

Study of Religion 2025 v1.0

General senior syllabus

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Queensland syllabuses for senior subjects

In Queensland, a syllabus for a senior subject is an official 'map' of a senior school subject. A syllabus's function is to support schools in delivering the Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE) system through high-quality and high-equity curriculum and assessment.

Syllabuses are based on design principles developed from independent international research about how excellence and equity are promoted in the documents teachers use to develop and enliven the curriculum.

Syllabuses for senior subjects build on student learning in the Prep to Year 10 Australian Curriculum and include General, General (Extension), Senior External Examination (SEE), Applied, Applied (Essential) and Short Course syllabuses.

More information about syllabuses for senior subjects is available at www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/senior/senior-subjects and in the 'Queensland curriculum' section of the *QCE and QCIA policy and procedures handbook*.

Teaching, learning and assessment resources will support the implementation of a syllabus for a senior subject. More information about professional resources for senior syllabuses is available on the QCAA website and via the QCAA Portal.

Course overview

Rationale

Study of Religion is the investigation and study of religious traditions and how religion has influenced, and continues to influence, people's lives. As religions are living traditions, a variety of religious expressions exists within each tradition. Religious beliefs and practices also influence the social, cultural and political lives of people and nations. Students become aware of their own religious beliefs, the religious beliefs of others, and how people holding such beliefs are able to co-exist in modern society.

In this subject, students study the five major world religions of Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism; and Australian Aboriginal spiritualities and Torres Strait Islander religion. Each tradition is explored through the lens of the nature and purpose of religion, sacred texts that offer insights into life, and the rituals that mark significant moments and events in the religion itself and in the lives of adherents. Nature and purpose of religion, sacred texts, and rituals provide the foundations for understanding religious ethics and the ways religion functions in society and culture.

Throughout the course of study, students engage with an inquiry approach to learning about religions, their central beliefs and practices, and their influence on individuals, groups and society. As a result, a logical and critical approach to understanding the influence of religion should be developed, with judgments supported through valid and reasoned argument. This contributes to the development of a range of transferable thinking and processing skills that will help students to live and work successfully in the 21st century.

Study of Religion allows students to develop critical thinking skills, including those of analysis, reasoning and evaluation, as well as communication skills that support further study and post-school participation in a wide range of fields. The subject contributes to students becoming informed citizens, as religion continues to function as a powerful dimension of human experience. Through recognising the factors that contribute to different religious expressions, students develop empathy and respect for the ways people think, feel and act religiously, as well as a critical awareness of the religious diversity that exists locally and globally.

Syllabus objectives

The syllabus objectives outline what students have the opportunity to learn.

1. Explain features and expressions of religious traditions.

Students identify the distinguishing features of religions and religious traditions. They describe characteristics of religious traditions and explain the ways religion is expressed in the lives of adherents.

2. Analyse perspectives about religious expression.

Students examine perspectives about religious expressions that form and inform responses to issues or situations, using a selection of information from sacred texts and other authoritative sources. They identify distinct beliefs and practices within and, where appropriate, across traditions, explaining characteristics, similarities and differences evident in religious expressions.

3. Evaluate the significance and influence of religion.

Students use information from their analysis to make judgments about the significance of religion and its influence on individuals, groups and society. They synthesise valid perspectives and ideas about the role of religion in situations or within issues, drawing conclusions and justifying their judgments with reasoning and evidence.

4. Communicate to suit purpose.

Students create responses that demonstrate choices of language and development of ideas to convey meaning suitable for purpose. They apply language conventions and present their responses using the required genre. Students use a recognised system of referencing to demonstrate scholarship.

Designing a course of study in Study of Religion

Syllabuses are designed for teachers to make professional decisions to tailor curriculum and assessment design and delivery to suit their school context and the goals, aspirations and abilities of their students within the parameters of Queensland's senior phase of learning.

The syllabus is used by teachers to develop curriculum for their school context. The term *course of study* describes the unique curriculum and assessment that students engage with in each school context. A course of study is the product of a series of decisions made by a school to select, organise and contextualise subject matter, integrate complementary and important learning, and create assessment tasks in accordance with syllabus specifications.

It is encouraged that, where possible, a course of study is designed such that teaching, learning and assessment activities are integrated and enlivened in an authentic setting.

Course structure

Study of Religion is a General senior syllabus. It contains four QCAA-developed units from which schools develop their course of study.

Each unit has been developed with a notional time of 55 hours of teaching and learning, including assessment.

Students should complete Unit 1 and Unit 2 before beginning Units 3 and 4. Units 3 and 4 are studied as a pair.

More information about the requirements for administering senior syllabuses is available in the 'Queensland curriculum' section of the [QCE and QCIA policy and procedures handbook](#).

Curriculum

Senior syllabuses set out only what is essential while being flexible so teachers can make curriculum decisions to suit their students, school context, resources and expertise.

Within the requirements set out in this syllabus and the [QCE and QCIA policy and procedures handbook](#), schools have autonomy to decide:

- how and when subject matter is delivered
- how, when and why learning experiences are developed, and the context in which learning occurs
- how opportunities are provided in the course of study for explicit and integrated teaching and learning of complementary skills.

These decisions allow teachers to develop a course of study that is rich, engaging and relevant for their students.

Assessment

Senior syllabuses set out only what is essential while being flexible so teachers can make assessment decisions to suit their students, school context, resources and expertise.

General senior syllabuses contain assessment specifications and conditions for the assessment instruments that must be implemented with Units 3 and 4. These specifications and conditions ensure comparability, equity and validity in assessment.

Within the requirements set out in this syllabus and the [QCE and QCIA policy and procedures handbook](#), schools have autonomy to decide:

- specific assessment task details
- assessment contexts to suit available resources
- how the assessment task will be integrated with teaching and learning activities
- how authentic the task will be.

In Unit 1 and Unit 2, schools:

- develop at least two but no more than four assessments
- complete at least one assessment for each unit
- ensure that each unit objective is assessed at least once.

In Units 3 and 4, schools develop three assessments using the assessment specifications and conditions provided in the syllabus.

More information about assessment in senior syllabuses is available in 'The assessment system' section of the [QCE and QCIA policy and procedures handbook](#).

Subject matter

Each unit contains a unit description, unit objectives and subject matter. Subject matter is the body of information, mental procedures and psychomotor procedures (see Marzano & Kendall 2007, 2008) that are necessary for students' learning and engagement with the subject. Subject matter itself is not the specification of learning experiences but provides the basis for the design of student learning experiences.

Subject matter has a direct relationship with the unit objectives and provides statements of learning that have been constructed in a similar way to objectives.

Aboriginal perspectives and Torres Strait Islander perspectives

The QCAA is committed to reconciliation. As part of its commitment, the QCAA affirms that:

- Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples are the first Australians, and have the oldest living cultures in human history
- Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples have strong cultural traditions and speak diverse languages and dialects, other than Standard Australian English
- teaching and learning in Queensland schools should provide opportunities for students to deepen their knowledge of Australia by engaging with the perspectives of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- positive outcomes for Aboriginal students and Torres Strait Islander students are supported by successfully embedding Aboriginal perspectives and Torres Strait Islander perspectives across planning, teaching and assessing student achievement.

Guidelines about Aboriginal perspectives and Torres Strait Islander perspectives and resources for teaching are available at www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/k-12-policies/aboriginal-torres-strait-islander-perspectives.

