This subject outline is accredited for teaching at Stage 1 from 2010 and at Stage 2 from 2011
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INTRODUCTION

SUBJECT DESCRIPTION

Religion Studies is a 10-credit subject or a 20-credit subject at Stage 1, and a 10-credit or a 20-credit subject at Stage 2.

A study of religion and spirituality forms a vital foundation for the study of a society. This is of particular importance in a culturally diverse society. An appreciation of the nature of national and global multicultural society is enriched by an understanding of religion and its influence on human behaviour, and the shaping of personal and group identity. Religions and spiritualities are living and dynamic, and students explore the ways in which religious adherents participate in, and respond to, current social and moral debates, and issues in communities such as those in Australia.

Students develop an understanding of different religious perspectives on events or practices, and examine a range of definitions of religion drawn from a variety of sources. These definitions of religion are evaluated in terms of how they lead to a particular understanding of religion.

Students study diverse religious and spiritual beliefs and value systems in Australian society and around the world, and explore how such a study can contribute to greater personal and interpersonal understanding; the development of skills in relating to people of different religious positions; and an appreciation of, and respect for, the different ways in which people think, feel, and act.

This subject outline emphasises an open approach to the study of religion and spirituality that encourages students to empathise with adherents within and across religious and spiritual traditions, and with adherents who have different beliefs and understanding within the same religion.

There is also an emphasis on understanding religious positions on ethical and social justice issues.

CAPABILITIES

The capabilities connect student learning within and across subjects in a range of contexts. They include essential knowledge and skills that enable people to act in effective and successful ways.

The five capabilities that have been identified are:

- communication
- citizenship
- personal development
- work
- learning.
In Religion Studies the main emphasis is on developing the capabilities for communication, citizenship, and personal development, which are reflected in the learning requirements, the content, the assessment requirements, and the performance standards.

**Communication**

In this subject students develop their capability for communication by, for example:
- communicating in different contexts (e.g. within the class, beyond the classroom, and online) and for different purposes (e.g. interacting with guest speakers, interviewing, presenting findings in class, interpreting, and constructing written and visual texts)
- understanding and appreciating the communication of others through listening, observing, and interpreting
- building intercultural understanding and communication across groups with different backgrounds and experiences
- acquiring skills in research, sources analysis, and interpretation
- gaining knowledge and skills to develop and sustain an argument
- using appropriate language to accurately and objectively describe religious and spiritual phenomena.

**Citizenship**

In this subject students develop their capability for citizenship by, for example:
- engaging, participating, and empathising with others to see the world through different eyes
- understanding religious structures and systems
- critically evaluating the reasons for the separation or integration of social and religious structures and systems
- understanding how religion and spirituality influence cultural practice and contribute to personal and group identity
- appreciating cultural and social diversity and cohesion, as they reflect religious beliefs
- appreciating the ways in which religious values can contribute to active citizenship
- understanding the ways in which a religious tradition has an impact on how adherents behave and interact with each other and the society in which they live.

**Personal Development**

In this subject students develop their capability for personal development by, for example:
- extending their interpersonal skills (e.g. empathy with others, negotiation skills, and working collaboratively with a range of people)
- reflecting on personal religious experiences and those of others
- understanding the role of religion and spirituality in developing or contributing to personal identity
- thinking critically and reflectively about religions and religious issues
- building their capacity to make decisions about religious ideas, beliefs, and experiences
- building their capacity to make decisions about ethical or moral issues
• extending their personal skills, through participation in activities that encourage self-awareness and self-confidence.

Work
In this subject students develop their capability for work by, for example:
• actively participating in service learning activities
• understanding voluntary work and paid work, and their place in religious and spiritual traditions
• appreciating individual and shared obligations and rights through an understanding and application of social justice
• understanding the ways in which religious and spiritual traditions have had an impact on social justice and human rights
• understanding and appreciating careers in the field of religious endeavour.

Learning
In this subject students develop their capability for learning by, for example:
• acquiring skills in research, organisation of information, critical reading, and analytical thinking and inquiry
• evaluating and interpreting religious concepts of time, events, people, actions, and phenomena of the past and present
• acquiring organisational and independent learning skills, initiative, creativity, and planning and presentation skills
• building knowledge of and applying various definitions and theories of religions and spiritualities
• recognising, understanding, and appreciating a range of perspectives on religious ideas and practice
• understanding the ways in which values and beliefs change over time, and are influenced by religion and religious leaders
• acquiring an ability to maintain objectivity in the study of various religious and spiritual traditions.

LITERACY IN RELIGION STUDIES
Students have opportunities to develop and refine the following literacy skills in Religion Studies:
• understanding and analysing a variety of texts and text types
• understanding and appreciating linguistic diversity within and across religious and spiritual traditions
• observing and understanding symbolic language
• creating and analysing texts in a range of forms
• identifying, selecting, recording, analysing, and evaluating written, oral, data, and visual sources from a range of perspectives
• understanding the relevance of context, purpose, bias, intent or message, inference, accuracy, objectivity, and authority
• analysing and presenting information from primary sources (e.g. interviews, field trips, surveys, qualitative and quantitative data, guest speakers, and observations), or secondary sources of information (e.g. the Internet, media, promotional material, reference books, and online and other electronic sources)
• communicating informed views supported by evidence
• acknowledging sources appropriately
• understanding and using different approaches to the study of religion and spirituality (e.g. the phenomenological approach).

