualification weighting); AND beliefs and teachings and sources of wisdom and authority (topics a and b from Part One) in relation to a second religion (25% of the qualification); AND either:
 - two different themes from Part Two, adopting a textual approach (25% of the qualification), OR
 - two different themes from Part Two, adopting the approach of religious, philosophical and ethical studies in the modern world (25% of the qualification)

6. Throughout all of the programmes of study, specifications should include the study of common and divergent views within traditions in the way beliefs and teachings are understood and expressed.

7. Specifications may offer students the ability to study the themes within Part 2 in relation to differing perspectives from either one or two religions. Where students approach a theme in relation to one religion, they must study differing perspectives from within that religion in order to ensure they meet the assessment objectives.
8. Awarding organisations can develop, combine or cross reference the required content in any way appropriate to the specification, as long as the overall criteria are met.

Subject content

Part One: Study of religions

9. The content outlined below sets out the requirements for the study of religions, which is described for specific religions in annex A.
10. Where a religion is studied from the perspective of one group or denomination the second option chosen must be from another principal religion (e.g Christianity and Catholic Christianity could not be combined). Where a group or denomination is studied it must be studied in the context of the wider religion to which it belongs.
11. The four (study of religion) topics from which specifications may draw, in line with the programme of study set out above, are:
 - a. beliefs and teachings of religion: beliefs about God, gods or ultimate reality; the role of communities of faith, key moral principles and the meanings and purposes of human life
 - b. sources of wisdom and authority: the nature, history and treatment of key religious texts or scriptures; and where appropriate, of key religious figures and/or teachers from the early history of the tradition and/or the modern age
 - c. practices: the application of beliefs and teachings to the lives of modern believers including the study of places and forms of worship (as appropriate to each religion) rituals, prayer, meditation, festivals and celebrations, fasting, rites of passage, religious journeys and pilgrimage
 - d. forms of expression and ways of life: the impact of beliefs on individuals, communities and societies through ways of life and moral codes, through art forms such as drama, dance, literature, architecture and music inspired by religions and belief, and the role of these art forms in worship or ritual
12. In addition, all specifications must require students to demonstrate knowledge and understanding that:

DRAFT

- religious traditions in Great Britain are diverse and include the following religions: Christianity, Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism, as well as other religions and non-religious beliefs
- the fact that religious traditions of Great Britain are, in the main, Christian

Part Two: Textual studies and religious, philosophical and ethical studies in the modern world

13. Students should engage with the subject content set out below for thematic studies through either a 'textual studies' or a 'religious, philosophical and ethical studies in the modern world' approach.

Textual studies

14. If following a textual studies approach, all students must investigate primary religious texts from one or both of the religions they have studied for Part One: Study of Religions relating to:

- the significance, importance and impact of the texts for individuals, communities and societies
- how varied interpretations of the meaning of such texts may give rise to diversity within traditions
- how far communities give authority to such texts especially in relation to other sources of contemporary authority

15. Specifications must require students to demonstrate an understanding of these three issues in relation to the text as whole, while also studying themes of central concern to the religious text they are exploring.

16. Specifications should prescribe the study of clearly referenced material from the particular religion or religions selected. A single extended extract or multiple shorter ones from one or several texts may be specified, but taken as a whole the material must be sufficient to enable the themes to be explored thoroughly, for different perspectives to be explored and for the assessment objectives to be met.

17. Decisions about the number and length of the extracts must take account of the level of challenge posed by the comprehension of the material and whether the selection is taken from one religious tradition or two.

Religious, philosophical and ethical studies in the modern world

18. If the approach to thematic studies is through a religious, philosophical and ethical studies in the modern world approach, students must be required to include a study of different philosophical and ethical arguments and their impact and influence in the modern world. They should demonstrate the depth of their understanding of religion through the application of teachings from religions and beliefs including through specific references to sources of wisdom and authority.

