



ASSESSMENT and
QUALIFICATIONS
ALLIANCE

General Certificate of Secondary Education

Religious Studies 4061/4062 *Specification A: Christianity* 2010

Material accompanying this Specification

- Specimen Papers and Mark Schemes
- Report on the Examination

SPECIFICATION

This specification will be published annually on the AQA Website (www.aqa.org.uk). If there are any changes to the specification centres will be notified in print as well as on the Website. The version on the Website is the definitive version of the specification.

Further copies of this specification booklet are available from:

AQA Logistics Centre, Unit 2, Wheel Forge Way, Ashburton Park, Trafford Park, Manchester, M17 1EH.
Telephone: 0870 410 1036 Fax: 0161 953 1177

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Set and published by the Assessment and Qualifications Alliance.

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Background Information

1

The Revised General Certificate of Secondary Education

Following a review of the National Curriculum requirements, and the establishment of the National Qualifications Framework, all the unitary awarding bodies have revised their GCSE specifications for examination in 2003.

1.1 Changes at GCSE

Key Skills

All GCSE specifications must identify, as appropriate, opportunities for generating evidence on which candidates may be assessed in the “main” Key Skills of communication, application of number and information technology at the appropriate level(s). Also, where appropriate, they must identify opportunities for developing and generating evidence for addressing the “wider” Key Skills of working with others, improving own learning and performance and problem solving.

Spiritual, moral, ethical, social, cultural, environmental, health and safety and European Issues

All specifications must identify ways in which the study of the subject can contribute to an awareness and understanding of these issues.

ICT

The national curriculum requires that students should be given opportunities to apply and develop their ICT capacity through the use of ICT tools to support their learning. In each specification candidates will be required to make effective use of ICT in ways appropriate to the needs of the subject.

It is anticipated that a variety of skills could be developed in courses of study based on this specification. The coursework component(s) could facilitate opportunities for extended use of ICT. Further information is provided in Section 16.7.

Tiering

The question papers for GCSE Religious Studies will not be tiered.

Citizenship

From 2002, students in England will be required to study Citizenship as a national curriculum subject. Each GCSE specification must signpost, where appropriate, opportunities for developing citizenship knowledge, skills and understanding. See Section 16 of this specification.

1.2 Changes to the Religious Studies Criteria

The latest version of the Qualification and Curriculum Authority’s subject specific criteria for Religious Studies (published in February 2000) contains a significant change to the Assessment Objectives.

Previously there were separate sets of Assessment Objectives for Religious Studies and Religious Education. The Religious Education Assessment Objectives have been taken by the new criteria as the model for all GCSE specifications in the subject. Each written paper targets all assessment objectives.

The new criteria eliminate the title “Religious Education”. All full course and short course GCSE qualifications in the subject will henceforth be entitled “Religious Studies”. Both short course and full course qualifications are available through this specification.

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Specification at a Glance

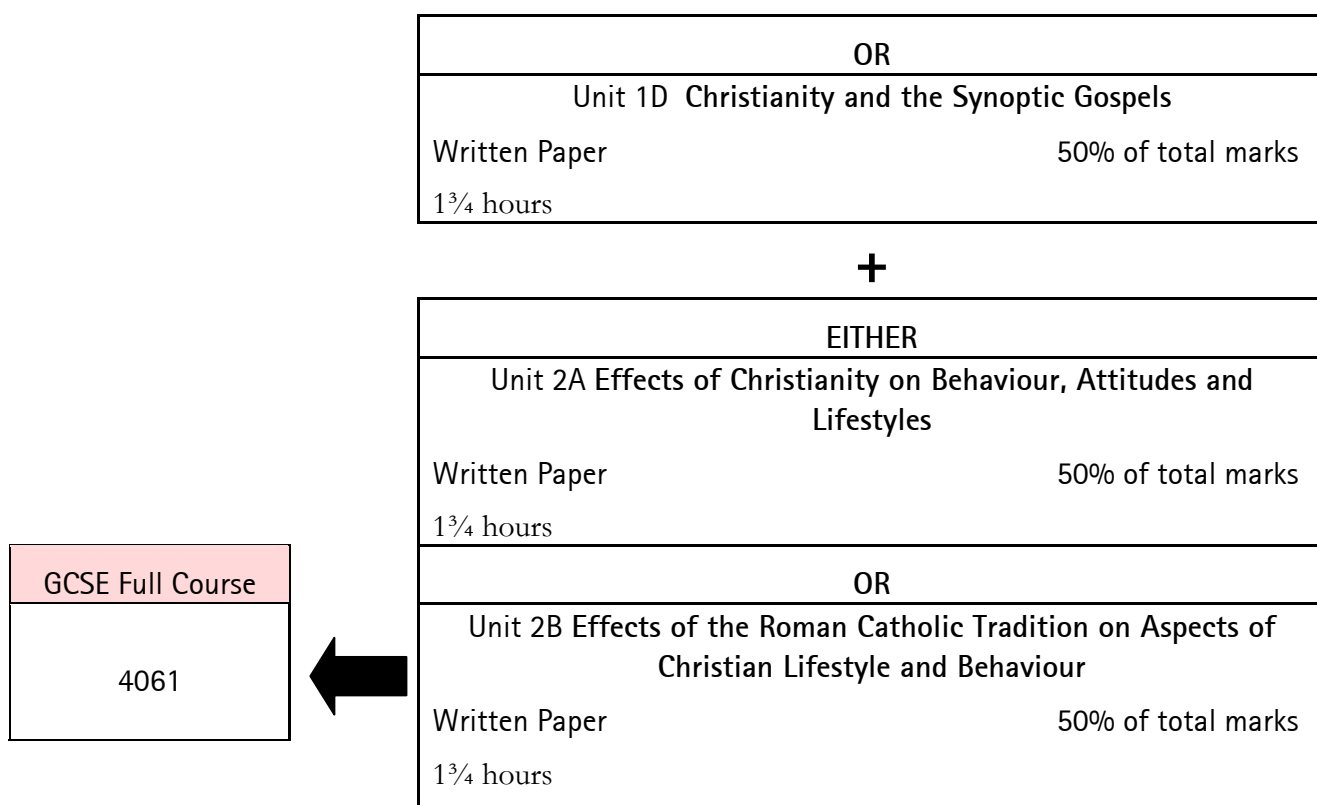
Religious Studies: Christianity

This is one of three specifications in Religious Studies offered by AQA. The others are Specification B: World and Philosophical Perspectives on Religious Issues, and Specification C: World Religions.

The Scheme of Assessment is not tiered.

Two qualifications are available through this specification: GCSE Full Course and GCSE Short Course. To gain a GCSE Full course, candidates enter for one Unit from 1A, 1B, 1C or 1D, and one Unit from either 2A or 2B. To gain a GCSE Short Course, candidates enter for one Unit from either 1A, 1B, 1C, 1D, 2A or 2B.

GCSE Full Course Religious Studies	
EITHER	
Unit 1A Christianity	
Written Paper 1¾ hours	50% of total marks
OR	
Unit 1B Christian Belief and Practice with reference to the Roman Catholic Tradition	
Written Paper 1¾ hours	50% of total marks
OR	
Unit 1C The Christian Life and St. Mark's Gospel	
Written Paper 1¾ hours	50% of total marks



The Scheme of Assessment is modular, and therefore flexible. The following possibilities are available.

