

**QUALIFICATION  
AWAITING  
ACCREDITATION**



## GCSE (9-1) Religious Studies



## Reform – an update

### GCSE and A Levels reform: An update

The first teaching of new A Levels and GCSEs begins in September 2015. We have been accredited by Ofqual for all of our reformed qualifications for first teaching from September 2015.

We are currently working on the development of a range of qualifications for first teaching from September 2016. These qualifications will be submitted to Ofqual for accreditation in 2015.

### Background to the reforms

The former Secretary of State for Education, Michael Gove, initiated the reform of GCSEs and A Levels in February 2013, asking Ofqual to implement changes that would lead to new qualifications.

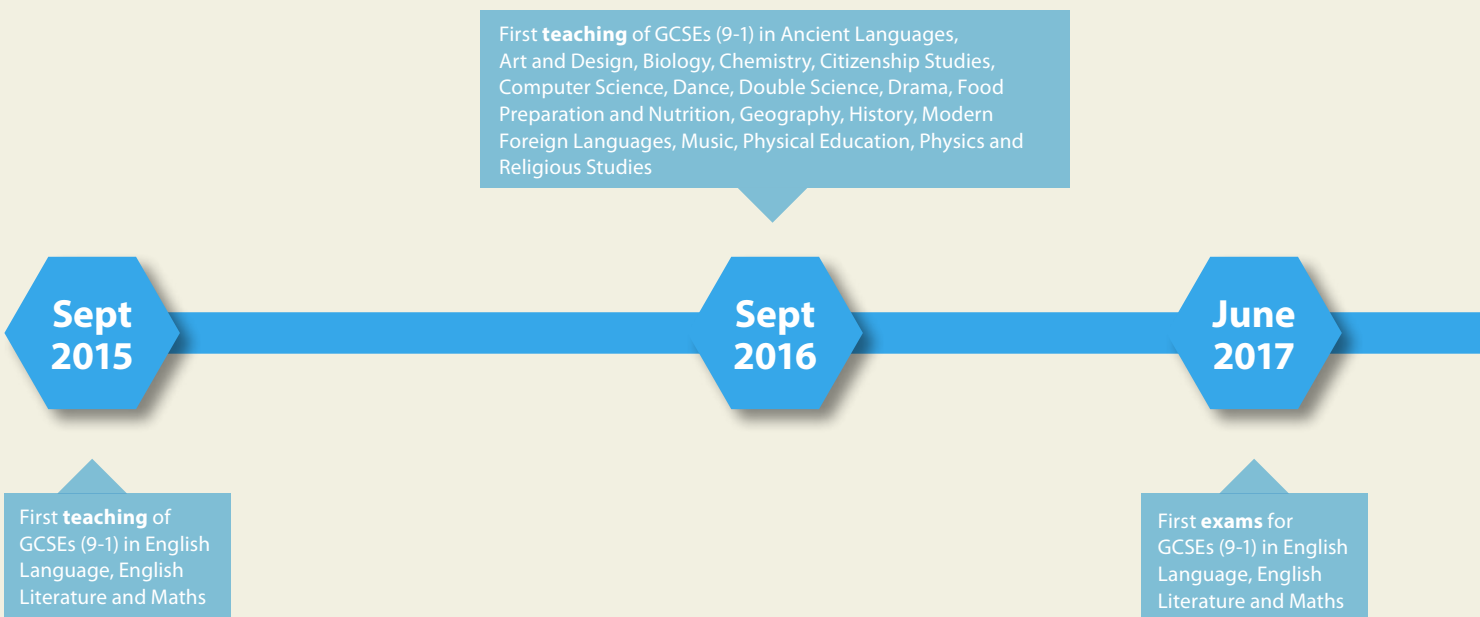
By reforming GCSEs and A Levels, the Department for Education (DfE) intends to:

- Make the qualifications more ambitious
- Better prepare young people for employment and further study

- Give everyone greater confidence in the integrity and reliability of the qualifications system.

The Government has stated that GCSEs will demand more from all students and that the purpose of taking A Levels is primarily for entry to university – changes are needed so students are better prepared to start their university course.

## GCSE timeline



## Changes to Assessment

Key structural features of the new GCSEs:

- Linear GCSEs with assessment at the end of the two-year course in June
- Tiering in certain subjects only, such as Maths and Modern Foreign Languages
- Assessment predominantly by external exam only
- A new 9-1 grading system (9 = top level)
- Re-sit opportunities in November for Maths and English Language only.

