

# GCSE Religious Studies

## General Introduction

Welcome to your GCSE Religious Studies course. This Introduction will show you what you can expect from the course and will help you plan and prepare for your study. It is important that you read through the Introduction carefully before you start the lessons.

The GCSE Religious Studies course follows the AQA Specification B, Ethics, Philosophy and Religion in Society, 4055.

In GCSE Religious Studies, the scheme of assessment is modular. To achieve a Full Course GCSE, you will need to study two Units from the specification. Each Unit is assessed in a separate examination. This course is based on two chosen Units from the specification (see below).

There are two possible ways of achieving a Full Course GCSE:

- you may take both the examinations at the end of two years;
- you may take both the examinations at the end of one year;
- NB you can no longer take one examination at the end of one year, and the other at the end of the following year.

Success in *one* of these examinations will achieve a Short Course Accreditation, i.e. half a GCSE. You will need to pass **both** examinations to obtain a GCSE in Religious Studies.

Of course, the examiners will be looking for good knowledge and understanding of the specification, but they will also be testing good evaluation skills and the course will help you to develop these skills.



Oxford Open Learning

## The Two Units

The two units included in this course are designed to enable you to focus on religions which are of interest to you. You may choose from six religions: Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism.

### Unit 1: Religion and Citizenship

You are required to study **one religion only** in Unit 1, but you may refer to more than one religion in your answers if you wish to.

### Unit 6: Worship and Key Beliefs

You need to study **at least two religions** in Unit 6.

## What are Religious Studies?

The study of religions helps to:

- achieve an understanding of people of different cultures and traditions;
- prevent prejudice and promote tolerance;
- develop confidence in participating fully in the life of a multicultural society;
- provide insight and understanding of the rights and responsibilities of citizenship;
- encourage evaluation skills, expecting opinions formed to be supported by valid argument and evidence. This may enhance students' ability and motivation to make a positive contribution to debates and decisions in society;
- understand local, national and global issues and to place them in a spiritual or moral context;
- understand the relationship between beliefs, morality and lifestyles by focusing on the study of specific issues;
- provide an opportunity for those with a religious faith to develop their understanding of their own religion and explore the religions of others. For humanists, or others who do not

have a religious faith, it facilitates understanding of the beliefs of others;

- make a contribution to philosophy, and enables reflection on ultimate questions about life and death.

## The Arrangement of the Lessons

In the examination, candidates will be required to answer **four** questions based on four of the six topics in Unit 1 and **four** questions based on four of the six topics in Unit 6. This course covers five of the six topics in Unit 1, and five of the six topics in Unit 6 as set out below. So you will have one 'spare' topic for each paper.

Each topic is covered in two lessons and the lessons are arranged in the order in which the topics occur on the specification.

### Unit 1: Religion and Citizenship

<i>Lesson</i>	<i>Title</i>
	General Introduction
	Preliminary Lesson: The Skill of Evaluation
<b>1</b>	Introduction to Religion and Citizenship
<b>Module 1</b>	<b>Topic 1: Religion and Relationships</b>
<b>2</b>	Religion and Marriage
<b>3</b>	Marriage Ceremonies and Divorce <b>TMA A</b>
<b>Module 2</b>	<b>Topic 2: Religion, Sport and Leisure</b>
<b>4</b>	Religious Attitudes to Sport and Leisure
<b>5</b>	Issues in Religion and Sport <b>TMA B</b>
<b>Module 3</b>	<b>Topic 3: Religion and Work</b>
<b>6</b>	The Importance of Work and Service
<b>7</b>	Rights and Responsibilities <b>TMA C</b>
<b>Module 4</b>	<b>Topic 4: Religion and the Multicultural Society</b>
<b>8</b>	Religion and Politics
<b>9</b>	Responses to Issues <b>TMA D</b>
<b>Module 5</b>	<b>Topic 6*: Religion and Human Rights</b>
<b>10</b>	Religion and Human Rights 1
<b>11</b>	Religion and Human Rights 2: Pressure Groups and Protest <b>TMA E</b> <b>TMA F: Mock Exam for Unit 1</b>

\*N.B. Topic 5 in the specification ('Religion and Identity') is **not** included in this course.