- Both assessment units taken at the end of one year of study.
- Both assessment units taken at the end of two years of study.
- One assessment unit taken at the end of one year of study, and another assessment unit taken at the end of a second year of study.
- Assessment units can be taken in any order.
- For a Full Course, candidates must complete one written paper from either Unit 1A, 1B, 1C or 1D, and one written paper from Unit 2A or 2B. For a GCSE Short Course, candidates must complete one written paper from either Unit 1A, 1B, 1C, 1D, 2A or 2B.

GCSE Short Course
4062



GCSE Short Course Religious Studies	
EITHER	
Unit 1A Christianity	
Written Paper 1¾ hours	100% of total marks
OR	
Unit 1B Christian Belief and Practice with reference to the Roman Catholic Tradition	
Written Paper 1¾ hours	100% of total marks
OR	
Unit 1C The Christian Life and Mark's Gospel	
Written Paper 1¾ hours	100% of total marks
OR	
Unit 1D Christianity and the Synoptic Gospels	
Written Paper 1¾ hours	100% of total marks
OR	
Unit 2A Effects of Christianity on Behaviour, Attitudes and Lifestyles	
Written Paper 1¾ hours	100% of total marks
OR	
Unit 2B Effects of the Roman Catholic Tradition upon Aspects of Christian Lifestyle and Behaviour	
Written Paper 1¾ hours	100% of total marks

The following possibilities are available.

- One assessment unit taken at the end of one year of study.
- One assessment unit taken at the end of two years of study.
- The facility to "top-up" a unit certificated as a Short Course to a Full Course, by taking a further assessment unit. For a Full Course, candidates must complete one written paper from either Unit 1A, 1B, 1C or 1D, and one written paper from Unit 2A or 2B. For a GCSE Short Course, candidates must complete one written paper from either Unit 1A, 1B, 1C, 1D, 2A or 2B.

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Availability of Assessment Units and Entry Details

3.1 Availability of Assessment Units

Examinations based on this Specification are available in the June examination series only.

An individual unit taken at the end of one year of study can be certificated as a GCSE Short Course. However, unit certification can be deferred until the following year.

3.2 Entry Codes

Normal entry requirements apply, but the following information should be noted.

The **Subject Codes** for entry to the GCSE award are 4061 (Full Course) and 4062 (Short Course).

3.3 Classification Codes

Each specification is assigned to a national classification code, indicating the subject area to which it belongs.

Centres should be aware that candidates who enter for more than one GCSE qualification with the same classification code, will have only one grade (the highest) counted for the purpose of the School and College Performance Tables.

The **Classification Code** for this specification is 4610 (Full Course and Short Course).

3.4 Private Candidates

This specification is available for private candidates

Private candidates should write to the AQA for a copy of “*Supplementary Guidance for Private Candidates*”.

3.5 Access Arrangements and Special Consideration

AQA pays due regard to the provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 in its administration of this specification.

Arrangements may be made to enable candidates with disabilities or other difficulties to access the assessment. An example of an access arrangement is the production of a Braille paper for a candidate with a visual impairment. Special consideration may be requested for candidates whose work has been affected by illness or other exceptional circumstances.

Further details can be found in the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) document:

Access arrangements and Special Consideration

Regulations and Guidance Relating to Candidates who are Eligible for Adjustments in Examination

GCE, AEA, VCE, GCSE, GNVQ, Entry Level & Key Skills

This document can be viewed via the AQA web site (www.aqa.org.uk)

Applications for access arrangements and special consideration should be submitted to AQA by the Examinations Officer at the centre.

3.6 Language of Examinations

All assessment will be through the medium of English. Assessment materials will not be provided in Welsh or Gaelic.

Scheme of Assessment

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Introduction

4.1 National Criteria

This AQA GCSE in Religious Studies specification complies with the following:

- The GCSE Subject Criteria for Religious Studies;
- The GCSE GCE, GNVQ and AEA Code of Practice April 2007;
- The GCSE Qualification Specific Criteria;
- The Arrangements for the Statutory Regulation of External Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland: Common Criteria.

4.2 Rationale

This specification is one of three specifications in Religious Studies provided by AQA. It is distinctive in providing for candidates the opportunity to gain a GCSE qualification following an in-depth study of Christianity alone. It facilitates the study of the beliefs, sources of authority, practices and organisation of the major Christian denominations.

This specification is designed to meet the needs of schools that are required or permitted to teach Christianity only, including denominational and independent schools. It also provides a range of alternative courses of study of aspects of Christianity for centres that wish to provide further opportunities for Religious Studies in addition to their provision for statutory Religious Education.

4.3 Prior level of attainment and recommended prior learning

No prior learning or level of attainment is necessary for candidates to undertake a course of study based on this specification. However in the course of compiling the subject content of this specification consideration has been given to courses followed at Key Stage 3 within denominational Christian centres. Particular opportunities will be found in courses of study teaching to this qualification to develop candidates' skills in literacy and communication.

4.4 Progression

This qualification is a recognised part of the National Qualification framework. As such, GCSE provides progression from Key Stage 3 to post-16 studies.

It lays an appropriate foundation for further study of Religious Studies or related subjects at Advanced Subsidiary and Advanced levels.

In addition it provides a worthwhile course for candidates of various ages and from diverse backgrounds in terms of general education and lifelong learning.

5

Aims

A course based on this specification should encourage candidates to:

- a. acquire knowledge and develop understanding of the beliefs, values and traditions of one or more religions;
- b. consider the influence of the beliefs, values and traditions associated with one or more religions;
- c. consider religious and other responses to moral issues;
- d. identify, investigate and respond to fundamental questions of life raised by religion and human experience, including questions about the meaning and purpose of life;
- e. develop skills relevant to the study of religion.

This specification does not presuppose faith, and is designed to be accessible to persons of any religious persuasion or none.

6

Assessment Objectives

6.1

Candidates must demonstrate their ability to:

- AO1 recall, select, organise and deploy knowledge of the specification content;
- AO2 describe, analyse and explain the relevance and application of a religion or religions;
- AO3 evaluate different responses to religious and moral issues, using relevant evidence and argument.

Although the assessment objectives are expressed separately they are not wholly discrete. AO1 pervades the other assessment objectives.

6.2 Quality of Written Communication

Where candidates are required to produce extended written material in English, they will be assessed on the quality of written communication. Candidates will be required to:

- present relevant information in a form that suits its purposes;
- ensure that text is legible and that spelling, punctuation and grammar are accurate, so that meaning is clear;
- use a suitable structure and style of writing;

Quality of written communication will be assessed in all components and in relation to all assessment objectives.

Three marks are available on each written paper, awarded in accordance with the following criteria.