NUMERACY IN RELIGION STUDIES
Students have opportunities to develop and refine the following numeracy skills in Religion Studies:
• identifying, collecting, and/or recording relevant quantitative data
• appreciating and analysing various and changing concepts of time, space, and number as conveyed in sacred texts
• appreciating numeric symbolism in religious stories and texts
• designing forms for surveying or recording observations of relevant phenomena
• recording relevant sacred spatial relationships and boundaries through images (e.g. photographs, symbols, plans, and drawings)
• communicating relevant quantitative and spatial data through the most effective form (e.g. a map, table, or pie chart)
• reflecting on spatial awareness when communicating, constructing religious symbols, or participating in, or observing, religious rituals.

ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER KNOWLEDGE, CULTURES, AND PERSPECTIVES
In partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, and schools and school sectors, the SACE Board of South Australia supports the development of high-quality learning and assessment design that respects the diverse knowledge, cultures, and perspectives of Indigenous Australians.

The SACE Board encourages teachers to include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge and perspectives in the design, delivery, and assessment of teaching and learning programs by:
• providing opportunities in SACE subjects for students to learn about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures, and contemporary experiences
• recognising and respecting the significant contribution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to Australian society
• drawing students’ attention to the value of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge and perspectives from the past and the present
• promoting the use of culturally appropriate protocols when engaging with and learning from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities.
Stage 1 Religion Studies
LEARNING SCOPE AND REQUIREMENTS

LEARNING REQUIREMENTS
The learning requirements summarise the knowledge, skills, and understanding that students are expected to develop and demonstrate through their learning in Stage 1 Religion Studies.

In this subject, students are expected to:
1. demonstrate knowledge and understanding of diverse religious beliefs, perspectives, and experiences within and across traditions
2. investigate and understand the social significance of religion and spirituality
3. explore how religion can provide a basis for personal and ethical decision-making
4. analyse the religious basis of a contemporary ethical or social justice issue
5. demonstrate and apply an understanding of religion and spirituality, using different forms of communication
6. reflect on religious experience, beliefs, and values, and how they contribute to a sense of personal meaning.

CONTENT
Religion Studies is a 10-credit subject or a 20-credit subject at Stage 1.

A 10-credit subject consists of:
• one religious and spiritual traditions study
• one ethical or social justice issue study.

A 20-credit subject consists of:
• two religious and spiritual traditions studies
• two ethical or social justice issue studies.

Religious and Spiritual Traditions Study
Traditions are often considered to be ancient, unalterable, and deeply important. Tradition includes:
• beliefs, practices, or customs taught or handed on by one generation to the next, often orally
• a broad religious movement that has common customs and a common history, culture, and, to some extent, body of teachings.

This study focuses on an aspect of religion and/or spirituality within one tradition or across traditions.
Teachers are advised to give students an overview of the chosen tradition or traditions before selecting an aspect of the tradition for study. Examples of aspects of traditions include:

- meditation and prayer
- interpretations of sacred texts
- images and understanding of God
- contemporary and traditional religious symbols and expressions
- the sacredness of the land
- rituals and festivals
- religious art
- forms of religious commitment
- religious schools
- youth and religion.

The aim of a study of religious and spiritual traditions is to increase understanding of the nature and significance of religion and spirituality, and to explore their relevance in contemporary society. The following questions provide a guiding framework for the exploration of aspects of traditions.

- What are some ways in which religions and spiritualities find expression in society?
- To what extent do different religious and spiritual traditions have varying beliefs and expressions, and to what extent do they have similar beliefs and expressions?
- To what extent do religion and spirituality provide guidance for social and moral beliefs?
- What is meant by religious authority and what is its role?
- To what extent is there tension between religious and spiritual beliefs or understanding and contemporary social practices?
- How have religious and spiritual beliefs and practices been maintained in society, and how have they changed?
- In what ways is there dialogue between Indigenous and non-Indigenous traditions?

Teachers and students should negotiate appropriate aspects of religious and spiritual traditions for study. Aspects chosen should reflect the variety of experiences, interests, and backgrounds that students bring to their studies, as well as the diversity and changing nature of religious and spiritual traditions.

Contemporary differences both within and across traditions should be explored.

**Ethical or Social Justice Issue Study**

Students explore the religious basis of a contemporary ethical or social justice issue. This study provides an opportunity for students to develop their skills in discussing, evaluating, and responding to an ethical or social justice issue from a religious perspective. The ethical or social justice issue may be taken from within one tradition or across different religious and spiritual traditions.

Teachers are advised to give students an overview of the chosen tradition or traditions before selecting the ethical or social justice issue for study.

The ethical or social justice issue study:

- focuses on a contemporary issue
- provokes open discussion of a contemporary issue from a religious perspective
allows students to demonstrate skills in critical thinking
encourages students to identify, analyse, and evaluate religious perspectives on the issue
provides students with an opportunity to explore, analyse, evaluate, and justify their personal perspectives on a particular issue.

The following questions are recommended as a guiding framework for the exploration of the ethical or social justice issue.

- What are some ways in which religions and spiritualities find expression in society?
- To what extent do religion and spirituality provide guidance for social and moral beliefs?
- To what extent do various traditions provide similar guidance for social and moral beliefs, and to what extent do they provide differing advice?
- What is meant by religious authority, and what is its role?
- To what extent is there tension between religious and spiritual beliefs or understanding, and social practices?
- How have religious and spiritual beliefs and practices been maintained in society, and how have they changed?
- In what ways is there dialogue between Indigenous and non-Indigenous traditions?