## Unit 6: Worship and Key Beliefs

<i>Lesson</i>	<i>Title</i>
12	An Introduction to Worship and Key Beliefs in World Religions
<b>Module 6</b>	<b>Topic 1: Places of Worship</b>
13	Places of Worship 1
14	Places of Worship 2 <b>TMA G</b>
<b>Module 7</b>	<b>Topic 2: Worship</b>
15	Worship 1: Worship in Special Buildings and at Home
16	Worship 2: Roles, Function and Value <b>TMA H</b>
<b>Module 8</b>	<b>Topic 3: Pilgrimage</b>
17	Pilgrimage 1: Judaism, Christianity, Islam
18	Pilgrimage 2: Hinduism, Buddhism, Sikhism <b>TMA I</b>
<b>Module 9</b>	<b>Topic 4: Origins and Beliefs</b>
19	Origins and Beliefs
20	Beliefs and Impact <b>TMA J</b>
<b>Module 10</b>	<b>Topic 5: Practices and Belonging</b>
21	Practices and Belonging 1
22	Practices and Belonging 2 <b>TMA K</b> <b>TMA L: Mock Exam for Unit 6</b>
	Glossary

\*N.B. Topic 6 in the specification ('Authority') is **not** included in this course.

## The Aims of GCSE Religious Studies Specification B

This course will provide students with the opportunity to:

- develop their knowledge, skills and understanding of religion by exploring the significance and impact of beliefs, teachings, sources, practices, ways of life and forms of expressing meaning;

- express their personal responses and informed insights on fundamental questions and issues about identity, belonging, meaning, purpose, truth, values and commitments.

The Topics for Unit 1 and Unit 6 are as follows:

## Unit 1 Religion and Citizenship

This unit is designed to link Religious Studies with other subjects in the secondary level curriculum including Citizenship, and Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE). It also contributes to the development of spiritual, moral, social and cultural education.

Within each topic studied, you should be familiar with the religious beliefs and teachings from the religion(s) you have chosen to study. You should also be aware of how religious leaders and other faith members have interpreted these teachings and applied them to life in society today.

### Topic 1: Religion and Relationships

- concepts of commitment, responsibility, contract and covenant;
- human sexuality and sexual relationships (heterosexual and homosexual relationships);
- age of consent and religious attitudes to sexual relationships before and outside marriage;
- religious attitudes to contraception;
- religious understandings of the purpose and character of marriage;
- marriage ceremonies, contracts and vows; alternatives to marriage;
- religious responses to the issues of love, parental involvement and race in the choice of marriage partner;
- the concept and role of parenting;
- the concept and role of the family;
- religious attitudes to divorce.

### Topic 2: Religion, Sport and Leisure

- religious attitudes towards the purpose, use and importance of leisure;
- types and purposes of relaxation, e.g. stress relief;
- misuse of leisure time, e.g. casinos, binge drinking;
- morality in sport, e.g. winning at all costs, honesty, fair competition and use of performance enhancing drugs;
- religious organisations within leisure, e.g. Christians in Sport, chaplains;

- leisure as an inspiration, benefits of belonging to a team, creative activities and the promotion of exercise, healthy living and relaxation;
- finance involved in leisure activities including pay of superstars, gambling and sponsorship;
- devotion of fans including pilgrimage, songs, symbols, memorabilia and mementos, e.g. has sport become a religion?
- sabbath and other religious issues, e.g. competing on holy days, source of skills and natural ability;
- leisure and issues of prejudice, e.g. gender issues, disability, professional and amateur status in sport.

### Topic 3: Religion and Work

- religious attitudes to the purpose and importance of work;
- work as service and prayer, e.g. sewa;
- careers, including a case study of the work of a believer who has regarded work as a vocation;
- business and enterprise, including views of acceptable and unacceptable professions, the economy and raising of money through taxation;
- use of money from earning, e.g. tithes;
- responsibilities and rights of employers and employees, e.g. fair wages, the minimum wage, health and safety issues, trade unions, contracts, code of conduct, holy day issues, family commitments;
- importance of voluntary work, including a case study of the work of a religious voluntary organisation;
- reasons for unemployment, the problems it brings and support for those out of work, e.g. by the state, community and religious organisations.

### Topic 4: Religion and the Multicultural Society

- concepts of tolerance, respect, diversity, multiculturalism and political correctness;
- religion and its involvement in politics and the debate about whether religion and politics should mix;
- advantages and disadvantages of a multicultural society, e.g. diversity, culture, celebrations, differences, segregation, misunderstanding;
- issues such as having a state religion, blasphemy laws and freedom of choice;
- debate about asylum seekers, integration, immigration and emigration;
- influence of faith communities, locally, nationally and internationally;
- projects run by faith communities;

- customs and celebrations, such as festivals in the community, e.g. Wesak, Christmas, Divali, Eid ul Fitr, Pesach and Baisakhi.

