

Which GCSE specification should I choose?

NATRE offers this guide to the draft specifications taken from material supplied by the awarding organisations. Please note that this guide should be read in conjunction with the **DfE's** subject content which sets out the material to be studied in relation to each topic of each religion and should not be taken as a substitute for the officially published content. All material is subject to **Ofqual** accreditation in the autumn term and could easily change between now and then.

Full course – Option One

Part One The study of **TWO religions** with a focus on TWO topics from each religion: Beliefs and Teachings and Practices (Worth 50% of the qualification)

Part Two The study of **FOUR themes** from texts and or philosophy and ethics in the modern world (Worth 50% of the qualification)

Awarding organisation	Part one: Study of Religions 50% Subject content as set out in DfE annexes		Part Two: Religious, Philosophical and Ethical Studies in the Modern World 50%	Assessment
WJEC	Beliefs and teachings and Practices from either: Christianity OR Christianity (Catholic Christianity) AND One world faith chosen from: 1. Buddhism 2. Hinduism 3. Islam 4. Judaism 5. Sikhism	Each section examined though one 1 hour paper – compulsory questions	Study of issues of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relationships Life and Death Good, Evil and Suffering Human Rights, Religion and Social Justice 	Examined though one 2 hour paper – compulsory questions
OCR:	Beliefs and teachings and Practices from two religions chosen from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Christianity* Christianity – Roman Catholic* Buddhism Hinduism Islam Judaism *prohibited combination	Examined through one 2 hour paper (30 minutes per theme per religion)	Study of four themes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relationships and families The existence of God and ultimate reality Religion, peace and conflict Belief and non-belief 	Examined through one 2 hour paper (30 mins per theme)

AQA	<p>Topics: Beliefs and teachings and Practices</p> <p>Study of two religions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Christianity*2. Christianity (Catholic Christianity)*3. Islam4. Judaism5. Hinduism6. Buddhism7. Sikhism <p>*prohibited combination</p>	<p>Each of the two religions chosen is examined by TWO 5-part compulsory questions (24 marks each question)</p> <p>There will be one question for each topic for each religion (four in total)</p> <p>Exam: 1 hour 45 mins – 96 marks (plus five marks for spelling, grammar and specialist terminology).</p>	<p>Religious, philosophical and ethical studies in the modern world:</p> <p>Themes: 50%</p> <p>EITHER Four chosen from the six below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Religion and relationships• Religion and life• The existence of God and revelation• Religion, peace and conflict• Religion, crime and punishment• Religion, human rights and social justice <p>OR</p> <p>TWO chosen from the six above (25%) PLUS Two themes from St Mark’s Gospel (25%)</p>	<p>Each of the four themes chosen is examined by one five-part compulsory question (24 marks each).</p> <p>Four questions in total</p> <p>Exam: 1 hour 45 mins – 96 marks (plus five marks for spelling, grammar and specialist terminology).</p>
This specification integrates the study of two religions with the study of themes in philosophical and ethical studies in the modern world:				
Edexcel B Beliefs in Action	<p>Two religions chosen from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Buddhism• Catholic Christianity*• Christianity*• Hinduism• Islam• Judaism• Sikhism. <p>*prohibited combination</p> <p>AND applied to two areas of study chosen from the three below. Each of these areas is worth 50% of the GCSE:</p> <p>Area of Study 1 is Ethics. This explores God, The Family, Worship as well as Life and Death. (50%)</p> <p>Area of Study 2 is Peace and conflict. This explores God, Reconciliation, Worship and Peace (50%)</p> <p>Area of Study 3 is Philosophy. This explores God, Belief, Worship and Equality (50%)</p>			<p>Students sit TWO papers. There are four sections within each paper with a combination of structured questions (worth 25%) and extended open response/critical thinking.(worth 75%)</p> <p>This means there are 7 papers available for each Area of Study - One for each of the 7 religions offered.</p> <p>Structured questions make up 25% of the GCSE</p>

Full course – Option Two

1(a) The study of ONE religion on FOUR topics: Beliefs and Teachings, Practices, Sources of wisdom and authority, Forms of expression (Worth 50% of the GCSE)

