

The GCSE Religious Studies (RS) course consists of two core elements, the study of the beliefs and practices of two major world religions and responses to social themes and ethical issues.

The GCSE RS course develops powerful knowledge because it instils in students a deeper understanding of the lives of literally billions of people. It also increases their knowledge and understanding of significant ethical issues such as abortion and capital punishment, developing their appreciation of the complexities of these issues and the varied responses to them.

One of the key skills RS students develop is the ability to evaluate, to take information from a variety of sources and interpret it accurately, using it to reach logical and reasoned conclusions. RS students are also analytical, looking at a range of views on an issue or topic, analysing the reasons behind these views and inferring the implications and potential impact of these views.

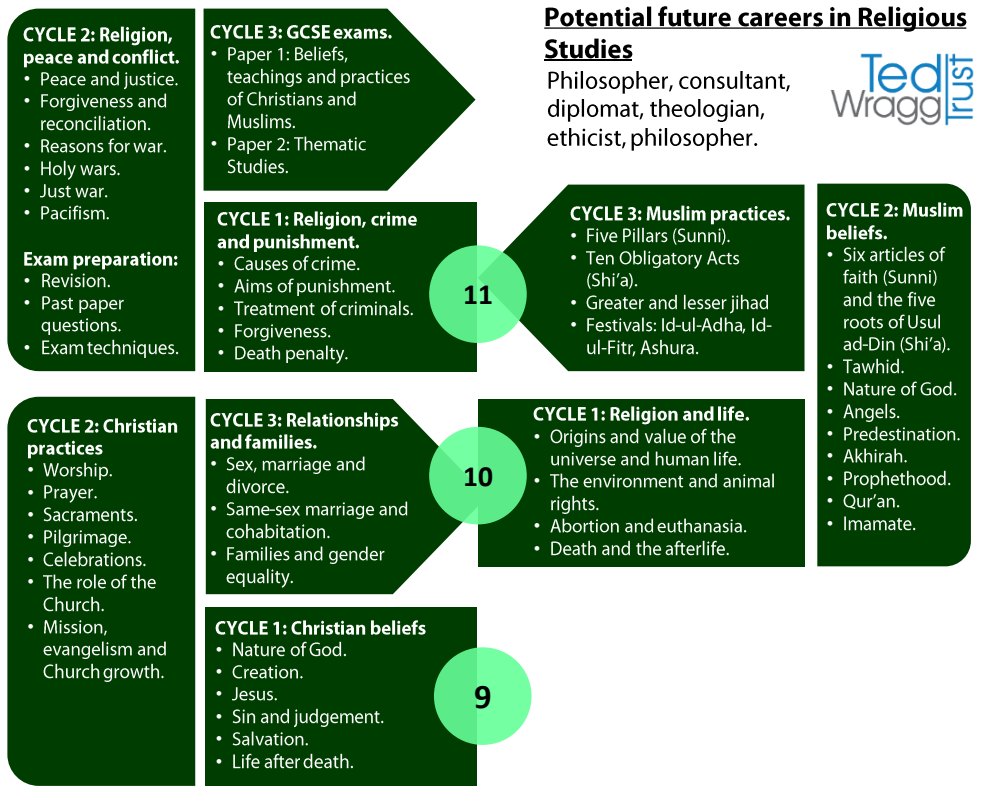
In terms of cultural capital, GCSE RS helps students understand the world around them as they gain a deep understanding of the beliefs and practices of Christians and Muslims, the two biggest religions in the UK. They also gain an understanding of the views of other religious believers, and non-religious people relating to a wide-range of topics and issues, from marriage and divorce to euthanasia and animal rights.

Supporting literacy is important within RS as students are introduced to many new terms and concepts, particularly as they study for the beliefs and practices paper. Knowledge and understanding of religious quotes is also important and time is spent learning and analysing these, along with using them accurately when answering exam practice questions.

The curriculum is designed to cover all the elements required by the exam board specification. This involves an in-depth study of the beliefs, teachings and practices of two religions, which is assessed in paper one and the study of four themes which are assessed in paper two. As can be seen, right, the course is structured so that the students study one religion, then two themes, then the second religion and finally the remaining two themes. This gives a good balance to the course. The chosen exam board is AQA which is the one used by many schools. The choice element available in both papers means that other schools may opt for different religions and/or themes.

Retrieval practice primarily takes place in lessons through the 'Do Now' tasks which form the silent starter at the start of each lesson. It also occurs through the inclusion of exam-style questions which require students to refer to previously gained knowledge.

Spiral learning is used in the delivery of the course. In particular, the beliefs and practices of Christians are constantly referred back to when students are studying the themes and examining religious responses to the topics and issues contained therein.



Key concepts



Beliefs



Practices



Values



Ethics

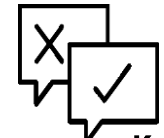
Interpreting Communicating



Debating



Evaluating



Key skills