Themes

- a. accounts in texts of key events in the lives of founders or important religious figures, their significance and impact, including on life in the 21st century. How varied interpretations of the meaning of such texts may give rise to diversity within traditions (textual study only)
- b. the significance, importance and impact of religious texts as a source for religious law making and codes for living in the 21st century. How varied interpretations of the meaning of these sources may give rise to diversity within traditions (textual study only)
- c. the significance, importance and impact of stories and/or parables that communicate religious, moral and spiritual truths. How varied interpretations of the meaning of such texts may give rise to diversity within traditions (textual study only)
- d. 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. How varied interpretations of sources and/or of teachings may give rise to diversity within traditions (textual study or religious, philosophical and ethical studies in the modern world)
- e. religious views of the world, including their relationship to scientific views; beliefs about death and an afterlife; explanations of the origins of the universe. How varied interpretations of sources and/or of teachings may give rise to diversity within traditions. (textual study or religious, philosophical and ethical studies in the modern world)
- f. the existence of God, gods and ultimate reality, and ways in which God, gods or ultimate reality might be understood; through revelation, visions, miracles or enlightenment. How varied interpretations of sources or of teachings may give rise to diversity within traditions. (textual study or religious, philosophical and ethical studies in the modern world)

DRAFT

- g. 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 (religious, philosophical and ethical studies in the modern world only)
- h. crime and punishment; causes of crime, aims of punishment, the concepts of forgiveness, retribution, deterrence, reformation; the death penalty, treatment of criminals; good, evil and suffering (religious, philosophical and ethical studies in the modern world only)
- i. dialogue within and between religions and non-religious beliefs; how those with religious and non-religious beliefs respond to critiques of their beliefs including the study of a range of attitudes towards those with different religious views – inclusivist, exclusivist and pluralist approaches (religious, philosophical and ethical studies in the modern world only)
- j. religion, human rights and social justice; issues of equality and freedom of religion or belief; prejudice and discrimination in religion and belief; human rights; wealth and poverty; racial prejudice and discrimination (religious, philosophical and ethical studies in the modern world only)

Religious studies short course

19. The content for GCSE religious studies short courses will be half the content of the GCSE full course. Specifications must offer the opportunity to either:

- study beliefs and teachings and sources of wisdom and authority (topics a and b from Part One) in relation to two religions

OR

- study beliefs and teachings (topic a from Part One) only in relation to two religions, AND two different themes from Part Two adopting the approach of religious, philosophical and ethical studies in the modern world

Annex A: Part One: Study of religions

Buddhism

All specifications must cover the following core knowledge and understanding, which represents 100% of the content for Part One.

Beliefs and teachings

- the Buddha: the narratives of Siddattha (Siddhartha) including his early life, the Four Sights/Signs; Enlightenment
- the Dhamma (Dharma): Dependent origination/conditionality (paticcasamupada/pratityasamutpada); three marks of existence: dukkha-suffering-unsatisfactoriness (lakkhanas/lakshanas), anicca/anitya-impermanence; anatta/anatman (no fixed self, essence or soul), Four Noble Truths
- the First Noble Truth: dukkha (suffering), different types of dukkha
- the Second Noble Truth (samudaya): The causes of dukkha (suffering/unsatisfactoriness), Three Poisons, rebirth/rebecoming (punabbhava), Factors governing rebirth
- the Third Noble Truth: cessation of craving/desire(tanha), interpretations of nirvana (nibbana) and enlightenment
- the Fourth Noble Truth: The Eight Fold Path (magga/marga) to nirvana (nibbana), three strands: sila (ethics), panna/prajna (wisdom) and samadhi (concentration)
- the human personality: In addition to the three marks of existence: Theravada - Five Aggregates (khandas/skandhas), Mahayana views - shunyata;tathagata - garbha; Buddha-nature
- Human destiny: arhat (arahant) and bodhisattva ideals, Buddhahood and The Pure Land
- Ethical and moral principles: kamma/karma; actions have consequences: panna/prajna(wisdom); karuna (compassion); metta/maitri (loving kindness); five precepts (pancha sila); In Mahayana: development of the six perfections (paramitas) or virtues

Sources of wisdom and authority

- Buddha: different meanings of Buddha: Gautama, other Buddhas such as Amitabha/Amida, Mahayana concept of Buddha-nature

DRAFT

- Buddhas and archetypal Buddhas and Bodhisattvas: Avalokiteswara/Chenrezig (in Chinese Buddhism, Kuan Yin), Manjushri-Jamyang
- Dharma (note different scripture collections in different types of Buddhism)
- Sangha: Interpretations of the term sangha: monks; monks and nuns; all Buddhists; sangha as the community of spiritual friends
- roles in the monastic and lay sangha including additional precepts for ordained monastic sangha (monastic community); forms of ordination: including married priests in Japanese traditions; ordination in the Triratna Order
- preceptors and elders in Theravada, gurus/lamas in Tibetan Buddhism, master-pupil in Zen/Ch'an
- the Tripitaka (the Three Baskets): the Vinaya Pitaka; the Sutta Pitaka; the Abidhamma Pitaka; the Prajnaparamita Sutra; and the Lotus Sutra
- individual and personal experience as authoritative: the Kalama Sutta
- key figures (Historical) including King Ashoka; (contemporary) Tenzing Gyatso (His Holiness the Fourteenth Dalai Lama); Soto Zen: Rev. Master Jiyu-Kennett; Sangharakshita

