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| Q | What is Religious Studies? |
| A | The GCSE course is called Religious Studies by the Department for Education but it involves all aspects of “Ethics, Philosophy, and Religion” you have become accustomed to lower down the school. The course is for everybody whether you are religious or not. |
| Q | Which examining body is responsible for the GCSE Religious Studies course? |
| A | We follow AQA’s Specification A. You can find further details here: https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/religious-studies/gcse/religious-studies-a-8062 Click on “Specification at a Glance” to find a detailed list of what you will study. Please bear in mind you will only study two religions (Christianity and Islam) and four themes (C – F). Click on “Past Papers and Mark Schemes” to see what your exams and assessments will look like. |
| Q | Will I miss out on the E-Bacc if I take Religious Studies? |
| A | No. The E-Bacc is a league table measure and not a certificate you will receive as a return for studying a particular suite of subjects. The DfE website makes this clear when it states: ‘The English Baccalaureate (E-Bacc) is a performance measure, not a qualification. It is not compulsory, but Ofsted will take it into account when inspecting your school.’ |
| Q | What are the exams like? |
| A | You will sit two papers, which are worth 50% each. Each paper is 1 hour 45 minutes long. You will be required to answer questions from 4 sections in both papers. What you have to do is easy to remember as the format of the questions the same in each section and both papers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Q1 – tick the correct answer for 1 mark; • Q2 – give two terms or two short sentences for 2 marks; • Q3 – give two answers explained in brief paragraphs for 4 marks; • Q4 – give two answers explained in brief paragraphs with a quotation for 5 marks; • Q5 – write 3 paragraphs in which you argue for then against an opinion and conclude for 12 marks. |
| Q | What do we study? |
| A | There are two components: Paper 1 – the Study of Religion; Paper 2 – Thematic Studies. The Study of Religion paper involves learning about the beliefs and practices of Christianity and Islam. The Thematic Studies paper explores a range of ethical and philosophical questions and issues. The themes studied include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theme C – The Existence of God and Revelation; • Theme D – Peace and Conflict; • Theme E – Crime and Punishment; • Theme F – Human Rights and Social Justice. |
| Q | How is the course taught? |
| A | We alternate between topics for the two papers so once with finish a Study of Religion topic we move on to a Thematic Studies topic and so on. |
| Q | What is a typical lesson like? |

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| A | Every lesson usually relates in some way to the modern world, either in terms of how people live their lives today or the issues they face. You will be surprised how often what we learn comes up in the news. You will be able to connect what you are learning with the real world pretty easily. There are plenty of discussions and debates to be had, perhaps even some arguments. You will get to read some really interesting texts and of course you will have to make notes but in a variety of ways. Most of all, you will have to engage in really deep thinking about life's ultimate questions. |
| Q | Do you do any coursework? |
| A | There is no coursework or controlled assessments. Your grade will be determined entirely by examinations alone. |
| Q | How much homework will we get? |
| A | The only homework we tend to set is revision. However, there are lots of great books, podcasts films, and documentaries linked to the course you can use to explore your interests further in the time set aside for homework, just listen closely for what your teacher recommends. |
| Q | Do you run any trips? |
| A | We try to run trips connected to both aspects of the course. We visit the National Justice Museum in Nottingham to provide a hands-on experience and history of the criminal justice system when studying Theme E (Religion, Crime and Punishment). This excursion includes a tour of the gaol, the hangman's gallows, the former police station, and putting on a trial in an actual court room. When studying the topics relating to religious practice we have previously attended some of the most spectacular places of worship in the country such as Peterborough Cathedral. |
| Q | Who will teach me? |
| A | One of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr Sean Tighe (Subject Leader); B.A. Hons. (Newcastle), P.G.C.E. (Leeds); or, • Miss Sarah Atkinson; B.A. Hons (Regents Park, Oxford), P.G.C.E. (Hull); or, • Mr James Howard; M.A. Hons. (Bishop Grosseteste), P.G.C.E. (Bishop Grosseteste). |
| Q | What help will I receive? |
| A | Weekly revision sessions relating to difficult exam questions are delivered after-school. This occurs just before and following the Mock Exams in Year 11. You will also be provided with free detailed revision guides for each of the eight topics you will study before each interim assessment. Our Subject Prefects also offer mentoring at lunch-time for anyone who is interested and willing to come along. |
| Q | How does the course relate to A-Level? |
| A | You will hone the skills of analysis and evaluation throughout the course: these skills are the basis of the assessment objectives at A-Level as well as GCSE. There is less emphasis on the study of religion at A-Level and more time is spent on Ethics and Philosophy. A number of the issues and questions covered in Thematic Studies are covered again but in greater depth at A-Level. |
| Q | What can you do with a qualification in RS? |
| A | Short answer: anything. You would be surprised by the wide range of careers open to those with qualifications in Religious Studies. But don't just take our word for it... TRS-UK is the Professional Association for Departments, Units and Subject Associations of the Study of Religion and Theology in the UK. The Culham St Gabriel's Trust is an independent endowed charity committed to excellence in religious education that runs the website RE-Online. RE-Online and TRS-UK have produced a series of videos showing real-life examples of people who have gone on to achieve great things with their qualifications in Theology and Religious Studies. |

The TRS-UK videos can be viewed here:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC2rWLXgsU6fzz4P3o9OBz2A?app=desktop&fbclid=IwAR0ZawfQ--wTQ0TehXg0kGBVmcs5qRrwNbnvXm0VWBwxRMbPPWV5Y80VCSE>

The RE-Online videos can be viewed here:

<http://casestudies.reonline.org.uk/>