

## Post 16

*Pupils should not just learn  
about religion  
but also about themselves  
from religion.*

**The law and this Agreed Syllabus require schools to provide Religious Education for all post 16 students. Schools should allocate funds for the provision of adequate specialist staffing and resources. Departments will need to devise appropriate schemes of work and methods of delivery.**

*Adequate curriculum time must be provided for Religious Education.  
This will not usually be less than 5%.*

Many schools provide 'A' level, AS courses or other external courses in Religious Studies. This is to be encouraged. Students should not be prevented from taking this option through lack of provision.

Religious Education for post-16 students should reflect their increasing maturity and assist them in considering their own place and purpose as adult members of society. Students should be provided with learning opportunities which allow them to develop their own thinking on important religious, philosophical, social and ethical issues drawing on principal world religions and, where appropriate, secular world views.

Teachers should present materials in such a way that students have the opportunity to deepen insight into their own beliefs, values and attitudes and are enabled to interpret religious and non-religious views and perceptions of life, purpose and world order. Teachers should build on the learning experiences of previous stages and provide opportunities for students to apply their knowledge.

It is important to continue the process of evaluating source material by further developing the skills of critical awareness, interpretation and analysis. Pupils should be given the opportunity to address issues of immediate interest and perennial concern.

Within Post 16 provision students should have increasing opportunities to:

- 1 Learn about religion (AT1)
- 2 Learn from religion (AT2)

## Breadth of study

*In order to ensure a broad and balanced exploration of religion post 16 students should cover at least 6 topics, 2 from each of the 3 areas of study outlined below.*

*Care must be taken to ensure that the chosen 6 topics and content should be significantly different.*

### **A God and Spirituality**

- 1 Religious Experience
- 2 Miracles
- 3 Mysticism and Meditation
- 4 Religion and Nature
- 5 Religion and Sexuality
- 6 Apocalypse
- 7 Death and the Afterlife
- 8 Incarnation and Resurrection
- 9 Myth, Symbol and Story
- 10 Religion and the Arts
- 11 Religion and the Media
- 12 Religion and Literature
- 13 New Age
- 14 Historicity and Religion
- 15 Faith and Commitment

### **B Religion and Society**

- 1 Fundamentalism
- 2 Liberation Theology
- 3 Saints and Martyrs
- 4 Religion and Conflict
- 5 Religion and the Environment
- 6 Religion and Politics
- 7 Religion and Race
- 8 Religion and Science
- 9 Religion and Psychology
- 10 Religion and Materialism
- 11 Religion and Secularisation
- 12 Religion and Social Justice
- 13 Religious Minorities
- 14 Unity and Diversity In Religion

### **C Philosophy and Ethics**

- 1 Arguments For and Against the Existence of God
- 2 Atheism, Humanism and Existentialism
- 3 Freewill and Determinism
- 4 Ethical Theories
- 5 Ethical Dilemmas In Medicine
- 6 Evil and Suffering
- 7 Post Modernism
- 8 The Meaning of Life
- 9 Religion and Women
- 10 Religion and the Paranormal
- 11 A Current Moral/Ethical Issue

## A God And Spirituality

---

### A1 Religious Experience

#### Suggested Content:

- Special revelation and general revelation.
- The meaning and effects of prayer.
- Modern examples of life changing effects of conversion experiences.
- Psychological explanations for religious experience.
- Enlightenment.
- Musical experience.
- Visiting speakers, e.g. clergy, to discuss their religious experience, non-evangelistically.

#### Basic Questions:

- What is religious experience?
- How do people claim to have experienced God?
- What effect might my experiences have on others?
- Can experience be trusted?
- How would you authenticate religious experience?
- What effect might others experiences have on me?

### A2 Miracles

#### Suggested Content:

- Examples of miracles: ancient and modern.
- Purpose of miracles.
- Jesus' miracles: nature, healing, raising the dead.
- Miracles and the nature of God.
- Naturalistic interpretations.
- The resurrection.

