



**Cambridge Assessment
International Education**

Syllabus

Cambridge IGCSE® Religious Studies 0490

For examination in November 2020 and 2021.



Version 1

Please check the syllabus page at www.cambridgeinternational.org/igcse to see if this syllabus is available in your administrative zone.

**Cambridge
Pathway** 

Why choose Cambridge?

Cambridge Assessment International Education prepares school students for life, helping them develop an informed curiosity and a lasting passion for learning. We are part of the University of Cambridge.

Our international qualifications are recognised by the world's best universities and employers, giving students a wide range of options in their education and career. As a not-for-profit organisation, we devote our resources to delivering high-quality educational programmes that can unlock learners' potential.

Our programmes and qualifications set the global standard for international education. They are created by subject experts, rooted in academic rigour and reflect the latest educational research. They provide a strong platform for learners to progress from one stage to the next, and are well supported by teaching and learning resources.

Our mission is to provide educational benefit through provision of international programmes and qualifications for school education and to be the world leader in this field. Together with schools, we develop Cambridge learners who are confident, responsible, reflective, innovative and engaged – equipped for success in the modern world.

Every year, nearly a million Cambridge students from 10 000 schools in 160 countries prepare for their future with an international education from Cambridge International.

'We think the Cambridge curriculum is superb preparation for university.'

Christoph Guttentag, Dean of Undergraduate Admissions, Duke University, USA

Quality management

Our systems for managing the provision of international qualifications and education programmes for students aged 5 to 19 are certified as meeting the internationally recognised standard for quality management, ISO 9001:2008. Learn more at www.cambridgeinternational.org/ISO9001



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Changes to this syllabus

For information about changes to this syllabus for 2020 and 2021, go to page 15.

The latest syllabus is version 1, published September 2017. There are no significant changes which affect teaching.



1 Why choose this syllabus?

Key benefits

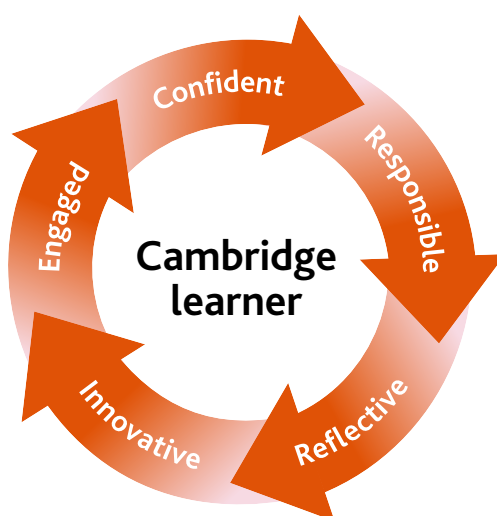
Cambridge IGCSE® syllabuses are created especially for international students. For over 25 years, we have worked with schools and teachers worldwide to develop syllabuses that are suitable for different countries, different types of schools and for learners with a wide range of abilities.

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

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

Our programmes balance a thorough knowledge and understanding of a subject and help to develop the skills learners need for their next steps in education or employment.

Our approach encourages learners to be:



'The strength of Cambridge IGCSE qualifications is internationally recognised and has provided an international pathway for our students to continue their studies around the world.'

Gary Tan, Head of Schools and CEO, Raffles International Group of Schools, Indonesia

Recognition and progression

The combination of knowledge and skills in Cambridge IGCSE Religious Studies gives learners a solid foundation for further study. Candidates who achieve grades A* to C are well prepared to follow a wide range of courses including Cambridge International AS & A Level Divinity, Islamic Studies, Religious Studies, or the equivalent.

Cambridge IGCSEs are accepted and valued by leading universities and employers around the world as evidence of academic achievement. Many universities require a combination of Cambridge International AS & A Levels and Cambridge IGCSEs or equivalent to meet their entry requirements.

UK NARIC, the national agency in the UK for the recognition and comparison of international qualifications and skills, has carried out an independent benchmarking study of Cambridge IGCSE and found it to be comparable to the standard of GCSE in the UK. This means students can be confident that their Cambridge IGCSE qualifications are accepted as equivalent to UK GCSEs by leading universities worldwide.

