

# SYLLABUS

Cambridge IGCSE®  
Religious Studies

**0490**

For examination in November 2015

### Syllabus changes for 2015:

This syllabus has been updated, but there are no significant changes.

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# 1. Introduction

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## 1.1 Why choose Cambridge?

### Recognition

Cambridge International Examinations is the world's largest provider of international education programmes and qualifications for learners aged 5 to 19. We are part of Cambridge Assessment, a department of the University of Cambridge, trusted for excellence in education. Our qualifications are recognised by the world's universities and employers.

Cambridge IGCSE® (International General Certificate of Secondary Education) is internationally recognised by schools, universities and employers as equivalent in demand to UK GCSEs. Learn more at [www.cie.org.uk/recognition](http://www.cie.org.uk/recognition)

### Excellence in education

Our mission is to deliver world-class international education through the provision of high-quality curricula, assessment and services.

More than 9000 schools are part of our Cambridge learning community. We support teachers in over 160 countries who offer their learners an international education based on our curricula and leading to our qualifications. Every year, thousands of learners use Cambridge qualifications to gain places at universities around the world.

Our syllabuses are reviewed and updated regularly so that they reflect the latest thinking of international experts and practitioners and take account of the different national contexts in which they are taught.

Cambridge programmes and qualifications are designed to support learners in becoming:

- **confident** in working with information and ideas – their own and those of others
- **responsible** for themselves, responsive to and respectful of others
- **reflective** as learners, developing their ability to learn
- **innovative** and equipped for new and future challenges
- **engaged** intellectually and socially, ready to make a difference.

### Support for teachers

A wide range of materials and resources is available to support teachers and learners in Cambridge schools. Resources suit a variety of teaching methods in different international contexts. Through subject discussion forums and training, teachers can access the expert advice they need for teaching our qualifications. More details can be found in Section 2 of this syllabus and at [www.cie.org.uk/teachers](http://www.cie.org.uk/teachers)

### Support for exams officers

Exams officers can trust in reliable, efficient administration of exams entries and excellent personal support from our customer services. Learn more at [www.cie.org.uk/examsOfficers](http://www.cie.org.uk/examsOfficers)

## Not-for-profit, part of the University of Cambridge

We are a not-for-profit organisation where the needs of the teachers and learners are at the core of what we do. We continually invest in educational research and respond to feedback from our customers in order to improve our qualifications, products and services.

Our systems for managing the provision of international qualifications and education programmes for learners aged 5 to 19 are certified as meeting the internationally recognised standard for quality management, ISO 9001:2008. Learn more at [www.cie.org.uk/ISO9001](http://www.cie.org.uk/ISO9001)

### 1.2 Why choose Cambridge IGCSE?

Cambridge IGCSEs are international in outlook, but retain a local relevance. The syllabuses provide opportunities for contextualised learning and the content has been created to suit a wide variety of schools, avoid cultural bias and develop essential lifelong skills, including creative thinking and problem-solving.

Our aim is to balance knowledge, understanding and skills in our programmes and qualifications to enable candidates to become effective learners and to provide a solid foundation for their continuing educational journey.

Through our professional development courses and our support materials for Cambridge IGCSEs, we provide the tools to enable teachers to prepare learners to the best of their ability and work with us in the pursuit of excellence in education.

Cambridge IGCSEs are considered to be an excellent preparation for Cambridge International AS and A Levels, the Cambridge AICE (Advanced International Certificate of Education) Group Award, Cambridge Pre-U, and other education programmes, such as the US Advanced Placement program and the International Baccalaureate Diploma programme. Learn more about Cambridge IGCSEs at [www.cie.org.uk/cambridgesecondary2](http://www.cie.org.uk/cambridgesecondary2)

### Guided learning hours

Cambridge IGCSE syllabuses are designed on the assumption that candidates have about 130 guided learning hours per subject over the duration of the course, but this is for guidance only. The number of hours required to gain the qualification may vary according to local curricular practice and the learners' prior experience of the subject.

### 1.3 Why choose Cambridge IGCSE Religious Studies?

Cambridge IGCSE Religious Studies is accepted by universities and employers as proof of knowledge and understanding.