School accountability and performance measures key headlines:

- Progress across a suite of 8 subjects (Progress 8)
- Attainment across 8 subjects (Attainment 8)
- The percentage of pupils achieving a C grade or better in English and maths
- The EBacc.

For more information refer to [ocr.org.uk/gcsereform](https://ocr.org.uk/gcsereform)

First **teaching** of GCSEs (9-1) in a range of further subjects (Ofqual is consulting on the principles for other subjects to be included as GCSEs)

Sept  
2017

June  
2018

First **exams** for GCSEs (9-1) in other subjects

June  
2019

First **exams** in GCSEs (9-1) in Ancient Languages, Art and Design, Biology, Chemistry, Citizenship Studies, Computer Science, Dance, Double Science, Drama, Food Preparation and Nutrition, Geography, History, Modern Foreign Languages, Music, Physical Education, Physics and Religious Studies

# Introducing Religious Studies changes – at a glance

## GCSE (9-1) Religious Studies

Our GCSE (9-1) Religious Studies specification provides your learners with the exciting opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of two religions, and explore philosophy and ethical studies in the modern world. We are striving to inspire learners to engage in relevant topical issues and acquire knowledge and a critical understanding of major issues that are relevant to learners in the twenty-first century. At OCR, we are passionate about this subject and want to share our enthusiasm and are keen to enable learners to acquire skills that will be transferable across the curriculum. Religious Studies can open up the possibility of in-depth debate, which leads to critical evaluation and analysis.

The specification has been designed after engaging with teachers, higher education and consultants resulting in a clear and accessible specification. We appreciate that a new specification may bring challenges and we want to support teachers in the delivery with training and a range of quality resources. The OCR Religious Studies team will be supporting you throughout the lifetime of the qualification, along with content developers who have a range of experiences within teaching, assessment and education.

## GCSE short course in Religious Studies

The content for the OCR GCSE Religious Studies short courses will be half the content of the GCSE full course. Learners will be able to study beliefs and teachings in relation to two religions, and two different themes adopting the approach of religious, philosophical and ethical studies in the modern world.



# Content Overview

## GCSE (9-1) Religious Studies

The specification includes exciting content exploring relationships and families, peace and conflict, belief in God and non-religious belief.

Component title	Component overview
<p><b>Study of Religions (01)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Beliefs and Teachings</b></li> <li>• <b>Practices</b></li> </ul>	<p>Study two religions from the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Christianity*</li> <li>• Christianity-Roman Catholicism</li> <li>• Buddhism</li> <li>• Hinduism</li> <li>• Islam</li> <li>• Judaism</li> </ul>
<p><b>Religious, Philosophical and Ethical Studies in the Modern World (02)</b></p>	<p>A study of four themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relationships and families</li> <li>• The existence of God and ultimate reality</li> <li>• Religion, peace and conflict</li> <li>• Belief and non-belief</li> </ul>

\*Learners entering for Christianity may not also enter for Christianity-Roman Catholicism.

## What's staying the same, what's changing?

### GCSE (9-1) Religious Studies

Due to new regulatory requirements, there have been changes to the specification's structure, assessment and content.

	What's staying the same?	What's changing?
<b>Assessment and Structure</b>	Marks will be awarded for Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar (SPaG). All components are assessed by written examination.	The qualification has compulsory components.
<b>Content</b>	Teachers retain the ability to make choices about which (two) religions to study.	Content across all components has been updated.



# Assessment Overview

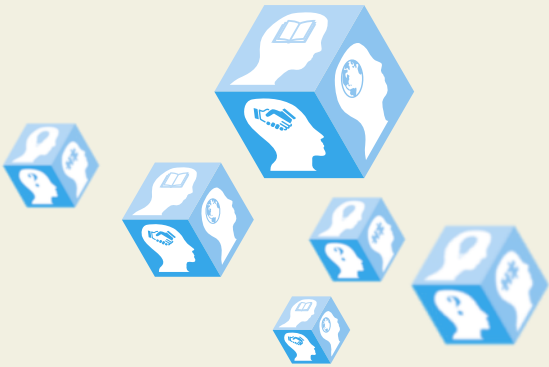
## GCSE (9-1) Religious Studies

This specification has a simple, clear assessment structure which consists of two written examinations.

		<b>Weighting</b>
<b>Component 1</b>	Study of Religion 1	25%
<b>Component 1</b>	Study of a Religion 2	25%
<b>Component 2</b>	Religious, Philosophical and Ethical Studies in the Modern World.	50%



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# Progression pathways

GCSE (9-1) Religious Studies provides progression from Key Stage 3 and through to a number of AS and A Level subjects.