Where appropriate, Aboriginal perspectives and Torres Strait Islander perspectives have been embedded in the subject matter.

Complementary skills

Opportunities for the development of complementary skills have been embedded throughout subject matter. These skills, which overlap and interact with syllabus subject matter, are derived from current education, industry and community expectations and encompass the knowledge, skills, capabilities, behaviours and dispositions that will help students live and work successfully in the 21st century.

These complementary skills are:

- literacy — the knowledge, skills, behaviours and dispositions about language and texts essential for understanding and conveying English language content
- numeracy — the knowledge, skills, behaviours and dispositions that students need to use mathematics in a wide range of situations, to recognise and understand the role of mathematics in the world, and to develop the dispositions and capacities to use mathematical knowledge and skills purposefully
- 21st century skills — the attributes and skills students need to prepare them for higher education, work, and engagement in a complex and rapidly changing world. These skills include critical thinking, creative thinking, communication, collaboration and teamwork, personal and social skills, and digital literacy. The explanations of associated skills are available at www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/senior/senior-subjects/general-subjects/21st-century-skills.

It is expected that aspects of literacy, numeracy and 21st century skills will be developed by engaging in the learning outlined in this syllabus. Teachers may choose to create additional explicit and intentional opportunities for the development of these skills as they design the course of study.

Additional subject-specific information

Additional subject-specific information has been included to support and inform the development of a course of study.

Engaging with the syllabus

When engaging with the Study of Religion syllabus, it is important to engage with the syllabus objectives to understand what students need to learn throughout the course of study. Objective 1 refers to features and expressions of religious traditions, whereby students explain the key features of the religious traditions. This involves key beliefs, rituals and ethical positions; however, the information can be contextualised to the focus of the unit and the religious tradition/s being covered. Objective 2 involves analysis and includes examining perspectives and considering similarities and differences, enabling the opportunity for students to examine the relationships within and, where appropriate, across traditions. The introduction of synthesis in Objective 3 provides the explicit opportunity for students to combine the relevant information from their analysis to assist in reaching valid conclusions. Synthesising requires students to combine their ideas with the information they have to make valid judgments. Objective 4 requires the creation of an appropriate response, using language conventions for the required genre. An analytical essay is the required genre for the Examination response in IA1 and the Investigation — inquiry tasks for IA2 and IA3. Demonstrating scholarship requires students to use an accepted method of referencing as prescribed by the school.

Each unit of work provides specific information that needs to be covered. When the syllabus uses the reference *including*, the list provided must be covered; however, it is not an exhaustive list, so schools can add content. The use of *e.g.* provides suggestions only; therefore, schools can choose to cover these or use their own examples to cover the required content.

Using the inquiry process

Study of Religion uses the inquiry process. When undertaking investigations, the inquiry process that is typical in the Social Sciences requires students to: identify the main question and devise focus questions to guide research; develop a hypothesis; collect, gather, and organise information and data from appropriate sources; analyse and interpret the information; evaluate and make judgments and draw conclusions in relation to the hypothesis and communicate ideas in a clearly structured response.

This approach can be adapted for the needs of the school context and supported by the teaching and learning approach in the classroom. Teachers can incorporate learning activities, homework, booklets, etc. as they see fit; however, they are not to be included in the assessment instrument as they are beyond the scope of the task.

Sacred texts and authoritative sources

Sources that are appropriate for Study of Religion draw on sacred texts from within the religious traditions. They are sacred because they are deemed so by their communities. It is important that students be mindful of this when dealing with and interpreting these texts. They should remain aware of various translations and methods of interpretation that are available, while being respectful when engaging with and handling the texts. Sacred texts from various traditions are often accompanied by commentaries by recognised and respected authors who have authority and agency within the tradition. Religious writings and other sources, including non-written texts can also be deemed authoritative and are useful in gathering information about religions, their beliefs and practices. However, the credibility of sources does need to be scrutinised, while understanding that authority is usually deemed from within the practising religious community or through academic agency. Objective 2 identifies that students need to use a selection of information from sacred texts and other authoritative sources. While students are not required to submit justifications for their choices, the quality of their choices is implied in their selection and use of information in their analyses.

Creating responses

Study of Religion requires students to create analytical essay responses and short responses of varying lengths. When writing an analytical essay under examination conditions, students should follow the general structure of an essay that includes an introduction with a clearly stated hypothesis and body paragraphs that demonstrate explanations, analysis and evaluations. Sub-headings are not required as the assessment objectives should appear throughout the body paragraphs. The conclusion generally provides a reconnection to the hypothesis and a concluding statement. Where the essay is a response to stimulus as in IA1, there should be clear references to, or identification of the stimulus referred to. While such reference to stimulus is important to demonstrate analysis, the task does not require source analysis.

The analytical essay for the inquiry process follows a similar structure to the one created under examination conditions; however, these essays require the inclusion of evidence in the form of quotes and paraphrasing from sources. Such references must be clearly acknowledged, using a recognised reference system. Schools have the autonomy to use the referencing system that best suits their context..

Reporting

General information about determining and reporting results for senior syllabuses is provided in the 'Determining and reporting results' section of the [QCE and QCIA policy and procedures handbook](#).

Reporting standards

Reporting standards are summary statements that describe typical performance at each of the five levels (A–E).

A
<p>The student thoroughly and accurately identifies distinguishing religious features. Descriptions of characteristics and how they are expressed in the lives of adherents are correctly identified and comprehensively explained.</p> <p>The student examines perspectives about religious expressions by selecting and using a diverse range of information from authoritative sources. Identification of distinct beliefs and practices within and, where appropriate, across traditions is thorough and accurate. The analysis of perspectives is thorough and accurate and is convincingly supported through well-reasoned arguments that are informed by an in-depth understanding of a range of views. The explanation of perspectives and ideas, including similarities and differences, is thoroughly synthesised to present discerning arguments, drawing valid conclusions with thorough and justified judgments.</p> <p>The student creates a clear and cohesive response in relation to a hypothesis to evaluate and draw conclusions about the significance of religion for adherents and the ways religion influences individuals, groups and society. The communication of ideas or arguments related to religion and religious traditions is succinct, fluent and logical, and adheres to genre, language and recognised referencing conventions.</p>
B
<p>The student accurately identifies distinguishing religious features. Descriptions of characteristics and how they are expressed in the lives of adherents are correctly identified and explained.</p> <p>The student examines perspectives about religious expressions by selecting and using valid information from authoritative sources. Identification of distinct beliefs and practices within and, where appropriate, across traditions is accurate. The analysis of perspectives is accurate and is supported through reasoned arguments that are informed by a considered understanding of a range of views. The explanation of perspectives and ideas, including similarities and differences, is synthesised to present reasoned arguments, drawing valid conclusions with considered and justified judgments.</p> <p>The student creates a clear and logical response in relation to a hypothesis to evaluate and draw conclusions about the significance of religion for adherents and the ways religion influences individuals, groups and society. The communication of ideas or arguments related to religion and religious traditions is clear and logical, with few errors in genre and language. The student uses recognised referencing conventions to demonstrate scholarship.</p>
C
<p>The student identifies some distinguishing religious features. Descriptions of characteristics and how they are expressed in the lives of adherents have some inaccuracies, errors or omissions.</p> <p>The student examines perspectives about religious expressions by selecting and using some valid information from authoritative sources. Identification of distinct beliefs and practices within and, where appropriate, across traditions is accurate. The analysis of perspectives is generally supported through arguments informed by some understanding of a range of views. The explanation of perspectives and ideas, including similarities and differences, is identified to present arguments, drawing conclusions with some relevant judgments.</p> <p>The student creates a response in relation to a hypothesis to evaluate and draw conclusions about the significance of religion for adherents and the ways religion influences individuals, groups and society. The communication of ideas or arguments related to religion and religious traditions is characterised by some errors in genre, language and recognised referencing conventions.</p>

D

The student identifies religious features but has significant omissions or inaccuracies in their statements. Statements about characteristics and beliefs are based on a simplistic understanding of religious traditions.

