

Curriculum Rationale

Religious Studies



William Hulme's Grammar School
The best in everyone™
Part of United Learning

Intent

The purpose of the RE curriculum is for students to know and understand a range of religious and non-religious worldviews and be able to critically engage with those views. Students should gain an appreciation for how these worldviews have impacted the world they live in at a local, national and global level.

Religious Studies is concerned with the deep meaning that individuals and groups make of their experiences and how this helps them give purpose to their lives. The purpose of Religious Studies is to help pupils to reflect upon the experiences and the mysteries of life and the contribution of religious and spiritual dimensions.

Religious Studies should enable pupils to:

- Acquire and develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and the other principal religions represented in the United Kingdom and particularly in Manchester.
- Develop an understanding of the influence of beliefs, values and traditions on individuals, communities, societies and cultures.
- Develop the ability to make reasoned and informed judgements about religious and moral issues, with reference to the teachings of the principal religions represented in the United Kingdom and thereby develop confidence in their own beliefs and values.
- Enhance their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development by:
 - developing awareness of the ultimate questions of life raised by human experiences, and of how religions can relate to them;
 - responding to such questions with reference to the teachings and practices of religions and other belief systems, relating them to their own understanding and experience;
 - reflecting positively on their own identity, beliefs, values and experiences in the light of their study;
- Develop positive attitudes:
 - of respect towards other people who hold views and beliefs different from their own, and;
 - towards living in and contributing to an inclusive and caring community and a society of diverse religions.

Implementation

Students receive two, hundred minute lesson each fortnight in Key Stage 3 (KS3) and three, hundred minute lessons in Key Stage 4 (KS4).

At KS3 we are introducing the new United Learning scheme of work in Year 7 during the 2021/2 year, with year 8 to follow in 2022/3, and year 9 the following year. During this transition students towards the end of KS3 will experience a mix of the new UL and older WHGS curriculum, with some GCSE topics introduced during Year 9.

At KS4 students continue on a GCSE course, currently the AQA Syllabus A in Christianity, Islam and Ethical studies.

At Key Stage 3 we teach the following units:

- **Year 7 – An Introduction to faith; Origins of Abrahamic Faith; Judaism; Christianity; Buddhism**
Both Judaism and Christianity are core (compulsory) UL topics and will be examined with a United Learning examination for the first time in the Summer 2022.
- **Year 8 – Inspirational figures; Hinduism; Islam; Philosophy of Religion; Atheism**
Both Islam and Philosophy of Religion are core (compulsory) UL topics and will be examined with a United Learning examination for the first time in the Summer 2023.
- **Year 9 – Life and Death; Equality; Extremism; Introduction to Ethics; GCSE topics**
Both Life after Death and Equality are core (compulsory) UL topics and will be examined with a United Learning examination for the first time in the Summer 2023.

Each topic is assessed by both continual testing through online quiz, class tests and an end of unit test. Where no UL exam is available an end of year exam will be produced in addition to unit tests.

The AQA Religious Studies Syllabus A GCSE is monitored continually through the course for progress, with short tests, longer exam style questions, and full past papers. The assessment for the award of a grade is done at the end of Year 11 through two terminal exam papers.

■ **Paper 1 – The Study of Religions**

The 4 units of study are:

Christian beliefs and teachings; Christian practices; Islamic beliefs and teachings; Islamic practices

■ **Paper 2 – Thematic Studies**

The 4 units of study are:

Relationships and families; Religion and life; Religion, peace and conflict; Religion, crime and punishment

A-Level students follow the Eduqas syllabus for RS, completing units in three component areas of study over two years. This is assessed by three terminal exam papers, one for each component.

■ **Component 1 A Study of Religion - Option B Islam**

Theme 1: Religious figures and sacred texts; Theme 2: Religious concepts and religious life; Theme 3: Significant social and historical developments in religious thought; Theme 4: Religious practices that shape religious identity

■ **Component 2 Philosophy of Religion**

Theme 1: Arguments for the existence of God; Theme 2: Challenges to religious belief; Theme 3: Religious Experience; Theme 4: Religious language

■ **Component 3 Religion and Ethics**

Theme 1: Ethical Thought; Theme 2: Deontological Ethics; Theme 3: Teleological ethics; Theme 4: Determinism and Free will

Impact

Students undertake assessments at the end of each unit of work. At Key Stage 3 these are supported by fortnightly knowledge tests covering work most recently covered, giving staff immediate feedback on progress made. Key Stage 3 students would also complete a common assessment issued by United Learning. These assessments allow the department to track the students' progress and identify both knowledge and skills gaps.

The intent behind the KS3 curriculum is to prepare the students with a strong foundation for KS4 GCSE, both through the skills they learn and the knowledge they acquire. This has led to a take up of well over 90% of Key Stage 3 students taking the GCSE.

We aspire for all students to leave the academy with the skills, knowledge and understanding of the world that enables them to be healthy, responsible and thriving citizens. For students who wish to study in this area for GCSE, we aim to support students in fulfilling their potential, helping them to achieve the highest possible results, progress and attainment in both so that they are well equipped to pursue a future career in this area should they wish to do so.

Well over 200 students have gone on to secure an A-Level in Religious Studies at WHGS and it has proven to be an excellent pathway into a number of degree courses such as philosophy, law and medicine.