#### Basic Questions:

- What is a miracle?
- What do they prove?
- Are miracles answers to prayers?
- Do miracles happen?
- Will science ever explain all miracles?

### A3 Mysticism and Meditation

#### Suggested Content:

- Mystical elements in world faiths e.g. Kabbalah in Judaism; Sufism in Islam; Vajrayana in Buddhism.
- Use of drugs to 'enhance spiritual experience'.
- Transcendental meditation: the Beatles.
- New Age and spirituality.
- Julian of Norwich; Meister Eckhart; Theresa; Hildegard of Bingen; Bede Griffiths; John Main.
- Links between meditation and social action e.g. socially engaged Buddhism, Thich Nhat Hanh.
- Silence, reflection and stilling exercises.

#### Basic Questions:

- Is there more to it than contemplating your navel?
- Is silence empty?
- Does mystical experience have a place in the rational world?
- Did our ancestors know something we don't?
- Is the search for a higher plane a reaction to a superficial age?
- What is mysticism?
- Are there messages we can miss through hyperactivity?
- Why is Eastern spirituality popular in the West?

## A4 Religion and Nature

### Suggested Content:

- James Lovelock's Gaia Theory.
- Native American and Australian Aboriginal cosmology, prophecies and religion.
- Role of poetry e.g. Wordsworth.
- Darwin and evolution.
- Music-'Earth Mass'.
- Religions revealed through nature.
- Glastonbury - fertility myths, pantheism.
- John Ruskin and his love of the natural world.
- Grisedale Forest sculpture walks.
- Teilard de Chardin and Creation Spirituality e.g. Matthew Fox

### Basic Questions:

- Are we part of, or distinct from, nature?
- How immanent is God?
- Which is a more powerful image-Mother Earth or Father God?
- Does nature say anything about God?
- Should we redefine patriarchal ideas about God?
- Does nature still inspire creativity?
- Which came first, chicken or egg? Does it matter?

## A5 Religion and Sexuality

### Suggested Content:

- Male gender dominance in religion.
- Role of New Age in affirming sexuality.
- Sexual experimentation among teenagers.
- The perfection of Mary as a role model and female guilt.
- Homosexual acts as preference, inclination or perversion.
- Hinduism: affirmation of sexuality in the Tantric tradition.

### Basic Questions:

- Should sex outside marriage be regarded as a sin?
- Should the church affirm homosexual relationships?
- Is celibacy realistic in today's world?
- Should the church allow gay priests?
- Does it matter if religious leaders are male or female?
- Is it religion, culture, or tradition which defines men's and women's roles?
- Is God male or female?

## A6 Apocalypse

### Suggested Content:

- Fulfilment of prophecy.
- Apocalyptic imagery in the arts.
- Millenarianism.
- Prophetic visions.
- Nostrodamus.
- Teachings about the end of time e.g. Jewish ideas about the Messiah; Book of Revelation; Mark 13.

### Basic Questions:

- Will the end of the world be brought about by God or humanity?
- Will I be judged and by what criteria?
- Will Jesus return? When?
- Why are people fascinated with the end of time?
- Is it possible to predict the future?

## A7 *Death and the Afterlife*

### **Suggested Content:**

- The nature of the afterlife e.g. Christian ideas of heaven, hell, resurrection, purgatory and limbo.
- Near death experiences.
- Contemporary attitudes to death and beyond.
- Ideas of reincarnation/rebirth in Hinduism, Buddhism and Sikhism.
- The nature of the soul.
- Definitions of 'death'

### **Basic Questions:**

- How do we know when someone is dead?
- What is the evidence that life does not end with death?
- What form does immortality take?
- Can we communicate with the dead?
- Is death an end or a beginning?
- Can we look forward to death?
- How do people express their beliefs in life after death?
- Resurrection or reincarnation?
- What is meant by heaven and hell?
- Does a part of us survive after death?

