

teacher's handbook

Version 3 April 2010

GCSE

Religious Studies B: Philosophy and Applied Ethics

J621 – Full Course
J121 – Short Course

This handbook is designed to accompany the OCR GCSE Religious Studies B: Philosophy and Applied Ethics specification for teaching from September 2009. This booklet contains the following support materials:

- Subject specific guidance
- Resource list
- Publisher partner resources
- Frequently asked questions
- Other forms of support.

OCR GCSE
**RELIGIOUS
STUDIES**

www.ocr.org.uk/religiousstudiesb/newgcse
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Introduction

OCR is offering new GCSEs for first teaching in September 2009.

The opportunity has been taken to improve the quality of our GCSEs for teachers and students alike.

Improvements have been made in three key areas: updated and relevant content, a focus on developing students personal, learning and thinking skills, and flexible assessment, so you can choose the best learning approach.

We want to make the introduction of these new GCSEs as easy for you to manage as possible.

The main changes are:

- The opportunity will be taken to bring course content up to date
- Examinations should provide opportunity for extended writing and more varied question types
- All GCSEs will meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act.

Our approach is to provide consistency across all our GCSEs by offering the flexibility that unitised qualifications bring, allowing teaching and assessment to be either a linear or unitised fashion.

OCR offers a range of support materials, developed following extensive research and consultation with teachers. They have been designed to save you time when preparing for the new specification and to support you while teaching them.

It is important to make the point that this Teacher Handbook plays a secondary role to the specifications themselves. The GCSE Religious Studies B Specification is the document on which assessment is based: it specifies what content and skills need to be covered. At all times therefore, the Teacher Handbook should be read in conjunction with the specification. If clarification on a particular point is sought, then that clarification must be found in the specification itself.

Subject specific guidance

This specification offers candidates the opportunity to explore the world of belief and religious life through reflection on stimulating philosophical and ethical material. Candidates have the opportunity to offer personal responses and informed insights on these fundamental questions and issues.

Candidates being prepared for short course will be able to specialise in either the Philosophical **or** Applied Ethics aspects of the course as best suits their needs or aptitudes. They will also be able to study topics and answer examination questions from **both** types of study unit. Full course candidates will need to be prepared for both aspects of the course.

Candidates may approach this through a study of the perspectives of one, of two or of three particular religions. They must not do this through a study of **more** than three religions. It is also acceptable for candidates to argue from a secular viewpoint or, in appropriate questions, to explore perspectives from faiths other than the six major world faiths.

Teachers wishing to develop students' awareness of Community Cohesion will find a great deal of material to explore in units covering topics such as "Human Relationships, Peace and Justice, Equality, Good and Evil".

In preparing for examinations candidates should be offered opportunities to engage with relevant traditions, authoritative sacred texts and statements drawn from the religion or religions being used as a focus for study. Candidates will benefit from the study of contemporary expressions of belief and arguments drawn from religions as well as consideration of their sacred texts and historical traditions. This should help candidates to perceive the issues as relevant and topical. Many of the issues (such as "End of Life, Medical Ethics, Good and Evil") are reported in the media and this material is easily accessible for most students.

Examination questions will require candidates to show sound factual knowledge relating to the issues being studied and an ability to demonstrate understanding and explanation of religious viewpoints. For this the abilities to describe, explain and analyse using appropriate knowledge and understanding will be important. (Assessment Objective 1. "Use of Evidence, Evaluation and Argument") Teachers will find the OCR materials relating to assessment valuable, especially the level descriptors.

Fifty per cent of the marks are now allocated to Assessment Objective 2. Candidates will be required to respond to statements with reference to different, supported points of view and to personal viewpoints. Candidates will be required to refer to the religious viewpoints relevant to the faith group in question but will also be credited for considering viewpoints which are secular or which relate to another faith tradition.

Candidates will be rewarded for any appropriate response relating to a reasonable interpretation of a question, even if the candidate's interpretation is very different from that which was anticipated when the question was set.

