

<b>SUBJECT: Philosophy &amp; Ethics: Religious Studies A</b>	<b>EXAM BOARD AND CODE: AQA 8062</b>
<b>NUMBER OF PAPERS: 2</b>	<b>LENGTH OF PAPERS: 105 minutes per paper</b>
<b>EQUIPMENT REQUIRED</b> Black pen (and spare)	<b>WEBSITE LINK:</b> <a href="http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/pe/specifications/AQA-8582-SP-2016.PDF">http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/pe/specifications/AQA-8582-SP-2016.PDF</a>

### Topics to be revised

#### Paper 1 – The Study of Religions

##### Christian Beliefs and Teaching

A01: Know in detail and be able to explain the following:

The nature of God: God as omnipotent, loving and just and the problem of evil.

The oneness of God and the Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Different Christian beliefs about creation including the role of Word and Spirit (John 1:1-3 and Genesis 1:1-3).

Jesus Christ and Salvation: Beliefs and teaching about the incarnation and Jesus as the Son of God and the crucifixion.

Jesus Christ and Salvation: Beliefs and teaching about the resurrection and ascension and life after death.

Different Christian beliefs about the afterlife and their importance, including: resurrection and life after death: judgement, heaven and hell.

Beliefs and teaching about sin, including original sin, the means of salvation, including, law, grace and Spirit, and the role of Christ in salvation and atonement.

A02: Be able to evaluate different viewpoints and give a personal response on the following:

Consider whether evil poses a problem for the nature of God – especially God being omnipotent and loving, and evaluate how giving God human qualities helps humans to develop these qualities in themselves.

Consider whether the trinity is a useful way of looking at the nature of God or whether it confuses the issue more.

Consider whether the Christian views on creation conflict with science and how these can work together for some Christians. Develop your own view on how the world began and whether there is a spiritual element to that explanation.

Consider why beliefs about the incarnation and Jesus as the Son of God are important to the Christian faith and how belief in God incarnate helps with an understanding of the Trinity. Is the incarnation a possibility or simply a myth?

Consider why the crucifixion is still significant to Christians today and how it impacts upon their life. Is the crucifixion more important to Christians than the resurrection or are they both significant in different ways?

Consider the significance of the resurrection and ascension for Christians. How likely is it that these events actually happened? How else could they be explained? Does it matter if the resurrection is spiritual or physical?

Consider your beliefs about life after death and how they are compare to the Christian view. Do you believe in the soul? What are the arguments for and against life after death?

Do you believe in heaven and hell and that your actions would determine what happens after death? Should actions and / or faith determine what happens after death? Would a loving and just God send people to eternal punishment?

What do you think about good, evil, sin, and why evil exists in the world? Should Christians be able to achieve salvation through grace alone or should it involve actions too?

### **Christian Practices**

A01: Know in detail and be able to explain the following:

Worship and festivals: Different forms of worship and their significance: Liturgical, non-liturgical and informal, including the use of the Bible and private worship. Prayer and its significance, including Lord's Prayer and informal prayer.

The role and meaning of the sacraments: The meaning of sacrament, the sacrament of baptism and its significance for Christians; infant and believers baptism; different ways in which it is celebrated and different interpretations of its meaning.

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.

The role and importance of pilgrimage and celebrations including: two contrasting examples of Christian pilgrimage: Lourdes and Iona. The celebrations of Christmas and Easter, including their importance for Christians in Great Britain today.

The role of the church in the local and worldwide community: The role of the Church in the local community, including food banks and street pastors. The place of mission, evangelism and Church growth.

The importance of the worldwide church including: The work for reconciliation, how Christian church respond to persecution and the work of Christian Aid.

A02: Be able to evaluate different viewpoints and give a personal response on the following:

Consider the advantages and disadvantages of liturgical and non-liturgical worship and why they are important to Christians. Which form of worship do you think is most important?

Consider whether private prayer is more significant to Christians than public worship. Does it matter if prayers are not answered or does this pose a problem for Christians? Consider whether parents should have their children baptised if they have no intention of bringing them up as Christians? What are the advantages of adult / believers baptism?

Consider the importance of the Holy Communion in relation to other Christian beliefs e.g. is it more important for a Christian to perform and celebrate Holy Communion than it is for them to give money to the poor? Which one do you think should be more important to a Christian?

Consider whether Christians should spend their time helping others rather than attending Holy Communion.

Consider the negative effects of going on a pilgrimage. Do you think the positives outweigh the negatives?

Consider whether Christmas can still be considered a Christian festival and to what extent it has become a secular (non-religious) tradition. What are the advantages and disadvantages of celebrating the same festivals (Easter and Christmas) every year?

Consider, in relation to the role of the Church in the local community, whether there will always be a need to feed the hungry people in Britain.

Consider whether you think all Christians have a responsibility to help in their local community? Is it the case that faith should always be accompanied by action?

Consider whether you think Christians should seek to tell others about their faith. Should all Christians be involved in evangelism? Should Christians rely on evangelism to help grow the Church?

Consider whether you think there will ever be a time when religious persecution can cease. It is possible to 'rejoice and be glad' if you are suffering persecution?

