



## Religious Studies

Engage

Endeavour

Excel



### How to Prepare for A-Level Religious Studies

At WHGS we follow the EDUQAS course in Religious Studies.

As with all A Level RS courses, you must study 3 separate topics. For you, those will be:

1. Philosophy of Religion
2. Religion and Ethics
3. The thematic study of Islam

You can find detail on each of the topics covered in both lower and upper sixth courses by going to the website shown:

[www.eduqas.co.uk/media/i4tjifbc/eduqas-a-level-religious-studies-spec-from-2016-e-200219-pdf.pdf](http://www.eduqas.co.uk/media/i4tjifbc/eduqas-a-level-religious-studies-spec-from-2016-e-200219-pdf.pdf)

**To help you stay organised in your studies you should have a large folder for each of these topics, which most student leave at home, preferring to use one small 'daily' folder in school instead.**

### Task 1

One way to help prepare for your studies is to create sub-dividers for these 3 files. You could print out your own or cut out the following divider titles and sticking them onto card dividers that you can buy on line (eg. WHSmith pack of 12 x A4 numbered file dividers are £2.99 x3)

You will need 12 dividers for each folder.

Being organised is vital in RS as you will have up to three teachers teaching each topic!



Titles for the 12 sections in each of your three topic folders. These could be copied or cut and paste.

## The Study of Islam

- **Section 1** The significance in the development of Islam of both the life and teachings of Muhammad in Makkah following the Night of Power.
- **Section 2** The significance in the development of Islam of both the hijrah and the life and teachings of Muhammad in Madinah.
- **Section 3** The Qur'an as a source of wisdom and authority – its use and treatment in Islam.
- **Section 4** The concept of Allah – tawhid (oneness) and shahada (bearing witness).
- **Section 5** Muslim beliefs about nabi (prophets), rasul (messenger), nadir (warner) and risalah (the message).
- **Section 6** Malaikah (angels) and Akhirah (the Day of Final Judgement).
- **Section 7** The role and significance of the following 3 pillars for Muslims and the Ummah (community).
  1. Salah (prayer) and other prayers.
- **Section 8**
  2. Zakah (purification through giving) and
  3. Hajj (pilgrimage)
- **Section 9** The five categories of ethical action exemplifying the key moral principles for Islam and a framework for Muslim living.
- **Section 10** The role of the Masjid (mosque) in Islam.
- **Section 11** The role of festivals in shaping religious identity, with reference to Ashura.
- **Section 12** The role of festivals in shaping religious identity, with reference to Ramadan and Id-ul-Fitr.

## The Philosophy of Religion

- **Section 1** Inductive arguments - cosmological
- **Section 2** Inductive arguments - teleological
- **Section 3** Challenges to Inductive arguments – Big Bang and Charles Darwin
- **Section 4** Deductive arguments – origins of the ontological argument
- **Section 5** Deductive arguments – developments the ontological arguments
- **Section 6** Challenges to the ontological argument – Guanilo and Kant
- **Section 7** The problem of evil and suffering
- **Section 8** Augustinian type theodicy



- **Section 9** Irenaean type theodicy
- **Section 10** The nature of religious experience (Visions, conversion, mysticism and prayer)
- **Section 11** Mystical experience. William James & Rudolf Otto
- **Section 12** Challenges to objectivity and authenticity of religious experience Kant

## Religion and Ethics

- **Section 1** Divine Command Theory and the challenges to it
- **Section 2** Virtue Theory and the challenges to it
- **Section 3** Ethical Egoism and the challenges to it
- **Section 4** St Thomas Aquinas' Natural Law – laws and precepts
- **Section 5** Aquinas' Natural Law – the role of virtues and goods in morals
- **Section 6** Application of Natural Law to Abortion and Voluntary Euthanasia
- **Section 7** Joseph Fletcher's Situation Ethics – Agape as the basis of morality
- **Section 8** Fletchers Situation Ethics - the principles as a way to morality
- **Section 9** Fletcher on 1. Homosexuality and 2. Polyamorous relationships
- **Section 10** Classical Utilitarianism - Jeremy Bentham's Act Utilitarianism
- **Section 11** John Stuart Mill's development from happiness to pleasure
- **Section 12** Utilitarianism - 1. Animal experimentation and 2. Nuclear deterrent

## Task 2

Research these key terminologies from the course. Give a brief explanation for each.

- |                 |                            |
|-----------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Omnipotence  | 12. Predestination         |
| 2. Omniscience  | 13. Intelligent Design     |
| 3. Teleological | 14. Free-Will              |
| 4. Sanctity     | 15. Polyamorous            |
| 5. Theodicy     | 16. Irreducible Complexity |
| 6. Cosmological | 17. Act Utilitarianism     |
| 7. Atheism      | 18. Hedonistic Calculus    |
| 8. Moral Evil   | 19. Categorical Hypothesis |
| 9. Contingent   | 20. Divine Command Theory  |
| 10. Ontological | 21. Miracle                |
| 11. Creationism |                            |



## Task 3

Watch a video clip: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=1A\\_CAkYt3GY&t=310s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1A_CAkYt3GY&t=310s), but before you do, read the following section on listening skills and try to apply them as you follow the clip.

