

A Student's Guide to the AS and Advanced GCE in

Religious Studies

What do I need to know or be able to do before taking this course?

There are no prior knowledge requirements for this AS/Advanced GCE.

What will I learn on this Advanced GCE course?

The AS/Advanced GCE in Religious Studies offers you a choice of areas of study. Depending on your choice of units, you can:

- ◆ focus on one or more world faiths
- ◆ study the philosophy and/or ethics of religion
- ◆ undertake an in-depth study of a selected area through coursework

What kind of student is this course suitable for?

This course is suitable for you if you:

- ◆ have an interest in religion
- ◆ have an interest in a specific faith
- ◆ wish to follow a philosophical or ethical approach to religion.



What examinations will I have to take to get my qualification?

AS

AS is short for Advanced Subsidiary. This is the first half of the full Advanced GCE course and is a stepping-stone to the full Advanced GCE qualification. You can take just the AS on its own or you and your tutor can decide, even at the end of the AS course, whether to continue to take the full Advanced GCE.

Unit 1 Coursework (compulsory)

An in-depth study of a religious topic. Your piece of coursework will be about 2000 – 2500 words long.

Plus two units from the following five:

Unit 2 Philosophy of Religion

A study of the philosophical arguments for the existence of God, the problem of evil and suffering and philosophical debates about miracles.

Unit 3 Old Testament/Jewish Bible OR Religious Ethics

One of:

3a Old Testament/Jewish Bible

A study of covenant, law and monarchy. The life of Abraham, Moses and the Law and Samuel and the Monarchy.

3b Ethics

A study of ethical theories, the relationship between religion and morality and applied ethics

Unit 4 New Testament

One of:

4a The Gospel according to Luke

The authorship and date of the Gospel, the nature of discipleship and Jesus' teaching on women, outcasts, wealth and forgiveness. The Birth and Infancy narratives, journey narratives and The Holy Spirit

4b The Fourth Gospel

The authorship and date of the Fourth Gospel, the nature of discipleship and Jesus' teaching on women. The 'I am' sayings, Jesus' public ministry and The Holy Spirit.

4c The early Church as reflected in Acts and 1 Corinthians

The authorship and dates of Acts and 1 Corinthians, the organisation of the early Church in Jerusalem and worship in the early Church. The role of Peter, relationship with the authorities and the Council of Jerusalem.

Unit 5 Christianity

One of:

5a Church History & Christian Thought: The Reformation

Key events in England (up to 1603) or Europe (up to 1531). The origins of the reformation and contributions including those of Cranmer and Luther.

5b Church History & Christian Thought: The Nineteenth Century to the Present Day

A study of Germany in the 1930s and 1940s, the influence of the Churches in England, Communism and the Church in Russia and Eastern Europe and the emergence and key ideas of Liberation Theology.

5c Christian Belief and Practice

A study of Christian beliefs about God, the person of Jesus, the nature and purposes of Christian worship and Christian teachings on sexual conduct, marriage and the family and the use of money.

Unit 6 World Religions

One of:

6a Buddhism

A study of Gautama; key concepts, including the three refuges and meditation and Buddhist ethics.

6b Hinduism

A study of the background and emergence of Hinduism; key concepts, including beliefs associated with Yoga and Krishna and Hindu ethics.

6c Islam

A study of the background and emergence of Islam; key concepts including the five pillars and Islamic ethics.

6d Judaism

A study of the growth of rabbinic Judaism; key concepts including Rashi and his school and Judah Halevi and Jewish ethics.

Advanced level

The full Advanced GCE qualification is made up of the three AS units plus three more units, which are studied at a higher level. You don't necessarily have to take the full Advanced GCE qualification; you can still get a certificate for the AS. If you decide to take the second half of the course it will cover three of the following units.

Two units from the following five:

Unit 7 Philosophy of Religion

A study of the philosophical arguments for the existence of God and concepts of proof, beliefs about life after death and religious language.

