

WELCOME. We hope you will find this bulletin useful.

IN THIS NEWSLETTER

- 1 Message from Tudor Thomas
- 2 Subscribe to Religious Studies update
- 3 GCSE News
 - Specification A details*
 - Advice on Entry Codes for Specification A*
 - Specification B details*
 - Publications to Support GCSE Specification B*
 - Advice on Entry Codes for Specification B*
 - GCSE Specification B Discussion Board*
 - GCSE Key Dates*
- 4 GCE News
 - Available publications*
 - DVD Review – Ethics*
 - GCE Key Dates*
- 5 Entry Level News
- 6 Examiner Vacancies
- 7 WJEC Secure Website
- 8 CPD (INSETs) news – dates for Autumn 2012
- 9 WJEC Website Home Pages with useful links
- 10 How to Contact Us

1 Message from Tudor Thomas

WJEC Religious Studies Subject Officer

There will be some changes to contend with in terms of GCSE the reintroduction of SPaG marks (Spelling Punctuation and Grammar) and in the medium term the ending of the staged assessment pattern that has been so successfully used in GCSE Religious Studies in both Specification A and Specification B. At the moment awarding organisations have not yet had the final advice from the regulators. I will do my utmost to communicate clearly with all centres the changes and what their effects will be. I shall also be supporting centres as these changes come in into effect.

2 Subscribe to Religious Studies updates

RS teachers are encouraged to join the SUBSCRIBE system which can be found on the Religious Studies page on the WJEC website. Subscribers will automatically be up dated about changes and any new resources support available.

Would you like to subscribe to Religious Studies updates and be kept informed of developments and important information? If so, email Paul Bradley at paul.bradley@wjec.co.uk stating your name, centre name and number and confirm the level of Religious Studies that you are interested in i.e. GCE level, GCSE Spec A, GCSE Spec B or Entry Level.

3 GCSE NEWS

KEY SPECIFICATION DETAILS

Specification A has a systematic study of religion, **and** Specification B, involves a thematic study of some central questions and issues in human life and experience exploring the relevance of religious beliefs, values and traditions to these questions and issues.

Specification B has the added advantage of allowing schools to meet the statutory requirements of both the 1944 Education Act and the 1996 Education Act. The 'staged assessment' (i.e. one short course in year 10 followed by a further short course in year 11, which is aggregated to give a full course result) offered in both specifications will be maintained.

SPECIFICATION A

This specification has been thoroughly revised.

Assessment for GCSE Religious Studies is untiered, i.e. all units cater for the full range of ability and allow access to grades A*-G for the subject award.

The specification content is prescribed in a series of eight units.

Candidates for the Full Course will be required to sit **two** equally weighted external written examination papers. Candidates for the Short Course and Further Short Course will be required to sit **one**.

The units are:

- Unit 1: Christianity
- Unit 2: Christianity through the Gospels
- Unit 3: Roman Catholicism 1
- Unit 4: Roman Catholicism 2
- Unit 5: Christian Philosophy and Ethics
- Unit 6: Hinduism
- Unit 7: Islam
- Unit 8: Judaism

The following combinations of units are **NOT** permitted:

- Roman Catholicism 1 with Christianity
- Roman Catholicism 2 with Christian Philosophy and Ethics
- Christianity Through the Gospels with Christianity

Each written paper will be as follows:

Written Paper: 1 hour 45 minutes
100% of Short or Further Short Course; 50% of Full Course

Four compulsory questions, consisting of visual or text stimuli leading to a series of paragraph and extended writing answers testing AO1 and AO2

There will still be the facility for candidates to enter the full course either by end-of-course assessment, or by the entering for one short course first and then by sitting a further short course (usually at the end of Years 10 and 11 respectively). The assessment will be by means of a further short course if the second unit is taken at a different examination sitting from the first.

There is no controlled assessment in GCSE Religious Studies.

This new specification includes for the first time two Catholic units and a brand new unit on Philosophy and Ethics. Christianity is for the first time being studied as a world religion. The WJEC is confident that the new revised specification A will be popular with both students and teachers.

GCSE Spec A - Advice on Entry Codes

To access the Advice on Entry Codes for the **Specification** please click here. <http://www.wjec.co.uk/uploads/publications/10124.pdf>

SPECIFICATION B

This specification has been thoroughly revised.