## Specialist Advice and Guidance

Resources and support for our GCSE (9-1) Religious Studies qualification, developed through collaboration between our Religious Studies Subject Specialist, teachers and other subject experts, are available from our website.

### Subject Specialist Support

OCR Subject Specialists provide information and support to schools including specification advice, updates on resource developments and a range of training opportunities.

Subject Specialists work with subject communities through a range of networks to ensure the sharing of ideas and expertise supporting teachers and students alike. Subject Specialists are dedicated to working with developers to help produce specifications and the resources needed to support these qualifications during development, an essential part of which is working alongside teachers through the Teacher Advisory Groups to obtain genuine honest feedback.

You can contact our Religious Studies Subject Specialist for specialist advice, guidance and support.

Meet the team at [ocr.org.uk/religiousstudiesteam](https://ocr.org.uk/religiousstudiesteam)



Michelle Webb

### Contact them at:

01223 553998

[ocr.religiousstudies@ocr.org.uk](mailto:ocr.religiousstudies@ocr.org.uk)

[@OCRexams](https://twitter.com/OCRexams)

To stay up to date with all the relevant news about our qualifications, register for email updates at

[ocr.org.uk/updates](https://ocr.org.uk/updates)

### Religious Studies Community

The social network is a free platform where teachers can engage with each other – and with us – to find and offer guidance, discover and share ideas, best practice and a range of Religious Studies support materials.

To sign up, go to [social.ocr.org.uk](https://social.ocr.org.uk)



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## Resources

Our aim is to help you at every stage of the introduction of a new specification and we're working hard to provide a practical package of support in close consultation with teachers and other experts.

For a start, we'll provide a range of high-quality creative resources. Tailored to the needs of each subject, their focus is on supporting creative teaching approaches and progression for all students. We see our resources as a body of knowledge that will grow throughout the lifetime of the specifications. They are built on the best practice we've identified from our ongoing discussions with the teaching community.

We are also developing exciting new digital tools to help you explore and interact with our resources. The Scheme of Work Builder will allow you to construct personalised schemes of work and you'll be able to add in the specification content, our wide range of resources and teaching suggestions, as well as add your own content and materials.

Please visit our website at [ocr.org.uk/reformresources](http://ocr.org.uk/reformresources) for details of the new tools we are developing and to take a look at the types of resources on offer.

### Publisher Partner Resources

We're working with a number of leading publishers who are publishing resources for the new GCSE, AS and A Level specifications for 2016. We're working together to make sure that the resources embed the fundamental content of each specification, while delivering the breadth and depth needed to succeed at GCSE, A Level and beyond.

You can find more details about all our publisher partners and all the resources they're providing on our website at [ocr.org.uk/publishing-partners](http://ocr.org.uk/publishing-partners)

## Free GCSE and A Level reform training events

### An introduction to the new specifications

We're running free training events throughout the next academic year to help you get to grips with the reformed qualifications for first teaching in September 2016.

### Practical events, created with you in mind

These carefully planned free events are designed to help smooth the path to the first teaching of reformed qualifications and provide you with an understanding of:

- The new specification content, structure and assessment
- The differences between the existing and new specifications
- The resources and support available for qualifications.