Practices

- meditation (in most but not all forms of Buddhism); samatha (concentration), vipassana (insight) and metta bhavana, visualisation, zazen
- chanting: including memorising key scriptures, making offerings, aiding mental concentration
- mantra recitation: chanting sacred syllables, concentration and the visualisation of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas; use of malas
- features and functions of Buddhist centres including temples, gompas, and viharas, shrines, artefacts and offerings
- puja in different Buddhist contexts
- ceremonies and rituals associated with death and mourning in Theravada communities and in Japan and Tibet
- festivals: Theravada: Wesak; Vassa/Rain Retreat and Kathina; uposatha days; Mahayana: Hanamatsuri and Obon (Japanese); Lama Tsong Khapa Day (Tibetan); Parinirvana Day

Forms of expression and ways of life

- Rupas (statues) of the Buddha and bodhisattvas within different traditions
- Thankas (In Tibetan Buddhism) including their use in worship
- symbols: the lotus flower, the wheel, the stupa
- Mudras (hand and body gestures) in iconography and worship
- Tibetan Wheel of Life: relationship to key teaching on causation and dependent origination (pratitya samutpada/paticca samuppada)
- one example of Buddhist charitable work in the UK (e.g. UK Buddhist development charity, the Karuna Trust), Buddhist chaplaincy (Angulimala, the UK Buddhist Prison Chaplaincy)
- pilgrimages and retreats including; India: Bodh Gaya (the Buddha's enlightenment); Deer Park at Sarnath (the Buddha's first teaching of the dhamma)

Common and divergent views within Buddhism in the way beliefs and teachings are understood and expressed should be included throughout.

Christianity

All specifications must cover the following core knowledge and understanding, which represents 100% of the content for Part One.

Beliefs and teachings

- the nature of God, such as omnipotence, the problem of evil/suffering and a loving and righteous God
- Creation, including the role of Word and Spirit, with textual references to Genesis 1-3, and John 1
- the Trinity, including the Oneness of God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit
- the person of Jesus Christ, including beliefs and teachings relating to his incarnation, crucifixion, resurrection and ascension
- Christology, including the titles of Jesus in the Gospels and the creeds
- salvation, including law, sin, grace and Spirit, the role of Christ in salvation, and the nature of atonement

DRAFT

- Eschatological beliefs and teachings, including the importance of resurrection and life after death, judgement, heaven and hell

Sources of wisdom and authority

- the Bible, including its development, structure and purpose (Old Testament: law, history, prophets, writings; and New Testament: gospels, letters), its unity as the Word of God, and two contrasting interpretations of its authority
- the Gospels as a source of authority for the events in Jesus' life, including the commonalities and differences between the synoptic gospels (Matthew, Mark and Luke) and the fourth gospel (John)
- Jesus as the Word of God and the role of Jesus in modelling practices such as love for others, forgiveness, servanthood, reconciliation and social justice, and in establishing the Kingdom of God
- the growth of the church, including belief in the Church as the body of Christ; the development of different churches: Catholic, Orthodox, Protestant and Pentecostal/Charismatic
- leadership in the church, including the Pope, bishops, priests/ministers/ pastors; the role of women in leadership
- the role of the individual, including religious experience, reason and personal conscience
- the use of the Bible in worship and in personal and ethical decision making by Christians

Practices

- different forms of worship including liturgical, informal and individual
- the role and meaning of the sacraments in Christian life, including: baptism and Eucharist
- prayer, including the Lord's Prayer, set prayers and informal prayer
- the role of pilgrimage and celebrations, including at least two contrasting examples of Christian pilgrimage (such as Walsingham, Taizé, Iona) and celebrations
- mission, evangelism and church growth
- the role of the church in the local community

DRAFT

- the worldwide church including working for reconciliation, the persecuted church and the work of Christian Aid/Tearfund/Cafod
- common and divergent views within Christianity in the way beliefs and teachings are understood and expressed should be included throughout

Forms of expression and ways of life

- the significance and meaning of at least three forms of art, drawn from:
 - icons
 - drawing/painting
 - sculpture
 - music
 - drama
 - film
 - new technologies and social media
- the use of symbolism and imagery in religious art including Christian symbols such as ChiRho, Cross, fish, Alpha and Omega, symbols of the four evangelists
- the use of different styles of music in worship, including: psalms, hymns and worship songs

Christianity (Catholic Christianity)

All specifications must cover the following core knowledge and understanding, which represents 100% of the content for Part One.