1(b) The study of a SECOND religion on TWO topics: Beliefs and Teachings, Practices, Sources of wisdom and authority (Worth 25% of the GCSE)

2 The study of TWO themes with a focus on texts and or philosophy and ethics in the modern world in one religion (Worth 25% of the GCSE)

Awarding organisation	Part one (1): Study of Religions 1 50% Subject content as set out in DfE annexes	Part one (2): Study of Religions 2 25% Subject content as set out in DfE annexes	Part Two: Religious, Philosophical and Ethical Studies in the Modern World 25%	
Edexcel A Faith and Practice in the 21st Century	(Catholic Christianity*, Christianity* or Islam) Component 1 Primary Religion. This is worth 50% of the GCSE Students would study four topics 1. Beliefs and teachings 2. Practices 3. Sources of wisdom and authority 4. Forms of expression and ways of life *prohibited combination 1 hour and 45 minutes examination 112 marks worth 50%	Component 2 Second Religion. Students would study two topics: • Beliefs and Teaching • Practices. Seven religions offered chosen from: • Buddhism • Catholic Christianity* • Christianity* • Hinduism • Islam • Judaism • Sikhism. 50 min examination 56 marks worth 25%	Optional Component 3 Philosophy and Ethics in primary religion. Two themes: 1 Arguments for the existence of God from a variety of viewpoints within a religion. 2. Relationships and families OR Optional Component 4 Textual Study. One textual study chosen from: Mark's Gospel and Qur'an 50 minute examination 56 marks worth 25%	1. Component 1: Primary Religion = 50% 2. Component 2: Second Religion = 25% PLUS EITHER 3. Component 3 Philosophy and Ethics. 25% of GCSE) OR 4. Component 4 Textual Study. 25% Each paper follows the same structure – choice of two questions; Structured questions make up 25% of each paper; Extended open response/critical thinking make up 75% of each paper.
AQA – Catholic Christianity	Catholic Christianity (75%) Four topics 1. Beliefs and teachings 2. Practices 3. Sources of wisdom and authority 4. Forms of expression		A study of a second religion chosen from Judaism and Islam (25%) PLUS A study of two themes (25%) from one religion	

Short Course

Awarding organisation	Part One:		Part Two:	
WJEC	No information available at this time			
OCR:	No information available at this time			
Edexcel B short course	A study of ethics in relation to one religion chosen from: Buddhism Christianity Catholic Christianity Hinduism Islam Judaism Sikhism <i>Areas of study: God, The family, Worship, Life and Death</i>	Worth 50% One examination of one hour 4 compulsory questions assessing knowledge, understanding and evaluation	A study of Peace and Conflict in relation to one religion chosen from: Buddhism Christianity Catholic Christianity Hinduism Islam Judaism Sikhism <i>Areas of Study: God, Reconciliation, Worship and Peace</i>	Worth 50% One examination of one hour The Areas of Study are the same titles as the full course but have less content 4 compulsory questions assessing knowledge, understanding and evaluation
AQA – short Course	A study of two topics: 1. Beliefs and Teachings 2. Practices In relation to two of the following three religions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Christianity Judaism Islam Worth 50%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Section A: 12 compulsory questions, six on each chosen religion (48 marks). Section B: 10 compulsory questions, five on each theme (48marks). 96 marks in total plus five marks for spelling, grammar and specialist terminology 	A study of two themes from philosophical and ethical studies in the modern world: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Religion and Relationships Religion, peace and conflict Worth 50%	The whole short course is assessed by one written examination 1 hour and 45 minutes

Edexcel A – short course	<p>A study of two topics: 1. Beliefs and Teachings 2. Practices</p> <p>In relation to two religions chosen from: Christianity, Catholic Christianity, Islam and Judaism (50%) *Christianity and Catholic Christianity is a prohibited combination</p>	<p>2 x 1 hour papers – one for each religion</p> <p>Each paper worth 50% of the qualification</p> <p>4 compulsory questions assessing knowledge, understanding and evaluation</p>		
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