- 3 marks** The candidate presents relevant information coherently, employing structure and style to render meaning clear. The text produced is legible. Spelling, punctuation and grammar are sufficiently accurate to render meaning clear.
- 2 marks** The candidate presents relevant information in a way which assists with communication of meaning. The text produced is legible. Spelling, punctuation and grammar are sufficiently accurate not to obscure meaning.
- 1 mark** The candidate presents some relevant information in a simple form. The text produced is usually legible. Spelling, punctuation and grammar allow meaning to be derived, although errors are sometimes obstructive.
- 0 marks** The candidate's presentation, spelling, punctuation and grammar seriously obstruct understanding.

7

Scheme of Assessment (Full Course and Short Course)

7.1 Assessment

The Scheme of Assessment for GCSE (Full Course) comprises two options. Candidates must complete one written paper from either Module 1A, 1B, 1C or 1D, and one written paper selected from either Module 2A or 2B.

The Scheme of Assessment for GCSE (Short Course) comprises one option. Candidates must complete one written paper from either Module 1A, 1B, 1C, 1D, 2A or 2B.

Candidates may use any version of the Bible in their study of this specification; they may quote from any version in their answers to written papers. For practical reasons the number of versions of the Bible quoted in the written papers will be limited to three. These will be the Good News Bible (GNB), the New International Version (NIV) and the Revised Standard Version (RSV). Most, but not all quotations will be given in all three versions.

Candidates who have been prepared for the examination using a version of the Bible other than the three versions indicated will not find the examination paper places them at any disadvantage on account of the versions used for quotations.

Care will be taken to ensure that quotations are not used which might disadvantage candidates familiar with the Jerusalem Bible.

GCSE Full Course

GCSE Short Course

Module 1A: Written Paper	1¾ hours
50% of the marks (Full Course)	
100% of the marks (Short Course)	80 marks

Candidates answer a series of compulsory short-answer questions (Part A), followed by two short answer stimulus response questions (Part B). Candidates then answer two structured essay questions from a choice of four (Part C). All questions are based on Module 1A of the subject content, **Christianity**.

Module 1B: Written Paper 1¾ hours

50% of the marks (Full Course)

100% of the marks (Short Course) 80 marks

Candidates answer a series of compulsory short-answer questions (Part A), followed by two short answer stimulus response questions (Part B). Candidates then answer two structured essay questions from a choice of four (Part C). All questions are based on Module 1B of the subject content, **Christian Belief and Practice with Reference to the Roman Catholic Tradition**.

Module 1C: Written Paper 1¾ hours

50% of the marks (Full Course)

100% of the marks (Short Course) 80 marks

Candidates answer a series of compulsory short-answer questions (Part A), followed by two short answer stimulus response questions (Part B). Candidates then answer two structured essay questions from a choice of four (Part C). All questions are based on Module 1C of the subject content, **The Christian Life and St Mark's Gospel**.

Module 1D: Written Paper 1¾ hours

50% of the marks (Full Course)

100% of the marks (Short Course) 80 marks

Candidates answer a series of compulsory short-answer questions (Part A), followed by two short answer stimulus response questions (Part B). Candidates then answer two structured essay questions from a choice of four (Part C). All questions are based on Module 1D of the subject content, **Christianity and the Synoptic Gospels**.

Module 2A: Written Paper 1¾ hours

50% of the marks (Full Course)

100% of the marks (Short Course) 80 marks

Candidates answer a series of compulsory short-answer questions (Part A), followed by two short answer stimulus response questions (Part B). Candidates then answer two structured essay questions from a choice of four (Part C). All questions are based on Module 2A of the subject content, **Effects of Christianity on Behaviour, Attitudes and Lifestyles**.

Module 2B: Written Paper	1¾ hours
50% of the marks (Full Course)	
100% of the marks (Short Course)	80 marks

Candidates answer a series of compulsory short-answer questions (Part A), followed by two short answer stimulus response questions (Part B). Candidates then answer two structured essay questions from a choice of four (Part C). All questions are based on Module 2B of the subject content, **Effects of the Roman Catholic Tradition upon Aspects of Christian Lifestyle and Behaviour**.

For GCSE (Full Course), candidates take one of Modules 1A to 1D and either Module 2A or 2B.

For GCSE (Short Course), candidates take one of Modules 1A, 1B, 1C, 1D, 2A or 2B.

7.2 Weighting of Assessment Objectives

The approximate relationship between the relative percentage weighting of the Assessment Objectives (AOs) and the overall Scheme of Assessment is shown in the following table:

Assessment Objectives GCSE Full Course	Component Weightings (%)		Overall Weighting of AOs (%)
	First written paper	Second written paper	
AO1 and AO2	37½	37½	75
AO3	12½	12½	25
Overall Weighting of Units (%)	50	50	100

Candidates' marks for each assessment unit are scaled to achieve the correct weightings.

Assessment Objectives GCSE Short Course	Component Weightings (%)	Overall Weighting of AOs (%)
	Written Paper	
AO1 and AO2	75	75
AO3	25	25
Overall Weighting of Units (%)	100	100

Candidates' marks for each assessment unit are scaled to achieve the correct weightings.

Subject Content

8

Summary of Subject Content

8.1

Module 1A Christianity

Beliefs and Sources of Authority: The Bible; The Apostles' Creed. Practice and Organisation: The Church; Public Worship; Holy Communion; Private Worship; Rites of Passage; Festivals.

Module 1B Christian Belief and Practice with Reference to the Roman Catholic Tradition

Beliefs and Sources of Authority: The Bible; The Apostles' Creed; The Role of Mary; The Teaching Authority of the Church ("The Magisterium"). Practice and Organisation: Public Worship; Holy Communion; Private Worship; Sacramental Rites of Passage; Festivals.

Module 1C The Christian Life and St Mark's Gospel

Authority. The Person of Jesus. Suffering, Death and Resurrection. The Christian Community. The Kingdom of God. Faith and Prayer. Discipleship. Leadership. Worship. Baptism.

Module 1D Christianity and the Synoptic Gospels

Distinctiveness of individual contributions to the Synoptic Gospels. The Life of Jesus. Christian life and mission: Jesus' example. Faith and worship. Jesus as Lord. Care for Minorities. The Kingdom of Heaven. Forgiveness. Stewardship. Discipleship.

Module 2A Effects of Christianity on Behaviour, Attitudes and Lifestyles

Decisions on Life and Living: sex; marriage; abortion and euthanasia; environment. Justice and Reconciliation: justice; forgiveness; punishment; conflict. Christian Responsibility: (a) prejudice and discrimination; (b) rich and poor.

Module 2B Effects of the Roman Catholic Tradition upon Aspects of Christian Lifestyle and Behaviour

Christian Values and features of Christian discipleship: the Commandments and the Sermon on the Mount. Sacraments of: (i) Initiation and related issues including respect for human life, (ii) Vocation and issues related to family and religious life, (iii) Healing, including justice and reconciliation in society and matters of life and death.

8.2 Use in Wales and Northern Ireland

Every effort has been made in this specification to create a flexible framework within which centres may meet their legal responsibilities to deliver religious education. These are, for England and Wales, as appropriate, Section 375(3) of the 1996 Education Act and Section 28 of the 1944 Education Act, with exemptions applying to certain centres depending on their funding arrangements.

In Northern Ireland, the relevant legislation is contained in Article 13 of the Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 1989. The range and variety of agreed syllabuses that exist under these statutory arrangements is such that this specification may not cover all of the content of the agreed syllabus which a centre is required to follow. It is for centres themselves to decide what additional measures they may need to take to meet their legal obligations.