## A8 *Incarnation and Resurrection*

### **Suggested Content:**

- Christian view that Jesus was fully human and fully God.
- Resurrection in Christianity in contrast to Platonic immortality.
- Nature of Jesus' resurrection e.g. physical or spiritual; hoax and revival from coma.
- Incarnation and Avatar.
- Views of Jehovah's Witnesses and Unitarians
- Early heresies: Arianism; Nestorianism; Docetism.
- Biblical evidence of the Trinity and developing Christology.

### **Basic Questions:**

- Was Jesus God? Was he following a script?
- When did Jesus begin?
- Does the crucifixion/atonement lose significance if Jesus wasn't fully human?
- Is the resurrection linked to Jesus' divine nature?
- Did Jesus know he was God?
- Did Mary need to be a virgin?
- Is the resurrection historical? If so, what form did it take?
- What happened to the body?

## A9 *Myth, Symbol and Story*

### **Suggested Content:**

- The inadequacy of language when describing the transcendent.
- The meanings behind the ideas in Creation stories in world faiths.
- Ethics, good and evil in folklore,
- Philosophical parables and their meanings.
- Symbolism in religion and fiction e.g. the heroic voyage; sacrifice; Tolkien; CS Lewis; Star Wars.

### **Basic Questions:**

- Genesis: fact or plagiarism?
- What are myths and legends?
- What makes a symbol powerful?
- What's the point of fairy tales?
- Is truth more important than meaning?
- How does this story affect you?

## *A10 Religion and the Arts*

### **Suggested Content:**

- Stained glass-the earliest form of story telling.
- Dance and Drama in different religious traditions e.g. Indian storytelling, Muslim Whirling Dervishes, Mystery Plays.
- Paintings, e.g. Pre-Raphaelites; Augustus Egg; religious paintings depicting scenes from the Bible; icons; tangkas; Hindu Gods etc.
- Sculptures and other carved images.
- Calligraphy
- Music from different religious traditions and in popular culture (e.g. Hindu and Sikh music reflecting the cyclical nature of time; music in Christianity from the Messiah to Superstar).

### **Basic Questions:**

- What effect does this music, dance, art or calligraphy have on you?
- How and why is religious symbolism and allegory used?
- What is special about Medieval mystery plays?
- How is the Hindu temple a microcosm of the universe?
- Why has religion been a source of inspiration to artists, dramatists and musicians?
- How effectively is religion portrayed in the Arts?
- Is it helpful to portray God in art form?
- Is it right to dance in a place of worship?

## *All Religion and the Media*

### **Suggested Content:**

- Analysis of current newspaper treatment of religious issues.
- Consider the religious content of appropriate films.
- The treatment of religious issues and people in soap operas.
- Religious programmes/magazines /newspapers

### **Basic Questions:**

- Does religious reporting in the media deter or encourage faith commitment?
- Is there a place for American style evangelism on British TV?
- What difference does/should the fact that we live in a multi-faith society make to religious broadcasting and reporting?
- How is religion portrayed in the media, with sympathy or scorn?

## *A12 Religion and Literature*

### **Suggested Content:**

- Appropriate literature: e.g. Narnia Chronicles; Tolkien; Samuel Beckett's 'Waiting for Godot', Flaubert's 'A Simple Heart'.
- Reference to, and use of religion in literature.
- The distinction between religious and secular literature.
- Literature and religious stereotypes

### **Basic Questions:**

- How influential is religion in literature?
- How are religious minorities portrayed?
- Is 'The Lord of the Rings' a suitable book for Lenten reading?
- What has Zen got to do with motorcycle maintenance?
- How are religious believers portrayed?
- Are there any common stereotypes?
- Is the 'The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy' a religious epic?
- Is the 'Mahabharata' just a long poem?

## A13 New Age

### Suggested Content:

- New age and self-development, affirmation of human nature especially individual development, positive view of femininity, alternative medicines.
- New age expressions in church worship.
- New age and spirituality in popular culture - meditation, nature, interest in 'old world' religions, people as 'divine', crystals, music, clothes.
- Glastonbury and contrasts with Christianity.