Teachers and students should negotiate appropriate aspects of an ethical or social justice issue for study. Issues chosen should reflect the variety of experiences, interests, and backgrounds that students bring to their studies, as well as the diversity of religious perspectives on ethics and social justice.

Examples of contemporary ethical or social justice issues could include:
- the relationship between the developed and the developing world (e.g. international trade systems, poverty, and hunger)
- global and local environmental challenges
- emerging biotechnologies
- sexual discrimination
- euthanasia
- religion and conflict
- religious endeavours for world peace.
ASSESSMENT SCOPE AND REQUIREMENTS

Assessment at Stage 1 is school based.

EVIDENCE OF LEARNING

The following assessment types enable students to demonstrate their learning in Stage 1 Religion Studies:

- Assessment Type 1: Practical Activity
- Assessment Type 2: Issues Investigation
- Assessment Type 3: Reflection.

For a 10-credit subject, students should provide evidence of their learning through three or four assessments, with at least one assessment from each assessment type. Each assessment type should have a weighting of at least 20%.

For a 20-credit subject, students should provide evidence of their learning through six to eight assessments, with at least one assessment from each assessment type. Each assessment type should have a weighting of at least 20%.

ASSESSMENT DESIGN CRITERIA

The assessment design criteria are based on the learning requirements and are used by teachers to:

- clarify for the student what he or she needs to learn
- design opportunities for the student to provide evidence of his or her learning at the highest possible level of achievement.

The assessment design criteria consist of specific features that:

- students should demonstrate in their learning
- teachers look for as evidence that students have met the learning requirements.

For this subject the assessment design criteria are:

- knowledge and understanding
- investigation and application
- communication
- analysis and personal reflection.

The specific features of these criteria are described on the following page.

The set of assessments, as a whole, must give students opportunities to demonstrate each of the specific features by the completion of study of the subject.
Knowledge and Understanding

The specific features are as follows:
KU1 Knowledge and understanding of diverse religious beliefs and experiences.
KU2 Recognition of different religious perspectives on an event or practice.
KU3 Understanding of the social significance of religion and spirituality.

Investigation and Application

The specific features are as follows:
IA1 Application and development of appropriate investigation skills and methods (e.g. interviewing, survey construction, and observation).
IA2 Exploration and explanation of the connections between religion and personal and ethical decision-making.

Communication

The specific features are as follows:
C1 Communication of understanding of religion and spirituality.
C2 Clarity of expression in a variety of forms for a specific audience and purpose.

Analysis and Personal Reflection

The specific features are as follows:
APR1 Analysis of a contemporary ethical or social justice issue in a religious context.
APR2 Reflection on the ways in which religious experience, beliefs, and values contribute to a sense of personal meaning.

SCHOOL ASSESSMENT

Assessment Type 1: Practical Activity

Students undertake at least one practical activity for both a 10-credit subject and a 20-credit subject.

In the practical activity, students communicate their knowledge and understanding of an aspect of religion and/or spirituality. The practical activity should be planned by students in conjunction with the teacher.

The practical activity can relate to a religious and spiritual traditions study and/or an ethical or social justice issue study.

The practical activity could include a written, oral, or multimodal explanation of, for example:
• a particular religious belief, practice, or experience
• various religious perspectives on an issue, belief, or experience
• an aspect of a particular way in which religion is demonstrated or expressed
• connections between religion and/or spirituality and ethics with reference to a particular ethical issue in a religious context.
Students present their practical activity to a particular audience and for a specific purpose (e.g. a speech at the school assembly on a mission activity, an article for the school newsletter on a social justice issue, or an aspect of religion and/or spirituality in society). Practical activities could be undertaken by students as individuals, in groups, or as members of a whole class. If part of a group, each student provides separate evidence of his or her learning and is assessed individually.

For this assessment type, students provide evidence of their learning primarily in relation to the following assessment design criteria:
- knowledge and understanding
- investigation and application
- communication.

**Assessment Type 2: Issues Investigation**

Students undertake at least one issues investigation for both a 10-credit subject and a 20-credit subject.

This assessment type has two parts:
- an investigation (conducted through, for example, interviews, guest speakers, surveys, visits, or film studies)
- a report (which may be in the form of, for example, an oral presentation, a role play, a written report, an audiovisual presentation, a multimedia presentation, a website, or an essay).

Students investigate and present a report on the religious basis of a contemporary ethical or social justice issue, and different perspectives on the issue, either within one religious or spiritual tradition or across traditions.

In investigating an ethical or social justice issue, students explore and explain the interactions between religion, culture, and society. They analyse their chosen issue in a religious context, and reflect on possible futures.

An issues investigation report should be a maximum of 1000 words if written or a maximum of 6 minutes if oral, or the equivalent in multimodal form.

For this assessment type, students provide evidence of their learning primarily in relation to the following assessment design criteria:
- investigation and application
- analysis and personal reflection.

**Assessment Type 3: Reflection**

Students undertake at least one reflection for both a 10-credit subject and a 20-credit subject.

For this assessment type, students choose an aspect of a religious or spiritual tradition of personal interest that will enable them to extend their understanding of religion and/or spirituality and reflect on the ways in which:
- beliefs and values contribute to personal meaning and/or community identity
- religion and/or spirituality provides a basis for personal and ethical decision-making.
Students explore their chosen aspect of interest through observation, participation, practical involvement, fieldwork, service, or research, using both primary and secondary sources. For example, students may use an activity in which they are involved (such as designing or participating in a religious ritual, preparing and presenting a speech on an aspect of religion for a class or a youth group, or a spiritual retreat activity) as a basis for their reflection.