Beliefs and teachings

- the belief in one God as a Trinity of persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The scriptural origins of this belief and its historical development and significance
- the doctrine of Creation and its implications: a belief in the goodness of the created world and the dignity of each person made in the image and likeness of God
- the interpretation of Genesis 1-3 within the Catholic interpretative tradition in contrast to creationism. The compatibility of the doctrine of Creation and the theory of evolution
- the doctrine of the Fall and original sin, its meaning and significance for Catholic beliefs about sin and freedom and its role in sacramental theology, especially baptism

DRAFT

- the belief in Jesus as incarnate Son, divine Word, both human and divine. The scriptural and historical origins of this belief and its historical development through the early councils of the Church
- the significance of Jesus' crucifixion, resurrection and ascension and the implications these have for Catholic beliefs about salvation and grace
- an understanding of the work of the Holy Spirit in the history of the Catholic Church and in the lives of people today
- Catholic beliefs about life after death: heaven, hell and purgatory and the meanings and implications of each

Sources of wisdom and authority

- the nature and importance of Scripture as a source of revelation, an understanding of the shape of the Bible and the historical origins of this shape, including an understanding of the Catholic method of biblical interpretation
- an understanding of the authority of the Church's magisterium: both conciliar and pontifical, and the weight given to different kinds of Church teaching
- an understanding of the Church as "one, holy, catholic and apostolic" and the significance of each of these marks of the Church
- the role and example of Mary as a model of the Church and perfect disciple
- the Second Vatican Council – its history and key documents
- the role of individual reason and Catholic teaching on the relationship between conscience, freedom and authority
- sources of moral teaching: the Ten Commandments, Natural Law, the virtues and the Catholic Church's teaching on the primacy of conscience

Practices

- the Catholic teaching on sacraments, including a knowledge of each of the seven sacraments, their form and matter. The central place of the Eucharist as source and summit of Catholic Christian worship and life
- the daily office as an expression of the constant work of praise to which all Catholics are called as part of Vatican II's universal call to holiness
- popular piety as expressed in such devotions as the Rosary, Eucharistic adoration, Stations of the Cross

DRAFT

- the Church's liturgical calendar, including an understanding of its fasts and feasts and the significance of each
- the Church at each level: domestic, local, national and global, including church structures, positions of authority and the papacy
- an understanding of the different features of a Catholic church and how these reflect Catholic beliefs and facilitate Catholic prayer and devotion

Forms of expression and ways of life

- a study of church and monastic architecture, design and decoration as expressive of Catholic beliefs and worship
- a study of one of the Church's great visual artists, for example Raphael, Michelangelo or other Catholic devotional artists
- a study of a Catholic devotional poet, for example Gerard Manley Hopkins
- Catholic iconography and statuary, for example different renderings of the Stations of the Cross or medieval rood screens
- Catholic liturgical music, including plainchant and other liturgical music
- other non-liturgical religious music, for example Elgar's Dream of Gerontius
- Catholic literature, for example the work of Graham Greene or Evelyn Waugh
- Catholic beliefs and practices as explored in film, for example The Mission, A Man for All Seasons or Of Gods and Men

Common and divergent views within Catholic Christianity in the way beliefs and teachings are understood and expressed should be included throughout.

Hinduism

All specifications must cover the following core knowledge and understanding, which represents 100% of the content for Part One.