### Basic Questions:

- What is New Age?
- How is it recognised in today's society? What are the effects?
- Why are religious believers often 'anti' new age?
- Did our ancestors know something we don't?
- Who is part of it?
- What might religious believers learn from New Age ideas?
- Is 'Old Time' religion making a comeback?
- Is it all in the stars? Was God an astronaut?

## A14 Historicity and Religion

### Suggested Content:

- Different types of religious writing e.g. symbolic, allegorical, historical, prophecy, teaching.
- Arguments for and against miracles, resurrection, virgin birth.
- Literal truth and spiritual truth.
- Reaction criticism, source criticism.
- Liberal and conservative approaches to interpretation and dating of scripture.
- David Hume on miracles: The testimony of barbarians.
- Idea of 'leap of faith'.
- Archaeology and religion.

### Basic Questions:

- How do we know Holy books are not made up?
- Beliefs, opinion, truth and fact: what's the difference?
- Are scriptures literally true, or symbolic?
- Why do parallel accounts in the gospels contain both similarities and differences?
- The Bible has been translated - hasn't it been changed?
- How are we to interpret miracles, the resurrection, virgin birth?
- Is meaning more important than fact?

## A15 Faith and Commitment

### Suggested Content:

- Analysis of the nature of faith.
- Faith and healing.
- People who have overcome obstacles through faith and commitment, e.g. Gandhi; Mother Teresa; Martin Luther King; Terry Waite.
- The place of ambiguity and contradictions in faith.
- Faith and deception/verification.
- Effects of fanaticism.
- Comparing faith with trust relationships e.g. parents, friends, partner - based on trust and not proof but central in our lives.

### Basic Questions:

- Why do people believe without proof?
- How influential is faith in life?
- Does it make sense to have faith in something we cannot fully understand?
- How is faith to be understood?
- Is science about proof or theory?
- Why might religion inspire commitment?
- Why do people take a 'leap of faith'?
- What do people have faith in besides religion?
- Is faith difficult today?
- Is suffering the result of sin?
- Is there a purpose to life?

## **B Religion and Society**

---

### *B1 Fundamentalism*

#### **Suggested Content:**

- Meaning of religious fundamentalism.
- Fundamentalism in politics, e.g. in Islamic states; Israel; Ireland; right-wing America.
- Fundamentalist interpretation of scripture.
- The attraction of fundamentalism.
- Effects of religious fundamentalism on society, e.g. women's lives, cultural and religious rules.

#### **Basic Questions:**

- How can a rational person be a fundamentalist?
- Why are religious fundamentalists often political activists?
- Why is fundamentalism popular today?
- Is fundamentalism dangerous or beneficial?

### *B2 Liberation Theology*

#### **Suggested Content:**

- Role of the prophets in social justice - should the church continue to be a prophetic voice?
- Definition of Liberation Theology.
- Key people and places e.g. Central and South America; Oscar Romero; Gustavo Gutierrez; Hilda Camera.

#### **Basic Questions:**

- Should Christians get involved with politics?
- Do Christians have a practical responsibility to help the poor?
- Should we re-interpret theology to meet the needs of the age?
- What is freedom?
- How should faith affect our actions?
- Is the Kingdom of God a spiritual concept? Does it relate to the material world?
- How can serving the needs of others increase one's freedom?
- Is there a reward in heaven?

### *B3 Saints and Martyrs*

#### **Suggested Content:**

- Concept of sainthood.
- Mary as a model for female sainthood.
- Modern 'saints': Gandhi, Elizabeth Fry, Mother Theresa, Martin Luther King, Nelson Mandela.
- Motives behind martyrdom.
- Uncelebrated examples in daily life.
- Key figures e. g Augustine of Hippo; Francis of Assisi; Guru Nanak; Buddha; Catherine.

#### **Basic Questions:**

- Why do some people stand against the crowd?
- Are religious ideas worth dying for?
- What makes a saint?
- Do you have to be perfect to be a saint, or merely a virgin?
- What makes this person special?
- Should we revere figures of religious authority?
- Which people have influenced me most? How?

