

REVISED GCE AS & A LEVEL
Student Guide
Religious Studies

For first teaching from September 2008

For first award of AS Level in Summer 2009

For first award of A Level in Summer 2010

religious
studies

Student Guide: Religious Studies

Studying GCE Religious Studies will help develop your understanding of religious beliefs, practices and values. From this, you will be encouraged to reflect upon your own attitudes, and those of others, to the topics under consideration. The AS course can be taken as a final qualification or as the first half of the A Level qualification. If you wish to obtain a full A Level qualification, you must complete the second half of the course referred to as A2.

Q. Why study Religious Studies?

If you are interested in learning more about religious traditions and beliefs, philosophical or ethical approaches to religion, then this course will give you the opportunity to achieve this.

By studying Religious Studies, you will be able to engage with challenging questions concerning the meaning and purpose of life which will help you develop your own beliefs and values.

Q. What do I need to be able to take this course?

You will enjoy this course if you have an interest in different cultures and beliefs and have an enquiring mind. You will be posed with questions which will give you the opportunity to debate and explore different viewpoints. As the course requires extended writing, we would recommend that you have sufficient levels of literacy.

Q. What will I study?

There are eight units at AS from which you will select two units to study. If you decide to continue on to A2, you will again select two units to study from a further choice of eight.

The range of options allows you to explore various areas of study in religion and to relate this to the wider world. This Religious Studies course can also encourage you to reflect on and develop your own values, opinions and attitudes through what you have learned.

The range of options offered at AS are continued through to A2. If you plan to continue your study to complete the full A Level, it is recommended that you follow the same themes from AS through to A2.

You will study the key concepts within your chosen area of study, for example, religious beliefs, teachings, doctrines, principles, ideas and theories and how these are expressed in a range of texts, writings and/or practice.

You will also consider the contribution of significant people, traditions or movements relating to the area studied. As part of the course you will become familiar with religious language and terminology, develop your knowledge and understanding of major issues and questions which arise from the chosen area of study, and the relationship between your area of study and other aspects of human experience.

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How can I find out more?

There are a number of ways that you can find out more about studying Religious Studies.

These include:

- Teachers at your school or college
- Students who are already studying the subject
- www.ccea.org.uk/religious_studies
- Careers advisor
- Library
- UCAS www.ucas.com or CAO www.cao.ie for details on entry requirements for university courses

Q. How will I be assessed?

There are a total of four units in this course, two at AS and two at A2. The breakdown of the units is detailed in the table below.

Unit	A choice of two from:	Weightings, Duration and Format
AS 1	An Introduction to the Gospel of Luke	Weightings: 50% of AS 25% of A Level Duration and Format: Two 1 hour 20 minutes externally assessed written papers
AS 2	An Introduction to the Acts of the Apostles	
AS 3	An Introduction to Old Testament Covenant and Prophecy	
AS 4	The Christian Church in the Roman Empire: Beginnings, Expansion and External Pressure	
AS 5	The origins of the Celtic Church in Ireland and the beginnings of its missionary outreach	
AS 6	Religious Ethics: Foundations, Principles and Practice	
AS 7	An introduction to Philosophy of Religion	
AS 8	An Introduction to the Study of Islam	
Unit	A choice of two from:	Weightings, Duration and Format
A2 1	The Theology of the Gospel of Luke	Weightings: 25% of A Level Duration and Format: Two 2 hour externally assessed written papers
A2 2	A Study of Acts, Galatians and 1 Corinthians	
A2 3	The Covenant Community: Prophecy and Renewal	
A2 4	The Continued Development of the Christian Church in the Roman Empire to 325 AD	
A2 5	A Study of the development and impact of the Celtic Church in the 5th, 6th and 7th centuries	
A2 6	Ethics and Society	
A2 7	Religious Belief and Competing Claims	
A2 8	Islam: Law, tradition and practice	

Q. What can I do with a qualification in Religious Studies?

Religious Studies can open up a wide range of opportunities for further and higher education and interesting and rewarding careers. If you wish to continue with your study of Religious Studies at degree level, you will need to complete the full A Level course comprising the two units at AS together with the two at A2.

Through studying Religious Studies, you will learn how to critically evaluate different topics and issues, developing your skills in considering evidence and arguing a case based on the evidence.

Students of Religious Studies can go on to have careers, for example in teaching, medicine, public service, advice work, counselling, journalism, ministry, social work, charity organisations, youth work and community work.