A reflection should be a maximum of 800 words if written or a maximum of 5 minutes if oral, or the equivalent in multimodal form.

For this assessment type, students provide evidence of their learning primarily in relation to the following assessment design criteria:
- knowledge and understanding
- communication
- analysis and personal reflection.

**PERFORMANCE STANDARDS**

The performance standards describe five levels of achievement, A to E.

Each level of achievement describes the knowledge, skills, and understanding that teachers refer to in deciding how well a student has demonstrated his or her learning on the basis of the evidence provided.

During the teaching and learning program the teacher gives students feedback on their learning, with reference to the performance standards.

At the student’s completion of study of a subject, the teacher makes a decision about the quality of the student’s learning by:
- referring to the performance standards
- taking into account the weighting of each assessment type
- assigning a subject grade between A and E.

Teachers can use a SACE Board school assessment grade calculator to help them to assign the subject grade. The calculator is available on the SACE website (www.sace.sa.edu.au).
## Performance Standards for Stage 1 Religion Studies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Knowledge and Understanding</th>
<th>Investigation and Application</th>
<th>Communication</th>
<th>Analysis and Personal Reflection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A</strong></td>
<td>Comprehensive application and development of appropriate investigation skills and methods (e.g. interviewing, survey construction, and observation). Clear and detailed exploration and perceptive explanation of the connections between religion and personal and ethical decision-making.</td>
<td>Logical and clear communication of understanding of religion and spirituality. Fluently, appropriate, and accurate expression in a variety of forms for a specific audience and purpose.</td>
<td>Perceptive and well-informed analysis of a contemporary ethical or social justice issue in a religious context. Insightful reflection on the ways in which religious experience, beliefs, and values contribute to a sense of personal meaning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B</strong></td>
<td>Clear application and development of appropriate investigation skills and methods (e.g. interviewing, survey construction and observation). Clear and detailed exploration and explanation of the connections between religion and personal and ethical decision-making.</td>
<td>Clear communication of understanding of religion and spirituality. Mostly fluent, appropriate, and accurate expression in a variety of forms for a specific audience and purpose.</td>
<td>Well-informed analysis of a contemporary ethical or social justice issue in a religious context. Thoughtful reflection on the ways in which religious experience, beliefs, and values contribute to a sense of personal meaning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>C</strong></td>
<td>Generally clear communication of understanding of religion and spirituality. Generally clear and appropriate expression in different forms for a specific audience and purpose.</td>
<td>Generally clear communication of understanding of religion and spirituality. Generally clear and appropriate expression in different forms for a specific audience and purpose.</td>
<td>Informed analysis of a contemporary ethical or social justice issue in a religious context. Some considered reflection on the ways in which religious experience, beliefs, and values contribute to a sense of personal meaning.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

- **Insightful knowledge and understanding of diverse religious beliefs and experiences.**
- **Perceptive recognition of different religious perspectives on an event or practice.**
- **Insightful and well-informed understanding of the social significance of religion and spirituality.**

- **Well-considered knowledge and understanding of diverse religious beliefs and experiences.**
- **Clear recognition of different religious perspectives on an event or practice.**
- **Clear and well-informed understanding of the social significance of religion and spirituality.**

- **Generally considered knowledge and understanding of diverse religious beliefs and experiences.**
- **Recognition of at least two different religious perspectives on an event or practice.**
- **Informed understanding of the social significance of religion and spirituality.**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Knowledge and Understanding</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>D</strong></td>
<td>Basic awareness of some religious beliefs or experiences. Emerging recognition of one or more religious perspectives on an event or practice. Basic awareness of the social significance of religion and spirituality.</td>
<td>Application of basic investigation skills, and an appropriate method (e.g. interviewing and observation). Description based on some exploration of one or more connections between religion and personal and ethical decision-making. Description tends towards identifying the connections.</td>
<td>Partial communication of some awareness of religion and spirituality. Some basic expression for a specific audience and purpose.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>E</strong></td>
<td>Emerging awareness of one or more religious beliefs or experiences. Limited awareness of one or more religious perspectives on an event or practice. Emerging awareness of the social significance of religion and spirituality.</td>
<td>Identification of one or more sources of information, and attempted application of an appropriate investigation method. Attempted identification of one or more connections between religion and personal and ethical decision-making.</td>
<td>Attempted communication of emerging awareness of religion or spirituality. Attempted expression for a specific audience or purpose.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ASSESSMENT INTEGRITY

The SACE Assuring Assessment Integrity Policy outlines the principles and processes that teachers and assessors follow to assure the integrity of student assessments. This policy is available on the SACE website (www.sace.sa.edu.au) as part of the SACE Policy Framework.

The SACE Board uses a range of quality assurance processes so that the grades awarded for student achievement in the school assessment are applied consistently and fairly against the performance standards for a subject, and are comparable across all schools.

Information and guidelines on quality assurance in assessment at Stage 1 are available on the SACE website (www.sace.sa.edu.au).
SUPPORT MATERIALS

SUBJECT-SPECIFIC ADVICE
Online support materials are provided for each subject and updated regularly on the SACE website (www.sace.sa.edu.au). Examples of support materials are sample learning and assessment plans, annotated assessment tasks, annotated student responses, and recommended resource materials.

ADVICE ON ETHICAL STUDY AND RESEARCH
Advice for students and teachers on ethical study and research practices is available in the guidelines on the ethical conduct of research in the SACE on the SACE website (www.sace.sa.edu.au).
Stage 2 Religion Studies
LEARNING SCOPE AND REQUIREMENTS

LEARNING REQUIREMENTS

The learning requirements summarise the knowledge, skills, and understanding that students are expected to develop and demonstrate through their learning in Stage 2 Religion Studies.