## B4 Religion and Conflict

### Suggested Content:

- Northern Ireland.
- Conflict within religion, e.g. role of women, crusades, sectarian disputes.
- Conscientious objectors.
- Quakers and the Peace Testimony.
- Middle East.
- Concept of a just war and applications to modern warfare.
- Biblical examples of warfare and pacifism.
- Jihad: What is its true meaning?

### Basic Questions:

- Is religion to disturb the comfortable or comfort the disturbed?
- Was Jesus a pacifist? Are pacifists cowards?
- Should you always obey the law?
- What do people mean by an educated conscience?
- What did St Augustine mean: 'Love God and then do what you like?'
- Should religious teaching ever be used to justify a war?
- Is religion the cause or consequence of conflict?
- Does any crime deserve death?
- What makes some people more law abiding than others?
- Are the means justified by the ends?
- Whose side is God on?

## B5 Religion and the Environment

### Suggested Content:

- Exploitation of planet, people and resources.
- Native American and Native Australian beliefs about the environment.
- Genesis and the concept of stewardship.
- Humanity's relationship to creation.
- Jain/Buddhist attitudes to creation.
- Western/Christian abuse of resources.
- Causes, effects and solutions of environmental concerns.
- Islamic idea of Khalifah (custodians).
- Implications of God as Creator.
- John Ruskin and his love of the natural world.

### Basic Questions:

- Do Christians have a responsibility to care for the environment?
- Does change depend on individuals or governments?
- Does extinction of a species matter?
- Do we take the world for granted?
- I didn't drop it so why should I pick it up?
- Should everyone refrain from harming living things?
- How far should people go to defend the environment?
- Who needs the rain forests anyway?
- What can Nature teach us?
- Why should we care if we won't feel the effects?

## B6 Religion and Politics

### Suggested Content:

- Religion and political parties e.g. Gandhi, Islamic governments, Christian socialism.
- Party affiliation and freedom of conscience, e.g. abortion debate.
- Khalistan as a possible Sikh state.
- Church of England as an established church and questions of disestablishment.
- 8th Century prophets (Amos, Micah) and their political challenge.
- Israel as a Jewish and Democratic state.

### **Basic Questions:**

- Was Jesus political?
- Can a Christian vote Tory?
- Can people of different faiths be effectively ruled by the same government?
- Should the British monarch be 'Defender of faith' or 'Defender of the Faith'?
- Can religion change politics, or politics change religion?
- How far should a secular state limit freedom?
- What did Rev. Tutu mean when he said 'When people say the Bible and politics don't mix, I am puzzled as to which Bible they are reading'?
- How do you feel when you see a person sleeping in a doorway?

## **B7 Religion and Race**

### **Suggested Content:**

- Slavery; holocaust; right wing racism; BNP.
- Rastafarians.
- Religion as a cause and victim of racism.
- Campaigns for racial equality, e.g. Harriet Tubman, Sojourner Truth, William Wilberforce, Martin Luther King, Malcolm X, Nelson Mandela.
- Racial based civil war- Bosnia, Rwanda, Sudan.
- Apartheid.
- Specific examples e.g. Stephen Lawrence.
- Concept of 'chosen people' - chosen for what?
- Relationship between England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales.
- Culture and religious expression.

### **Basic Questions:**

- What are the causes and effects of racism?
- Are people naturally racist?
- Can you legislate against discrimination?
- What freedom is there for the economically deprived?
- Why are mixed race churches so rare?
- Are God's blessings for universal enjoyment?

## **B8 Religion and Science**

### **Suggested Content:**

- Scientific revolutions in history and effects on religious belief e.g. Copernicus, Kepler, Galileo, Darwin, Einstein, etc.
- Big bang theories and God: recent philosophy and physics.
- Similar aims of theologians and scientists in discovering the nature of the universe.
- Interpreting Genesis.
- Creation v evolution debate.
- The changing place of humanity in the universe.
- Miracles, the supernatural and science (e.g. David Hume, Nostrodamus).

### **Basic Questions:**

- Does scientific advancement negate faith?
- Why has the church denied scientific advances in the past?
- Are science and religion on the same road?
- Did God cause the big bang?
- Is atheism the inevitable consequence of scientific investigation?
- Is 'why' more important than 'how'?