Learn more at www.cambridgeinternational.org/recognition

Supporting teachers

We provide a wide range of practical resources, detailed guidance, and innovative training and professional development so that you can give your learners the best possible preparation for Cambridge IGCSE.



'Cambridge IGCSE is one of the most sought-after and recognised qualifications in the world. It is very popular in Egypt because it provides the perfect preparation for success at advanced level programmes.'

Mrs Omnia Kassabgy, Managing Director of British School in Egypt BSE

2 Syllabus overview

Aims

The aims describe the purposes of a course based on this syllabus.

The aims are to:

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

Content overview

Candidates study **two** from:

- Christianity
- Islam
- Judaism



Support for Cambridge IGCSE Religious Studies

Our School Support Hub www.cambridgeinternational.org/support provides Cambridge schools with a secure site for downloading specimen and past question papers, mark schemes, grade thresholds and other curriculum resources specific to this syllabus. The School Support Hub community offers teachers the opportunity to connect with each other and to ask questions related to the syllabus.

Assessment overview

All candidates take two papers.

All candidates take:

Paper 1 1 hour 45 minutes
80 marks 50%

Candidates answer questions from **two** sections.

Each section has **two** compulsory structured questions. The second question is based on stimulus material.

Externally assessed.

and:

Paper 2 1 hour 45 minutes
80 marks 50%

Candidates answer questions from **two** sections.

Each section has three questions. Candidates answer **two** questions from the sections they have chosen.

Externally assessed.

Assessment objectives

The assessment objectives (AOs) are:

AO1 Knowledge

Candidates should be able to:

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

AO2 Understanding and interpretation

Candidates should be able to:

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

AO3 Evaluation

Candidates should be able to:

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

Weighting for assessment objectives

The approximate weightings allocated to each of the assessment objectives (AOs) are summarised below.

Assessment objectives as a percentage of the qualification

Assessment objective	Weighting in IGCSE %
AO1 Knowledge	35
AO2 Understanding and interpretation	35
AO3 Evaluation	30

Assessment objectives as a percentage of each component

Assessment objective	Weighting in components %	
	Paper 1	Paper 2
AO1 Knowledge	35	35
AO2 Understanding and interpretation	35	35
AO3 Evaluation	30	30

3 Subject content

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

- Christianity
- Islam
- Judaism.

Introduction

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

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

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

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

Topics

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

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

Topic 1: Worship

Topic 2: Beliefs and sacred writings

Topic 3: Festivals, fasts, pilgrimage/historic places

Topic 4: Religion and the family; rites of passage

Topic 5: Religion and social action

Christianity

Topic C1: Worship

- Church: altar/communion table, font/baptistery, pulpit, lectern, cross, crucifix.
- Public and private worship: Eucharist/Holy Communion/Mass; Sunday and daily worship; private devotion; blessings; Bible services; services of reconciliation.
- Role and significance of bishop, priest/vicar/minister: the meaning of hierarchy, the difference between a bishop and an archbishop.

Topic C2: Beliefs and sacred writings

- The Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit, the Apostles' Creed; beliefs about Jesus' mother Mary; the Communion of Saints.
- Jesus of Nazareth: beliefs about Jesus of Nazareth as reflected in Topic 3; birth narratives; last supper; death and resurrection of Jesus, the ascension, the effects of the coming of the Holy Spirit.
- Salvation and resurrection: what Christians mean by the term salvation; the Old Testament as a history of salvation.
- The Ten Commandments.
- The Bible: its place in worship; the basis of its authority; Old and New Testaments; the significance of the different types of literature it contains: history, myth, psalms, songs and prophecy.

Topic C3: Festivals, fasts, pilgrimage/historic places

- Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Lent including Holy Week, Easter, Ascension, Pentecost: how they are celebrated; what the different major festivals of Christianity teach about Christian beliefs.
- Sunday: the Eucharist and ideas of thanksgiving.
- Places of pilgrimage: e.g. Lourdes, Rome or local places of pilgrimage; the reasons why Christians go on pilgrimage.
- Historic places: e.g. Bethlehem, Nazareth, Jerusalem, Lourdes, Rome; what these historic places teach about Christian beliefs.