Beliefs and teachings

- the individual, eternal self (atman), distinct from material mind and body
- Samsara (cycle of birth and death), the law of karma (moral action and reaction); types of moksha (liberation), prakriti (matter); the tri-guna (three qualities); maya (illusion); cosmology; eschatology; many worlds; cycle of four ages

DRAFT

- Brahman (spirit; the ultimate reality or absolute truth); nirguna and saguna brahman
- three features of the divine: brahman (everywhere, as non-personal); antaryami (within the heart); bhagavan (beyond, as a personal loving God)
- manifestations of the divine: the tri-murti; male and female deities; avatara; murti
- the four aims of human life; dharma; sanatana dharma; varnashrama dharma
- Dharma and its meaning; Sanatana Dharma (eternal religion); Varnashrama Dharma (relative duties relating to the four varnas & four ashramas), to be distinguished from the later hereditary Jati
- individual free will, and responses to suffering; knowledge and ignorance
- personal virtues e.g. ahimsa, respect, empathy, mind/sense control, humility, love

Sources of wisdom and authority

- main sources of authority: 1. texts (oral and written) 2. holy people 3. personal insight
- main divisions of text: 1. Shruti (revealed scripture) and 2. Smriti (remembered scriptures)
- key texts: Vedas; Upanishads; Ramayana; Mahabharata; Bhagavad-gita; Puranas
- Sad-darshana (six schools of Indian philosophy); Vedanta theology (which largely represents modern thought), especially dvaita and advaita; debates about the existence, nature and identity of God
- the four primary religious traditions/denominations
- the role of guru and sacred lineages; the guru-disciplic relationship
- views on Hinduism's origins, history and founding figures; reformers
- Rishis; brahmins; saints; sannyasins; temple priests; gurus and swamis; famous women; key theologians (e.g. Shankara and Ramanuja)
- the Sanskrit language; its role and meaning within liturgy and scholarship

Practices

- the four paths towards yoga (union with the divine): karma (action), jnana (knowledge) astanga (meditation) and bhakti (devotion)

DRAFT

- forms of worship/meditation: havan, puja, arati, darshan, bhajan/kirtan, japa, mantra
- places of worship: inside the home; temple; outdoors (e.g. shrine); within the space of the heart
- focusses of worship and representations of the divine (deities, guru, holy hills, rivers)
- sacred festivals and the origin and meaning of: Diwali, Holi, Navaratri, Dussehra, Ram Navami, Ratha-yatra, Janmashtami, Raksha Bandhan
- pilgrimage; associated purposes, practices and sacred sites
- ascetic traditions; world-affirming traditions - brahminism; social systems; family life
- modern leaders and movements in the UK: VHP, ISKCON and Swaminarayana
- Hindu responses to contemporary moral issues: Hindu environmental projects; charities to help others and promote peace, social inclusion and women's rights

Forms of expression and ways of life

- classical, medieval and modern (e.g. Gandhi) social reformers
- world-renouncing and ascetic traditions: sadhus and naked babas; austerity and penance. World-affirming traditions: Hindu social systems; brahminism; family life, children and education
- decorative arts: symbols, rangoli, temple architecture, sculpture, decoration of shrine and sacred image
- expressive and literary arts: song, dance, music, painting, drama, poetics, television and film; Sanskrit and scholarship
- Hindu etiquette; food, diet and hospitality; dress and ornamentation; respect for elders; modern expressions of culture
- Hindu achievements in mathematics (zero, pi, trigonometry), physics (speed of light, heliocentric cosmology), medicine (herbal medicine and surgery) and astronomy

Common and divergent views within Hinduism in the way beliefs and teachings are understood and expressed should be included throughout.

Islam

All specifications must cover the following core knowledge and understanding, which represents approximately 100% of the content for Part One.

Beliefs and teachings

- the six articles of faith in Sunni Islam and five roots of 'Usul ad-Din in Shi'a Islam
- teaching about the nature of Allah: His 99 Names, oneness (Tawhid), immanence, transcendence, omnipotence, beneficence, mercy, fairness and justice (Adalat in Shi'a Islam)
- teachings about Risalah (prophethood), including Adam, Ibrahim, Ismael, Musa, Dawud, Isa, Muhammad
- teaching about Kutub (Books); Sahifah (Scrolls), Injil (Gospel), Tawrat (Torah), Zabur (Psalms)
- teaching about Malaikah (angels) including Jibril, Izra'il, Mika'il, Israfil, Munkar/Nakir and Kiraman/Katibin
- teaching about al-Qadr (predestination) and human freedom and its relationship to the Day of Judgement; teaching about Akhirah: life after death, human responsibility and accountability, heaven and hell

