

Cambridge IGCSE

Religious Studies 0490

Explore beliefs, values and how people live by them.

Understanding the subject

Explore beliefs, values and how people live by them. This introduction connects the subject with everyday questions, practical learning and possible future directions. It gives you a starting point before you explore the complete syllabus.

How can beliefs shape everyday choices? Why might people answer a moral question differently? These questions invite you to connect ideas with a real situation. Identify the question people are debating. Explain relevant religious teachings. As you study, you will learn to explain your choices and check how well your ideas fit the situation.

What your learning will look like

Learning focus	What you will explore
Explore the ideas	Explore the religions selected for your course. Understand beliefs, teachings and practices.
Connect them to practice	Consider ethical questions and different views. Connect religious ideas to lived experience.

These examples introduce the subject. Open Syllabus Overview for the complete topic map and any qualification options.

Skills you will develop

Explain a belief accurately and respectfully. Use examples of religious practice. Compare reasons behind different viewpoints. Build a clear, supported argument. Practise these skills together: a clear answer should show how you reached it, not simply state a result. Use feedback to notice what you can already do and what needs more practice.

A useful habit

Ask: What is the evidence, and how does it support my explanation? Clear reasoning matters more than guessing an answer.

Putting ideas into practice

Explore an ethical disagreement. This illustrates learning, not an extra task now.

Identify the question people are debating. Explain relevant religious teachings. This sets the context for applying what you have learned. Compare different reasons and responses. Reach a conclusion supported by evidence.

Connect the starting information to your explanation or decision. The diagram summarises this process; it is not an extra assignment.

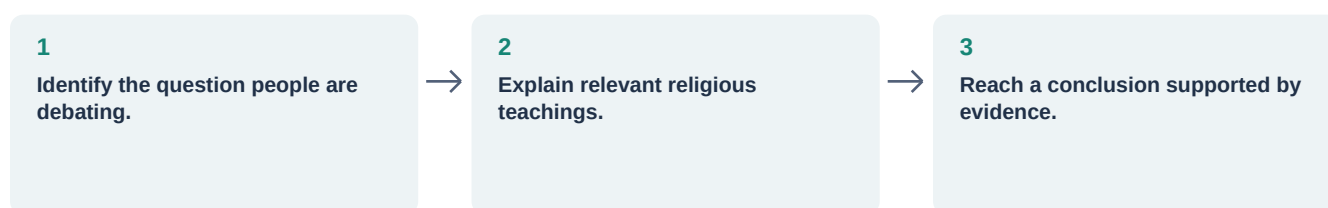


Figure 1. A simple sequence for turning a question into a reasoned explanation.

Future study and career connections

Teachers explain beliefs and traditions. Researchers study religion and society. Heritage teams interpret cultural practices. Public-service roles value respectful communication.

These connections show where the skills can be useful; the qualification does not award a particular job. Specialist roles usually require further study or training. You can explore these possibilities without deciding on a career now.

Your next step

Explore humanities and social sciences. Build understanding across different perspectives. Notice which ideas interest you most. Open Syllabus Overview to see what is ahead.

Use the subject map to see the learning ahead. For future study, check entry requirements with the institution; these can differ.

Keep the purpose in mind

This introduction helps you see why the subject matters and how you will learn. It is not the full syllabus or an assessment guide. Continue to Syllabus Overview, then Assessment Overview, for those details.

Reference

Based on the seven-slide course introduction and the Cambridge syllabus for 2028. [Read the official Cambridge syllabus.](#) Practical examples and career connections are illustrative.