The student makes some statements about perspectives by using sources. The explanation of ideas, including some similarities and differences, is based on a simplistic understanding of religious traditions, making some statements that include basic judgments.

The student creates a response in relation to a hypothesis to comment about religion. The communication of ideas or arguments related to religion and religious traditions has significant errors in genre, language and/or recognised referencing conventions.

E

The student identifies religious features but their statements lack detail and/or relevance. Significant omissions and inaccuracies are evident. The student makes statements on beliefs and perspectives that are often based on an erroneous understanding of religious traditions.

The student provides basic or incomplete statements about perspectives, occasionally using sources.

The identification of ideas, including simplistic similarities and differences, is based on a limited understanding of religious traditions, making general statements or basic judgments.

The student provides information from sources in relation to a hypothesis or position. Statements made on the significance of religion for adherents and the ways religion influences individuals, groups and society are often lacking in detail, erroneous and/or irrelevant. The communication of ideas or arguments related to religion and religious traditions has frequent and/or significant errors in genre, language and recognised referencing conventions.

Determining and reporting results

Unit 1 and Unit 2

Schools make judgments on individual assessment instruments using a method determined by the school. They may use the reporting standards or develop an instrument-specific marking guide (ISMG). Marks are not required for determining a unit result for reporting to the QCAA.

The unit assessment program comprises the assessment instrument/s designed by the school to allow the students to demonstrate the unit objectives. The unit judgment of A–E is made using reporting standards.

Schools report student results for Unit 1 and Unit 2 to the QCAA as satisfactory (S) or unsatisfactory (U). Where appropriate, schools may also report a not rated (NR).

Units 3 and 4

Schools mark each of the three internal assessment instruments implemented in Units 3 and 4 using ISMGs.

Schools report a provisional mark by criterion to the QCAA for each internal assessment.

Once confirmed by the QCAA, these results will be combined with the result of the external assessment developed and marked by the QCAA.

The QCAA uses these results to determine each student's subject result as a mark out of 100 and as an A–E.

Units

Unit 1: Religion, meaning and purpose

In Unit 1, students are introduced to the concept of religion and its role in providing meaning and purpose to adherents. It explores the five major world religions of Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism, as well as Australian Aboriginal spiritualities and Torres Strait Islander spiritualities and religion as a foundation to the course of study. Through an examination of the nature of religion and an introduction to key beliefs and practices, students investigate how these spiritualities and religions offer insights into life, provide guidance for living, and offer meaning and purpose to their followers. They are introduced to the significance of sacred texts and the role they play in the lives of adherents and their communities. As Unit 1 progresses, there is a focus on the diversity of Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander texts, the Abrahamic traditions and the sacred texts of Judaism, Christianity and Islam and the Eastern traditions of Hinduism and Buddhism and their sacred texts.

Unit objectives

1. Explain features and expressions of the nature and purpose of religion and associated sacred texts.
2. Analyse perspectives about the nature and purpose of religion and the sacred texts of different traditions.
3. Evaluate the significance and influence of the nature and purpose of religion and the sacred texts of different traditions on individuals, groups and society.
4. Communicate to suit purpose.

Subject matter

Topic 1: Nature and purpose of religion

In this topic, students are introduced to the nature and purpose of religion and the significant links to the sacred texts that underpin meaning in the specific religious traditions of Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism and Australian Aboriginal spiritualities and Torres Strait Islander spiritualities and religion. Students identify features and functions of religion and consider the influence of these on individuals, groups and society.

- Explain features and expressions of religious traditions by
 - identifying key features of various approaches to understanding and studying religion to explain the origin, nature and purpose of religion, e.g. from a sociological, psychological, typological, historical or theological perspective
 - describing worldviews and their relationship with religious beliefs about purpose, e.g. cyclical and linear worldviews
 - explaining the characteristics of religions and their belief systems and how these manifest in the lives of individuals, groups and society
 - explaining the roles of sacred texts and how they inform beliefs and expressions, e.g. build community, provide guidelines, maintain communal identity, and require a standard of behaviour.
- Analyse perspectives about religious expression by
 - selecting and using relevant information from sacred texts and authoritative sources
 - explaining characteristics, similarities and differences within and between traditions in the way religious expression manifests and provides meaning and purpose to individuals, groups and society
 - examining perspectives related to how religious traditions, their beliefs and expressions provide meaning and purpose for adherents and how this has developed over time.
- Evaluate the significance and influence of religion by
 - synthesising perspectives and ideas about the role of religion in creating and enhancing meaning and purpose
 - making judgments and drawing conclusions about the significance of religion in the lives of individuals, groups and society in particular situations and contexts
 - justifying judgments using evidence regarding the significance and influence of religion in creating and enhancing meaning and purpose for individuals, groups and society.
- Communicate to suit purpose by
 - employing appropriate language choices and developing ideas suitable for purpose, related to the nature and purpose of religion
 - applying language conventions
 - identifying sources, e.g. Source 1, Source 3; using a recognised system of referencing.

Topic 2: Sacred texts

In this topic, students focus on the Abrahamic traditions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam, the Eastern traditions of Hinduism and Buddhism and Australian Aboriginal spiritualities and Torres Strait Islander spiritualities and religion. They investigate the expressions of sacred texts, their

provenance and authority, how texts are interpreted, and the influence these texts have on individuals, groups and society.

- Explain features and expressions of religious traditions as identified in their sacred texts by
 - identifying distinguishing features of sacred texts of Judaism (TaNaKh), Christianity (Bible) and Islam (Qur'an), Hinduism (smṛiti and śruti), and Buddhism (Pali Canon or Tipitaka), Australian Aboriginal spiritualities (Dreaming stories) and Torres Strait Island spiritualities and religion (stories of The Tagai and the Bible), explaining why they are deemed authoritative
 - describing characteristics of sacred texts, their origin and meaning
 - explaining how sacred texts influence and shape beliefs and practices within religious traditions.
- Analyse perspectives about religious expression by
 - selecting and using relevant methods of interpretation
 - explaining similarities and differences within and between religious traditions and the ways sacred texts provide meaning, e.g. accounts of the divine, creation, human destiny
 - examining sacred texts and how perspectives inform the lived experience of religion and spiritualities within historical, contemporary, cultural and geographical contexts.
- Evaluate the significance and influence of sacred texts on individuals, groups and society by
 - synthesising information and valid perspectives about the role of sacred texts
 - making judgments and drawing conclusions about the influence of sacred texts within different contexts
 - justifying judgments using evidence from sacred texts and supporting authoritative sources.
- Communicate to suit purpose by
 - using religious language and developing ideas suitable to purpose
 - applying language conventions
 - identifying sources, e.g. Source 1, Source 3; using a recognised system of referencing.