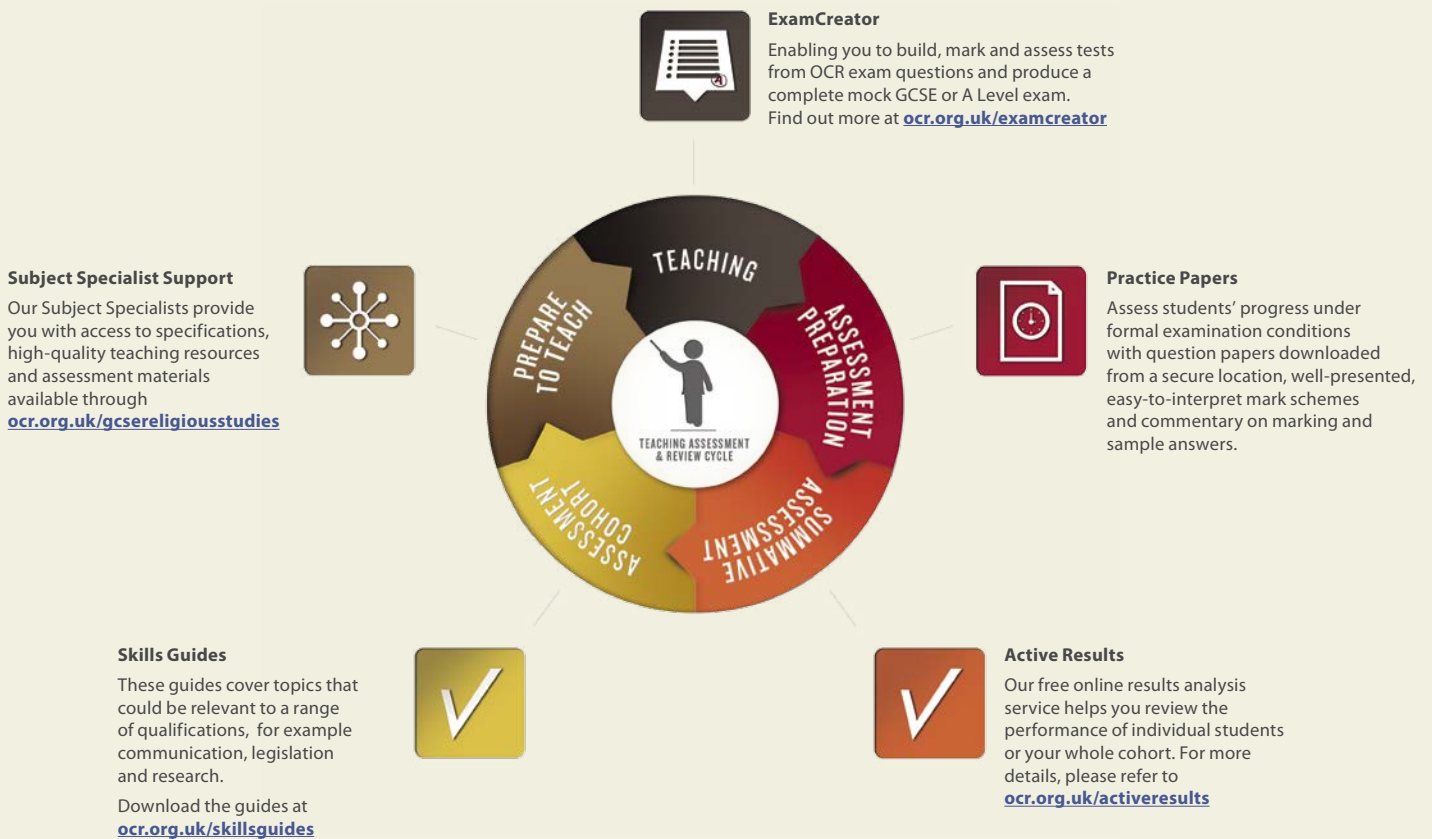
They'll give you the opportunity to speak face to face with our team, and network and discuss teaching approaches with colleagues.

To receive more information about dates, and the wide range of locations as we release them, please register for A Level or GCSE reform email updates at [ocr.org.uk/updates](http://ocr.org.uk/updates)

# Assessment Preparation and Analysis Service

We recognise that the introduction of a new specification can bring challenges for implementation and teaching. Our aim is to help you at every stage and we're working hard to provide a practical package of support in close consultation with teachers and other experts so we can help you to make the changes.

Along with subject-specific resources and tools, you'll also have access to a selection of generic resources that focus on skills development, professional guidance for teachers and results data analysis.



Building a practical package of support and resources to support you at every stage of the introduction of a new specification. In close consultation with teachers and industry experts.

# Extended Project Qualification (EPQ)

## Giving your students the edge

Our **Extended Project Qualification (EPQ)** can provide your students with the skills that universities look for, to help them stand out from the crowd.

## Four steps to success



It's straightforward for your students to take our inspiring EPQ. They can enjoy the freedom of working in their own way as they undertake a project based either on a subject they're studying or in an area of personal interest.

With its skills-based assessed assignment, the qualification is ideal for helping students improve transferable skills such as planning, research, analysis and evaluation, and they can take it as part of either an academic or vocational curriculum.

It's the equivalent of an AS Level and designed as a one-year course.

## Three reasons to deliver the EPQ

- It's worth up to 70 UCAS points
- There is real flexibility and ease of delivery – it can be taught by non-specialist staff and run over one or two years, and it has two entry points (January and June)
- Fewer guided learning hours than AS Level and requires fewer resources.

Find out more at [ocr.org.uk/extendedproject](https://ocr.org.uk/extendedproject)









## Download high-quality, exciting and innovative GCSE (9-1) Religious Studies resources from [ocr.org.uk/gcsereligiousstudies](https://ocr.org.uk/gcsereligiousstudies)

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