Sources of wisdom and authority

- the Qur'an including its revelation, compilation and its use by Muslims
- the Prophet Muhammad: life, teaching and authority including his call; work in Makkah and Madinah, the hijrah, role as 'seal of the Prophets' and as a role model
- Ahl-al-Baht (the family of the Prophet Muhammad including Caliph/Imam Ali) in Sunni and Shi'a Islam; the origins of differences and implications for questions of authority
- the Hadith as a record of the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad, compilation, main collections (Sunni and Shi'a), elements of Hadith - isnad and matn
- Shari'ah: how it is agreed including sources used by the main schools of Sunni and Shi'a Law; Qur'an; Hadith, Qiyas (analogy) and Ijma' (consensus); the role of qadis (judges) and the 'ulama (scholars)
- the Imam in Sunni and Shi'a Islam: origins, nature, role in individual and community life. The doctrine of Nass, the inerrancy and intercession of Imams in Shi'a Islam. The implications of teaching on Imams for the lives of Muslims today

Practices

- the Five Pillars of Sunni Islam and Ten Obligatory Acts of Shi'a Islam
- Shahadah: declaration of Faith, the place of the Shahadah in Muslim practice
- Salah: how and why Muslims pray, ablution, times, directions, movements and recitations, in the home and mosque and elsewhere. Jummah prayer, diversity of practice
- Sawm: fasting during the month of Ramadan. Origins, duties, benefits, those who are excused and why, the Night of Power
- Zakah: giving alms: origins, how and why it is given, benefits of receipt. Khums (Shi'a)
- Hajj: Pilgrimage to Makkah: the origins, how and why it is performed
- Jihad: greater and lesser, origins, impact and conditions for declaration of lesser jihad.
- festivals and commemorations: Id-ul-Adha, Id-ul-Fitr, Id-ul-Ghadeer and Ashura

Forms of expression and ways of life

- Muslim identity expressed through the ummah including the ceremonies for welcoming a child into the ummah; expectations about modesty including dress codes
- one national Muslim organisation working to relieve poverty and suffering in the UK
- halal and haram; categories, how they are applied to laws of food and drink, riba - prohibition of interest
- the use of art forms as an expression of Muslim belief including calligraphy, music, poetry and architecture
- the mosque: religious features of mosques including design, furniture, artefacts and associated practices
- Shi'a obligatory actions: Amr bil Maruf and Nahy Anil Munkar, Tawallah and tabarra; Love for the Prophet Muhammad and his family and disdain for their enemies

DRAFT

- Sufi ways of life including the origins, the Sheikh, teachers such as al-Ghazālī, ibn al-‘Arabi and Rābi‘a al-‘Adawiyya, Key practices including orders, music, dance, poetry, fasting, dhikr, saints

Common and divergent views within Islam in the way beliefs and teachings are understood and expressed should be included throughout.

Judaism

All specifications must cover the following core knowledge and understanding, which represents 100% of the content for Part One.

Beliefs and teachings

- beliefs and teachings about the nature of God including God as One, Creator, Law-Giver and Judge
- beliefs and teachings about the divine presence (Shekhinah)
- beliefs and teachings about the importance of the Covenant at Sinai (the Ten Commandments)
- beliefs and teachings about the importance that Judaism places on the sanctity of human life, including the concept of Pikuach Nefesh
- beliefs and teachings about the nature and role of the Messiah
- beliefs and teachings about the Promised Land
- beliefs and teachings regarding key moral principles including the relationship between free will and the 613 Mitzvot
- beliefs and teachings about Mitzvot between man and God and Mitzvot between man and man
- beliefs about life after death including judgement and resurrection

Sources of wisdom and authority

- diversity of beliefs regarding the interpretation of sources of wisdom and authority amongst the Jewish community
- the Tenakh (the Written Law): Torah, Neviim and Ketuvim (use in daily life)
- the Talmud (the Oral Law): collection of the Mishnah and Gemara (use in daily life)
- different denominations of Judaism including Orthodox (to include Hasidic and Modern Orthodox), and Liberal and Reform (the Pluralistic movement)

DRAFT

- practices associated with sources of authority in daily life including the use of tefillin, mezuzah and tzitzit
- interpretation and application of sources of authority through study in yeshivot and authority and role of the Beth Din
- different denominations of Judaism including Orthodox (to include Hasidic and Modern Orthodox), Reform and Liberal (the Pluralistic movement)
- the role of the rabbi in the synagogue and the community

Practices

- public acts of worship: synagogue services
- the use of Tenakh and Talmud in daily life
- worship in the home and private prayer
- prayer in Jewish worship including amidah – the standing prayer
- rituals: birth ceremonies; Bar and Bat Mitzvah; marriage; mourning rituals
- Shabbat in the home and synagogue
- Jewish Festivals including Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Pesach, Shavuot and Sukkot
- the synagogue; religious features of synagogues including design, artefacts and associated practices