Module 1A

Christianity

9.1 Candidates will be expected to be aware of the common ground that all Christians share, as well as to appreciate the variety of practices found in Christianity, as indicated in the subject content. They will be expected to know and understand the proper terms for aspects of Christian faith and practice which form part of the subject content.

The divisions of the subject content are not rigid and questions may be set which span two or more of them. The sequence in which the material is set out is not intended to indicate either the order in which it should be studied or its relative importance. Stimulus questions may be set using texts which the candidates will not be expected to have studied.

9.2 Beliefs and Sources of Authority

- The Bible
 - An explanation of the terms Old Testament and New Testament.
 - Contrasting beliefs about the authority, inspiration and interpretation of the Bible (literalism, fundamentalism, conservative view, liberal view)
 - The use of the Bible in public and private worship
- The Apostles' Creed as representing a summary of Christian beliefs with reference to the following:
 - the oneness of God and the Trinity
 - the incarnation and Jesus as the Son of God
 - the meaning of the crucifixion, resurrection and ascension of Jesus
 - the person and work of the Holy Spirit
 - the Church as the Body of Christ
 - the Communion of Saints
 - sin and the means of salvation
 - judgement and the world to come

9.3 Practice and organisation

- The Church
 - Different types of structure of the Church in Orthodox, Catholic and Protestant traditions (episcopal, non-episcopal, no ordained ministry)
- Public Worship

Different forms of worship: liturgical, non-liturgical, including both the structured and the spontaneous

The Lord's Prayer

Different places of worship: how their interior and exterior features relate to beliefs and practices

Pilgrimage: the reasons for pilgrimage; the study of at least one place of Christian pilgrimage

Sunday - its significance and observance

- Holy Communion (Eucharist, Mass, the Lord's Supper, the Breaking of Bread)
ways in which it is celebrated today in Orthodox, Catholic and Protestant traditions and how these reflect differences of belief
reasons why Holy Communion is not celebrated in some traditions
- Private Worship
Prayer and meditation (rosary, icon, Jesus Prayer)
- Rites of Passage
infant baptism, chrismation, dedication
confirmation, believers' baptism
marriage ceremony
death rites
- Festivals
the significance and practice of the following special days and festivals for Christians
their relationship to events in the life of Jesus and the early Church
specifically Christian observances, customs and symbols connected with them
their meaning to Christians today
Advent, Christmas, Epiphany; Lent, Holy Week, Easter, Pentecost.

Module 1B

Christian Belief and Practice with Reference to the Roman Catholic Tradition

10.1

Candidates will be expected to be aware of the common ground that all Christians throughout the world share, and of the Orthodox, Roman Catholic and Protestant traditions, including the reasons for their distinctions. However, there will be an emphasis on **Roman Catholic belief and practice**. A specific study of the history of the Christian Church is not required. Candidates will be expected to know and understand the proper terms for aspects of Christian faith and practice which form part of the subject content.

The divisions of subject content are not rigid and questions may be set which span two or more of them. The sequence in which the material is set out is not intended to indicate either the order in which it should be studied or its relative importance.

10.2 Authority

- The Bible
 - Contrasting beliefs about the authority, inspiration and interpretation of the Bible (literalism, fundamentalism, conservative and liberal views)
- The use of the Bible in public and private worship
- The Apostles' Creed as representing a summary of Christian beliefs with reference to the following:
 - the oneness of God and the Trinity
 - the incarnation and Jesus as the Son of God
 - the meaning of the crucifixion, resurrection and ascension of Jesus
 - the person and work of the Holy Spirit
 - the Church as the Body of Christ
 - the Communion of Saints
 - sin and the means of salvation
 - judgement and the world to come
- The teaching authority of the Church ("The Magisterium")
- The role of the Pope as successor to Peter, spiritual guide and head of the Roman Catholic Church
- The teaching ministry of the Church and the combined authority of the Pope and the bishops

10.3 Rites of Passage

- The idea of Sacramental Rites of Passage
- infant baptism, chrismation
- confirmation, believers' baptism
- marriage ceremony
- death rites

10.4 Worship

- Private worship: prayer and meditation, the use of the rosary, icons and statues
- The role of Mary:
Mary as the “Mother of God”
her place in Roman Catholic belief as guide and role model, especially in prayer
- Public Worship: different forms of worship: liturgical; non-liturgical, including both the structured and the spontaneous
- The Lord's Prayer
- Places of worship: how their interior and exterior features relate to beliefs and practices
Pilgrimage: the reasons for pilgrimage; the study of at least one place of Christian pilgrimage

10.5 Celebration

- Holy Communion (Eucharist, Mass, Lord's Supper, the Breaking of Bread)
ways in which it is celebrated today in Orthodox, Roman Catholic and Protestant traditions and how these reflect differences of belief
reasons why Holy Communion is not celebrated in some traditions.
- Festivals
the significance and practice of the following special days and festivals for Christians
their relationship to events in the life of Jesus and the early Church
consideration of the observances, customs and symbols connected with them
their meaning for Christians today
Advent, Christmas, Epiphany; Lent, Holy Week, Easter, Ascension and Pentecost.

Module 1C

The Christian Life and St Mark's Gospel

11.1

This section of the specification provides an opportunity for the study of aspects of Christian belief and practice with specific reference to the Person and Ministry of Jesus, as presented in **St. Mark's Gospel**. Candidates should have knowledge and understanding of the origins of the gospel, of the specified themes, and of the ways in which modern beliefs and practices have been drawn from the Gospel account.

The candidates will be expected to have studied all the following themes found in St. Mark's Gospel, together with such aspects of the social and political background as will enable them to understand the themes.

Particular attention should be paid to the passages specified for each theme. Candidates should recognise that a number of the set passages are relevant to the study of more than one theme.

The divisions of the subject content are not rigid and questions may be set which span two or more of them. The sequence in which material is set out is not intended to indicate either the order in which it should be studied or its relative importance.

11.2 Authority

- A knowledge and understanding of the way in which St. Mark's gospel came to be written, and the implications of this for the authority of the Gospel for Christians today. A knowledge and understanding of various interpretations of the Gospel as 'The Word of God' (literalism, fundamentalism, conservative view, liberal view).
 - Mark 1:1
-

11.3 The Person of Jesus

- The meaning and significance of Christian titles for Jesus, both for the disciples and for modern Christians. The relevance and importance of the Person of Jesus, as presented by St. Mark, for Christian faith today.
 - Son of God:
 - The Baptism 1: 9-11
 - The Transfiguration 9: 2-8
 - The Trial before the High Priest 14: 53-65
 - Son of Man:
 - The Paralyse Man 2: 1-12
-

The Request of James and John 10: 35-45

The Prediction of the Passion 8: 31-33

- Jesus/Saviour:
 - The Calming of the Storm 4: 35-41
 - The Feeding of the 5000 6: 30-44
 - The Syro-Phoenician woman's daughter 7: 24-30
 - Christ/Messiah/Son of David:
 - Caesarea Philippi 8: 27-30
 - Blind Bartimaeus 10: 46-52
 - Entry to Jerusalem 11: 1-11
-