### Listening Skills

There are many study skills for you to absorb in the Sixth Form. For any of the advice and help given by RS staff to work, it is vital for you to be a good listener in class. Much of what you will have to learn will be presented verbally by your teachers. Just hearing what your teachers say is not the same as listening to what they say. Listening is a cognitive act that requires you to pay attention and think about and mentally process what you hear, so let's cover that now.

Here are some things you should do to be a good listener in class. Getting it wrong can be embarrassing and worse, it will lead to difficulties in your studies.

- **Be Cognitively Ready to Listen When You Come to Class.** Make sure you complete all assigned work and readings. Review your notes from previous class sessions. Think about what you know about the topic that will be covered in class that day. If unsure, ASK.
- **Be Emotionally Ready to Listen When You Come to Class.** Your attitude is important. Make a conscious choice to find the topic useful and interesting. Be committed to learning all that you can.
- **Listen with a Purpose.** Identify what you expect and hope to learn from the class session. Listen for these things as your teacher talks. The teacher should always make these aims clear.
- **Listen with an Open Mind.** Be receptive to what your teacher says. It is good to question what is said as long as you remain open to points of view other than your own.
- **Be Attentive.** Focus on what your teacher is saying. Try to note what is being said and not to daydream or let your mind wander to other things. It often helps to sit in the front and center of the class and to maintain eye contact with your teacher.
- **Be an Active Listener.** You can think faster than your teacher can speak. Use this to your advantage by evaluating what is being said and trying to anticipate what will be said next. Take good written notes about what your teacher says. While you can think faster than your teacher can speak, you cannot write faster than your teacher can speak. Taking notes requires you to make decisions about what to write, and you have to be an active listener to do this. Note making will be the focus of lessons at the start of each year.
- **Meet the Challenge.** Don't give up and stop listening when you find the information being presented difficult to understand. Listen even more carefully at these times and work hard to understand what is being said. Don't be reluctant to ask questions.
- **Triumph Over the Environment.** The classroom may be too noisy, too hot, too cold, too bright, or too dark. Don't give in to these inconveniences. Some students argue that they can focus more at home and so simply give in to the distractions around them. DON'T. Stay focused on the big picture - LEARNING.

**In the Sixth Form, you must be able to take good written notes from what your teachers say. Taking good notes is a three-stage process in which there are certain things you should do before class, during class, and after class.**



# The School of Life Western Philosophy

Below are a number of clips from various websites that you should watch over the next few weeks. Practice taking notes from what you hear and later re writing them into some form of order. To get you started the first clips are all from Youtube, a series called **The School of Life Western Philosophy**. You should watch the first introduction clip:

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=VDiyQub6vpw&list=PLwxNMb28XmpeypJMHfNbJ4RAfRtmAN3P](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VDiyQub6vpw&list=PLwxNMb28XmpeypJMHfNbJ4RAfRtmAN3P)

(If you cannot cut and paste, just type in the bold title from the paragraph above)

Once you have watched the introduction clip, watch the clips from that series on the following philosophers, remembering to take notes.

- a) Plato
- b) Aristotle
- c) Immanuel Kant
- d) Rene Descartes
- e) Epicurus
- f) Epicurus
- g) St Augustine

There are lots of websites that will give you a good introduction to some of the ethics we cover on this course. You should try The Moral Maze which is a series of debates on topical ethical issues which can be found at [www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006qk11](http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006qk11) or just tap in **BBC The Moral Maze** on a search engine.

You should find material and make notes to improve your all-round knowledge on the main areas we study in Ethics.

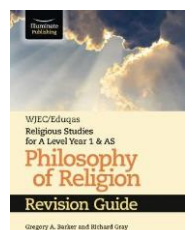
- 1. Animal experimentation for medical reasons
- 2. The use of Nuclear Weapons as a form of deterrence
- 3. The issue of Homosexuality and Polyamorous relationships
- 4. Issues surrounding the legality and use of Abortion
- 5. The moral issues surrounding Voluntary Euthanasia

If you just want to sit back and watch a movie without taking notes, we recommend you try The Matrix and the Message, both of which cover themes or material from the course.

## Recommended to Buy

School will provide you with all the text books you will require for the course. However, students have previously found these revision guides specifically for our course to be very useful and are a good starting point for your reading. The following are strongly recommended.

From Illuminate Publishing  
**WJEC/Eduqas RS for Yr 1 Philosophy of Religion**  
Revision Guide by Gregory A Barker £11.99



From Illuminate Publishing  
**WJEC/Eduqas RS for Yr 1 Religion and Ethics**  
Revision Guide by Gregory A Barker £11.99

