

# AQA GCSE Religious Studies

## Christianity

		R	A	G
3.1.2.1 Beliefs and teachings	The nature of God:			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>God as omnipotent, loving and just, and the problem of evil and suffering</li> <li>the oneness of God and the Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.</li> </ul>			
	Different Christian beliefs about creation including the role of Word and Spirit (John 1:1–3 and Genesis 1:1–3).			
	Different Christian beliefs about the afterlife and their importance, including: resurrection and life after death; judgement, heaven and hell			
	Jesus Christ and salvation:			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the incarnation and Jesus as the Son of God</li> <li>the crucifixion, resurrection and ascension</li> <li>sin, including original sin</li> <li>the means of salvation, including law, grace and Spirit</li> <li>the role of Christ in salvation including the idea of atonement.</li> </ul>			
3.1.2.2 Practices	<b>Worship and sacraments</b>			
	Different forms of worship and their significance:			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>liturgical, non-liturgical and informal, including the use of the Bible</li> <li>private worship.</li> </ul>			
	Prayer and its significance, including the Lord’s Prayer, set prayers and informal prayer.			
	The role and meaning of the sacraments:			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the meaning of sacrament</li> <li>the sacrament of baptism and its significance for Christians; infant and believers’ baptism; different beliefs about infant baptism</li> <li>the sacrament of Eucharist/Holy Communion and its significance for Christians, including different ways in which it is celebrated and different interpretations of its meaning.</li> </ul>			
	<b>Pilgrimage, celebrations &amp; the worldwide Church</b>			
	The role and importance of pilgrimage and celebrations including:			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>two contrasting examples of Christian pilgrimage: Lourdes and Iona</li> <li>the celebrations of Christmas and Easter, including their importance for Christians in Great Britain today.</li> <li>The role of the church in the local and worldwide community</li> <li>The role of the Church in the local community, including food banks and street pastors.</li> <li>The place of mission, evangelism and Church growth.</li> </ul>			
	The importance of the worldwide Church including:			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>working for reconciliation</li> <li>how Christian churches respond to persecution</li> <li>the work of one of the following: Catholic Agency For Overseas Development (CAFOD), Christian Aid, Tearfund.</li> </ul>			

## Islam

		R	A	G
<b>3.1.2.1 Beliefs and teachings</b>	<b>Key Beliefs</b>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The six articles of faith in Sunni Islam and five roots of Usul ad-Din in Shi'a Islam, including key similarities and differences.</li> </ul>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Oneness of God (Tawhid), Qur'an Surah 112.</li> </ul>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The nature of God: omnipotence, beneficence, mercy, fairness and justice (Adalat in Shi'a Islam), including different ideas about God's relationship with the world: immanence and transcendence.</li> </ul>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Angels, their nature and role, including Jibril and Mika'il.</li> </ul>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Predestination and human freedom and its relationship to the Day of Judgement.</li> </ul>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Life after death (Aakhirah), human responsibility and accountability, resurrection, heaven and hell.</li> </ul>			
	<b>Authority</b>			
	Prophethood (Risalah) including the role and importance of Adam, Ibrahim and Muhammad.			
	The holy books:			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Qur'an: revelation and authority</li> <li>the Torah, the Psalms, the Gospel, the Scrolls of Abraham and their authority.</li> </ul>			
The imamate in Shi'a Islam: its role and significance.				
<b>3.1.2.2 Practices</b>	<b>Worship</b>			
	Five Pillars of Sunni Islam and the Ten Obligatory Acts of Shi'a Islam (students should study the Five Pillars and jihad in both Sunni and Shi'a Islam and the additional duties of Shi'a Islam).			
	Shahadah: declaration of faith and its place in Muslim practice.			
	Salah and its significance: how and why Muslims pray including times, directions, ablution (wudu), movements (rak'ahs) and recitations; salah in the home and mosque and elsewhere; Friday prayer (Jummah); key differences in the practice of salah in Sunni and Shi'a Islam, and different Muslim views about the importance of prayer.			
	<b>Duties and festivals</b>			
	Sawm: the role and significance of fasting during the month of Ramadan including origins, duties, benefits of fasting, the exceptions and their reasons, and the Night of Power, Qur'an 96:1-5.			
	Zakah: the role and significance of giving alms including origins, how and why it is given, benefits of receipt, Khums in Shi'a Islam.			
	Hajj: the role and significance of the pilgrimage to Makkah including origins, how hajj is performed, the actions pilgrims perform at sites including the Ka'aba at Makkah, Mina, Arafat, Muzdalifah and their significance.			
	Jihad: different understandings of jihad: the meaning and significance of greater and lesser jihad; origins, influence and conditions for the declaration of lesser jihad.			
Festivals and commemorations and their importance for Muslims in Great Britain today, including the origins and meanings of Id-ul-Adha, Id-ul-Fitr, Ashura.				