Unit 2: Religion and ritual

In Unit 2, students build on their understandings of Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Australian Aboriginal spiritualities and Torres Strait Islander spiritualities and religion as they investigate religious rituals that mark significant moments and events within the religion and in the lives of adherents.

The rituals are studied under two categories: lifecycle rituals and calendrical rituals. Lifecycle rituals mark rites of passage in the biological and sociological cycle of human life; calendrical rituals occur at a particular time of the day, week, month or year or mark a period of time since a significant event.

Unit objectives

1. Explain features and expressions of religious rituals within the context of religious traditions.
2. Analyse perspectives about religious rituals within the context of religious traditions.
3. Evaluate the significance and influence of religious rituals on individuals, groups and society.
4. Communicate to suit purpose.

Subject matter

Topic 1: Lifecycle rituals

In this topic, students will identify, analyse and interpret religious lifecycle rituals within and across religious traditions. Students will also consider how some rituals have remained unchanged for centuries, while others have incorporated cultural practices. They will consider the role ritual plays in membership of the religious community.

- Explain features and expressions of religious traditions by
 - identifying the distinguishing features of religious lifecycle rituals associated with Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Australian Aboriginal spiritualities and Torres Strait Island spiritualities and religion, including
 - initiation rites
 - rites of passage
 - rites of cleansing and healing
 - describing the core beliefs of religious traditions and how they manifest in lifecycle rituals
 - explaining the significance of lifecycle rituals for individuals, groups and society.
- Analyse perspectives about religious expression by
 - selecting and using relevant information from religious texts and other authoritative sources about the purpose and expression of lifecycle rituals in the lives of individuals, groups and society
 - identifying at least one religious lifecycle ritual by using and critiquing a recognised theory, e.g. Arnold van Gennep, Victor Turner, Terence Lovat
 - explaining and giving reasons for the ways lifecycle rituals provide membership to the community and emanate from sacred texts, the similarities and differences across and within religious traditions, and the way/s lifecycle rituals may have changed over time, e.g. Bar Mitzvah and Bat Mitzvah in Judaism
 - examining various perspectives on the ways lifecycle rituals flow from, and respond to, a view on ultimate questions, e.g.
 - what does it mean to be human?
 - how do individuals, groups and society connect with the divine?
 - how do individuals, groups and society make meaning and seek purpose in life?
- Evaluate the significance and influence of lifecycle rituals on individuals, groups and society by
 - synthesising information about the role of lifecycle rituals in various contexts, including the influence of culture and secularism on participation in religious lifecycle rituals
 - making judgments and drawing conclusions about the significance and influence of lifecycle rituals on individuals, groups and society
 - justifying judgments about lifecycle rituals with reasoning and evidence.
- Communicate to suit purpose by
 - choosing language and developing ideas suitable for purpose
 - applying language conventions
 - identifying sources, e.g. Source 1, Source 3; using a recognised system of referencing.

Topic 2: Calendrical rituals

In this topic, students will identify, analyse and interpret religious calendrical rituals within and across religious traditions. Students will investigate the significance of calendrical rituals in the lives of individuals and examine the influence that culture may play in these rituals. They will consider the extent that participation in such rituals enhances identity and membership of individuals, groups and society.

- Explain features and expressions of religious traditions by
 - identifying the distinguishing features of religious calendrical rituals in Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism and Torres Strait Islander religion, e.g.
 - Yom Kippur (Judaism)
 - Advent (Christianity)
 - Salat (Islam)
 - Raksha Bandhan (Hinduism)
 - Dharma Day (Buddhism)
 - Coming of the Light (Torres Strait Islander religion)
 - describing the characteristics of calendrical rituals and their influence on individuals, groups and society
 - explaining the relationship between calendrical rituals, sacred texts and/or significant individuals and how these are expressed in the lives of individuals, groups and society
 - explaining why aspects of the rituals occur at a particular time of the day, week, month or year or how they mark a period of time since a significant event, e.g.
 - Shabbat (Judaism)
 - Pentecost (Christianity)
 - Ramadan (Islam)
 - Divali (Hinduism)
 - Uposatha day of observance (Buddhism).
- Analyse perspectives about religious expression by
 - selecting and using relevant information from religious texts and other authoritative sources about the purpose and expression of calendrical rituals in the lives of individuals, groups and society
 - explaining the similarities and differences within and between religious traditions in preparing and participating in calendrical rituals
 - examining perspectives on the role and meaning of symbols in calendrical rituals, such as the use of water, food and clothing.

- Evaluate the significance and influence of religion on the role and expression of calendrical rituals on individuals, groups and society by
 - synthesising information about calendrical rituals in religiously diverse contexts
 - making judgments and drawing conclusions about the importance of participation in forming and enhancing identity, confirming membership and strengthening community for individuals, groups and society
 - justifying judgments with reasoning and evidence.
- Communicate to suit purpose by
 - choosing language and developing ideas suitable for purpose
 - applying language conventions
 - identifying sources, e.g. Source 1, Source 3; using a recognised system of referencing.

Unit 3: Religious ethics

In Unit 3, students continue to build on Units 1 and 2 to examine the religious–ethical principles that are evident within the traditions of Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism. They are required to understand the religious foundations that form and inform ethical principles within different religious traditions. Students apply religious–ethical principles to real-life contexts and evaluate how they influence individuals, groups and society.

Unit objectives

1. Explain features and expressions of religious ethics within the context of religious traditions.
2. Analyse perspectives about religious expression and religious–ethical principles within the context of religious traditions.
3. Evaluate the significance and influence of religious–ethical principles on individuals, groups and society.
4. Communicate to suit purpose.

Subject matter

Topic 1: Social ethics

In this topic, students consider how ethical principles and theories in Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism are understood and applied to social–ethical issues. A social–ethical issue is a problem or situation that requires a person to consider the social implications of a moral decision and identify alternatives that need to be considered in the decision-making process. Students analyse issues from a religious–ethical perspective and evaluate the extent to which religious ethics influence decisions.

- Explain features and expressions of religious traditions by
 - identifying distinguishing features and frameworks of religions and religious traditions that inform ethical positions
 - describing characteristics of social–ethical teachings within religious traditions and how they are expressed, lived and governed by individuals, groups and society
 - explaining the ways social–ethical teachings within religious traditions inform decision-making processes in the lives of individuals, groups and society.
- Analyse perspectives about religious expressions that form and inform responses to issues or situations by
 - selecting and using information from sacred texts and other authoritative sources
 - explaining distinct beliefs and practices within and across traditions, their characteristics, similarities and differences in their approach to social–ethical issues
 - examining the viewpoints evident in religious expressions and the influences of religious ethics on individuals, groups and society in response to one of the following social–ethical issues
 - asylum seekers
 - capital punishment
 - employment and work
 - environment
 - animal testing
 - refugees
 - slavery
 - privacy
 - food security
 - war.
- Evaluate the significance and influence of religion on social–ethical issues by
 - synthesising religious ideas and positions regarding social–ethical issues
 - making judgments and drawing conclusions about the significance of religion and its influence on individuals, groups and society when responding to social–ethical issues
 - justifying judgments about responses to social–ethical issues with reasoning and evidence from sacred texts and authoritative sources.
- Communicate to suit purpose by
 - choosing language and developing ideas suitable for purpose
 - applying language conventions
 - identifying sources, e.g. Source 1, Source 3.