Forms of expression and ways of life

- symbolism: how symbols and artefacts are used in worship including, Magen David and chanukiah
- expressing beliefs through Tzedekah and Gemilut Chassidim
- expressing beliefs through Bikur Cholim
- expressing beliefs through Tikkun Ha Olam – ‘Repairing/healing the world’ and Chessed – kindness to others
- different attitudes to Zionism and the State of Israel among Jewish people
- the nurture of the young in the Jewish family

DRAFT

- the work of one national Jewish organisation working to care for those in need such as to relieve poverty and suffering, to support families or to promote Jewish learning and education in the UK
- dietary laws: kosher and trefah, separation of milk and meat

Common and divergent views within Judaism in the way beliefs and teachings are understood and expressed should be included throughout.

Sikhism

All specifications must cover the following core knowledge and understanding, which represents 100% of the content for Part One.

Beliefs and teachings

- beliefs about the nature of God as expressed in the Mul Mantra
- belief about God as Creator
- beliefs about the nature of human life as an opportunity to unite with God
- beliefs in karma and rebirth, and the aim of mukti (liberation)
- beliefs about the importance of being gurmukh (God-centred) and the elimination of haumai (pride/ego)
- the belief in the oneness of humanity: equality of all human beings; complete gender equality as expressed in the Guru Granth Sahib and in stories from the lives of the Gurus and Sikhism today
- equality as expressed in stories from the lives of the Gurus and in Sikhism today
- the priority of the service of others
- the role of the sangat (community)

Sources of wisdom and authority

- the concept of 'Guru' and the place of the Ten Gurus in Sikhism
- the life and work of Guru Nanak including his three days in the river, his teachings about God and about equality, and his establishment of Kartarpur
- the life and work of Guru Gobind Singh: life and work including Vaisakhi and the formation of the Khalsa

DRAFT

- the authority and status of the Guru Granth Sahib, its origins, compilation, authority and status as the living Guru shown in practices including reading in worship and study
- the Rahit Maryada (Sikh Code of Conduct) as a guide to life and practice.
- the role of the granthi and other gurdwara functionaries such as rigis (custodian/reader of the Guru Granth Sahib)

Practices

- the gurdwara: religious features of the gurdwara including design, furniture, artefacts and associated practices
- role of the gurdwara within the Sikh community
- Langar as expression of sewa (selfless service to others)
- the practice of nam japa (meditating on the name of God) in daily life and in the gurdwara
- prayer in the home
- Gurpurbs (festivals): Guru Nanak's birthday, Vaisakhi, Divali, commemorations of the martyrdom of Guru Arjan and Guru Tagh Bahadur Ji
- the akand path (continuous 48 hour reading of the Guru Granth Sahib)
- birth and naming ceremonies; the significance and use of the names Singh and Kaur, Amrit sanskar (the initiation ceremony)
- visiting Sikh historical gurdwaras including the Harimander Sahib in Amritsar (the Golden Temple)

Forms of expression and ways of life

- Sewa in its various forms - tan (physical service), man (mental service) and dhan (material service)
- symbols, such as the Ik Onkar and khanda as expressions of belief
- Panj Kakke (the 'Five ks') and their significance
- respect for all religions as written in the Guru Granth Sahib and practiced through langar and within the Sikh community
- the role of kirtan (singing) in diwan

DRAFT

- Nam japna and avoidance of five evils of lust, anger, pride, greed and undue attachment, kirat karo (honest work), and vand chakko (service of those in need) as key values in life
- the work of one Sikh organisation working to relieve poverty and suffering
- work of a Sikh organisation promoting community cohesion and interfaith understanding
- no use of pictures or statues for worship, the availability of artists' expression of Gurus' pictures for decoration

Common and divergent views within Sikhism in the way beliefs and teachings are understood and expressed should be included throughout.



Department
for Education

© Crown copyright 2014

You may re-use this document/publication (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence v2.0. Where we have identified any third party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

To view this licence:

visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/2

email psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk

About this publication:

enquiries www.education.gov.uk/contactus

download www.gov.uk/government/publications

Reference: DFE-00641-2014



Follow us on Twitter:
[@educationgovuk](https://twitter.com/educationgovuk)



Like us on Facebook:
facebook.com/educationgovuk