This wide-ranging syllabus aims to promote an enquiring, critical and sympathetic approach to the study of religion. Candidates will reflect on religious responses to moral issues, identify and explore questions about the meaning of life, and recognise the contribution of religion to patterns of belief and behaviour.

Students study Christianity, Islam and Judaism, providing an introduction to the challenging and varied nature of religion.

## Prior learning

Candidates beginning this course are not expected to have studied Religious Studies previously.

## Progression

Cambridge IGCSE Certificates are general qualifications that enable candidates to progress either directly to employment, or to proceed to further qualifications.

Candidates who are awarded grades C to A\* in Cambridge IGCSE Religious Studies are well prepared to follow courses leading to Cambridge International AS and A Level Divinity, Islamic Studies, Religious Studies, or the equivalent.

## 1.4 Cambridge International Certificate of Education (ICE)

Cambridge ICE is the group award of Cambridge IGCSE. It gives schools the opportunity to benefit from offering a broad and balanced curriculum by recognising the achievements of learners who pass examinations in at least seven subjects. Learners draw subjects from five subject groups, including two languages, and one subject from each of the other subject groups. The seventh subject can be taken from any of the five subject groups.

Religious Studies (0490) falls into Group II, Humanities.

Learn more about Cambridge IGCSE and Cambridge ICE at [www.cie.org.uk/cambridgesecondary2](http://www.cie.org.uk/cambridgesecondary2)

The Cambridge ICE is awarded from examinations administered in the June and November series each year.

Detailed timetables are available from [www.cie.org.uk/examsOfficers](http://www.cie.org.uk/examsOfficers)

## 1.5 How can I find out more?

### If you are already a Cambridge school

You can make entries for this qualification through your usual channels. If you have any questions, please contact us at [info@cie.org.uk](mailto:info@cie.org.uk)

### If you are not yet a Cambridge school

Learn about the benefits of becoming a Cambridge school at [www.cie.org.uk/startcambridge](http://www.cie.org.uk/startcambridge). Email us at [info@cie.org.uk](mailto:info@cie.org.uk) to find out how your organisation can register to become a Cambridge school.

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## 2. Teacher support

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### 2.1 Support materials

Cambridge syllabuses, past question papers and examiner reports to cover the last examination series are on the *Syllabus and Support Materials* DVD, which we send to all Cambridge schools.

You can also go to our public website at [www.cie.org.uk/igcse](http://www.cie.org.uk/igcse) to download current and future syllabuses together with specimen papers or past question papers and examiner reports from one series.

For teachers at registered Cambridge schools a range of additional support materials for specific syllabuses is available online. For Teacher Support go to <http://teachers.cie.org.uk> (username and password required).

### 2.2 Resource lists

We work with publishers providing a range of resources for our syllabuses including textbooks, websites, CDs etc. Any endorsed, recommended and suggested resources are listed on both our public website and on Teacher Support.

The resource lists can be filtered to show all resources or just those which are endorsed or recommended by Cambridge. Resources endorsed by Cambridge go through a detailed quality assurance process and are written to align closely with the Cambridge syllabus they support.

### 2.3 Training

We offer a range of support activities for teachers to ensure they have the relevant knowledge and skills to deliver our qualifications. See [www.cie.org.uk/events](http://www.cie.org.uk/events) for further information.

### 3. Assessment at a glance

All candidates take Paper 1 and Paper 2. Each paper contains **three** sections:

- A Christianity
- B Islam
- C Judaism.

Candidates choose questions taken from **two** of the sections. Questions on both papers are drawn from the whole of the curriculum for the specified religion – i.e. there is no predetermined division of topics between the papers.

#### Paper 1

1 hour 45 minutes

Each section on this paper consists of **two** compulsory structured questions. The second question in each section is based on stimulus material. Candidates answer **both** the questions on **two** of the sections.

Maximum 80 marks: weighted at 50% of total

#### Paper 2

1 hour 45 minutes

Each section of this paper consists of **three** structured questions without stimulus material. Candidates answer **two** of the questions from **two** of the sections.