## **B9 Religion and Psychology**

### **Suggested Content:**

- Freud - religion as a symptom of neurosis.
- Development of our ideas about God - as a child, adolescent and adult.
- Does the enabling power of spirituality come from without or within?
- Ideas of Don Cupitt.
- God as subjective or objective reality.
- Jung - religion as a cure for neurosis.
- Ideas of Feuerbach: God as projection of human desires.
- Ideas of Oliver Sachs on mysticism and experience induced by migraine/epilepsy.
- Conversion experiences.
- Marx - religion as opium of the people.

### **Basic Questions:**

- Can belief be explained by psychology?
- How does conversion affect our perception of life and ourselves?
- Does 'mind over matter' fully explain prayer, faith and healing?
- Is mysticism a migraine?
- Is faith a disease or a cure?
- Does religion encourage people to accept or challenge hardship?
- Does God change, or merely our perception?
- Does God exist only in the mind?

## **B10 Religion and Materialism**

### **Suggested Content:**

- Question of ethics in making money.
- Connections between money, lifestyle and happiness.
- Buddhist teaching on Right Livelihood.
- Church's use of and teaching on wealth.
- Value of property over people.
- Ethical banking e.g. Islamic rule of no interest; the Co-op bank.
- Values and attitudes associated with professional life.
- Christian values about love and service to God.
- Causes, symptoms and effects of a consumer society.
- Power and influence of advertising.

### **Basic Questions:**

- Are we stewards of, or owners of, our money?
- Is the love of money the root of evil?
- What do Christians mean by 'being rich in God's sight'?
- Do adverts tell the truth and how influenced are we by them?
- Which is more important - money or job satisfaction?
- What can and can't money achieve?
- Does the church set a good example of financial responsibility?
- Why do some religious people reject wealth?
- Is professional success vital to happiness?
- Is money-making ever unethical?

## **B11 Religion and Secularisation**

### **Suggested Content:**

- Examples and effects of secularisation in society.
- Place of religious ritual in secular society e.g., opening of Parliament, swearing on Bible in court.
- Death of God' philosophy.
- Rise of Humanism; its ideas and values.
- Marginalisation of religion from the centres of power in society.

### **Basic Questions:**

- What does 'secular' mean?
- Has token religious ritual become more important than faith?
- Have we outgrown religion?
- Are there such things as secular values?
- Is secularisation a natural consequence of the decline of religion and rise of materialism?
- Can religious values survive in a secular world?

### **B12 Religion and Social Justice**

#### **Suggested Content:**

- 8th century prophets (Amos, Micah).
- Buddhist precepts.
- Caste system in Hinduism.
- Responsibility of believers: conversion or feeding people?
- Treatment of minorities.
- 10 commandments.
- Teaching of Jesus.
- Class structure and the Church of England.
- Types of injustice in society.
- John Ruskin and social justice.
- Mistakes in justice systems

#### **Basic Questions:**

- Do believers have a responsibility to the poor and oppressed?
- Is charity welfare on the cheap?
- Discuss 'All people are created equal. But some are more equal than others.'
- Should society admit to miscarriages of justice?
- Have faith systems failed the poor?
- Does politics effect religious duty?
- Can a society uphold both the 10 commandments and the death penalty?
- What place has integrity in social management?

### **B13 Religious Minorities**

#### **Suggested Content:**

- Beliefs and practices of religious minorities. e.g. Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons.
- Differences between cults and sects.
- Analysis of conversion methods, dangers and possible consequences.
- Orthodox and unorthodox within religion.

#### **Basic Questions:**

- What makes a cult a cult, and a sect a sect?
- What makes ideas 'orthodox' and 'unorthodox'?
- Can a sect be right?
- Are all cults dangerous?
- Do people feel threatened by religious minorities?
- How should we treat people we disagree with?