Assessment for GCSE Religious Studies is untiered, i.e. all units cater for the full range of ability and allow access to grades A*-G for the subject award.

The specification content is prescribed in two units.

Candidates for the Full Course will be required to sit **two** equally weighted external written examination papers. Candidates for the Short Course and Further Short Course will be required to sit **one**.

The units are:

Unit 1: Religion and Life Issues

Unit 2: Religion and Human Experience

Candidates who have already received a short course award in Unit 1 may enter for a Further Short Course award in Unit 2.

Candidates who have already received a short course award in Unit 2 may enter for a Further Short Course award in Unit 1.

Each written paper will be as follows:

Written Paper: 1 hour 45 minutes 100%

Four structured questions consisting of visual stimuli used as a basis for a series of paragraph and extended writing answers, testing AO1 and AO2.

There will still be the facility for candidates to enter the full course either by end-of-course assessment or by the entering for one short course first and then by sitting a further short course (usually at the end of Years 10 and 11 respectively). The assessment will be by means of a further short course if the second unit is taken at a different examination sitting from the first.

There is no controlled assessment in GCSE Religious Studies. The main thrust of Specification B will be maintained – as an interesting and stimulating issues based specification. Colour stimulus will still be used throughout the examination paper and the system of having the question paper and answer book combined will continue.

The content remains similar – though there has been some fine tuning. In Unit A the Topic 'Identity and Belonging' has been removed and content in the other topics have been increased slightly.

In Unit B the topic 'Suffering and Evil' has been removed and content in other topics increased slightly.

The subject specific criteria are more demanding and that is the rationale for removing one topic in both units to allow students to study in greater depth.

Religion and Life Issues

Topic 1	Relationships	Issues of love, marriage and divorce
Topic 2	Is it Fair?	Issues of justice and equality
Topic 3	Looking for Meaning	Issues about God, life and death
Topic 4	Our World	Exploring creation and our place in the world

Religion and Human Experience

Topic 1	Religion and Conflict	Issues of peace, forgiveness and conflict
Topic 2	Religion and Medicine	Issues of medical ethics and the sanctity of life
Topic 3	Religious Expression	Issues of expressing one's faith
Topic 4	Authority, Religion & State	Issues of law and order in religion and society

PUBLICATIONS TO SUPPORT NEW GCSE SPECIFICATION B

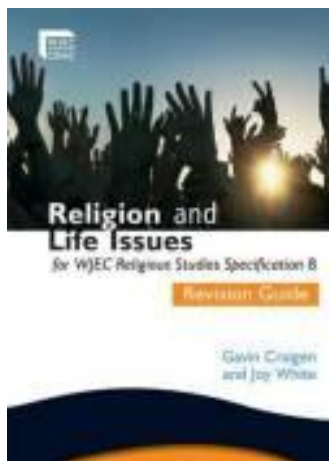
There are exciting developments on the resources being developed to support Specification B.

Hodder and Stoughton have revised their very popular '**Believing and Living**' (Religion and Life Issues) and '**Believing and Experiencing**' (Religion and Human Experience) written by Joy White (Principal Examiner Specification B) and Gavin Craigen (former Chief Examiner for Specification B). Hodder have also developed a student work booklet to accompany the above titles. For further details please click <http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/getdoc/e6ee04c8-9c11-4ea2-961b-bdccc493701/WJEC-GCSE-RE.aspx>.

BOOK REVIEW by Lowri Florence

WJEC Religious Studies Specification B Revision Guide

Religion and Life Issues – Gavin Craigen and Joy White



This is an excellent resource for GCSE Religious Studies students. The Revision Guide is especially designed for the WJEC Religious Studies Spec B course and it explores the four main topics covered in the course. It contains useful definitions of the six key concepts for each topic and key teachings from the six major world religions on all issues covered in the course. This is an invaluable revision guide for GCSE students. It is a stimulating and flexible resource.

The Revision Guide contains useful exam tips, practice questions and specimen answers which have been awarded marks. Students are encouraged to use marking grids to improve each answer given. Advice is given to prompt best-quality responses from students. A range of well thought out and purposeful activities engage the

students who like the colourful format. Attractive diagrams summarise a range of issues to help students to tackle evaluation questions and useful advice is given on examination techniques. Useful revision summaries support independent revision and catch students' attention.