Consider whether you think religious charities should concentrate on emergency aid only.

## **Buddhist Beliefs and Teaching**

A01: Know in detail and be able to explain the following:

The concept of Dhamma (Dharma) and its various meanings. Be able to show that this is one of the three refuges (Dhamma, the Buddha, and the Buddhist community or Sangha).

The concept of dependent arising (paticcasamupada) and how it links to other teaching such as Karma and Nirvana.

The Three Marks of Existence: Anicca (impermanence), Anatta (no fixed self), Dukkha (life involves suffering).

The human personality, in the Theravada and Mahayana traditions: Theravada: the Five Aggregates (skandhas) of form, sensation, perception, mental formations, Consciousness. Mahayana: sunyata, the possibility of attaining Buddhahood and Buddha-nature.

Human destiny: different ideals in Theravada and Mahayana traditions: Arhat (a 'perfected person') and Bodhisattva ideals.

Buddhahood and the Pure Land Buddhism and its approach to Buddhism.

The Buddha's life and its significance: the birth of the Buddha and his life of luxury.

Know how this influenced his later teaching.

The Four Sights: illness, old age, death, holy man (Jataka 075).

The Buddha's ascetic life and why he rejected this as the path to enlightenment.

The Buddha's Enlightenment including the process of his enlightenment and the three watches of the night.

The Four Noble Truths:

1 suffering (dukkha) including different types of suffering

2 the causes of suffering (samudaya); the Three Poisons, ignorance, greed and hate

3 the end of craving (tanha)

4 the Eightfold Path (magga) to nibbana/nirvana; the path as the Threefold Way: ethics (sila),

meditation (samadhi) and wisdom (panna). Dhammapada 190 –191.

The different interpretations of Nirvana and Enlightenment.

A02: Be able to evaluate different viewpoints and give a personal response on the following:

Consider to what extent the Buddha's early life is significant for Buddhists today? Is it more or less significant than his later life and teachings?

Consider whether the Middle Path between two extremes is indeed the best path to follow. Is it always best to avoid extremes or when can extremes be good?

Consider to what extent the Buddha's enlightenment still influences Buddhists today.

Consider whether you think that Karma is a real force in existence in the world or not.

Have you had any experience of Karma at work in your own life?

Consider whether you agree that change and impermanence lead to suffering and whether accepting that suffering is part of life can help to increase happiness. What do you think is the most significant part of the three marks of existence and why? Do you agree that there is no fixed self?

Consider whether you think that the Buddha's approach to Kisa's suffering was a good way of helping her to overcome the loss of her son.

Consider whether you agree that it is the three poisons that lead to suffering. Which of the Four Noble Truths do you think is most important to Buddhists?

Consider what you think is the most successful understanding of the term 'Nirvana'.

Consider whether you agree that attachment can cause suffering and whether this means that attachment should therefore be avoided.

Consider whether in your opinion the Noble Eight-Fold Path offers good guidance for how to lead a good life and follow a path to enlightenment. Is this the most important of the Four Noble Truths?

Consider which branch of Buddhism you agree with the most, Mahayana or Theravada, when it comes to explaining the human personality and human destiny. Do you agree with the Theravada belief that merit / good karma can be transferred to someone else?

## **Buddhist Practices**

A01: Know in detail and be able to explain the following:

The nature, use and importance of Buddhist places of worship including temples, shrines, monasteries (viharas), halls for meditation or learning (gompas) and their key features including

Buddha rupa, artefacts and offerings.

Puja: the significance and role of puja/devotional ritual in the home and in the temple, including chanting, both as a devotional practice and as an aid to mental concentration, mantra recitation, use of malas.

Meditation: the different aims, significance and methods of meditation:

1. Samatha (concentration and tranquillity) including mindfulness of breathing
2. Vipassana (insight) including zazen
3. The visualisation of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas.

The practice and significance of different ceremonies and rituals associated with death and mourning in Theravada communities and in Japan and Tibet.

Ethical teaching: belief in Karma and rebirth and how this affects the desire to pursue skilful actions rather than unskilful actions.

Compassion (karuna) and loving-kindness (metta) and how both of these are significant to Buddhists

The five moral precepts: do not take life, do not take what is not given, do not misuse the senses, do not speak falsehoods, do not take intoxicants that cloud the mind.

The six perfections in the Mahayanan tradition: generosity, morality, patience, energy, meditation, wisdom.

A02: Be able to evaluate different viewpoints and give a personal response on the following:

Consider whether Buddhist practices are best described as 'worship' or should they be considered as something else. Consider whether it is appropriate to worship the Buddha when he is not believed to be a God.

Consider why meditation is so important to Buddhists and whether it bears any similarities with prayer.

Consider the benefits of a range of different types of meditation and which you consider to have the greatest benefit to a Buddhist.

Consider whether you think that religious festivals, like one that celebrates the birth of the Buddha, is just an excuse to have a good time and nothing more.

Consider whether you think it is the motivation behind an action that matters the most or is it the consequences of an action that determine whether it is right or wrong.

Consider whether you agree with the Dalai Lama that a world that shows more compassion would be more successful. Do you have an obligation to help other people who are suffering in your opinion?