In this subject, students are expected to:

1. demonstrate knowledge and understanding of diverse religious beliefs, perspectives, and experiences within and across traditions
2. critically evaluate definitions of religion and spirituality
3. investigate and analyse how religion and spirituality in Australia have an impact on, and are influenced by, sociocultural, historical, and/or political events and attitudes
4. explore and reflect on the personal and social significance of religions and spirituality in traditional and contemporary societies
5. investigate and report on a range of religious and spiritual phenomena
6. analyse religious and spiritual ideas, concepts, and issues presented in selected sources
7. investigate, apply, and communicate knowledge and understanding of religions and spiritualities in local and global contexts.

CONTENT

Religion Studies is a 10-credit subject or a 20-credit subject at Stage 2.

For a 10-credit subject, students study the core topic and one option topic.

For a 20-credit subject, students study the core topic and two option topics.

Core Topic
- Overview of Religion

Option Topics: Religious Traditions
- Option Topic A: Buddhism
- Option Topic B: Christianity
- Option Topic C: Hinduism
- Option Topic D: Indigenous Australian Spirituality
- Option Topic E: Islam
- Option Topic F: Judaism
Core Topic: Overview of Religion

The core topic provides students with an overview of religion and the study of religions and spiritualities, and gives a general introduction to the study of individual religious traditions. The core topic consists of three key areas of study. Students should cover all three key areas before they begin their study of the option topic(s).

Key Areas of Study

1. What is religion? What is spirituality?
2. What are the key phenomena that make up religion?
3. How are secular culture and religious culture linked?

1. What is religion? What is spirituality?

There are many definitions of religion and spirituality. Students explore a range of definitions drawn from different sources. Each definition is evaluated in terms of how it enables an understanding of religion. The meaning and significance of ‘the sacred’ and ‘the profane’ are examined, and students evaluate the usefulness and limitations of these two terms in defining and describing what constitutes religion.

Most definitions contain some of the following elements:

- an essential characteristic such as the sacred or the holy (often by referring to a god, gods, or the supernatural, or a similar phenomenon)
- a reference to participating in certain practices (e.g. ceremonial events connected with worship), and having a specific ethical stance on human behaviour
- a reference to believing specific and coherent religious truths.

The following are suggested questions to guide students in this key area of study:

- From your experience of religious traditions, how well do the various definitions describe what religion is essentially about?
- To what extent are these definitions helpful for distinguishing a religion from what is not a religion in society?
- Which is the most helpful definition and why?
- How does the distinction between ‘the sacred’ and ‘the profane’ help in understanding religion and spirituality?

2. What are the key phenomena that make up religion?

There are general characteristics of religion called the phenomena of religion. For example, adherents of a religion have a religious experience that is specific to that religious tradition. They respond to this religious experience by performing repeated sacred actions or rituals. They also respond by understanding and handing on sacred stories, some of which may be in the written form of sacred texts. They further respond by thinking in certain ways, giving rise to sacred beliefs, and acting in certain ways according to sacred ethics.

The religious tradition also involves the adherents in a social structure in which they recognise that certain places, times, and persons are more sacred than others. Finally, they acknowledge certain sacred symbols as representing the meaning of their religious faith and adherence.
The following are suggested questions to guide students in this key area of study:
- Do all religions share the same phenomena?
- In what ways are the various religious phenomena, within one tradition, linked? Are there any commonalities across traditions?
- Are there some religious phenomena that are more important than other phenomena? Why?
- In what ways do religious phenomena link ‘the sacred’ and ‘the profane’?

3. **How are secular culture and religious culture linked?**

Culture (both secular and religious culture) consists of the systematic way in which people think, act, and make value judgments. Differences in beliefs, values, and attitudes can be linked to culture. These differences can also be linked to religion and/or spirituality.

The following are suggested questions to guide students in this key area of study:
- What is the relationship between religion and/or spirituality and culture?
- What are some examples of cultural beliefs and practices that are commonly accepted as religious beliefs and practices?
- In which societies are religious, spiritual, and cultural beliefs and practices closely linked?
- Which widely accepted Australian secular cultural or social practices or attitudes have a basis in religious culture?
Option Topics: Religious Traditions

There are six option topics as follows; each one is based on a religious tradition:

- Option Topic A: Buddhism
- Option Topic B: Christianity
- Option Topic C: Hinduism
- Option Topic D: Indigenous Australian Spirituality
- Option Topic E: Islam
- Option Topic F: Judaism.

For a 10-credit subject, students study one option topic.

For a 20-credit subject, students study two option topics.

Protocols

All Traditions

Teachers are advised that particular protocols must be followed when selecting, organising, and discussing the content in relation to any of the religious traditions listed above. Teachers are advised that in certain content areas the public is able to discuss some sacred issues, whereas others are secret and/or gender-exclusive.

Indigenous Australian Spirituality

Teachers are advised to consult local Indigenous community members or specialist advisory bodies on Indigenous affairs on any content areas. It is recommended that students have access to local Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people as instructors on content areas that require specialised teaching.

Key Areas of Study

Each option topic covers a religious tradition that is explored using the following six key areas of study. Teachers are advised to give students an overview of the selected tradition(s) before choosing one or more of the key areas of study for a more specialised focus on the option topic(s).

