

Students who continue Religious Studies into Key Stage 4 follow the **AQA GCSE Religious Studies (Specification A)** course. They will study **two religions—Islam and Christianity—in depth**, examining key beliefs, practices, and sources of authority. Building on this foundation, students explore a range of contemporary themes, including **relationships and family life, the origins and value of life, crime and punishment, and issues of peace and conflict**. These topics continue into Year 11, encouraging students to consider how religious beliefs shape attitudes and everyday decisions. Throughout the course, students develop **critical skills of explanation, analysis, and evaluation**, learning to discuss different religious perspectives and the impact of faith in modern society. Assessment is through **two final examination papers at the end of Year 11**. To prepare, students complete regular practice exam questions, end-of-unit tests, and mid- and end-of-year assessments. In Year 11, they also sit **two full mock exams**, giving valuable experience before the final GCSE assessments.

| Year 10                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Year 11                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
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| <b>Unit 1: Christianity – Beliefs</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nature of God (omnibenevolent, omnipotent, just)</li> <li>The Trinity</li> <li>Creation (literal and symbolic interpretations)</li> <li>Incarnation, crucifixion, resurrection, ascension</li> <li>Life after death (heaven, hell, purgatory, judgment)</li> <li>Sin and salvation (atonement, role of Christ)</li> </ul>                                                   | <b>Theme B: Religion and Life</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Origins of the universe: Big Bang vs creation</li> <li>Value of the world: stewardship, dominion, environment</li> <li>Use and abuse of animals</li> <li>Abortion and euthanasia</li> <li>Death and the afterlife</li> </ul>                   |
| <b>Unit 2: Christianity – Practices</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Worship: liturgical, non-liturgical, private prayer</li> <li>Sacraments: baptism, Eucharist, others</li> <li>Pilgrimage and festivals (Christmas, Easter)</li> <li>Role of the Church in the local community (food banks, street pastors)</li> <li>Worldwide Church: mission, evangelism, reconciliation, persecution, charity</li> </ul>                                 | <b>Theme D: Religion, Peace and Conflict</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Religious teachings about peace, justice, forgiveness, reconciliation</li> <li>Violence, terrorism and war</li> <li>Just War theory and Holy War</li> <li>Weapons of mass destruction</li> <li>Pacifism and peace-making</li> </ul> |
| <b>Unit 3: Islam – Beliefs</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The six articles of faith (Sunni) and five roots of Usul ad-Din (Shi'a)</li> <li>Nature of God (Tawhid, 99 names)</li> <li>Angels and their roles</li> <li>Holy books: Qur'an, Hadith, other scriptures</li> <li>Prophets: Adam, Ibrahim, Muhammad</li> <li>Life after death (Akhirah, resurrection, judgment, paradise/hell)</li> <li>Predestination and human freedom</li> </ul> | <b>Theme E: Religion, Crime and Punishment</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Causes of crime</li> <li>Aims of punishment: retribution, deterrence, reformation</li> <li>Treatment of criminals &amp; prison ethics</li> <li>Corporal and capital punishment</li> <li>Forgiveness and justice</li> </ul>        |
| <b>Unit 4: Islam – Practices</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Five Pillars: Shahadah, Salah, Zakah, Sawm, Hajj</li> <li>Ten Obligatory Acts (Shi'a)</li> <li>Prayer: times, wudu, Jummah</li> <li>Fasting and Ramadan, Night of Power</li> <li>Charity: Zakah and Sadaqah</li> <li>Hajj rituals and significance</li> <li>Jihad: greater and lesser</li> <li>Festivals: Id-ul-Fitr, Id-ul-Adha, Ashura</li> </ul>                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>Theme A: Relationships and Families</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Human sexuality &amp; same-sex relationships</li> <li>Marriage &amp; divorce</li> <li>Families and roles of men and women</li> <li>Contraception and family planning</li> <li>Religious teachings on these issues from Christianity &amp; Islam</li> </ul>                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |

**Useful resources for supporting your child at home:**

- Seneca is an online platform for homework and revision. <https://app.senecalearning.com/>
- BBC bitesize <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/examspecs/zjqx47h>
- GCSE POD <https://members.gcsepod.com/login/>
- AQA Past Papers <https://www.aqa.org.uk/find-past-papers-and-mark->