This is the best revision guide I've seen. It is affordable and interesting to read. A superb resource for GCSE. Many students in my class have decided to buy a copy for themselves!

There are also two Student Revision Guides in the pipeline from Hodder – one covering Unit 1 Believing and Living and one covering Unit 2 Believing and Experiencing. I do not have a definite date –but they should be published in the Spring.

Folens have produced a book to support the new Specification B Unit 1 – **Believing and Living**. This is being written by Ina Taylor who is a very successful author of a number of text books. She is a team leader for WJEC Specification B, Option A.

For further details please click

<http://www.folens.com/gcsers/religionandlifeissuesbasedonchristianityandislam/>.

Heinemann, part of the Pearson Group have published books to support Specification B, Units 1 (**Religion and Life**) and Unit 2 (**Believing and Experiencing**). Significant contributions are authored and included from practising Chris Owens (Principal Examiner), and from practising teachers, Tanya Long, Helen Bartley and Laura Burrige. Heinemann have also produced web based materials as well to support Specification B. For further details please click

<http://www.pearsonschoolsandfecolleges.co.uk/Secondary/ReligiousEducationandCitizenship/14-16forWJEC/14-16forWJEC.aspx>

All of the above books and materials are now published and are available from WJEC bookshop or directly from the publishers. These publications have WJEC quality assurance and are endorsed with the WJEC logo.

Key Dates for current GCSE specification 2010-2012

Deadline date for GCSE entries	Tuesday 21 February 2012
Deadline date for Entry amendments (without incurring a charge)	Saturday 31 March 2012
Publication of Results Summer 2012	Thursday 23 August 2012

GCSE Spec B - Advice on Entry Codes

To access the Advice on Entry Codes for the **Specification** please click here.
<http://www.wjec.co.uk/uploads/publications/8959.pdf>

WJEC GCSE Specification B --- Subject Discussion Board

This is an interactive forum for teachers and senior examiners. Teachers are welcome to post comments and questions which will be answered by senior examiners who have direct access to this link. Teachers can also offer suggestions for resources, web links which other colleagues might find useful. **Click on the link** <http://forums.wjec.co.uk/viewtopic.php?t=56> **to access this forum.** You will need to register at the start of the process when the WJEC Subject Discussion Board page comes up.

4 GCE NEWS

Religious Studies is the fastest growing subject at Key Stage 4 and WJEC certainly wants to encourage the same expansion post 16. The full range of units currently offered at AS and A2 will be available in the new specification. All of the content in the new specification has been reviewed and up-dated. The new specification has been set out in a new clear two column format with the topic set out on the left hand side and the issues set out on the right hand side. This will make for greater clarity for both teachers and students alike.

AVAILABLE PUBLICATIONS

RS3 CS: Studies in Religion and Contemporary Society

RS3 ETH: Studies in Religion and Ethics

RS3 PHIL: Studies in Philosophy of Religion

All of the above resources may be downloaded and copied free of charge from the WJEC Secure Website by all WJEC registered centres.

UWIC Press have published their text book on **Contemporary Society**. This book is now available in English and Welsh from UWIC direct or from the WJEC bookshop. UWIC are publishing this book via a contact set by the Welsh regulators DCELLS. The Contemporary Society unit is proving to be very popular in centres and attracts a wide following amongst students.

UWIC Press have also published The Teachers' Handbook for the AS Religion in Contemporary Society. This book is now available in English and Welsh from UWIC direct or from the WJEC bookshop.

Two text books are now available in Welsh - Judaism by C M Pilkington published by UWIC Press and Ethics by Mel Thompson published by UWIC Press. Both are available from UWIC or the WJEC bookshop.

Joe Jenkins (author of the Heinemann, Examining Religion series) has produced a very useful DVD entitled, 'Sex and Ethics'.

The Principal Examiner for Ethics, Andrew Pearce reviewed this DVD and has recommended it as a very worthwhile resource. He writes,

'Making applied ethics' relevant, interesting and thought provoking for teenagers is not an easy task, but this DVD manages to do all three. There are four short video 'bites' which cover four ethical theories (Natural Law, Situation Ethics, Utilitarianism and Kant's Moral Law). The initial videos outline the basics of the each theory, its attitude to sexual ethics and some of the theory's main strengths and weaknesses.