Questions asked within each topic will be similar for each religion, and tasks will be broadly comparable. However, this does not mean that the different religions studied will all fit the same mould, and that similar answers are expected. Sometimes candidates will be able to draw attention to the fact that the religion they have studied does not necessarily have strong beliefs about a particular topic (the existence of God in some forms of Buddhism, for example). For some topics the issues under discussion might be central, while for another religion they might be less important. Candidates should aim to give accurate representations of the religion or religions they are studying and should not feel they need to distort the beliefs they have studied to overemphasise any "similarity" which may actually be only superficial.

Indeed, the assessment criteria and specification contents encourage candidates to show understanding of the distinctive approaches, attitudes and perspectives of different religions and this could involve candidates providing intelligent and perceptive comment about contrasts and comparisons between religions on topics raised in study.

Similarly, candidates are likely to gain higher marks if they are able to demonstrate, for a particular topic, not only the commonality of viewpoint within a religion but also to give examples of diversity *within* that religion together with reasons for this difference in interpretation. (For example, within Christianity, The Roman Catholic Churches teaching about contraception differs markedly from the Anglican churches teaching. Within Islam there are differences in interpretation of key verses of the Qur'an which relate to attitudes towards war and self defence.)

The issues covered in this specification are often ones which can be studied in great depth at AS level and beyond. It is not expected that GCSE candidates will go beyond the level of demand and detail required in the specification. A basic knowledge of the issues, at a level appropriate for sixteen-year-olds, is all that is required.

Summary for Teachers

- Over a period of time the specification will be covered
- On any one paper there will not necessarily be full coverage of the unit
- On any one paper questions will not necessarily follow a particular order
- The question paper may include more than one question from a sub section of the unit
- Teachers should take careful note of the text in the specification at the beginning of each unit as this indicates the breadth of coverage of the unit
- Questions in examinations for this specification will now have an equal allocation of marks (50%) to cover the Assessment Objectives 1 (Demonstrate Knowledge, Understanding and Analysis) and 2 (Use of Evidence, Evaluation and Argument).
- Teachers will find the OCR materials relating to assessment valuable in assisting candidates to develop the required skills, especially the level descriptors
- Candidates will be rewarded for any appropriate response to a reasonable interpretation of a question, even if the candidate's interpretation is different from that which was anticipated when the question was set.

Christianity:

If biblical quotations appear on the examination paper, they will be from the NIV translation.

Hinduism:

If scriptural quotations appear on the examination paper, they will be from *Hindu Scriptures*, trans & ed R C Zaehner, Everyman's Library.

Islam:

Teachers should note that in the specification and question papers the phrase 'peace be upon him' after the name of the Prophet will appear as the Arabic colophon .

If Qur'anic quotations appear on the examination paper, they will be from *The Meaning of the Holy Qur'an*, Yusuf Ali Abdullah, Amana Publications.

Judaism:

Teachers should note that in the specification and question papers the divine name will appear as G-d.

If scriptural quotations appear on the examination paper, they will be from the *Tanach*, Mesorah Publications.

Unit B603: Ethics (Relationships, Medical Ethics, Poverty and Wealth)

This unit is distinctive in allowing candidates to explore a variety of ethical issues from the viewpoints of members of any of the major world faiths. This allows great flexibility in that candidates could complement this study by choosing to work on any other unit relating to the religion or religions examined in this unit on Ethics. It also allows candidates to compare and contrast the ethical perspectives and standpoints of different religions, should that be required.

Candidates will be rewarded for any appropriate response to a reasonable interpretation of a question, even if the candidate's interpretation is very different from that which was anticipated when the question was set.

For each topic the questions asked will be similar for each religion and will set tasks that are broadly comparable. However, this does not mean that the different religions studied will all fit the same mould, and that similar answers are expected. Sometimes candidates will be able to draw attention to the fact that the religion they have studied does not necessarily have strong beliefs about a particular topic. For some topics the issues under discussion might be central, while for another religion they might be less important. Candidates should aim to give accurate representations of the religion or religions they are studying and should not feel they need to distort the beliefs they have studied to overemphasise any "similarity" which may actually be only superficial.