Topic C4: Religion and the family; rites of passage

- Baptism: infant baptism/dedication, believers' baptism.
- First communion; confirmation; marriage ceremonies; funeral rites.
- Traditional religious teaching on the roles and responsibilities of men, women and the family; nurture of the young; care of the elderly; the challenges experienced by trying to preserve traditional teaching and accepting change.

Topic C5: Religion and social action

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

Islam

Topic I1: Worship

- Mosque, minaret, dome, quiblah (direction), mihrab (niche), minbar (steps for sermon), architecture and calligraphy.
- Public and private worship: salah, the times and sequence of movements (rak'ahs); du'a (private devotion); wudu (ablution); artefacts used in worship: compass, prayer mat, tisbah (prayer beads).
- Adhan (call to prayer); muezzin.
- Jummah (Friday mid-day prayer).
- The role and significance of the Imam, including their role in the Islamic community.

Topic I2: Beliefs and sacred writings

- Articles of Faith: Tawhid (unity of God); risalah (Prophets), akhirah (life after death), Angels.
- Five Pillars: shahadah, salah, sawm, zakah, hajj.
- Muhammad (pbuh), revelation, hijrah, Seal of the Prophets; early life and character; persecution in Makkah.
- Qur'an, Sunnah (Ahadith); the reasons why the Qur'an is a sacred text for Muslims; the ways in which it is used in private and public worship.
- Jihad (greater and lesser).
- Origins of Sunni and Shi'ah.

Topic I3: Festivals, fasts, pilgrimage/historic places

- Ramadan: observance of the fast, those excused from fasting and the significance of the last ten days; Lailat ul-Qadr (Night of Power); Id al-Fitr (the end of Ramadan).
- Performance of hajj; the meaning and significance of each stage, Id al-Adha (feast of sacrifice).
- Makkah and Madinah, as places of pilgrimage and their historic significance in Islam.

Topic I4: Religion and the family; rites of passage

- Birth rites: adhan (call to prayer) and iqamah (command to worship), Aqeeqah (sacrifice), naming rituals.
- Marriage ceremonies; nikkah (marriage contract), mahr (dowry), walimah (wedding feast); funeral rites.
- Traditional religious teaching on the roles of men, women and the family; nurture of the young, care of the elderly; the challenges experienced by trying to preserve traditional teaching and accepting change.

Topic I5: Religion and social action

- Ummah, the religious community, local and worldwide.
- Shariah (law): as a code of behaviour for Muslims and a legal system; the concepts of halal (rightful) and haram (wrongful) thought and actions.
- Teachings about love and concern for others; use of zakah and sadaqah (voluntary contributions).
- Organisations of the religious community for the relief of poverty, e.g. Muslim Aid, Red Crescent; the relief of poverty within local communities.

Judaism

Topic J1: Worship

- Synagogue: ark (aron ha-kodesh), Sefer Torah (Torah scrolls), bimah (reading desk), Ner Tamid (eternal light), Ten Commandments (tablets of the law), menorah (seven-branched candlestick), Magen David (star of David); absence of any representations of God; different uses of the synagogue by the community.
- Public and private worship in the synagogue: minyan (number required for public worship), daily and Shabbat (Sabbath) services. In the home: daily prayer, Kiddush; the use of symbols and artefacts in worship.
- Shema (statement of faith); mezuzah; mikvah.
- Ritual dress: tallit (prayer shawl), tefillin (phylacteries), kippah/yarmulka (skull cap).
- Role and significance of rabbi, chazan (cantor) and congregation.

Topic J2: Beliefs and sacred writings

- The unity of God; the Covenant relationship between God and his people (Abraham and Moses), the background and details of the terms of the Covenants, and their importance and significance to the development of Judaism today.
- The Torah as the revelation of God's will; the centrality of the mitzvot in the Torah.
- The Tenakh: Torah (Law), Nevi'im (Prophets), Ketuvim (Writings); their impact upon behaviour, attitudes and lifestyle today.
- The Mishnah (oral law), its content and origins; the Talmud (commentary on the Mishnah).

