

Information for Religious Studies GCSE, AQA Route A

Exam Structure

The RS exam is divided into two papers:

Paper 1- Study of Two Religions (1h 45m)

- Christian Beliefs
- Christian Practices
- Buddhist Beliefs
- Buddhist Practices

Paper 2- Thematic Studies (1h 45m)

- Theme A: Relationships and the Family
- Theme B; Religion and Life
- Theme D: Religion, Peace and Conflict
- Theme E: Crime and Punishment

Tips for Revision

1. Ensure that your book is well-organised, with topics clearly labelled and worksheets glued in at the right place.
2. Make clear revision notes for each topic that help you to learn. Also consider using: cue cards; posters; mind-maps; and podcasts. After each lesson you could re-read your notes and consolidate your knowledge.
3. Use the VLE to access the range of revision materials and booklets provided for each topic. The section entitled 'Revision for all Topics' may be most useful
<https://vle.lionhearttrust.org.uk/course/view.php?id=167#section-11>
4. Each week you should be carrying out preparation learning tasks and/or revision beyond the classroom. Use the revision schedule given out to guide you. The topic will be set weekly on Beehive.
5. Please purchase this **updated revision guide to reflect the new changes to exam questions: AQA Revision Guide (Revised Edition): Religious Studies A (9-1), Christianity & Buddhism** by Marianne Fleming; Nagapriya; and Peter Smith, October 2025: Oxford University Press, ISBN: **978-1382073684**
6. If you wish to purchase copies of revised edition workbooks, you will need 2 copies – one for Paper 1 (Beliefs & Practices) and one for Paper 2 (Themes)

AQA GCSE Religious Studies A (9-1) Workbook: Christianity & Buddhism for Paper 1: Revised Edition Paperback by Rachael Jackson-Royal and Steven Humphrys, September 2025: Oxford University Press, ISBN: **978-1382073585**

AQA GCSE Religious Studies A (9-1) Workbook: Christianity & Buddhism for Paper 2: Revised Edition Paperback by Dawn Cox and Steven Humphrys, September 2025: Oxford University Press, ISBN: **978-1382073608**

7. On the VLE and on AQA's website, there are lots of sample questions for each topic. Your answers to sample exam papers can be brought in for feedback from your teacher.
8. Use the excellent resources on BBC Bitesize to help you recap and to test yourself.

AQA GCSE Religious Studies. Guidance on answering exam questions.

Q1. 1 Mark Questions - Multiple choice. Choose one answer

Q2. 1 Mark Question – Short answer, using bullet points. This could be to give an idea, a reason or a definition of a key term.

Q3. 4 Mark Question- You will be asked to explain two ideas. You will answer using Point Explain x2

First Point (1/2 marks)	Second Point (3/4 marks)
1 mark for a simple (a basic point) explanation of a relevant and influence / similarity / difference	1 mark for a simple (a basic point) explanation of a relevant and influence / similarity / difference
1 mark for a detailed (developed) explanation of a relevant and influence / similarity / difference	1 mark for a detailed (developed) explanation of a relevant and influence / similarity / difference
This question should be answered in two short paragraphs.	

Q4. 6 Mark Question- You will need to explain two beliefs and add a source of wisdom e.g. the Bible, The Buddha says, etc. You must state the source. Answer using Point Explain and Point Evidence (name the source) Explain Apply

First point (1/2 marks)	Second point (3/4 marks)	Source (5/6 marks)
1 mark for a simple explanation of a relevant and accurate belief / teaching	1 mark for a simple explanation of a relevant and accurate belief / teaching	1 mark for a response naming a relevant source of authority.
1 mark for a detailed explanation of a relevant and accurate belief / teaching	1 mark for a detailed explanation of a relevant and accurate belief / teaching	1 mark for application of a relevant source of authority to the question

AO2 Questions (12 Mark Question): You will be given a statement to discuss

Evaluate a statement by showing arguments for using evidence and evaluation, showing arguments against using evidence and evaluation, and reaching a justified conclusion.

Suggested technique:

A paragraph for using PEEL and Evaluate- make sure you explain in great depth and use examples

A paragraph against using PEEL and Evaluate- make sure you explain in great depth and use examples

A paragraph either for or against using PEEL and Evaluate- make sure you explain in great depth and use examples

A conclusion starting with *despite* that weighs up both sides of the argument

Level	Criteria	Marks
4	A well-argued response, reasoned consideration of different points of view. Logical chains of reasoning leading to judgement(s) supported by knowledge and understanding of relevant evidence and information. References to religion applied to the issue.	10-12
3	Reasoned consideration of different points of view. Logical chains of reasoning that draw on knowledge and understanding of relevant evidence and information. Clear reference to religion.	7-9
2	Reasoned consideration of a point of view. A logical chain of reasoning drawing on knowledge and understanding of relevant evidence and information. OR Recognition of different points of view, each supported by relevant reasons / evidence. Maximum of Level 2 if there is no reference to religion or the argument is onesided.	4-6
1	Point of view with reason(s) stated in support.	1-3
0	Nothing worthy of credit.	0