Similarly, candidates are likely to gain higher marks if they are able to demonstrate not only the commonality of viewpoint within a religion about a particular topic but also to give examples of diversity within that religion together with reasons for this difference in interpretation. (For example, within Christianity Roman Catholic Church teaching about contraception differs markedly from Anglican teaching. Within Islam there are differences in interpretation of key verses of the Qur'an which relate to attitudes towards war and self defence.)

The issues covered in this specification are often ones which can be studied in great depth at AS level and beyond. It is not expected that GCSE candidates will go beyond the level of demand and detail required in the specification. A basic knowledge of the issues, at a level appropriate for sixteen-year-olds, is all that is required.

Resources

GCSE Religious Studies for OCR A: Christianity: Ethics
Jon Mayled, Libby Ahluwalia
ISBN: 9780340983607

Ethics through Christianity for OCR B GCSE Religious Studies: Second Edition
Lorraine Abbott (Really for Syllabus B but still useful)
ISBN: 9780340984123

Christianity (GCSE RE for You)

by [Anne Jordan](#)
ISBN 9780748753208

GENERAL RESOURCES

The British Library. Useful on-line resources about the Abrahamic faiths and stories from world religions. <http://www.bl.uk/learning/cult/sacredbooks/sacredintro.html>

OCR GCSE Religious Studies A: World Religion(s) Evaluation Pack

ISBN: 9780435501372 This is a free evaluation pack from Heinemann publishers. This is an introduction to a range of teacher and student resources which are endorsed by OCR

Resources

A resource list for teachers

Discovery (Nelson Thornes)
Jon Mayled and Libby Ahluwalia
ISBN 0 7487 6223 X

Discovery – Christianity and Islam (Nelson Thornes)
Jon Mayled
ISBN 9780748781324

Philosophy through Christianity (Hodder Murray)
Lorraine Abbott
ISBN 978 0 340 91677 3

Ethics through Christianity (Hodder Murray)
Lorraine Abbott
ISBN 978 0 340 91680 3

Student book with CD Rom - Philosophy

(Heinemann) ISBN: 9780435501501
Publication Date: May 2009

Student book with CD Rom - Applied Ethics

(Heinemann) ISBN: 9780435501518
Publication Date: May 2009

GCSE OCR Religious Studies B : Philosophy & Applied Ethics Teacher Guide with editable CD
(Heinemann)

ISBN: 9780435501525
Publication Date: June 2009

GCSE OCR Religious Studies B: Philosophy ActiveTeach CD-ROM

ISBN: 9780435501556
Publication Date: June 2009

These websites offer very useful information and links for both aspects of this course:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/ethics/>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/>

Other forms of Support

In order to help you implement the new GCSE Religious Studies B Specification effectively, OCR offers a comprehensive package of support. This includes:

Published Resources

OCR offers centres a wealth of quality published support with a fantastic choice of 'Official Publisher Partner' and 'Approved Publication' resources, all endorsed by OCR for use with OCR specifications.

Publisher partners

OCR works in close collaboration with three Publisher Partners; Hodder Education, Heinemann and Oxford University Press (OUP) to ensure centres have access to:

- Better published support, available when you need it, tailored to OCR specifications
- Quality resources produced in consultation with OCR subject teams, which are linked to OCR's teacher support materials
- More resources for specifications with lower candidate entries
- Materials that are subject to a thorough quality assurance process to achieve endorsement

Heinemann is the publisher partner for OCR GCSE Religious Studies B.



Heinemann is producing the following resources for OCR GCSE Religious Studies B for first teaching in September 2009, which will be available from Spring 2009:

OCR GCSE Religious Studies B: *Christian Philosophy and Applied Ethics Student Book* ISBN: 978-0435501587 (Available from July 2009)

OCR GCSE Religious Studies B: *Philosophy Student Book with ActiveBook CD-ROM* ISBN: 978-0435501501 (Available from May 2009)

OCR GCSE Religious Studies B: *Applied Ethics Student Book with ActiveBook CD-ROM* ISBN: 978–0435501518 (Available from May 2009)

OCR GCSE Religious Studies B: *Philosophy and Applied Ethics Teacher Guide with editable CD-ROM* ISBN: 978–0435501525 (Available from June 2009)