Topic J3: Festivals, fasts, pilgrimage/historic places

- Shabbat (Sabbath) in the home and synagogue.
- High Holy Days: Rosh Hashanah (New Year), Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement), Simchat Torah (rejoicing the Torah).
- Pilgrim festivals: Pesach (Passover), Shavuot (Feast of Weeks), Sukkot (Tabernacles).
- Historic places: Jerusalem (Western Wall), Yad Vashem (Holocaust Memorial); the ways the memory of the Temple is kept alive in Judaism today.

Topic J4: Religion and the family; rites of passage

- Birth rites: Brit Milah (circumcision); naming ceremonies.
- Bar/Bat Mitzvah; Bat Chayil; marriage ceremonies: chuppa (canopy), ketubah (marriage contract), blessings; funeral rites, chevra kaddisha (burial society), Shiva (mourning ritual).
- Kashrut (kosher): food and clothes; treyfah (forbidden) as applied to food and clothes.
- Traditional and religious teaching on the role and responsibilities of men, women and the family; nurture of the young, care of the elderly; the challenges experienced by trying to preserve traditional teaching and accepting change.

Topic J5: Religion and social action

- Teachings about love and concern for others: tzedaka (righteous giving), pushkes (collection boxes), gemilut hasadim (kind actions); teaching about love and concern for others.
- Organisations of the religious community for the relief of poverty, e.g. Tzedek, Jewish Care, World Jewish Relief; the relief of poverty within local communities.

4 Details of the assessment

Paper 1

1 hour 45 minutes, 80 marks

Candidates answer **four** questions.

This paper consists of three sections:

- A Christianity
- B Islam
- C Judaism

Candidates answer questions in **two** of these sections.

Each section consists of two compulsory structured questions worth 20 marks each.

Candidates answer **all** the questions in the sections they have chosen.

This written paper is an externally set assessment, marked by Cambridge International.

Paper 2

1 hour 45 minutes, 80 marks

Candidates answer **four** questions.

This paper consists of three sections:

- A Christianity
- B Islam
- C Judaism

Candidates answer questions in **two** of these sections.

Each section consists of three structured questions worth 20 marks each.

Candidates answer **two** questions in the sections they have chosen.

This written paper is an externally set assessment, marked by Cambridge International.

5 What else you need to know

This section is an overview of other information you need to know about this syllabus. It will help to share the administrative information with your exams officer so they know when you will need their support. Find more information about our administrative processes at www.cambridgeinternational.org/examsofficers

Before you start

Previous study

We do not expect learners starting this course to have previously studied Religious Studies.

Guided learning hours

We design Cambridge IGCSE syllabuses based on learners having about 130 guided learning hours for each subject during the course but this is for guidance only. The number of hours a learner needs to achieve the qualification may vary according to local practice and their previous experience of the subject.

Availability and timetables

You can enter candidates in the November exam series. You can view the timetable for your administrative zone at www.cambridgeinternational.org/timetables

All Cambridge schools are allocated to one of six administrative zones. Each zone has a specific timetable. This syllabus is not available in all administrative zones. To find out about availability visit the syllabus page at www.cambridgeinternational.org/igcse

Private candidates can enter for this syllabus.

Combining with other syllabuses

Candidates can take this syllabus alongside other Cambridge International syllabuses in a single exam series. The only exceptions are:

- Cambridge O Level Religious Studies (Bible Knowledge) (2048)
- Cambridge O Level Religious Studies (Bible Knowledge, Singapore) (2049)
- syllabuses with the same title at the same level.

Cambridge IGCSE, Cambridge IGCSE (9–1) and Cambridge O Level syllabuses are at the same level.

Group awards: Cambridge ICE

Cambridge ICE (International Certificate of Education) is a group award for Cambridge IGCSE. It allows schools to offer a broad and balanced curriculum by recognising the achievements of learners who pass examinations in a range of different subjects.