Maximum 80 marks: weighted at 50% of total

### Availability

This syllabus is examined in the October/November examination series.

This syllabus is available to private candidates.

Centres in the UK that receive government funding are advised to consult the Cambridge website [www.cie.org.uk](http://www.cie.org.uk) for the latest information before beginning to teach this syllabus.

### Combining this with other syllabuses

Candidates can combine this syllabus in an examination series with any other Cambridge syllabus, except:

- syllabuses with the same title at the same level
- 2048 Religious Studies (Bible Knowledge)
- 2049 Religious Studies (Bible Knowledge – Singapore)

Please note that Cambridge IGCSE, Cambridge International Level 1/Level 2 Certificates and Cambridge O Level syllabuses are at the same level.



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## 4. Syllabus aims and assessment objectives

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### 4.1 Syllabus aims

The aims of the syllabus are not listed in order of priority.

The aims are to:

1. promote an enquiring, critical and sympathetic approach to the study of religion, especially in its individual and corporate expression in the contemporary world
2. introduce candidates to the challenging and varied nature of religion, and to the ways in which this is reflected in experience, belief and practice
3. help candidates to identify and explore questions about the meaning of life, and to consider such questions in relation to religious traditions
4. encourage candidates to reflect on religious responses to moral issues
5. enable candidates to recognise and appreciate the contribution of religion in the formation of patterns of belief and behaviour.

### 4.2 Assessment objectives

The three assessment objectives in Religious Studies are:

- A Knowledge
- B Understanding and interpretation
- C Evaluation.

#### A. Knowledge

Candidates should be able to:

1. use knowledge in order to describe the religious practices, experiences and beliefs of others
2. select and deploy relevant knowledge of the religions studied.

#### B. Understanding and interpretation

Candidates should be able to:

3. show understanding of religious beliefs and practices by explaining their significance for believers
4. demonstrate awareness and understanding of religious responses to contemporary issues, both personal and social.

#### C. Evaluation

Candidates should be able to:

5. evaluate different views on issues arising from religious belief and practice by using evidence and argument.

### 4.3 Weighting of the assessment objectives

Assessment objectives	Weighting
A. Knowledge	35%
B. Understanding and interpretation	35%
C. Evaluation	30%

Papers 1 and 2 are equally weighted and each carries a maximum of 80 marks. All questions are equally weighted and each covers all of the assessment objectives in the overall weightings for the syllabus.

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## 5. Syllabus content

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### Introduction

The syllabus content is divided into sections, each of which is based upon central ideas within Religious Studies. All five topics will be assessed by both Paper 1 and Paper 2.

The curriculum is set out in terms of central ideas, key questions and associated concepts. A consideration of the central ideas and key questions is essential for the purpose of this curriculum.

Candidates will be expected to understand how the significance of the main beliefs and major figures of a religion is expressed through the topics listed. However, no questions will be set directly on these beliefs and figures, unless they are specified in the topics.

Candidates will be expected to be familiar with the key technical terms used within a religion. In Topics 1–5 such terms are listed, with the meaning given in brackets. Where a term is widely used, but knowledge of it is not required of candidates, it has been put in brackets.

### Syllabus content

Candidates are required to make a study of **two** of the following three world religions:

- Christianity
- Islam
- Judaism.

### 5.1 Topics

Each religion will be examined according to the inter-related topics listed below. The topics have been numbered purely for purposes of reference, and there is no intention that the order should be seen as a suitable sequence for study.

Candidates should be aware that the importance attached to particular themes will vary from religion to religion.

**Topic 1: Worship**

**Topic 2: Beliefs and sacred writings**

**Topic 3: Festivals, fasts, pilgrimage/historic places**

**Topic 4: Religion and the family; rites of passage**

**Topic 5: Religion and social action**

## 5.2 Christianity

### Topic C1: Worship

- Church: altar/communion table, font/baptistery, pulpit, lectern, cross, crucifix
- Public and private worship: Eucharist/Holy Communion/Mass; Sunday and daily worship, private devotion
- Role and significance of bishop, priest/vicar/minister.