OCR GCSE Religious Studies B: *Philosophy ActiveTeach CD-ROM* ISBN: 978–0435501556 (Available from August 2009)

OCR GCSE Religious Studies B: *Applied Ethics ActiveTeach CD-ROM* ISBN: 978–0435501563 (Available from August 2009)

OCR GCSE Religious Studies B: *Philosophy and Applied Ethics Active Revise* (Available from October 2010)

Approved publications

OCR still endorses other publisher materials, which undergo a thorough quality assurance process to achieve endorsement. By offering a choice of endorsed materials, centres can be assured of quality support for all OCR qualifications.



Endorsement

OCR endorses a range of publisher materials to provide quality support for centres delivering its qualifications. You can be confident that materials branded with OCR's "Official Publishing Partner" or "Approved publication" logos have undergone a thorough quality assurance process to achieve endorsement. All responsibility for the content of the publisher's materials rests with the publisher.

These endorsements do not mean that the materials are the only suitable resources available or necessary to achieve an OCR qualification. Any resource lists which are produced by OCR shall include a range of appropriate texts.

OCR Training

A full range of training events provide valuable support, for the delivery and assessment of OCR qualifications:

Get Ready...

An overview of new OCR specifications

Get Started...

For teachers preparing to deliver or already delivering OCR specifications

Get Ahead...

For teachers wanting to improve delivery and assessment of a current OCR specification

Lead the way...

To encourage creativity and innovation

View up-to-date event details and make online bookings at www.ocreventbooker.org.uk or view our new training e-books at www.ocr.org.uk/training. If you are unable to find what you are looking for contact us by e-mail training@ocr.org.uk or telephone 02476 496398.

e-Communities

Over 70 e-Communities offer you a fast, dynamic communication channel to make contact with other subject specialists. Our online mailing list covers a wide range of subjects and enables you to share knowledge and views via email.

Visit <https://community.ocr.org.uk>, choose your community and join the discussion!

Interchange

OCR Interchange has been developed to help you to carry out day to day administration functions online, quickly and easily. The site allows you to register and enter candidates online. In addition, you can gain immediate free access to candidate information at you convenience. Sign up at <https://interchange.ocr.org.uk>

Frequently Asked Questions

How many religions do I study?

This is a matter of choice for centres. To some extent centres will wish to take into account the interests, aptitudes and faith commitments of their students. There are advantages in focussing study through one particular faith as this may clarify and simplify learning for some students. Approaching this specification through the study of two or three separate religions is educationally valid in allowing candidates to appreciate the importance of religion in a broader context.

Candidates may **not** study **more** than three religions.

Can I do Controlled Assessment?

No, assessment is by written examination.

How is the course assessed?

Assessment is by written examination. Candidates taking a Short Course in Religious Studies B (Philosophy and/or Applied Ethics) will take two written examinations from any two units. Candidates taking a Full course in Religious Studies B (Philosophy and Applied Ethics) will take four written examinations from the four units. Each examination paper requires candidates to choose two separate questions from the topic areas involved. Each paper is one hour in length. Specimen papers and mark-schemes are available for inspection and teachers are strongly advised to read them.

The examination papers allow equal weighting for AO1 and AO2.

How does Short Course compare to Full Course GCSE?

Both types of candidates may study units in exactly the same ways; they are assessed in exactly the same ways and to the same standard. The difference is in the quantity of material the candidates are required to study; the Short Course is made up of any **two** units and the Full Course is made up of all **four** units. Results from both courses are awarded on the scale A*-G.

Centres must enter candidates for the correct qualification certification (J621 for Full Course, J121 for Short Course.)

What can this study progress to?

This specification provides candidates with an appropriate foundation for study at Advanced Subsidiary GCE and Advanced GCE in Religious Studies, particularly for the OCR specifications at these levels which provide for study of Philosophy and Ethics.

www.ocr.org.uk

OCR customer contact centre

General qualifications

Telephone 01223 553998

Facsimile 01223 552627

Email general.qualifications@ocr.org.uk

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