## Topic 6: Religion and Human Rights

- religious attitudes towards the law and human rights;
- the impact of religion on the rights and responsibilities as a citizen;
- human rights, including United Nations (UN) Declaration of Human Rights, the Human Rights Act and legal rights;
- organisations which help if rights are being abused, e.g. Citizens Advice Bureau, ChildLine and Samaritans;
- case studies of contemporary local and national human rights issues;
- role of local, national and international pressure groups and organisations, e.g. Amnesty International, Greenpeace, Abortion Right, Society for the Protection of Unborn Children (SPUC);
- forms of protest as a means of publicising issues and achieving minority and/or human rights;
- religious responses to protest, pressure groups and human rights;
- reasons why believers might support non-religious organisations;
- case studies of the work of religious groups and individuals who have supported human rights.

## Unit 6: Worship and Key Beliefs

This unit allows you to explore the key beliefs, teachings and practice of **at least two** of the six major world faiths (Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Sikhism). It also allows for a comparison and contrast of aspects of two faiths. Candidates will be expected to evaluate and make judgements about the impact and importance of these aspects of the faith. Questions will facilitate answers from any of the six major world religions, but will not be specifically about one religion.

### Topic 1: Places of Worship

For each religion studied:

- description and symbolism of the exterior of buildings;
- description and symbolism of the interior of buildings;
- furnishings, including the use and symbolism;
- why there are religious buildings;

- money spent on religious buildings, including making judgements regarding this use of money;
- uses and role in community, including its influence on the community;
- the value of buildings to an individual or the religion.

## Topic 2: Worship

For each religion studied:

- worship at place of worship and at home, including the key elements of each;
- aids to worship (items used in worship) – what they are, how they are used, and their symbolism;
- roles in worship of different members of the religious community, and their importance;
- day of worship, including its importance and why it was chosen;
- function and value of worship itself;
- attitudes to worship in the life of faith.

## Topic 3: Pilgrimage

For each religion studied:

- key places of pilgrimage;
- linked events and history, people, symbolism, practices for each place of pilgrimage;
- impact of pilgrimage on a religion and on an individual, including links with miraculous happenings, and pilgrimage as a life-changing experience;
- value of pilgrimage to a religion or individual;
- attitudes to the place/role of pilgrimage in a modern society.

## Topic 4: Origins and Beliefs

For each religion studied:

- origins of the faith, including life of the founder or prophet;
- concept of God;
- nature of afterlife, and how this life influences that one;
- concept of soul (or similar, or no soul);
- basic beliefs/teaching;
- value to the believer of these concepts, and the impact on the lives of believers.

## Topic 5: Practices and Belonging

For each religion studied:

- behaviour codes, including the need to follow them, and attitudes to those who do not;
- duties;
- dietary laws, including the challenges this may present to believers living in a multicultural society;
- prayer and meditation;
- rites of passage;
- key festivals.

For each practice, both the importance and the value must be studied.

In the Specification, there is a helpful Grid on pages 21-22 which sets out specific beliefs and practices which need to be covered for each of the six religions.

## Assessment Objectives

The following information shows you what skills will be tested in your examination:

### Assessment Objective 1 (AO1)

Describe, explain and analyse, using knowledge and understanding.

50%

### Assessment Objective 2 (AO2)

Use evidence and reasoned argument to express and evaluate personal responses, informed insights, and differing viewpoints.

50%

AO1 and AO2 are interrelated and connections must be made. Students are expected to use their knowledge and understanding to support their responses to the issues for evaluation. (For more information on evaluation skills, please refer to the Preliminary Lesson.)

# AQA's Scheme of Assessment and the Examinations

## Unit 1: Religion and Citizenship

A one-and-a-half hour un-tiered paper, targeted at grades A\*-G.

The Paper consists of six questions, to match the six topics in the specification, of which this course has covered five. You need to answer **four** questions. Each question has four or five parts and you must answer **each part of the four questions** you choose.

The questions test AO1 and AO2. Each question carries 18 marks.

In the examination, students write their answers in the answer booklet provided. You must make sure you write down clearly the number of each question and question part you are answering.

This course has chosen *not* to cover one of the sections (Topic 5: 'Religion and Identity'). So you should not answer this question or parts of this question.

The total mark for the paper is 72, plus there are 4 marks available for good spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPaG), so the grand total is 76 marks.

## Unit 6: Worship and Key Beliefs

A one-and-a-half hour un-tiered paper, targeted at grades A\*-G.