### **B14 Unity and Diversity in Religion**

#### **Suggested Content:**

- Doctrinal differences between denominations.
- Ecumenical movement.
- Protestant and Catholic divisions in Northern Ireland.
- Meaning of 'unity' e.g. many parts of one body.
- Preferences in styles of worship.
- Relationships between world faiths.
- Resistance to anything new in worship e.g., music, dance, dress.

#### **Basic Questions:**

- Are so many denominations necessary?
- Should Christians convert people?
- Can diversity be a good thing?
- If Christians love each other, why can't they worship together?
- Do they all believe the same thing?
- Does unity require uniformity?
- What did Jesus mean when he prayed that they might all be one (John 17)?
- How can we be open-minded in our approach to worship?

## C Philosophy and Ethics

---

### C1 Arguments For and Against the Existence of God

#### Suggested Content:

- Arguments for God's existence: ontological, cosmological, teleological, moral, experience.
- Buddhism - faith without God.
- Arguments against God's existence, the problem of evil, the challenge of science.
- Concept of God in the world's faiths.

#### Basic Questions:

- Can God's existence ever be proved?
- Is there something of God in everyone?
- Can a survivor of ethnic cleansing believe in God?
- Does the possibility of life on other planets change anything?
- What do Buddhists worship if they don't believe in God?
- Is seeing believing?
- How big is God? Can God be defined?
- What do you gain and lose by believing in God?
- Either atheists or believers have delusions. Does it matter?

### C2 Atheism, Humanism and Existentialism

#### Suggested Content:

- Non-theistic world views, humanism, existentialism.
- Ideas of: Darwin, Marx, Freud, Kierkegaard, Sartre, Neitsche, Russell and their influence on modern thought.
- 'Death of God' theology.

#### Basic Questions:

- Did God ever exist?
- Is religion the root of all evil?
- Is suicide the answer?
- Do Humanists believe in spiritual development?
- Does life, the universe or anything have any meaning?
- What hope is there?
- Can you prove that you exist?

### C3 Free Will and Determinism

#### Suggested Content:

- Predestination and theological determinism e.g. Calvin; Luther.
- Belief in karma.
- Skinner and Behaviourism.
- Achievements of freedom movements in history e.g. Jewish; ANC.
- Free will arguments of Sartre; Camus; and Freud.

#### Basic Questions:

- Is my future decided by my past?
- Freedom from and for what?
- How would our actions and speech be different if we believed in karmic consequences?
- How can I be both an individual and part of a group?
- Does freedom have limits?
- Is freedom worth dying for?
- 'No man is an island'. True or False?
- Is freedom without responsibility like football without rules?

## C4 Ethical Theories

### Suggested Content:

- Utilitarianism.
- Categorical imperative.
- Theistic ethics.
- Hedonism.
- Natural law.
- Karma and Buddhist precepts.
- Situation ethics.
- Original sin.
- Egoism.
- Absolutism and relativism.
- 10 commandments.

### Basic Questions:

- Why be good?
- Are rules relevant?
- Is there a universal right way of living?
- Are we punished for our bad actions?
- What does it mean to be good?
- Is goodness a cause or a consequence?
- Is there a common morality?
- Can you be good apart from God?

## C5 Ethical Dilemmas in Medicine

### Suggested Content:

- Euthanasia.
- Genetic engineering.
- Medical experimentation on animals.
- Abortion.
- Funding decisions-who gets a transplant?

### Basic Questions:

- What does the Hippocratic Oath say?
- At what point does a foetus become a baby? Who decides?
- Is abortion murder?
- Do we have the right to play God?
- Should society be driven by technology or ethics?
- What do some of the world's religions say about these issues?
- Is euthanasia ever justified? Is it murder?

## C6 Evil and Suffering

### Suggested Content:

- Natural disasters: why does God allow them to happen?
- Faith offers meaning, not explanation.
- Examples of people retaining faith despite suffering e.g. Terry Waite.
- Human evil: is freedom worth it? Dostoyevsky: The Brothers Karamazov.
- Is suffering the will of God/Allah?
- Traditional theodicies: Augustine, Irenaeus, Process theology.