1. Historical Background

In this key area of study students explore the historical and cultural context in which a religious tradition began, and develop an understanding of the foundation and development of the tradition through to contemporary times. In each option topic students explore how the religious tradition and its communities have changed and grown in a variety of historical and cultural contexts. For a 20-credit subject, students may also compare changes and growth across two traditions.

2. Religious World View

In this key area of study students understand the ways in which a particular religious world view functions as a guide to, or an interpreter of, personal and social behaviour. They develop an understanding of the ways in which the general religious world view provides coherence for all aspects of the religious tradition (e.g. community, sacred text, person, creed, custom, experience).
3. Sacred Texts and Sacred Stories

In this key area of study students explore stories, such as myths, legends, and parables about the world, and human beings ‘in the beginning’. Students understand the ways in which sacred stories carry an important message for the followers of a religious tradition. Sacred texts are usually in the form of writing, but may also be transmitted orally.

4. Religious Beliefs

In this key area of study students explore the ways in which a religious tradition has a variety of beliefs about the relationship between the supernatural and the human, the search for meaning, and the ultimate goal of human life. Students understand and respect how religious beliefs vary within traditions. For a 20-credit subject, students may also compare how religious beliefs vary across traditions.

5. Religious Practice and Religious Ethics

In this key area of study students explore religious practice as sacred actions or rituals. Students understand how sacred actions or rituals recreate the founding experience for believers. Religious traditions have specific rituals for significant moments of life (such as birth, puberty, marriage, death) that bring believers into contact with ultimate order.

Students also explore religious codes of conduct, the particular understanding of religions and spiritualities, and the ways in which human beings should respond to, and behave within, society. Students identify the key practices, and social and moral beliefs of the religious tradition they are studying, especially emerging and contemporary ‘lived’ practices. Students are able to explain how rituals, practices, and social and moral beliefs are embedded in a larger belief system.

6. Contemporary Traditions Globally and in Australia

In this key area of study students explore how a religious tradition emerges from a variety of particular cultural, political, economic, social, and historical environments. They understand how the beliefs, structures, and practices of a religious tradition are challenged by contemporary Australian and global societies. For a 20-credit subject, students may also compare challenges across traditions.
ASSESSMENT SCOPE AND REQUIREMENTS

All Stage 2 subjects have a school assessment component and an external assessment component.

EVIDENCE OF LEARNING

The following assessment types enable students to demonstrate their learning in Stage 2 Religion Studies:

School Assessment (70%)
- Assessment Type 1: Sources Analysis (30%)
- Assessment Type 2: Folio (40%)

External Assessment (30%)
- Assessment Type 3: Investigation (30%).

For a 10-credit subject, students provide evidence of their learning through four or five assessments, including the external assessment component. Students undertake:
- at least one sources analysis assessment
- at least two folio assessments
- one investigation.

For a 20-credit subject, students provide evidence of their learning through seven to nine assessments, including the external assessment component. Students undertake:
- at least one sources analysis assessment on the core topic, and one on an option topic
- at least three folio assessments
- one investigation.

ASSESSMENT DESIGN CRITERIA

The assessment design criteria are based on the learning requirements and are used by:
- teachers to clarify for the student what he or she needs to learn
- teachers and assessors to design opportunities for the student to provide evidence of his or her learning at the highest possible level of achievement.

The assessment design criteria consist of specific features that:
- students should demonstrate in their learning
- teachers and assessors look for as evidence that students have met the learning requirements.
For this subject the assessment design criteria are:
- knowledge and understanding
- investigation and application
- analysis and evaluation
- reflection.

The specific features of these criteria are described below.
The set of assessments, as a whole, must give students opportunities to demonstrate each of the specific features by the completion of study of the subject.

**Knowledge and Understanding**
The specific features are as follows:

KU1  Explanation of different religious beliefs, perspectives, and experiences within and across traditions.
KU2  Knowledge and understanding of religious and spiritual ideas, concepts, and issues in selected sources.

**Investigation and Application**
The specific features are as follows:

IA1  Development and application of appropriate methods of investigation, including use of inquiry skills.
IA2  Application of knowledge and understanding of religions and spiritualities in local and global contexts.
IA3  Investigation and explanation of a range of religious and spiritual phenomena.
IA4  Clarity of communication, including presentation of conclusions.

**Analysis and Evaluation**
The specific features are as follows:

AE1  Analysis of religious and spiritual ideas, concepts, and issues in selected sources.
AE2  Analysis of how religion and spirituality in Australia have an impact on, and are influenced by, sociocultural, historical, and/or political events and attitudes.
AE3  Critical evaluation of definitions of religion and spirituality.

**Reflection**
The specific features are as follows:

R1  Reflection on the personal significance of religions and spiritualities in traditional and contemporary societies.
R2  Consideration and explanation of the social significance of religions and spiritualities in traditional and contemporary societies.
R3  Exploration of the relevance of religions and spiritualities in contemporary Australia.
SCHOOL ASSESSMENT

Assessment Type 1: Sources Analysis (30%)

For a 10-credit subject, students undertake one sources analysis assessment that relates to one or more of the key areas of study from the core topic.

For a 20-credit subject, students undertake at least one sources analysis assessment that relates to one or more of the key areas of study from the core topic, and at least one sources analysis assessment on an option topic.

Students apply their knowledge and understanding of religion and/or spirituality to sources, stimuli, and structured questions that illustrate an aspect of religion, spirituality, or a religious issue in a local and/or global context.

By analysing various sources, students apply their understanding of the concepts, theories, and definitions of religion and spiritualities; the nature of ‘the sacred’ and ‘the profane’; case studies of religion in society; religious issues; or contemporary trends that have been studied.