11.4 Suffering, Death and Resurrection

- Jesus' example of self-sacrifice and his suffering, death and resurrection. The central place which these events have within Christianity, and the Christian belief in life after death.
 - Gethsemane 14: 32-52
 - The Roman Trial, and mocking 15: 1-20
 - The Crucifixion 15: 21-41
 - The Burial 15: 42-47
 - The Empty Tomb 16: 1-8
 - Resurrection Appearances 16: 9-20
 - The question about resurrection 12: 18-27
-

11.5 The Christian Community

- The beginnings of the Christian community, its priorities and practices as shown in the life and teaching of Jesus. The importance and relevance of these themes for Christian life today.
 - **The Kingdom of God**
 - The significance of the Kingdom, and its present and future dimensions.
 - The meaning and purpose the Kingdom gives to the Christian Life.
 - The Parables of the Kingdom 4: 1-34
 - Sayings of the Kingdom 1: 14-15
 - Jesus and the children 10: 13-16
 - Entry into the Kingdom 10: 17-27
 - The Greatest Commandments 12: 28-34
 - **Faith and Prayer**
 - The importance of faith, prayer and commitment
 - Jairus' Daughter 5: 21-24, 35-43
 - The woman with a haemorrhage 5: 25-34
 - Jesus at prayer 6: 45-46
 - The epileptic boy 9: 14-29
-

- **Discipleship**

The nature and cost of discipleship

Cost of discipleship 8: 34-38

Rewards of discipleship 10: 28-31

The widow at the treasury 12: 41-44

- **Leadership**

The role of the disciples, their call, their mission and the implications of their work for Christian organisation and mission today.

Call of the disciples 1: 16-20

Choosing the Twelve 3: 13-19

Mission of the Twelve 6: 7-13

Peter's promise and denial 14: 26-31, 66-72

The Commission 16: 14-18

- **Worship**

The day of rest

The Jewish Sabbath, the significance of Sunday for Christians, ways in which Sunday is observed by Christians, and issues relating to its use.

Man with an evil spirit 1: 21-28

Question about the Sabbath 2: 23-28

Man with the withered hand 3: 1-6

Resurrection Day 16: 1-2

Holy Communion (Eucharist, Mass, the Lord's Supper, the Breaking of Bread)

The origin of the Eucharist, its significance and importance in Christian worship. Denominational differences in celebration and interpretation.

The Last Supper 14: 12-25

- **Baptism**

The origin of the ceremony of baptism and the significance of the baptism of Jesus. The meaning of baptism for Christians today, and the issue of infant and believers' baptism.

Jesus' Baptism 1: 9-11

Module 1D

Christianity and the Synoptic Gospels

12.1

This module requires the study of the relevance and application to Christian moral behaviour, attitudes and lifestyles of the life, teaching and mission of Jesus as portrayed in the Synoptic Gospels. In each section of passages from the Synoptic Gospels, candidates will be required to demonstrate that they understand the importance which these have for Christians today.

The divisions of the subject content are not rigid and questions may be set which span two or more of them.

The sequence in which the passages are listed is not intended to indicate either the order in which they are to be studied or the relative importance of the topics. Candidates will be expected to be aware that many passages are relevant to more than one theme.

Background

Candidates will need to develop an understanding of the nature and purpose of the “Gospel” and the distinctive emphasis given by each of the writers of the Synoptic Gospels.

12.2 The Life of Jesus

Candidates will be expected to demonstrate understanding of the significance attributed to these events by the different gospel writers and by Christians today. A particular focus for study should be the meaning and significance of the Messiahship of Jesus for Christians today. The following events and passages must be studied.

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| • The prologues to the Gospels | Matthew 1: 1; Mark 1: 1;
Luke 1: 1-4 |
| • Birth | Matthew 1: 18-25; 2: 1-12;
Luke 1: 26-38; 2: 1-20 |
| • Baptism | Mark 1: 9-11 |
| • Temptations | Luke 4: 1-13 |
| • Rejection at Nazareth | Luke 4: 16-30 |
| • Caesarea Philippi | Matthew 16: 13-28
Mark 8: 27-9: 1 |
| • The Transfiguration | Mark 9: 2-13 |

- **Holy Week**

Triumphal Entry	Mark 11: 1-11
The Last Supper	Mark 14: 10-25
Mount of Olives/ Arrest/Denial	Luke 22: 39-62
Jesus before the Council	Mark 14: 53-65
The Crucifixion	Mark 15: 21-39, Luke 23: 32-43
Resurrection	Matthew 28: 1-15; Mark 16: 1-8; Luke 24: 1-12
Walk to Emmaus/ Ascension	Luke 24: 13-53

12.3 Christian life and mission – the example of Jesus

Candidates will be expected to study the following passages with a particular focus on the themes of Faith and Worship; Jesus as Lord; Care for Minorities; The Kingdom of Heaven; Forgiveness and Stewardship. **The focus for study should be the ways in which Christians interpret the Synoptic Gospel teaching about the meaning, challenge, cost and rewards of discipleship.**

The passages for study are:

Prayer	Matthew 6: 5-15
Healing on the Sabbath	Matthew 12: 9-14
The Parables of the Kingdom of Heaven	Matthew 13: 1-46; 25: 14-46
Walking on the Water	Matthew 14: 22-33
The Four Fishermen	Mark 1: 14-20
In the Cornfields on the Sabbath	Mark 2: 23-28
Calming the Storm	Mark 4: 35-41
Legion/Mob (Gerasene Demoniac)	Mark 5: 1-20
Jairus' Daughter/Woman with internal bleeding	Mark 5: 21-43
Feeding the Five Thousand	Mark 6: 30-44
Syro-Phoenician Woman's Daughter	Mark 7: 24-30
Authority to forgive sins	Luke 5: 17-26
Eating with sinners	Luke 5: 27-32
The Centurion's Servant	Luke 7: 1-10
The Sinful Woman	Luke 7: 36-50

The Good Samaritan	Luke 10: 25-37
The Rich Fool	Luke 12: 13-21
The Lost Sheep, Lost Coin, The Prodigal/Lost Son	Luke 15: 1-32
The Men with Leprosy	Luke 17: 11-19
Zacchaeus	Luke 19: 1-10

12.4 Further Guidance

Some of the above passages may be used in connection with more than one theme. The following list gives a break-down of which passages, listed on the previous page, relate to each of the themes:

- **Faith and Worship**, and their relevance for Christians today.

The Lord's Prayer	Matthew 6: 5-15
Healing on the Sabbath	Matthew 12: 9-14
Walking on the Water	Matthew 14: 22-33
The Call of the Disciples	Mark 1: 14-20
In the Cornfields on the Sabbath	Mark 2: 23-28
Calming the Storm	Mark 4: 35-41
Jairus' Daughter/Woman with internal bleeding	Mark 5: 21-43
Syro-Phoenician Woman's Daughter	Mark 7: 24-30
The Centurion's Servant	Luke 7: 1-10
The Men with Leprosy	Luke 17: 11-19
- **Jesus as Lord** and the importance of this for Christians today.