The Paper consists of six questions, to match the six topics in the specification, of which this course has covered five. You need to answer **four** questions. Each question has four or five parts and you must answer **each part of the four questions** you choose.

The questions test AO1 and AO2. Each question carries 18 marks.

In the examination, students write their answers in the answer booklet provided. You must make sure you write down clearly the number of each question and question part you are answering.

This course has chosen *not* to cover one of the sections (Topic 6 Authority). So you should not answer this question or parts of this question.

The total mark for the paper is 72, plus there are 4 marks available for good spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPaG), so the grand total is 76 marks.

## Choice of Sections

For each examination, this course has not studied one topic (see above). This is so that you have more time to cover the other topics. However, you do have some choice. You need to remember to answer only **four** questions, on four different topics – and all the parts of that question. You will see exactly how the questions are set out when you do a mock examination (TMA F and TMA L).

## Choice of Religions

For the AQA GCSE Religious Studies B Specification, you may use information from up to six religions. These are:

- Buddhism
- Christianity
- Hinduism
- Islam
- Judaism
- Sikhism

For the study of **Unit 1: Religion and Citizenship**, you could study the views of religious believers from just **ONE religion**, or you may like to study more than one and use different religions to answer different questions.

For the study of **Unit 6: Worship and Key Beliefs**, you must study at least **TWO religions**. There will be questions in which you will be asked for the beliefs or teachings or attitudes of two religions. You must not use more than two religions for these answers. However, in your exam you could use the same two religions throughout, or use a different two religions for different questions.

It may be interesting to use some different religions in your answers in Unit 6, but it is not advisable to learn beliefs and practices in six religions because it is possible to confuse them and there would be a great deal to learn. You will not be asked any question about a specific religion, because, of course, not all candidates for the examination will have studied the same religions.

## Holy Books

One of the chief sources of authority for the religions is their holy books. These are the books or documents which religious believers regard as sacred or significant. They are important because they contain many of the beliefs and teachings of the faith, and because either they are believed to have come directly from God, or through

leaders of the faith, or have been collected together over many years from traditions handed down by word of mouth by believers.

The following holy books are referred to in this course:

- Buddhism – The Tripitaka
- Christianity - The Bible
- Islam – The Qur'an (sometimes 'Koran'), hadith
- Hinduism – the Vedas, Laws of Manu, Mahabharata
- Judaism – The Tenakh (Torah, Neviim, Ketuvim), The Talmud)
- Sikhism – The Guru Granth Sahib, Rahit Maryada

This course does not expect you to study these books in detail, but to understand their importance for the religion.

## Quotations from Holy Books

Where quotations have been included in lessons, the book from which the quotation has been taken is named, followed by a specific reference to the chapter or verse in which it appears. For example, a reference to the Bible given as 'Exodus 20:3' refers to the Book of Exodus, Chapter 20, Verse 3. The holy book reference is followed by the name of the religion for which the book is sacred. So for the above, reference would appear as: '(Exodus 20:3) (Judaism, Christianity)'.

e.g. *'A man leaves his mother and father and is united with his wife, and they become one.'* (Genesis 2:24) (Judaism and Christianity)

In a similar way, 'Qur'an 30:21' refers to Chapter 30, Verse 21 of the Qur'an, and 'Mahabharata 5:1517' refers the first to the chapter and then the verse from which the quotation was taken. In the same way, the numbers in the reference, 'Guru Granth Sahib 1299' refer to the verse.

e.g. *"They are not said to be husband and wife, who merely sit together. Rather they alone are called husband and wife, who have one soul in two bodies."* (Guru Granth Sahib Ji, Pauri, page 788), (Sikhism)

This practice has been followed in the case of most of the holy books quoted. You are not expected to know the numbers of a chapter or verse, and will not be tested on them. It is a good idea to learn a few short quotations off by heart which you can use in examination answers. If you find this very difficult, then being able to summarise what is said in the quotation will be helpful.

You may use any translation of the holy books to help you in your studies, or may use quotations which you find in the textbook, this course or online.

The quotations from the Qu'ran cited in this course are from:

*The Holy Qur'an*. translated by Abdullah Yusuf Ali (Wordsworth Editions Limited ISBN 978-1-85326-782-6)

## How should I study the course?

We suggest that you study all five topics included in this course for each of the two Units i.e. Unit 1: Religion and Citizenship, and Unit 6: Worship and Key Beliefs. This will give you some choice for the examination, and will also build up your confidence as these topics overlap to some extent.