Topic 2: Personal ethics

In this topic, students use their understandings of religious ethics, ethical teachings, ethical terminology and approaches to ethical decision-making developed in Topic 1 of this unit. A personal ethical issue is a problem or situation that requires a person to consider the implications of a moral decision on individuals and identify alternatives that need to be considered in the decision-making process. These understandings are applied to one contemporary ethical issue from the perspective of one of the five major world religions. Students identify how a variety of views may be evident and the extent to which religious ethics influence the decision-making process for individuals.

- Explain features and expressions of religious traditions by
 - identifying the way/s in which religious traditions inform personal ethics
 - describing the key teachings of religious traditions in informing personal ethics and the way these are expressed, supported and enforced within traditions
 - explaining the variety of responses from adherents within religious traditions, to a range of ethical issues in contemporary society.
- Analyse perspectives about personal ethics through the lens of one of the five major world religions by
 - selecting and using information from sacred texts and authoritative sources about the influence of religious beliefs and teachings on personal ethics
 - explaining the variety of responses, within religious traditions, to a range of personal ethical issues in contemporary society
 - examining one of the following contemporary personal ethical issues by investigating
 - beginning and end of life, e.g. reproductive technologies, palliative care
 - pivotal life events or situations, e.g. arranged marriages, polygamy, having/raising/disciplining children, contentious objection in medicine/military service
 - body image, e.g. cosmetic enhancement, tattooing
 - interpersonal conflict, e.g. domestic violence, non-consensual sexting
 - medical technologies, e.g. organ farming, genetic engineering, xenotransplantation
 - substance abuse, e.g. steroids in sport.
- Evaluate the significance and influence of religion on individuals when making personal ethical decisions by
 - synthesising ideas and perspectives about the role of religion in personal ethical situations
 - making judgments and drawing conclusions about the significance of religion for adherents and its influence on individuals when making personal ethical decisions
 - justifying judgments about the significance and influence of religion when making personal ethical decisions, with reasoning and evidence.
- Communicate to suit purpose by
 - choosing language and developing ideas suitable for purpose
 - applying language conventions
 - using a recognised system of referencing.

Unit 4: Religion — rights and relationships

In Unit 4, students consider how religion affects and influences people’s understanding of culture, history, politics and social interaction. Within this context, they consider the nature of humanity according to various world views, and the issues of rights and religion–state relationships that result. Students investigate how religions seek to shape and are shaped by their social, cultural and political contexts. They examine how the dynamic of religion in different times and places has interacted with the nation–state, as well as religion’s contributions to society and culture. They explore how religions seek to address humanity’s big questions about life, destiny, meaning and purpose, belief in the divine and the influence such responses have on the relationships between individuals, groups and society and how they treat and interact with each other.

Unit objectives

1. Explain features and expressions of religious traditions, their characteristics and expressions that shape and influence responses to events, situations or issues in specific contexts.
2. Analyse perspectives about religious expression by examining beliefs and practices within (and, where appropriate, across) traditions.
3. Evaluate the significance and influence of religion on understanding humanity and human interaction and the relationship between humanity and religion.
4. Communicate to suit purpose.

Subject matter

Topic 1: Religion and the nation–state

In this topic, students identify and examine relationships between religion and the nation–state. They investigate and analyse the interactions of religion with the nation–state in order to evaluate the interplay between religion and nation–state on individuals, groups and societies.

- Explain features and expressions of religious traditions by
 - identifying different types of religion–state relationships that may exist, including
 - official separation of religion and the nation–state, e.g. USA, France
 - religious state, e.g. Saudi Arabia, Iran
 - multi-religious state, e.g. Indonesia
 - pluralist state, e.g. Germany
 - secular state, e.g. Australia
 - state religion, e.g. Denmark
 - predominantly religion-less state, e.g. Democratic Peoples’ Republic of China
 - describing the characteristics of these religion–state relationships
 - explaining the variety of ways relationships between religion and the nation–state manifest.
- Analyse perspectives about religious expressions, examining the role and influence of religion and the ways it has interacted with the nation–state by
 - selecting and using relevant information from religious texts and other authoritative sources
 - conducting research that enables a detailed inquiry into the interactions between religion and the nation–state in one of the following contexts
 - Judaism in a specific European context before 1945, e.g. Germany and the events surrounding the Kristallnacht Pogrom in November 1938; pogroms in Odessa, Kiev or Warsaw
 - Judaism in Israel post 1948, e.g. Six-Day War, passing of The Law of Return in 1950, Oslo Accords 1993–1995
 - Christianity — Roman Catholicism in Poland (particularly in 1980s)
 - Christianity in a Latin American country, e.g. El Salvador in 1980s, Nicaragua post-2018
 - Christianity in Israel post-1948
 - Islam in Israel since 1948, e.g. First Intifada 1987
 - Islam in Egypt, Indonesia, Iran or Turkey, e.g. Aceh Province in 2001, reverting of Hagia Sophia in 2020
 - Hinduism in India pre-independence (1947), e.g. Gandhi’s Salt Marches (Salt Satyagraha) of 1930

- Hinduism in India post-independence (1947), e.g. election of BJP party in 2014
 - Buddhism in Myanmar (Burma), Thailand, Tibet or Vietnam, e.g. the Unified Buddhist Sangha of Vietnam (UBSV) post-1964, the military coup in Thailand 2014–2016
 - Australian Aboriginal spiritualities through legislation, practice, and/or involvement of institutions, e.g. the establishment of specific Aboriginal missions and reserves, e.g. Woorabinda, Cherbourg, Aurukun; Yirrkala Petition, 1963; in establishing and celebrating Mabo Day, NAIDOC Week; the Prime Minister’s Apology in 2008
 - Torres Strait Islander peoples’ practice of Kupai Omasker and the Queensland Government’s *Meriba Omasker Kaziw Kazipa (Torres Strait Islander Traditional Child Rearing Practice) Act 2020*
- explaining the viewpoints evident in religious beliefs and practices related to the chosen nation–state context, including similarities and differences within the religious tradition, to determine relationships that influence and guide the religious interaction with the nation–state
 - examining perspectives evident in the religious tradition that form and inform the interaction with the nation–state.
- Evaluate the significance of religion in its relationship with the nation–state for individuals, groups and society by
 - synthesising valid ideas and information about religion’s interactions with the nation–state
 - making judgments and drawing conclusions about the significance of religion and its relationship with the nation–state for individuals, groups and society
 - justifying judgments about the significance of religion in its relationship with the nation–state for individuals, groups and society, using reasoning and evidence.
 - Communicate to suit purpose by
 - choosing language and developing ideas suitable for purpose
 - applying language conventions
 - using a recognised system of referencing.

Topic 2: Human existence and rights

In this topic, students consider how religious traditions address questions about the nature and significance of humanity, informing and shaping timeless issues about what it means to be human, exploring perspectives on rights, including human rights. They examine perspectives on ultimate questions, social justice and human rights by using their understandings of religious traditions and the insights that these provide on issues at a local, national and global level.