Healing on the Sabbath	Matthew 12: 9-14
Walking on the Water	Matthew 14: 22-33
Calming the Storm	Mark 4: 35-41
Legion/Mob (Gerasene Demoniac)	Mark 5: 1-20
Jairus' Daughter/Woman with internal bleeding	Mark 5: 21-43
Feeding the Five Thousand	Mark 6: 30-44
Syro-Phoenician Woman's Daughter	Mark 7: 24-30
Paralysed Man	Luke 5: 17-26
The Centurion's Servant	Luke 7: 1-10
The Men with Leprosy	Luke 17: 11-19

- **Care for Minorities**, and its relevance for Christians today.
 - Legion/Mob (Gerasene Demoniac) Mark 5: 1-20
 - Syro-Phoenician Woman's Daughter Mark 7: 24-30
 - The Centurion's Servant Luke 7: 1-10
 - The Sinful Woman Luke 7: 36-50
 - The Good Samaritan Luke 10: 25-37
 - The Men with Leprosy Luke 17: 11-19
 - Zacchaeus Luke 19: 1-10
- **The Kingdom of Heaven** and its significance for Christians today.
 - The Lord's Prayer Matthew 6: 5-15
 - The Sower Matthew 13: 1-8; 18-23
 - The Weeds Matthew 13: 24-30; 36-43
 - The Mustard Seed Matthew 13: 31-32
 - The Yeast Matthew 13: 33
 - The Hidden Treasure Matthew 13: 44
 - The Pearl Matthew 13: 45-46
 - The Three servants/The Talents Matthew 25: 14-30
 - The Sheep and the Goats Matthew 25: 31-46
 - Feeding the Five Thousand Mark 6: 30-44
- **Forgiveness** and its significance for Christians today.
 - The Lord's Prayer Matthew 6: 5-15
 - Authority to forgive sins Luke 5: 17-26
 - Eating with sinners Luke 5: 27-32
 - The Sinful Woman Luke 7: 36-50
 - The Lost Sheep, Lost Coin, The Prodigal/Lost Son Luke 15: 1-32
- **Stewardship** and its significance for Christians today.
 - The Three Servants/The Talents Matthew 25: 14-30
 - The Sheep and the Goats Matthew 25: 31-46
 - The Rich Fool Luke 12: 13-21

- **Discipleship** and its significance for Christians today.

Healing on the Sabbath	Matthew 12: 9-14
The Parables of the Kingdom of Heaven	Matthew 13: 1-46; 25: 14-46
Walking on the Water	Matthew 14: 22-33
The Four Fisherman	Mark 1: 14-20
In the Cornfields on the Sabbath	Mark 2: 23-28
Authority to forgive sins	Luke 5: 17-26
Eating with sinners	Luke 5: 27-32
The Sinful Woman	Luke 7: 36-50
Zacchaeus	Luke 19: 1-10

Module 2A

Effects of Christianity on Behaviour, Attitudes and Lifestyles

13.1

This section of the specification is intended to provide an opportunity for the study of:

- relevant background and factual material;
- the ways in which aspects of personal and social life may be related to Biblical moral teaching and Christian ethics;
- the variety of opinion and practice between Christians, Churches and Christian organisations;
- Christian and, where appropriate, non-religious responses to the contemporary issues detailed below.

Candidates will be expected to make full use of their knowledge and understanding of the biblical passages specified below. Credit will be given for the relevant use of additional biblical material.

The divisions of the subject content are not rigid and questions may be set which span two or more of them. The sequence in which the material is set out is not intended to indicate either the order in which it should be studied or its relative importance.

13.2 **Decisions on Life and Living**

- Sexual relationships outside marriage, including adultery
- Marriage (including Christian marriage vows), annulment, divorce and remarriage
- Abortion and euthanasia, with particular reference to Christian teachings
- Environmental conservation and pollution, with particular reference to Christian stewardship and responsibility
- Biblical passages for study should include:

Creation	Genesis 1:1–2:3
The Ten Commandments	Exodus 20: 1-17
Adultery and divorce	Matthew 5: 27-32
The body as a temple	1 Corinthians 6: 18-20
Husbands and wives	Ephesians 5: 21-33

13.3 Justice and Reconciliation

- Christian views of justice, reconciliation and peace
 - Forgiveness
 - The aims of punishment (retribution, deterrence, protection, reformation and vindication)
 - Capital punishment with particular reference to Christian responses
 - Christian views about conflict (terrorism, nuclear war, ‘just’ war, pacifism, disarmament) and protest
 - Biblical passages for study should include:
 - Teaching on forgiveness Matthew 5: 38-48
 - The unmerciful servant Matthew 18: 23-35
 - The arrest of Jesus Matthew 26: 47-53
 - The traders in the temple Mark 11: 15-18
 - The spirit of the Lord Luke 4: 16-21
 - The forgiving father Luke 15: 11-32
 - The penitent thief Luke 23: 32-43
 - The woman in adultery John 8: 2-11
 - The authority of the state Romans 13: 1-7
-

13.4 Christian Responsibility

- Issues relating to prejudice and discrimination in colour, race, gender and disability. This should include the study of the effects of Christian beliefs on the work of **one** well known Christian.
 - Biblical passages for study should include:
 - The centurion’s servant Luke 7: 1-10
 - The good Samaritan Luke 10: 25-37
 - Peter and Cornelius Acts 11: 1-18
 - All one in Christ Galatians 3: 28
 - Differences between rich and poor, including issues of development, disease, population, debt and long term and short term (emergency) aid.
 - A study of the Christian motivation and the work of **one** of the following voluntary agencies:
 - Christian Aid
 - CAFOD and/or TROCAIRE
 - TEAR Fund
 - Biblical passages for study should include:
 - The sheep and the goats Matthew 25: 31-46
 - The rich fool Luke 12: 13-21
 - The rich man and Lazarus Luke 16: 19-31
 - Barnabas and the early church Acts 4: 32-37
-

Module 2B

Effects of the Roman Catholic Tradition upon Aspects of Christian Lifestyle and Behaviour

- 14.1** This section of the specification will examine the effect of the Roman Catholic Tradition upon aspects of Christian lifestyle and behaviour. Candidates will need to be aware of the distinctive effect of the Roman Catholic tradition.
- Candidates will be expected to make full use of their knowledge and understanding of the biblical passages specified below. Credit will be given for the relevant use of additional biblical material.
- The divisions of the subject content are not rigid and questions may be set which span two or more of them. The sequence in which the material is set out is not intended to indicate either the order in which the material is to be studied or its relative importance.
- Passages in bold print may appear on the examination paper.**

14.2(i)	Christian Values	The Ten Commandments	Exodus 20:1-17
		The Sermon on the Mount	Matthew 5-7 including the Beatitudes Matthew 5:1-12
14.2(ii)	Features of Discipleship	Call of the Disciples	Luke 5:1-11, 27-32
		The Commission	Matthew 28:18-20
		The Rich Young Man	Matthew 19:16-30
		Mission of the Twelve	Mark 6:7-13
		Parables of the Kingdom	Matthew 13
		Cost of Discipleship	Mark 8:34-38
		Status of Discipleship	Matthew 20:24-28
		The Widow	Mark 12:41-44
		The Great Commandment	Mark 12:28-31