### Basic Questions:

- If God is omnipotent, he could prevent evil. If he is loving, he will want to. So why does evil exist?
- What are turning points in a person's faith?
- Does TV violence cause or reflect real violence?
- Are we becoming immune?
- Can you believe in God after the Holocaust?

## C7 Post Modernism

### Suggested Content:

- The rise of individualism and its effects e.g. diversity of ethical positions; rise of cults and sects; alienation from others; decline of traditional religious belief.
- View that there is no universal truth so people form their own philosophy of life and 'pick and mix' beliefs.
- Philosophical revolution e.g. authority of the church, modernism, logical positivists and early 20th century view that science is infallible.
- Recent scientific shift e.g. science is not infallible.

### Basic Questions:

- What is truth?
- Is it OK for people to believe whatever they like?
- Is there a difference between literal and religious truth?
- Has humanity made progress?
- Can we make our own reality?
- Do ultimate questions have absolute answers?
- Do things have to be proved scientifically to be meaningful?
- Can we get it wrong and live under an illusion?

## C8 The Meaning of Life

### Suggested Content:

- Society's view of happiness: egoism; hedonism; wealth and fame; media messages.
- Buddhist beliefs: 4 Noble Truths, 8 Fold Path and 6 Perfections.
- Muslim beliefs about submitting to Allah.
- Analysis of what is fundamental to human happiness.
- Christian beliefs about love.

### Basic Questions:

- Can we ever be truly happy when everything is impermanent?
- Why work?
- Are happiness and meaning the same thing?
- Is love all we need?
- What is the meaning of your life?
- What makes you happy? What is most important in your life?
- Is God the answer?
- Why do some people reject wealth and status?
- What does it mean to be happy and successful?
- Is happiness the same as enlightenment?

## C9 Religion and Women

### Suggested Content:

- Influence of perception of female figures in religion past and present.
- Development of feminism in society and its effects on religious traditions.
- Difference between 'equality' and 'sameness'.
- Messages about the sexes and their roles in the media.
- Reforms in law, society and expectations.
- Place and treatment of women in history.
- Nature of God and the positive role of the feminine in religion and society.
- Issue of nature versus nurture.
- Role of women in the teaching and practices of world religions.
- Role and status of women in Sikhism.

### **Basic Questions:**

- How would society and religions differ if we had a feminist government?
- If God is feminine, what are the implications for femaleness in the world?
- Are women defined by their relationships with men whereas men are defined by their jobs?
- What is it like to be a women in Islam, Hinduism or Sikhism?
- Are role and status the same?
- Are women's roles given equal value to men's roles?
- Are biological differences the only differences between men and women?
- How do culture, tradition, and religious teaching define the role of women?
- Are women permitted and capable to lead within faith communities?
- Why do people see God as male?

### ***C10 Religion and the Paranormal***

#### **Suggested Content:**

- Examine naturalistic interpretations and religious teaching on the paranormal.
- Psychological dangers of involvement with the occult.
- Biblical ideas of exorcism, demonic powers, angels and their influence in human affairs.
- Discuss why people are interested in the paranormal.
- Invite a minister who has experience of exorcism, or a psychologist, to speak.

#### **Basic Questions:**

- Are there other life forms in the universe?
- How might such occurrences be explained?
- Why do some people find the occult fascinating?
- Can people make objects fly round rooms?
- Have you ever seen a ghost?
- Is there a devil?
- What does it say about our need for the spiritual?
- Do we entertain angels unawares?

### ***C11 A Current Moral/Ethical Issue***

#### **Suggested Content:**

- Capitalise on current interest in an ethical issue-locally, nationally or internationally.
- News clips and documentaries.
- Background to the dilemma: its causes.
- Arguments for and against, religious and secular.
- Effects of possible solutions.

#### **Basic Questions:**

- How has this dilemma arisen?
- Who are the specialists in this area? What are their views?
- What do others think about it? Why?
- What effect is it having in the world?
- What do I think about it? Why?
- Could I be wrong?
- What might happen if each solution were put into practice?