- Explain features and expressions of religious traditions relating to the nature and purpose of human existence by
 - identifying the distinguishing features of each religious tradition and their teachings about the nature of humanity in
 - Judaism (Revelation; sin, repentance, free will; Divine and human justice; sanctity of life)
 - Christianity (Revelation, Incarnation, Resurrection, free will, Salvation, human dignity)
 - Islam (revelation to the Prophet, predestination and the Greater Jihad)
 - Hinduism (karma, samsara, moksha, reincarnation)
 - Buddhism (rebirth, karma, dharma, samsara and nirvana)
 - describing the concepts of rights, religious rights and human rights and how these are framed by religious teachings, relate to the nature and purpose of human existence and aim to address ultimate questions, including
 - Judaism and Christianity (sacredness of human life)
 - Islam (submission to the will of Allah)
 - Hinduism (karmic consequences)
 - Buddhism (karmic consequences)
 - explaining the ways in which religious traditions inform understandings of human rights, including their features and expressions by
 - showing ways different religious traditions acknowledge and promote the notion of being human
 - the beliefs identified in sacred texts
 - key principles in Judaism (in God's image-B'tselem Elohim; Covenant, chesed, tikkun olam, pikuach nefesh, tzedakah); Christianity (Sanctity of life, Imago Dei, Judgment, grace, forgiveness); Islam (Adalat — Divine justice [Shi'a], Yawm ad-Din — Day of Judgment, Five Pillars, Sharia); Hinduism (atman, dharma); and Buddhism (anatta, five aggregates, Four Noble Truths, Five Precepts).

- Analyse perspectives about the nature of humanity, rights and ultimate questions and their alignment with religious traditions by
 - selecting and using relevant information from human rights documents, e.g.
 - Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)
 - Cairo declaration on human rights in Islam (1990)
 - identifying distinct beliefs in religions through the ways human life is viewed, including
 - linear world view (Judaism, Christianity and Islam)
 - cyclical world view (Buddhism and Hinduism)
 - responses to ultimate questions, e.g. the purpose of life, the role of a deity
 - explaining viewpoints, considering the relationships between religious traditions and organisations that support and promote human rights and strive for social justice, e.g.
 - B'nai B'rith, Stand Up (Judaism)
 - World Vision, Mission Australia, Wesley Mission, Caritas (Christianity)
 - Australian Muslim Women's Centre for Human Rights, Islamic Relief Australia (Islam)
 - Hindus for Human Rights, Australian Hindu Humanitarian Fund (Hinduism)
 - Bodhi Australia, Buddhist Global Relief (Buddhism).
- Evaluate the significance and influence of religion and the extent to which it has an influence on responses to ultimate questions and human rights issues, e.g. poverty, homelessness, human trafficking, genocide, destiny, responsibility to self and community, by
 - synthesising religious ideas about the role of religion in addressing ultimate questions and responding to social justice and human rights issues
 - making judgments and drawing conclusions about the significance of religion for individuals, groups and society when addressing ultimate questions and responding to social justice and human rights issues
 - justifying judgments about the influence of religion, with reasoning and evidence.
- Communicate to suit purpose by
 - choosing language and developing ideas suitable for purpose
 - applying language conventions
 - identifying sources, e.g. Source 1, Source 3.

Assessment

Internal assessment 1: Examination — extended response (25%)

Assessment objectives

1. Explain features and expressions of religious traditions that inform social–ethical responses.
2. Analyse perspectives about religious expression that form and inform responses to a social–ethical issue.
3. Evaluate the significance and influence of religion on religious–ethical stances made by adherents to a social–ethical issue.
4. Communicate to suit purpose by creating an analytical essay response, using language choices, developing ideas or arguments about religious–ethical responses to a social–ethical issue and identifying sources used.

Specifications

The teacher provides an examination that:

- focuses on one social–ethical issue provided in Unit 3 Topic 1
- asks students to
 - respond to an unseen question or hypothesis
 - engage with unseen stimulus material
 - analyse perspectives from two of the major world religions that form and inform religious–ethical responses to one social–ethical issue
 - respond in the form of an analytical essay.

Stimulus specifications

The teacher provides stimulus material that:

- includes a balance of information related to two of the five major world religions and the social–ethical issue selected from Unit 3 Topic 1
- is succinct enough to allow students sufficient time to engage with it, e.g. one A3 page or equivalent
- has not been copied from information or texts that students have directly used in class
- provides students with information to provoke thinking and draw their own conclusions without giving specific information about religious positions or direct teachings on the issue
- is presented in written texts and/or visual texts, e.g. excerpts from sacred texts and religious writings, reference books, journals, media articles, illustrations and images, religious art, cartoons, diagrams, graphical representations, tables.

Conditions

- This is an individual supervised task.
- Time allowed
 - Planning time: 15 minutes
 - Working time: 120 minutes
- Students must not bring notes into the examination.

Mark allocation

Criterion	Assessment objectives	Marks
Explaining	1	6
Analysing	2	8
Evaluating	3	8
Communicating	4	3
Total marks:		25

Instrument-specific marking guide

Explaining	Marks
The student response has the following characteristics:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> comprehensive and relevant identification of distinguishing features of religious traditions that inform religious ethics thorough and detailed description of characteristics of religious traditions that inform social–ethical responses accurate and detailed explanation of the ways in which the two religious traditions are expressed in the lives of adherents and inform ethical decision-making processes 	5–6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> relevant identification of distinguishing features of religious traditions that inform religious ethics description of characteristics of religious traditions that inform social–ethical responses explanation of the ways in which the two religious traditions are expressed in the lives of adherents and inform ethical decision-making processes 	3–4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> simplistic identification of features of religious traditions that inform religious ethics statements about characteristics of religious traditions that inform social–ethical responses limited and basic explanation of the ways in which the two religious traditions are expressed in the lives of adherents and inform ethical decision-making processes. 	1–2
The student response does not match any of the descriptors above.	0

Analysing	Marks
The student response has the following characteristics:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> effective selection and accurate use of relevant information from stimulus that influence decision-making on the social–ethical issue thorough and accurate explanation of distinct beliefs and practices in religious traditions, including similarities and differences well-reasoned examination of perspectives from two religious traditions that form and inform religious–ethical responses to the social–ethical issue 	7–8
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> appropriate selection and accurate use of relevant information from stimulus that influence decision-making on the social–ethical issue substantial and accurate explanation of distinct beliefs and practices in religious traditions, including similarities and differences considered examination of perspectives from two religious traditions that form and inform religious–ethical responses to the social–ethical issue 	5–6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> selection and use of relevant information from stimulus that influence decision-making on the social–ethical issue partial explanation of beliefs and practices in religious traditions, including similarities and differences some examination of perspectives from two religious traditions that form and inform religious–ethical responses to the social–ethical issue 	3–4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> limited selection and lack of/irrelevant use of information from stimulus that influence decision-making on the social–ethical issue simplistic and/or erroneous understanding of the two religious traditions' beliefs and practices in relationship to the religious–ethical response to the social–ethical issue one or more statements are made on beliefs, practices and/or perspectives within religious traditions. 	1–2
The student response does not match any of the descriptors above.	0

Evaluating	Marks
The student response has the following characteristics:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • succinct synthesis of ideas about the role of religion in social–ethical situations or within social–ethical issues • discerning judgments and relevant conclusions about the significance of religious–ethical stances to a social–ethical issue and its influence on individuals, groups and society • consistent and thorough justification of judgments using reasoning and evidence 	7–8
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • synthesis of ideas about the role of religion in social–ethical situations or within social–ethical issues • considered judgments and appropriate conclusions about the significance of religious–ethical stances to a social–ethical issue and its influence on individuals, groups and society • justification of judgments using reasoning and evidence 	5–6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • limited synthesis of ideas about the role of religion in social–ethical situations or within social–ethical issues • basic judgments and simplistic conclusions about the significance of religious–ethical stances to a social–ethical issue and its influence on individuals, groups and society • some justification of judgments using evidence 	3–4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • one or more statements about the role of religion in social–ethical situations or within social–ethical issues • simplistic and/or erroneous judgments about the significance of religious–ethical stances to a social–ethical issue and its influence on individuals, groups and society • inaccurate and/or irrelevant judgments. 	1–2
The student response does not match any of the descriptors above.	0

