

GCSE Religious Studies Assessment

How many papers will I sit?

You will sit **2** papers:

- Paper 1: The study of religion, beliefs and practices
- Paper 2: Thematic studies

How long is each paper?

Each paper is 1 hour 20 minutes long.

Are there any differences between the papers?

Yes.

Paper 1 you need to answer all **three** sections.

Paper 2 you have a choice of **four themes**, but **only** need to answer **three** sections. Do not answer all four themes as your first three sections will be the ones which count for marks.

Will there be SpaG marks?

Yes.

There will be 3 marks for SPaG in the first question in paper 1.

There will be 3 marks for SPaG for paper 2 – the best SPaG mark out of your three sections will be taken.

What is in my Religious Studies assessment papers?

PAPER 1 – The study of religion, beliefs and practices

Unit 1: Christian Beliefs	Revised
The nature of God: oneness of God; God as omnipotent, omnibenevolent and just	
The Trinity	
The problem of evil and suffering	
Beliefs about creation	
Beliefs about the afterlife: resurrection; judgement; heaven; purgatory; hell	
Incarnation of Jesus	
Crucifixion, resurrection and ascension of Jesus	
Sin and original sin	
Salvation: grace and good works; the role of Jesus in salvation and the idea of atonement	

Unit 2: Christian Practices	Revised
Different forms of worship: liturgical; non-liturgical; informal; private	
Prayer: set and informal prayer; the Lord's Prayer	
Sacrament – Baptism: meaning and importance; infant baptism; believer's baptism	
Sacrament – Holy Communion: significance and differing interpretations; different ways it is celebrated	
Pilgrimage: importance; contrasting places of pilgrimage = Lourdes and Iona	
Festivals: celebrations of Christmas and Easter; how and why celebrated; importance to Christians	
Role of the Church in the local community: food banks; street pastors	
Mission; evangelism; Church growth	
Role of the Church in the worldwide community: working for reconciliation; responses to Christian persecution; work of one Christian charity	

Unit 3: Islam Beliefs	Revised
The 6 articles of faith in Sunni Islam; the 5 roots of Usul ad-Din in Shi'a Islam: similarities and differences	
The Oneness of God: Tawhid	
The nature of God: omnipotence; beneficence; merciful; just (Adalat); God's relationship with the world – immanence and transcendence	
Angels: nature and role; Jibril and Mika'il	
Predestination: differences between Sunni and Shi'a; human free will; relationship with the Day of Judgement	
Akhirah (life after death): resurrection; Jannah (heaven); Jahannam (hell); human responsibility and accountability	
Prophethood (Risalah): role and importance of Adam, Ibrahim and Muhammad	
Holy books: Qur'an; Torah; Psalms; Gospel; Scrolls of Abraham	
The Imamate: Shi'a beliefs about its role and importance	

Paper 2: Thematic studies

Unit 4: Theme A - Relationships and families	Revised
Human sexuality: heterosexual and homosexual relationships	
Sex before and outside of marriage	
Contraception and family planning	
Nature and purpose of marriage	
Same-sex marriage and cohabitation	
Divorce and remarriage: reasons for divorce; ethical arguments about divorce	
Nature of families: types of families; role of parents and children	
Purpose of families: procreation; stability; protection; educating children in faith	
Same-sex parents and polygamy	
Roles of men and women	
Gender equality	
Gender prejudice and discrimination	

Unit 5: Theme B – Religion and life	Revised
Origins of the universe: religious beliefs and differing interpretations; the Big Bang theory; the relationship between scientific and religious views	
The value of the world: duty to protect the world; religious views about stewardship, dominion, responsibility, awe and wonder.	
The use and abuse of the environment: use of natural resources – renewable and non-renewable; pollution	
The use and abuse of animals: use of animals for food; use of animals for animal experiments	
The origins of human life: religious beliefs about the origins of human life and differing interpretations; the theory of evolution; the relationships between scientific and religious views	
Concepts of sanctity of life and quality of life	
Abortion: ethical arguments about abortion, including sanctity and quality of life; mother’s life at risk	
Euthanasia: types and forms; ethical arguments about euthanasia, including sanctity and quality of life	
Beliefs about the afterlife: impact of beliefs about the value of life	

Unit 6: Theme D – Religion, peace and conflict	Revised
Meaning and significance of peace, justice, forgiveness and reconciliation	
Violence: violent protest (riot); terrorism	
Reasons for war: greed; self-defence; retaliation	
The just war theory: 6 conditions for a just war	
Holy war	
Religion as a cause of war in today’s world	
Nuclear weapons: nuclear deterrence; use of weapons of mass destruction	
Pacifism	
Peace making: work of peacemakers in the 21 st Century	
Religious responses to victims of war: the work of one present day religious organisation	

Unit 7: Theme E - Religion, crime and punishment	Revised
Good and evil intentions	
Reasons for crime: poverty; upbringing; addiction; mental illness; greed; hate; opposition to an unjust law; religious attitudes to these reasons	
Aims of punishment: retribution; deterrence; reformation; religious attitudes to these aims	
Treatment of criminals: prison; corporal punishment; community service; religious attitudes to these treatments	
Forgiveness: religious teachings about forgiveness	
The death penalty: ethical arguments about the death penalty, including the principle of utility and sanctity of life	