These videos would form an excellent starter activity to 'hook' students into a topic as they introduce the historical background of each theory together with its place in 21st Century society.

Each of these 'theory' videos is then in turn followed by a further video which contains a range of factual, fictional and contemporary examples of sexual ethics, which are then debated by Sixth Form students in an incisive way. These videos would serve as an excellent means of testing students understanding of a theory and their ability to assess its usefulness - both key components of AS and A modules.

The videos for each theory are also supported by a series of well constructed teaching materials for use both before and after the videos, which employ a range of teaching strategies. Overall, an excellent multimedia teaching resource developed by an enthusiastic practitioner and well worth what amounts to the price of a few text books."

This resource is available on DVD for £85 (including delivery) by sending a cheque to 'Ethics Online', PO Box 257, Herefordshire HR1 9GQ. Joe Jenkins has also produced a very good DVD on the issue of War and Peace which is well worth looking at.

DVD REVIEW BY ANDREW PEARCE Principal Examiner AS and A2 Ethics

Gaia & Genesis (New Resource to support RS GCE Ethics!)

Another well researched, thought provoking and visually stimulating DVD from Joe Jenkins, which will become a valuable resource for teachers and students. The material is divided into 5 sections on issues ranging from 'Gaia' to 'All Things Are Connected'. Each section of the DVD is also accompanied by well constructed teaching materials. The DVD follows the same format as that used in his other recent DVD 'Sex & Ethics' -

an issue followed by discussions by Sixth Form students on this issue. These discussion sections in particular will provide students with valuable information for completing evaluation style questions in their examinations. Topics raised within materials include 'Will our attempts to try to dominate nature ultimately lead to nature causing our extinction?' and 'how far has the Christian belief about the primary importance of humankind contributed to the exploitation of nature?' The materials also include the views of modern theologians such as Rev. Prof Andrew Linzey and scientists such as Prof. James Hansen.

The "Stewards & Slayers" Section would be particularly useful for those studying the WJECs AS RS – 'Religion in Contemporary Society' module (animal rights is a featured topic). Carefully selected sections of the DVD would also be valuable to those studying the Our World module of the WJEC's GCSE Religious Studies Spec B – 'Religion & Life Issues'.

This resource is available on DVD for £85 (including delivery) by sending a cheque to 'Ethics Online', PO Box 257, Herefordshire HR1 9GQ.

For a further listing of **publications** that support GCE please click <http://www.wjec.co.uk/uploads/publications/8585.pdf>

Key Dates for current GCE specification 2012-2012

Release of pre- release material for RS9	Start of Spring Term
Publication of Results Winter 2012	Thursday 8 March 2012
Deadline date for GCE entries (Summer series)	Wednesday 21 March 2012
Publication of Results Summer 2012	Thursday 16 August 2012

5 ENTRY LEVEL NEWS

ENTRY PATHWAYS – HUMANITIES

The new Entry Level Pathways development is moving forward. This is being organised by Alison Doogan Geography Subject Officer. A successful CCPD session for History, Geography and Religious Studies teachers at Western Avenue to explain the implications of the radically new system. The subject offered under the Humanities Pathways include: History, Geography, Religious Studies and Humanities. These subjects will be available to teach from September 2011 and are offered at Entry level 2 and Entry 3 only. Centres will be able to choose to study units all in one subject area for example Religious studies, or mix and match from any other subject within the Humanities Pathway or a unit from another Pathway can be included in the Award or Certificate for Humanities e.g. Working as part of a group or a Religious Studies unit for example, can be included in another pathway such as personal and Social development. All Entry Level Pathway units are internally assessed and externally moderated (through scripts). Assessment will be criteria based rather than mark based.

If you have enquiries about the new Entry level Pathways qualification please contact Alison Doogan on 029 2026 5022 or email alison.doogan@wjec.co.uk or the Subject Support Officer : Rhian Naish on 029 2026 5327 or email: rhian.naish@wjec.co.uk

The units for the Entry Pathways Humanities qualification can be accessed via our website page (please see link:

<http://www.wjec.co.uk/index.php?subject=71&level=6&list=docs&docCatID=85>).