- 14.3** Christian Initiation
- 14.3(i)** Sacraments of Initiation
- Baptism, Confirmation and the Eucharist.
- The purpose and effects of these sacraments upon Christian lifestyle and behaviour.
- 14.3(ii)** Related Issues
- Baptism:
- The Sanctity of Human Life
 - Contraception and Abortion
- Confirmation:
- Christian Vocation

Capital Punishment with particular reference to Christian responses
Prejudice and Discrimination

Issues relating to Prejudice and Discrimination in Colour, Race,
Gender and Disability

War and Peace

Christian views about 'Just War', Nuclear War and Pacifism

14.5(iv)

Biblical passages for study should include:

The Forgiving Father	Luke 15:11-32
The Good Samaritan	Luke 10:25-37
Respect for all People	James 2:1-9
The Unmerciful Servant	Matthew 18:23-35
The Paralysed Man	Mark 2:1-12
The Centurion's Servant	Luke 7:1-10
The Practice of Justice and Reconciliation	Philemon
The Lost Coin/Lost Sheep	Luke 15:1-10
Sickness and Healing	James 5:13-15

Key Skills and Other Issues

15

Key Skills – Teaching, Developing And Providing Opportunities for Generating Evidence

15.1 Introduction

The Key Skills Qualification requires candidates to demonstrate levels of achievement in the Key Skills of *Application of Number, Communication and Information Technology*.

The units for the ‘wider’ Key Skills of *Improving own Learning and Performance, Working with Others* and *Problem-Solving* are also available. The acquisition and demonstration of ability in these ‘wider’ Key Skills is deemed highly desirable for all candidates, but they do not form part of the Key Skills Qualification.

Copies of the Key Skills Units may be downloaded from the QCA web site (www.qca.org.uk/keyskills).

The units for each Key Skill comprise three sections:

- A What you need to know.
- B What you must do.
- C Guidance.

Candidates following a course of study based on this Specification for Religious Studies can be offered opportunities to develop and generate evidence of attainment in aspects of the Key Skills of *Communication, Information Technology, Improving own Learning and Performance, Working with Others* and *Problem-Solving*. Areas of study and learning that can be used to encourage the acquisition and use of Key Skills, and to provide opportunities to generate evidence for Part B of the units, are signposted below.

Opportunities for developing and generating evidence of attainment in the Key Skill of Application of Number are not readily available in this specification.

15.2 Key Skills Opportunities in Religious Studies

Communication Level 1

What you must do ...	Signposting of Opportunities for Generating Evidence in Subject Content					
	1A	1B	1C	1D	2A	2B
C1.1 Take part in discussions	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
C1.2 Read and obtain information	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
C1.3 Write different types of documents	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Communication Level 2

What you must do ...	Signposting of Opportunities for Generating Evidence in Subject Content					
	1A	1B	1C	1D	2A	2B
C2.1a Contribute to discussions	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
C2.1b Give a short talk	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
C2.2 Read and summarise information	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
C2.3 Write different types of documents	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Information Technology Level 1

What you must do ...	Signposting of Opportunities for Generating Evidence in Subject Content					
	1A	1B	1C	1D	2A	2B
IT1.1 Find, explore and develop information	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
IT1.2 Present information, including text, numbers and images	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Information Technology Level 2

What you must do ...	Signposting of Opportunities for Generating Evidence in Subject Content					
	1A	1B	1C	1D	2A	2B
IT2.1 Search for and select information	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
IT2.2 Explore and develop information and derive new information	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
IT2.3 Present combined information, including text, numbers and images	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Working with Others Level 1

What you must do ...	Signposting of Opportunities for Generating Evidence in Subject Content					
	1A	1B	1C	1D	2A	2B
WO1.1 Confirm what needs to be done and who is to do it	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
WO1.2 Work towards agreed objectives	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
WO1.3 Identify progress and suggest improvements	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Working with Others Level 2

What you must do ...	Signposting of Opportunities for Generating Evidence in Subject Content					
	1A	1B	1C	1D	2A	2B
WO2.1 Plan work and confirm working arrangements	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
WO2.2 Work co-operatively towards achieving identified objectives	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
WO2.3 Exchange information on progress and agree ways of improving work with others	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Improving own Learning and Performance Level 1

What you must do ...	Signposting of Opportunities for Generating Evidence in Subject Content					
	1A	1B	1C	1D	2A	2B
LP1.1 Confirm short-term targets and plan how these will be met	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
LP1.2 Follow plan to meet targets and improve performance	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
LP1.3 Review progress and achievements	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Improving own Learning and Performance Level 2

What you must do ...	Signposting of Opportunities for Generating Evidence in Subject Content					
	1A	1B	1C	1D	2A	2B
LP2.1 Help set short-term targets and plan how these will be met	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
LP2.2 Use plan and support from others, to meet targets	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
LP2.3 Review progress and identify evidence of achievements	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Problem Solving Level 1

What you must do ...	Signposting of Opportunities for Generating Evidence in Subject Content					
	1A	1B	1C	1D	2A	2B
PS1.1 Confirm understanding of given problems	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
PS1.2 Plan and try out ways of solving problems	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
PS1.3 Check if problems have been solved and describe the results	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Problem Solving Level 2

What you must do ...	Signposting of Opportunities for Generating Evidence in Subject Content					
	1A	1B	1C	1D	2A	2B
PS2.1 Identify problems and come up with ways of solving them	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
PS2.2 Plan and try out options	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
PS2.3 Apply given methods to check if problems have been solved and describe the results	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

15.3 Further Guidance

More specific guidance and examples of tasks that can provide evidence of single Key Skills, or composite tasks that can provide evidence of more than one Key Skill are given in the AQA specification support material, particularly the Teachers' Guide.

Many of the activities appropriate to coursework will be suitable for generating evidence of attainment in Key Skills.

Spiritual, Moral, Ethical, Social, Cultural and Other Issues

16.1 Spiritual, Moral, Ethical, Social, Cultural and Other Issues

All options in this specification provide opportunities to address subject matter that is concerned with:

- the quest for meaning in life, truth and ultimate values;
- awareness of aspects of human life other than the physical and material;
- human experiences of transcendence, awe, wonder and mystery;
- the exploration of religious belief.

In addition they provide opportunities for candidates to:

- explore their own beliefs, creative abilities, insights, self-identity and self-worth;
- recognise and value the world and others.

16.2 European Dimension

AQA has taken account of the 1988 Resolution of the Council of the European Community in preparing this specification and associated specimen papers.

Candidates studying this specification will have the opportunity to recognise that religious faith is not subject to political or national boundaries. There will be opportunities to study the legacy of significant European religious leaders as manifested in the variety of modern Christian belief and practice.

16.3 Environmental Issues

AQA has taken account of the 1988 Resolution of the Council of the European Community and the Report *“Environmental Responsibility: An Agenda for Further and Higher Education”* 1993 in preparing this specification and associated specimen papers.

Religious perspectives on environmental issues should be examined as the opportunity arises. The issues of Christian responsibility and appropriate Christian behaviour inform all modules. Particularly focused opportunities to discuss Christian responses to the environment are available in Module 2A, in which candidates are required to address environmental conservation and pollution, with particular reference to Christian stewardship and responsibility.

