

Information for Religious Studies GCSE- AQA route A (The Cedars academy)

Exam Structure

The RS exam is divided into two papers:

1. Paper 1: Study of religious practices and beliefs.
 - Focuses on the study of Christianity and Islam.
 - You will look at the beliefs and practices of these religions separately.
 - This paper is worth 50% of your final grade.

2. Paper 2: Thematic Studies
 - Includes themes A,B,D,E- Religion and families, Religion and life, Religion, peace and conflict, Religion, Religion, crime and punishment.
 - Students will look at Christian and Muslims views on these topics above.
 - Students are only required to answer questions from the themes listed above.
 - This paper is worth 50% of your final grade.

Revision Ideas

- Regular Revision: Encourage your child to review their notes regularly and use revision guides.
- Past Papers: Practicing past exam papers can help familiarise them with the exam format and question styles.
- Mind Maps and Flashcards: These tools can help in summarising key concepts and making revision more interactive.
- Group Study: Studying with peers can provide different perspectives and enhance understanding.
- Complete Exam Questions: Practicing past paper questions will help with time management and confidence
- Define Key Terms: For example, "What is omnipotence?" or "What is stewardship?".
- Describe Concepts: Such as "Describe the role of Word and Spirit in creation".
- Explain Significance: Questions like "Explain why the concept of the Trinity is important in Christianity".
- Evaluate Arguments: For instance, "Religious believers should be against abortion".

Skills needed

- Knowledge and Understanding: Detailed knowledge of the subject material and the ability to explain beliefs and actions.
- Key Vocabulary and Sources of Authority: Familiarity with key terms and references to scripture or religious teachings.
- Impact and Analysis: Understanding how beliefs influence actions and the ability to break down topics into parts.
- Argument and Evaluation: Giving reasons for different viewpoints and weighing up ideas to come to a judgment.

Topics for GCSE RS

Paper 1- Christian beliefs and practices and Islam beliefs and practices

Christian Beliefs	Christian Practices	Islam Beliefs	Islam Practices
The nature of God	Worship	The oneness of God and the supremacy of Gods will	The five pillars, ten obligatory acts and the Shahadah
God as omnipotent, loving and just	Prayer	Key belief of Sunni Islam and Shi'a Islam	Salah: The daily prayers
The oneness of God and the trinity	The sacraments: baptism	The nature of God	Sawm: fasting during Ramadan
Different Christian beliefs about creation	The sacraments: Holy communion	Angels	Zakah: almsgiving
The incarnation and Jesus, the son of God	Pilgrimage	Predestination	Hajj: Pilgrimage
The crucifixion	Celebrating festivals	Life after death	Jihad
The resurrection and ascension	The role of the church in the local community: Food banks and street pastors	Prophethood and Adam	The festivals of Id-ul-Fitr and Id-ul-Adha

Resurrection and life after death	The place of mission and evangelism	Ibrahim	The festival of Ashura
The afterlife and judgement	Church growth	Muhammad and the Imamate	
Heaven and hell	He importance of the worldwide church	The holy books	
Sin and salvation	Christian persecution		
The role of Christ in salvation	The churches' response to world poverty		

Paper 2- Christian and Islamic understanding, beliefs, teachings and practices on.

Theme A	Theme B	Theme D	Theme E
Human sexuality	The origins of the universe	Violence, violent protest and terrorism	Reasons for crime
Sexual relationships before and outside marriage	The value of the world	Reasons for war	Lawbreakers and different types of crime
Contraception and family planning	The use and abuse of the environment	Nuclear war and weapons of mass destruction	Suffering and causing suffering to others
Marriage	Animals- use off, testing e.c.t	Just war theory	Three aims of punishment
Divorce and remarriage	The origins of human life	Holy war	The treatment of criminals: prison, corporal punishment and community service

The nature of families	Abortion	Pacifism	forgiveness
The purpose of families	Euthanasia	Religious responses to victims of war	The death penalty
Gender equality	Death and afterlife		

Useful Resources

Past papers and mark schemes

[AQA GCSE RS Past Papers - Revision World](#)

[GCSE Religious Studies 8062 | Assessment Resources | AQA](#)

Important: the specification for the exam has changed, your child has been given a printed booklet of all the past papers adapted and changed to the new layout.

The most important resource:

Attached below is the teams link which your child has had access too since the start of the year.

This contains everything they could possibly need, lesson resources, past papers, mark schemes, assessments, feedback PowerPoints, useful videos and more.

This is regularly updated.

[General | GCSE RS/1104-RS 1 2024-2026 | Microsoft Teams](#)

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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