The sources or stimuli could have many different forms, including media items (e.g. a news report, a television excerpt, a radio interview, or a newspaper article), quotations, songs, cartoons, websites, written materials, speeches, graphical information (e.g. maps, photographs, or diagrams), and statistical data about religions or aspects of religion in society.

Students analyse the sources in response to questions set by the teacher. Student responses may be in a variety of forms such as a debate, writing, a discussion, a lecture, a forum, or a visual or multimodal presentation.

A sources analysis assessment should be a maximum of 1000 words if written or a maximum of 6 minutes if oral, or the equivalent in multimodal form.

For this assessment type, students provide evidence of their learning primarily in relation to the following assessment design criteria:

- knowledge and understanding
- analysis and evaluation.

Assessment Type 2: Folio (40%)

For a 10-credit subject, students undertake at least two folio assessments, one on the core topic and one on an option topic. A folio assessment should be a maximum of 1000 words if written, or a maximum of 6 minutes for an oral presentation, or the equivalent in multimodal form.

For a 20-credit subject, students undertake at least three folio assessments, at least one on the core topic and at least one on an option topic. A folio assessment should be a maximum of 1000 words if written or a maximum of 6 minutes for an oral presentation, or the equivalent in multimodal form.

A folio assessment may be in the form of, for example:

- a discursive essay in response to a set question
- an article for a religious publication
- a dramatic monologue
• a description and analysis of a particular religious or spiritual phenomenon or experience
• a speech concerning a religious perspective on a particular issue or topic
• a report analysing and explaining some of the ways in which religion and/or spirituality in Australia impact on, and are influenced by, sociocultural, historical, and/or political events and attitudes
• a digital text dealing with a religious or spiritual phenomenon or experience
• an analysis of a practical activity such as a visit to a site of religious significance, the conducting of surveys or questionnaires, participation in religious rituals, observation of participants, or interviews about religious beliefs, perspectives, or experiences.

For this assessment type, students provide evidence of their learning in relation to the following assessment design criteria:
• knowledge and understanding
• investigation and application
• analysis and evaluation
• reflection.

EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT

Assessment Type 3: Investigation (30%)

Students undertake one investigation for both a 10-credit subject and a 20-credit subject. Students choose a religious or spiritual phenomenon or a religious issue linked to Australian or global society for investigation. Students should undertake preliminary background research into the phenomenon or issue before seeking more contemporary and contextual information through the use of, for example, interviews, questionnaires, and current media sources.

Students collect, plan, and organise their materials to produce a comprehensive and integrated written report on their investigation. The report should be a maximum of 1000 words for a 10-credit subject, and a maximum of 2000 words for a 20-credit subject.

Teachers should allow students to begin preparing for the investigation at the start of the teaching and learning program. Students should submit the report for assessment at the end of the program. This enables students to develop their investigative skills, and to have a more detailed understanding of the phenomenon or issue chosen for study.

Students are expected to maintain a folio that verifies that the work is their own. It should contain documents that outline the processes of preliminary data collection, sources, and background materials. The folio is not submitted as part of the external assessment process.

The following specific features of the assessment design criteria for this subject are assessed in the investigation:
• knowledge and understanding — KU1 and KU2
• investigation and application — IA1, IA3, and IA4
• analysis and evaluation — AE1 and AE2
• reflection — R2 and R3.
PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

The performance standards describe five levels of achievement, A to E.

Each level of achievement describes the knowledge, skills, and understanding that teachers and assessors refer to in deciding how well a student has demonstrated his or her learning on the basis of the evidence provided.

During the teaching and learning program the teacher gives students feedback on their learning, with reference to the performance standards.

At the student’s completion of study of each school assessment type, the teacher makes a decision about the quality of the student’s learning by:

• referring to the performance standards
• assigning a grade between A+ and E− for the assessment type.