Communicating	Marks
The student response has the following characteristics:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • insightful choice of religious language, logical, cohesive, and succinct development of ideas suitable for the analytical essay genre, including creation of hypothesis • consistently appropriate application of language conventions (spelling, grammar, punctuation) • consistent identification and acknowledgment of sources used 	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • accurate choice of some religious language, development of ideas suitable for the analytical essay genre, including creation of hypothesis • application of language conventions (spelling, grammar, punctuation) • identification and acknowledgment of sources used 	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • some use of religious language, with ideas related to a hypothesis and features of an essay • limited application of language conventions (spelling, grammar, punctuation) • limited acknowledgment of sources. 	1
The student response does not match any of the descriptors above.	0

Internal assessment 2: Investigation — inquiry response (25%)

Students research a specific problem, question, issue or hypothesis through collection, analysis and synthesis of data. They investigate the influence of religious ethics on an individual as applied to a specific aspect of a contemporary ethical issue from the perspective of one of the five major world religions. The task identifies the nominated religion and the contemporary ethical issue/s to be investigated from the list provided in Unit 3 Topic 2; the student can choose the specific focus or select from the examples provided.

Assessment objectives

1. Explain features and expressions of religious traditions and the ways a world religion informs a response to the contemporary personal ethical issue selected.
2. Analyse perspectives about religious expression within a world religion that influence responses to the contemporary personal ethical issue selected.
3. Evaluate the significance and influence of religious ethics on responses to a contemporary personal ethical issue.
4. Communicate to suit purpose by creating an analytical essay response to the contemporary personal ethical issue selected.

Specifications

This task requires students to:

- select one issue from the list the teacher has provided of contemporary personal ethical issues and nominate a specific focus
- respond using the specified world religion
- devise a hypothesis for the focus of the inquiry
- investigate the issue by conducting research using the inquiry process
- analyse the issue from the selected religious perspective
- write an analytical essay.

It is recommended that this task is designed so that students can develop a response in approximately 15 hours of class time.

Conditions

- Students can develop their responses in class time and their own time.
- This is an individual task.

Response requirements

Written: up to 2000 words

Mark allocation

Criterion	Assessment objectives	Marks
Explaining	1	6
Analysing	2	7
Evaluating	3	7
Communicating	4	5
Total marks:		25

Instrument-specific marking guide

Explaining	Marks
The student response has the following characteristics:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> comprehensive and relevant identification of the distinguishing features of one religious tradition that informs its ethical teachings thorough and detailed description of characteristics of one religious tradition and the way it informs a response to the contemporary personal ethical issue selected accurate and detailed explanation of the ways one religious tradition is expressed in the lives of adherents in response to the contemporary personal ethical issue selected 	5–6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> relevant identification of the distinguishing features of one religious tradition and its ethical teachings description of characteristics of one religious tradition and the way it informs a response to the contemporary personal ethical issue selected explanation of the ways one religious tradition is expressed in the lives of adherents in response to the contemporary personal ethical issue selected 	3–4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> limited identification of the features of one religious tradition and its ethical teachings basic description of characteristics of one religious tradition and the way it informs a response to the contemporary personal ethical issue selected simplistic explanation of the ways one religious tradition is expressed in the lives of adherents in response to the contemporary personal ethical issue selected. 	1–2
The student response does not match any of the descriptors above.	0

Analysing	Marks
The student response has the following characteristics:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • critical selection and appropriate use of relevant information from religious texts and other authoritative sources to inform analysis of perspectives about religious expression within one religious tradition • detailed and accurate explanation of distinct beliefs and practices within one religious tradition, including similarities and differences, that influence responses to the contemporary personal ethical issue selected • thorough examination of perspectives within one religious tradition that influence responses to the contemporary personal ethical issue selected, evident in distinct beliefs and practices 	6–7
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • considered selection and use of relevant information from religious texts and other authoritative sources to inform analysis of perspectives about religious expression within one religious tradition • explanation of beliefs and practices within one religious tradition, including similarities and differences, that influence responses to the contemporary personal ethical issue selected • examination of perspectives within one religious tradition that influence responses to the contemporary personal ethical issue selected, evident in distinct beliefs and practices 	4–5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • selection and use of information from religious texts and/or other authoritative sources to inform basic analysis of perspectives about religious expression within one religious tradition • some explanation of beliefs and practices within one religious tradition that influence responses to the contemporary personal ethical issue selected • basic examination of perspectives within one religious tradition that influence responses to the contemporary personal ethical issue selected 	2–3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • limited selection and use of information from religious texts or other authoritative sources to inform statements about religious expression within one religious tradition • simplistic or erroneous statements about beliefs and/or practices within one religious tradition related to the contemporary personal ethical issue selected • one or more statements on a perspective within a religious tradition related to the contemporary personal ethical issue selected. 	1
The student response does not match any of the descriptors above.	0

Evaluating	Marks
The student response has the following characteristics:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> thorough and succinct synthesis of ideas about the influence of religious ethics on responses to a contemporary personal ethical issue discerning and astute judgments about the significance of religion and its influence on responses to a contemporary personal ethical issue detailed justification of judgments supported using reasoning and evidence 	6–7
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> considered synthesis of ideas about the influence of religious ethics on responses to a contemporary personal ethical issue appropriate judgments about the significance of religion and its influence on responses to a contemporary personal ethical issue justification of judgments supported using reasoning and evidence 	4–5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> some synthesis of ideas about religious ethics and a response to a contemporary personal ethical issue basic judgments about the significance of religion and its influence on responses to a contemporary personal ethical issue limited justification of judgments, supported with reasoning and/or evidence 	2–3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> one or more statements about religious ethics and a response to a contemporary personal ethical issue simplistic and/or erroneous judgments about the significance of religion and its influence on responses to a contemporary personal ethical issue inaccurate and/or irrelevant justification. 	1
The student response does not match any of the descriptors above.	0

Communicating	Marks
The student response has the following characteristics:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> insightful choice of religious language, logical, cohesive and succinct development of ideas suitable for the analytical essay genre, including creation of hypothesis consistently appropriate application of language conventions (spelling, grammar, punctuation) consistent identification and acknowledgment of sources, accurately using a recognised/prescribed system of referencing 	4–5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> accurate choice of religious language, development of ideas suitable for the analytical essay genre, including creation of hypothesis application of language conventions (spelling, grammar, punctuation) acknowledgment of sources using a system of referencing 	2–3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> some use of religious language, with ideas related to a hypothesis and features of an essay limited application of language conventions (spelling, grammar, punctuation) limited acknowledgment of sources. 	1
The student response does not match any of the descriptors above.	0

Internal assessment 3: Investigation — inquiry response (25%)

Students research a specific problem, question, issue or hypothesis through collection, analysis and synthesis of data. They investigate the ways religion interacts with the nation–state through one example listed in Unit 4 Topic 1.