16.4 Citizenship

All options within this specification will assist with the development of candidates' reflection on and sense of social and moral responsibility. Opportunities will be available for the development of knowledge and understanding of responsibilities, issues of religious diversity, roles of voluntary and other bodies; the involvement of Christian institutions in conflict resolution; Christian perspectives on economic development and on environmental issues. The specification will assist with the development of the skill of enquiry and communication of topical religious issues. All options will encourage the skill of participating responsibly in the life of the community.

16.5 Avoidance of Bias

AQA has taken great care in the preparation of this specification and associated specimen papers to avoid bias of any kind.

16.6 Health and Safety

All options will encourage the development of a sense of Christian responsibility for the health and safety of the self and others. Particular opportunities should be exploited to promote these issues, and such opportunities will be found particularly in Modules 2A (Decisions on Life and Living; Christian Responsibility); and 2B (Personal issues related to the Sacraments).

16.7 ICT

All options within this specification will provide opportunities for the development of skills in using ICT. For example, research on issues, religious concepts or places of worship, in any option, for class work, would be enhanced by utilising the internet to access relevant web sites, or using, for example, a CD-ROM based encyclopaedia. ICT can form the basis of attractive tasks designed to assist with the assimilation and familiarisation with the subject content of all options. For example, candidates might be encouraged to devise an intranet web page, designed for younger members of the school, based on a place of worship, a religious festival, or a specific religious practice.

Candidates might also be encouraged to develop their own facility in the subject by creating ICT-based resources useful for others, such as an intranet-based resource bank based on the religious practices of a particular denomination. Another application might be the construction of an intranet chat room, to be used for exploration and discussion of any of the ethical or moral issues identified in the subject content of this specification.

Candidates might also make use of, for example, e-mail to survey views on a particular topic or issue identified within the specification. Electronic presentation packages might be employed to enhance presentations of the findings of such research.

The mark out of 3 for Quality of Written Communication must be added to the marks out of 80 (40 x 2) to give a final total mark out of 83 for each candidate (short course or full course).

Awarding and Reporting

17

Grading, Shelf-Life and Re-Sits

17.1 Qualification Titles

The qualifications based on this specification have the following titles: AQA GCSE in Religious Studies, and AQA GCSE in Religious Studies (Short Course).

17.2 Grading System

The qualification will be graded on an 8 point grade Scale A*, A, B, C, D, E, F, G. Candidates who fail to reach the minimum standard for grade G will be recorded as U (unclassified) and will not receive a qualification certificate.

The question papers for GCSE Religious Studies will not be tiered.

17.3 Re-Sits

Candidates are allowed to re-sit any assessment unit once prior to certification of the qualification. Individual assessment unit results, prior to certification of the qualification, have a shelf-life limited only by the shelf-life of the specification when they are used to contribute to the qualification.

An assessment unit could be taken either at the end of the first or at the end of the second year of study, leading to a GCSE Short Course qualification. A candidate taking an assessment unit at the end of Year 10, for example, could re-take this unit at the end of Year 11.

The result of a candidate's attempt on an assessment unit could be obtained after one year of study, and this result combined with a further assessment unit result obtained the following year, to gain a GCSE Full Course qualification. A special feature of this specification is that a unit result can be "topped-up" with another unit result and be certificated as a Full Course, even if the first unit result had been certificated as a Short Course. Full and Short Course entries can be mixed within teaching groups and candidates may enter simultaneously for a Full Course award and a Short Course award.

An entire qualification may be taken more than once. Candidates are not permitted to decline certification of either the Full Course or the Short Course but they may take either or both qualifications more than once.

17.4 Minimum Requirements

Candidates will be graded on the basis of work submitted for assessment.

17.5 Awarding and Reporting

This specification complies with the grading, awarding and certification requirements of the current GCSE, GCE and AEA Code of Practice April 2008 and will be revised in the light of any subsequent changes for future years.

Appendices

A

Grade Descriptions

The following grade descriptors indicate the level of attainment characteristic of the given grade at GCSE. They give a general indication of the required learning outcomes at each specific grade. The descriptors should be interpreted in relation to the content outlined in the specification; they are not designed to define that content.

The grade awarded will depend in practice upon the extent to which the candidate has met the assessment objectives (as in section 6) overall. Shortcomings in some aspects of the examination may be balanced by better performances in others.

- Grade A** Candidates demonstrate detailed and comprehensive knowledge and understanding of beliefs, values and traditions and their impact on the lives of individuals, societies and cultures. They do this by consistently using and interpreting a range of specialist vocabulary, drawing out and explaining the meaning and religious significance of the religion(s) studied and explaining, where appropriate, how differences in belief lead to differences of religious response. They support, interpret and evaluate a variety of responses recognising the complexity of issues, weighing up opinions and by making judgements supported by a range of evidence and well-developed arguments.
- Grade C** Candidates demonstrate, generally with accuracy, a knowledge and understanding of beliefs, values and traditions and their impact on individuals, societies and cultures. They do this by using correct specialist vocabulary when questions specifically demand it and describing accurately and explaining the importance of the religion(s) studied. They support, interpret and evaluate different responses to issues studied by presenting relevant evidence to support arguments, incorporating reference to different points of view and using arguments to make reasoned judgements.
- Grade F** Candidates demonstrate elementary knowledge and understanding of beliefs, values and traditions studied and their impact on adherents and others. They do this through limited use of specialist vocabulary and knowledge, sometimes correctly but not often systematically, and by making simple connections between religion and people's lives. They support and evaluate responses to issues studied by giving a reason in support of an opinion.

B

Overlaps with other Qualifications

There is the potential for AQA GCSE Religious Studies Specification A to overlap peripherally with Specification B depending on the option(s) chosen within Specification B. The major potential for this occurs in the focus on Christianity in Option 1 and the possible choice of Christianity as one of the two religions chosen as the focus for Option 3 or Option 4. However, the approaches adopted in the two specifications are different. Because of the very specific phenomenological focus on Christianity in Specification A, and the generic, thematic approaches adopted in Specification B it is considered that the two specifications would provide the basis for a valuable, complementary and mutually enlightening study of religion.

Overlap with AQA GCSE Religious Studies Specification C is possible if the Christianity option within Specification C is chosen.

In all cases of overlap, the perspective and depth required in the study of issues or aspects of religion varies within each specification.

There is the potential for AQA GCSE Religious Studies Specification A to overlap with AQA GCSE Humanities depending on the options chosen for study within Specification A and the issue chosen as the basis for exploring Key Idea 4 of Core Module 1 of the AQA GCSE Humanities Specification. This requires the exploration of an issue including either capital punishment, abortion, or euthanasia from the contrasting perspectives of at least two groups and this issue can be approached from the perspective of contrasting belief systems.

If the beliefs systems in relation to the issue(s) chosen comprise those reflected in the major denominations within Christianity, there is some possibility of overlap between the two specifications. This could take place if Module 2A is chosen for study within GCSE Religious Studies Specification A, as this option requires the exploration of Christian perspectives on the issues identified above.