### Topic C2: Beliefs and sacred writings

- The Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit, the Apostles' Creed
- Jesus of Nazareth: beliefs about Jesus of Nazareth as reflected in Topic 3
- Salvation and resurrection
- The Ten Commandments
- The Bible: its place in worship; the basis of its authority; Old and New Testaments; types of literature it contains.

### Topic C3: Festivals, fasts, pilgrimage/historic places

- Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Lent including Holy Week, Easter, Ascension, Pentecost
- Sunday
- Places of pilgrimage e.g. Lourdes, Rome or local places of pilgrimage
- Historic places e.g. Bethlehem, Nazareth, Jerusalem.

### Topic C4: Religion and the family; rites of passage

- Baptism: infant baptism/dedication, believers' baptism
- First communion, Confirmation, marriage ceremonies, funeral rites
- Traditional religious teaching on the roles and responsibilities of men, women and the family.

### Topic C5: Religion and social action

- Teachings about love and concern for others: the Two Greatest Commandments
- Tithing and personal giving
- Organisation of the religious community for the relief of poverty e.g. Christian Aid, CAFOD, missionary activities.

## 5.3 Islam

### Topic I1: Worship

- Mosque, minaret, dome, qiblah (direction), mihrab (niche), minbar (steps for sermon), architecture and calligraphy
- Public and private worship: Salah, Du'a (private devotion), Wudu (ablution)
- Adhan (call to prayer), Muezzin
- Jummah (Friday mid-day prayer)
- The role and significance of the Imam

### Topic I2: Beliefs and sacred writings

- Tawhid (unity of God); Risalah (Prophets), Akirah (life after death), Angels
- Five Pillars: Shahadah, Salah, Sawm, Zakah, Hajj
- Muhammad (pbuh), Revelation, Hijrah, Seal of the Prophets
- Qur'an, Sunnah (Ahadith)
- Jihad (greater and lesser)
- Origins of Sunni and Shi'ah

### Topic I3: Festivals, fasts , pilgrimage/historic places

- Ramadan, Lailat ul-Qadr (Night of Power), Id al-Fitr (the end of Ramadan), Id al-Adha (feast of sacrifice)
- Performance of Hajj
- Makkah and Madinah

### Topic I4: Religion and the family; rites of passage

- Birth rites: Adhan (call to prayer) and Iqamah (command to worship), Aqeeqah (sacrifice)
- Marriage ceremonies, funeral rites
- Traditional religious teaching on the roles of men, women and the family

### Topic I5: Religion and social action

- Ummah, the religious community, local and worldwide
- Shariah (law)
- Teachings about love and concern for others, use of Zakah and Sadaqah (voluntary contributions)
- Organisation of the religious community for the relief of poverty e.g. Muslim Aid, Red Crescent.

## 5.4 Judaism

### Topic J1: Worship

- Synagogue: ark (aron ha-kodesh), Sefer Torah (Torah scrolls), bimah (reading desk), Ner Tamid (eternal light), Ten Commandments (tablets of the law), menorah (seven-branched candlestick), Magen David (star of David)
- Public and private worship in the synagogue: minyan (number required for public worship), daily and Shabbat (Sabbath) services. In the home: daily prayer, Kiddush
- Shema (statement of faith), mezuzah
- Ritual dress: tallit (prayer shawl), tefillin (phylacteries), kippah/yarmulka (skull cap)
- Role and significance of Rabbi, Chazan (Cantor) and congregation.

### Topic J2: Beliefs and sacred writings

- The unity of God, the Covenant relationship between God and his people (Abraham and Moses)
- The Torah as the revelation of God's will
- The Tenakh: Torah (Law), Nevi'im (Prophets), Ketuvim (Writings)
- The Mishnah (oral law), the Talmud (commentary on the Mishnah).

### Topic J3: Festivals, fasts, pilgrimage/historic places

- Shabbat (Sabbath) in the home and synagogue
- High Holy Days: Rosh Hashanah (New Year), Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement)
- Pilgrim festivals: Pesach (Passover), Shavuot (Feast of Weeks), Sukkot (Tabernacles)
- Historic places: Jerusalem (Western Wall), Yad Vashem (Holocaust Memorial).