Remember that you may focus on only **one** religion for Unit 1: Religion and Citizenship – although you can study more than one. You must study **two** religions for Unit 6: Worship and Key Beliefs – again you can look at more than two, perhaps to suit the particular topic, but it is probably not a good idea to try to study five or six religions!

We would suggest that you take the following approach for each lesson:

1. Read carefully through a lesson.
2. Make notes under the various headings given in the lesson, bearing in mind the religion(s) you have chosen to study.
3. Carry out the activities set for the lesson and then compare your answers with the model answers for those activities. These are given at the end of each lesson.

Remember that the model answers are only examples. You may have chosen to answer using a different religion, or in the evaluation activities, you may have offered a completely different point of view from the one given in the model answer. This is absolutely fine, but what you should check is that, like the model answer, you have provided enough argument and evidence to support the opinions you offer. (See Lesson One for more information about evaluation skills).

4. If you have the AQA textbooks (see below in 'Further Reading'), you will find them useful in researching answers to the activities. In any case, it is a good idea to read through the chapter in the textbook

which relates to the topic you are studying. This will consolidate your learning.

5. Answer the Self-Assessment Test (SAT) for the lesson, and then check your answers against the model answers at the end of the lesson. The second lesson on each topic ends with a Tutor-marked Assignment (TMA), which you should complete as a test on the topic and then send your answers to your tutor for marking.
6. Do some research on the area of the topic you are studying. Read the appropriate chapter in the textbook if you have it, and/or look on the websites recommended, or use search engines, e.g. Google, to find relevant information.

## Making Notes

Notes are important to help you with learning and with examination revision. It is important to make notes from the start of the course, so that you gradually build up your knowledge and understanding.

In particular, you will need to make a note of research you do, especially connected with the religions you have chosen to study. The kind of notes you make will depend on what sort of notes help you. Bullet points are often very useful, and you may find some of the suggested answers to be useful models in showing you how notes can be taken. The notes must be fully understandable to you. Copying and pasting large chunks from the internet may not help you - but summarising in note form one or two paragraphs from a website may be just what you need.

## Tutor-marked Assignments

Throughout the course you will find a Tutor-marked Assignment at the end of each Topic. These should be treated as tests to be assessed by your tutor. At the end of each Unit there is also a mock examination. Your mock examination should be completed as part of your revision. You should send your answers to these tests and mock exams to your tutor.

When you receive your corrected TMAs you will also receive a set of model answers to the TMA questions. These will give you an indication of what an examiner is looking for and how the questions should be answered in a GCSE exam. Although these sets of model answers may seem quite detailed, they show how tutors and examiners are testing **skills** as well as **knowledge and understanding** and you will find them useful. The AQA website provides you with sample papers and mark schemes. You should look at the mark schemes carefully because this will help you answer the questions in sufficient detail to achieve maximum marks. Examiners undertake level of response marking on many

questions and you will be able to see how this works. You will also see that they will credit a wide variety of valid answers and this should give you confidence!

## The Written Examinations

You will find that by the time you reach Lesson Eleven, you will have already had plenty of practice in answering questions of the kind that will appear in the examinations. The following advice is often given by examiners when they write their reports on examinations, and by teachers to their students:

- Always answer all parts of the question.
- Do not write out the questions.
- Look carefully at the wording of the question.
- Note the command words:
  - e.g. 'Describe' and 'Outline' ask for knowledge, information
  - e.g. 'Explain' or 'What is meant by' tests knowledge **and** understanding
- Note the number of marks being given for one part of the question and check you are writing the right amount. A two mark answer will be shorter than a six mark answer.
- Note the difference between three mark and six mark evaluation questions. Both need reference to religion in the answers; the three mark questions only need one point of view, the six mark questions require two points of view to be considered. Lesson One will take a more detailed look at this skill.
- Do not get carried away and run out of time. You have four questions (with each of their parts) to answer in one-and-a-half hours. This means you have about 20 minutes per question. This will leave you about 10 minutes to check things through and add anything you can think of.

## The Specification

You should acquire your own copy of the specification. This can be downloaded from

<http://store.aqa.org.uk/qual/newgcse/pdf/AQA-4055-W-SP.PDF>

You may also find it useful and reassuring to look at specimen papers and their mark schemes. You can find these on the AQA GCSE Religious Studies webpage, under Religious Studies Specification B, Key Materials, Teacher Resource Bank, 'Question Papers and Mark Schemes'

<http://store.aqa.org.uk/qual/newgcse/pdf/AQA-4055-W-SP.PDF>

Past papers can be found by searching the AQA website.