This page also has our Teacher Guide, introductory PowerPoints and specification to get you started. If you have any queries regarding this new course, please feel free to contact us via email or telephone.

Rhian Naish – rhian.naish@wjec.co.uk 029 2026 5327

ENTRY LEVEL RELIGIOUS STUDIES AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Key Dates for Entry Level 2010-2012

Deadline date for entries	Monday 21 November 2011
Deadline date for Entry amendments (without incurring a charge)	Monday 16 January 2012
Submission of coursework:	Friday 4 May 2012
Publication of results	Thursday 5 July 2012

6 Examiner Vacancies

There is always a need for examiners in this subject at all levels, especially in GCSE Religious Studies Specification B. If you are interested in examining for us, please apply online by downloading an application form from the WJEC home page. Alternatively, email the appropriate section for the application form required.

GCE A level: email: rob.reynolds@wjec.co.uk

GCSE: email: rob.bisatt@wjec.co.uk

Entry Level: email: chris.quinn@wjec.co.uk

When there are no vacancies, then your application will be kept in our Reserve bank and referred to as and when vacancies occur.

7 WJEC SECURE WEB-SITE

The WJEC Secure Website can be accessed by authorised staff at Centres that work with WJEC. This is often the Examinations Officer within the Centre. Once a Centre is registered, access is available to a range of resources including circulars, past papers and marking schemes. There is also the facility for entry/amendment file uploads and the ability to make online post-results enquiries.

If your Centre is not registered, please send an email to securewebsite@wjec.co.uk stating centre number, centre name, contact name and contact email address. Only the centre examinations officer should send this email. WJEC will then get a letter of registration out to your centre as soon as possible (normally within two working days). Please indicate on your email if your registration is urgent. Once registered, the examinations officer can then register other members of teaching staff additional limited access accounts themselves.

8 CPD (INSETs)

CPD is the new acronym for INSET i.e. Continuing Professional Development. Every year, a number of teachers miss out on CPD provision that is available for this subject because of being unaware of the date(s). CPDs for all Religious Studies subjects *normally* take place in the Autumn of every academic year. Dates for this Autumn's CPDs are in the process of being finalised and will be posted on the WJEC website as soon as possible. When you visit the WJEC website, look under **Teachers** for details and to download an application form to register.

9 WJEC WEB-SITE Home Pages with useful links

Please visit the Homepages of Religious Studies.

You will find useful links have been added. You can also download specifications, past question papers, examiner reports, coursework/assessment and resource materials etc. If there are any ideas or suggestions on how you think the Religious Studies web pages could be improved please let us know.

The address to visit is: <http://www.wjec.co.uk/religiousstudies>

When you have arrived at the WJEC Home Page, look to the column on the left hand side and you will see the Subject and underneath Level box menus. First, click on the Subject drop down menu and select Religious Studies. Secondly, click on the Level drop menu and select the appropriate level required. Once done, click Go. This will take you to the Religious Studies Home Page for the appropriate level selected.

On the right hand-side you will see a column and the category "Documents". Scroll down to see "View full list of documents". Click this link to access the many source materials related to this subject level.

Don't forget to visit WJEC website regularly!

10 HOW TO CONTACT US:

Subject Officer for Religious Studies

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Subject Support Officer to Tudor Thomas

Paul Bradley tel: 029 2026 5183 email paul.bradley@wjec.co.uk

GCE Level Section

Kieran McDonnell, Section Head, tel: 029 2026 5148 email kieron.mcdonnell@wjec.co.uk

GCSE Section

Nick Brooks, Section Head, tel: 029 2026 5061 email nick.brooks@wjec.co.uk

Entry Level Section

Chris Quinn, Section Head, tel: 029 2026 5128, email chris.quinn@wjec.co.uk

Entries Section

Caroline McGlynn, Section Head tel: 029 2026 5193 email caroline.mcglynn@wjec.co.uk

Bookshop

Caroline Redman, Bookshop Manager tel: 029 2026 5042 email caroline.redman@wjec.co.uk

Feedback always welcome!



Tudor Thomas

WJEC Religious Studies Subject Officer