### Topic J4: Religion and the family; rites of passage

- Birth rites: Brit Milah (circumcision), naming ceremonies
- Bar/Bat Mitzvah, Bat Chayil, marriage ceremonies, funeral rites, Shiva (mourning ritual)
- Kashrut (kosher): food and clothes
- Traditional and religious teaching on the role and responsibilities of men, women and the family.

### Topic J5: Religion and social action

- Teachings about love and concern for others: Tzedaka (righteous giving), pushkes (collection boxes), Gemulit hasadim (kind actions)
- Organisation of the religious community for the relief of poverty e.g. Tzedek, Jewish Care.

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## 6. Grade descriptions

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The following grade description are intended to give a general indication of the standards of attainment likely to have been achieved by candidates awarded grades A, C and F.

At **Grade A** the candidate will be expected to:

- demonstrate a detailed knowledge and clear understanding of the syllabus content, a balanced coverage of the syllabus and the ability to select appropriate features of the information required; organise and present the information in a consistent and appropriate manner.
- demonstrate a thorough understanding of the areas concerned with the study of religion, including: a thorough understanding of religious language and concepts; an understanding of the influence of particular individuals, writings etc. on religious communities; an understanding of principal beliefs, and the ability to express them clearly and to show the relationship between belief and practice.
- demonstrate the ability to see the significance of specific issues and to express clearly a personal opinion supported with appropriate evidence and argument.

At **Grade C** the candidate will be expected to:

- demonstrate a wide knowledge of the syllabus content and the ability to select appropriate features of the information required; show some ability in organising and presenting the information.
- demonstrate a reasonable understanding of the areas concerned with the study of religion, including: some understanding of religious language and basic concepts; some understanding of the influence of particular individuals, writings etc. on religious communities; an understanding of principal beliefs, and the ability to show the relationship between belief and practice.
- demonstrate the ability to see the significance of a specific issue and to express a personal opinion supported with some evidence and argument.

At **Grade F** the candidate will be expected to:

- demonstrate some knowledge of the syllabus content and the ability to select some features of the information required; attempt some organisation of the information.
- demonstrate some understanding of the areas concerned with the study of religion, including: a limited understanding of religious language; a simple understanding of the influence of particular individuals, writings etc. on religious communities; a limited understanding of some principal beliefs and the relationship between those beliefs and practice.
- express clearly a personal opinion, supported by limited argument.

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## 7. Other information

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### Equality and inclusion

Cambridge International Examinations has taken great care in the preparation of this syllabus and assessment materials to avoid bias of any kind. To comply with the UK Equality Act (2010), Cambridge has designed this qualification with the aim of avoiding direct and indirect discrimination.

The standard assessment arrangements may present unnecessary barriers for candidates with disabilities or learning difficulties. Arrangements can be put in place for these candidates to enable them to access the assessments and receive recognition of their attainment. Access arrangements will not be agreed if they give candidates an unfair advantage over others or if they compromise the standards being assessed.

Candidates who are unable to access the assessment of any component may be eligible to receive an award based on the parts of the assessment they have taken.

Information on access arrangements is found in the *Cambridge Handbook* which can be downloaded from the website **[www.cie.org.uk](http://www.cie.org.uk)**

### Language

This syllabus and the associated assessment materials are available in English only.

### Grading and reporting

Cambridge IGCSE results are shown by one of the grades A\*, A, B, C, D, E, F or G indicating the standard achieved, A\* being the highest and G the lowest. 'Ungraded' indicates that the candidate's performance fell short of the standard required for grade G. 'Ungraded' will be reported on the statement of results but not on the certificate. The letters Q (result pending); X (no results) and Y (to be issued) may also appear on the statement of results but not on the certificate.

### Entry codes

To maintain the security of our examinations we produce question papers for different areas of the world, known as 'administrative zones'. Where the component entry code has two digits, the first digit is the component number given in the syllabus. The second digit is the location code, specific to an administrative zone. Information about entry codes, examination timetables and administrative instructions can be found in the *Cambridge Guide to Making Entries*.



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