The student’s school assessment and external assessment are combined for a final result, which is reported as a grade between A+ and E−.
# Performance Standards for Stage 2 Religion Studies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Knowledge and Understanding</th>
<th>Investigation and Application</th>
<th>Analysis and Evaluation</th>
<th>Reflection</th>
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<tbody>
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<td><strong>A</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Insightful explanation of different religious beliefs, perspectives, and experiences within and across traditions.</td>
<td>Sustained and logical development and application of appropriate investigation methods, including highly productive use of inquiry skills.</td>
<td>Perceptive and critical analysis of religious and spiritual ideas, concepts, and issues in selected sources.</td>
<td>Insightful and critical reflection on the personal significance of religions and spiritualities in traditional and contemporary societies.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clear and in-depth knowledge and perceptive understanding of religious and spiritual ideas, concepts, and issues in selected sources.</td>
<td>Insightful and appropriate application of knowledge and understanding of religions and spiritualities in local and global contexts.</td>
<td>In-depth and well-informed analysis of the various ways in which religion and spirituality in Australia have an impact on, and are influenced by, sociocultural, historical, and/or political events and attitudes.</td>
<td>Well-informed and perceptive consideration and explanation of the social significance of religions and spiritualities in traditional and contemporary societies.</td>
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<td>In-depth investigation and detailed explanation of a range of religious and spiritual phenomena.</td>
<td>Insightful and critical evaluation of definitions of religion and spirituality.</td>
<td>Well-informed and perceptive exploration of the relevance of religions and spiritualities in contemporary Australia.</td>
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<td>Well-informed, clear, and well-structured communication, and well-reasoned presentation of conclusions.</td>
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<td><strong>B</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Well-considered explanation of different religious beliefs, perspectives, and experiences within and across traditions.</td>
<td>Clear development and application of appropriate investigation methods, including productive use of inquiry skills.</td>
<td>Clear and critical analysis of religious and spiritual ideas, concepts, and issues in selected sources.</td>
<td>Thoughtful and critical reflection on the personal significance of religions and spiritualities in traditional and contemporary societies.</td>
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<td>Mostly clear and detailed knowledge and well-informed understanding of religious and spiritual ideas, concepts, and issues in selected sources.</td>
<td>Well-considered and appropriate application of knowledge and understanding of religions and spiritualities in local and global contexts.</td>
<td>Detailed and well-informed analysis of the various ways in which religion and spirituality in Australia have an impact on, and are influenced by, sociocultural, historical, and/or political events and attitudes.</td>
<td>Well-informed consideration and explanation of the social significance of religions and spiritualities in traditional and contemporary societies.</td>
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<td>Some depth of investigation and accurate explanation of a range of religious and spiritual phenomena.</td>
<td>Considered and critical evaluation of definitions of religion and spirituality.</td>
<td>Well-informed exploration of the relevance of religions and spiritualities in contemporary Australia.</td>
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<td>Mostly well-informed, clear and structured communication, and reasoned presentation of conclusions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>C  Some considered explanation of different religious beliefs, perspectives, and experiences within and across traditions. Generally relevant knowledge and informed understanding of religious and spiritual ideas, concepts, and issues in selected sources.</td>
<td>Competent development and application of appropriate investigation methods, including generally productive use of inquiry skills. Appropriate application of knowledge and understanding of religions and spiritualities in local and global contexts. Competent investigation and explanation of a range of religious and spiritual phenomena. Explanation may include some inaccuracies. Generally informed, clear, and structured communication, with some reasoned conclusions.</td>
<td>Generally clear analysis of religious and spiritual ideas, concepts, and issues in selected sources. Informed analysis of some of the ways in which religion and spirituality in Australia have an impact on, and are influenced by, sociocultural, historical, and/or political events and attitudes. Some critical evaluation of definitions of religion and spirituality, tending towards description.</td>
<td>Considered reflection on the personal significance of religions and spiritualities in traditional and contemporary societies. Generally informed consideration and explanation of the social significance of religions and spiritualities in traditional and contemporary societies. Informed exploration of the relevance of religions or spiritualities in contemporary Australia.</td>
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<tr>
<td>D  Description of aspects of more than one religious belief, perspective, or experience within or across traditions. Identification and some consideration of one or more religious and/or spiritual ideas, concepts, or issues in a selected source or sources.</td>
<td>Application of aspects of an investigation method, including inconsistent use of some inquiry skills. Application of some basic knowledge of religions or spiritualities in local and global contexts. Partial investigation and explanation of aspects of religious and spiritual phenomena, with limited detail and some inaccuracies. Disjointed and partly informed communication, with inclusion of some summary comments.</td>
<td>Description and some attempted analysis or consideration of aspects of religious or spiritual ideas, concepts, and issues, with partial reference to sources. Description and some attempted analysis or consideration of one or more ways in which religion and spirituality in Australia have an impact on, and are influenced by, events or attitudes. Some recognition and description of definitions of religion or spirituality.</td>
<td>Some reflection on the personal significance of religions or spiritualities in traditional and contemporary societies. Some basic consideration and description of the social significance of a religion or spirituality in a traditional and contemporary society. Partial exploration of the relevance of religions or spiritualities in contemporary Australia.</td>
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<td>E Identification of one or more beliefs, perspectives, or experiences, in a religious tradition. Limited consideration of any religious or spiritual ideas, concepts, or issues in a selected source.</td>
<td>Attempted application of aspects of an investigation method, including identification of one or more sources of information. Attempted application of some emerging awareness of religions or spiritualities. Communication of some awareness of a religious phenomenon. Attempted communication of limited information.</td>
<td>Attempted description of a religious or spiritual idea, concept, or issue, with limited reference to any sources of information. Description of limited aspects of religion or spirituality in Australia. Listing of some definitions of religion or spirituality.</td>
<td>Recognition of the personal significance of an aspect of religion or spirituality in traditional or contemporary societies. Limited consideration of the social significance of religions or spiritualities in traditional or contemporary societies. Attempted exploration of an aspect of the relevance of religion or spirituality in contemporary Australia.</td>
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ASSESSMENT INTEGRITY

The SACE Assuring Assessment Integrity Policy outlines the principles and processes that teachers and assessors follow to assure the integrity of student assessments. This policy is available on the SACE website (www.sace.sa.edu.au) as part of the SACE Policy Framework.

The SACE Board uses a range of quality assurance processes so that the grades awarded for student achievement, in both the school assessment and the external assessment, are applied consistently and fairly against the performance standards for a subject, and are comparable across all schools.

Information and guidelines on quality assurance in assessment at Stage 2 are available on the SACE website (www.sace.sa.edu.au).
SUPPORT MATERIALS

SUBJECT-SPECIFIC ADVICE
Online support materials are provided for each subject and updated regularly on the SACE website (www.sace.sa.edu.au). Examples of support materials are sample learning and assessment plans, annotated assessment tasks, annotated student responses, and recommended resource materials.

ADVICE ON ETHICAL STUDY AND RESEARCH
Advice for students and teachers on ethical study and research practices is available in the guidelines on the ethical conduct of research in the SACE on the SACE website (www.sace.sa.edu.au).