Unit 8 Old Testament/Jewish Bible OR Religious Ethics

One of:

8a Old Testament/Jewish Bible

A study of prophecy, the nature of God and moral and social righteousness.

8b Ethics

A study of ethical theories including emotivism, ethical language and concepts in moral discourse and applied ethics.

Unit 9 New Testament

One of:

9a The Gospel according to Luke

The purpose and characteristics of the Gospel; the person of Jesus and His teachings including salvation, prayer and Kingdom of God. Jesus' relationship with the authorities; the Passion narratives and the death and resurrection of Jesus.

9b The Fourth Gospel

The purpose and characteristics of the Fourth Gospel; the Prologue; the person of Jesus and His teachings including salvation and eternal life.

9c The early Church as reflected in Acts and 1 Corinthians

Paul's teaching including relations with the authorities, spiritual gifts, resurrection, marriage and worship. Paul's life and work and the Church at Corinth.

Unit 10 Christianity

One of:

10a Church History & Christian Thought: The Reformation

Key events in England (1603-1702) or Europe (1531-1700). Contributions including those of Fox, Calvin and Loyola.

10b Church History & Christian Thought: The Nineteenth Century to the Present Day

A study of the effect of social, political and cultural factors on Christianity, the Ecumenical movement, religious developments in the UK, black theology in North America, African theology, Liberation Theology in Latin America and Liberation Theology and its impact on the Church.

10c Christian Belief and Practice

A study of Christian beliefs about the Trinity, the person of Jesus, atonement and salvation, death and eternal life and Christian teachings on employment and leisure and relations with other religions.

Unit 11 World Religions

One of:

11a Buddhism

A study of the expansion of Buddhism; key concepts, including dukkha, anicca and bodhisattva and selected texts.

11b Hinduism

A study of contributions to the modern development of Hinduism; key concepts including atman and dhama and selected texts.

11c Islam

A study of the development of Islam; key concepts including beliefs about Allah and Sufism and selected texts.

11d Judaism

A study of the contributions to Judaism of Moses Mendlessohn, David Friedlander and others; key concepts including law and authority and Chasidism and selected texts.

Plus:

Unit 12 Issues in Religion (compulsory)

You are required to study one topic chosen from a range of topic areas. The study should develop your knowledge and understanding of the connections between elements of the area of study selected. This will be assessed by a 1 hour 30 minute examination.

How can I develop my full range of skills by doing this course?

As well as covering advanced level study of Religious Studies, this course will enable you to develop some key skills, which will be essential to you whatever you go on to do afterwards. Depending on your programme of study, the key skills you can develop during this course are:

- ◆ Communication
- ◆ Information technology
- ◆ Working with others
- ◆ Improving own learning and performance
- ◆ Problem solving.

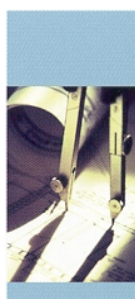
Development of these skills will help you with your learning as well as helping you to move in to higher education or employment.

What could I go on to do at the end of my course?

Successful completion of this Advanced GCE will give you access to a range of career and higher education opportunities. The course will provide you with the opportunity to develop a range of transferable skills. These include the skills of collecting, synthesising and interpreting information from a range of sources the findings of this research will need to be effectively communicated. You will also be required to identify and develop the links between the different parts of the subject that you have studied. These skills are in great demand and are recognised by employers and universities and colleges as being of great value.

Religious Studies combines well with almost all other humanities AS/Advanced GCE subjects such as History, Geography and English. In addition, if taken with sciences like Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry and Biology, Religious Studies will give you a broad-based curriculum.

Many students use their qualification to go straight into employment, rather than go on to higher education. Because AS/Advanced GCE Religious Studies develops the transferable skills and the key skills that employers are looking for, they can help you take advantage of a wide range of employment opportunities.



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