Consider whether you agree that it is possible to show loving-kindness to everyone in the world, including people that you don't like. If you practiced metta in your own life, how might it help you and be of benefit?

Consider whether you agree with the Five Moral Precepts and whether you think these should be treated as strict rules for Buddhists or guidelines to follow. Do you think it is more helpful when you are told what you should do, rather than what you should avoid?

Consider whether you think the Six Perfections are useful in cultivating the virtues and becoming a good person.

## **Paper 2 – Thematic Studies**

### **Religion and Life**

A01: Know in detail and be able to explain the following:

Different beliefs about the creation of the universe, including the Big Bang and religious beliefs about creation.

Different beliefs about the origins and value of human life, including evolution and religious beliefs concerning the sanctity of life and quality of life.

Different beliefs concerning the value of the world and ideas of stewardship and responsibility.

Different beliefs about the use and abuse of the environment and religious beliefs concerning the protection of the environment. The main types of pollution and how religions work to reduce pollution and climate change.

Different beliefs about the use and abuse of animals, religious beliefs towards animals, animal experimentation and vegetarianism.

Different beliefs about abortion, including arguments for and against abortion.

Different beliefs about euthanasia, including arguments for and against euthanasia.

Different beliefs about death and the afterlife.

A02: Be able to evaluate different viewpoints and give a personal response to the issues stated above by means of:

Weighing up the strengths and weaknesses of opposing views.

Making a clear personal judgement on which side you most agree with.

Using relevant evidence and information to ensure a well-argued and supported judgement.

Using a logical chain of reasoning when you are arguing your point of view.

### **Religion, Crime and Punishment**

A01: Know in detail and be able to explain the following:

What crime and punishment is and religious beliefs concerning good and evil intentions and actions.

Reasons why some people commit crime including upbringing, poverty, addiction, greed and hate.

Different attitudes to lawbreakers and types of crime.

The three main aims of punishment: retribution, deterrence, and reformation.

Different attitudes to suffering and causing suffering to others.

Different attitudes to the treatment of criminals – prison, corporal punishment and community service.

Different attitudes towards forgiveness

Different attitudes towards the death penalty, including arguments for and against.

A02: Be able to evaluate different viewpoints and give a personal response to the issues stated above by means of:

Weighing up the strengths and weaknesses of opposing views.

Making a clear personal judgement on which side you most agree with.

Using relevant evidence and information to ensure a well-argued and supported judgement.

Using a logical chain of reasoning when you are arguing your point of view.

### **Relationships and Families**

A01: Know in detail and be able to explain the following:

Human sexuality: different attitudes towards heterosexual and homosexual relationships.

Different attitudes towards sexual relationships before marriage and outside of marriage.

Different attitudes towards contraception and family planning.

Different attitudes towards marriage, the purpose of marriage and cohabitation.

Different attitudes towards divorce, religious teaching concerning divorce and responses to couples having problems in their marriage.

Different religious teachings about the nature of families and the role of parents.

Different attitudes towards the purpose of families and relationships within families.

Different attitudes towards gender equalities and the roles of men and women.

A02: Be able to evaluate different viewpoints and give a personal response to the issues stated above by means of:

Weighing up the strengths and weaknesses of opposing views.

Making a clear personal judgement on which side you most agree with.

Using relevant evidence and information to ensure a well-argued and supported judgement.

Using a logical chain of reasoning when you are arguing your point of view.

## **Religion, peace & conflict**

A01: Know in detail and be able to explain the following:

Attitudes and teachings about justice, peace, forgiveness and reconciliation

Attitudes and teachings about violence and terrorism

Explain the causes of war including religion, greed, self-defence and retaliation

Explain the Just War Theory and the criteria

Attitudes and teachings about Holy War

Explain attitudes towards nuclear weapons and WMDs

Explain Christian attitudes to pacifism and an individual who has worked towards this

Explain Christian responses to the victims of war, including the work of one present day religious organisation

A02: Be able to evaluate different viewpoints and give a personal response to the issues stated above by means of:

Weighing up the strengths and weaknesses of opposing views.

Making a clear personal judgement on which side you most agree with.

Using relevant evidence and information to ensure a well-argued and supported judgement.

Using a logical chain of reasoning when you are arguing your point of view.

### **Revision Tips**

Remember that your Philosophy and Ethics textbook is an excellent source of revision. Read through each chapter carefully and test your knowledge by answering the questions at the end of each topic. Look at the advice on exam technique given by examiners which can also be found at the end of each section.

You can also use the notes in your exercise books for further reference and use this to put together detailed revision notes for the mock exam that can also be used for the summer exam.

Be sure that you know the following for each topic in preparation for the mock;

- **Key concepts / specialist terminology**
- **Religious teaching that can be learnt and referred to (particularly in the 5 and 12 mark questions)**
- **Differences in the approach taken by religions or the denominations of a religion**

### **Exam Hints**

Use the recommended structure for the 12 mark questions: 3 paragraphs; arguments FOR the statement, arguments AGAINST the statement and then your conclusion at the end. Structure these clearly and take your time before answering them. Have a plan in mind before embarking upon your answer.