Assessment objectives

1. Explain features and expressions of religious traditions and the ways a world religion informs responses to the nation–state in a particular context.
2. Analyse perspectives about religious expression within a world religion that influences responses to the nation–state in a particular context.
3. Evaluate the significance and influence of religion on responses to the nation–state in a particular context.
4. Communicate to suit purpose by creating an analytical essay.

Specifications

This task requires students to:

- respond to the example, nominated by the teacher, from the list provided in Unit 4 Topic 1
- devise a hypothesis for the focus of the inquiry
- investigate the nominated religious tradition and the nation–state context by conducting research using the inquiry process
- analyse the ways in which religion has interacted with the nation–state
- write an analytical essay.

It is recommended that this task is designed so that students can develop a response in approximately 15 hours of class time.

Conditions

- Students can develop their responses in class time and their own time.
- This is an individual task.

Response requirements

Written: up to 2000 words

Mark allocation

Criterion	Assessment objectives	Marks
Explaining	1	6
Analysing	2	7
Evaluating	3	7
Communicating	4	5
Total marks:		25

Instrument-specific marking guide

Explaining	Marks
The student response has the following characteristics:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> comprehensive and relevant identification of the distinguishing features of one religious tradition and its teachings in relation to the nation–state in a particular context thorough and detailed description of characteristics of one religious tradition and the way it informs a response to the nation–state in a particular context accurate explanation of the ways one religious tradition is expressed in the lives of adherents in response to the nation–state in a particular context 	5–6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> relevant identification of the distinguishing features of one religious tradition and its teachings in relation to the nation–state in a particular context description of characteristics of one religious tradition and the way it informs a response to the nation–state in a particular context explanation of the ways one religious tradition is expressed in the lives of adherents in response to the nation–state in a particular context 	3–4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> limited identification of the features of one religious tradition and its teachings in relation to the nation–state in a particular context basic description of characteristics of one religious tradition and the way it informs a response to the nation–state in a particular context simplistic explanation of the ways one religious tradition is expressed in the lives of adherents in response to the nation–state in a particular context. 	1–2
The student response does not match any of the descriptors above.	0

Analysing	Marks
The student response has the following characteristics:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • critical selection and appropriate use of relevant information from religious texts and other authoritative sources to inform analysis of perspectives about religious expression within one religious tradition • detailed and accurate explanation of distinct beliefs and practices within one religious tradition, including similarities and differences, that influence the religion's interaction with the nation–state in the context selected • thorough examination of perspectives within one religious tradition that influence responses to the religion's interaction with the nation–state in the context selected 	6–7
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • considered selection and use of relevant information from religious texts and other authoritative sources to inform analysis of perspectives about religious expression within one religious tradition • explanation of beliefs and practices within one religious tradition, including similarities and differences, that influence the religion's interaction with the nation–state in the context selected • examination of perspectives within one religious tradition that influence responses to the religion's interaction with the nation–state in the context selected 	4–5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • selection and use of information from religious texts and/or other authoritative sources to inform analysis of perspectives about religious expression within one religious tradition • some explanation of beliefs and practices within one religious tradition, including similarities and differences, that influence the religion's interaction with the nation–state in the context selected • basic examination of perspectives within one religious tradition that influence responses to the religion's interaction with the nation–state in the context selected 	2–3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • limited selection and use of information from religious texts or other authoritative sources to inform analysis of perspectives about religious expression within one religious tradition • simplistic or erroneous statements about beliefs and/or practices within one religious tradition, including similarities and differences, that influence the religion's interaction with the nation–state in the context selected • one or more statements on a perspective within one religious tradition related to the religion's interaction with the nation–state in the context selected. 	1
The student response does not match any of the descriptors above.	0

Evaluating	Marks
The student response has the following characteristics:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> thorough and succinct synthesis of ideas about the influence of religion and its interaction with the nation–state and the extent it has shaped society’s response within a particular context discerning and astute judgments about the influence of religion and its interaction with the nation–state in shaping society’s response within the context selected detailed justification of judgments supported with reasoning and evidence 	6–7
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> considered synthesis of ideas about the influence of religion and its interaction with the nation–state and the extent it has shaped society’s response within a particular context appropriate judgments about the influence of religion and its interaction with the nation–state in shaping society’s response within the context selected justification of judgments supported with reasoning and evidence 	4–5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> some synthesis of ideas about the influence of religion and its interaction with the nation–state and the extent it has shaped society’s response within a particular context basic judgments about the influence of religion and its interaction with the nation–state in shaping society’s response within the context selected limited justification of judgments supported with reasoning and evidence 	2–3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> one or more statements are made about a religion–state relationship simplistic and/or erroneous judgments about the influence of religion and its interaction with the nation–state in shaping society’s response within the context selected inaccurate and/or irrelevant justification. 	1
The student response does not match any of the descriptors above.	0

Communicating	Marks
The student response has the following characteristics:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> insightful choice of religious language, logical, cohesive and succinct development of ideas suitable for the analytical essay genre, including creation of hypothesis consistently appropriate application of language conventions (spelling, grammar, punctuation) consistent identification and acknowledgment of sources, accurately using a recognised/prescribed system of referencing 	4–5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> accurate choice of religious language, development of ideas suitable for the analytical essay genre, including creation of hypothesis application of language conventions (spelling, grammar, punctuation) acknowledgment of sources using a system of referencing 	2–3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> some use of religious language, with ideas related to a hypothesis and features of an essay limited application of language conventions (spelling, grammar, punctuation) limited acknowledgment of sources. 	1
The student response does not match any of the descriptors above.	0

External assessment: Examination — short response (25%)

External assessment is developed and marked by the QCAA. The external assessment in Study of Religion is common to all schools and administered under the same conditions, at the same time, on the same day.

Assessment objectives

1. Explain features and expressions of religious traditions that shape views on ultimate questions, social justice and human rights.
2. Analyse perspectives about religious expression that inform understandings of ultimate questions, social justice and human rights.
3. Evaluate the significance and influence of religion and religious traditions in responding to ultimate questions, social justice and human rights.
4. Communicate to suit purpose by creating responses to ultimate questions, social justice and human rights.

Specifications

This examination:

- relates to Unit 4 Topic 2
- may ask students to respond using
 - sentences or paragraphs
 - several paragraphs so that ideas are maintained, developed and justified
- may ask students to
 - explain the ways religious traditions have formed and informed perspectives on ultimate questions, social justice and human rights, with a particular focus on the influence of sacred texts and religious beliefs and practices
 - use unseen stimulus materials provided with the examination paper
 - demonstrate sustained analysis, synthesis and evaluation to fully answer a problem, question or hypothesis.

Stimulus specifications

The QCAA provides stimulus material that is:

- from written and/or visual texts, e.g. excerpts from sacred texts and religious writings, reference books, journals, media articles, illustrations and images, religious art, cartoons, diagrams, graphical representations, tables
- succinct enough to allow students sufficient time to engage with them during planning.

Conditions

- Time allowed
 - Planning time: 15 minutes
 - Working time: 120 minutes
- Students must not bring notes into the examination.

Glossary

The syllabus glossary is available at www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/downloads/senior-qce/common/snr_glossary_cognitive_verbs.pdf.

References

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Version history

Version	Date of change	Information
1.0	January 2024	Released for familiarisation and planning (with implementation starting in 2025)