## Theme A: Relationships and families

You must be able to explain contrasting beliefs on the following three issues with reference to the main religious tradition in Britain (Christianity) and Islam:

- Contraception.
- Sexual relationships before marriage.
- Homosexual relationships.

		R	A	G
<b>Sex, marriage and divorce</b>	Human sexuality including: heterosexual and homosexual relationships.			
	Sexual relationships before and outside of marriage.			
	Contraception and family planning.			
	The nature and purpose of marriage.			
	Same-sex marriage and cohabitation.			
	Divorce, including reasons for divorce, and remarrying.			
	Ethical arguments related to divorce, including those based on the sanctity of marriage vows and compassion.			
<b>Families and gender equality</b>	The nature of families, including:			
	• the role of parents and children			
	• extended families and the nuclear family.			
	The purpose of families, including:			
	• procreation			
	• stability and the protection of children			
	• educating children in a faith.			
	Contemporary family issues including:			
	• same-sex parents			
	• polygamy.			
	The roles of men and women.			
	Gender equality.			
Gender prejudice and discrimination, including examples.				

## Theme B: Religion and life

You must be able to explain contrasting beliefs on the following three issues with reference to the main religious tradition in Britain (Christianity) and one or more other religious traditions:

- Abortion.
- Euthanasia.
- Animal experimentation.

		R	A	G
<b>The origins and value of the universe</b>	The origins of the universe, including:			
	• religious teachings about the origins of the universe, and different interpretations of these			
	• the relationship between scientific views, such as the Big Bang theory, and religious views.			
	The value of the world and the duty of human beings to protect it, including religious teaching about stewardship, dominion, responsibility, awe and wonder.			
	The use and abuse of the environment, including the use of natural resources, pollution.			

	The use and abuse of animals, including:			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• animal experimentation</li> <li>• the use of animals for food.</li> </ul>			
The origins and value of human life	The origins of life, including:			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• religious teachings about the origins of human life, and different interpretations of these</li> <li>• the relationship between scientific views, such as evolution, and religious views.</li> </ul>			
	The concepts of sanctity of life and the quality of life.			
	Abortion, including situations when the mother's life is at risk.			
	Ethical arguments related to abortion, including those based on the sanctity of life and quality of life.			
	Euthanasia.			
	Beliefs about death and an afterlife, and their impact on beliefs about the value of human life.			

### Theme D: Religion, peace and conflict

You must be able to explain contrasting beliefs on the following three issues with reference to the main religious tradition in Britain (Christianity) and one or more other religious traditions:

- Violence.
- Weapons of mass destruction.
- Pacifism.

		R	A	G	
Religion, violence, terrorism and war	The meaning and significance of:				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• peace</li> <li>• justice</li> <li>• forgiveness</li> <li>• reconciliation.</li> </ul>				
	Violence, including violent protest.				
	Terrorism.				
	Reasons for war, including greed, self-defence and retaliation.				
	The just war theory, including the criteria for a just war.				
	Holy war.				
	Pacifism.				
	Religion and belief in 21st century conflict	Religion and belief as a cause of war and violence in the contemporary world (e.g. Israel & the Palestinian territories)			
		Nuclear weapons, including nuclear deterrence.			
The use of weapons of mass destruction.					
Religion and peace-making in the contemporary world including the work of individuals influenced by religious teaching including Malala					
Religious responses to the victims of war including the work of one present day religious organisation (e.g. Christian Aid, Muslim Aid, Islamic relief)					

### Theme E: Religion, crime and punishment

You must be able to explain contrasting beliefs on the following three issues with reference to the main religious tradition in Britain (Christianity) and one or more other religious traditions:

- Corporal punishment.
- Death penalty.
- Forgiveness.

		R	A	G
<b>Religion, crime and the causes of crime</b>	Good and evil intentions and actions, including whether it can ever be good to cause suffering.			
	Reasons for crime, including:			
	• poverty and upbringing			
	• mental illness and addiction			
	• greed and hate			
	• opposition to an unjust law.			
	Views about people who break the law for these reasons.			
Views about different types of crime, including hate crimes, theft and murder.				
<b>Religion and punishment</b>	The aims of punishment, including:			
	• retribution			
	• deterrence			
	• reformation.			
	The treatment of criminals, including:			
	• prison			
	• corporal punishment			
	• community service.			
	Forgiveness.			
The death penalty.				
Ethical arguments related to the death penalty, including those based on the principle of utility and sanctity of life.				