Learn more about Cambridge ICE at www.cambridgeinternational.org/cambridgeice

Making entries

Exams officers are responsible for submitting entries to Cambridge International. We encourage them to work closely with you to make sure they enter the right number of candidates for the right combination of syllabus components. Entry option codes and instructions for submitting entries are in the *Cambridge Guide to Making Entries*. Your exams officer has a copy of this guide.

Exam administration

To keep our exams secure, we produce question papers for different areas of the world, known as 'administrative zones'. We allocate all Cambridge schools to one administrative zone determined by their location. Each zone has a specific timetable. Some of our syllabuses offer candidates different assessment options. An entry option code is used to identify the components the candidate will take relevant to the administrative zone and the available assessment options.

Support for exams officers

We know how important exams officers are to the successful running of exams. We provide them with the support they need to make your entries on time. Your exams officer will find this support, and guidance for all other phases of the Cambridge Exams Cycle, at www.cambridgeinternational.org/examsofficers

Retakes

Candidates can retake the whole qualification as many times as they want to. This is a linear qualification so candidates cannot re-sit individual components.

Equality and inclusion

We have taken great care to avoid bias of any kind in the preparation of this syllabus and related assessment materials. In compliance with the UK Equality Act (2010) we have designed this qualification to avoid any direct and indirect discrimination.

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

Candidates who cannot access the assessment of any component may be able to receive an award based on the parts of the assessment they have completed.

Information on access arrangements is in the *Cambridge Handbook* at www.cambridgeinternational.org/examsofficers

Language

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

After the exam

Grading and reporting

Grades A*, A, B, C, D, E, F or G indicate the standard a candidate achieved at Cambridge IGCSE.

A* is the highest and G is the lowest. 'Ungraded' means that the candidate's performance did not meet the standard required for grade G. 'Ungraded' is reported on the statement of results but not on the certificate. In specific circumstances your candidates may see one of the following letters on their statement of results:

- Q (result pending)
- X (no result)
- Y (to be issued)

These letters do not appear on the certificate.

How students and teachers can use the grades

Assessment at Cambridge IGCSE has two purposes.

- To measure learning and achievement.

The assessment:

- confirms achievement and performance in relation to the knowledge, understanding and skills specified in the syllabus, to the levels described in the grade descriptions.

- To show likely future success.

The outcomes:

- help predict which students are well prepared for a particular course or career and/or which students are more likely to be successful
- help students choose the most suitable course or career.

Grade descriptions

Grade descriptions are provided to give an indication of the standards of achievement candidates awarded particular grades are likely to show. Weakness in one aspect of the examination may be balanced by a better performance in some other aspect.

Grade descriptions for Cambridge IGCSE Religious Studies will be published after the first assessment of the IGCSE in 2020. Find more information at www.cambridgeinternational.org/igcse

Changes to this syllabus for 2020 and 2021

The syllabus has been updated. This is version 1, published September 2017

This document has a new design and has been updated with our new name Cambridge Assessment International Education.

Minor changes to the wording of some sections have been made to improve clarity.

Changes to syllabus content

- The subject content has been refreshed and clarified to help teachers and learners understand what is required.

- Additional detail has been added to:

Christianity

- C1 Worship
- C2 Beliefs and sacred writings
- C3: Festivals, fasts, pilgrimage/historic places
- C4: Religion and the family; rites of passage
- C5: Religion and social action

Islam

- I1 Worship
- I2 Beliefs and sacred writings
- I3: Festivals, fasts, pilgrimage/historic places
- I4: Religion and the family; rites of passage
- I5: Religion and social action

Judaism

- J1 Worship
- J2 Beliefs and sacred writings
- J3: Festivals, fasts, pilgrimage/historic places
- J4: Religion and the family; rites of passage
- J5: Religion and social action

Changes to assessment (including changes to specimen papers)

- There are **no** changes to the assessment. We have not updated the specimen materials for this syllabus.
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You are strongly advised to read the whole syllabus before planning your teaching programme.

'While studying Cambridge IGCSE and Cambridge International A Levels, students broaden their horizons through a global perspective and develop a lasting passion for learning.'

Zhai Xiaoning, Deputy Principal, The High School Affiliated to Renmin University of China

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