There is also a short guide for students about the style of the question paper which is helpful. This can be downloaded at

<http://store.aqa.org.uk/qual/pdf/AQA-STUDENT-GUIDE-EX-UPDATE-2011.PDF>

## Further Reading

The Oxford Open Learning Religious Studies GCSE course is self-contained, and all the information you need is in the course. Nevertheless, as with all subjects, you will find it helpful to consult textbooks and/or websites to provide you with extra information where you are asked to research a topic, and to consolidate and help you learn the work you have done.

## Recommended Textbooks

We recommend the following textbooks which are studied by many AQA candidates:

M. Fleming, A. Jordan, P. Smith and D Worden, *AQA Religious Studies B Religion and Citizenship* edited by C. Bartlett (Nelson Thornes, 2009, ISBN 978-1-4085-0512-0)

M Fleming, A Jordan, P Smith and D Worden, *AQA Religious Studies B Worship and Key Beliefs* ed by C. Bartlett (Nelson Thornes, 2009, ISBN 978-1-4085-0517-5)

These textbooks carefully cover each topic and are written especially to meet the requirements of the AQA specification.

## Useful Websites

Some of our course activities ask you to do some research to answer a question. This is particularly useful in furthering your knowledge of one or two religions' responses to the topic you are studying. It is recommended that you do this research regularly as the course proceeds, rather than leaving all to the end! In addition to any textbook, you will find various sources of information on websites

and in your local library. Internet access is not compulsory and you will not lose out if you are unable to access the websites. The Internet is, nevertheless, a useful research tool provided that you do not spend too long searching.

Some particularly good websites for Religious Studies GCSE are:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/events/> (useful on festivals and events)

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/gcsebitesize/rs/> (useful for human relationships – marriage, divorce, etc. and on the sanctity of life)

The following are useful websites for topics in Unit 1: Religion and Citizenship:

<http://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk>

<http://www.amnesty.org.uk>

<http://www.abortionrights.org.uk>

<http://www.spuc.org.uk/>

<http://www.childline.org.uk>

<http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/>

<http://www.samaritans.org/>

<http://www.greenpeace.org.uk/>

The following websites are useful for the specific religions studied and for work in Unit 6: Worship and Key Beliefs:

Buddhism:

<http://www.buddhanet.net/e-learning/buddhism/index.htm>

Christianity: [www.request.org.uk](http://www.request.org.uk)

Hinduism: [www.hindunet.org](http://www.hindunet.org)

Islam: <http://www.world-faiths.com/Islam/ISLAM.HTM>

Judaism: <http://www.world-faiths.com/Judaism/JUDAISM.HTM>

Sikhism: <http://www.sikhiwiki.org>

As you are probably aware, websites come and go or are sometimes unavailable when being updated, so we cannot guarantee that any

site will still be there when you look for it! We also cannot guarantee the content of any third-party website.

Look out for documentaries or news items on the television that are related to topics on the specification. For example, on marriage, morality in sport, rights and responsibilities at work, the multicultural society, or human rights, as well as programmes or news items on the particular religions you have chosen to study.

It is expected that your tutor will give you a certain amount of help with your studies and may be able to help with advice on how to complete research tasks if you have a particular difficulty.

Many of the illustrations in your course folder have been reproduced from digital images in Wikimedia Commons. You can see the illustrations in colour on that website if you type in the url (website address) where this is given under an illustration. Alternatively, entering some key words from the illustration title may also locate the image in Wikimedia Commons.

## Using the Internet

If you have access to the internet, you would benefit from consulting the AQA website – [www.aqa.org.uk](http://www.aqa.org.uk) . You should also check the Oxford Open Learning site – [www.ool.co.uk](http://www.ool.co.uk) – where you may find news, additional resources and interactive features as time goes by. If you have not already done, so, you may register for your free copy of *How to Study at Home*, our 200-page guide to home learning, or enrol on further courses. Put it on your Favourites list now!

## A Word of Encouragement

This is a really interesting GCSE in Religious Studies and you will find that you can bring knowledge and understanding which you already have gained about citizenship or about a particular religion to help you study. You will gradually pick up the skills you need and we hope you will enjoy the challenge of considering more than one point of view on some controversial topics, especially trying to think of arguments to support a view you yourself do not hold! At the end of the course, you will find you have gained much useful and interesting information as well as developing your skills.

Good luck with the course. Enjoy it!

Cynthia Bartlett

© Oxford Open Learning, 2014